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AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

SPECIAL ISSUE 7 ■ £3.95

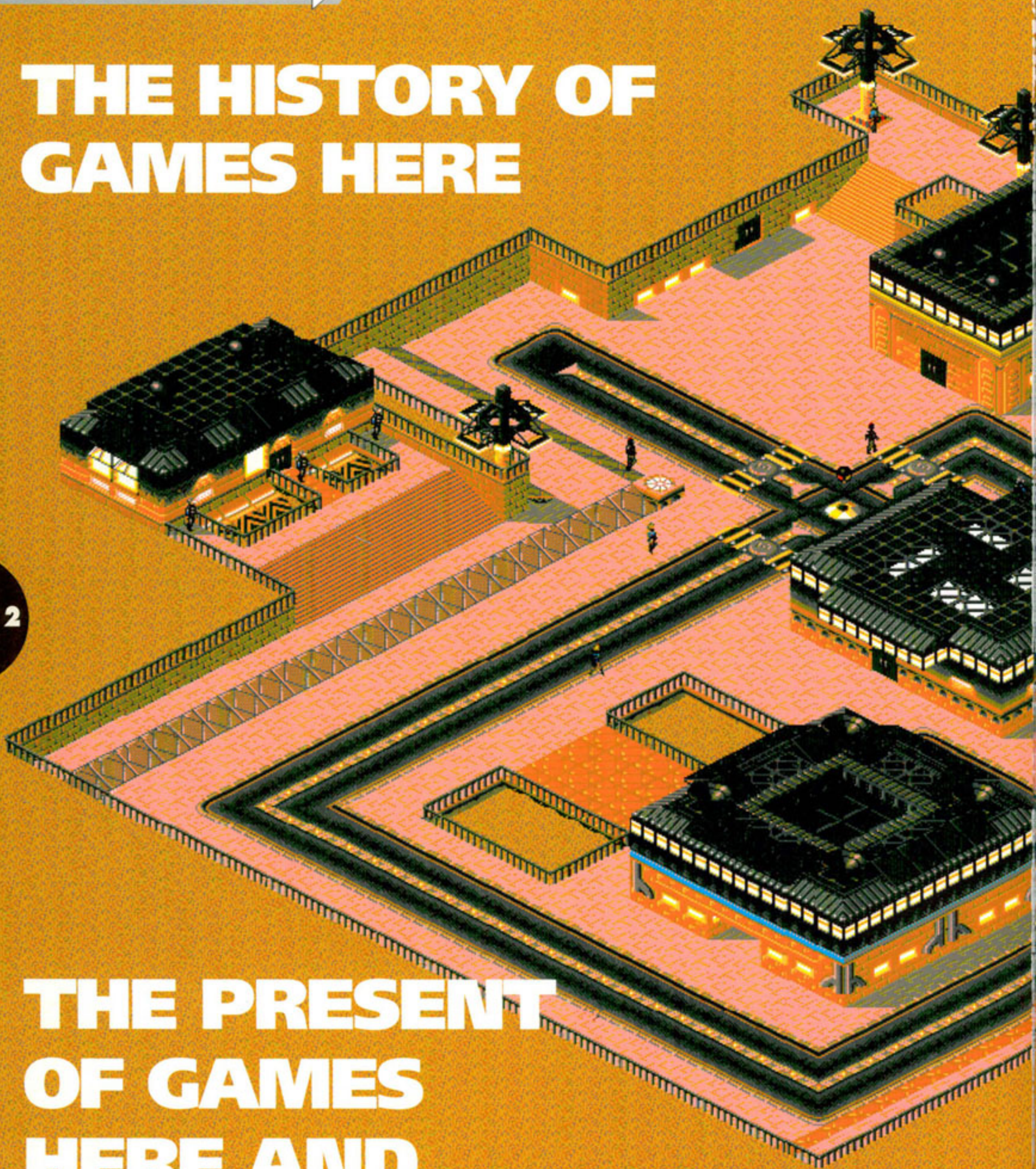


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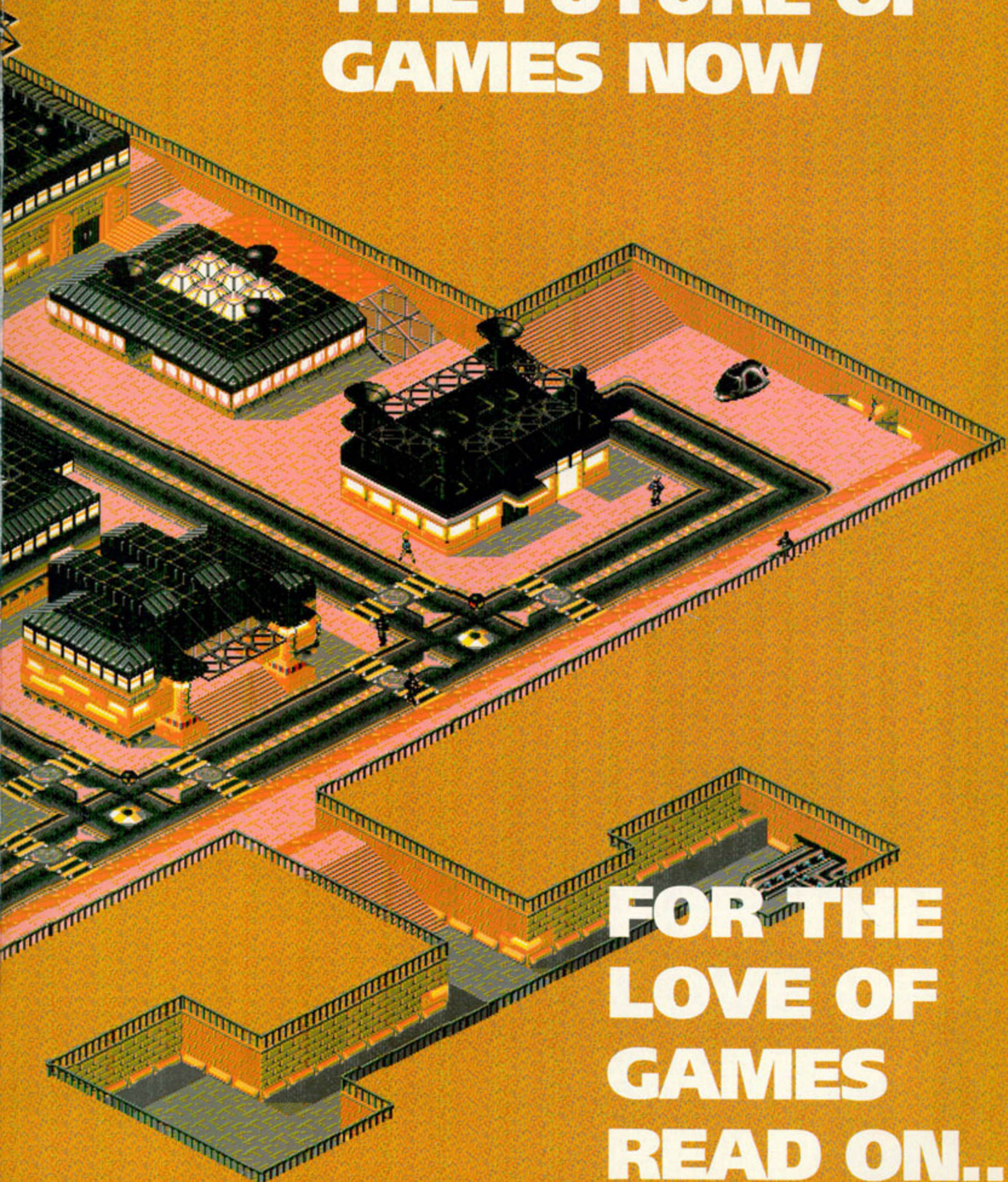
THE HISTORY OF GAMES HERE



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THE PRESENT OF GAMES HERE AND NOW

THE FUTURE OF GAMES NOW



**FOR THE
LOVE OF
GAMES
READ ON...**

AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

GAMES

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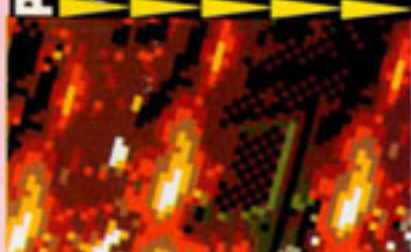
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Dull? Tedious? Okay, miss out on some classics. Don't read this

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Hello and welcome to this, the first of the **Amiga Format Games Specials**. My name's Tim Smith, I'm the editor. That's enough idle chat. Why don't you just dive into these lovingly crafted pages and get your pleasure-glands overloaded?

EVENTS

WIN One of two brilliant Amiga CD³² consoles. Line up on page 50!

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WIN A copy of GOAL! or a Premiership season ticket on page 68



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The list of the games you must have. In detail. In fact. In-missable?



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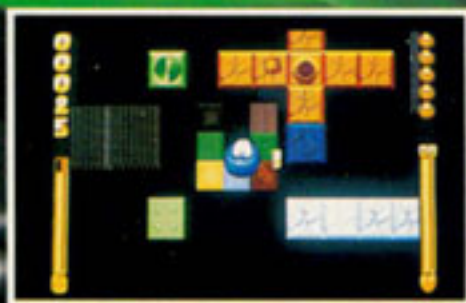
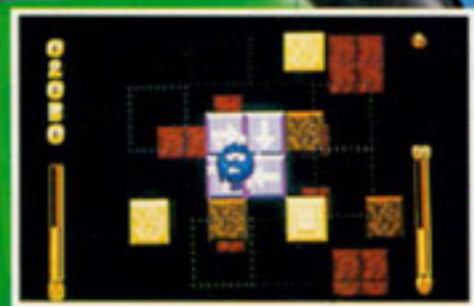
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FOREWORD

"There's plenty of time to play this game... and trash the Spaniards too"

Sir F Drake. Admiral and all-round headcase 1588

"Being rich and famous means less than nothing if you still can't beat Drac in Rainbow Islands"
Anon. 1993

BELIEVE IT... WELCOME READ ON...



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PRINTED IN THE UK BY
St Ives PLC, Plymouth

NEWSTRADE DISTRIBUTION, UK
Future Publishing, 0225 442244
NEWSTRADE DISTRIBUTION
& OVERSEAS
MMC Ltd 0463 211222

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AMIGA FORMAT Specials
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW
Telephone 0225 442244
Facsimile 0225 446019
Subscriptions, Back Issues
and Mail Order
Future Publishing,
Somerton,
Somerset, TA11 6TB
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1. THE ARCADE DAYS

What was the first Amiga game? What was the first ever computer game, come to that? How have games changed over the years, and what will we see in years to come? Over the next ten pages, **Damien Noonan** answers all these questions and many more, kicking off with a look at the very first video games...

WHERE FROM, WHERE NOW?

The Real First Computer Game

Whatever the US might claim, it was Manchester University in the North of England that first ran both an electronic computer (1948) and a transistor-based computer (1953).

By the mid-Sixties many universities had mainframe computers and it was on these that the first games were created in the form of huge text-only adventure games.

Adventures didn't change radically, apart from static colour graphics to pretty them up, right up to the early days of the Amiga.

The first ever video game: 1972



Pong: not so much a smell as a way of wasting time and money in US bars.

Wasn't 1972 at all (see The Real First Arcade Game and The Real First Computer Game). But *Pong* was the first successful game and counts as where it all started.

Pong (named after ping-pong) was created when flares were still a happening trouser fashion, by a young electronics engineer called Nolan Bushnell. He had set up a firm called Atari to develop new technolo-

gies and sell them to big businesses.

Nobody, but nobody, could be persuaded to take on the crazy idea of a computerised game, so Bushnell traipsed round bars in his area of California asking them to give his machines a go. The first design fault soon emerged – the machines were so popular that the coin boxes were jammed full with silver dollars within a couple of hours.

In 1973, *Pong* arrived in the UK and a small-scale craze swept the country. Later versions added the concept of increasing difficulty – the ball speeded up as you went on.

Nolan Bushnell went on to create about 20 more ground-breaking games, including *Asteroids*, before selling Atari to Warner Brothers Communications in 1976. He now works with – Commodore!

The second video game: 1973



BreakOut: not so much a game as a historical concept-making, epochal er... thang.

Pong was succeeded by even more of a 'smash hit': *BreakOut* shifted the bat to the bottom of the screen and put blocks at the top. If the ball hit a block, it destroyed it – but if you let the ball drop off the bottom of the screen, you lost a life.

BreakOut was the first genuine one-player game, the first against-the-computer game and essentially it was also the first 'shooting things' game. And that's where it all started...

The first home video game: 1974

It wasn't until a couple of years later that video games boomed in the arcades, but the idea was building up popularity in the home. The early black-and-white home consoles by Mattel or Binatone had no software, they came with games 'built-in' (called hardwiring, tech freaks) and featured several variations on *Pong*. These included bat-and-ball games that had spurious connections with real sports such as squash, tennis, and even ice hockey.

These systems were status symbols for middle-class kids. So if you now see a working model at a car boot sale, grab it – it will soon be a collectors' item.

The cartridge console: 1977

It wasn't long before bat-and-ball consoles were superseded by systems into which you could plug a cartridge to choose which game you played. Bingo! The console as we know it today had arrived.

The first console was the Atari 2600, followed in 1978 by the Atari 400, which by 1982 was dominating the home video game market and, ironically, beginning to kill off the Atari-created arcade game scene.

The first great video game: 1978

Space Invaders. Need I say more?

The Japanese suddenly arrived – big style. This coin-op from Taito made arcade video games A Big Deal. By 1979 about 750,000 *Invaders* machines were in use across the world, 85,000 of them in the UK.

Costing 5p to play, it was in mono only,

THE REAL FIRST ARCADE GAME

"Legend has it that *Pong* was my first video game, in fact it was the second," says Nolan Bushnell. "The first was called *Computer Space*, which we licensed to another company. Not a great success, it had spaceships and flying saucers all over the screen and it didn't go down so well with the public. I then vowed that my next game would be something simple."

Ancient arcade games, swallowed 10p bits and led to crimewaves... not!

CLASSICS FOR YOUR AMIGA*

Lots of the real arcade classics are still heaps of fun and can be tracked down in bargain PD versions. To the near right we have *PacMan*. To the far right (upper) is the classic *Space Invaders*. To the far right (lower) is the boulder-bashing *Asteroids*. All of these screenshots are from the Public Domain of here and now. They all exist under other names

* Those other names are as follows: *Amoeba Invaders*, *Haemorrhoids*, *PacMan 87* and *Girl Actions* (*Galaxians*!) were all featured on Issue 27's *Amiga Format* Coverdisk, while the excellent *Defender* clone comes with *Amiga Power* issue 26.



The first home computer games: 1981 and 1982

The Atari 400 and 800 consoles went on sale in Britain in 1981, but suddenly home computers were here and cheap. The way was led by twisted genius Sir Clive Sinclair's infamous 'computer for the masses', the ZX-80, and Commodore's Vic-20. By 1982 the market was flooded with zillions of blatant rip-off versions of all the top arcade games. Whizz-kid programmers crashed their first Ferraris before they were 18, businesspeople bought Porsches in cash. The Software Industry was born...

The first arcade licence: 1983

It never really occurred to anyone that stealing someone else's game was wrong. Every time a new arcade machine appeared, rival firms took the cabinets apart and 'reverse engineered' their own versions.

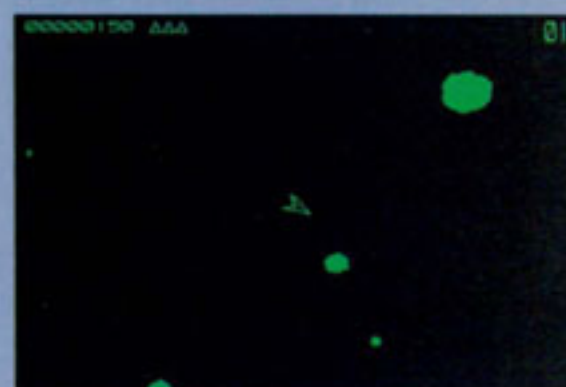
The same happened with home computer 'conversions' – blatant rip-offs of the arcade games, sometimes thinly disguised with a different name (*Planetoids*, *Space Intruders*, *Killer Gorilla*). In 1985 the Copyright Act was amended to take computer data into account, but even before that the big boys started to throw their weight around. So it was that legal licensing started in 1983, when Manchester-based arcade manufacturers Century Electronics sold the rights to their *Hunchback* game to Ocean for the Spectrum version and Superior Software for the BBC and Commodore versions.

The first classic originals, 1984

Although in the early days all home computer games were based on arcade machines, before long the whizz-kid talent honed on arcade rip-offs came up with new ideas and the Original Game was born.

Original games were almost exclusively British, whereas the arcade stuff came from Japan and America. These games were different – you could, indeed had to, sit down and play for hours, which simply wasn't possible in the arcade.

David Braben's wireframe 3D space-trading epic *Elite* (1984) was far and away the king, although Geoff Crammond's filled-3D race-driving simulation *Revs* (1985)



comes close. But by late 1985 the home computer market started to hit a slump: many of the boom-time software houses went bust. The arcades stole the limelight again.

After the troubles of the previous year, 1986 brought a slow pick-up in home game-playing, led by the cheap Amstrad CPC as well as by the Commodore 64, but it was still conversions of the latest arcade games that everyone wanted to buy. And then along came the Amiga...

THE FIRST FILM LICENCE? 1983

As far as we can establish, the first official film licence to make the video game screen was the *Star Wars* arcade machine – from Atari.

This not only featured astonishing wire-frame graphics to lovingly recreate the bombing of the Death Star, it was also the first to use sampled sound, with snatches of speech straight from the film – "Use the force, Luke!" – adding to the atmosphere.

Ever since, licence themes have been favourites – for home games more than for arcade machines – partly because shops could see the appeal and so would stock them. Films (first big hit on home computers was *Ghostbusters*, 1984), books (first ever deal was Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, 1983) and even TV programs (*Bullseye*, from 1983, was still selling strongly five years later!) sold loads.

Films, books and even TV shows made it to the arcades and then, inevitably on to the home computer.

2. AMIGA CLASSICS

So, when did the first Amiga game arrive, and what was it? What were the first generation of Amiga games like? Find out, as we explore the Amiga's glorious gaming history...

The Amiga arrives: 1986

Commodore created the very first 'personal computer' with the KIM1 in 1977, had one of the first successful home game machines with the Vic-20, then in 1982 unleashed the C64, which eventually became the world's



Where it all started; *Defender of the Crown*, the first Amiga game and also, three years later, the first game ever to be released on Compact Disc.

best-selling single model of computer, with sales to date of over 13 million.

What Commodore didn't do, however, was create the Amiga. The company bought it wholesale in the summer of 1984 from its designers Jay Miner, who designed the chips for the Atari 800 console, and RJ Mical, who had created arcade machines for Williams.

The Amiga 1000 was launched in June 1986. It had 256K of RAM and when it went on sale in the UK, it cost £1,256 with a single disk-drive. Typically, Commodore wasn't quite sure who to sell it to.

The IBM-PC had yet to dominate business, so the Amiga was pushed in that direction, but most of the software was graphics and music related. Mostly, it was bought by 'propeller-heads', enthusiasts with a fascination for desirable technology.

Formula 1 Grand Prix and (right) *Virus*: the 3D effect is a winner on the Amiga, it harks back the *Star Wars* and *BattleZone* arcade games.

The first Amiga game: June 1986

There are rival claims for this honour, with some parties claiming that the first game was *Brataccas*, but we reckon that the first Amiga game was *Defender of the Crown*, by Cinemaware in America. Like Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Paint*, it was created specifically for the Amiga 1000 to show off its 32-colour graphics and sampled stereo sound – hence the credit on the box: 'Computography by RJ Mical'. Awestruck punters, watching the game run at the A1000 launch, asked where the Laserdisc player was hidden.

The game also had a couple of other important 'firsts' – it was the first in the adventure/strategy genre with animated graphics, and the first with arcade-style action sections. Sadly the gameplay was a bit thin, but when beefed up for the Atari ST two years on, it became an excellent game.

The A500 arrives: March 1987

A year after Atari's 16-bit, 512K ST went on sale, Commodore released its rival, which would battle with the ST over the next three years. The Amiga 500, with 512K of RAM, the new Workbench 1.2 operating system and a Kickstart ROM to get it going, not only made the 256K, disk-booted A1000 look

puny, but also cost a fraction of the price at £499 (equivalent to about £620 today). A TV modulator to attach it to your telly cost £35.

Early Amiga games: 1986-7

With most A1000s selling to adult professionals in the States, the first generation of Amiga games followed the same path that PC games were to tread – they were almost entirely adventures. The second generation arrived with the A500 and brought many more arcade-style action games.

Surprisingly, there were a lot of Amiga games about: if you were considering getting an A500 for Christmas 1987, you already had about 90 titles to choose from. Let's have a look at the kind of things you would have been playing back then.

Naturally, there were those American adventures, still text-based, but decorated with lots of pretty pictures. Infocom already had a massive 25 titles on sale, with the dungeon-style *Zork* series and the deeply silly *Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* book-licence standing out. The *Ultima* series from MicroProse was later rivalled by the *King's Quest* series from Sierra – all are still big names in 'adult' games.

British adventurers *Level 9* and *Magnetic Scrolls* were making a name for themselves as were increasingly-graphic adventures such as *Jewels of Darkness* and *Guild of Thieves*, on British Telecom's Rainbird label. And Icom, via Mirrorsoft, broke ground with *Deja-Vu*, the first icon-driven adventure game. A couple of outstanding non-adventure titles again showed a pattern that IBM

THE 3D GAME

It's no coincidence that the two great classic computer originals, *Elite* and *Revs*, both used 3D systems. Using the technique, David Braben and Geoff Crammond were able to do what the coin-op machines never had: create a believable fantasy world inside the computer.

Those games on the BBC and Incentive's *Freescape* series (*Driller*, *Total Eclipse* and *Dark Side*) on the 8-bit machines proved that 3D worked on the older models, but the Amiga made the solid 3D technique its own. Between 1987 and 1989 in particular, it seemed that every truly innovative and original game to appear was in 3D.

Braben's *Virus*, Crammond's *The Sentinel*, Argonaut's *Starglider 2*, Realtime's *Carrier Command*, Paul Carruthers' *Archipelagos* – all were strange, original and in filled 3D.

And that's before you start on the sims: classic flight sims from *Interceptor* to *Falcon MiG-29 Fulcrum*, *F-29 Retaliator*, *F-16 Combat Pilot* and *F-19 Stealth Fighter*, driving sims from the arcade style of *Stunt Car Racer* to the ultra-realism of *Indianapolis 500* and, finally,

back where we started – the 1992,

Amiga-ised *Revs* – *Formula One Grand Prix*. Soon we'll have *Elite 2* and we can all pretend it's 1984 again.

It's only in the last couple of years that the 3D thing has died out a bit. Perhaps we've all seen one flight sim too many? All the same, 3D might be very important for the next stage of game development. But I'll leave that for the bit about the future of games...

PC games would later follow – mature titles for intelligent players, produced by large American programming teams. *Chessmaster 2000* and *Flight Simulator II* were both beautifully constructed, both cost £45 on import, and both were still critics' favourites a year later, as was Microsoft's nuclear-age political strategy game *Balance of Power*.

By contrast, the early arcade action titles which arrived with the A500 in 1987 were pretty crap. The big-name publishers weren't committed to the Amiga yet, so small firms dived in to gain a head start. The games were exclusively re-hashes of earlier arcade or 8-bit games and relied on the sex appeal of 32-colour graphics rather than any depth of that essential quality, gameplay.

Germans Ariolasoft, with *Marble Madness* and *Archon* among their releases, and London-based Anco, with games such as *Karate King* at a high-value £9.99, were typical sources. Psygnosis, too, got in early with *Barbarian* in September 1987 setting a pattern for the sort of graphically strong arcade adventure that made its name.

In this context, the few half-way decent arcade games available got more than their share of praise. Rainbird's wireframe-3D shoot-em-up *Starglider* and US Gold's first foray into the Amiga market, the excellent golf game *Leaderboard*, were both 'must buy' names for the earliest Amiga owners.

Arcades to 3D, 8-bit to 16: 1987-8

Christmas 1987, and once more the all-important games-buying season was dominated by 8-bit arcade conversions. US Gold's *Out Run* coin-op licence, a pretty average driving game, sold in excess of 200,000 copies. It wasn't available on ST until six months later and didn't reach the Amiga until 1988.

By March 1988, Commodore claimed to have shifted 25-30,000 Amigas in the UK, but it was way behind the Atari ST and even the ST wasn't popular enough for most games publishers to support it. Big-name licence releases like *Bubble Bobble* and *Gary Lineker's Football* had no Amiga versions, while Nigel Mansell's *Grand Prix* (yes, five years ago!) wasn't even on the ST, never mind the Amiga.

During the course of 1988, though, four major developments were happening that would change the face of gaming.

First of all, publishers started deciding that Amiga versions of successful 8-bit titles would be worthwhile. In May 1988 *Bubble Bobble* finally appeared for the Amiga and was followed by *Wizball*, *Super Sprint*, *Tetris* and a *BreakOut* clone called *Impact* in June, by the *Super Mario* rip-off *Great Giana Sisters* and *Buggy Boy* in July, *Thundercats* and *Scrabble* in August, and *Nebulus* in

THE KIND OF GAME WE ALL WANT TO PLAY?



What is the ultimate Amiga game? If you were allowed to have only one, what would it be? Well, it would probably be an arcade action game, and for many a long year you would have picked a shoot-em-up.

Let's have no arguments at the back, there, you would!

It all started in September 1987. In those days, the Amiga wasn't just good enough to do good arcade conversions, it was good enough to actually be an arcade machine!



Mastertronic signed a deal with Commodore reputedly worth several million pounds to put Amiga vitals into a cabinet with games running from chip cartridge: it was called the Arcadia system.

So it was that the first great shoot-em-up for the Amiga arrived in the arcades and on home machines at the same time: The Bitmap Brothers' *Xenon*, in March 1988. From then on, shoot-em-ups were considered to be the ultimate in action games.

There were horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-ups, vertically-scrolling shoot-em-ups and shoot-em-ups that scrolled in all directions at once. Ma and Pa of them all was the *R-Type* coin-op which hit the arcades for Christmas 1987. Top Amiga programmers made their debut by writing a shoot-em-up:

Bullfrog arrived with *Fusion* in November 1988, and Dave Jones came up with *Menace* the very same month.

Amiga *R-Type* and its superior German clone, *Denaris*, arrived in early 1989. The latter was long considered to be the best Amiga game there was, even though legal action from Taito, makers of the former, made it a little tricky to obtain.

Shoot-em-ups had trends, first massive power-ups were de rigueur, then you had to have a shop to buy them in. DMA Design brought us *Blood Money* in April 1989, which for several months was every would-be alien-basher's fave rave, then The Bitmap Brothers kept up with Dave Jones by releasing the excellent *Xenon 2* in September.

And, somehow, that sort of killed off the trend for shoot-em-ups. Dave Jones went away and invented *Lemmings* and the next time a shoot-em-up came out, everyone realised they'd seen it all before. You could probably think of a dozen released since then, but nobody really cared.

Some still stick in the mind, particularly Team 17's homage to the genre, *Mindless Alien Blasting*. But the *Space Invaders* derivatives had run out of steam, and the cute colourful arcade licence was here instead.

Bubble Bobble had started it all, *New Zealand Story* did a whole lot more damage. But the one that broke the mould was *Rainbow Islands*. Most people would still

argue that the conversion by Graftgold is the best game ever on the Amiga.

Now, of course, we have *Zool AGA* and a revitalised *Robocod*, waving the banner of the pure arcade game on the CD32.

Same stuff,

slightly more scrolly wrapper. Fashions have moved games slightly towards console role-models, the hardware and programming

have got better, and games have more colours and more speed. But underneath all of this, you're left with the all important gameplay, or lack of it.

Is there a future for this genre? Can anyone do any better? Well, all that CD storage won't make much difference to the arcade game. Who cares? We love 'em!



DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

November. All of them were ready-made classics, now with the Amiga's added style.

Secondly most of the major programming talent of 8-bit days now turned its hand to the 16-bits and came up with some astounding stuff. David

Braben's *Virus* appeared mid-way through 1988, Geoff Crammond's *The Sentinel* came in July and Tony Crowther, John Ritman and Jeff Minter co-operated for *Bombuzal* in November 1988.

Thirdly, new talent started appearing with, seemingly, the shoot-em-up as its training ground. The Bitmap Brothers, Dave Jones's DMA Design, and Bullfrog arrived in 1988. All of them programmed on the Amiga.

Fourthly, there was massive innovation. On the technical side, this was particularly in the 3D game. In

September 1988 both Argonaut's *Starglider 2* and Realtime's *Carrier Command* arrived, both 3D classics. On the conceptual side, it was mainly in the increasingly animated adventure genre, dominated then and now by the Americans. Cinemaware's *Rocket Ranger* in November 1988 once more showed the way ahead for the Amiga.

Another advantage the Amiga had at the time was a number of games you couldn't play on its rival, the ST. In May 1988 a race game from Electronic Arts called *Ferrari Formula One* offered unrivalled realism, and a top-notch arcade game called *Bonecruncher* appeared, with gorgeous graphics but packed with gameplay. Not on the ST.

Then in June 1988 came *The Big One* – a flight simulator by Electronic Arts called *Interceptor*. Quite remarkable from start to finish and totally unavailable on other formats, this game sold more Amigas than anything Commodore did.

The same month, the Amiga 500 was dropped in price to compete equally with the ST at £399 and a magazine called *ST/Amiga Format* was launched. A happy Christmas was in store...

Christmas 1988

For those gorgeous Christmas sales in (software houses love Xmas-tide) 1988, though, it was back to big-name arcade coin-op licences backed by big advertising budgets – the ultimate shoot-em-up in *R-Type*, and lesser efforts in *Thunderblade*, *Operation Wolf* and *Afterburner*.

It's a sign of the times that since then, very few coin-op conversions have been competing for the Christmas top slot. I can think of only two: *Hard Drivin'* from Atari in 1991, which was rare in being a 3D coin-op and turned out to be a pretty dire conversion, and 1992's *Streetfighter 2*.

The reason goes back to those 1987 and 1988 coin-ops. All the game ideas had been done before and 16-bit computers were well able to compete on graphics, so the arcade machines turned to physical gadgetry – *Afterburner* had the 'rock and roll' hydraulic cabinet, *Operation Wolf* featured its plastic machine gun, and the original *Streetfighter* was operated by air-filled rubber punch-bags. *Streetfighter 2* may have had about 14 fire buttons, but at least it was a standard stick-and-buttons system.

Instead, the big-name Christmas games have mostly been film or TV tie-ins: *Batman* in 1989, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* in 1990, *WWF Wrestling* in 1991. Sadly, and with *Batman* being a notable exception, they've mostly stuck to the time-honoured tradition of taking the money, in exchange for pretty poor games.

Milestones in 1989

January 1989 finally brought us the Amiga translation of *Elite*, February continued with the arcade games in *Super Hang-On* and *Demaris*, a blatant *R-Type* clone. Both the latter showed how Amiga programmers could now do perfect coin-op clones.

The same month TV Sports Football, the greatest of Cinemaware's sports releases, arrived. Cinemaware was trying to build a system in which Amiga graphics could be replaced with real video footage. It made a great game, and it's a milestone for the potential development of CD games nowadays. Similarly, that month saw the first translation of a Laserdisc-based coin-op in *Dragon's Lair* – more lessons for the future, in how gameplay should not be sacrificed for graphic beauty.

March that year brought more milestones for game development, with two of only a few totally original game concepts the Amiga has ever seen – *Populous* and the Amiga version of *Dungeon Master*. It also saw the release of the first of Lucasfilm's great arcade adventures in *Zak McKracken*, with attractive animated graphics and using the keyword system, where all the options were there on the screen.

April showered on us *Blood Money*, Dave Jones's perfectly formed shoot-em-up, and *Battlehawks 1942*, a very accessible flight sim (again from Lucasfilm). July 1989 brought the first ever issue of *Amiga Format* (hurray!) and the amazing *Kick Off*, along with the continued development of 3D in *Powerdrome* and the first stunning Amiga arcade game, the cutesy *New Zealand Story*.

September saw the Bitmaps' *Xenon 2*, with its amazing Bomb the Bass soundtrack, so more or less rounding off the Age Of The Shoot-em-up, and the most realistic flight sim yet in *F-16 Combat Pilot*. By October, *Shadow of the Beast* finally proved firstly, that the Amiga's graphics were now in a class of their own, and secondly, that this is no excuse for inadequate gameplay.

In November 1989 the 200,000th Amiga 500 was sold and *Interphase* was released, arguably bringing the Age Of The Original 3D Game to a close. It was accompanied by the rather outstanding strategy game *Laser Squad*, the best Amiga film licence ever in *Batman*, the return of Geoff Crammond with *Stunt Car Racer* and another genuinely inno-

14

STUNT CAR RACER

POPULOUS

SIM CITY

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

The first Amiga game; and the first in a series in which Cinemaware prepared for the eventual arrival of CD – a massive seven years later!

INTERCEPTOR

The first game out only on Amiga which everyone else wanted, the first classic flight sim and the representative of the first generation of filled 3D.

POPULOUS

One of only two games that started a genre and were programmed on the Amiga.

SIM CITY

Railroad Tycoon and *Civilization* are classics of the strategy genre, but this was there first.

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX

The marker for when original games came full circle, as well as the finest piece of 3D programming yet achieved. The camera replays and views are stunning.

MAGNETIC SCROLLS COLLECTION

This amusing little number packages an enormous quantity of the original Amiga games – text-only adventures, would you believe, as well as graphic adventures. Delightful stuff.

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND(s)

It wasn't the first, even, to be presented in this way by Lucasfilm – *Zak McKracken*, *Loom* and *Indiana Jones* came before it – but it made thousands of people realise that adventures could be fun. Superb.

vative game, the strange strategy of *Sim City*. The *Batman* pack which Commodore put together for Christmas 1989 is widely credited with finally making the Amiga the UK's top-selling computer. By November 1990, Commodore claimed a user base of half a million machines in this country.

Slow progress in 1990 and 1991

1990 will be remembered above all for the release of *Rainbow Islands*, the perfect conversion of the perfect arcade game, in April, and the announcement of the CDTV in June.

It also brought us a few steady strides of advancement: adventures *Captive* and *Loom* in September, a 3D race-driving game that set a modern standard called *Indianapolis 500* in November and the first console-style arcade game, *James Pond*, that same month.

If only we'd realised how important that nod in the direction of consoles would prove to be. Over the next couple of years, the whole atmosphere of gaming was to be changed by pressure from two directions: the cutesy, colourful arcade influence of the consoles and the depth and size of PC games. Already, the Amiga had passed a watershed. Developers were thinking of what would sell on Sega, Nintendo and PC.

January 1991 arrived and with it *Spindizzy Worlds* – the end of the era for translating classic 8-bit ideas into a 16-bit environment. And, of course, there was *Lemmings* – a rare, stunning, genuinely original idea and yet another great game to be actually programmed on the Amiga.

Railroad Tycoon in February and *PGA Tour Golf* in March both betrayed the influence of the growing PC (larger amounts of RAM were called for!). Commodore had decided that the 1Mb Amiga 500 was here to stay – all A500s would be sold with a free RAM expansion. And the last of the first era of great shoot-em-ups was released – anyone remember *SWIV*?

The astonishing *Secret of Monkey Island* appeared in May, perfectly blending all the animated adventure ideas that Lucasfilm had been working on so hard. That same month the Bitmaps' *Gods* proved that the Amiga was now the system to have, while *Cybercon 3*'s failure to sell proved that origi-

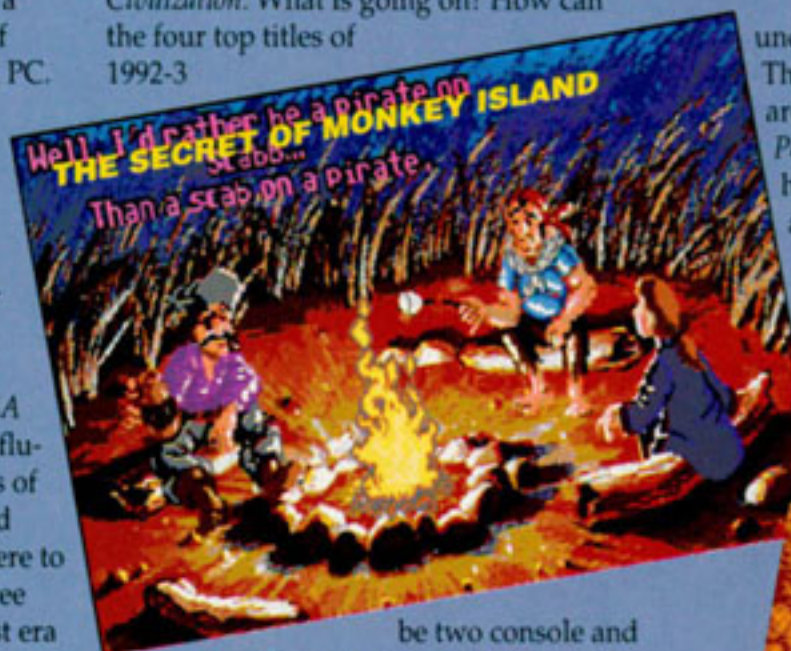
nal 3D games had lost their following.

Christmas 1991 was probably the peak of original Amiga games. *Eye of the Beholder*, *Jimmy White's Snooker*, *First Samurai* and *Robocod* vied for the place of top title. Unfortunately, if you were buying an Amiga you'd probably get given the new A500 Plus, with Workbench 2 – and you couldn't be sure which of those would run on it!

Only last year...

Just missing the Christmas market, 1992 kicked off with *Formula One Grand Prix* – Geoff Crammond doing what he does best, producing a *Revs* for the Amiga. No 3D simulation before or since has equalled it for technical excellence or quality of gameplay. February brought another step on for the arcade adventure with Delphine's *Another World*, March saw the Amiga 600. Now we had an Amiga that wanted to be a console.

Since then, the Amiga's position of supremacy has been dubious. Of the five outstanding games of last year, only one was an Amiga game, *Wizkid*, and that was an 8-bit throwback. Of the other four, two were console games – *Zool* and *Putty* – and two were PC games – *Monkey Island 2* and *Civilization*. What is going on? How can the four top titles of 1992-3



be two console and two PC games? Well, on the arcade side it's a matter of presentation. Arcade games haven't really changed a lot over the years, but the way they look has. Fashions change with circumstances.

In the early days of the Amiga, the shoot-em-up was where it was at. Eventually shoot-em-ups went about as far as they could, and it was the colourful, cutesy style that took over, with *Rainbow Islands* remaining the archetypal game for several years. *Zool*, *Putty* and *Robocod* aren't a million miles away, but in the last couple of years *Sonic* and *Mario* have had an undue influence on fashions and so it's 'console-beating' games that are in vogue rather than the arcade-influenced style.

It's a similar story with the PC-style games: neither adventures nor strategy games are a new idea, but it's the degree of excellence in the presentation that has opened them up to a wide market. Developing for the PC, you can rely on having a hard drive available and use 256-colour screens. But now the CD³² and

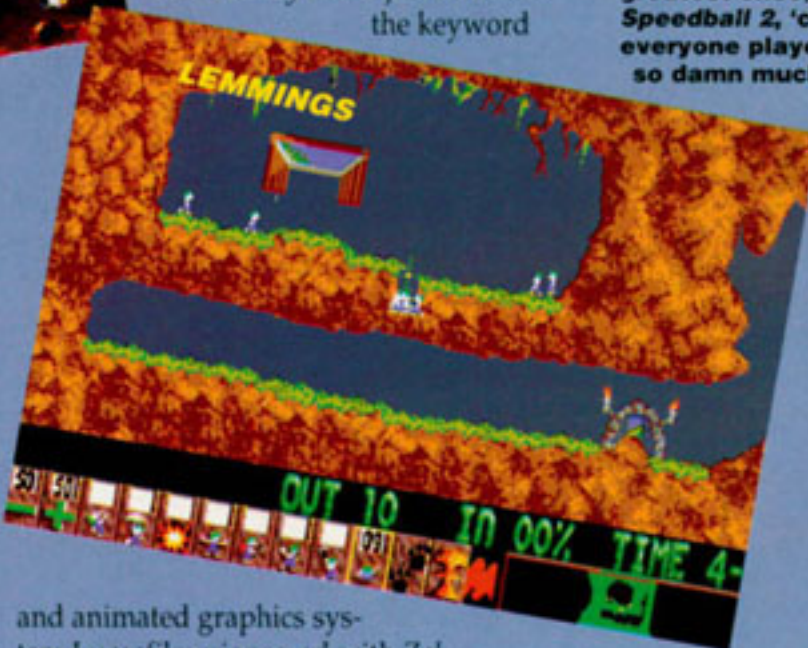


the A1200 can use 256-colour screens – and who needs a hard drive when you've got a CD...?

That's seven years of Amiga games, gone in a few pages. What have we learnt?

Well, firstly, that there's been plenty of unmemorable games. Over those seven years, there's probably been the best part of 2,000 games released for the Amiga. How many do you recall?

Secondly, there's nothing new under the sun. Or very little, anyway. There's probably only two games that are genuinely ground-breaking: *Populous* and *Lemmings*. Those apart, it had all been done before the Amiga arrived. *Dungeon Master* and *Monkey Island* both stand out as milestones, but both are the very oldest form of game, the adventure, dating back to the Sixties. They weren't even innovators: *DM* didn't invent icon control (that was *Deja-Vu*, in 1987) and *Monkey Island* just followed the keyword



and animated graphics system Lucasfilm pioneered with *Zak McKracken*.

In some ways, it's appropriate that we're almost back where we started. Arcade conversions for fun: then in 1984 and 1985, original games, with *Elite* creating a virtual world and *Revs* simulating the real one. Now we have console-style games that knock the pants off arcade conversions, we have *FIGP* instead of *Revs* and soon we'll have David Braben's *Elite 2*. So now we can make a new start. CD, here we come...

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Stuff that ought to be in our Historical Top Ten, but isn't...

Kick Off, for bringing us a footy game as fast, frantic and wildly unpredictable as the real thing; **PGA Tour Golf** and **Links**, because they have to be there (and should be on CD with 'real video' graphics); **Spindizzy Worlds**, **Wizkid** and **Nebulus** for proving that classic 8-bit puzzle-plus-action gameplay was even better on the Amiga; **Blood Money**, **Denaris**, **Xenon II** and **SWIV**, because shoot-em-ups really were the greatest once; and **Speedball 2**, 'cos everyone played it so damn much...

TANT GAMES

DUNGEON MASTER

The first icon-driven adventure presented entirely graphically and with 3D views: an important game for the future.

LEMMINGS

The only other (with *Populous*) 100 per cent original Amiga idea. One of the most stunningly successful ideas ever!

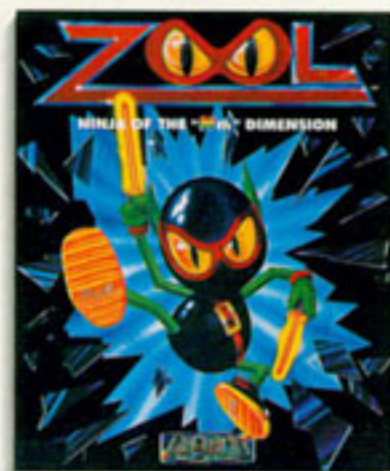
RAINBOW ISLANDS

For so long, this was considered the best game on the Amiga, that we could hardly ignore it now. A milestone of achievement only in that it proved that anything the arcades could do, the Amiga could do too!

serious

amiga games

from the people who take the
amiga seriously



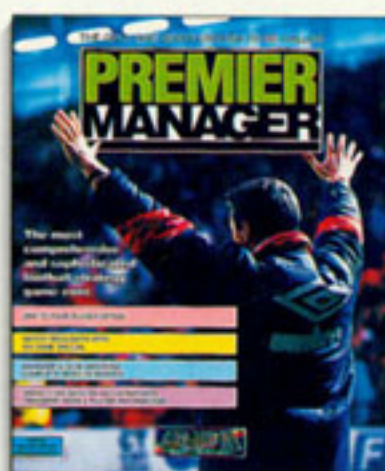
ZOOL®

The Ninja from the 'Nth' Dimension who is so incredible, so awesome and so big he has rocked the games world and turned it upside down.



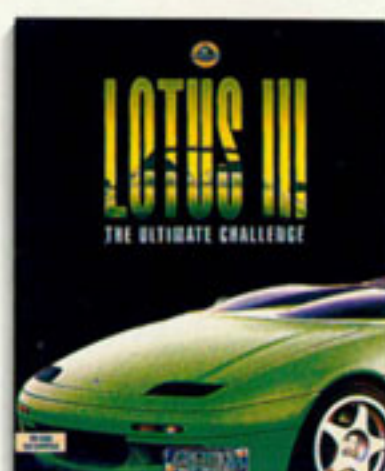
MANSELL

A team made up of the most exciting racing driver in the world and the greatest racing game producers bring to you the definitive Grand Prix experience.



PREMIER MANAGER

Make the right decisions and you'll share in the fame and fortune of a Premier Manager. Get it wrong and you're stuck with a bunch of part timers... it's all down to you!



LOTUS III

Once behind the wheel of a fantastic high performance Lotus Sports car you'll terrify yourself in one of the meanest and fastest head to head racing games ever.

MORE HITS FOR AMIGA ADDICTS OUT SOON:

ZOOL 2
DISPOSABLE HERO
LEGACY OF SORAS
PREMIER MANAGER
KIT VICIOUS
K240

ALSO OUT SOON ON CD32 FOR THE FANATICS:

ZOOL
LOTUS TRILOGY

When it comes to the hottest games for your collection, choose the people that won their spurs in Amiga. Gremlin specialise in this classic format, and boy does it show - in the advanced graphics, addictive gameplay and charismatic characters. Add to this a range of titles that reads like a Who's Who of computer game superstars, and Amiga buffs know there's only one name to take seriously. Gremlin.



3. INTO THE FUTURE



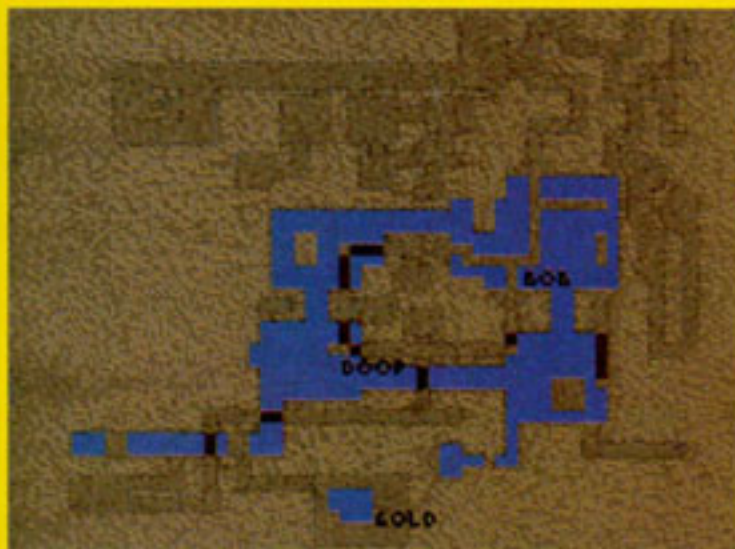
As early as 1988 we had real video digitised in to Amiga games: this is Psygnosis' *Carl Lewis* licence from 1992, but it's based on the *Daley Thompson* game of four years previously. This is an obvious direction for CD games to take.

Taking the technique further is *Links* (right), US Gold's golf sim in which real video footage of the courses was digitised and used as scenery blocks in what is essentially a 3D environment. The problems with the original A500 *Links* – lack of speed and vast disk space needed – would both be solved by CD³², with its faster processor and CD storage.



SO HOW DO WE GET REALISTIC GRAPHICS?

CD can offer us the chance to use very large amounts of digitised graphics, but there is a problem. It can only store these graphics as frames of animation. That animation can be used for sprites if memory allows, or backgrounds, but it has limitations. Imagine if you want to put digitised



real graphics in a flight sim, for example: you'd need a lot of footage!

The solution is to extend the idea of *Links* – using digitised or drawn bitmaps to add detail to a 3D world. The best way is 'texture mapping', a technique that plasters flat images on to the surfaces of 3D objects. This technique needs lots of processor power and is already used in PC games: an example is the fractal-3D method used in *Comanche* (above left). An almost identical method was used to take the *Dungeon Master* style of game a step ahead in the fabulous *Ultima Underworld* (left). This pioneered the use of texture-mapped 3D to build the walls, giving a realistic view in which the walls of the dungeon scroll past you as you explore.

Now the seriously important bit: what happens next?

We asked top game developers Dave Jones (*Lemmings*), Peter Molyneux (*Populous*), Andy Braybrook (*Rainbow Islands*) and Steve Kelly of the Bitmaps what they think is in store for us...

So the question in all our minds is – games: what happens next? At the moment, with the A1200 and the CD32, there's a huge jump in technology that will push games forward, and everyone's talking about what's on the way as a consequence.

In the studio tonight, I have with me four of Britain's (and, indeed, the world's) most respected game developers. In a moment, they'll be discussing where they think games are heading. But first, let's pinpoint a few of the main areas of discussion.

Everyone's talking about the immense storage of CD bringing a new kind of epic game with heaps of sound and graphics, usually referred to as the interactive movie style. There's much talk about Hollywood's involvement, Schwarzenegger's latest, *Last Action Hero*, being one of several recent big-name movies for which extra sequences have been shot so they can make an interactive, computer game version.

★ A lot of things have to change, to stop games being put in this trendy niche ★

One option is that games will be filmed using real actors, the scenes digitised in and constructed into a game. This has already been done with a CD-based adventure out last year, Icom's *Sherlock Holmes – Consulting Detective*. Similarly, Cinemaware's whole ethic for games such as *TV Sports Football* and *Defender of the Crown* was that the Amiga graphics could eventually be replaced by digital video instead.

Naturally games would need the millions of dollars that movies cost, instead of a few thousand. The idea is that extra popularity leads to extra sales to cover this cost, so games would have an equivalent audience to films. This is why big-name firms are moving in on games developers, as in the recent Sony buy-out of Psygnosis.

AMIGA OK!

Because anyone can develop a game for the Amiga without paying a licence fee, CD³² has a head start.

COMMENT

Steve Kelly
Bitmap Bros
"Most developers will tell you that the 68000 is a dream to work on. And the nice thing about the Amiga is that you don't have to get approval from a firm that doesn't necessarily know how a good game plays."

COMMENT

Dave Jones
DMA Design
"The Amiga's great as an open market. And it's not really so nice to work for people like Sega and Nintendo..."

COMMENT

Andy Braybrook
Graftgold
"We're a bit worried about Commodore's financial situation."

COMMENT

Peter Molyneux
Bullfrogs
"One major problem is the things you use to play the games, which are so unfriendly and artificial. The biggest leap possible would be proper speech recognition."

COMMENT
Peter Molyneux

"A game has to alter to reflect the way the person plays. Most games nowadays are simply too hard, like *Zool* – it just puts people off completely if they can't get anywhere straight away."

A mass-market level of popularity suggests that you need a common platform – no single games system is currently popular enough to bring that kind of audience. This could be provided when, as is about to happen, digital video on CD arrives. The CD³² is supposed to have an MPEG1 digital video add-on available for it by Christmas at £200.

The movie-style ethic suggests realistic graphics and this is another major growth area, particularly in sports games and in simulations such as flight and driving sims, where digitised graphics have already made a showing in the past.

★ One opinion is that CD is good simply because it's like having a massive great hard drive ★

COMMENT
Dave Jones

"I'm quite impressed by CD³². I think if Commodore now gets its act together for the next step, it could be well up there."

One last comment, as you'll know if you've read the last four pages on the history of Amiga games, in the early days with its 32 colours and solid 3D, the Amiga was at the vanguard of games technology. For the last

We already have some excellent examples of how NOT to do the interactive movie style of game. *Dragon's Lair* (above, main picture) was originally a Laserdisc coin-op in 1984, the idea being that enormous quantities of cartoon animation by Disney rival Don Bluth would more or less mean you didn't have to bother with gameplay. It and its sequels (*Space Ace* and... erm... the other forgettable one) sold well in their many-disk Amiga versions, but the minimal gameplay – along the lines of 'when the scene switches to the next screen, pull right on the joystick, but time it wrong and your dead' – won it no friends.

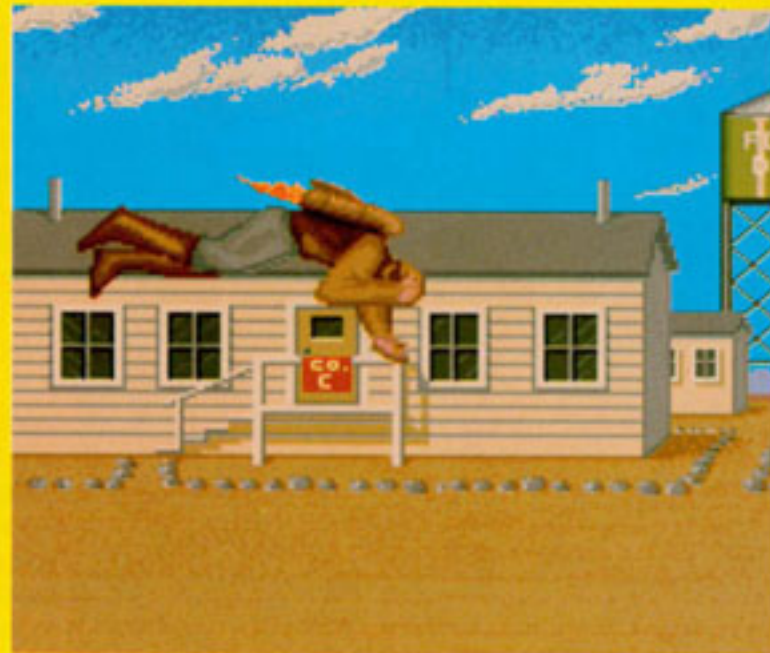
Similarly, *The Case of the Cautious Condor* (above, inset) was designed to show off the graphic wonders of the Japanese CD-based FM Towns computer, it won lots of awards in 1991, but when it came out for CDTV we discovered that it had barely any gameplay worth the name. Still, it had a 20-minute cartoon intro.



There is, however, cause for hope. It's no accident that Lucasfilm (makers of *Star Wars*) got involved in games, and its whole series of adventures, including the *Indiana Jones* film licences and the amazing *Monkey Island* (below left), show clearly how film-making techniques could supply the visuals and the sound, while the interaction is handled by a system carefully crafted over a good many years of experience.

There's more cause for optimism from Cinemaware, whose arcade-adventure style was developed to fit movie themes and make it possible to do them as movie-style games at a later date. *Defender of the Crown*, *Rocket Ranger*, *It Came from the Desert* and *Wings* all prove Cinemaware had the right ideas. Sadly, the company had the plug pulled by its backers only a couple of years ago, just as their time was all set to come...

COULD INTERACTIVE MOVIES WORK?



Yes, it's that time again when you read another caption about the great and wonderful *Secret of Monkey Island* (above left). We know, it's like some boring football buff yawning on about how great some 1970s alcoholic striker was, but (like that unnamed striker, who was the best in his field) *SOMI* was groundbreaking in both looks, sound and gameplay. *Rocket Ranger* (above right) tried hard on the graphics front, but was quickly forgotten.



intros, lots of music. That's the way we're going with the CD *Chaos Engine*. Dan's doing a lot of work on intro graphics, we're doing a lot of work on sound. It all gives the CD version plenty of extra value.

"We can't dive straight in to adding 50 extra levels, or anything like that. And we won't be doing a 7th *Guest* (a massive PC CD game from Virgin - it comes on two CDs!).

Andy Braybrook, creator of the Amiga *Rainbow Islands* and now known as 'The man who killed pop music', agrees. "The possibilities are good just for extending games: in adventure games, bigger map sizes, more locations; in arcade games, more levels, more sounds, more graphics. But these are what you could call 'two-dimensional' sorts of things. I don't see so much potential in what you might call the third dimension, to actually change gameplay much."

Andy's also not totally convinced it's the miracle medium everyone claims it is. He explains: "I'm a bit worried about CD from the fragility point of view. My CD at home gets a bit of dust on a disc and it goes haywire! Still, we've been using it and it seems to work OK. Yeah, they must have plenty of error-checking."

But won't the amount of data CD uses be hard work to deal with? "It makes the librarian side of things a nightmare! If you imagine, it's like having a stack of 600 floppy disks to keep track of," says Andy.

Hard work indeed. But useful for certain types of game, as Steve Kelly points out. "For PC-style stuff, *Wing Commander* and so on, that already comes on about 15 HD floppies it'll be ideal." And an awful lot cheaper to make than all those floppies.

couple of years it hasn't been, because PCs with more colours (256 in VGA mode) and faster processors (25MHz is now considered a minimum) have stolen a march. This has led to one very important technique appearing in PC games - this is Texture-Mapping in 3D games.

What this does is fill in surface detail on the blank polygons of a 3D game. In a flight sim, for example, it means you can put clouds in the sky and fields on to the ground. The other important use has been to give the *Dungeon Master* style of game a view down a 3D corridor which you can actually move along, the walls scrolling past you as you go. It's pretty cool.

So, now, we're prepared for the debate ahead. Over to the panel, to get their opinions on what will happen next for games...

Starting with CD

First of all, is the use of CD a good thing in itself? Most developers see it as being a good financial choice for the publishers, but of less relevance to them. "For a delivery medium it's ideal, but I don't think it's going to revolutionise games the way some people suggest," offers Dave Jones of DMA.

The majority opinion is that arcade-style games will not change vastly, only adding a few 'extra value' enhancements. Steve Kelly, representing The Bitmap Brothers: "One of the strains of opinion is that CD is a good thing simply because it's like having a massive great hard drive. That makes it possible to have lots more graphics and sound, big

At the movies

So, no-one seems to want to rush out and produce an interactive movie. What about those, chaps?

Over to Boss Bullfrog, Pete Molyneux. He agrees on the need to move to a mass market, but not on the way to do it. "If games don't start appealing to a broader range of people, the games industry is going to fall into the same category as toys. New machines should give us a chance to start involving the whole family."

"Games must start developing away from the arcades, become more complex and more realistic. A lot of things have to change to stop games being this trendy niche."

"If interactive movies really are the coming thing, then God knows who's going to write them. If it takes Hollywood that much effort to come up with a film that we all want to watch, something like *Jurassic Park*, then a game we all want to play will take hugely much more effort. You've got to script for all possible eventualities. If, for



Andy Braybrook

★ The A1200 is a big improvement, so we should see some pretty good stuff using its extra welly ★

instance, in *Aliens* the player decides that Ripley will not go to the planet where everything's going to happen and chooses to stay at home and feed the cat instead, you've got to account for that. And then you've got to find some way of forcing Ripley to go.

"Yet you don't want a level of complexity where the player can choose to do anything - being able to look at a glass that's lying around on a table is pretty dull, because it's just a glass."

"So the problems with it aren't really to do with programming, they're more to do with content. Interactive movies would probably be very boring or very contrived."

Andy Braybrook recalls the only real example we've had of this kind of thing before, the highly attractive but only slightly interactive cartoon on a Laserdisc, Don Bluth's *Dragon's Lair*. "You tend to lose the interactivity. I don't think it's a step forwards for the person playing. But I think there will be a new kind of game... not necessarily a game, even, perhaps an 'entertainment' of some kind..."

So we can see that the linear plot of movies would be tricky to adapt. If that's not the direction, then, what is? Peter Molyneux has an idea. "More the direction will be the creation of worlds inside a computer, more like simulations, so that you can interact with everything. To do that properly, you need a lot more power. In *Syndicate* we've tried to do something a bit like that but you can only process about 600 people before the whole thing grinds to a halt. So to do this kind of thing properly, you'll need about a hundred times the kind of processing power we've currently got."

★ Any type of game can be done with 3D, and done better - it's the ideal way ★

An aspect of the interactive movie that does impress the developers is that of more realistic graphics. To Peter Molyneux this is vital if games are to widen their appeal.

"You and I switch on a game and we think 'Yeah, that's a computer game', but someone who's never seen one before switches on and the visual aspect puts them

MULTI-PLAYER GAMES

Dave Jones

"One other thing that's going to be very big is multi-player games."

Peter Molyneux

"The other thing that's definitely going to happen, already is in the US and Japan, is that you'll have games where you can play against anyone else in the country."

In Japan, they've built a housing estate where all the houses are linked on one games system (*Sounds like the Stepford Gamers... worried ed*), so if you get home from work and fancy a game of baseball you can log on and find someone who wants to play against you. Playing against a human is much, much better than against a computer (*oh, right, comforted ed*).

IN DEVELOPMENT

Dave Jones

"Currently most development is programmer-driven, but that won't stay the same. They'll be much lower down the scale. Designers will do all the work. Games are always going to be pretty lengthy projects."

Peter Molyneux

"The way it's going is towards big companies developing formula-type games that they know will work, like Hollywood, where they keep re-making the same blockbuster movies."

"I can say with absolute confidence that every single developer has had an offer. And people like Sony have an enormous amount of money."

Andy Braybrook

"We've got 16 or 17 working here now - in the US they often have 30 in a team working on just one project!"

WE DEMAND QUALITY!

The Amiga CD³² and A1200 – two very excellent machines indeed. As games expand to fit the new technology, we have every right to expect constant improvements. But will it happen that way? No! They'll try to fob us off with dross like *Microcosm*!

So what are we going to do about it? Well, here's what: a list of demands that cannot be ignored! Ten simple points that define the future of good gaming!

The AFS Manifesto

1. WE DEMAND... GAMEPLAY GETS PRIORITY!

It seems obvious to say, but it isn't. Whenever new, advanced machinery appears, you tend to get games that show off how great they look, but forget you need a game in there too. *Microcosm* is the perfect example – looks bloody marvellous, but plays like a very aged shoot-em-up.

Of particular concern is the interactive movie game style. We've seen disastrous attempts at this before, such as *Dragon's Lair*. We know that movie licences will sell even if the game's god-awful – just remember them *Turtles* (Bluuurgh!). But it's not good enough.

All the hard work has already been done on how to make games of this kind work – simply look at *Monkey Island* or the Cinemaware games for proof. We need to see commitment to that kind of quality. All it takes is a little respect from the software houses for their customers. You!

2. WE DEMAND... FULL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

We can have 256-colour graphics. We can have full, studio-recorded hi-fi soundtracks. We know we can: it's been done already. So is there any excuse for fobbing us off with less? Or, indeed, for boasting about games having these features when we ought to be able to expect them as standard? No!

We want to be able to show off our Amiga games to envious console-owning acquaintances (or complete strangers!). Why not? After all, software sells machines!

3. WE DEMAND... FAIR PRICES!

With, potentially, lots of artists working on the development of new games over longer periods of time, costs could be high. Can this fairly be passed on to the customer? No!

When 16-bits took over from 8-bits, the revenue from the average game trebled. Now, CD will discourage piracy and reduce production costs. We've been promised a standard CD price of £25-ish, and we expect it to be stuck to. Further, we expect it to fall to £19.99 – for one thing, our CD³²s will play music and videos too, and price comparisons might make games look poor value!

4. WE DEMAND... CONTINUED INNOVATION!

You've heard from the developers – the Amiga needs to compete with the PCs and next-generation consoles in the area of texture-mapped 3D especially. This needs more processor power and a new, faster chip set – Commodore must be ready to phase them in. We also need that Full Motion Video add-on this side of the Christmas season.

5. WE DEMAND... CLEVER COMPILATIONS!

The strength of the Amiga CD³² in a marketplace that will soon be overflowing with digital video/computer games systems is that it has a long history of excellent games. This should be taken advantage of by releasing collections of top-quality back-catalogue games: for instance, a *Bubble Bobble*, *Rainbow Islands*, *Parasol Stars* set on one CD.

6. WE DEMAND... INCREASED INTERACTIVITY!

Games need believable artificial worlds. The more we can interact with a game environment, the better. Detail might not matter to the gameplay, but it can still be entertaining – We demand that you be able to switch on the TV in a room in an adventure game and be offered a choice of programmes!

7. WE DEMAND... SUPPORT THE AMIGA!

There's going to be a lot of new formats out there soon. Stick with the best!

8. WE DEMAND... DEATH TO DEAD-END STYLES!

Computer games are criticised for violence, and there is a move afoot to have them certificate-rated in the same way as videos. As graphics get more realistic, the *Op Wolf*-style shoot-em-up or the average beat-em-up will become more and more stomach-turning. Do we really need them?

10. WE DEMAND... MORE MULTI-PLAYING!

Until you've played Geoff Crammond's *Stunt Car Racer* on a two-machine hook-up, you can't really call yourself an Amiga gamer. It's stunning. More of this will help make Amiga games stand out from the crowd and prepare for the multi-player future.

off immediately. You need to have realistic, movie-quality, TV-quality graphics."

To some extent, CD can achieve this. With all that storage, you have masses of space for detailed graphics. But you are forced, by the nature of the technology, to rely on screen-by-screen animation. And that's a technique that imposes restrictions.

Imagine, for instance, you want to do a rally-car driving game, so you pop out and film a special stage and digitise it in. Within your game, you're going to be restricted to views you have recorded with the camera. So if the player puts the car into a spin or piles it into a tree, you have to have animation available to cover that eventuality. That would need an infinite amount of data.

Impressive 3D

It seems everyone agrees that the better way to do that is to use 3D – and not just the flat, Lego-like blocks we've seen to date, but with textures added to the surfaces. Dave Jones is utterly adamant that in the future all games will be 3D-based. "3D is going to make an enormous difference. Any game can be done that way, and done better."

"I've seen the latest Sega arcade games, and they're very impressive, with really fast texture-mapped 3D and hundreds of thousands of polygons a second."

Andy Braybrook thinks fractal backgrounds could be important. "What you need is an environment you can do anything in, but also you need things to get more detailed the closer you are to them." Using fractal techniques, that is possible.

Can we do it?

All these fancy ideas tend to imply that we're going to see lots of nasty new hardware. "All the arcade games, for example, have extra chips to zoom and rotate graphics. They just bolt on another 68000," Andy Braybrook explains. So does the Amiga have the necessary welly?

"It's a question of whether you throw raw processor power at it or you use the custom chips," says Andy. "On the Amiga, the Blitter is no help at all for this kind of thing – it's only really useful for 2D sprites."

Steve Kelly also finds that the AGA chips can be a touch limiting in terms of speed. "The '020 gives you about twice the speed, but if you're using 256 colours that more or less halves it again. And you are still limited by the custom chips, which aren't any faster yet, though I hear they are working on that."

A 'Triple A' chip set, soon? Let's hope so. The bottom line is that the Amiga CD³² does need another advance in technology at some stage in the future if it is to stay ahead of the pack. Andy Braybrook can see the Amiga keeping up:

"The PCs are going to get the 686 chip soon, but we'll have the 68060 available before too long, and then you're talking 100 MHz speeds," he says. Luvverly 3D stuff, then! Personally, I can't wait...

Left: Archer Maclean goes skydiving with his instructor. Looks like fun.



Programming can be a lonely, time-consuming business that requires vast amounts of concentration. When Archer Maclean comes head to head with a particularly difficult problem he sometimes spends 18 hours a day working on it and doesn't step outside his front door for days at a time.

So it's not surprising that when Archer lets off steam he does so by driving go karts around race circuits at very high speeds and jumping out of aeroplanes from 13,000 feet.

In fact Archer has only been sky-diving once, but he fully intends to take it up as a new hobby. "I get complaints from my friends that I am very difficult to get to do anything with, because of the hours I work, so when an opportunity comes up to do

★ **There was a point when I really thought I wasn't going to be able to finish Snooker** ★

something like the sky-diving, you've got to grab it," he says.

Archer is probably best known for *Jimmy White's Snooker* and *Archer Maclean's Pool* but he released *Dropzone*, a space shoot-em-up and his first commercial game, back in 1984. He followed that with the excellent beat-em-up *International Karate Plus* (or *IK+* as it is better known), and in 1989 started working on *Jimmy White's Snooker*.

But how did he get started in the programming business?

"It was 1972 when I got interested in electronics and started taking things apart to find out how they work. Then I started building radios in match boxes and wrist-watch calculators."

Archer went on to work for an electron-

ics company and did a degree in cybernetics, where he learnt the maths which are so important to creating the 3D effects in *Jimmy White's Snooker*. The biggest problem he came up against in programming that game was working out the coding for what happens if you hit a pack of touching balls.

"A point came after I'd been working on *Snooker* for about a year and a half when I really thought I wasn't going to be able to do it. I didn't want to produce a crap effect so I tried dozens and dozens of different ways of working out the touching balls problem before I eventually got there," says Archer.

One of the beauties of *Jimmy White's Snooker* is that it seems such a simple game. It isn't. The game has something like 164 million different shot permutations, there are 23,000 possible angles at which you can hit the balls, and once you start multiplying that by the different strengths at which you can hit the ball and all the different ways in which you can strike the cue ball those figures just keep getting bigger and bigger. Yet it takes about three seconds to line up a shot.

"When the cue is going in and out on *Jimmy White's Snooker*, there's a lot of unbelievably complex maths going on in the background, working out what is going to happen for the next 12 seconds, that means that the game doesn't have to freeze to calculate everything after you've played the shot," says Archer.

Archer Maclean is one of the few remaining solo programmers, and for the immediate future he is going to continue working on his own, converting his games for consoles. Once that's

Archer Maclean is now one of the few remaining big-name solo programmers, but can he continue to go it alone?

Archer Maclean

FAVOURITE PASTIMES:

Jumping out of planes, driving go-karts

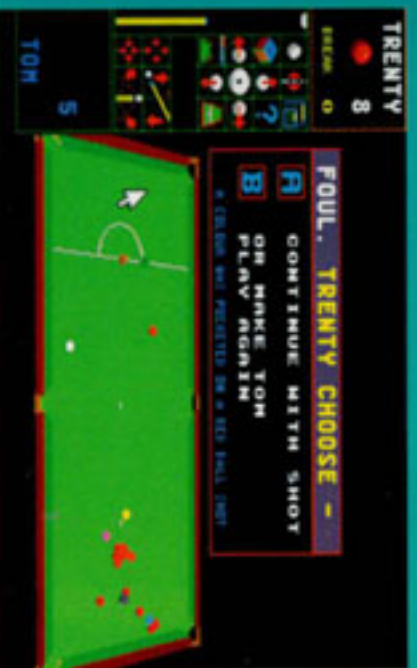
BEST GAME:

Jimmy White's Snooker

done he says he'll be at a crossroads in his career as games are now so big that the days of the one-man outfit could be numbered. On top of this he feels he has to choose between console or CD as the future format.

Let's hope that whatever he decides

Archer keeps producing great games.



Archer has been programming games for almost ten years but *Jimmy White's Snooker* was his really big break, other people were green with envy at it.

ARCHER MACLEAN INTERVIEWED



WITH RICHARD JONES

AMIGA POWER



**Take it home and cuddle it
on September 9**

Jeff Minter is regarded by many as an eccentric, but his Llamasoft company has been going strong since 1982, so what's the secret of his success?



Jeff Minter wrote his first piece of code on a Commodore PET when he was at Sixth Form college. It was a bio-rhythm program that he converted on paper from HP-41 calculator language to generic BASIC with the aid of a library book on BASIC. He went on to form Llamasoft, which became one of the top software houses, before the days of the giant companies such as US Gold, Ocean and LucasFilm, but decided against expansion in favour of keeping the operation small, friendly and leftfield.

"I guess we could have started hiring people, licensing games and built ourselves into something similar (to the big companies)," says Jeff. "But we preferred to stay a small family company with all the games being written and coded by one person, me."

"We strove to produce games that were good to play and had a distinctive style, usually involving beasties. As a result we developed a cult following of loyal customers rather than a vast, but fickle market of 14-year-olds."

Jeff's main hobby is skiing, but he also enjoys listening to music, and plays anything from Pink Floyd to rave techno, according to his mood. So does he agree with the often-heard argument that games are destroying the music scene?

"No, I don't think so. You can't listen to a game on the radio while you're belting down the M4.

You can't put thousands of people into a venue to watch someone playing Llamatron (well you probably could if you projected the game on to large TV screens and played loud rave

tunes all night). As computers and game machines become powerful synths in their own right, and CD-ROM becomes the standard game distribution medium, I expect to see games and music combining, with well-known bands writing soundtracks specifically for games."

Llamas seem to play a very important part in Jeff's life (they feature in his games and his company name) but just what is the great attraction of this South American member of the camel family?

"Llamas are just gorgeous, lovely beasties," enthuses Jeff. "When I went to Peru, I saw one llama in particular (I have a photograph of it) which was the most beautiful living organism I have ever seen in all my born days."



Left: Jeff Minter is one of the most influential figures in games programming, and has done more to promote the cause of shareware and llamas than anybody else featured in this Games Special.

Far left: This Minter creation is called *Revenge of the Mutant Camels*. Some people claim that a llama is in fact a mutant camel.

★ Jeff doesn't approve of the kind of software houses that will only release formula crap ★

"They feel nice with all that fur. And they also smell nice (that is if you like the smell of llama)."

Jeff, who lives in a village near Newcastle Emlyn deep in the wilds of West Wales, is currently getting involved in exploring the world of 3D programming, something that he put off doing for a long time, but is now completely enthusiastic about. "It's a lot less daunting than I thought it would be, you can create excellent graphics and it opens up a whole new arena of games," he says.

But for Jeff Minter the really important thing about programming is the constant challenge of creating new and innovative games.

"I don't think that there's enough freedom for programmers," he says. "I don't approve of software houses that just release formula crap, and I don't think that people will get away with it for much longer. I'd like to see a lot more originality in games programming." So say all of us!

Far left: Llamatron, the shareware game that has earned Jeff Minter his near legendary status. Str-aaa-nge!



Jeff Minter

FAVOURITE ANIMAL:

Cow? Pig? Go on, guess!

FIRST PROGRAM:

Bio-rhythm program written at school

JEFF MINTER INTERVIEWED





AGA

Good games don't just magically grow, they need to be carefully nurtured, pruned and debugged as we discovered when we talked to four programming teams and discovered how they go about creating their games. Now get the inside track...

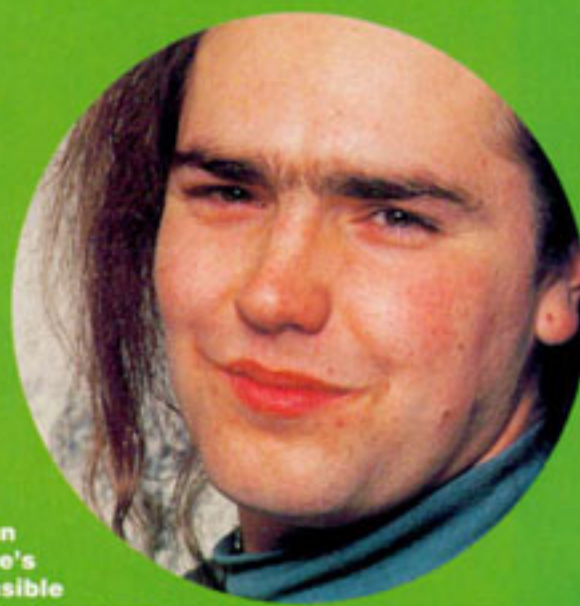
24

Once upon a time the only computer games were written by enthusiasts in their bedrooms. It wasn't long before businessmen realised there was gold in games, and the first software houses appeared. This was way back in time when the Vic 20 was Commodore's flagship, and the media was full of stories of millionaire 16-year-old programmers.

In America they were already doing things differently. Software houses such as MicroProse appeared and used teams of programmers rather than individuals. In the UK, Geoff Brown saw the quality of American games, and he set up a company called US Gold to import them.

This was the start of the 'software house' as we know it now. Companies now have sway. Although there are notable exceptions – Dino Dini, Archer Maclean, David Braben, Jeff Minter – it's programming squads such as the Bitmap Brothers, Sensible Software, Core, Revolution, Bullfrog and DCD who churn out games these days.

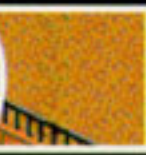
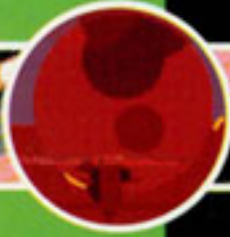
But how does a game change from an amorphous idea scribbled on the back of a Pot Noodle tub into a complete game on a shop shelf? Over the next 11 pages we visit four leading producers of software in this country to find out just how they do it. Read on and change your views on games...



John Hare's Sensible Software company. Given a kicking? Page 26 to find out



Peter Molyneux's Syndicate has shocked a few people. Find out how on page 29



MEANS DRINK

25



Kevin Bulmer's DCD, pull no punches. How do they create great games though. We reveal the secrets. Turn to page 33



The last post for MicroProse? Or is there plenty of life in the old dog yet? We'll open a few doors for you starting on page 36.

THE SENSIBLE ATTITUDE

Jon Hare's Sensible Software team have developed a reputation for being a somewhat offbeat bunch of guys in the sometimes grey and corporate world of the games industry, but is that just a front or are the Sensible team seriously shot away. We went to Cambridgeshire to find out...

COMPANY:

Sensible Software.
Location: Through the tortuous Huntingdon roadworks in flat Cambridgeshire.

TYPICAL GAME:

Anything odd, anything really odd, or based on football.

MOST NOTABLE GAMES:

Mega-lo-Mania, *Sensible Soccer*.

CURRENT PROJECT:

Cannon Fodder – a war action game in which you have to inflict as much damage on enemy troops as possible.

TIME IN DEVELOPMENT:

Couple of years.

KEY PERSONNEL:

Jon Hare (co-founder of Sensible), Chris Chapman (programmer), David Korn (programmer), Stoo (in charge of graphics).

These days you can't innocently flip open a computer magazine without being presented with the winning smiles of the Sensible Software team. So we thought we'd get in on the act and talk to just about the hottest programming team at work in this country.

Sensible is a super-sharp contrast to the MicroProse experience. Chris Chapman, the programmer behind *Mega-lo-Mania* and *Sensible Soccer*, explains his role: "I work from a so-called design spec which never really exists. I put all the graphics in, and get everything animating. I'm not involved in design at all, although there is some overlap. I generally leave the design of the game to Jon and Stoo."

★ Chris Chapman works from a so-called design spec that never really exists ★

Mega-lo-Mania took about 20 months to complete working on Amigas, but using PCs for the development.

Wrack your brains

Also at the not-at-all-sensible Sensible offices is graphic artist Stoo. He shares the graphic chores with Jon, but did all the work on *Cannon Fodder* which he's just finishing off. Stoo gets his ideas for graphics from all over the place.

"If a game is set in areas of the world then you go down to the library and get a book on that particular country," Stoo says.

Mega-lo-Mania (right) began life as a shoot-em-up, and evolved into a strategy game.



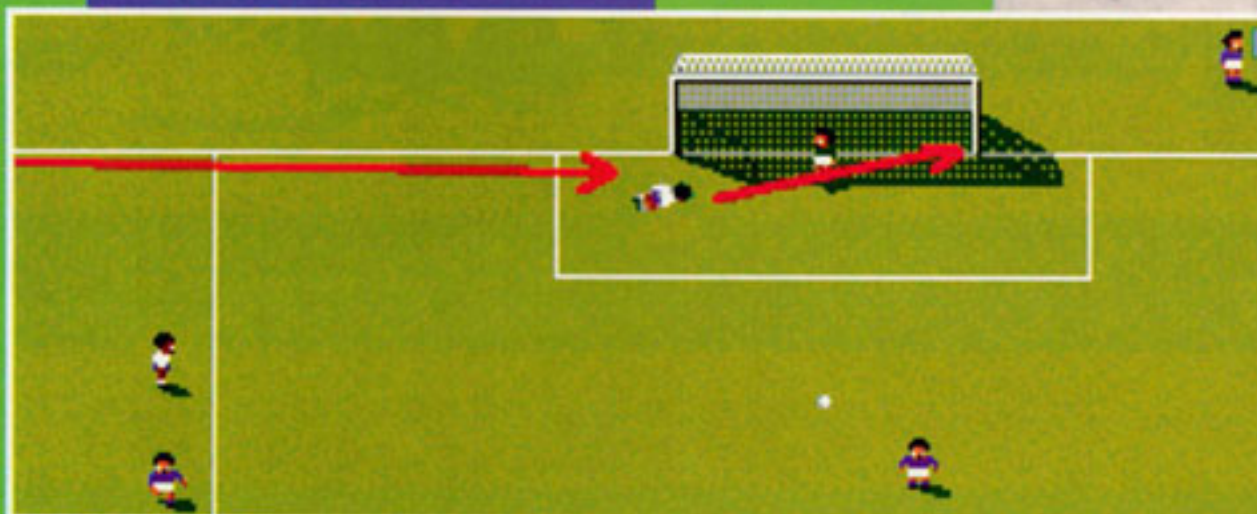
"With weird, spacey games you just sit there and wrack your brains. I do most of that stuff on screen. I prefer to work like that. The main problem is in utilising the limited graphics palette."

Which brings us to major media celeb and prolific abuser of the vernacular, Jon Hare. We spoke to Jon downstairs in his plush office where the noise of the trains rumbling past the window wasn't quite so loud. Jon was just checking a bill for the use of a recording studio where he laid down the *Cannon Fodder* theme tune.

Cannon Fodder is the first game that Jon has had no graphical involvement in at all. As he puts it: "There's been more crap and paperwork for me to do and graphics is really time consuming, so I do less now. I've done virtually no graphics in the last four or five months."

Sensible Software is best known for the peculiarity of its games. "But ideas are two a penny," says Jon. "You're driving along and you think 'that's a good idea'. Then you narrow it down, talk about things, build up an idea for a character and then you do a screenshot. That

Sensible Soccer: how one software house can appeal to football fans, platform fans and strategy fans is a trick that all of the others want to know. (hint: it's to do with quality game-play people!)





will give you a vision for a game.

"A lot of games never get finished. We started a game called *Touchstone* which was an adventure game. We spent about six months on it and that disappeared up its own arse."

Not the corporate types

Jon doesn't fancy travelling the MicroProse route to corporate stability. He reckons everyone has their own speciality and so there isn't much to be gained from being that corporate. Jon and Chris Yates have been partners for eight years and they've always run Sensible pretty much like it is now. They worked with Dave Korn about five years ago then Chris Chapman arrived on the scene and then a couple of years ago Stoo and Jools joined.

Sensible Software has quite a big say in how its games are marketed. Virgin is currently looking at *Cannon Fodder* although, says Jon: "They're not as easy to convince as other publishers."

The usual way in which a Sensible game gets into the shops is by Jon and Chris Yates touring the publishers and seeing how they react. The duo's very first

game, *Parallax*, was sold to Ocean that way.

"We took *Parallax* to

★ **Getting a major-league software house to fork out for airfares is seen as 'good fun' ★**

Ocean and they liked it immediately. They gave us £1,000 up front for it. We went back on the train, bought some cigars and smoked them on the train. It was quite a funny time."

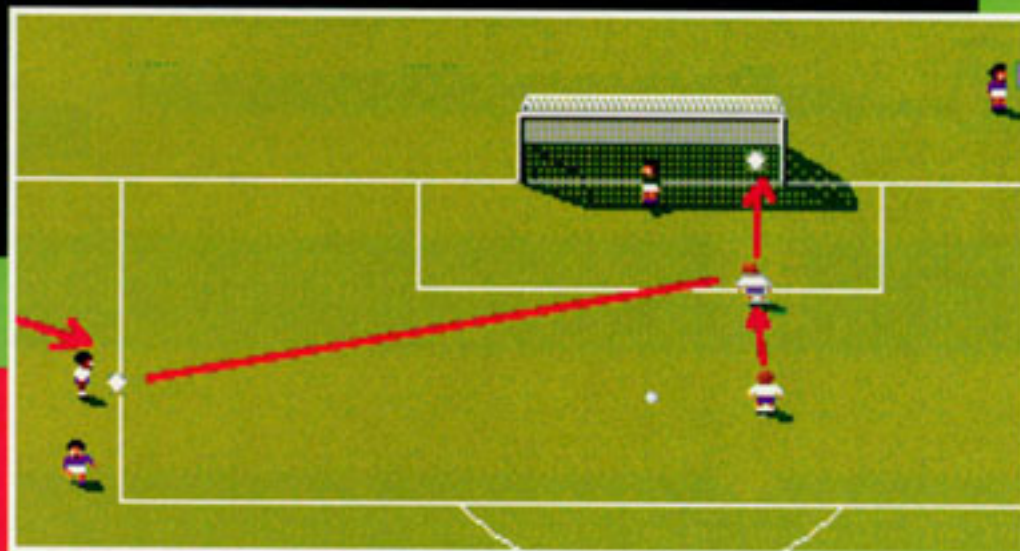
Jon soon found that he liked the feeling of power, that being a popular programming outfit gave him.

"We did a few more games and then we wanted to feel we were getting somewhere, so Ocean agreed to pay for us to go up there. We thought 'let's see if they'll pay for us to go up by plane'. They did, from London to Manchester. It was about twice the price of the train and by the time you get to London, park in Heathrow, pay about a £100 to leave your car there, it worked out more expensive. That was good fun."

Sensible Software games go through some pretty extraordinary changes before they hit the shelves. *Mega-lo-Mania* started off as an eight-way scrolling shoot-em-up with sectors with robots in them. The robots made themselves which is the reason, says Jon, why the men breed from one person.

"The idea," says Jon, "was that you'd have these 16 towers from

Jon Hare and Chris Yates. Just look how old, cynical and haggard running a major software development team makes you look. Yup, cashing in on licences, creating quick sequels and hyping no-hopers is obviously the way to stay happy. Poor old Jon and poor old Chris. When will they learn that quality and gameplay are not what really counts in the big wide business world! (oh how very, very sarcastic, very ironic. ed)



which you could arm your plane, and you also had to manage the towers and build the extra weapons which you then bolt on to your spaceship.

"We took it to Virgin and they said it was too complex. They told us to concentrate on one area of the game. So we looked

A classic Sensible goal. The winger lad plays a ball across the six yard box into the path of the centre forward lad, who slots the ball home. The onion bag bulges, the crowd roars.

But Sensible Soccer doesn't just appeal to the footy fan. It is widely agreed that it has great quality gameplay, the goal of all gamers.



at the game and worked out what the strongest part of it was and we decided it was the strategy element.

"Then a decision was made to have things battling against each other, so we thought we could have four parties battling for territories. In the end we decided to humanise it and because we were talking about evolving a society (although it was set in the future) we thought people could relate to it a bit better if we took it through an evolution that people are aware of, which is why we took it from cavemen through to the nuclear age.

"The little guys added a lot of character and the last thing we put in was the speech. Now everyone refers to it as 'that game with the speech in'. The thing is, you're



Mega-Lo-Mania: the name really speaks for itself. Come on be honest, when you play a god game, you want to be, well, a god right?



The weird and wonderful Wizkid did much to gain Sensible its reputation for producing bizarre games.

always coming up against things the machine can't handle.'

Sensible has become very successful by releasing extremely original games. To date its most popular game is *Sensible Soccer*, having sold 190,000 copies, 130,000 of which are on the Amiga.

With a success like that, and with other Sensi games performing extremely well, Jon has a fixed vision of how to create a good game. He reckons the key to good game design is to turn a problem into a feature.

★ **Sensible Soccer**
has sold a total
of 190,000
copies, 130,000
on the Amiga ★

He explains: "You know if you're decorating a room and there's this horrible bit of wet rot and you're aware of it. Whenever you look at that room you'll look at the wet rot bit and see if it's showing through the paint. Anyone who's just walked into the room won't notice it because they're not looking for it. That's what game design is all about." Er... yes right. So ta-ta then Sensible Software. We will leave you to create playable games that are so odd that even the **Amiga Format** *Specials* staff think they're strange, and that are so playable that the **Amiga Format** *Specials* staff get perilously close to missing their deadlines. Sensible Software? Not!

Stoo is happiest when he's programming away creating games such as *Wizkid* (inset)

MORE FOOTIE FUN TO COME

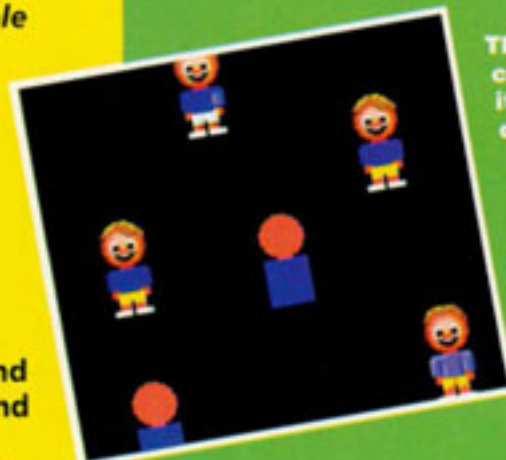
Jon Hare and the Sensible team are currently working on a major upgrade to the classic *Sensible Soccer* in the form of *Sensible World Of Soccer*, which should be released next year.

According to Jon, *Sensible World Of Soccer* will have a management option, you will be able to buy and sell players and be either a player, a player-manager or a manager. So if you like playing a management game you won't even notice the action side. There will be more teams and changes in the gameplay, and different crowd chants depending on whether you're winning or losing, or playing at home or away, there will be a referee and lines-men, player injuries and a physio.

Says Jon: "The star players will stand out more so you will play the ball to them more. So if you were playing England and Gascoigne was fit, you'd pass to him and if Barnes was on the pitch you'd never pass to him."



Calvary: a Jon Hare original illustration that has yet to appear in any Sensible games. Now there's a surprise isn't it?



This little character made it as far as the drawing board stage, and stayed there. Poor little soul (could have been Chrissy Waddle)

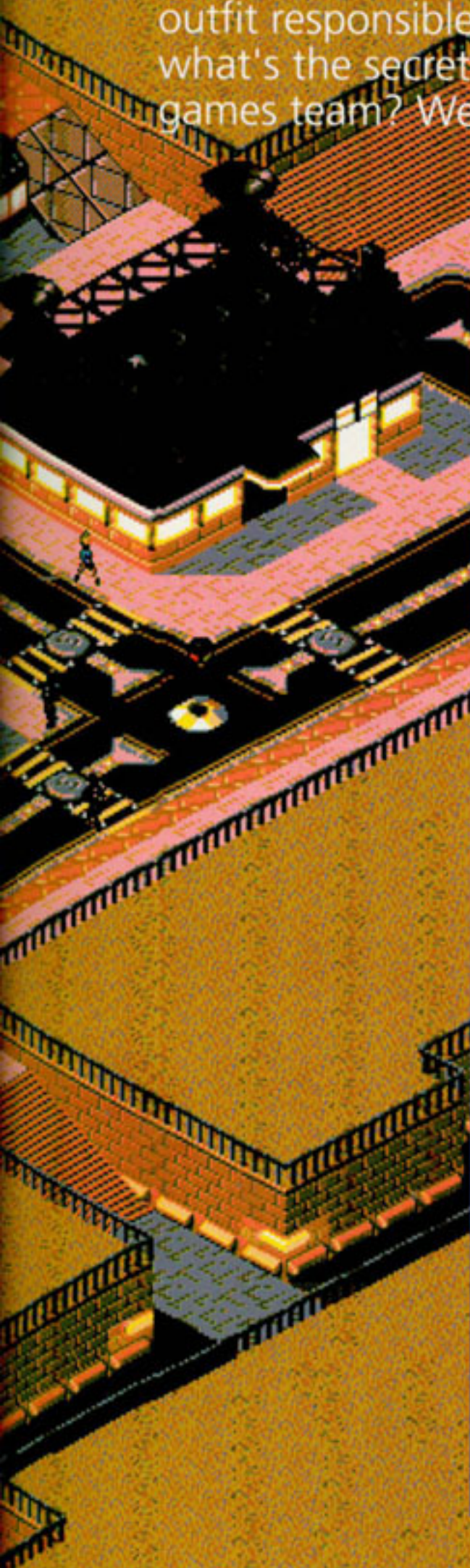


This opera singer, is another of the doodles from the Sensible team that never made it to the development stage.



Another project that never got past the design stage is the Sensible Software soccer quiz. Shame.

outfit responsible
what's the secret
games team? We



KEY PERSONNEL: Peter Molyneux (co-founder of Bullfrog), Sean Cooper (head programmer), Paul McGlocen (head of graphics), Mike Diskett (head of conversions).

Bullfrog also uses play-testers as it develops games. Two schoolkids come into



Killing
and
more killing
is what *Syndicate* is
all about. Oh, there's
also getting pink
rods stuck down the
barrel of your heavy-
duty laser.

29



(too late sucker!)





**WHEN THE STREET JUST AIN'T
TOUGH ENOUGH...
GO PLAY IN THE PARK**

IF IT'S NOT JURASSIC PARK IT'S EXTINCT

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This is what an unreal man looks like. More hi-tech than a Zanussi spin-dryer!

the office every week to play and rate the game under production.

Molyneux explains: "What we do first is show them a crappy game. Not one of ours, but someone else's! Then we get them to mark it and ask them to justify the marks they give it. So hopefully, in the end you get marks that are representative of how they feel. The play-testers are the ones that really balance the game."

The Syndicate story (or saga)

Bullfrog's latest release, *Syndicate*, starts off pleasantly with some undemanding introductory missions, and builds to a bloody climax on the last mission, the Atlantic Accelerator. It takes about two weeks of solid play to complete the game, taking in all 50 missions. Originally there were going to be 150 missions, but time ran out.

The original idea for the game came out of the team's experiences programming *Populous* and *Powermancer*. Molyneux says the first idea was to get complex actions into a character, but still present them in a simple way, although he exclaims: "The actual end result was completely different!"

Syndicate started out as an exercise in artificial intelligence. The programmers created a system of three bars which enable you to decide how perceptive or intelligent your team of four cyborgs are. However, as they developed the idea, the use of the bars changed.

Molyneux explains how the emphasis of the game changed in development: "We realised that it was actually far more fun to just take your agents into the city and blow everything up. Now the bars are still there, but the actual strategy part of the game has been toned down."

So, the game changed from a largely strategic to an action orientated exercise. As the programmers developed the artificial intelligence aspect, they encountered problems with the cyborgs being too intelligent.

"You used to be able to turn the intelligence up, the perception to middling and the aggression down, then click on a car and instead of the cyborg using the car directly he'd go and find the person who owned the car and get them to drive him around. However, it turned out to be bloody aggravating because you'd be running from somebody and you'd say ...phew, there's a car, let's leap in it - oh no - he's going to ask somebody for the keys! I don't believe it. So we thought, hmmm, better take that intelligence stuff out."



You too could have a body like this if you don't watch out. Hard as nails, he is.

Another problem in the game's development was designing the nice'n'easy icon-based control panel.

"It was the hardest thing to design," admits Molyneux.

"To start with we had icons with stuff like pick up weapon, shoot weapon, drop weapon... there were masses of different ones. Then we realised there was little point in having all those icons - if you click on a weapon then the cyborg should pick it up, it should be obvious. You're not clicking on it to spray paint it in gold; you want to pick it up. (many a true word spoken in irony).

"So now it looks simple, you've just got the scanner, four icons and the weapons icons." Easy to use... we like that.

The team speak

Molyneux had a huge team of specialists working on *Syndicate*: Sean Cooper, coding; Paul McGlocklen and Chris Hill, graphics; Russell Shaw, sound; Alex Travers, missions and play-testing; and Michael Diskett, who is in control of conversions.

The Corridors of Power. Now, unless you're heavily armed, we don't suggest that you even consider thinking about the merest chance of you going down here. Not unless you want to be Cyborg lunch that is.

Sean started work on *Syndicate* three years ago, so it's been a long time in development. The game is programmed on a PC set-up with a central core which calls on a library of modules. This meant that Sean could concentrate on the actual game, making the process of programming quicker and more compact.

Sean explains how the game was put together: "It started off as an action game in pseudo isometric 2D because the isometric view appealed to me. We used to have really big sprites for the cyborgs, then we had small ones, and finally we plumped for the medium height ones which are in the finished game."

But the programmer's real nightmare are bugs. "The worst kind is when you haven't touched a piece of code for six months and it goes wrong," says Sean. "That means you've got to go back to it and work your way through it, trying to remember what you did with that piece of code. We were lucky with *Syndicate* - it only took two weeks from being a Beta game to being a final version."

Much of *Syndicate's* appeal lies in its great cyberpunk graphics, created by graphic designers Paul and Chris. Paul used *DPaint* on an Amiga to produce most of the work on the cities, and Chris worked on the sprites.

Paul says he works according to the needs of the programmer: "Generally you work on the backgrounds first in combination with a rough set of sprites. You rarely jump straight in and get something substantial finished early on."

"People come up and throw ideas at you and gradually you start building up a very specific look," adds Chris. "Even right up to the last minute we were deciding whether or not to include certain sprites and how guns should work."

Russell, the sound effects man, started work on *Syndicate* in November 1992, his task was made much easier because the game was mostly finished. His job, says Russell, "is very much a pruning process after I've done tons of things. I'd rather have fewer effects with better quality, than thousands of effects that all sound rubbishy. Sound quality has to be your priority."

Alex Travers' job title is Head of Quality Assurance. "When a project reaches a certain state it's my job to play the game thoroughly, look for any problems and make suggestions for the game," he says.

"The way this works is we fill in a bug sheet which is divided into sections dealing with program faults, crashes, glitches and

Glorious colour and intimidating scenes add to the atmos'



31

The Blade Runner feel is almost tangible in this shot.





Just think, *Syndicate* could have ended up looking like this if Bullfrog hadn't continued to develop and refine both the look, the feel and the gameplay of its latest game.



Good Lord! It might even have looked like this as well. Yup, these historic work-in-progress grabs of one of this year's most popular games are brought to you by Bullfrog and the best *Special* ever. You lucky people!

stuff. At the end of the day it gets handed on to the programmer. And believe me, we are the programmers worst enemy because we give them so much grief!"

However, on *Syndicate*, Alex spent most of his time creating the different missions.

"The first step in designing the levels was to take the blocks from the graphic artist," he explains. "We've got this custom City Editor which enables you to place things where you want. It's a good idea to have a sketch before you start, though, so you've got a rough idea what's going where."

"Once the basics of the city were down, I then used the people editor to plonk policemen, citizens, agents or criminals wherever I wanted and I could tell them to do almost anything - instruct a citizen to use a car, park it, go into a house, wait, come out of the house, go to work, and so on."

"In *Syndicate* the whole transport system works as it should. You can use the cars and the monorail and all the other characters use it too. There's a lot of stuff in there that people will never see. A car will go past, but they won't watch it, they'll just blow the thing up."

"You don't have to aimlessly wander around blowing things up, it's just that a lot of people like doing that. Many of the levels can be completed non-violently."

"I hope people do realise that the violence is tongue in cheek," adds Alex, "the game was a lot worse - we used to have more

THE FUNNY PANEL AT THE END

Well, not that funny at all actually, but it is bloody impressive. Did you know for example, that *Populous* has sold more than one million (1,000,000) copies all over the world? Just think about it - at £24.99 that's... loads and loads of money.

No wonder that Bullfrogs supremo Peter Molyneux (pictured below) looks so chuffed!



civilians in the city. For instance there were mothers and babies which you could torch, but the biggest objections came when dogs were torched!"

Eventually, all the hard work has to stop and the game must be mastered and duplicated ready for the shops and you.

"There's a lot of pressure to release a game early," says Molyneux. "In *Syndicate's* case there was a lot of pressure on us from distributors Electronic Arts to release it in March '93. I said no."

There's also a lot of pressure internally to keep on making improvements, but you've got to stop somewhere or you'd go on forever."



HOW DCD DECIDES

Kevin Bulmer has modelled his Dimension Creative Design team on the same structure used by a film production team. We wondered why he needed clapperboards and make-up artists to create games such as *Legends of Valour*, so we visited DCD to find out...



Team picture: the DCD lads pose for the cameras before they embark on the 1993-94 campaign.

COMPANY:
Dimension Creative Designs.

LOCATION:
Wolverhampton.

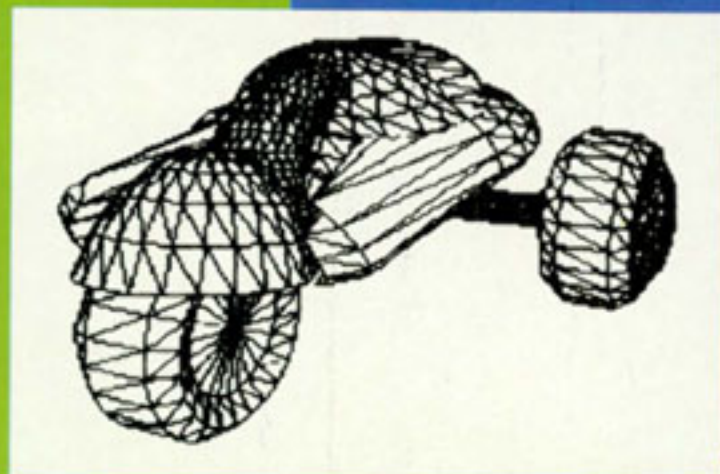
TYPICAL GAME:
Anything utilising fast 3D graphics.

MOST NOTABLE GAMES:
Legends of Valour, *Resolution 101*.

CURRENT PROJECT:
Two options being investigated: *Blastro* and *Race Wars* (a futuristic racing game).

TIME IN DEVELOPMENT:
Couple of months.

KEY PERSONNEL:
Kevin Bulmer (co-founder of DCD), Ben Daglish (music), Ian Downend (programmer), Nigel Bunegar (graphics).



A detail from *Race Wars*, the futuristic racing game that the team are currently developing

Although the members of the DCD team have known each other for quite a long time, they really came together for the *Legends of Valour* project. This texture-mapped *Dungeon Master*-style RPG game was released last year to critical acclaim. Kevin Bulmer, the founder of DCD used the opportunity to set up in offices in Wolverhampton and get some full time graphic artists on the case.

The last year has seen the DCD team perfecting their NSR graphics engine and converting *LoV* to various other formats. As we spoke DCD was on the verge of signing deals with major software houses to develop two original games.

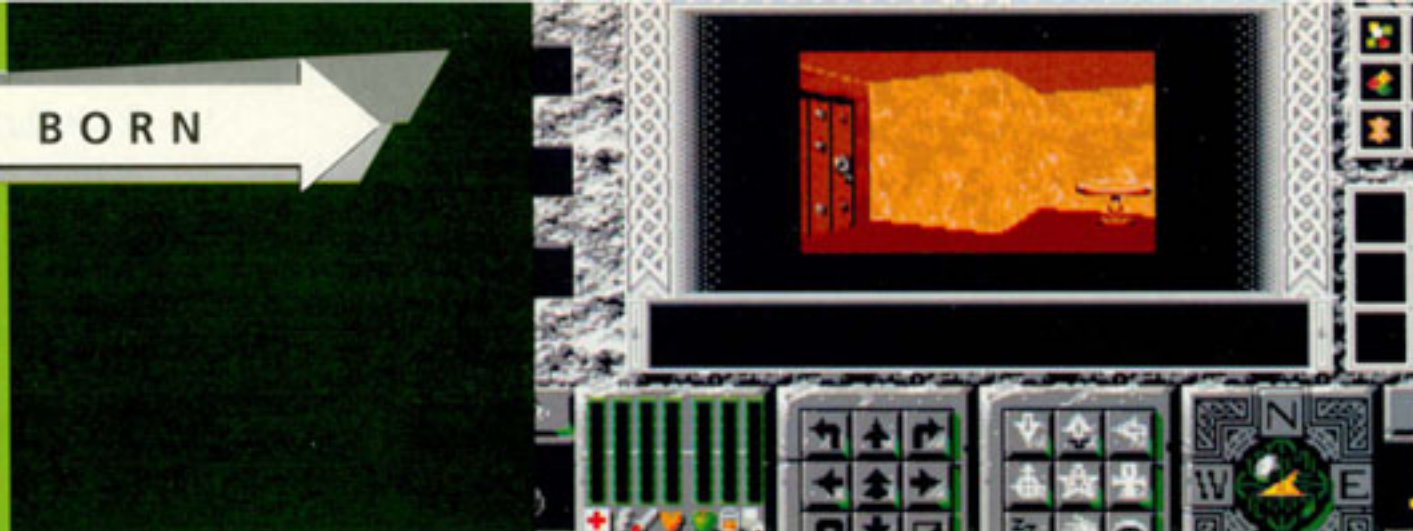
Creating a game in the Nineties is an enormous task, and for programmers there are often long lapses between projects. This is where the DCD team are at the moment - waiting for financial backing from one of the big software houses before they start programming again.

Kevin Bulmer explains how DCD starts putting a game together: "It's much like a picture, a matter of sketching, preparing, finding the elements that you want to incorporate into it and then finding out how they're all going to fall together. With *Race Wars*, I wanted a lot of variety, and sci-fi gives you that option. It also gives you the option of wrong-footing people."

The sketching that Kevin talks of takes the form of a 26-page proposal document for the game which is presented to the various software houses. This proposal includes information on the scenario, the idea of the game, examples of illustrations and graphics, and details about controls, sound and any specific version information.

Kevin Bulmer, the man who brought together the multi-talented DCD team





Legends of Valour uses fast 3D graphics which are typical of the DCD style of game.

"Ideas for games come from all different sources," says Kevin. "With *Legends of Valour* it was because I used to play *Dungeons and Dragons* a lot. Whatever you do is going to be like *Dungeon Master*, so we wanted something extra. It evolved beyond that, but that was the initial intention.

"Within this office we want to produce games which appeal to us. If we wanted to make money we'd be working on the Megadrive, but we're not, we're still working on the Amiga and the PC and 3D0. So the fact that software houses feel a certain type of game won't sell doesn't bother us."

A new production approach

Once Kevin has a rough feel for the game, it's time to allot tasks to the team members. The DCD approach is modelled on a film or theatre production team.

"From now on, the system we have for games is like the film industry," says Kevin. "We will have a director, a cinematographer, a design department, a modelling department and a special effects department."

Kevin likes to get everything down on paper and to consult with the team before any modelling is produced. Then the models are rendered on the Amiga, and next the effects department, headed by the cinematographer, work on the game.

"It breaks down very much like the film industry," explains Kevin, "but being a British production, it's on a shoestring. So there's going to be job sharing and blends between groups."

As more software houses move towards a film set style of approach to game develop-

ment, they have to get more professional. This inevitably means one man programmers such as Archer Maclean and David Braben are becoming scarce.

"But there's always going to be a place for them," Kevin stresses. "It's like you get musicians who put down all the tracks of the individual instruments and do all the vocals and write the music. There will always be people who like working on their own. If you have someone with such a strong vision then they will carry on doing what they're doing anyway."

While there are undoubtedly advantages to creating a game single-handed, the DCD approach seems far more flexible. How does DCD actually set about coding a game?

★ Kevin hopes to add emotion into games, so they will appeal across the gender and age spectrum ★

Kevin explains: "Well, it's the utilities necessary for creation that dictate time. We have the existing 3D engine NSR1 which we used for *Legends of Valour*. That's now been scrapped. We then produced NSR2 which we've got rendering here now. It's light years ahead of previous stuff, but because

we were sitting around twiddling our thumbs, we came up with a new idea which is proving to be better. This means that NSR2 will never see the light of day because NSR3 will be so much better."

What about the other parts of the game, besides the rendering?

"The 3D engine is the basis for the code. That then uses modules of code that fit around it to deal with the universal and specialist behaviour of the characters, so things evolve and gradually build up from there."

DCD employs far more graphic artists than it does programmers. This may seem odd, but producing graphics is time consuming. The graphics can even get in the way of the actual game.

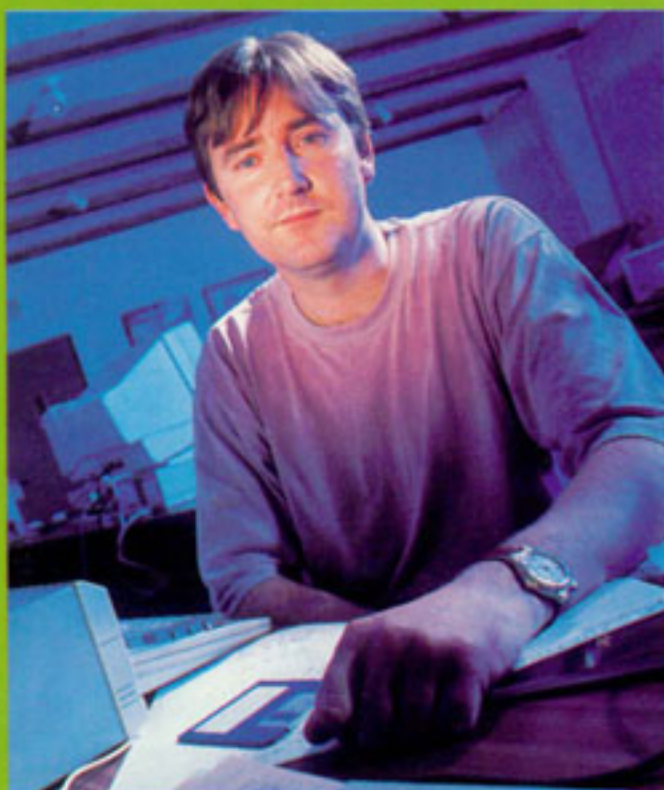
"Graphics are important because people first see what a game is like in magazines, so the screenshots must look good. Or if they see a good demo running in the shop then that will encourage them to spend money."

As games become increasingly sophisticated, Kevin hopes to add emotion into them so that they appeal across the gender and age spectrum.

"At the moment, sprites will walk, run, fight and die and that's it," he explains. "You don't know whether they're walking with a limp because they've been injured or if they're walking quickly to deliver some important information. It's that subtlety that is important to the future of games."

Sometimes DCD sounds man Ben Daglish needs a hand to get to grips with his music making.

Steve Drysdale forms the DCD graphics team with Nigel Bunegar.



Kevin Bulmer created the DCD team to work on the excellent RPG *Legends of Valour*.



DCD's in-house graphics team is Nigel Bunegar and Steve Drysdale. They were both trained in design and joined DCD with little experience of computers. Kevin is a firmly believes that what makes a good designer is their design skills, not their computer skills. The computer skills can be learned but when it comes to design, you've either got the ability or you haven't

All the sound for the games (and even symphony orchestra conducting) is taken care of by Ben Daglish, the veteran Commodore 64 and Amiga music coder. Ben gathers his sound effects from 'all over the place' and has built up a large library of samples which he carries around with him all the time.

When he needs original samples he has a different approach. Ben says: "Once when I was doing a motorbike game for Gremlin I got a tape recorder and microphone, went to the local motorbike shop and said 'Can you rev this up for 20 minutes please'.

"Quite often you do that with musical samples too. For instance, once I wanted a guitar that went 'whicky, whicky, whicky' so I went into a guitar shop and said 'Can I borrow this and a wah-wah pedal for a while' and I went off and whicky whicked it."

Nigel Bunegar one of the DCD graphics team. The designers are picked for their design skills rather than their computer skills.



Money matters

Much of what the DCD team can do in terms of creating new games is dictated by economics and the decision on when a game is finished depends very much on the size of the production.

"If you're working on an epic production that takes you two years then there are a number of things that happen. Money is invested in packaging and in advertising. You can't waste that money, so you get pressured from all sides to maximise returns on the product," says Kevin.

"Because we are small fry we have to compromise. But then I don't think anyone would pretend that games are high art and have that sort of value. We all have an opinion about our games.

The proposal for Race Wars includes precise details about how the team envisage the finished game.

I certainly think that my opinion is an awful lot more valid than a lot of publishers who we've dealt with."

DCD doesn't play an enormous part when it comes to the marketing and advertising of their games.

Kevin says: "We're involved in the production of the manual, the clue book and the box art, but only to a degree. Theoretically we should have a lot of say in what is done, but in reality the schedule is so hectic that sometimes we are not consulted or we don't

chase to find out what is going on. But it all works out all right in the end."

The huge changes in the computer industry are also a deciding factor as to why DCD doesn't market its own games.

"Since 1985 we've had the ST and the Amiga. Had things remained that way then we might have been able to market our own games," explains Kevin. "But now you've got 3D0, and new machines from Nintendo, and Sega, so who knows what's going to happen. You don't want to back Betamax if you can avoid it. We're not in a position to publish across all those formats - we couldn't fund it. So for the foreseeable future we'll be working with publishers. And that's just the way it is."

A sketch from the proposal for Race Wars, the game the DCD team is currently working on.



Matt Stott one of the DCD programming team working on the new *Race Wars* project.



THE GUNSHIP CREW

The MicroProse programming and design team recently finished work on the Amiga conversion of *Gunship 2000*, their avowed intention being to make it the most action-packed flight sim for the Amiga. Here's how they went about doing that...

COMPANY:
MicroProse.

LOCATION:
Science park in Chipping Sodbury.

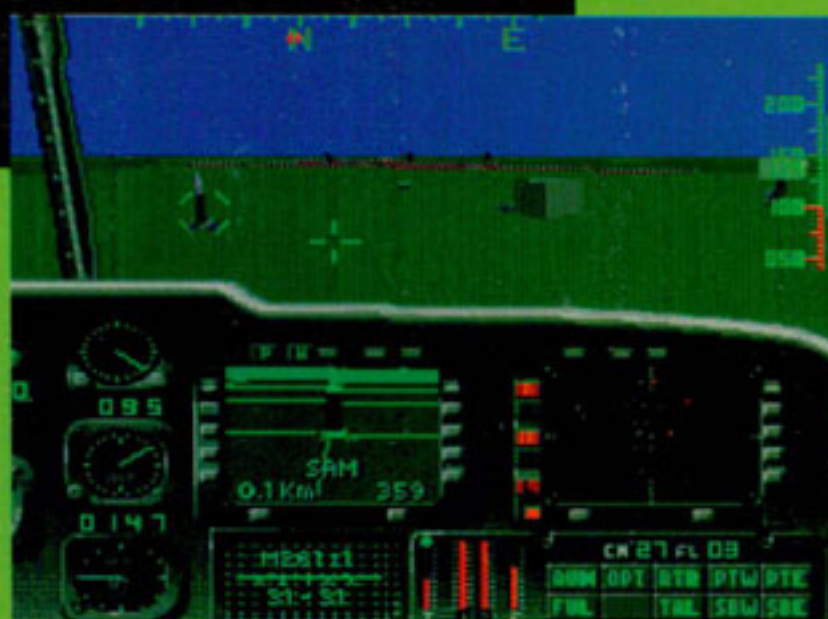
TYPICAL GAME:
High-quality simulations. The more complicated the better.

MOST NOTABLE GAMES:
F-19, F-15, Stealth Fighter, MicroProse Golf and many more.

CURRENT PROJECT:
Conversion of *Gunship 2000* to the Amiga.

TIME IN DEVELOPMENT:
About a year.

KEY PERSONNEL:
Mark Langerack (lead programmer), Paul Ayliff (music), Mark James (programmer), James Hawkins (producer).



The various helicopters have different cockpit views. This Blackhawk has side-by-side seating rather than the standard tandem arrangement.

project. Right at the end there was an intense period of testing of about 10 days, for 24 hours a day, although James is quick to point

The MicroProse approach to game development is very different to the other developers. The company is very corporate, possibly because it's been around a long time, or perhaps because it was founded in America, or even because it publishes games as well as developing them. But when you see the consistent high quality of MicroProse games you can't help thinking that the company is getting it right.

The latest MicroProse release is *Gunship 2000* – a conversion of the existing PC game. Having recently finished the game, the British team were ready to tell us all about it.

Gunship 2000's producer, James Hawkins, says of his job: "The producer is responsible for What (the quality of the finished game), When (the schedule deadlines) and How Much (what the product costs). He also acts as the centrepiece for communication within the company with regard to his project. It's a busy role to say the least, especially at the end of a project. You need about six pairs of arms."

James was put on to the *Gunship 2000* project in February this year. He reckons that most of his time is spent co-ordinating quality assurance (QA) – deciding which bugs get tackled in what order. In all, the team found 150 bugs in *Gunship 2000*, all of which, we presume, are now fixed.

Quality assurance normally takes place over the last month of a project, although on *Gunship* the team found that the gameplay was much too hard until the last two weeks of the

out that he wouldn't usually work so intensively: "But quality assurance does bring forward a lot of ideas," he says.

"On an original project I would have ideas on how I want things to look. At MicroProse we have producers working entirely on their individual projects, and function managers who are concerned with the departments used to make up those projects, so they give you a lot of input as well. We don't have overall control because it makes more sense to get everyone involved."

Gunship 2000 was tested solidly for 10 days, for 24 hours a day before being released.

"With *Gunship 2000*, I wanted it to be the most action-packed flight simulator on the market. That involves

making sure about things like not flying along without targets to shoot at, the ability to fly low to the ground, a fast frame rate and lots of things going on so that the player feels involved in the whole mission, not just parts of it," says James.

Also on the *Gunship 2000* team, Mark Langerack is lead programmer. Starting in March '92, the first thing he did was look at the PC original and at the PC source code.



Gunship 2000: first choose your helicopter and arm it, and then find something to destroy, such as these tanks.



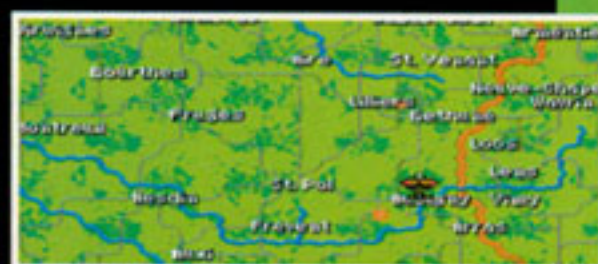
The brief for *Gunship 2000* was to produce a flight sim with more action than anything else on the market.

If you're not sure of the best weapon for the job just pause *Gunship 2000* to see your options.



MicroProse is well known for the quality of its simulations. This one is *Knights of the Sky*

A map is essential when you're flying around looking for things to bomb.



Conversions made easy

He then worked out a schedule for how long it would all take. The first thing Mark changed was the line-of-sight function which checks if one object can see the other object (to judge if there are any hills in the way, for example) because he thought that the PC version was much too slow.

★ Being a game producer is a very busy role, you need about six pairs of arms ★

Mark reckons that the Amiga and its 68000 is easy to program, but he finds that the Amiga is too slow, especially for 3D. "You're constantly thinking about the slow down that will occur if you add another feature," he says. "This doesn't affect the gameplay because that's not what takes the processing power. The main thing is that the objects are less detailed on the Amiga version, especially the landscape."

"On the Amiga version we also had to create the three detail levels for each object. This means that you've got the high detail object which pops in when you're really close, and when that is a bit further away you replace it with a slightly less detailed object, and then when it's very far away it's just a few polygons."

F-19 Stealth Fighter, was released before the military admitted that the plane existed.



This screen signifies that all is not well. In fact, it's worse than that, you're off to see the geezer with the bugle at the top right of the facing page.

This is where graphic artist Paul Ayliff comes in. He found the trickiest element of producing *Gunship 2000* for the Amiga was to convert the 256-colour palette down to a 32-colour palette so that it would work on the Amiga and still look like it does on the PC original.

Usually Paul works by importing the graphics from the PC into *DPaint* on his Amiga. However, on the title sequence he completely redrew the helicopter, which took about a week. But the biggest problem was the office animation (the options screen) because he had some problems fitting that in with Mark Langerack's code. In all Paul produced it three times.

Programmer Mark James' role on the team was to convert the C (the computer language) based PC front-end to the Amiga using Lattice C. That took him about eight months. When tackling a conversion, the first thing Mark does is to try to work out the basic structure of the code and produce flow charts and structure charts of what procedure is called where. To do that he literally sits down with a pen and paper, and the PC code, and works his way through it. Sounds like fun! Despite the

The *Gunship 2000* copy protection and difficulty levels are set from this screen.



fact that this can be highly tedious work, Mark hasn't let it spoil his enjoyment of playing *Gunship 2000*. "I come in in the mornings and boot it up and have a play," he says. "The worst thing is looking for things that are wrong!"

THE TALE OF SID AND BILL

When it comes to producing simulations MicroProse is generally regarded as being the best in the business.

The company was formed 10 years ago by 'Wild' Bill Stealey and Sid Meier when they met at a conference in Las Vegas.

They both played a video game called *Red Baron* and found it severely lacking. Sid (an experienced programmer) reckoned he could write a better game in a week, and although it took him a bit longer than that he came up with the flight sim

Hellcat Ace. The game was particularly realistic because of Bill's experience as a USAF pilot. In fact it was rumoured that Stealey was a defence consultant for the Pentagon, which would explain why *F-19 Stealth Fighter* came out before

the USAF admitted that the plane existed. Bill has now left MicroProse, but Sid went on to write *Civilization* and *Railroad Tycoon*.



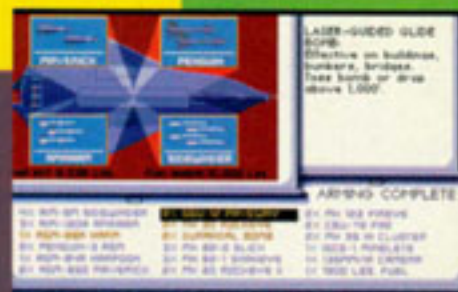
Sid Meier was a co-founder of MicroProse and also wrote the classic *Civilization*.



Getting ready for take off in *F-19 Strike Eagle*. This is the easy bit...



...Once you're up and running life gets a lot more difficult as the action heats up.



Pick your weapons and take to the skies in the tactically enthralling *F-19 Stealth Fighter*.

GET BLITZ



IZED!

You're looking at one of the tracks for Vision Software's storming new four-player racing game, Skidmarks. The finished game will have 10 tracks, monster trucks (that bounce), dune buggies and all sorts of other stuff.

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A working version of Blitz Basic 2 is on the Coverdisk of Amiga Format 52, on sale September 23rd.

Inside, you'll find a competition to find the best Blitz Basic games writer. The two lucky, but talented, Winners will walk off with A4000s under their arms.

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AMIGA FORMAT

COOLER THAN ANYTHING ELSE



Bob Wade, Andy Wilton and Andy Smith used to get paid for playing games, now they want to make money by creating them with their new Asylum team...

Nobody sees as many games, good, bad and indifferent, as a games review journalist, and so, you could assume, nobody has a better idea of what makes a game good, bad or indifferent. That's the logic that journalists Bob Wade, Andy Wilton and Andy Smith applied when they decided to stop writing about games and start creating them.

The three founders of the Bath-based Asylum software house have a long and distinguished career in computer journalism behind them, and between them have worked on titles including *Amstrad Action*, *ACE*, *PC Plus*, *PC Format*, ***Amiga Format***, *Amiga Shopper* and *Future Music*.

Their paths first crossed in the late 1980s on *ACE* (Advanced Computer Entertainment) magazine, and it was then that the idea of setting up a software house was born over pints

of beer in the local pub. However, it was earlier this year that pub-chat became reality. The boys not only formed Asylum, they also recruited a fourth team member, Jim Gardner, who is a former MicroProse programmer.

Asylum's first game *Zeewolf*, is now approaching the final stages of development, but the team is tight-lipped about predicting a release date.

"It's very important that we don't announce anything until we actually know just when it is going to be ready," says Bob. "As journalists we have seen so many companies screw up by announcing that a product would be ready by a given date, and before you know it it's two months late, then six months late then a year late, and people lose interest."

Given that reluctance to divulge too much information, what can we expect from *Zeewolf*? Andy Smith describes it as: "a thinking man's shoot-em-up."

Programmer Andy Wilton expands on the subject: "It's a solid 3D style of game. I've always been interested in 3D stuff, but a lot of 3D games look very sterile, you get things like helicopters flying through mountains and stuff like that which makes it difficult to believe in the game and interact with it."

★ If I see one more cute, fluffy platform game, I'm going to puke. It's all been done before ★

"All of us like action games," adds Bob Wade. "But we are also all fans of strategy games and games that require a lot of tactics. There's a lot of fun in action games, but we want something that also means you have got to make intelligent choices."

So reading between the lines we can expect a 3D game with a strong element of strategy as well as a blast of shoot-em-up action. Whatever it's going to be, *Zeewolf* is almost certainly going to be different.

"Our experience of working on magazines is that a lot of the games should never have been released, because if the programmers had any idea about the market they



would have realised the games weren't going to get anywhere," says Andy Smith.

Another lesson that the Asylum team have learned from their journalistic experience is that there's no long-term future in trying to cash in on the success of other games. "If I see one more cute and fluffy platform game I'm going to puke," says Bob. "I like platform games, but there are so damn many of them and so many of them have been done before. A lot of people seem to have stopped looking for ways of doing things differently."

So, the Asylum team have seen hundreds of games that are either mediocre or just plain bad, but what, in their opinion are the really groundbreaking Amiga games, whose ranks they want *Zeewolf* to join?

Bob Wade: "I'll still play the original BBC version of *Elite*. That game just has so many of the right elements in it. *Populous* probably did more than any other game to popularise the Amiga."

Andy Smith: "I suppose one of the best games has to be *Kick Off*, simply because of the effect it had at the time. When we were working at Future Publishing everybody played it, we set up a league of four divisions and 32 teams."

Andy Wilton: "*Stunt Car Racer*, *Virus* and *Sentinel*. They all made 3D exciting and made you think in terms of 3D ideas like depth and height. What that tells you is that if you get the game physics right, 3D can be incredibly gripping."



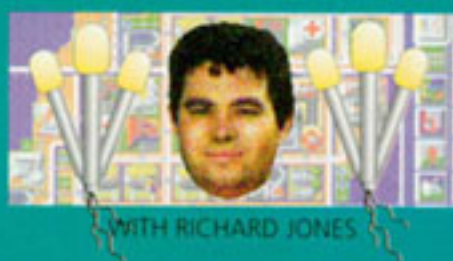
Asylum

FAVOURITE AMIGA GAMES:

Elite, *Kick Off*, *Virus*, *Sentinel*, *Stunt Car Racer*.

CURRENT PROJECT:

Zeewolf ('a thinking man's shoot-em-up').



ASYLUM INTERVIEWED

You've seen them here, you've seen them there, but just who are Special Reserve?

Special Reserve

The Games Club

Special Reserve are the leading mail order computer games company in Europe. Over 180,000 people have joined the club since it's beginnings way back in 1988. We pride ourselves on giving our customers the best prices, biggest selection and the best service. We have over 18 lines to take your calls and qualified staff to handle your requests. We sell games and accessories all at amazing prices for Megadrive, Master System, Game Gear, Super NES, Gameboy, NES, Lynx, Amiga, Atari ST, PC, CD Rom and Apple Mac. And we sell T-Shirts and cuddly toys!

The excellent prices that you see advertised everywhere (in your regular copy of Amiga Format for instance) are available only to members, BUT membership costs from just £4.99 and even if you add that cost to the price of the item you want, it will still be cheaper than anywhere else! There is no obligation to buy anything from us and you can be any age to join. Make sure that you phone us to check out our prices first!

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CD GAMES

WELCOME TO



42



AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL
GAMES



THE FUTURE

CDs are coming, ready or not. And if it means 'Bye bye, Sonic! Bye bye, Mario!' then it could be worth it, even if prices of £50 a game are already a reality. Damien Noonan explains...

The new CD³² is already in mass production in Commodore's Far East factories and goes on sale in October. If you want to know how to make your own, here's how you do it.

First take an A1200: the AGA chip set, 32-bit architecture, EC68020 central processor, 2Mb of RAM. Remove every single interface, then squash down the printed circuit board to make it a hell of a lot smaller.

Next put the stereo audio sockets and composite video socket back on, and replace the RGB with an S-VHS video connector. Add a couple of joystick ports and a keyboard connector.

Then let everything else hang off the edge of the PCB in an edge connector which will give hardware expansions, and especially the new MPEG1 full-motion video gadgetry, direct access to all the Central Processing Unit and video chip functions. Then attach a CD-ROM drive. You may encounter problems here, so design a new gate array chip to handle input and output.

Next, you'll need an operating system that will run the CD drive, so design a Workbench 3 variant and squirt it all into a massive 2Mb Kickstart ROM chip. This baby will never need a Workbench disk! Then do something really radical: add in a special

chip designed to convert PC graphics to Amiga screen display "on the fly", in real time. That should keep more than a few programmers happy!

Finally add the cosmetic touches: a nice, compact case, a flip-top lid for the CDs, a volume control and headphone socket. And there you have it – the world's first 32-bit, CD-driven console! And because it's based on an A1200, it'll only cost £299!



Theme Park, a management sim/god game with a difference from the Bullfrogs, is currently under development for the CD³².

But wait! What's this? A £200 boxful of chips that plugs into the edge connector and makes it the world's first digital video player too for a sum total of £499? Yes, please! I'll have one...

For those of you with short attention spans, here's Everything You Need to Know About CDs in – what do you reckon? Three paragraphs? OK.

One: you don't have a choice about whether you want them or not. Compact

discs will certainly take over from floppy disks as the main format for games, just as surely as they will take over from the cartridges used by Sega and Nintendo consoles.

Two: CDs will mean a big change in game technology simply because they can hold 650 megabytes of data – about as much as 750 Amiga floppies could store. We're going to see a big shift towards the mega-epic interactive movie style of game.

Three: what will happen to prices is anybody's guess. Some people fear we're facing a rip-off price rise, similar to what happened when music moved from vinyl albums to CDs. With the price of Psygnosis' first mega-epic *Microcosm* set at about £50, they could be right.

'But,' I hear you say. 'But, why are CDs going to take over? Don't we have a choice?' Well, not really. Here's how CD has become

the only way forward for games. The software industry has always ticked along quite happily, generally making decent money and occasionally coining it in. But it has always been riddled by a paranoid sense, based on two unspoken beliefs, that it was being denied the enormous profits it deserved. Firstly, there was the myth of the Great

Popularity Breakthrough. This stated that just around the corner was a time when computer games would become really popular, that games machines would be as common in households as video recorders and software publishing would make heaps of cash and gain the kind of media credibility accorded to music, films or books.

Second, there was the Piracy Problem Hypothesis. This stated, quite unprovably, that if games weren't sold on copyable

"We feel that CD32 is the most significant hardware launch of recent years. The combination of the power of the machine, its aggressive price and the potential software support, will give it every chance of being a huge success in 1994."

Tom Watson,
Renegade

★ **Whether you like it or not, CDs will take over as the main format for games** ★



Right: Ocean's CD³² flight sim TFX is now in the late stages of development.

Below: The CD³² version of the truly excellent Pinball Fantasies is even better than the original.

"The Amiga CD is a leap forward in terms of technology and gives the user a more up-to-date choice in the plethora of CD formats available."

Mark Lewis,
Managing
Director,
Electronic Arts
UK



media like floppy disks then the publishers would shift about ten times as many copies and make much, much more dosh.

About three years ago, a crucial phase of change started. Sega and Nintendo were gearing up for the vast marketing push which would make Mario and Sonic household names, but to create a real 'scene' they needed more good games. In Britain, there lurked a vast, ready-made supply of games-writing talent and top-quality titles.

The tight restrictions on who could publish games on Sega and Nintendo cartridges were relaxed and more UK publishers got involved. As numbers of console owners increased, thanks to Sega's and Nintendo's aggressive marketing, games sales went up and up. And since the games were on cartridges, casual piracy didn't damage sales.

All would seem to be well in console heaven – mass sales, mostly unharmed by piracy. Yet there were problems.

For starters, there was the strategy of the console makers. Essentially, Sega and Nintendo sell their hardware at a loss. They then make all their profit from the sales of games – originally by publishing all the games themselves, then later by charging a licence fee enforced by protection code and control over cartridge manufacture.

So if you're a publisher wanting to get a Sega game published, not only do you have to send it to Sega for approval, you also have to pay the company to make the cartridges for you. This tight control soon rankled with publishers who were used to open access systems such as the Amiga. The second problem is

the high cost of production. Since each cartridge is hardware, centred around a chip, it costs a lot to make – around £7 per unit, including the licensing fee. Not only is that massive compared to the cost of disk duplication, it's also a big risk.

If you make too many carts and even a few don't sell, the cost of the unsold units could wipe out your profits. "A difference of five per cent in how many you order could make the difference between profit and loss on a game," an insider at Gremlin told us.

Equally, the production time is so long – we're talking months – that if you have a surprise hit and it sells out, you don't have time to order more copies and 'maximise' your profit. And, worse still, the customers were getting pretty peeved. Parents were shocked at the £30-£40 cost of games when

AMIGA CD GAMES: THE FIRST GENERATION

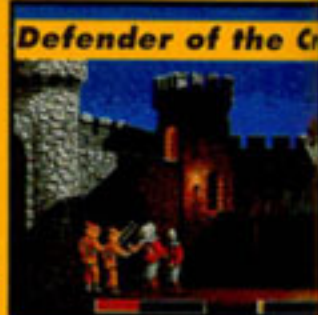
When CDTV came out, the software publishers were still all falling over each other trying to jump on the console bandwagon, so they hadn't yet developed the keen belief they have nowadays that CD-based games are The Future. As a result, they hardly fell

over themselves to develop for CD and since CDTV sold about as well as Bristol City season tickets, the market for CDTV games never grew and the initial trickle of games dried up to a mighty none at all. Let's see what you could have got, because most are now available for CD³².

Lemmings came free with the machine and was simply a straight port of the Amiga version plus, to fill space, a demo animation of a plane flying over a fractal landscape, later turned into the only marginally more playable *Microcosm*. The CDTV remote control joystick's notchy response made it tricky to play *Lemmings* by spoiling that vital leap to get the cursor over the Builder before he tumbled to his doom.

Defender of the Crown was not only the first Amiga game but also the first ever game out on CD, in a PC version in 1989. It featured a full stereo hi-fi soundtrack – lots of nice brassy trumpet fanfares – but the gameplay was the same as the Amiga original and looked pretty faded.

Sim City followed the same 'add a hi-fi soundtrack' idea, using



Left: *Creation* is being developed by the Bullfrog team for CD³² and promises to be one hell of a god game.

Below: The CD³² version of *Syndicate* should be even bigger and better than the original.

four pleasant jazz-rock tunes recorded by a Paris band, but it also tweaked the gameplay a bit with new scenarios and a clever 'zoom in' mode. Still a good version, if you don't have the original.

Falcon, one of the best Amiga flight sims, was supposed to be out on a disc that also included several of the add-on missions, which made it pretty good value. On the down side, it had to be adapted to play from a joypad, which took out a lot of the detail, and when Robert Maxwell took his dive its publishers, the Maxwell-owned Mirrorsoft, did too.

Battlestorm, an Amiga shoot-em-up, is the only one carried to the CD³² catalogue out of several very average arcade-style games released for CDTV. It's not worth buying. The only really promising action release for CDTV was *Xenon 2*, complete with a real hi-fi ver-

sion of its original Bomb the Bass soundtrack (they were a popular pop band of the time, junior) but that too vanished with Mirrorsoft.

The Case of the Cautious Condor came from the Japanese FM Towns system and was probably the first game ever developed especially for CD. It won awards, but when we got our hands on it

the console had already set them back a hundred quid, and they soon found out about the makers' price control methods. Government inquiries are still underway, in America and Britain.

It's against this background that CDs begin to seem like the way forward for the software industry. CDs can be made cheaply (around £1.70 per unit, including all packaging) and quickly, so orders can respond to demand. They have attractions for the buyer (you and me) in that they are a more robust, tidier and more familiar format.

Another gain for the software publishers might be in the shelf life of games. Sales of games are curtailed by the short time they stay on display in the shops – often as little as two weeks. If retailers like WH Smith were willing to stock CD games more like they stocked music, shelf lives would improve and so would sales.

So CDs have obvious attractions for the software publishers. Commodore recognised this a long while ago, and has committed itself to CD to keep the publishers happy. This way, Commodore ensures that new games continue to be brought out for the Amiga – without new games, the Amiga would soon lose its appeal to buyers.

But Commodore also sees CD as giving it other commercial advantages. Amiga CD is an 'open system' – one for which anyone can develop games without paying the hardware makers a fee – and that puts pressure on Sega and Nintendo to follow suit.

If Sega and Nintendo are forced to move to open CD systems, they lose the income from game licensing, meaning that they can no longer afford to lose money on selling hardware. This pushes up their prices massively, creating direct Amiga-versus-console competition.

Already you can see this tactic working. Nintendo is going to be very late into the CD market – early next year at best – but Sega tried to get in first with the Mega CD. It costs £269 in the high street just for the CD



add-on, the MegaDrive you plug it into bringing the complete system up to £350. This outdated, overpriced botch-job looks pretty sad alongside an Amiga CD³² console, purpose-designed around new technology, at £299.

And, finally, there's a whole lot more at stake too. We're now facing the extinction of the computer games system As We Know It, to be replaced by a new kind of home entertainment system. Commodore hasn't been entirely successful as a computer company:

★ These games may look great but the gameplay is likely to be utter tripe ★

after unsuccessful attempts to make it in the business world with its PC range, only sales of the Amiga have saved the company from going bust.

But Commodore still has its sights set on making it big. Dominating Sega and Nintendo in the computer games market is a tiny, tiny thing compared with what's up for grabs is the Home Entertainment System competition which will dominate the second half of the Nineties.

This long-term plan underlays the whole CDTV idea, which Commodore cocked up badly but which will now come into its own. The key to it is digital video –

"This is the most exciting technology. I'm quite sure that with Commodore's track record the new machine will be a tremendous success in Europe."

Geoff Heath,
Managing
Director,
Mindscape



we discovered this was mainly for its cartoon graphics, especially the excellent 20-minute scene-setting intro, and not for the gameplay, of which it had barely sufficient to cover the back of a postage stamp.

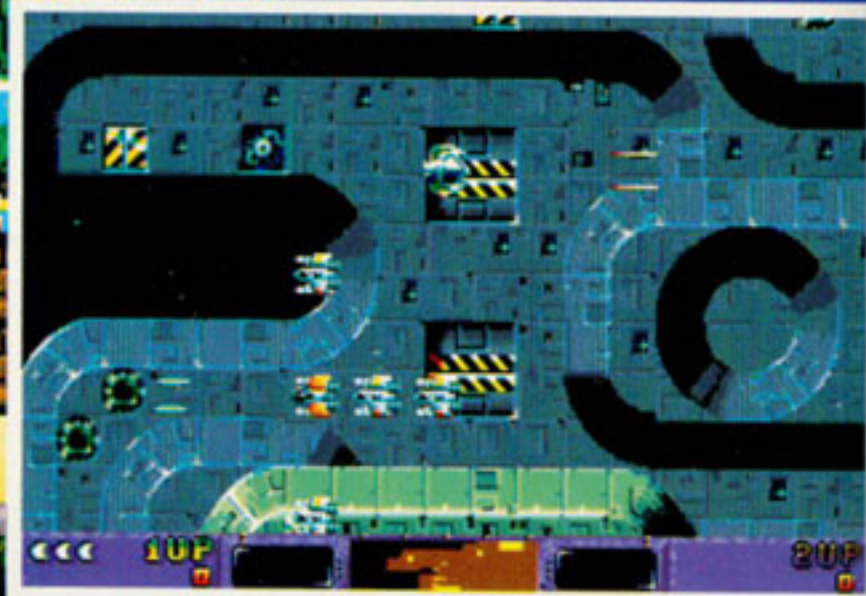


Above: Oscar is a 256-colour platform game designed for the CD³² by Flair.

Top inset: Andy Braybrook's Uridium is destined for the new CD³².

Bottom inset: The classic Zool could soon be on CD³².

Below: The Case of the Cautious Condor was the first game to be developed specifically for CDTV.



videos on CD – which are technologically ready and will soon transform the video market the way CD did music.

The only reason video on CD hasn't happened already is that you need too much data – 50 screens of picture have to be pulled from the disc every second, in addition to the audio soundtrack. CD drives just can't shift data this quickly.

The problem is solved by data compression, and all the firms interested in digital video co-operated on research to establish a standard form of data compression. They set up an organisation called the Motion Picture Expert Group (MPEG), which last year finally came to its conclusions and defined a standard for video data compression.

The practical application of this is a standard set of silicon chips which perform the data compression and decompression. This is known as the MPEG FMV chip set.

By October, Commodore reckons it will have an add-on available for the CD³² console that contains the FMV chips and therefore can play videos from CD. The plug-in box will cost about £200, but spend that and in one machine, you'll have a video player (digital video too – no more deteriorating tapes, but benefits like perfect freeze frame) as well as a hi-fi audio player and a

computer games console. Plus, if you buy a keyboard and a floppy or hard drive, you've got a personal computer as well. Zowee!

And this isn't just pie in the sky. Already, deals have been signed to release 50 popular movies on the MPEG1 CD standard by Christmas. And because the chips are standard, even Commodore can't mess it up and miss the deadline.

So now you know the hidden agenda. You know why you're getting CD whether you like it or not. Just to recap: one, the software houses hope for improved sales and

★ With the Amiga CD console Commodore can get off to a flying start ★

wider profit margins; two, Commodore thinks that in a fair hardware-versus-hardware fight, it can beat Sega and Nintendo; and three, Commodore can get a flying start in the war of integrated, digital-video based Home Entertainment Systems. So in a way we, the customers, are innocent bystanders caught up in a commercial war. We haven't asked for CD games. Is there anything in it for us?

Well, the thing you're supposed to find sexy is the 650 Megabytes of storage. That massive amount of space leaves plenty of room for gorgeous graphics in full AGA chip technicolour. The mega-epic, movie-style game is meant to be the big attraction of CD, the one thing that will make it stand out and add the "Hey! I want one!" factor.

Personally, I reckon these games may look great, but the gameplay is likely to be utter tripe for the foreseeable future. This is the conclusion you're likely to start hearing

in the first reviews of Psygnosis' *Microcosm*, appearing in an Amiga magazine near you soon. From what I've seen of *Microcosm*, it looks great but is severely lacking on the gameplay front. If this is the case with the first batch of CD³² games, it's just as well that the CD idea has other attractions.

For starters, some sort of common sense is likely on pricing. We're promised a set price of £29.99 for CD³² games, but I've heard a growing consensus that publishers need to work towards a £20 price for games. As sales grow and the anti-piracy effect of CD is felt, that target should become more and more realistic.

Second, the large capacity of a CD has other advantages besides mega-epics. Seven-disk games such as *Monkey Island* will easily fit on a CD, so you won't need a hard drive to play the more mature, PC-style adventures – and they should cost an awful lot less to produce, because they don't need all those disks for data storage.

Similarly, we can expect some decent compilations, particularly of games that have extra bits: flight sims with added missions, for example, or golf games with loads of different courses. Plus your average 'jumble sale' compilation should see a bit of a renaissance – I'd hope to see themed ones, like all the Bub 'n' Bob games (*Bubble Bobble*, *Rainbow Islands*, *Parasol Stars*) on one CD at £29.99.

So in the short term, we're not losing out. In the long term, we could be winners in a very big way.

If lessons are learnt from the sheer quality of gameplay in games such as *Monkey Island*, then the mega-epic movie-style game will really come into its own. Imagine a game of the quality of *Monkey Island* with film footage of actors, or Walt Disney-style animation, instead of graphics... with sampled speech and music... can't you imagine a pretty stunning game? It's not so very far away, you know...



About 10 years ago a young programmer called David Braben wrote a space trading game called *Elite*. It is still regarded by many as the finest ever Amiga game. For the past five years David has been working on *Frontier* (*Elite 2*), which should be in the shops very shortly. David has created *Frontier* virtually single-handed, so how does it feel to spend five years of your life working on one game?

"Programming is very tedious and very fiddly," says David. "I would hate to be just a programmer. The bit that gets me going is working on the design."

It may seem a strange admission from the man responsible for programming one of the best games ever, but many programmers agree with David. At best programming is boring, at worst it's a complete and utter hair-pulling-out, pain of a business.

★ I hope that *Frontier* will be as different to what is around now as *Elite* was when it was released ★

Anyway, how does David feel about the universal praise that was, and still is, heaped on *Elite*? "I am very proud of *Elite*. I suppose that one of the reasons it has been such a success is because I was in the right place at the right time, but I'm particularly pleased that it has stood the test of time."

David wrote *Elite* on a BBC Micro about 10 years ago: "At the time people said that it was impossible to do 3D on those machines. It was a real breakthrough when I realised it could be done because the only thing I had seen then was *Battle Zone* in the arcades."

Right: *Frontier* (*Elite 2*): took five Braben-years to develop.

Below: The man who created *Elite*... David Braben



For the last five years David has been working on *Frontier*, it promises to be a huge game, but is it just a reworking of *Elite* or is it an entirely different game?

"It's very different," says David. "I'd certainly like to think that it's as different to what is around now as *Elite* was when it was originally released."

Frontier is a 3D space adventure in which you have a huge number of gameplay options because you can play different characters, such as a pirate, mercenary or smuggler, each of which effects the gameplay in a different way. The galaxy is modelled on current astrological charts and there are more than 80 basic missions, but you can just ignore them and go wherever you want to.

Frontier is, in the words of its creator: "a very, very big game."

So with the release imminent, is Braben preparing to take on another mammoth solo venture? "I probably won't do such a major project on my own again, most teams for a similar sort of project would have 10 or more people involved."

Depending on the success of *Frontier*, David is considering setting up such a team, but one area of games design he has reserva-



Is *Elite* the best Amiga game ever? We talk to the guy who created it, and we find out even more...

David Braben

FAVOURITE MACHINE:

Programs on an A4000

LEAST FAVOURITE GAMES:

Most film licences

tions about getting involved in is the film licence business. "One of the things that is a shame at the moment is the pressure for short term projects such as licences. You might only have six months to complete the game, and if you only have such a short time, you tend to be derivative."

"I think that people will always judge games for gameplay, and anybody with any sense should realise just how important the gameplay is."



Left: *Frontier* is a 3D space adventure, which, in the words of David Braben is: "a very, very big game." It should be in a shop near you soon.

DAVID BRABEN INTERVIEWED







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**ALL THE GOOD GAMES
DON'T HAVE TO BE OLD**

**AMIGA DEVELOPERS ALL
AROUND THE WORLD ARE EVEN
NOW BRINGING US GREAT NEW
GAMES SUCH AS YO! JO!.
AND THERE'S EVEN MORE IN THE
PIPELINE FOR YOUR AMIGA!**

**DOESN'T IT JUST MAKE
YOU FEEL WARM AND
SMUG INSIDE?**

WIN YOUR VERY OWN AMIGA CD³²

The picture you see beneath this piece of prose could be your passport to one of **TWO 32-BIT AMIGA CD³²** consoles we have to give away. Yes, that one of Commodore UK's joint managing director, David Pleasance, and the UK's own 'Mr Breakfast' - *The Big Breakfast's* Chris Evans at the Science Museum launch of the latest Amiga to hit the streets.

This time there are no questions to answer, nothing to research, and no worrying that someone with less taste and less need than you will win the wonderful prize simply because their poxy postcard showing a picture of 'Nighttime in Rhyl' came out of the editor's huge hat first. This competition calls for an element of skill and rare wit. Failing that, it requires some silly words and the odd bit of libellous content (see rule six for clarification on this). In fact we'll even lob in some clues to guide you towards that very rarest of commodities - the correct sense of humour for the prize.

What we're looking for here is a line of no more than 30 words (that's quite a long line if you think about it, I mean this is 23 words long and it's dragging already!) that sums up the picture's feel, it's ethos, it's atmosphere and timbre... oh hell! We want one that makes us laugh. And we want it by October 30th, in English, printed or type-written and sent to the following address: My Line Is It Anyway Comp, *Amiga Format* Specials, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. You can have as many goes as you like, as long as they're all funny. Couldn't be easier. And here are the clues:

- 1) Chris Evans was squirting people with a water pistol at the launch of the CD³².
- 2) David Pleasance has just taken over from Kelly Sumner as Commodore UK's joint MD.
- 3) His joint MD is called Colin Proudfoot.
- 4) Sega also has a CD-based console - the Mega CD - and we don't think it's much cop.
- 5) Oh come on, you don't really want any more clues this is easy, it really is. So just get writing.

OH, AND GOOD LUCK.

FAIRPLAY NOW! FAIRPLAY!

THE STRICT AND STRINGENT RULES OF THE COMP' FOR THE FABULOUS PAIR OF AMIGAS ARE AS FOLLOWS MUSH...

- 1) NO EMPLOYEES OF FUTURE PUBLISHING OR COMMODORE OR COMMODORE'S PR COMPANIES CAN ENTER.
- 2) THE EDITOR'S (PROBABLY HUMOURLESS) DECISION IS FINAL!
- 3) ENTRIES WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED ON POSTCARDS OR THE BACK OF SEALED ENVELOPES.
- 4) MULTIPLE ENTRIES WILL BE LAUGHED AT AND BINNED.
- 5) ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 30TH.
- 6) ANYTHING LIBELLOUS REGARDING EITHER OF THE PICTURED PEOPLE WILL NOT BE PRINTED. NO WAY. NO HOW. NOPE! NEVER EVER. (that's okay then: happy lawyers).



This CD³² could be yours... all yours if you can create a mouth-tearingly funny, yet relevant, caption. No, not to the picture below you fool – to that one on the left!



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**TWO
TO BE
WON!**

FULL HOUSE

Wanting to expand the sum total of your knowledge we talked to every software house we could find to build a list of all the available Amiga games, well probably all.

Scattered across the land are dozens of software houses beavering away adding to the already vast range of games available for your Amiga - which already boasts more and better games than any comparable machine. What follows is a massive six page listing of the currently commercially available games from each software house for you to drool over and save up for.

The software house under which a game is listed is not necessarily the originator of the game and there can be a confusing number of companies involved in developing a game. For example there's a development team (either in-house, or an independent group like Bullfrog), then you have the publishers and the distributors, who are not always the same people.

When a game stops selling too well it is often moved on to a budget range, repackaged and given a drastic price cut, often with another publisher. Foreign games will often be distributed by a different UK firm. Companies also get bought up by other companies or sell games on. Tracking down a specific title isn't always easy.

In addition to this two of the biggest publishers, Ocean and US Gold have large budget ranges culled from the catalogues of other publishers while at the bottom of the heap come companies such as Prism. Its list, especially the Pocket Power range, is the last resting place of many a game.

Looking through the list you'll find that a few favourites are missing. These games have either been deleted at full price and not released as budget, or are from outfits no longer with us. Psygnosis, for example, is notable for not having a budget label and never selling on old games, while some classic games from now defunct companies might take a while to resurface again.

To give you the maximum information we have included the year, issue number and score of games reviewed in **Amiga Format** where possible. With so many games released and limited space, not all got a look in, and some date from before **Amiga Format's** time. You'll find some games are re-reviewed when released on budget.

We can't promise to have included every game currently available or every software house working on the Amiga, a small label or two might have escaped our beady eye, but we think what follows is the most up to date and complete list of currently available Amiga games you'll find, phew.

Game	Price	Year	AF Rating
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21st Century Entertainment
West Brook Street
Blewbury
Oxfordshire OX11 9QB
☎ 0235 851852

<i>Deliverance</i>	£29.99	92	35	80%
<i>Moonfall</i>	£29.99	91	22	71%
<i>Nebulus 2</i>	£29.99	91	27	63%
<i>Pinball Dreams</i>	£29.99	92	33	84%
<i>Pinball Fantasies</i>	£29.99	92	41	90%
<i>Rubicon</i>	£29.99			

Accolade
Bowling House
Point Pleasant
London SW18 1PE
☎ 081 8770880

Best selling game: Elvira 2

<i>Elvira 2</i>	£24.99	92	34	81%
<i>Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf</i>	£29.99	89	3	78%
<i>Waxworks</i>	£34.99	93	43	72%
<i>Zyconix</i>	£19.99	92	41	75%

Alternative Software
Units 3-6
Baileygate Estate
Pontefract
West Yorkshire WF8 2LN
☎ 0977 797777

Best selling game: Dr. Who Dalek Attack

<i>Allo Allo Cartoon Fun</i>	£19.99			
<i>Bully's Sporting Darts</i>	£9.99	93	46	72%
<i>Count Duckula 1</i>	£7.99			
<i>Count Duckula 2</i>	£7.99			
<i>Crossbow - William Tell</i>	£7.99			
<i>Dr. Who Dalek Attack</i>	£16.99	93	43	59%
<i>Fallen Angel</i>	£7.99			
<i>Galactic Warrior Rats</i>	£9.99			

Game	Price	Year	AF Rating	
<i>Gilbert</i>	£7.99			
<i>High Steel</i>	£7.99	89	2	39%
<i>Huckleberry Hound</i>	£9.99			
<i>Hulk Hogan's Commando</i>	£19.99			
<i>Jaws</i>	£7.99			
<i>Munsters</i>	£7.99			
<i>Pixie + Dixie</i>	£9.99			
<i>Popeye 2</i>	£7.99	92	39	68%
<i>Postman Pat</i>	£7.99			
<i>Postman Pat 3</i>	£7.99			
<i>Sooty and Sweep</i>	£7.99	92	39	80%
<i>Thomas the Tank Engine</i>	£7.99			
<i>Thomas the Tank Engine 2</i>	£9.99			
<i>Tracksuit Manager</i>	£7.99			

Audiogenic
Unit 27
Christchurch Industrial Centre
Wealdstone
Harrow HA3 8NT
☎ 081 4242244

Best selling game: Graham Gooch's World Class Cricket

<i>Emlyn Hughes Arcade Quiz</i>	£19.99	91	21	38%
<i>Emlyn Hughes Int. Soccer</i>	£25.99	90	14	78%
<i>Exile</i>	£25.99	91	23	68%
<i>Exterminator</i>	£25.99	91	20	64%
<i>Five Nations Rugby</i>	£29.99	92	35	69%
<i>Graham Gooch's Cricket</i>	£29.99	93	47	78%
<i>Helter Skelter</i>	£19.99	90	16	87%
<i>Loopz</i>	£19.99			
<i>World Class Rugby</i>	£25.99	92	31	68%
<i>Wreckers</i>	£24.99	91	22	82%

Beau Jolly
29A Bell Street
Reigate
Surrey RH2 7AD
☎ 0737 222003

Best selling game: The Greatest

<i>Big Box 2 -</i>	£29.99			
<i>(R-Type, Back to the Future 3, IK+, TV Sports Football, Shanghai, Rocket Ranger, Real Ghostbusters, Sinbad, Defenders of the Earth, Bombuzal)</i>				
<i>The Greatest</i>	£32.99	93	46	91%
<i>(Dune, Lure of the Temptress, Jimmy White's Snooker)</i>				
<i>Power Pack 2</i>	£29.99			
<i>(Wings, It Came from the Desert, Battlemaster, Predator 2)</i>				

Codemasters
Lower Farm House
Stoneythorpe
Southam
Warwickshire CV33 0DL
☎ 0926 814132

Best selling game: First Division Manager

<i>Bignose the Caveman</i>	£7.99	93	43	65%
<i>Bubble Dizzy</i>	£7.99			
<i>Captain Dynamo</i>	£7.99	92	40	67%
<i>Cartoon Collection</i>	£24.99	92	37	84%
<i>(Seymour goes to Hollywood, Spike in Transylvania, Slightly Magic, Dizzy, C.J.'s Elephant Antics)</i>				
<i>CJ in the USA</i>	£7.99	92	40	79%
<i>CJ's Elephant Antics</i>	£7.99			
<i>Crystal Kingdom Dizzy</i>	£19.99	93	45	65%
<i>Dizzy Collection</i>	£24.99	92	30	78%
<i>(Fast Food, Kwix Snax, Fantasy World Dizzy, Treasure Island Dizzy, Magicland Dizzy)</i>				
<i>Dizzy Panic</i>	£7.99			
<i>Dizzy Prince of the Yolkfolk</i>	£7.99	92	41	81%
<i>Dizzy's Excellent Adventures</i>	£24.99	92	35	77%
<i>(Dizzy Panic, Bubble Dizzy, Dizzy Prince of the Yolkfolk, Spellbound Dizzy, Kwix Snax)</i>				
<i>Fantasy World Dizzy</i>	£7.99			
<i>Firehawk</i>	£19.99	93	48	65%
<i>First Division Manager</i>	£7.99	92	34	66%
<i>Hoversprint</i>	£7.99	92	35	67%
<i>Kamikaze</i>	£7.99			
<i>Kwix Snax</i>	£7.99	92	33	55%
<i>Little Puff</i>	£7.99			
<i>Magicland Dizzy</i>	£7.99			
<i>Mean Machine</i>	£7.99			
<i>Miami Chase</i>	£7.99			
<i>Pro Boxing</i>	£7.99			
<i>Quattro Fighters</i>	£7.99			

Game	Price	Year	AF Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF Rating
(SAS Combat, Mig-29, Kamikaze, Guardian Angel)				Action Sixteen (label):				Empire			
Quattro Power Machines	£7.99	93	46 68%	Flight of the Intruder	£14.99	93	42 82%	The Spires			
(Violator, Grand Prix, Pro Powerboat, Nitro Boost Challenge)				F-16 Combat Pilot	£9.99	92	34 80%	677 High Road			
Quest of Aggravain	£7.99			Falcon	£14.99	92	39 90%	North Finchley			
Robin Hood Legend Quest	£7.99	93	45 65%	Operation Counterstrike	£9.99	92	39 80%	London N12 0DA			
Seymour goes to Hollywood	£7.99	92	38 77%	(Falcon Data Disk)				☎ 081 3437337			
Skyhigh Stuntman	£7.99			Operation Firefight	£9.99	92	39 78%				
Slightly Magic	£7.99			(Falcon Data Disk)				Best selling game: Campaign			
Soccer Pinball	£7.99	92	40 46%	North and South	£7.99	92	37 84%	Award Winners	£25.99	92	34 85%
Spike in Transylvania	£7.99			Advanced Destroyer Simulation	£9.99	92	35 67%	(Populous, Space Ace, Kick Off 2, Pipemania)			
Steg the Slug	£7.99	92	36 83%					Campaign	£34.99	92	41 79%
Super All Stars	£25.99	93	43 75%	Coktel Vision (label):				Campaign	£15.99	93	50 82%
(Steg the Slug, Magicland Dizzy, Captain Dynamo, CJ in the USA, Robin Hood Legend Quest)				Ween	£29.99	93	42 50%	(Data Disk)			
Super Seymour	£7.99			Goblins	£29.99	92	38 81%	Combat Classics	£29.99	92	42 88%
Treasure Island Dizzy	£4.99			Goblins	£25.99	93	42 82%	(F-15 Strike Eagle II, Team Yankee, 688 Attack Sub)			
Violator	£7.99			Fascination	£29.99	92	39 65%	Cool Croc Twins	£25.99	92	37 88%
Core Design				Domark				Deathbringer	£25.99	92	30 71%
Tradewinds House				Ferry House				International Sports Challenge	£29.99	92	37 68%
69/71 Ashborne Road				51-57 Lacy Road				Leeds United	£25.99		
Derby DE22 3FS				Putney				Megatraveller	£29.99	91	24 70%
☎ 0332 297797				London SW15 1PR				Megatraveller 2	£29.99	92	38 82%
Producers of the brilliant Thunderhawk and the outfit that brought Chuck Rock into the world.				☎ 081 7802224	Best selling game: Championship Manager 93			Millennium	£29.99		
Best selling game: Chuck Rock								Pacific Islands	£29.99	92	35 93%
Blob	£25.99	93	51 83%	AV8B Harrier Assault	£39.99	93	43 60%	Soccer Stars	£25.99		
Car-Vup	£25.54	91	19 83%	Championship Manager 93	£25.99	93	48 82%	Space 1889	£29.99	92	31 59%
Chuck Rock	£25.54	91	22 80%	European Football Manager	£25.99			Space Legends	£29.99	93	46 91%
Chuck Rock II	£25.99	93	46 81%	Head to Head	£34.99			(Wing Commander, Megatraveller, Elite Plus)			
Corporation	£25.54	90		International Rugby Challenge	£25.99	93	47 16%	Sports Masters	£29.99	93	44 90%
Corporation Mission Disk	£15.36	90		Rampart	£25.99	92	41 75%	(PGA Tour, Indy 500, Advantage Tennis, European Championship 1992)			
Curse of Enchantia	£34.99	92	41 62%	Super Space Invaders	£24.99	91	29 83%	Team Yankee	£29.99	90	16 81%
Doodlebug	£25.99	92	41 72%	Electronic Arts				Volfied	£25.99	91	29 72%
Frantic	£25.99	91		90 Heron Drive				War in the Gulf	£25.99	93	46 78%
Heimdall	£34.99	91	29 88%	Langley				Touchdown (Budget Label)			
Jaguar XJ220	£25.99	92	37 83%	Berks SL3 8XP				Let Sleeping Gods Lie	£9.99	92	38 60%
Premiere	£30.99	92	39 89%	☎ 0753 549442	Best selling game: Populous			Gazza's Super Soccer	£9.99		
The Adventurers	£25.99							Emlyn Hughes	£9.99	92	38 77%
Thunderhawk	£30.99	91	26 90%	Air, Land and Sea	£34.99	92	30 73%	Pipemania	£9.99	90	9 81%
Torvak the Warrior	£25.54	90	17 69%	Aquatic Games	£25.99	92	40 86%	Flair			
Warzone	£20.99	91	24 73%	Birds of Prey	£34.99	92	30 88%	The Smithy Side			
Wolfchild	£25.99	92	33 76%	Black Crypt	£25.99	92	34 78%	7 Belle Villas			
Cyberdreams				Castles	£29.99	92	35 72%	Ponteland			
9a Canfield Place				Castles - Data Disk	£14.99			Northumberland NE20 9BD			
London NW6 3BT				Castles 2	£34.99	93	51 73%	☎ 0661 860260			
☎ 071 32832687				Desert Strike	£29.99	93	46 87%	Best selling game: Trolls			
Darkseed	£34.95	93	44 72%	Global Effect	£29.99	92	36 67%	1869	£29.99	93	46 90%
Daze Marketing				Gold of the Americas	£25.99			Trolls	£25.99	93	44 64%
2 Canfield Place				Halls of Montezuma	£25.99	91	25 43%	Trolls A1200	£25.99	93	47 85%
London NW6 3BT				Harpoon	£34.99			Whales Voyage	£29.99	93	47 80%
☎ 071 3282762				Harpoon Battleset 2	£14.99			Grandslam			
Daze Marketing specialises in distributing UK versions of games from abroad including juicy French RPGs, yummy.				Harpoon Battleset 3	£14.99	92	34 78%	3 Rathbone Square			
Best selling game: Ishar: Legend of the Fortress				Harpoon Scenario Editor	£19.99			28 Tanfield Road			
Boston Bomb Club	£9.99	93	48 77%	Indy 500	£25.99	90	17 92%	Croydon			
Bunny Bricks	£9.99	92	41 78%	John Madden Football	£25.99	92	33 94%	Surry CR0 1AL			
Crystals of Arborea	£9.99	93	46 52%	Lord of the Rings	£25.99	92	30 72%	☎ 081 6807044			
Ishar	£29.99	92	37 76%	Panzer Battles	£25.99	92	37 69%	Best selling game: Nick Faldo's Championship Golf			
Ishar A1200	£29.99	93	48 77%	PGA Golf	£29.99	91	22 90%	Beastlord	£19.99		
Ishar 2	£29.99	93	50 79%	PGA Golf Courses - Data Disk	£14.99	92	33 72%	Beavers	£25.99	93	47 75%
Magic Worlds	£25.99			Populous II Challenge	£14.99	92	41 80%	Chambers of Shaolin	£25.99		
(Dragon's Breath, Storm Master, Crystals of Arborea)				(Data Disk)							
Metal Mutant	£9.99			Populous II Plus	£34.99						
Nicky Boom 2	£25.99	93	51 72%	Powermonger	£29.99	91	18 94%				
Starblade	£9.99	93	48 51%	Powermonger Data Disk	£14.99						
Storm Master	£12.99	93	46 89%	Reach for the Stars	£25.99						
Superski 2	£9.99	93	49 68%	Risky Woods	£25.99	92	37 65%				
Super Sports Challenge	£25.99	93	51 53%	Road Rash	£25.99	92	41 84%				
The Patrician	£32.99	93	51 89%	Rome AD92	£29.99	92	40 77%				
Transarctica	£29.99			Syndicate	£34.99	93	49 91%				
Transarctica A1200	£32.99	93	48 60%	The Bards Tale	£29.99	93	45 66%				
Digital Integration				(Construction Set)							
Watchmoor Trade Centre				Warlords	£25.99	91	22 85%				
Watchmoor Road				Wing Commander	£29.99	93	44 83%				
Camberley				Star Performers (Budget Label)							
Surry GU15 3AJ				Battlechess	£10.99						
☎ 0276 684959				Bards Tale III	£10.99	91	23 69%				
Best selling game: F-16 Combat Pilot				Centurion	£10.99	91	24 79%				
				Elite Systems							
				Anchor House							
				Anchor Road							
				Aldridge							
				Walsall WS9 8PW							
				☎ 0922 55852							
				Joe and Mac	£24.99	93	43 74%				



BAT 2: action-packed adventures from UBI Soft.

KOSHAN INC.

Game	Price	Year	AF Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF Rating
Chubby Gristle	£9.99			Unit 2/12				The Lost Vikings	£29.99	93	49 79%
Die Hard 2	£25.99			Chelsea Garden Market				Kompart			
England Football	£25.99			Chelsea Harbour				25 Hart Road			
Espionage	£19.99			Lots Road				St Albans			
Grandslam Collection	£29.99	92	42 57%	London SW10 0XE				Herts AL1 1NF			
(The Running Man, The Flintstones, Scramble Spirits, Espionage, Saint and Greavsie, Terry's Big Adventure, Trivia, England Football, Peter Beardsley's Football, Terramex)				☎ 071 3512133				☎ 0727 868005			
Liverpool	£25.99	92	39 45%	Best selling game: Caesar				Kompart acts as distributor for a number of developers and smaller software houses including Blue Byte and Hudson.			
Nick Faldo's Championship Golf	£34.99	93	43 90%	Afrika Korps	£29.99	91	24 64%	Apidya	£25.99	92	35 90%
Paciland	£9.99			Air Bucks	£29.99	92	38 72%	Arsenal	£25.99		
Pacmania	£9.99			Blitzkrieg May 1940	£25.53			Back Sides	£25.99	93	51 34%
Peter Beardsley Int. Soccer	£9.99			Breach 2 Enhanced	£29.99			Battle Isle 93	£25.99	93	48 81%
Scramble Spirits	£9.99	90	10 54%	Caesar	£29.99	92	41 91%	Creatures 2	£25.99		
Space Harrier	£9.99			Caesar Deluxe	£29.99			Fat Man	£25.99		
T-Pac	£9.99			Charge of the Light Brigade	£29.99			Historyline 1914-1918	£34.99	93	43 94%
Terramex	£9.99			Chariots of Wrath	£24.99	92	36 42%	Yol Jol	£25.99	93	50 91%
Terry's Big Adventure	£9.99			Cohort II	£29.99	93	47 55%	Woody's World	£25.99		
The Flintstones	£25.99			Cohorts - Fighting for Rome	£29.99			Disney Software (Distributed by Kompart)			
The Gates of Jambala	£19.99			Discovery	£29.99	92	37 72%	Roger Rabbit	£25.99	92	33 25%
The Hunt for Red October	£9.99			Feudal Lords	£29.99			Dick Tracy	£30.99		
The Hunt for Red October 2	£25.99			Fighter Command	£29.99			Krisalis			
The Running Man	£25.99			Fort Apache	£29.99	92	30 68%	Teque House			
Thunderbirds	£25.99			Great Napoleonic Battles	£29.99	92	33 40%	Masons Yard			
Trivia	£9.99			Kenny Dalglish Soccer Match	£24.99			Downs Row			
Warp	£9.99			Merchant Colony	£29.99	91	23 67%	Moorgate			
Gremlin				Paladin 2	£29.99	92	41 69%	Rotherham S60 2HD			
Carver House				Power Up	£7.99			☎ 0709 372290			
2-4 Carver Street				Raider	£7.99			Best selling game: MUFC Europe			
Sheffield S1 4FS				Renaissance	£7.99			Arabian Nights	£25.99	93	46 80%
☎ 0742 753423				Rorke's Drift	£25.53	90	13 62%	Graham Taylor's			
These people brought you Zool, an amazing success story for Gremlin and a huge boost to the game playing cred of your Amiga. Thank you.				Samurai	£29.99	92	35 65%	Sporting Challenge	£25.99	92	37 82%
Best selling game: Zool				The Final Conflict	£29.99			John Barnes European Football	£25.99	92	37 42%
Lotus 3	£25.99			Universe 3	£29.99			Sabre Team	£25.99	92	41 87%
Nigel Mansell	£29.99	93	42 55%	Warriors of Releyn	£29.99	92	38 59%	Shadowlands	£25.99	92	33 93%
Nigel Mansell A1200	£29.99	93	47 55%	Energise (Budget Label)				Shadowlands	£25.99	92	41 85%
Premier Manager	£25.99	93	43 87%	Ancient Games	£7.99			Soccer Kid	£29.99	93	51 93%
Space Crusade				Classic 4	£7.99			Vikings	£25.99	92	38 62%
+ Voyage Beyond	£25.99	93	45 72%	Cap'n Carnage	£7.99			Buzz (Budget Label)			
Utopia + The New Worlds	£29.99	92	39 74%	Cybercop	£7.99			Face Off Hockey	£9.99	93	50 70%
Voyage Beyond (Data Disk)	£14.99	93	45 72%	Emperor of the Mines	£7.99			Hill Street Blues	£9.99	93	50 80%
Zool	£25.99	92	39 95%	FC Manager	£7.99			MUFC Europe	£9.99	93	50 60%
Zool A1200	£25.99	93	47 85%	Hyperaction	£7.99			Loriciel			
GBH (Budget Label)				Int. Championship Athletics	£7.99	91	27 58%	7 Rue Du Fosse Blanc			
Footballer of the Year 2	£7.99			Jungle Jim	£7.99			92624 Gennevilliers Cedex			
Hero Quest	£9.99	93	45 86%	Legend of the Lost	£7.99			France			
James Pond	£7.99	92	33 90%	Renaissance	£7.99			☎ 010 331 46882838			
Janangir Khan Squash	£7.99	92	41 63%	Ringside	£7.99			Baby Jo	£24.99	92	30 58%
Lotus 2	£9.99	93	49 87%	Soccer Match	£7.99			D-Day	£29.99	93	50 59%
Lotus Esprit	£9.99	92	35 87%	Striker No.9	£7.99			Entity	£25.99	93	50 58%
Man. United	£9.99	92	36 74%	Super League Soccer	£7.99			Golden Eagle	£24.99	91	18 59%
Supercars	£7.99	90	8 86%	Tee Off	£7.99			Golden Eagle, the Return	£24.99		
Supercars 2	£9.99	92	41 82%	The Munchies	£7.99			Jim Power	£24.99	92	37 85%
Switchblade 2	£9.99	92	41 79%	Tornado Ground Attack	£7.99			Panza Kick Boxing	£24.99		
Team Suzuki	£7.99	92	37 87%	Trivia Gameshow	£7.99			Paragliding	£24.99		
The Shoe People	£9.99			Web of Terror	£7.99	90	15 48%	Simulation's Best	£24.99		
Toyota Celica GT Rally	£7.99	92	33 73%	1000cc Turbo	£7.99			Sport's Best	£24.99	92	36 75%
Ultimate Golf	£9.99	92	32 90%	Simulmondo/IFF/Hawk (Distributed by Impressions)				(Panza Kick Boxing, Tennis Cup, Turbo Cup)			
Video Kid	£9.99	93	45 83%	Crime City	£29.99	92	33 70%	Tennis Cup	£24.99	90	11 83%
World Boxing Manager	£7.99	92	41 60%	Formula 1 3D	£29.99			Tennis Cup 2	£24.99	92	38 80%
HiSoft				GP Tennis Manager	£24.99	91	24 81%	Tiny Skweeks	£24.99	92	41 81%
The Old School				I Play 3D Soccer	£24.99			Top Simulation	£24.99		
Greenfield				The Basket Manager	£24.99			Microprose			
Bedfordshire				The Executioner	£25.53	91	27 40%	Unit 1			
☎ 0525 718181				Infogrames				Hampton Road Industrial Estate			
Proflight	£19.95	91	25 75%	18A Old Town				Tetbury			
ICE				Clapham				Glos GL8 8LD			
Bridge House				London SW4 0LB				☎ 0666 504326			
Merrywalks				☎ 071 7388199				If it's got a motor and you can drive or fly about in it then these people have probably produced a simulation of it. Microprose produces some outstanding games that others are measured against.			
Stroud				Best selling game: Sim City Deluxe				Best selling game: F1 Grand Prix			
Glos GL5 1QA				Advantage Tennis	£25.99			Ancient Art of War in the Skies	£34.99	93	48 87%
☎ 0453 756993				Alcatraz	£25.99	92	35 76%	B17 Flying Fortress	£34.99	93	46 91%
Abandoned Places 2	£29.99	93	45 87%	Sim City + Populous	£29.99			Civilization	£34.99	92	38 94%
Fire Force	£25.99	93	42 71%	Sim City Deluxe	£35.99			F1 Grand Prix	£34.99	92	32 92%
Gnome Alone	£25.99	93	43 50%	Tetris	£19.99	91	23 70%	Gunship 2000	£34.99	93	49 94%
Piracy	£29.99	93	43 50%	Interplay				Best selling game: Battlechess (now on Electronic Arts budget label)			
Mean Arenas	£25.99	93	51 76%	The Barn							
Impressions				St. John's Yard							
				Main Road							
				Fyfield							
				Oxon OX13 5LN							
				☎ 0865 390029							

Game	Price	Year	AF	Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF	Rating	Game	Price	Year	AF	Rating
Knights of the Sky	£34.99	91	29	88%	Sports Collection	£19.99				Flight Path 737	£2.99	91	25	10%
Microprose Golf	£34.99	92	30	90%	(Pro Tennis Tour, Run the Gauntlet, World Cup Soccer, Italia '90)					Fly Fighter	£2.99			
Railroad Tycoon	£34.99	91	22	92%	Superfighter	£25.99				Football Manager	£2.99			
Silent Service II	£34.99	91	28	82%	(Pitfighter, Final Fight, WWF Wrestlemania)					Frost Byte	£2.99	91	25	69%
Special Forces	£34.99				The Dream Team	£25.99	93	43	70%	Goldrunner	£2.99			
Super Tetris	£29.99	92	38	68%	(Bart Vs. Space Mutants, Terminator 2, WWF European Rampage)					Goldrunner II	£2.99			
Mindscape					Wizkid	£25.99	92	37	93%	HATE	£2.99			
Priority House					WWF European Rampage Tour	£25.99	93	43	18%	Highway Patrol II	£2.99	90	10	48%
Charles Avenue					Hit Squad (Budget)					Hotshot	£2.99			
Maltings Park					688 Attack Sub	£12.99	93	48	73%	Ice Hockey	£2.99			
Burgess Hill					Bart v the Space Monsters	£12.99	93	47	83%	International Soccer	£2.99			
West Sussex RH15 9PQ					Budokan	£12.99	93	48	80%	Iron Trackers	£2.99			
☎ 0444 246333					Chase HQ II	£9.99	91	18	76%	J.U.G.	£2.99			
Mindscape lives in a large designer slab built from an almost unimaginable number of little plastic bricks. Rumour has it that the inside is like St. Marks in Rome.					Forth and Inches	£12.99	93	47	42%	Jump Jet	£2.99			
Best selling game: Captive					Gunboat	£12.99	93	50	75%	Karting Grand Prix	£2.99			
4D Sports Driving	£14.99	92	33	33%	Hard Nova	£9.99	93	50	44%	Las Vegas	£2.99			
4D Sports Boxing	£14.99	92	30	79%	Hardball	£9.99				Mad Show	£2.99			
Aces of the Great War	£14.99	91	23	65%	Hudson Hawk	£7.99	93	45	62%	Manhattan Dealers	£2.99			
Captive	£14.99	90	16	91%	Mean 18	£9.99				Mouse Trap	£2.99			
DiGeneration	£14.99	92	37	66%	Mig-29 Fulcrum	£12.99	93	46	91%	Phantasm	£2.99			
Das Boat	£14.99	91	23	79%	Pictionary	£7.99	93	48	81%	Plutos	£2.99			
Knightmare	£14.99	93	46	85%	Pitfighter	£7.99	91	28	60%	Prospector	£2.99			
Legend	£14.99	93	46	88%	Populous + Promised Lands	£12.99	93	47	89%	Protector	£2.99	91	25	13%
Life and Death	£14.99	91	25	70%	Prince of Persia	£7.99	93	45	74%	Quadrailien	£2.99			
Megafortress	£14.99	92	38	77%	RBI 2 Baseball	£7.99	93	45	82%	Quantox	£2.99			
Moonstone	£14.99	93	46	72%	Robocop 2	£7.99	91	18	80%	Seconds Out	£2.99			
Sim Life	£34.99				Run the Gauntlet	£7.99				Shaolin Warriors	£2.99			
Sim Life AGA	£34.99	93	50	86%	Shadow Warriors	£7.99	90	14	42%	Slayer	£2.99	89	5	43%
TV Sports Baseball	£14.99	93	43	65%	Sly Spy	£7.99				Space Dudes	£2.99			
TV Sports Boxing	£14.99	93	43	46%	Smash TV	£7.99	93	45	89%	Space Station	£2.99			
Worlds of Legend	£24.99	93	48	88%	Strike Fleet	£12.99	93	47	88%	Star Blaze	£2.99			
Mirage					Super Hang On	£7.99				Star Goose	£2.99			
No.12 Moody Street					Terminator 2	£7.99	93	46	69%	Star Ray	£2.99			
Congleton					Test Drive 2	£7.99	93	46	62%	Steel	£2.99			
Cheshire CW12 4YR					The Addams Family	£9.99	93	46	88%	Super Ski	£2.99			
☎ 0260 299909					The Cycles	£9.99	93	49	80%	Tanglewood	£2.99			
Best selling game: Humans					The Immortal	£12.99	93	49	82%	Thai Boxing	£2.99	91	25	16%
Ashes of Empire	£39.99	92	37	85%	The Simpsons	£9.99	91	26	82%	The Grail	£2.99			
Humans	£29.99	93	42	72%	Toki	£9.99	93	50	86%	Turbo Trax	£2.99			
Humans - the Jurassic Levels	£29.99	93	47	72%	Total Recall	£7.99	92	40	79%	Warzone	£2.99			
Humans - the Jurassic Levels (Data Disk)	£19.99	93	47	72%	Trivial Pursuit	£7.99	93	46	62%	5th Gear	£2.99	90	8	42%
Ragnarok	£34.99	93	45	60%	Untouchables	£7.99	92	34	38%	Mad Pack	£9.99			
Ocean					Voyager	£7.99	93	43	92%	(Fighter Mission, Mad Show, Thai Boxing, Electronic Pool)				
2 Castle Street					Wizball	£7.99				Soccer Mania	£19.99			
Castlefield					WWF Wrestlemania	£9.99	93	48	43%	(Football Manager 2, Gazza's Super Soccer, Microprose Soccer, Soccer Manager World Cup)				
Manchester M3 4LZ					Oxford Softworks					Speed Pack	£9.99			
☎ 061 8326633					Stonefield House					(Highway Patrol, Phantasm, Chicargo 90, Jump Jet)				
Ocean is known for the big film licences such as Batman, Terminator and the forthcoming Jurassic Park.					198 The Hill					Sports Pack	£9.99			
Best selling game: Robocop					Burford					(Windsurf Willy, Hotshot, Karting Grand Prix, 5th Gear)				
2-Hot 2-Handle	£29.99				Oxford OX18 4HX					Star Pack	£9.99			
(Shadow Warriors, Total Recall, Golden Axe, Super Off Road)					☎ 099 3823463					(Eye of Horus, Star Ray, Star Goose, Quadrailien)				
A-Train	£34.99	93	45	84%	Chess Champion 2175	£19.99	90	13	77%	Triple Action Vol. 1	£14.99			
A-Train Construction Set	£14.99				Intelligent Strategy Games 5	£25.99				(Deuteros, Hammer Boy, Battle Valley)				
Cool World	£25.99	93	42	62%	Omar Sharif's Bridge	£34.99	92	38	58%	Triple Action Vol. 2	£14.99			
Epic	£29.99	92	37	34%	Prism					(Seconds Out, Hunter, Lancaster)				
F-29 Retaliator	£25.53	90	11	92%	Unit 1					Triple Action Vol. 3	£14.99			
Games Espana 92	£29.99	92	39	43%	Baird Road					(Targan, Titus the Fox, Ghostbusters II)				
Hollywood Collection	£30.64	91	18	80%	Enfield					Triple Action Vol. 4	£14.99			
(Ghostbusters 2, Indiana Jones, Robocop, Batman the Movie)					Middlesex EN1 1SJ					(Grand Prix Master, Crazy Cars III, Battletech)				
Hook	£25.99	92	38	48%	☎ 081 8048100					Triple Action Vol. 5	£14.99			
International Golf Challenge	£25.99	93	51	80%	A game often spends its last days of commercial viability in the Prism range, where you'll find dozens of old games at a more than reasonable price.					(Satan, The Blues Brothers, Maya)				
Lethal Weapon	£25.99	93	43	64%	The range includes classics such as R-Type II.					Turbo Pack	£9.99			
Ninja Collection	£19.99				Best selling game: Football Manager					(Iron Trackers, Dark Fusion, Turbo Trax, Steel)				
Parasol Stars	£25.99	92	36	87%	Pocket Power (Budget)					PC Hits (Budget)				
Power Up	£30.64				Airball	£2.99				Battletech	£9.99			
Pushover	£25.99	92	38	86%	Archipelagos	£2.99								
One Step Beyond	£19.99	93	51	78%	Artificial Dream	£2.99								
Rainbow Collection	£19.99				Bad Company	£2.99	90	8	71%					
(New Zealand Story, Bubble Bobble, Rainbow Islands)					Battle Bound	£2.99								
Robocop 3	£25.99	92	32	91%	Battle Valley	£2.99								
Robosport	£29.99	92	40	90%	Battleships	£2.99								
Sim Ant	£34.99	92	36	73%	Beyond the Ice Palace	£2.99								
Sim Earth	£34.99	92	39	79%	Chicago '90	£2.99								
Sleepwalker	£25.99	93	44	91%	Dark Fusion	£2.99								
Sleepwalker A1200	£25.99	93	47	89%	Deflektor	£2.99								
					Demolition	£2.99								
					Dogs of War	£2.99								
					Electronic Pool	£2.99								
					Eye of Horus	£2.99	90	6	61%					
					Fighter Mission	£2.99								
					Fireblaster	£2.99								



AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL
GAMES



Left: *Uridium 2* is the Amiga version of Andy's action-packed blaster *Uridium*.

Below: Programmer and bass guitar player Andy 'Geddy Lee' Braybrook.



Andy Braybrook began programming for GEC Marconi writing accounting programs, he went on to produce *Rainbow Island*, possibly the best-ever Amiga game...

Andy Braybrook

FAVOURITE PASTIME:

Playing Bass Guitar

FAVOURITE 70S ROCK BAND:

Rush

Most of the programmers we've spoken to started out messing about with 8-bit computers in their bedrooms and slowly worked their way up the programming ladder into full-time employment. Not so Andy Braybrook, he was employed as a programmer by GEC Marconi writing accounting programs in Cobol. Andy explains how he made the switch into games programming. "I was playing bass in a rock band. Steve Turner was in another band playing lead guitar, and writing stuff on the Spectrum in

his spare time. Steve decided to make the break and start his own company (Graftgold) and a few months later, in September 1983, he asked me to join him."

"Steve gave me a job interview when he came round to my house on a Friday night like he did every week before we went to the pub. It went something like: 'Do you want to work for me?' 'Yeah, OK.' 'Right, let's go down the pub.' So I took about a 50 per cent cut in pay and we set up in Steve's living room."

So was it hard leaving GEC Marconi?

"Not really", says Andy.

"I had long hair and I think I was something

but then Ocean bought it and released it," explained Andy.

★ I missed out on a few pay rises because I wouldn't get a haircut ★

Below and Right: *Uridium 2*, is based on the original *Uridium* Andy wrote in 1986.



Andy is currently working on *Uridium 2*, an enhanced and updated version of the excellent spacecraft shoot-em-up he programmed for the C64 in 1986. It's the first version of *Uridium* for the Amiga.

"It's just about finished," he says. "It's a fast, scrolling shoot-em-up (and it looks good in preview too, ed), that should have the feel of the original, but be better."

In the meantime Andy has got his band back together again and is trying to think of a name for it that the drummer approves of. He is also eagerly awaiting the release of the new Rush album.



WITH RICHARD JONES

ANDY BRAYBROOK INTERVIEWED

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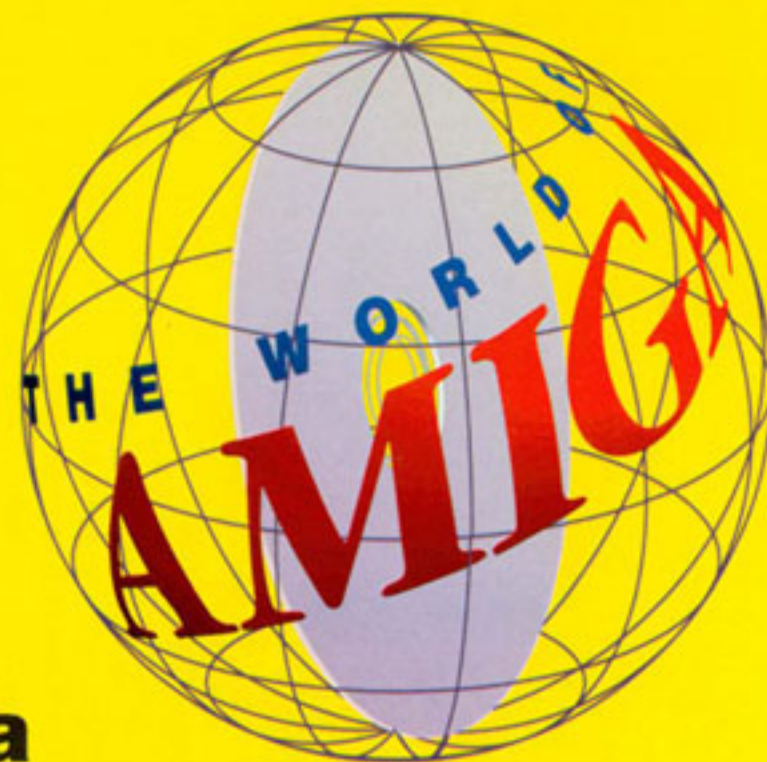
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GAMES FOR A LAUGH



game is to successfully complete a number

Some games in life are mad, they can really make you sad, while other games just make you swear and curse. These are the mad ones. So, Join our panel of fading celebrities as they award the **Amiga Format Special Silly Game Awards of 1993...**

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Good evening Ladies, Gentlemen. You join us here at the Walthamstow British Legion club on a very special occasion. We're here to award the coveted **Amiga Format Jury De Maison Publique** statuettes, or Cyrils as they are popularly known. These sought-after trophies are given for services below and behind the level of sanity.

Since issue one in August 1989, **Amiga Format** has reviewed some 1,000 games. Many of these are now just dim and distant memories but some games, no matter what kind of score they received, stay fresh in everyone's mind. This is because they are odd, peculiar, bizarre and, for these reasons, we remember them fondly.

We'd like to celebrate these bizarre games with you. We feel that the tortured geniuses who invented them should be recognised; they should get a pat on the back for providing more unintentional laughs per minute than a speech by John Major.

THE ARTHUR ASKEY VETERAN'S AWARD

Amiga games have been hatstand for quite some time now. All the games in this category were released well before 1990. The weirdness started with a game called *Wizball*.

This Ken Dodd of a game was one of the first 16-bit programming efforts from Sensible Software. The game is about a ball called (stop me if you've heard it), *Wizball*. This little red blob is the servant of a wizard and it's his job to zip around Madland collecting colours. Along the way *Wizball* collects various power-ups including a satellite *Wizball* called *Cat*. Fortunately, the game's as brilliant as it is bizarre, managing to mix a great inertia system with some massively frantic zapping. We reckon that this is more than overdue for a re-release, so how about it Sensible?

Our second nomination is a stalwart of the weird game feature. It comes from the land of the cheap mutton import (that's France EEC fans) and it's called *Captain Blood*. The story-line is about an intergalactic pirate called Captain Blood who goes through a displacement beam and gets split into nine different entities. The idea of the exercise is to zip around the universe, tracking down all the different Captain Bloods. The game includes some truly great pre-rave psychedelic patterns and lots of completely meaningless conversation with alien lifeforms.

The third game in this category has a surprisingly similar feel to *Captain Blood*. The game is called *Purple Saturn Day* and it's also a French national. This bizarre *numero francais* is a futuristic sports event in which you compete in reflex and intelligence tests so unusual that you'll forget your name for several minutes.

And finally, in this category we have the 1989 Mindscape game, *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top of Fun*. The idea of this multi-event

of circus acts. There's the high diving, the unicycle juggling, the trapeze, the knife throwing and the highwire act. It's difficult to say which is the oddest of these events, but the knife throwing, in which you get to hit the spinning girl, must rank as some of the weirdest Amiga entertainment ever.

So there we have it, the oddest pre-1990 games for the Amiga. And the winner in this highly-competitive category is:

Captain Blood. Congratulations to the French and their most excellent wine.



THE DIEGO MARADONNA FAIRPLAY IN SPORTS AWARD



Jocky Wilson's Darts: winner of the Cyril for most peculiar sports game. Well done.



Sports simulations are great, they bring out the competitive side in people and get the old adrenaline pumping. Then of course there are sports simulations from the Oddth dimension, games that bring out the disdainful side in people and get the amino acids pumping. This category is for those games which simulate some bizarre sport.

Straight off the starting blocks is that masterpiece of deconstructive programming, *Grand National*. The idea of the game is to coax a racehorse through a few seasons, winning as much prize/betting money as possible. The race is viewed from overhead with bushes and fences hurtling by as the aspiring Desert Orchids conserve just enough energy to complete a charge for the finishing line. In other words it's all completely pointless and about as exhilarating as *Country File*.

★ **Purple Saturn Day is so bizarre that it may cause you to forget your name** ★



How we laughed at the hilarious sporting moments featuring Biffa Bacon, Roger Melee and all the other Viz characters.



Bunny Bricks. Quite why a programmer invented a game in which a rabbit swipes at bricks with a tennis racket is beyond us.

Another surprising choice for conversion to an Amiga game is darts. Zeppelin's budget release of 1991 was sponsored by Jocky Wilson and is notable because it's surprisingly fun. The idea is to point a wavering hand roughly where you want the dart to hit; manage the top score and a suitably northern voice shouts out "180!". What with the head-to-head and the fabulous round-the-clock variations included in the game, this is chillingly good fun, but bat's-arse nonetheless.

The callous and extremely rude humour which typified the comic *Viz* was transferred quite brilliantly by Virgin in their Amiga *Viz* sports game. Such *Viz* regulars as Buster Gonad, Johnny Fartpants and Biffa Bacon competed in an absurd race and took part in individual events which lent themselves to each character's peculiar talents. Unfortunately, despite the humour, the game was very disappointing and seems very dated now.

The final entry into this category is *Bunny Bricks*. Ostensibly this is a *Breakout*-style game in which you bounce a ball up



the screen, wiping out a wall of bricks. The twist is that instead of a bat at the bottom of the screen you have a bunny rabbit with a racket. This floppy-eared rodent slices and top spins the puck with considerable grace, making the whole thing most peculiar.

That's the contenders and now the winner. The Cyril Award for Weirdest Sport Game ever goes to *Jocky Wilson's Darts*. Well done Zeppelin.

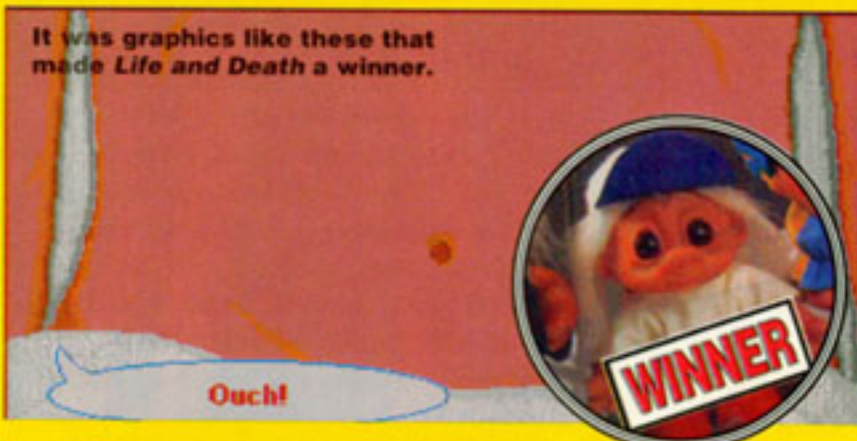
THE ASIL NADIR AWARD FOR STRATEGY GAMES

The ability to think your way through a game is something that has only become important since games got an IQ. The strategy game in particular requires considerable amounts of brain power, as it calls on you to plan ahead. The weird strategy or adventure game, however, requires you to plan ahead laterally and holistically taking into account I-Ching, Akido, Chun Li and astrology. To complete a weird strategy game you've got to be one odd sod.

Picture the scene, your body catches a



Germ Crazy: My mum's solution to all germs was a regular dousing in Savlon or Dettol...

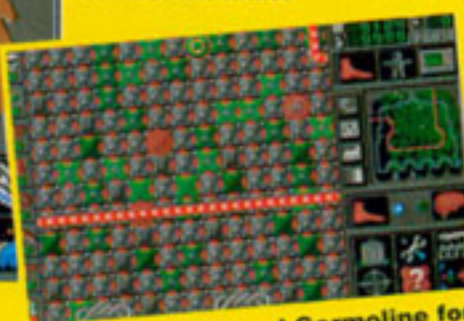


The action is nerve-janglingly tense in the aircraft control tower sim *Tower FRA*.

virus. The rock-hard marines of antibodies that whizz around in your blood go into battle and defeat the nasty illness. Now imagine that you're controlling the distribution of those antibodies, you decide what happens where. That's the idea of *Germ Crazy*. This queer old game enables you to plonk germs, quarterize sections of the body, lop off limbs and generally go body-barmy. Mad, mad, mad.

Funnily enough, the human body in its many-splendoured states was the subject of *Life and Death*. In this tasteful slice-em-up, you can have a bash at operating on your

very own sick person. The whole medical process is lovingly simulated, from diagnosis to recovery (or more likely, death). You control the anaes-



...She also favoured Germoline for those nasty grazes. Thanks mum.

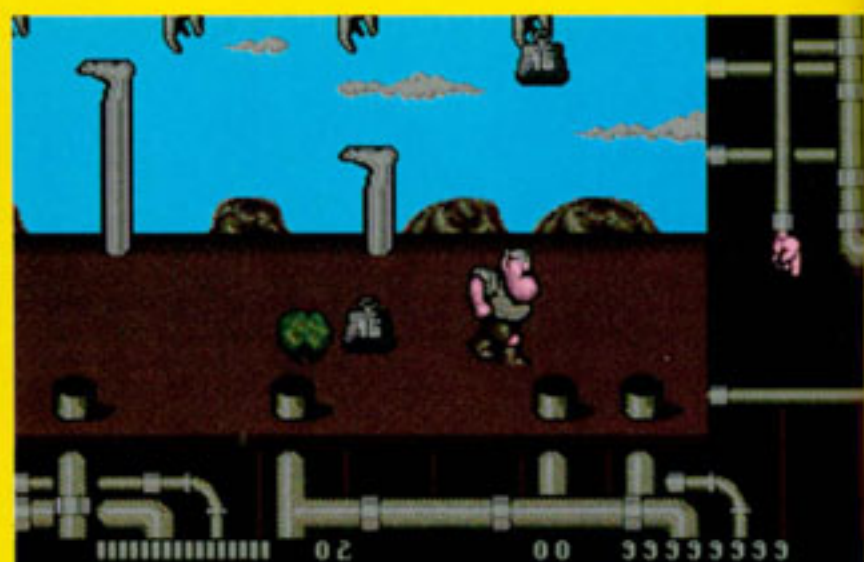
★ The floppy-eared rodent top-spins the puck with some elegance ★

SimAnt(tn) 1991 Maxis

Quick Game



Did you favour the magnifying glass or the kettle of boiling water when torturing ants as a child?



Monty Python: spam, egg and spam, sausage and spam, sausage egg and spam, spam, spam and...

thetic, the blood flow and which bit of the body gets removed. Virginia Bottomley is believed to be interested in using *Life and Death* as a training aid for junior doctors.

Near-missingly enough, life and death is the underlying theme to *Tower FRA*. This is a simulation of an aircraft control tower in which you track the movements of planes and try to get them all on to the ground in one vaguely plane-shaped piece. The most disturbing aspect to the game is how realistic it is; the radar display looks just like the real thing, although the robot voices provide a few inadvertent comic moments.

Ever wondered what ants do all day, beside legging it from kettles of boiling water? The hugely eccentric *Sim Ant* enables you to find out. The idea is to ensure the survival of your tribe of ants. You do this by breeding lots of ants, finding lots of food and fighting off spiders and other ants. Best of all is the experimental mode in which you can spray the ants with insecticide.

So those are the nominees for weirdest strategy game of the year. The winner of the Cyril in this category is *Life and Death*. We'll take death.

THE ROBERT MAXWELL ACTION GAME AWARD

It's very tricky to get an action game right, balancing the amount of adrenaline that gets expended with the difficulty of the game.

One thing is for certain, the plot-line is usually completely superfluous

because all that's being tested are your reflexes.

Then there are those action games with that special something: oddness. You wouldn't expect a terribly sane game from a Monty Python licence, but

Virgin got seriously bizarre. During the



Wizkid: a surreal peanut-em-up, the object of which is to collect lots of cats.

course of play you get mini lectures on trees (number two: the Larch, the Larch), cheese and lumberjacks. The actual game involves guiding a fish through an oil refinery, avoiding a bush with legs and collecting tins of spam. Pythonesque.

There's nothing quite like attaching a famous name to a game in the hope that it will shift a few more copies. This was exactly what Loriciel hoped for when it released the million seller(!), *Steve McQueen*. Basically, this is an *Operation Wolf* style game set in the Irrational West and Steve McQueen's role in



Steve McQueen: never was the west won in such colourful fashion.



Neighbours: shallow rip-off of *Home and Away* isn't it. That Lucy's a bit tasty though isn't she. Well we think so.



Wizkid proves that the Sensible Software lads have spent too long in the sun.

the proceedings is limited to a couple of photos in the manual. What with the purple buildings and the gun fighters in their bright red chaps, this is wonderfully hokey.

Another spectacularly odd (and crap for that matter) licence was Impulze's *Neighbours* game. Rather than creating something that reflected the television programme, what you actually got was this monstrously freakish skateboard game. The *Amiga Format* reviewer called it the saddest licence of all time. We'd like to add that it's one of the weirdest too.

We've already discussed the oddness of *Wizball*, by that peculiar bunch at Sensible Software, but their oddest game to date is the sequel, *Wizkid*. In this nifty peanut-em-up you have to collect lots of cats. You've also got to bounce leaves off penguins heads, visit the loo a bit and grab all the

colours you can. Most odd indeed, or as they might say on the *Big Breakfast*, where are you Jon Hare?

So those are the contenders in a field packed with quality nominations. It's been a difficult decision, but the winner of the Cyril for Oddest Action Game goes to *Wizkid*.

You know, in a sense, life's one big adventure. We wander into a clearing, go north a bit, examine treasure chests, fall down traps and then wish we'd saved the game. Fortunately, life's adventure is

THE ANNEKA RICE WEIRD ADVENTURE AWARD

★ After about five minutes you've had enough of this bizarre ordeal and want a nice cup of tea ★

WEEN
PETROU

Ween is a supremely peculiar game and a well-deserved winner of the award for Weird Adventure Game.

a lot more bizarre than many of the Amiga adventure games that have appeared on the market over the years. Except for these.

Personally I've always loathed the Famous Bloody Five. I have no soft spot for them, I think they're the worst kind of bland simplistic literature ever to grace a mobile library's shelves. Fortunately *The Famous Five on a Treasure Island* adventure game is just odd enough to save it from a life of ignominy. What with lashings of ginger beer, a spot of sunken treasure and characters called Dick, it's nicely odd in a smashing kind of way.

Plan 9 From Outer Space is widely held to be the worst film ever. Gremlin thought they'd pick up the licence (must have cost

them a lot) and produce a game. Unfortunately the game was crap and bizarre. The idea of the game is to retrieve some film footage that's been lost. After about five minutes you don't want the film footage, you don't even want to play on, you just want to put the bizarre ordeal down to experience and have a nice cup of tea.

We couldn't have a Bizarre Game awards ceremony without including a CD game. That game is the graphic adventure, *Psycho Killer*. The idea of this is to, ermm... hold on, nobody actually knows what the idea of the game is because everybody collapses in fits of laughter after about two minutes. Terminally mad, sad, odd and best forgot. Now *Ween* was a different kettle of

bison. This was unintentionally odd, but also massively and peculiarly addictive. Not only was the plot of the game mad (something about rescuing three grains of sand), but the problems were completely hatstand. For example you had to use a jar of jam to tempt a bat to knock a jar off a

shelf, rub a gold coin with a metal rod to make a cauldron and bribe the king of the ants to pick up a grain of sand. Well odd.

Those are nominees in this category and the winner by a huge mad margin is *Ween*. Those French at it again.

PALME D'HATSTAND 1993

Every year we like to give out a special award to one game which managed to out-weird all the others. This year that game shone through, beating off its rivals by a huge margin and securing a place in Amiga gaming history as the game most likely to appeal to Lord Byron.

This isn't a particularly new game, in fact it first emerged to rapturous applause in 1991, but it remains one of the hokiest ever. It's called *Alpha Waves* and is designed to relax you. This mysterious relaxation process takes place as you bounce a ball off a series of rising and falling platforms in a 3D room. There are different screens for each of your different moods, with lovely sea-blue screens for when you're wound up and day-glo for when you've eaten some dodgy mushrooms (dodgy in the Off sense!).

The actual idea of the game is to reach a relaxed meditative state. Unfortunately, because the bouncing ball is quite hard to control, you end up getting wound up because you've missed a platform and end up in a much worse mood than when you started. This process is somewhat akin to lying in a remote field on a hot summer's day and getting jived off with the racket that the crickets make.

The game's designers were either having a quiet laugh up their French sleeves or else they seriously believed that the experience of seeing a little aquamarine ball bouncing around a screen would cool you down and create a state of deep relaxation. Whatever the case *Alpha Waves* goes down in Amiga history as one of oddest games ever and is a worthy winner of this year's

Palme D'Hatstand. Well done Infogrames.



Alpha Waves: the Amiga games equivalent of a flotation tank, but not as wet...or dark...or big.



Plan 9 was mostly harmless, but was undeniably tedious.

This peculiar artifact is known as a cigar-store Indian and is an integral part of North American folk-love. It is absolutely useless to you.



Wasn't it a shame that the Famous Five didn't become addicted to strong drugs and ended up in rehab unit for teenage delinquents and annoying fictional characters.

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MICROPROSE
Seriously Fun Software

Mev Dinc taught himself to program with a Spectrum. He went on to create the classic *First Samurai*, and his Vivid Image company has just completed work on *Second Samurai*, but it hasn't exactly been a smooth ride for Mev and the Vivid Image team.

Although *First Samurai* is a great game – it raised the beat-em-up to new-found heights and was received with universal praise – only 18,000 copies made it on to the shelves. This was because distributors Mirrorsoft went folded along with the rest of Mr Maxwell's Mirror Group empire.

"*First Samurai* was released through Mirrorsoft, but had only been on sale for a week when Maxwell died," explained Mev. The game was withdrawn as the web of Maxwell's financial intrigue was untangled, and 18 months work was all but lost.

"I'm just getting over all that now that *Second Samurai* is coming to an end, and it's a much, much better game," said Mev.

Mev Dinc wasn't trained as a programmer (he has a degree in economics) and had little to do with computers until a friend got a Spectrum.

He tells a tale of woe that worked out for all of us in the end: "At the time I wanted to do my Phd, but couldn't afford the fees. My friend said I should get a Spectrum to take my mind off the Phd. I just got hooked and spent two years playing around with it. It appealed to me because I have always been interested in logical problems and solving them."

★ We want to explore new ideas, not dress up games with flash graphics and sound effects ★

Mev's first game was *Jodie Germ*, a curious sort of anti-hero affair in which you play a germ that must invade and take over a human body. The game was a hit in America and gave Mev the confidence to go on to create *Prodigy*, *Knightmare*, *Big Trouble In Little China* and *Last Ninja 2*.

In 1988 he set up his Vivid Image software house and stepped back from hands-on programming to take an overview of the company. Vivid Image employs programmers and designers on a freelance basis and the team that worked on *Second Samurai* includes programmers Raffael Cecco, Nick Jones, the Apex programmers and graphics artist Saurav Sarkar.

Vivid Image, says Mev, is committed to exploring new ideas that make good games, rather than dressing up average games with flash graphics and sound or launching games through film tie-ins.

Says Mev: "Personally I'm getting tired of the big film licence games. Look at *Jurassic Park*, it's a brilliant film but I doubt if the game will be any good. I get very annoyed about that because we are trying to create original games and it takes at least two years to do that."

To Mev and his Vivid Image development team a good game is a good game whether it's on floppy disk or CD: "Our attitude has not changed with the technology. No matter what the medium is, our aim is to create good playable games. If it's a

good game on the A500 it is a good game on CD, you can play around with graphics and sound effects, but ultimately it's the same game." And so say all of us in loud voices.

Mev doesn't have a great deal of time to play games but he does have two favourites, *Tetris* because it appeals to his problem solving side, and *Monkey Island 2*:

"To me the humour in games is absolutely paramount. When you write games you write them to entertain people and humour plays a part in entertaining people. That's why I like *Monkey Island 2*, it's very, very, very funny." Thanks for those wise words Mev.

Mev Dinc's Vivid Image team gave the beat-em-up style, class and subtlety with *First Samurai*... now find out what else they've got in store



Second Samurai: the major work in progress from Vivid Image and Mev Dinc.
Far left: The large red plasma-spitting caterpillar thing takes a lot of kicking before it curls up and dies.
Above: The Samurai boys in a bubble. More floaty action with death awaiting the poor gamesplayer.
Below: The Samurais practise synchronised jumping.



MEV DINC INTERVIEWED



With Richard Jones

WIN A SEASON TICKET OR A COPY OF GOAL!

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SCORE BLIMEY! Picture the scene: you're sitting at home with a can of lager and a packet of crisps. Flickering away on the television in the corner of the room are the edited highlights from the Premier League football games. You take a swig of beer, shovel a couple of crisps down your neck and wish you were there, cheering on your team, rather than warming the couch. Come the full-time whistle, you turn to your trusty Amiga and have a few games of the tremendous *Goal!* from the mind of Dino Dini and the software house that is Virgin Games. Or rather you don't, cos you haven't got a copy! Well we're going to cheer you up no end right now...

Well we can make that dream come true, footy fans! In honour of that rather excellent soccer game, *Goal!*, Virgin Games are offering a lucky **Amiga Format Specials** reader a season ticket for any one of the Premiere League teams. That means you can go to every home match for one of these teams:

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QPR	Southampton	Aston Villa						

That's not all. Virgin, being the fine bunch of lads (and lasses) that they are on the day, over the 90 minutes, have given more than 100% – there are also ten (10!) copies of Dino Dini's curling, dipping, driving, swerving, *GOAL!* to be won as well. That's right, you could soon find yourself in possession of one of the finest footy games ever to grace the Amiga, or any other machine for that matter.

And all we want you to do is to answer the following, easy peasy, questions regarding the Great Game and the Amiga. Couldn't really be more simple could it? Oh, please send your answers to: Score Blimey!, **Amiga Format Special**, 30 Monmoth St, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. Make sure to include your name and address as well as the club of your choice.

Questions

- 1) What score did *Goal!* get in a recent issue of **Amiga Format**?
- 2) What other football game is Dino Dini (*Goal!*'s author) famous for?
- 3) Which software house did Dino Dini recently sign to?
- 4) What's the name of Leeds Utd's home ground?
- 5) Which company sponsors Chelsea?

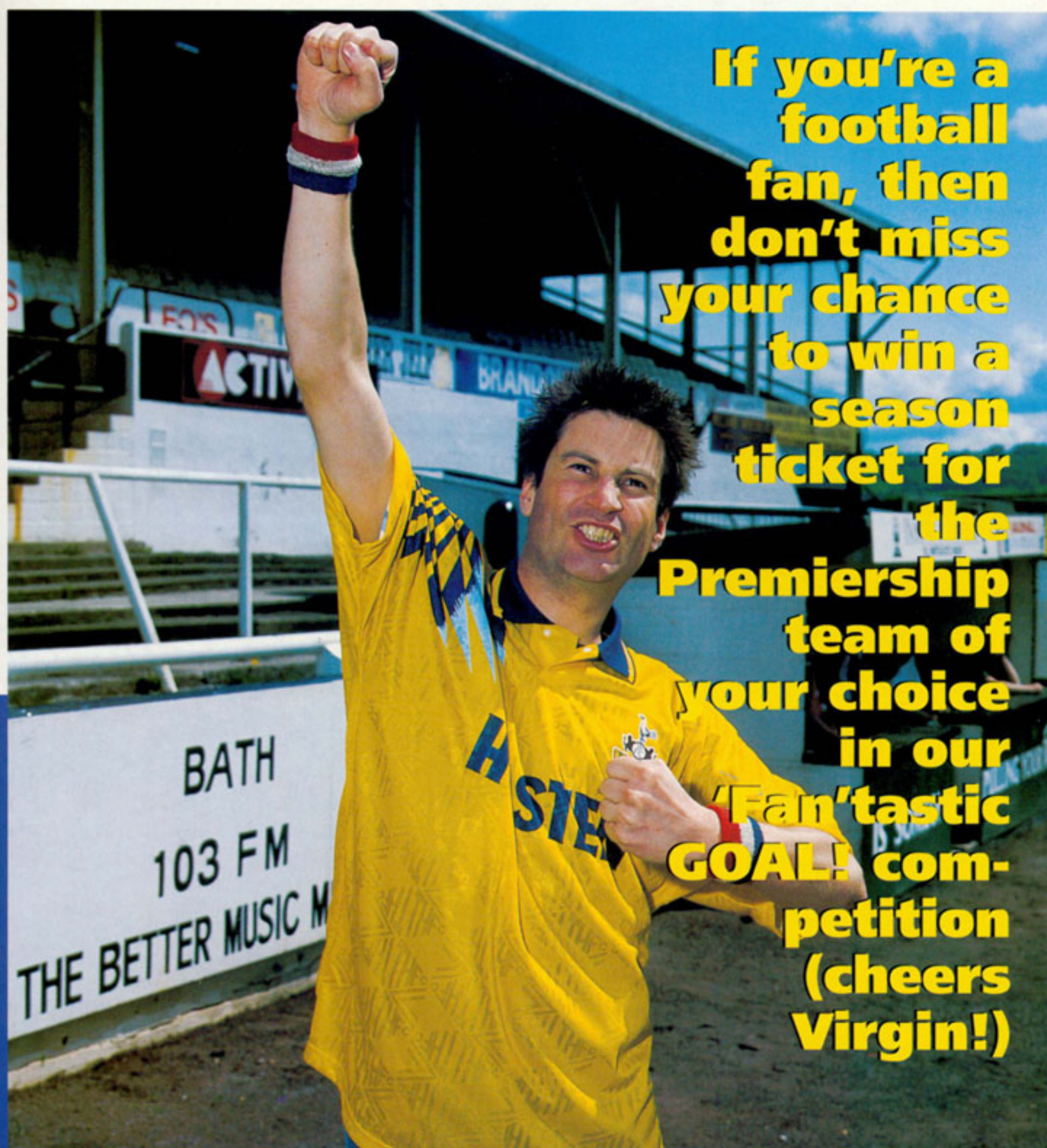
The tiebreak: what would your ideal Great Britain (including Ireland) World Cup squad of 11 players and three substitutes be?

Be as smug as this striking chap on the left if you win a season ticket for your fave team, or a copy of *GOAL!*.



AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

GAMES



If you're a football fan, then don't miss your chance to win a season ticket for the Premiership team of your choice in our 'Fan'tastic GOAL! competition (cheers Virgin!)

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Please note

NOT+ means software is not compatible with the following models: 500 Plus, 600, 1200



Geoff Crammond began programming in his spare time when he created *Super Invaders* and *Aviator*. Then with *Revs* he moved up a gear, gave up his job as a systems engineer and became a full-time professional programmer. Since then he's really started motoring with the **Amiga Format** Gold games *Stunt Car Racer* and *Formula One Grand Prix*.

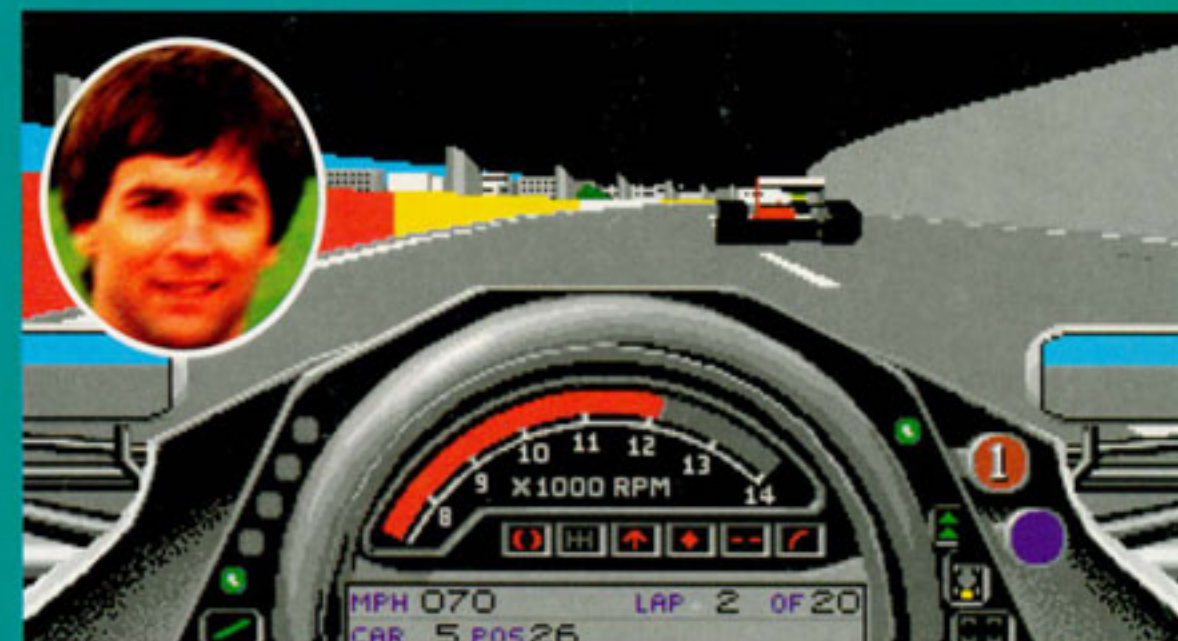
Now Geoff is one of the most respected programmers in the business and the recognised king of the racing game. One of the secrets of his success is the way in which his games combine realism and gamesplaying excitement, so how important is it to Geoff to get that realistic feel?

"The quest for realism is a challenge," says Geoff. "I had quite a lot of liaison with the Footworks team to get the technical information like tyre friction versus temperature, versus load."

But surely a game can never really capture the flavour of different courses or the excitement of a Grand Prix race? Well a Canadian driver contacted Geoff to say how impressed he was with the accuracy of the Montreal circuit, but perhaps the greatest accolade Geoff has been paid came from Oliver Gavin, who was chosen as the McLaren Young Driver of 1992 and therefore given the chance to race in a Formula Three race at the Belgian Grand Prix circuit in Spa.

"Because part of the circuit is on the public road, Oliver couldn't practise on the circuit," explains Geoff.

"So he used *F1GP* to learn the track, took pole position and won the race. But I'm also very conscious of trying to make the game accessible to the person who isn't necessarily into racing, as well as to the fanatics. That's



Behind the wheel of *Formula One Grand Prix* and (inset) programmer Geoff Crammond.

why I included the help options, they're like a helping hand on the steering wheel or a foot on the brake pedal."

Geoff is currently working on a new project that is wrapped in secrecy. He can't say anything about it other than that it's a racing game. But in general terms he believes that the racing game can be taken a lot further.

"I'm interested in improving graphics and speed, and I still enjoy the whole racing thing," he says.

In fact Geoff has started having a go at the

real thing and drives single-seater Formula Ford cars at Silverstone. He also intends to try his hand at Saloon Car racing. *Formula One Grand Prix* is his finest achievement, says Geoff, but he rarely has the time to play Amiga games: "I relax by doing things away from the computer. I quite like playing golf."

Geoff has been in the programming game for some time now, so he has watched the industry change, and not always, he says,

Geoff Crammond

FAVOURITE PASTIMES: Playing golf and driving Formula Ford cars at Silverstone.
CONCERNS: Violence in video games. Thinks that ratings will come in.

If you want speed, realism and action then look no further than one of Geoff Crammond's racing games...

for the better. "The market seems to be fairly healthy at the moment. When I first started I saw the industry as something that was here today and might be gone tomorrow. I think it is definitely here to stay now."

"The thing that concerns me about the industry is the contents of some of the games, some of which are too violent. I think there will come a time when games will be rated in the same way as films."

★ **A Formula Three driver used F1GP to learn a track, took pole position and won the real race** ★



Formula One Grand Prix in all of its glory. And in the centre and on the left are other graphic examples of Geoff's near genius for the car driving Amiga sim in the form of the classic (and now on budget, hurrah!) *Stunt Car Racer*.

CRAMMOND INTERVIEWED



CONTROL YOURSELF

Gameplay isn't just about the software. You need the right technology to play the games. **Tim Smith** looks at the options...

Hardware? Hardware! What the hell is all this stuff about hardware doing in the middle of a glorious **Amiga Format** Special devoted to the advancement of gamers the world over? (Hell, you don't even have to be an Amiga owner to get something from this baby's packed pages but we won't dwell on that).

The straight honest answer to this question is that the modern, well-rounded gamer, the kind of Amiga user who wants to be an achiever, also wants the best add-ons to show off their gaming prowess at its very best.

The world has moved on since the Competition Pro joystick (wake up you dodgy old gamers, it's nostalgia time for a few moments) ruled the playfields of parallax. Things have changed since the pioneering days when autofire buttons were lauded as great new inventions rather than simply as standard issue for any stick worth its name.

Nowadays there are footpedals, there are steering wheels, there are Bugs and Mavericks, Navigators and analog controllers. Good lord above there are even joysticks that, uselessly, pretend to be mice. Where will it all stop, where do you begin?

This handy two pager is a good start. Let's break the control device thang down into matching the game to the device because in my experience, games players will generally stick to one type of game.

The platformer

For a kick off, don't even think about a Freewheel, a set of footpedals or, more laughably still, a mouse because you will



The Gravis Gamepad is a splendid aid to leaping around platform games.

look foolish and never finish a game. Platformers offer, as nice Mr Major might say, not an unreasonable strain to the joysticks of this world. What he might mean is that there's a hell of a lot of wrenching the shaft from left to right as you attempt to make it from one platform to the next.

But strength isn't the only thing you're looking for, you also need precision – there's no point in timing your jump to perfection, if the hardware then lets you down. If platformers are your peccadillo, then you should have a thought about the following sticks:

The Competition Pro Cheetah
£13.99Tel: 061-7077080
The GamePad Advanced Gravis
£14.99Tel: 0344 891313
ZipStick PowerPlay
£14.99Tel: 0457 876705

The shoot-em-up

Notoriously the hardest genre of game on any joystick (playing shoot-em-ups with mice is akin to playing Rugby League in a pair of Nike Huaraches, it's very stupid and extremely painful).

Games such as *Project X*, *X-Out*, *X-Men* (don't be stupid, there's no such game as *X-Men*) all require you to place maximum stress on the fire button(s) of your chosen stick. Fire button? That brings the question of auto-fire buttons to the fore. If you are a shoot-em-up fan, you must have autofire as well as a sturdy shaft. Try the following:

The Bug Cheetah
£14.99Tel: 061-7077080
The GamePad Advanced Gravis
£14.99Tel: 0344 891313
Navigator Konix
£15.99Tel: 0495 350101
Speed King Konix 11
£10.99Tel: 0495 350101



The Navigator is ideal for shoot-em-ups. It even looks like a *Star Trek* phaser.

The RPG

Using a joystick to play this kind of game would make you look incredibly daft as you sat there ferociously hauling the shaft of your Bug forward and backward to attempt to escape the clutches of the evil skull warriors in *Eye of the Beholder 2*. What you need

here is a mouse, that's what you need. For sure the standard Amiga mouse will do the business, however, upgrading is by far the better option. We recommend the following roistering rodents for RPG'ing.

Power Mouse *Power Computing*
£15Tel: 0234 843388
Naksha Mouse *Silica*
£29.24Tel: 081-309 1111
Golden Image Mouse *Ladbroke*
£14.99Tel: 0772 203166



Choosing the right rodent can make all the difference to your RPG enjoyment.

The flight sim

Opinions differ on this one. Some Amiga airpeople wouldn't go near a flight sim with anything other than a keyboard. Others will invest in weird and wonderful flighty contraptions that include DIY footpedals, pseudo HUDs and more. Others still will opt for the middle ground between the heavily be-buttoned joystick and keyboard with overlay.

Frankly, the more like the inside of a Harrier Jumpjet from the year 2013 a flight sim looks, the happier the simmer will be. So, our recommendations go out to the hardcore virtual pilots out there. And remember, bring em all back home.



The Logic 3 Sigma Ray joystick is a better idea than a joypad if flight sims take your fancy

The Python QuickShot
£10.99Tel: 081-3651993
Logic 3 Sigma Ray Spectravideo
£13.99Tel: 081-900 0024
125+ Cheetah
£9.99 Tel:061-7077080

The sports sim



The rough and tumble of the world of sport demands a sturdy, yet precise stick. The Bug is just what you're looking for.

Games such as *Sensible Soccer*, *Goal!*, *Graham Gooch's World Class* (snigger, snigger) *Cricket* or any of the rest of the Amiga world's pantheon of sporty games require a sturdy stick with precision control and a responsive fire button that won't let you down in front of goal or elsewhere in the sporting arena.

Sports sims are hi-octane, hi-tension outings, and it's all too easy to get carried away when you're playing a big game, so expect your joystick to take a real battering. With this in mind, we have the following recommendations:

The Bug Cheetah
£14.99Tel: 061-7077080
ZipStick PowerPlay
£14.99Tel: 0457 876705
Speed King Konix
£10.99Tel: 0495 350101

The driving sim

Yes, we're talking about those essential driving sims such as those fast-movers *Vroom*, *Indianapolis 500 Formula One Grand Prix* (F1GP to its mates in the trade) and *Stunt Car Racer*. All that speed and torque, all those revs, those carbs and turbos, my goodness if only real driving was half as good as the Amiga driving sim then no hedgehog would be safe. Anyway, driving sims have been well-catered for in the strange and useful joystick and steering wheel market.

Check out our recommendations:

Quickjoy Footpedal Spectravideo
£10Tel: 081-900 0024
Freewheel Spectravideo
£29.99Tel: 081-900 0024.



The Freewheel is ideal for those who employ an, err, freewheelin' approach.

THE HARDER THEY COME

More than a disk, more than a drive, the average Amiga hard disk can improve your games playing life beyond belief. But let's explain the basics first...

Partition: unlike floppy disks where you are stuck with a single area to save data to, you can create separate and distinct file storage areas. This is called Partitioning and is achieved when you first set-up up your hard disk. You can treat one area of the disk as Games, another as Graphics and another as System. Very handy for tidiness and also for avoiding accidental erasures.

IDE: Intelligent Drive Electronics. A hard (and floppy) disk controller standard used in the A600, A1200 and A4000s. It's not actually intelligent at all, but it is cheap and it is very effective.

SCSI: Small Computer System Interface. The older, more versatile and more expensive hard drive controller standard used in older Amigas such as the A500 and A3000.

Defragment: tidying up your hard disk every so often. Because of the way in which data is stored on disks, it gets scattered around the magnetic media, and the longer you have a hard disk, the more this scattering (or fragmentation) occurs. This means that the read/write head has to search around the place like a drunken idiot. What you need is defragmentation software such as the shareware program *ReOrg* (on *Amiga Format's* issue 50 subscribers' disk. There's also a hard disk back-up program called *AbackUp* on the same disk because you should always back up your disk before you defragment it).

Now that you've seen what benefits a hard disk can offer, you'll no doubt agree that you need one. No, there's no point in arguing that all you ever do is play *Sensible Soccer* which isn't hard disk installable anyway and neither is the saved games option, so what's the flopping point? Well unless you intend to play nothing but *Sensible Soccer* for the rest of your life, the chances

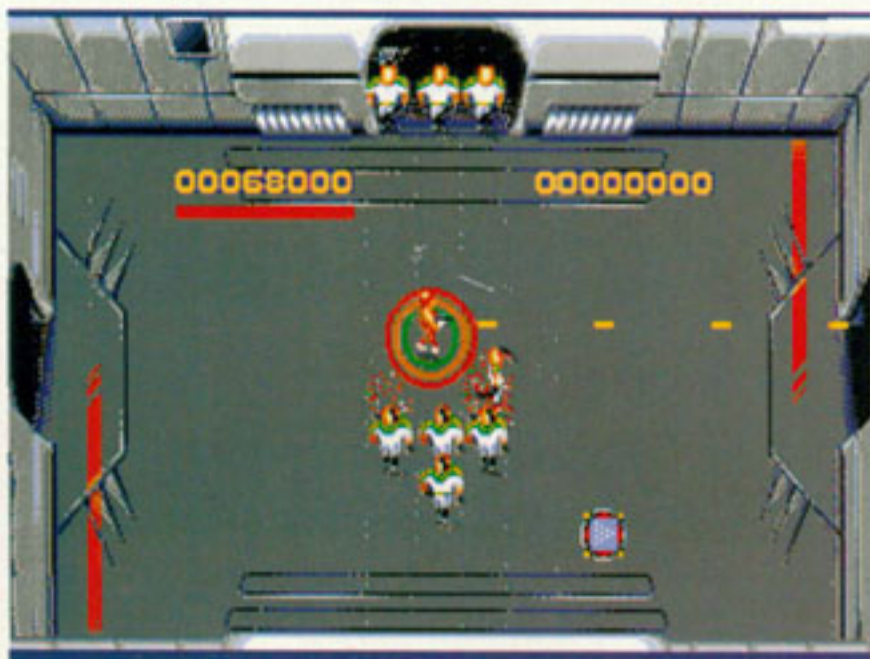
are that you'll also want a go at the hot new games *Syndicate* or *Hired Guns* that are hard disk installable. Come on, go the whole nine yards and treat yourself to an investment that could improve the usability of your Amiga several fold, and make all that incredibly frustrating disk accessing a thing of the past. We recommend the following drives for the following Amigas:

A500 (& Plus)
GVP A530 Silica from £499 (42Mb) 081-309 1111
Trifecta 500 LX Power from £239 (80Mb) 0234 843388
Alfa Power HD Golden Image from £199 (40Mb) 081-365 1102

A600/A1200
IDE drives are much of a muchness. Look for the 2.5-inch versions in *Amiga Format*. You can also look for this type of drive in IBM-PC mags because IDE is widely used in the world of the PC.

PUBLIC DOMAIN GAMES

Oh God no, not PD, not that cheap, rubbishy rubbish knocked out by enthusiasts who play games day-in day-out and so know what the average player wants in a game. Hold on, that doesn't sound so bad. **Tim Smith** investigates the scene



You'll find all sorts in the Public Domain, such as this version of *Smash TV*.

There are ways of getting hold of free games that don't entail the following: (a) entering a competition (b) waiting outside a games shop and begging (c) robbing a games store (d) writing your own game and giving it to yourself (e) working for a software house (f) working for **Amiga Format**. You could go delving into the rich and diverse world of the Public Domain.

Hidden among the text editors, comms packages, hex-to-octal translators and timetables for the workings of Old Oak Common depot are some quite stonkingly good games.

This is where you'll find the classics such as *Tempest*, *Phoenix*, *Galaxian*, and *Asteroids* all masquerading behind masks of false but associated names.

This is also where you'll find some original games ideas such as the *Star Trek* series. So, if you enjoy gaming, then you really are cutting off your nose to spite your face if you don't look in the PD.

But what kind of things are on offer to the discerning Amiga gamer with the less than over-endowed bank balance? Everything that's what. Let's have a look at a few of the genres you can dip into.

Weird scenes

One of the main reasons that the Public Domain is infested with so many off-the-wall ideas is that the programmers create the games from a sense of fun and of challenge rather than for any idea of profit or commercial reality (of course some of these creative bods also use the PD arena to show off their skills to the wider, more profitable world). But let's move on from all that to look at the kind of games that defy classification.

The most obvious of these is Jeff Minter's total PD classic *Llamatron*. Various described as 'asteroids on acid', 'that weird shooty-flyey thing with llamas', 'totally weird and very quick', *Llamatron* set up Minter as a legendary figure and his software house, Llamasoft, as a creative force which has never yet 'sold out' (see our interview with Mr Minter on page 23).

Battlecars is a Licenceware game from far out of leftfield that you might have seen in the form of *Badlands* (from Domark) in the

world of Shareware. It is given the raunchier and more accurate title of *Battlecars* from the paper-based games of the same name. This features several souped-up jaloppies armed with missiles racing each other.



Smooth graphics and frantic shoot-em-up action make *Hellzone* a good PD bet...



...just think, hours of shoot-em-up fun for little more than the cost of the disk.

★ Hidden among all the comms packages and text editors are some quite stonkingly good games ★

Other interesting games include the Rubik's influenced *Cubulus*; *Entity* - a shooting game that involves converging lines rather than small aliens; *Numerix* - a Scrabble-based game that uses numbers instead of letters; *Seven Tiles*, which is a Cyberpunk-cum-football game (a la *Speedball*); *AMOS Cricket* - a very decent game designed using one of the Amiga's most popular and versatile programming languages, this should give you a good laugh and some idea as to what you can do with AMOS.

PD AND MOST DEFINITELY NOT PD

Ten Things That Can Be Shortened To PD If You Really Wanted To Do That Sort of Thing

- 1) **Practical Dentistry**: most useful, especially when applied to younger siblings and elder statesmen.
- 2) **Positive Discrimination**: ultra liberal attempt to balance out the world. The kind of option that means Williams have to use Ayrton Senna, Damon Hill and Basil Brush (who is drivingly challenged).
- 3) **Porky Dennis**: the kind of fat bloke who is always eating and who makes you ask: "Why do you always see fat blokes eat?". Favourite games are *Global Gladiators* and *McDonald Land*.
- 4) **Pay Day**: the kind of thing you look forward to when young because it means your bank balance is full. The kind of thing you greet with resignation when old because it means your bank balance is slightly less empty.
- 5) **Princess Diana**: the thinking person's excuse for republicanism.
- 6) **Partial Deafness**:... PARTIAL DEAFNESS!!!!!! Pardon.
- 7) **Public Defender**: the person who wins all the cases on telly but who can't be bothered in real life.
- 8) **Paul Daniels**: the kind of performer who doesn't deserve a (7) but who gets an enormous (4) every week and who rightfully deserves unanaesthetised (1).
- 9) **Peter Davenport**: ace striker who never got the recognition he deserved.
- 10) **Pile'o'Doodoo**: see (9)

HAVE YOU REGISTERED?

Yes, it's the sensible, responsible, think of the long term and don't dirty your own nest like a fool, bit. PD and Shareware are wonderful anarchic areas of Amigadom. Repositories of ancient classics and innovative new ideas, both areas rely on the goodwill and good behaviour of their users.

This means that if you get Shareware, you should register with the authors if you are going to keep on using the software after a few weeks. I mean, come on, it's only fair isn't it? If you lent your favourite joystick to someone and they decided not to return it, you'd at least expect some dosh to settle the deal. Shareware prices are not extreme, and if you think that they are, all you have to do is trash your copy of the software, easy. Most importantly, if we are going to keep a healthy Amiga community, then we have to support it right? End of polemic.



Llamatron, by Jeff Minter, is probably the most famous Public Domain game ever and is a fine example of Mr Minter's peculiar obsession with anything to do with the South American member of the camel family.

THE PLATFORM GAME

Yo! Joe! *Rainbow Islands*, *Wizkid*, there are probably more excellent platform games on the Amiga than on any other kind of machine. So why would you want to look in the Public Domain for more of the same? Well one good reason is that the people who write Amiga PD games have played Amiga games for years and they know them inside out. Another good reason is that platform games (which are meant to keep you amused for months and not just hours) are cheap and plentiful. Don't expect vast impressive graphics (although you will be pleasantly surprised by the quality that is available) but do expect plenty of fun. The following are just a selection of PD platformers available to you:



Crazy Sue: a completely frustrating and addictive Public Domain platform romp.



Above:
More PD
platform
action
with
Crazy Sue 2



... really starts to get quite annoying when she doesn't do what she's told.



Crazy Sue may look like a cute little platform character but in fact she...

Doody - from the Agile productions team, this one will test your wits.

Wilbert's Winter Wonderland - don't confuse this with the appalling *Son of Wilf* that preceded it. This one is a goody.

Crazy Sue - make your way around several levels of excellently realised platform fun.

★ The people who write Amiga PD games have played games for years and know them inside out ★

THE SHOOT-EM-UP

Shoot-em-ups have long been favourites of the Amiga user, from *Defender* to *Microcosm*, this genre of game has thrilled the senses and tingled the nerve endings with greater effectiveness than a half-pint of Tequila washed down with some sugar-heavy chocolate sauce. The great thing about a really good SEU is that, no matter what the

Transplant is a fine space adventure, and because it's PD it won't cost the earth





Mission X is an action-packed PD shoot-em-up in the arcade tradition.



games spin doctors say, you don't have to think very much at all when you're playing them. As far as PD is concerned, the following offerings are well worth a little piece of your valuable time and energy.

Blast – a vertically scrolling shoot-em-up with plenty of guts.

Hellzone – as it sounds, quite violent with some neat twists.

Nebula – a 3D (well as 3D as you get on a 2D screen) outing.

Skyflyer (1&2) – produced with the Shoot-Em-Up Construction Kit (SEUK), this is a good example of the type.

Revenge of the Mutant Camels – another surreally fab game from the Jeff Minter stable of bizarre things.

Mission-X – a fair shoot-em-up with plenty of action.

ARCADE CLASSICS

No, not the **Amiga Format 26** (since sold out) Coverdisk of the same name, this genre covers all those clunky classic arcade games that once had kids shoving 10p after 10p into huge machines that made inadequate sounds. Still, back then before hype, over-advertising, games reviewers, 'really great graphics' and regurgitated plots there was...

Game Play. This strange concept enabled you to squeeze every half-pence (they existed back then) from your meagre investment. Then the Amiga came along and the bulk of these games were lovingly transferred to disk where they currently live like classic old black and white films.

Game names such as *Tempest*, *Phoenix*, *Galaxians*, *Pacman* and *Defender* are now available in one form or another. In fact, let's look at what's available:

Amigoids – the programmers knew their audience when they created this superb *Asteroids* clone and renamed it. Fine stuff (It's also worth checking out *Cabaret Asteroids* and *Lemmingoids*)

City Defence – a *Missile Command* clone that



Transplant: an *Asteroids* clone and a half. And twice as much fun to boot (or shoot?)

sees you defending your city from shower after shower of incoming fire.

Microbes – this one revolves around the old *Tempest* game.

Megaball – if you weren't into shoot-em-ups, you were into *Breakout* (or *Arkanoid* as it was weirdly renamed for the commercial market) *Megaball* tests reflexes and concentration very nicely indeed thank-you.

Pacman, **Super Pacman** – these people just do not care about vast legal bills for copyright infringement when they are lovingly labouring on a classic PD game (see also *Mouthman* and *Pacman 92*).



It's that man Minter again with the highly peculiar *Revenge of the Mutant Camels*.

Croak – remember *Frogger*, an incredibly simple concept that involved you having to get a frog up a screen from one side of a road to the other? Some say that it turned into any vertically scrolling game you can name (others have far more sense). Either way, *Croak* is the Public Domain clone of *Frogger* and it's still a damn find challenge.

Cybermetix – excellently executed version of *Stargate-cum-Defender*. Fast action, horizontally scrolling game fun to keep you busy for hours as you pummel the enemy (it's also worth taking a look at *Oblivion*, which is a similar sort of game).

Metal Life – ahhh the strangely named game, that has become a staple of PD. This one is particularly weird and is based on that violent old wonder, *Operation Wolf*.

★ PD games are infested with so many off-the-wall ideas because people create the games for fun ★

PD CONTACT NUMBERS

You don't need to make a game out of getting your hands on good PD. Just make use of this contact guide to track down some the country's finest PD Houses. Note to PD companies: if we have neglected to mention your firm, and you think that you should get a look in, please contact Tim Smith with details.

NBS, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, IOW PO30 5QA
Tel: 0983 529594

17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Office, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH
Tel: 0924 366982

Anglia PD, 115 Ranleigh Rd, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7HU
Tel: 0394 283494

Amiganuts, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX
Tel: 0703 785680

Riverdene, 30a School Rd, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks, RG3 5AN
Tel: 0734 452416

PD Soft, 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
Tel: 0702 466933

Diskcovery PD, 108, The Avenue, Clayton, Bradford, W Yorks, BD14 6SJ
Tel: 0274 880066

Seasoft, The Business Centre, First Floor, 80 Woodlands Avenue, Rustington, West Sussex BN16 3EY
Tel: 0903 850378

KT's PD, 75 The Drive, Rochford, Essex ss4 1QQ
Tel: 0702 542536

The Public Domain is packed with, err, *Pacman* games.



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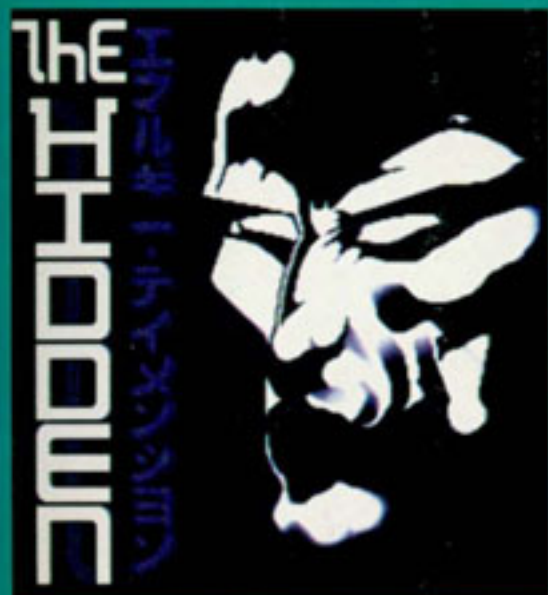


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21 (graphics) and 22-year-old William Bell (lead programmer). They met about four years ago when they were on an OND and HND computer studies course at a college in Norwich, and started work on *Donk* about a year ago.

"We started out as three kids working from our bedrooms.

When we left college we were all very good at writing business programs, but we didn't want to do that so we decided to give ourselves a year to produce a game, and started work on *Donk*. We're all very pleased that we actually got there. We work quite quickly, but the main problem was the amount of time we spent redesigning the game." Well, it worked fine for us lads!

When they first started working on *Donk*

The Hidden wanted it to be sold for a maximum of £15.99, but after seeing how much work went into creating it they now think that a £25 asking price is probably fair. "I think floppy disk games should be about

£25 and CD games about £15, because you can't copy them. Piracy is a real problem. I've heard some figures quoted that for every single copy of a game sold, there are 15 pirate copies, especially in Italy and Spain, where it's a really big problem."

The Hidden are totally committed to developing games primarily for the Amiga and Craig has used one since the very early days. "I've had an Amiga for six or seven years, now," he says.

"The first I knew about it was when a friend got an A1000 on import. It cost him £1,900 or something ridiculous, but it was a great machine. It was so cute, so well designed for the time. It's still my favourite Amiga. Actually the A1200 is the best home machine, we're really into the 1200."

Despite the problems with *Donk*, The Hidden are already working on a new game.



The Hidden (from left): Simon Leggett, Craig Howard and William Bell.

One of the new programming teams to have made the biggest impact in recent months is a three-man setup from Norfolk. In April a demo of their platform game *Donk* was featured on an **Amiga Format** Coverdisk, but then some chain stores objected to the game's name and it was changed to *Donk*. Then the distributors, DMI, went bust and it seemed that *Donk* might not get released as the receivers picked over the bones of DMI. Now, another company is set to pick up the much-improved finished game, that should be released shortly. But how did Craig feel when he was told that the game's name would have to be changed?

"At first we thought it was a real shame and got quite wound up about it. We didn't think that the name *Donk* caused any offence, and it seems a bit funny that some shops objected to the name, but that they sell over-18s magazines. Now we're not too worried about it."

The Hidden are 21-year-old Craig (graphics and design), Simon Leggett, aged

★ We started out as kids working from a bedroom, then we gave ourselves a year to write *Donk* ★

Although they're a new team, The Hidden are learning very quickly about the problems of getting a game released...

THE HIDDEN

FAVOURITE AMIGA GAMES:

Starglider 2, *Lemmings*, *FIGP*.

WORST AMIGA GAMES:

Super Cauldron.

"It could be really big," said Craig. "It outperforms *Superfrog* and outzools *Zool*." Big claims from the boys. We can only wait until the definitive review appears in **AF**.

And what about after that? "There's one thing I've always wanted to do and that's do a game for blind people," said Craig. "It would obviously have to work with sound, and I haven't worked out how we could do it yet, but I'd really like to try."



Far left: The two-player mode of *Donk* in all its A1200 AGA glory

Left: This little chap is called *Donk*, he used to be called *Donk* but that was far too rude.

THE HIDDEN INTERVIEWED



WITH RICHARD JONES

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 - D76...A2000 Genlock Demo
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 - D111...Defcon 1
 - D117...Aurora M/Demo
 - D118...Cult M/Demo 2
 - D125...Precise Demo
 - D133...Fascination
 - D136...Goldfire Megademo
 - D137/138...So What (2)
 - D139...Devils "No Reality"
 - D144...The Silents "Ice"
 - D145...Crystal Symphonies
 - D148...Ray Of Hope 2
 - D149...No Brain No Pain
 - D158/159...Cyborg Demo (2)
 - D195...Coastal Comp
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 - D206...Dreamers 3
 - D208...Avengers M/Demo
 - D216/217...Bass o Matic (2)
 - D218...Disorder Demo
 - D219...Tuff Enuff
 - D225...Cool Fridge Demo
 - D226...Hardrock M/Demo
 - D233...Hypnotic Hammer
 - D235...Six of One Demo
 - D238...PlanetSide
 - D239...Lemmings Revenge
 - D240...Total Respray
 - D243...Budbrain 3
 - D244...Phenomena Interspace
 - D245...Total Retrial
 - D247...Pulling the Trigger
 - D253...CES Demos
 - D256...Total Recount
 - D257...Total Rebate
 - D262...Spasmolytic
 - D264...D-Mob M/Demo
 - D267...Sun Connection 2
 - D270...Ketrans The Wall
 - D271...Times Hydra
 - D272...Electric Demos 1
 - D274...Delpackers Demo
 - D276...Cave La Weid
 - D279...Iraqi Demo
 - D280/281...Delirious (2)
 - D290...Popeye Demo
 - D292...Excalibur Demo
 - D298...Silents + Anarchy
 - D301...Subway Demo
 - D302...Tarot Demo
 - D303...Despair Demo
 - D307...L.S.D. Demo
 - D312...Devils Colours
 - D314...Trauma
 - D315...The Groove Ramjam
 - D322/323...Star Wars (2)
 - D325/326...Real Empathy (2)
 - D328/329...Red Dwarf (2)
 - D330...Darkness M/Demo
 - D332...Malted Experience
 - D333/337...Odyssey (5)
 - D338...Beastie Boys Demo
 - D340...Watchman Demo
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 - D368...Dynamic Illusions
 - D369...Pieces of Mind
 - D370...3D Demo 2
 - D371...Lethal Exit

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- U1...Games Music Creator
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 - U41...Red Devils Utis 4
 - U43...Future Composer
 - U44...Ketrans Makeboot
 - U45...PE Giant Utis 168
 - U47...Label Designer
 - U49...Ultimate Icon Disk
 - U50...Power Comp Utis
 - U51...Jazz Bench
 - U55...Visicalc
 - U57...Quickbench
 - U59...Font Designer
 - U60...D-Point Fonts 1
 - U61...D-Point Fonts 2
 - U62...Med 3.20
 - U63...Direct Anim Creator
 - U64...Crossword Designer
 - U66...CLI Help + Others
 - U67...S/Tracker Mega
 - U68...Ultimate Boots 1
 - U69...Ultimate Boots 2
 - U73...Powerlogo
 - U74...M-Cad
 - U75...Journal Home Acc's
 - U76...Home Utilities
 - U77...Electrocad
 - U78...Ami Base
 - U81...Bootbench V2.0
 - U82...Slideshow Maker
 - U83...Catalog Workshop 1
 - U84...Catalog Workshop 2
 - U87...Hard Disk Utis
 - U89-94...Amateur Radio (6)
 - U95...C-Light + Others
 - U96...GFX Utis 1
 - U100...Ham Lab
 - U101...Sid V2.0
 - U108...A-Gene
 - U113...Mid Utilities
 - U118/119...Video Utis (2)
 - U132...GFX Utis 2
 - U133/134...North C (2)
 - U136...CrossDoss (demo)
 - U138...Squid Squad Utis
 - U139...Terminalities V1.0
 - U140...Squash 1 (2.04 only)
 - U141...Squash 2 (2.04 only)
 - U142...Text Plus 3
 - U144...Dennis Samples 1
 - U145...Digital Intro Design
 - U146...Viz Clip Art
 - U147...Spectrum Emulator
 - U151...Slipstream V/Killers
 - U152...Red Devils Utis 6
 - U154...AmigaBox W/P
 - U155...PD Utis Docs Disk
 - U163...Quickbench + (2.04)
 - U164...Rim Database
 - U166...Dennis's Hack Disk
 - U167...Demolisher Utis
 - U168...Home Business 3
 - U172...Squash (1.3 only)
 - U176...GFX Utis 3
 - U177...Star Charts
 - U179...180...Dice (2)
 - U181...Celtic Demo Maker
 - U186...206...Track Ins 10-30
 - U207...Icon Collection 1
 - U208...Dave Jones Fonts 1
 - U210...Ultrapaint 3
 - U211...Chemesthetics
 - U212...Animated Pointers
 - U213...Desk Top Publisher
 - U214...Desktop Icons
 - U215...Messy Sid 2
 - U216...Master V/Killer 2.2
 - U218...Data Base Wizard
 - U223...Ten Pin Database
 - U224...Q-Base Database
 - U226...Games Solutions 1
 - U231...D-Point Fonts 3
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 - U238...Iconmania
 - U240...Icon Editor
 - U252...Opticomms 2.0
 - U254...New Superkillers 2
 - U255...Protractor V2.0
 - U256...Atari ST Emulator
 - U258...D-Copy 3
 - U262...PC Emulator
 - U263...Med 3.21
 - U273...Vid Fonts 1
 - U274...Illnot Labels
 - U275...600 Business Letters
 - U279...Invoice Printer
 - U280...Women V2.02D
 - U283...Headline Fonts
 - U289...Amos Updater
 - U290...Kickstart 2.04
 - U292...Black Tiger Utis 1
 - U293...Black Tiger Utis 2
 - U294...Text Engine V4.0
 - U295...Game Tamer
 - U296...Ultimate Disk Crea
 - U297...10 PD Copiers
 - U298...Protractor V3.0

- #### GAMES
- G1...Return to Earth
 - G2...Games Comp 5
 - G3...Dizzy Lizzy
 - G4...Scum Haters
 - G5...Parachute Joust
 - G6...Francis Freddie
 - G8...Twintrix
 - G9...Pseudo Cop
 - G10...Drip
 - G11...Bug Bash
 - G12...Asteroids
 - G13...Llamatron
 - G14...Escape From Jovi
 - G15...Morla Adventure
 - G16...Ground Attack
 - G17...Megaball
 - G18...Insiders Club
 - G19...Various Adventures
 - G20...Battleforce
 - G22...Dragon Cave
 - G24...Rings of Zon
 - G25...Mayhem
 - G26...Mechlight
 - G27...The Tennis Game
 - G28...Flaschier
 - G29...Buck Rogers
 - G30...Grayslayer
 - G31...7-Tiles
 - G32...Mega Comp 1
 - G33-34...Star Trek 1 (2)
 - G35-37...Star Trek 2 (3)
 - G38-39...Mechforce (2)
 - G40...Klondyke
 - G42...Car
 - G43...Games Comp 2
 - G44...S.E.U.C.K. Games
 - G45...Sacc Games Comp
 - G46...Games Comp 3
 - G48...Rays Game Disk
 - G49...Games Comp 4
 - G50...Games Comp 6
 - G51-52...Trucking (2)
 - G53...Jetpac
 - G55...Quick and Silva
 - G56...Miniblast
 - G57...Larner Game
 - G58...Games Comp 7
 - G59...Games Comp 8
 - G60...Pum Pom Gunner
 - G61...Caverunner
 - G62...Crystal Caverns
 - G63...Intact
 - G64...Eternal Rome
 - G65...Lemmingsoids
 - G66...Downhill Challenge
 - G67...Lame ST Ports
 - G68...Paranoid
 - G69...Puggles
 - G70...Chainsaw Death
 - G71...Pirate Pete's Treasure
 - G72...Serene 2
 - G73...Castles
 - G74...Dynamite Dick
 - G75...Card Games 1
 - G76...Wizzy's Quest
 - G77...Growth
 - G78...Skate
 - G79...Asc Alac
 - G80...Napoleonic Sim
 - G81...Project 1
 - G82...Lazer Zone
 - G83...Lemmings Pack
 - G84...Star Trek S.E.U.P
 - G85...Lethis
 - G87...Matched Pairs
 - G88...Raphaels Revenge
 - G89...Snake Pit
 - G90...Zeus
 - G91...Merv The Merciless
 - G92...Blizzard
 - G93...The Maze Game
 - G94...Subculture
 - G95...Hollywood Trivia
 - G97...Shootout
 - G99...Holy Grail Adventure
 - G100...Amos Coldrop
 - G101...Classic Comp 1
 - G102...Card Games 2
 - G103...Super Skoda Chail
 - G104...Grand Prix Sim
 - G105...Games Comp 9
 - G106...Computer Conflict 2
 - G107...Mission X Raid 2
 - G108...NU Game
 - G109...Antep + Slot Cars
 - G110...Tricky + The Turn
 - G111...Martle Slide
 - G112...Games Comp 10
 - G113...Black Jack Lab
 - G114...Dungeon of Madrox
 - G115...Amiga Columns
 - G116...Robocop in Iraq
 - G117...Mutant Camels
 - G118...Games Comp 11
 - G119...Number Fumbler
 - G120-122...Warlock (3)
 - G123...Card Sharp 1
 - G124...Bart Simpson
 - G125...CC Games Comp
 - G126...Air Ace 2
 - G127...Breakout Con Kit
 - G128...Pipeline
 - G129...Dung of Dorian
 - G215...Amos Games 1
 - G212-214...Timelords 6-8

- #### ANIMS
- A1...Probe Sequence
 - A2...Ghost Pool
 - A3...Jogger + Magician 1
 - A4...Gymnast Demo
 - A5...Fractal Flight
 - A6...Basketball Demo
 - A9...Magician 2
 - A10...Pugs in Space
 - A11...Luxor Teenager
 - A13...Juggler Demo
 - A16...Cool Cougar
 - A17...Mono Cycle Anim
 - A18...Robocop Anim
 - A20...Mayhem on Wheels
 - A21...Jugette 2
 - A22...Shuttlecock Anim
 - A23...T-Pot Anim
 - A27...Fleet Manoeuvre
 - A28...Billard Anim
 - A29...E/Prise Leaves Dock
 - A30...Star Wars 2 Anim
 - A31...Star Trek Anim
 - A32...Fraxion Revenge
 - A34...Madonna Anim
 - A35...Stealthy Anims 2
 - A36...Raiders Of The Lost Ark
 - A37...Bugs Bunny Show
 - A38...Iraq V's UK Anim
 - A39...Mike Tyson Anim
 - A40...Knight Anim
 - A42...Walker 2
 - A43...Walker 3
 - A45-46...Light Cycle (2)
 - A47...Exploding Head
 - A48...Police Car Chase
 - A49...Top Gun Demo
 - A50...Animators Demo
 - A51...5 Ways to Kill a Mole
 - A52...Another 5 Ways
 - A53...Batman The Movie
 - A54...3D Spaceship
 - A55...Mr Potato Head
 - A57...Camouflage
 - A58...VQA Anim 4
 - A59...Low Level Flight
 - A63...Amy V's Walker
 - A64...Real Pinball Anim
 - A65...Franklin The Fly
 - A66...Porky Pig Anim
 - A67...Adventures of Chuck
 - A69...Burnen Burner
 - A70-71...Max Overdrive (2)
 - A73...Spaceshuttle Anim
 - A74...Ghostbusters + Horse
 - A76...Alarm Anim
 - A77...Flight Anim
 - A78...Piano Anim
 - A79...Dart Anim
 - A80...Bad Bird Anim
 - A81...Holiday Anim
 - A82...Fillet The Fish
 - A83...The Boings
 - A84...Clothes Peg
 - A85...Miners Anim
 - A86...Pocket Watch Anim
 - A90-93...The Movies 2 (4)
 - A95...My Tin Toy
 - A96...T-Pot 2 Anim
 - A99...Terminator 3
 - A100...Dolphin Dreams
 - A101/102...Thunderbirds (2)
 - A103...Hisor Of Amy
 - A104...Pogo Anim (2 Meg)

- #### SLIDES
- S1...Ham Pics Show 1
 - S4...Madonna Slides
 - S5...MovieStar Slides
 - S6...Party Disaster
 - S8...Immaculate Collection
 - S9...Simpsons Slides
 - S10-11...Channel 42 (2)
 - S12...Bruce Lee Slides
 - S14...Addams Family
 - S15...Vir Mag Slides
 - S16...Boris 13
 - S17...Docklands Jarre
 - S18...Dr Who Demo
 - S19...Napalm Death
 - S20...Nasa Slides
 - S21...Exodus 3D Slides
 - S22-24...WWF Slides (3)
 - S25...Cascade Demo
 - S27...Demons Slides
 - S28...Total Recall
 - S29...Joe's Slides
 - S30...Ham Pics Show 2
 - S31...D-Point Slides
 - S32...Neighbours Slides
 - S33...Roger Dean Slides
 - S34...Iron Maiden Slides
 - S35-36...Tobias Richter (2)
 - S37...Joe Tril Slides
 - S38...Basket Case 2
 - S39...Eces Slides
 - S40...Fraxion Devine 2
 - S41...Fraxion Devine 1
 - S42...Golems Gate Slides
 - S43...Chainsaw Slippers
 - S44...Cry For Dawn
 - S45...Forgotten Realms (2)
 - S47...Kick Off 3 Slides
 - S48...PD Slideshow
 - S49-52...Terminator (4)
 - S53...Robocop 2 Slides
 - S54...Trackmaster Slides
 - S55...Forgotten Realms 2
 - S56...Garfield Slides
 - S57...Pawmbraker Slides
 - S58...Hellraiser Slides
 - S59...Night Breed Slides
 - S60...Raytracing
 - S61...Horror Slides
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 - S64...Rock Star Manager
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 - S70...Muscle Mania
 - S71...Creature Comforts

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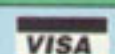
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81

Since the first issue of **Amiga Format** in August 1989 an elite group of games have received the ultimate accolade of being awarded an **Amiga Format Gold**. The first games to enter this hall of fame were Dino Dini's footie sim *Kick Off*, the classic platform romp *New Zealand Story* and the futuristic racing game *Powerdrome*. They have since been joined by such classics as *Rainbow Islands*, *Populous 2*, the *Monkey Islands* games, *Xenon 2*, *Syndicate* and many more.

Gaining access to the **Amiga Format Gold** hall of fame is no easy task. It requires a rating of 90 per cent or above, and that is not easily come by. The jump from a 89 per cent rating to a 90 per cent Gold is a big one and if there's the slightest doubt that a game isn't worthy of a Gold rating then it doesn't get one, no matter what the hype surrounding it, and regardless of the pressure from the software houses.

So what is it that makes a game Gold quality? Well, there's no set rules to reviewing games, but the aspects that the **Amiga Format** team takes into consideration include the game's graphics, sound, difficulty level and its originality and addictive quality.

But more important and more difficult to pin down than these is that elusive element of playability. That's the quality that makes a game completely compelling, that makes it almost impossible to tear yourself away from it, that makes it a classic.

Over the following pages we pay tribute to all those games that have been awarded **Amiga Format Golds**

over the last four years. Every single game is included, with a picture, a brief description, a contact number for the software house (where the software house still exists). We've also included a reference for the issues of **Amiga Format**, **Amiga Power** and **Amiga Format Special** and where tips appeared for the game, we've also included the issue number.

Many of the games, such as *Zool*, *Sensible Soccer*, *Stunt Car Racer*, *Lure Of The Temptress*, *Lemmings*, *Mega-lo-Mania* and *The Chaos Engine* will be familiar to you, but in this list of Golds there are many buried treasures, games that just turned up, in the **Amiga Format** office, without a posse of press people in attendance, and without a massive advertising campaign to carry them, but which fully deserve to sit alongside their better-known peers. These games include the wargame/strategy exercise *Waterloo*, the fantastic collection of text-only adventures *The Lost Treasures Of Infocom*, the god game *Caesar*, the utterly off-the-wall adventure *Knights Of The Crystallion*, and the intriguing chess-style game *Distant Armies*.

The reason these smaller games got their Gold ratings is that **Amiga Format** reviewers pay the same attention to games regardless of the hype surrounding them, if a game is good they say so, and if it's bad they don't hold back, no matter if the software houses get upset. In short they offer an expert and honest opinion.

What follows is a complete list of the games that, in their opinion, **Amiga Format** reviewers reckon are the very best.

90%

Dune 2



(£30.99, **AF50** p57, 90%)
A mixture of strategy and war game, *Dune 2* is a moody, tense and atmospheric game that becomes increasingly enthralling the further you get into it. The world of *Dune 2* revolves around spice. You must take on two other operations in a trade war, the currency of which is the valuable spice called Melange. You mine the spice, and sell it to build up your spice operations and to buy armaments with which you attempt to wipe out the competition. This is a fiendishly addictive outing in strategy and power.
Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Apidya



(£25.99, **AF35** p83, 90%)
This five-level shoot-em-up is notable for its gorgeous graphics, courtesy of the excellent German programming team BlueByte. You control a wasp and must fire streams of poisonous wasp spit at various adversaries from the insect and creepy-crawly world. There are no flies on *Apidya*, a classic with a real sting in its tail.
Software House: BlueByte via Kompart UK (0727 868005).
Tips: AP15.
AFS5 (Q&A).

Project-X



(£12.99, **AF50** p88, 90%)
A budget, and slightly tweaked, release of the space wars shoot-em-up that some Amiga gamers felt was a tad harshly treated when it got 75 per cent when the original full-price version was originally reviewed in June 1992. You must save the planet Ryxx from the evil attentions and unpleasantness of various adversaries. To this end you must zoom about in your spaceship shooting things, collecting power-ups, and generally being a space super-hero. An excellent budget shoot-em-up.
Software House: Team 17 (0924 291867).

Batman



(£24.99, **AF5** p38, 90%)
This was the game that named the bundle that launched the Amiga 500 to the big wide world in full force. Based on the Michael Keaton, Jack Nicholson Hollywood blockbuster rather than the dear old Zap! Pow! Crrrunnch! Adam West TV version, *Batman* is a five level test of shoot-em-up, driving and platform skills. You take control of the Batmobile and Batwing, enter the Batcave and do battle with the Joker in Gotham Cathedral. *Batman* is set apart by its slick graphics and engrossing gameplay. Many people were expecting a tired, sad film licence with no gameplay for a great deal of cash. Oh, how wrong they were. This little beauty turned the computer world around, and it's still playable today. Holy excellent, *Batman*!
Software House: Ocean (061 832 6633).
Tips: AF3, AF4, AF44.

Carrier Command



(£9.99, **AF41** p88, 90%)
One of the best releases in the long, and not always very distinguished, history of the budget game. *Carrier Command* puts you in command of an, er... carrier (of the aircraft variety) and you must sail around taking over islands before the enemy forces can get to them. The wide range of weaponry and the gameplay that takes in strategy, flight sim and arcade action makes this an essential budget buy for any astute Amiga user.
Software House: Kixx, via US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: AP7.
AFS5 (Q&A).

Cruise For A Corpse



(£25.99, **AF27** p78, 90%)
Opinions in the *Amiga Format* office remain fiercely divided about this one. Some reckon it thoroughly deserved its Gold rating gained in October 1991. Others found it a baffling and frustrating exercise. The plot of this graphic adventure-cum-puzzle game follows a French detective as he searches for the clues to a nasty murder on a cruise ship (a sort of Ooh La La Dunit). It's very much in the Poirot mould and can be either immensely satisfying or mouse-stampingly annoying.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: AF29, AF31.
AP9, AP15, AP26.

F-15 Strike Eagle II



(£34.99, **AF24** p62, 90%)
Enemy aircraft at 4 o'clock (or tea time, as we call it in the *AF* offices), primary target secured, range 25km, bearing 020. Yep, it's flight sim time, and *F-15 Strike Eagle II* is one of the better examples of the genre. It is packed with action, the speech and sound give it a realistic atmosphere, the 3D view conveys a striking impression of height and speed and it's very, very fast.
Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).
Tips: AFS5 (Q&A).

MicroProse Golf



(£30.99, **AF30** p122, 90%)
Get in the swing (no more puns please! saddened ed) with one of the best golf sims available for the Amiga. *MicroProse Golf* is a remarkably detailed simulation giving you a range of clubs, different stances and club faces, and tee positions, as well as showing you wind speed, green speeds, overviews of each hole and much more. If Oscar Wilde had played *MicroProse Golf* on the Amiga he probably wouldn't have described golf as: "...a good walk ruined."
Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).
Tips: AFS5 (Q&A).

Falcon



(£14.99, AF39 p115, 90%)

A classic flight sim at a budget price. Playing *Falcon* ain't easy, but no-one ever said flying around on deceptively difficult missions while various enemies take pot-shots at you was going to be a piece of cake. Excellent game-play at a fast and furious pace for a budget price. What more could you possibly want?

Software House: Action 16 via Digital Integration: (0276 684959).

Tips: AF55 (Q&A).

Nick Faldo's Championship Golf



(£34.99, AF43 p90, 90%)

Although it doesn't boast as many options as some of the other golf sims on the Amiga, *NFCG* is Gold material on the strength of its brilliant graphics, excellent sound effects, and addictive game play. Among the other plus points are the effective multi-player options and the Mulligan mode, which effectively means you can cheat by taking a shot again.

Software House: Grand Slam (081-680 7044).

Tips: AF45, AF46, AF47.

Heart Of China



(£34.99, AF32 p56, 90%)

Oriental adventure in which the object

of the exercise is that you (a dashing young hero called Jake 'Lucky' Masters) rescue a young lady called Kate from the clutches of the evil Li Deng and his hordes of ninja henchmen. Superb graphics, brilliant sound effects and a remarkable variety of options make this an adventure that can run and run.

Software House: Sierra (0734 303171).

Tips: AF41.

James Pond



(£7.99, AF33 p92, 90%)

Fishy business with an underwater secret agent set over 12 platform levels. The mission titles all have fish-related puns such as Licence To Bubble, A View To A Spill and Fishfinger, and this has given rise to generations of Amiga journalists straining to introduce similar plays on words into their copy. We'll avoid that temptation because at **Amiga Format Special** we believe all puns have their place.

Software House: Millennium (0223 844894).

Tips: AF22, AF38, AF42. AP1, AP25.

The Lost Treasures Of Infocom



(£39.99, AF40 p112, 90%)

A compilation of 20 text-only adventure games from the annals of Amiga history. The complete listing is (very deep breath):

The Zork Trilogy, Planetfall, Stationfall, Moonmist, Enchanter, Sorcerer, Hitch Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy, Spellbreaker, Starcross, Ballyhoo, Infidel, Suspended, Deadline, Witness, Suspect, Zork Zero, Beyond Zork, Lurking Horror.

Software House: Infocom, via Profile (0295 263363).

RoboSport



(£29.99, AF40 p69, 90%)

This is an interesting one in this; *RoboSport* can't really be compared with any other Amiga game, it is a multi-player war game that relies on patience and tactics rather than quick reactions and a well-primed fire button finger. Each player, up to a maximum, of four, gets 15 seconds to plan their tactics, the Amiga plays them out, you get another 15 seconds and so on. It can last for days and is strangely addictive.

Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).

The Demo Collection



(£19.99, AF41 p147, 90%)

This CD Collection packed with the best demos from the Public Domain is a real find and is a fabulous bargain at under £20. It contains scores of demos, perhaps the most notable of which is a sizable back catalogue of the young and outrageously gifted animator Eric Schwartz. A treasure chest of games (that's why it's here!) graphics and music demos from the PD scene.

Software House: Almathera Systems (081-683 6418).

The Chaos Engine



(£25.99, AF45 p58, 90%)

A recent addition to the Gold role of honour from the Bitmap Brothers pro-

gramming team, *The Chaos Engine* is a full-blooded shoot-em-up with a strong puzzle element. It's set across 16 levels, which are sub-divided into four worlds each with their own graphical style. Racing around these worlds blasting all-comers is fun in itself, but to get the most out of *The Chaos Engine* you need more than rapid reactions and an eye for a kill.

Software House: Renegade (071-481 9214).

Tips: AF47, AF48.

AP26, AP27.

Reach For The Skies



(£30.99, AF48 p82, 90%)

While Captain Mainwaring and the rest of the chaps from *Dad's Army* were tilting at scarecrows with home-made bayonets there was a real war going on in the skies above England. *Reach For The Skies* is a flight sim set during the Battle Of Britain, that may lack some of the action and sound effects of other sims but scores heavily on historical accuracy.

Kevin and Bobby Sensible: The least well known of the Sensible Soccer players, these two lads crop up before every single Sensible game you will play.



Stars of the Amiga Screen

Software House: Virgin Games (081-960 2255).
Tips: AF50.

Storm Master



(£29.99, AF33 p64, 90%)
An unusual and fascinating beast from French software house Silmarils that mixes strategy with a touch of role-playing, a dash of arcade action and a large slice of the bizarre. You play the wartime leader of an island the waters off which are inhabited by sea monsters. This means the only way to wage war is by aircraft. First you have to build the planes, then summon up the storm master to give you a prevailing wind, see if the plane flies, then defeat the enemy. Most peculiar stuff from the French.
Software House: Silmarils, via Daze Marketing 071-328 2762.
Tips: AP13.

Pinball Fantasies



(£29.99, AF41 p128, 90%)
Pinball Fantasies holds the joint record with Sensible Soccer as the game that has had the most detrimental effect on productivity among the AFS team, oh, former consultant editor Andy Hutch has been consulting with his monitor, a mouse and a game of Syndicate for the last couple of weeks. It's simple, it's infuriatingly addictive and it's... pinball.
Software House: 21st Century Entertainment (0235 832939).
Tips: AF43, AF44, AP22, AP25, AP26, AFS5 (Q&A).

Ultimate Golf



(£9.99, AF32 p84, 90%)
This just missed out on a **Format Gold** when it was first reviewed back in July 1990 (AF12, 88%), but the budget release elevated *Ultimate Golf* into our hall of fame. Although *Ultimate Golf* doesn't break any new ground in terms of graphics and sound effects, the gameplay can't be faulted.
Software House: GBH/Gremlin (0742 753423).

Their Finest Hour



(£29.99, AF11 p71, 90%)
This flight sim set in the days when there were bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover, when people could only eat powdered egg because their upper lips were too stiff to take normal food, and the Nazis were goose-stepping their way across Europe, launches you high into the skies above the English Channel to take part in the Battle of Britain. Realistic with stacks of different gameplay options.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: AFS5 (Q&A).

PGA Tour Golf



(£24.99, AF22 p68, 90%)
Of the various golf sims *PGA Tour Golf* is generally reckoned to be the best for playing techniques. So although it may lack some of the extras of other golf sims, *PGA Tour*

Golf has a good feel. Although it's easy to get used to the controls, it can take a while to get any good at the game, particularly as split second timing is required if you're going to get anywhere near the middle of the fairway or the cup itself.
Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Operation Stealth



(£24.99, AF22 p68, 90%)
This humorous and classy graphic adventure casts you as CIA agent John Glames on a mission to retrieve an USAF Stealth Bomber that has gone missing over the banana republic of San Paragua. To this end you must ask questions of various characters, find clues, solve puzzles and extricate yourself from various tricky situations. *Operation Stealth* is an absorbing game of lasting appeal and well deserving of its **Format Gold** status.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: AF16, AF23, AF31, AF50, AP1, AP15, AP17, AP18, AP19, AP22, AP23, AP26, AP27, AFS5 (Q&A).

Gods



(£24.99, AF23 p54, 90%)
A platform game of some distinction, *Gods* was created by the Bitmap Brothers in mid-1991. You have to battle your way through a series of dungeon levels by collecting money and power ups and seeing off various baddies intent on causing you considerable harm. One of the most innovative features of *Gods* is the difficulty level, which means that if you're doing badly, the baddies take it easy on you and bonuses fall from the sky. Some of the puzzles are particularly tricky, especially at the higher levels.
Software House: Renegade (071-481 9214).

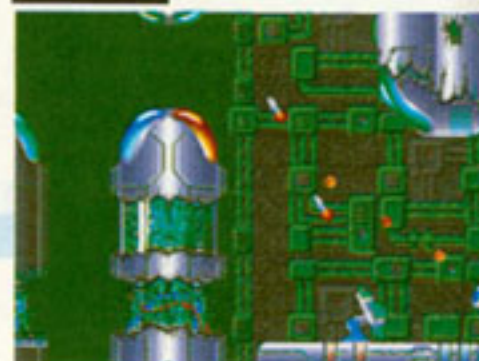
Tips: AF26, AF28, AF30, AF44, AP1, AP4, AP5, AF6, AP14, AFS5 (Q&A).

MiG-29 Fulcrum



(£34.99, AF20 p48, 90%)
The Russian MiG-29 is one of the most efficient combat planes in the world, and this action-packed flight sim goes a long way to reproducing the thrills of hurtling through the air at enormous speed. The five missions see you taking on Sea Harriers that are guarding a crippled submarine, fighting it out over the Great Wall Of China, Freeing the Straights of Hormuz from the grip of a tinpot dictator, quelling a Soviet uprising and protecting the free world somewhere in the Gulf.
Software House: Domark (081-780 2222).
Tips: AP1, AP8.

Z-Out



(£24.99, AF19 p56, 90%)
Z-Out gets 'nil points' for originality, but scores heavily on the graphics and addictive quality front. This horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-up is the follow-up to *X-Out* and puts you in charge of the *Z-Out* attack team that has been sent to the Alpha Centauri moon to wipe out enemy forces. You shoot things, they shoot you, and you collect power-ups so you can shoot more things. Simple but space-violently effective.
Software House: N/A.
Tips: AF30.

Thunderhawk



(£30.99, AF26 p82, 90%)
Just as you're getting used to flying

the Thunderhawk helicopter, a missile flashes past your windscreen, then an enemy copter comes choppering towards you and before you know it you are a smouldering heap of twisted metal and buckled rotor blades. *Thunderhawk* is not an easy flight sim. The action is fast and furious and you are plunged into the action straight away. Programmed by Mac Avery, *Thunderhawk* remains a favourite of those flight sim fans with an itchy trigger finger.
Software House: Core Design (0332 297797).

Red Lightning



(£29.99, AF4 p61, 90%)
If you like lots of shoot-em-up action in your war games then you won't find much to keep your trigger finger occupied in *Red Lightning*. This is a highly detailed strategic war game set in the central European theatre of World War Three. The graphics and sound are sadly disappointing, and *Red Lightning* will probably only have any lasting appeal for those war gamers who really take their strategy very seriously indeed.
Software House: SSI via US Gold (021-625 3366).

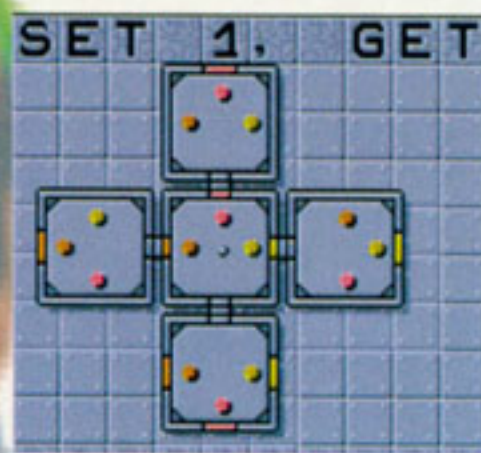
Supremacy



(£29.95, AF15 p68, 90%)
This Space-age god game is notable for its great graphics, easy-easy-use controls and its engrossing plot. The idea is to control the universe by using your skills to outwit four worthy rivals. The first can be seen off by giving him a good seeing to in a few inter-galactic skirmishes, the second and third have a better grasp of the imperialist nature of the universe and present a greater challenge, and the fourth is one mean son of a gun. While you are plotting the overthrow of your

adversaries' empires you must feed and tax your population, monitor messages, train armies, build space-ships and factories and carry out all the day-to-day tasks that befall a potential potentate of the known universe.
Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Projectyle



(£24.99, AF13 p46, 90%)
Curious sports game played on five pitches in the shape of a cross by up to three players. The game starts in the middle pitch where two players defend goals. In three of the other four pitches one player defends a goal and the other two try to score. On the fifth pitch, the Frantic Zone, all three players defend a goal. The ball, or projectyle, can be sent to the different pitches through tunnels. There, it's all quite easy then isn't it. Although it sounds complicated, all becomes clear after a couple of games, and soon you will be hooked by the adrenal and compulsive gameplay.
Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Cybercon 3



(£24.99, AF23 p82, 90%)
A superpower has entrusted its defence to a Cybercon computer, and, as is the way when you give a computer all your weapons of mass destruction, it throws a wobbler and uses them against you in a fit of silicon-inspired spite. A small band of survivors must enter the Cybercon and pull the plug on it. This involves

finding your way through a maze of tunnels, solving puzzles and taking out guards and other adversaries. *Cybercon 3* mixes arcade action with 3D adventure. It's hard to start with and gets progressively tougher.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Battle Isles



(£29.99, AF29 p68, 90%)
When it was released in late 1991, *Battle Isles*, from the German BlueByte programming team, set a new standard in war games by combining board game strategy with arcade-style graphics. *Battle Isles* is controlled by simple joystick movements. This ease of use, makes the game an instantly attractive proposition and the gameplay is equally alluring. You must use your strategic skills and the resources at your disposal to outwit the enemy.
Software House: Ubi Soft (081-343 9055).
Tips: AF34.
AP10.

Battle Command



(£24.99, AF19 p52, 90%)
A combination of thoughtful strategy and mindless blasting, *Battle Command* puts you in charge of a tank that must complete 15 missions of varying degrees of difficulty. The missions also demand different skills and each requires a coherent battle plan. Some are out and out destruction jobs, such as taking out an enemy base while others involve escorting convoys or recovering military secrets. Although it was released in early 1991, *Battle Command* has a lasting appeal.
Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).
Tips: AP1.
AF55 (Q&A).

1869



(£29.99, AF46 p72, 90%)
Venture capitalism is the name of this game, that really comes into its own in multiplayer mode. You set up a 19th century shipping company and must buy cargo and sail around selling it. Sounds simple enough, but you have to take historical conditions into account, for example you won't do to well if you put your money into cotton during the American civil war. In multiplayer mode you have the added bonus of having to out think your capitalist competitors. A shipping game with lasting appeal.
Software House: Max Design via Flair Software (0661 860260).

91%

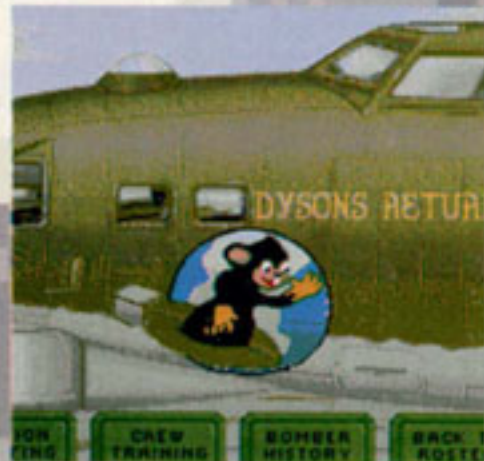
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The Greatest



(£32.99, AF46 p93, 91%)
This absolutely and completely outstanding budget compilation comprises three games, two of which are **Format** Golds in their own right. For your money you get the film and book tie-in strategy/adventure game *Dune* (reviewed AF36, 79%), the Dungeons & Dragons style *Lure Of The Temptress* (reviewed AF36, 92%), and *Jimmy White's Snooker* (reviewed AF26, 91%). Something for everybody, apart from people who don't like games.
Software House: Beau Jolly (0737 222003).

B-17 Flying Fortress



(£39.99, **AF46** p76, 91%)

B-17 is not the kind of easy-peasy, lemon er... squeazy flight sim that is going to give you a quick thrill and then leave you wondering where all those £££s went, there's more to it than frantic joystick waggling and unleashing missile death on various enemies. B-17 puts you in command of a 10-man crew (navigator, bombardier, gunners, radio operator and the suchlike) and you must help improve their skills and generally guide them through a series of missions of varying degrees of difficulty. This game requires more than a fair amount of technical skill, it's highly atmospheric, very challenging and has a lasting appeal.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: **AF47**.

Yo! Joe!



(£26.99, **AF50** p67, 91%)

One of the best platform games since *Rainbow Islands* (according to Marcus anyway) Yo! Joe! is a huge game with zillions of levels, and just the right degree of difficulty to keep you coming back for more. And more and more. As with all the best platform games the plot isn't important, but the action and degree of difficulty is crucial, and those elements are perfectly crafted in the finest platform traditions. A veritable classic.

Software House: Kompart (0727 868005).

Blade Of Destiny

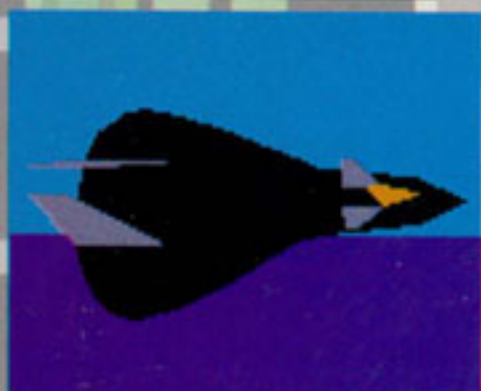


(£39.99, **AF50** p85, 91%)

Although this role-playing game doesn't exactly push back the boundaries when it comes to originality of plot, it is a hugely detailed and well-crafted exercise of immense depth. Set in the realm of Arkania, *Blade Of Destiny*, involves you and your party wandering around using your special skills, casting spells, fighting people and asking pertinent questions in order to acquire the various bits of a map that will eventually lead you to the blade of destiny. A highly intriguing and absorbing adventure.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

F-19 Stealth Fighter



(£29.99, **AF16** p48, 91%)

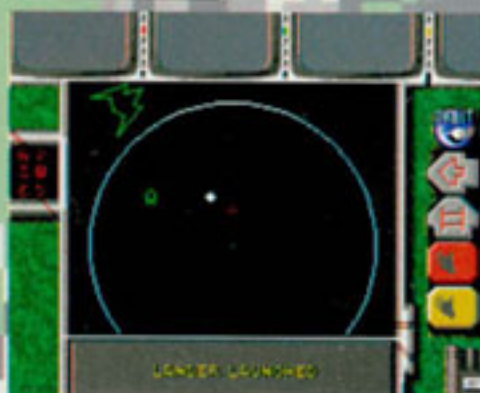
If your idea of a flight sim is a game in which you leap into the cockpit, loop the loop, take out a few enemy planes before saturation bombing your target, and shooting a few tanks to bits on your way back to base, then *F-19 Stealth Fighter* is not for you. This is probably the most technical of the Amiga flight sims. Because it is based on the *Stealth fighter* (which is supposedly invisible to enemy radar), much of the gameplay involves making sure your own radar signature is kept to a minimum, and taking detailed notes about the sort of radar you encounter while taking the appropriate action to avoid detection.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: **AP1**.

AF55 (Q&A).

Captive



(£24.99, **AF16** p71, 91%)

Captive is a welcome variation on the tried and tested *Dungeon Master* theme for adventure games. You are the captive of the game's title, locked away in a prison starship that gets its power from a series of remote planet bases. To escape you must knock out the power bases, not easy unless you happen to have a laptop computer in your cell and can use it to control four droids who can battle their way through various dungeon levels to come to your rescue. An interesting variation on a well-tried theme.

Software House: Mindscape (0444 246333).

Tips: **AF42**, **AF47**.

AP1.

AF55 (Q&A).

First Samurai



(£25.99, **AF29** p94, 91%)

Although it's usually classified as a beat-em-up, *First Samurai*, pro-

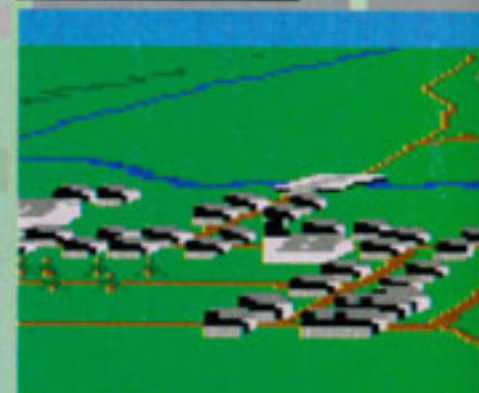
grammed by Mev Dinc, doesn't fit easily into any genre. The game is set in a six level tour of futuristic Japan and has strong elements of arcade adventure and strategy. You are a samurai warrior who must fight with honour to retain his sword. Make a mistake and you lose the sword and have to defend yourself with your bear hands. A big game with a lot of player flexibility and a lasting appeal. *First Samurai* was available through ImageWorks, part of the Mirrorsoft Empire that went under at the same time as its owner Robert Maxwell. It is now available on a Ubi Soft compilation.

Software House: Ubi Soft (081-343 9055).

Tips: **AF36**, **AF46**.

AP10, **AP13**, **AP14**, **AP19**, **AP22**, **AP24**.

Austerlitz



(£24.95, **AF8** p53, 91%)

Although it looks a touch dated now, *Austerlitz* was considered a highly impressive war/strategy game when it was released in early 1990. You step back in time to take the role of either Napoleon or Czar Alexander in the battle of Austerlitz in the Napoleonic wars. You take it in turns to dispatch orders to your subordinates who then put your battle strategy into action. The key to the game is to react quickly to developing situations, and despite its age it's still a lot of fun.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Tips: **AF9**.

AF55 (Q&A).

Robocod



(£25.99, **AF29** p80, 91%)

Wonderful platform game in which you control a cod who has some remarkable talents, such as the ability to stretch to any height. The aim of the exercise is to save lots of penguins who are hidden in some particularly

Zool: despite what many foolish people will tell you, Zool is not an Ant. He is quite simply a very fast, very colourful, very competitive ninja being from the Nth dimension. So there.



**Stars of
the Amiga
Screen**

inaccessible parts of the screen. All this requires Robocod to stretch, float and levitate (a sort of 'flyed' cod) (no more puns!! In fact you're sacked! Go and work for **Amiga Format**!! Irate ed.) Colourful, crazy and cute (pali!).
Software House: Millennium (0223 844898).

Tips: **AF33**.
AP12, AP13, AP14, AP15.
AFS5 (Q&A).

Robocop 3



(£39.95, **AF32** p60, 91%)
Robocop is a shoot-em-up that takes in elements of flight simulation and driving. Our hero gets called out on missions all over the city, which test his skills and his three prime directives of protecting the innocent, serving the public and upholding the law. So he rams terrorists' cars off the road, stalks muggers down dark alleys and blows drug dealers' helicopters out of the sky. A damn fine game.
Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).
Tips: **AF42**.
AP19.

Strider



(£19.99, **AF3** p36, 91%)
From the days of the cold war when all Russians (*Soviets I think. Politically pedantic ed.*) were evil, and not just poor as they are now, Strider is a platform shoot-em-up that involves taking out KGB agents and various other organs of the Soviet state. Even the Siberian monsters take a good beating. The action is suitably frantic and the game has a distinctly addictive edge.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: **AF7**, **AF8**, **AF34**.
AFS5 (Q&A).

Sleepwalker



(£25.99, **AF44** p60, 91%)
This hugely addictive platform game is packed with neat touches and surprises. A sleepwalker climbs out the window and somnambulates around the city. Of course all sorts of hazards await him, but luckily his trusty hound, Ralph (that's you), follows him and pushes him away from danger, and leads him safely past all manner of unpleasant things. Sleepwalker is original, addictive and it's also part of the A1200 Comic Relief bundle.
Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).
Tips: **AF45**, **AF46**.
AP25.
AFS5 (Q&A).

Eye Of The Beholder 2, The Legend Of Darkmoon



(£35.99, **AF35** p54, 90%)
The original Eye Of The Beholder is probably still the best and most atmospheric role playing game for the Amiga. EOTB2 offers more of the same (why change a winning team?). Although there is a new plot we're basically talking the same theme of a team of adventurers armed with different talents and attributes solving puzzles and taking on foes in a murky world of dungeons, tunnels, towers, more dungeons and woods.
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: **AF37**, **AF38**, **AF39**, **AF40**, **AF41**, **AF42**, **AF43**.
AP17, AP18, AP25.

Caesar



(£29.99, **AF41** p92, 91%)
The Romans will go down in history as the civilisation that introduced central heating, toga parties and inspired Caesar, an excellent Amiga god game. You are given control of a province and must build houses, set taxes, go to the forum, go to war, and generally act like a Roman governor. If you do well the Emperor offers you promotion, and you can keep taking over provinces and countries until you become emperor yourself. It's really rather addictive... like in the extreme, er... dude.
Software House: Impressions (071-351 2133).

Robocod AGA



(£25.99, **AF49** p89, 91%)
'The best game yet for showing off the A1200,' wrote **Amiga Format** editor Marcus Dyson. Robocod AGA is an upgrade of the original **Format** Gold Robocod, designed to make full use of the A1200's AGA chip set. This means the excellent platform game is even more colourful than the original and has five fiendishly tricky new levels. Probably not worth buying if you've got the original Robocod, but if you've got an A1200 sans Robocod, get it.
Software House: Millennium 0223 844894.

Kick Off



(£19.95, **AF1** p35, 91%)
For a long time Kick Off was the footie fans' favourite. Then came Sensible Soccer, Player Manager and Goal! and the terraces ceased to ring to the chants of "Ooh, aah Kick Off!". Although, Dino Dini's Kick Off is now undeniably dated (it was reviewed in the first **Amiga Format** way back in August 1989), it is still an immensely playable footie game. In fact it caused such a stir at Future Publishing that a four division league was set up, and Kick Off became so popular that work rates plummeted and the game was banned during office hours.
Software House: Anco (0322 292518).
Tips: **AF1**, **AF3**, **AF11**.

MiG-29 Fulcrum



(£12.99, **AF49** p96, 91%)
This flight sim originally released by Domark (**AF29**, 89%) and then as a budget by Hit Squad was awarded a **Format** Gold for its immense playability rather than its flight sim accuracy and realism. Basically you assume the identity of a Soviet pilot and fly around shooting things and avoiding being shot at. MiG-29 Fulcrum may not be as sophisticated as some of the other flight sims, but it's a lot of fun.
Software House: Hit Squad (021-625 3366).
Tips: **AF42**.
AP8.

KGB



(£30.99, **AF42** p132, 91%)
You play a Russian (**SOVIET!!!!**) agent fighting for the cause of perestroika in this graphic adventure that, despite some cheap anti-Russian jibes, is compulsive playing. KGB is also notable for its strong language, most notably

when you are told to stick a turnip somewhere most uncomfortable, and touches of sexual innuendo. If it was a TV program, KGB would be shown After 9pm.

Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Tips: **AF48**.

AP25, AP26, AP27.

Legends Of Valour



(£39.99, **AF44** p90, 91%)

Deep in the heart of this Dungeons & Dragons-style graphic adventure/RPG there is chillingly realistic representation of **AF5** consultant editor Hutch (honestly). This aside *LoV* is a superb looking game. Set in the town of Mitteldorf you are given various tasks to fulfil and places to explore. It's a huge, enthralling game of epic proportions.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Tips: **AF46**.

AP25, AP26.

AF55 (Q&A).

Gravity



(£24.95, **AF11** p46, 91%)

Opinions remain divided about *Gravity*, the game that is, not the force that makes apples fall into greengrocers' shops. Those who persevered with this space style war game with a wedge of strategy, found it an intriguing prospect. Many others found the strategy simply distracted from the shooting and blasting. This was a Mirrorsoft game, the company owned by Cap'n Bob Maxwell, which like Cap'n Bob, no longer exists.

Ghouls 'n' Ghosts



(£24.99, **AF7** p32, 91%)

When it was first released for the Amiga all the way back in February 1990, this excellent arcade conversion was one of the best platformers around. It now looks a touch dated (bet you don't look as good now as you did in February 1992, we certainly don't), but despite these cosmetic problems, it remains an atmospheric and challenging jaunt through an imaginative variety of levels inhabited by various laser-death spitting nasties.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Mega-lo-Mania



(£29.99, **AF26** p54, 91%)

This epic (in the 'very big indeed' sense of the word) god game from the Sensible Software team of programmers involves your quest to dominate 28 islands by exploiting their mineral wealth, developing and creating weapons and then using those weapons to wipe out the opposition. There is heaps and heaps of planning as well as the occasional wedge of quick thinking involved here. Belaying the Sensible's reputation for strangeness and weird thrills, *Mega-lo-Mania* is an absorbing game with lasting appeal and many humorous touches, start to play it and you'll be up all night.

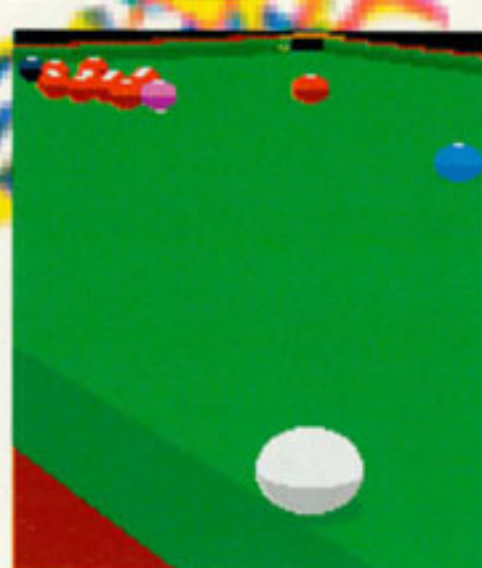
Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Tips: **AF30**, **AF31**, **AF42** **AF49**.

AP7, AP11.

AF55 (Q&A).

Jimmy White's Snooker



(£29.99, **AF26** p58, 91%)

Programmer Archer Maclean was really on cue when he spotted the opportunity to introduce a snooker sim into the Amiga market (*Sacked! Sacked! Sacked!*). The icon control system is quick and easy to use and before you know it you'll be chalking your cue purposefully as you stride around the table, glancing anxiously at the scoreboard and muttering to yourself about a double kiss as you line up a plant to screw back out of baulk and leave a good position on the black. It's almost the real thing.

Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Tips: **AF42**.

AP13, AP15.

AF55 (Q&A).

Knights Of The Crystallion



(£29.99, **AF9** p40, 91%)

There is the bizarre and the seriously bizarre. The plot of this game falls into the latter category. A huge prehistoric monster is trapped in a canyon, dies, and over the centuries rots down to a skeleton, which a tribe of people carve their way into and set up a society. You must control and administer that society, and, along the way undergo five tests to achieve the same telepathic powers that some of the tribes possess. Peculiar and enjoyable.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Sensible Soccer



(£25.99, **AF36** p58, 91%)

Why is it that a football game with tiny characters who can't trap the ball is now widely regarded as not only the best Amiga footie sim, but perhaps the best ever Amiga game? Well, *Sensible Soccer* from Jon Hare's Sensible Software team has got something that transcends flash graphics and arcade action, it's got an uncannily authentic football feel. Of course, if there's something wrong with you and you don't like football, this realism will be lost on you, and you'll probably wonder what all the fuss is about. But if you know the difference between a square back four and an attacking sweeper system, *Sensible Soccer* will slowly take over your life. The more you play the better it gets.

Software House: Renegade (071-481 9214).

Tips: **AF42**, **AF45**.

AP17.

AF55 (Q&A).

Vroom



(£25.99, **AF34** p56, 91%)

Programmed by Geoff Crammond, of *Formula One Grand Prix* and *Stunt Car Racer* fame, *Vroom* is an incredibly fast racing game with excellent graphics and the sort of sound effects that cry out to be put through your hi-fi at a socially unacceptable volume. *Vroom* has three modes, Training, Arcade (in which you must pass a given number of cars to qualify for the next race) and Competition (the full-blown championship, in which you tour the world's leading circuits). With pit-stops for petrol and tyre changes, *Vroom* is a realistic and challenging racing game. You can almost smell that acrid burning rubber.

Software House: Ubi Soft (081-343 9055).

Space Legend Compilation



(£29.99, **AF**49 p95, 91%)

Three-game budget release featuring *Wing Commander* (reviewed **AF**44, 83%) *MegaTraveller 1* (reviewed **AF**24, 70%) and *Elite Plus* (not previously reviewed). *Wing Commander* is a *Star Wars*-style romp in which you meet interesting aliens and shoot them; *MegaTraveller 1* is a role playing game which involves you saving the Third Imperium from the evil attentions of the Zhodani; *Elite Plus* is an offspin of the classic *Elite* inter-galactic trading game. Excellent value compilation. **Software House:** Empire (0268 541212).

Syndicate



(£34.99, **AF**49 p83, 91%)

This enthralling game from the Bullfrogs combines action and strategy in a cyberpunkish sort of way. You have to defeat rival syndicates and take over the world. To do this you arm and equip up to four of your cyber agents and send them on various missions to rescue spies, assassinate leaders, kidnap scientists and the suchlike. These missions require a fair amount of thought and planning, not to mention oodles of laser death. If you complete the mission successfully you take over the country, set a tax and become more powerful. Excellent sound, great graphics and compelling gameplay combine to make a very good game indeed.

Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Tips: **AF**50.

92%

Indianapolis 500



(£24.99, **AF**17 p64, 92%)

This racing simulation is based on the famous American race which is characterised by the large number of high-speed accidents. The game captures the manic speed of the race and there are lots of different camera angles for analysing those 15 car pile-ups. *Indianapolis 500* combines racing skills with the urge to prang lots of those lovely new shiny cars. Good stuff.

Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Tips: **AF**18.

AP12.

AF55 (Q&A).

Damocles



(£24.99, **AF**14 p36, 92%)

The second in Paul Woakes' *Mercenary* trilogy *Damocles* is a 3D adventure in which you are a mercenary charged with saving the planet from destruction by diverting a very large, very hard meteorite. That's not easy in itself, but to make matters worse, you don't have a clue where to start and so you must solve various puzzles to make yourself more adept in the art of meteorite diversion. An addictive game with some quirky humour.

Software House: N/A

Tips: **AF**15.

AP19.

AF55 (Q&A).

Distant Armies



(£24.99, **AF**16 p90, 92%)

This fascinating chess-inspired strategy game is a real gem. You have the choice of ten games, each with its own board, all of which are variations on the basic chess theme. Although that may not seem too special, *Distant Armies* is the sort of game that you dip into and before you know it you're sending out for pizza. Consider us very impressed.

Software House: N/A

Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis



(£37.99, **AF**43 p72, 92%)

Produced by the American LucasArts company responsible for the classic *Monkey Island* games, *Indiana Jones* is an intriguing and engrossing graphic adventure starring Indy and his fellow scientist/adventurer, the alluring Sophia Hapgood. Many of the puzzles demand a great deal of thought. Sometimes your course of action will determine the direction of the gameplay, so if you chose to battle your way out of a given situation rather than think your way around the problem, you'll follow a much more action-packed route. *Indiana Jones* has a fair slice of humour, and although it isn't quite in the same league as the incredible *Monkey Island 2*, it's still an absorbing game and one that you will treasure for months if not years of your Amiga gaming life to come.

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Tips: **AF**46, **AF**48.

AP22, **AP**23, **AP**24.

AF55 (Q&A).

Eye Of The Beholder



(£29.99, **AF**24 p82, 92%)

One of the most influential role playing games, *Eye Of The Beholder* is set in a fantasy land of freakish, outlandish creatures and powerful beings, all of which are intent on making your life as difficult as possible. You control a party of six people all of whom have different skills to help you through the trials that lie ahead. Each character has the ability to learn how to use weapons and the mage and cleric can also learn how to cast spells and heal people, which means that their knowledge grows as yours does. One of the great games of all time.

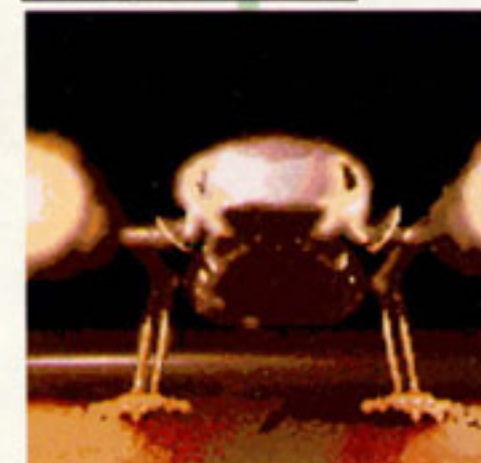
Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Tips: **AF**26.

AP27.

AF55 (Q&A).

Killing Game Show



(£24.99, **AF**17 p74, 92%)

Based around a futuristic game show in which there is only one winner and the losers die horribly, *Killing Game Show* is a fast-moving platform game with shoot-em-up action. Among the hazards are MUGs, convicted criminals who have been transformed into cyborgs, pits Of Death, HALFs (Hostile Artificial Life Forms) and DOLL (Deadly to Organic Life Liquid), acid that creeps up the screen and corrodes your joints if you linger too long on the way to an exit.

Software House: Psygnosis (051 709 5755).

Tips: **AF**33.

AP1.

F-29 Retaliator



(£24.95, AF11 p62, 92%)

This well-crafted flight sim puts you in the cockpit of either a Grumman F-29 or a Lockheed F-22 and gives you the option of four theatres of war (Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific or America). For those of us who don't get off on going through five hours of pre-flight check-checks, this game is a winner. The emphasis is firmly on the action rather than the flying, and to this end you have heaps of missiles and bombs to choose from and a host of missions to fly.

Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).

Tips: AF12, AF13, AP1, AP8.

Kult



(£24.95, AF2 p34, 92%)

This adventure-cum-puzzle game was rapturously received by **Amiga Format** way back in September 1989. The plot involves two tribal groups, the primitive and pagan Protozorgs and the weaker but more intelligent (but more boring) Normals. The Protozorgs turn nasty and give the Normals a good old zapping, during the course of which your girlfriend is kidnapped. You (Raven) must rescue her by undertaking five tasks to gain access to the temple where you believe she is being held. It all sounds very simple but deep down it's also fiendishly effective.

Software House: Infogrames (071-738 8199).

Tips: AF3, AF4.

Formula One Grand Prix



(£30.99, AF30 p132, 92%)

Geoff Crammond is the best programmer in the business when it comes to racing games and *F1GP* is his finest achievement to date. The action is fast, the graphics are incredibly detailed and the game is totally engrossing. You can race on 16 different circuits, and before each race you complete a practice circuit to determine where you start on the grid. The racing itself is remarkably realistic and once you get into the swing of it, it's surprisingly easy to work your way through the field and challenge for a place in the top three.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: AF34, AF42, AP12, AP13, AFS5 (Q&A).

Lemmings



(£24.99, AF20 p62, 92%)

It's a complete myth that lemmings deliberately throw themselves off cliffs. What really happens is that when thousands of the little rodents migrate in herds (or is it flocks?) the momentum they build up means that when they reach a cliff they can't stop and hurtle over the edge. *Lemmings* is probably the most famous Amiga game ever. It was programmed by David Jones and released by the Liverpool software house Psygnosis in February 1991.

Software House: Psygnosis (051 709 5755).

Tips: AF22, AF30, AF42, AF45, AP9, AP20, AP23, AFS5 (Q&A).

Hero's Quest



(£34.99, AF13 p57, 92%)

'Just to call this a game is inadequate: it's a five-disc work of art,' enthused the **Amiga Format** reviewer when *Hero's Quest* was released in July 1990. *Hero's Quest* is a role-playing game in which you can choose the attributes of your character by being a fighter, a magician or a thief. You then set about defending the people of the Spielberg valley from a variety of monsters (the Humanoids, the Inhumanoids, The Undead and the Unknown) and other fantastical calamities.

Software House: Sierra (0734 303171).

Tips: AF16.

Links



(£37.99, AF36 p77, 92%)

If you haven't got a hard drive you can't play *Links* - so get a hard drive. *Links* has just got the edge on the other **Format** Gold golf games because of its slick animation, the control it gives you over shots, and the option to play up to eight players at once. The courses are incredibly realistic and are based on pictures taken from a helicopter flying over them. If you make a complete mess of a shot, you can take it again. In real golf this is known as cheating (oh really? sarc'ee ed.).

Software House: US Gold (021-625 3366).

Rick Dangerous 2



(£24.99, AF16 p82, 92%)

Rick Dangerous is returning home

After defeating The Fat Guy in *Rick Dangerous 1* when he sees a fleet of The FG's flying saucers heading toward Hyde Park and before he knows it he has assumed his platform game superhero identity once more in... *Rick Dangerous 2*. Each level of this exhilarating platform romp takes you to a different location, such as the planets Freezia and Vegetalia and The Fat Guy's mud mines. Most of the action is laser inspired which gives the game a rare zapping quality.

Tips: AFS5 (Q&A).

Midwinter



(£24.95, AF12 p40, 92%)

The year is 2099, the earth has been struck by a meteorite and been plunged into a second ice age. A small group of survivors build a new society on the frozen wastes of Midwinter Isle and form the Free Villages Peace Force. But the new civilisation is threatened by a rebel army and your job is to thwart them by deploying your forces around the islands on skis, in cable cars, on a snow mobile or by hang glider. An unusual, but strangely captivating game.

Software House: N/A.

SWIV



Subtle it ain't. Why worry about tactics and strategy when you've got a band of heavily-armed ruffians under your command? *SWIV* is an out-and-out shoot-em-up in which you control a search and destroy team that goes behind enemy lines to take out installations and troops in land, sea and air battles. The graphics are amazing, the sound is excellent and the action is frantic all the way.

Software House: Storm (071-585 3308).

Tips: AF26, AF30, AP1, AP5.

Powerdrift



(£24.00, **AF5** p42, 92%)

The original *Powerdrift* coin-op game was one of those affairs where you sat in a cabinet that moved from side to side, allegedly to simulate the feel of a racing game. Activision's conversion for the Amiga doesn't have the cabinet (or the gaggle of callow youths who would often gather around it down the arcade), but it does have a compelling charm and cunningly addictive quality. Basically, you race a kart around a series of tracks. You start each race in fourth place and must finish in the top three to progress to the next track. For such an early game, it is still incredibly fast, colourful and action-packed. So forget all the years that have passed, and concentrate on the excellent gameplay, after all... what more could you want from a racing game?

Software House: Activision/The Disc Company via profile 0295 263363.

Sim City



(£29.99, **AF6** p55, 92%)

One of the earliest and, arguably, still one of the best god games *Sim City* (some might even say that this gem was the one that started the genre) is a detailed and captivating exercise in social control. You must build, control and administrate a vast metropolis. You do this by employing the skills of the citizens to good advantage, setting taxes, creating police and fire departments. Although it seems fairly straightforward, *Sim City* has that all important element of good gameplay that separates the sadly average from the greatly exceptional. A true classic.

Software House: Infogrames (071-738 8199).

Tips: **AF10, AF42, AF43.**

Powerdrome



(£24.99, **AF1** p49, 92%)

This futuristic racing game involves belting around twisting, high-walled courses, taking out opponents and avoiding getting smashed into zillions of little tiny pieces. The graphics are slick, the game is very fast and an added bonus is that you can link up your Amiga with a null-modem cable to race against a human opponent. An old 'un but a good 'un.

Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Tips: **AF6.**

The Secret Of Monkey Island



(£24.99, **AF23** p74, 92%)

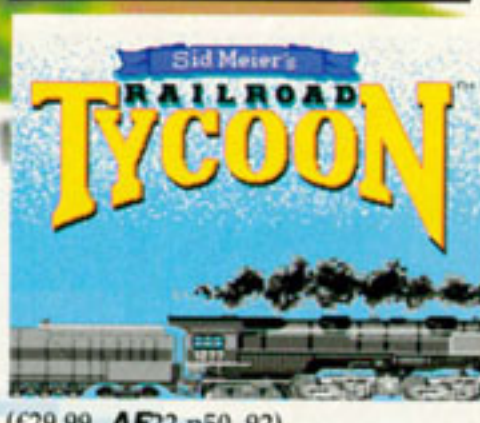
When the American company LucasArts sprung *The Secret Of Monkey Island* on an unsuspecting games playing world in mid 1991, it was met with awe and wonder. Little has changed. The only graphic adventure game that is better than *Monkey Island* is *Monkey Island 2*. Anyway, the original game is funny, challenging, addictive and a classic piece of entertainment. When it was released the plot about the battle between Guybrush Threepwood and the evil pirate LeChuck was witty, fresh and frustrating. It still is. To be honest, if you miss out on this game, then you've limited your life experiences.

Software House: LucasArts via US Gold (021-625 3366).

Tips: **AF24, AF25, AF35, AF40, AF42, AF47.**

AP4, AP13, AP14, AP15, AP16, AP18, AP21, AP24, AP25.

Railroad Tycoon



(£29.99, **AF22** p50, 92)

On the face of it, a strategy game based on the development of the American railway system may not seem a particularly gripping concept. However, *Railroad Tycoon*, by Sid Meier of *Civilization* fame, is a thoroughly absorbing and challenging game. You start life as a humble investor, and through astute business deals gradually become a railway mogul. But being head of the rail network isn't just about drawing a huge salary and making excuses about leaves on tracks. In *Railroad Tycoon* you have to build bridges, see off rivals in fare wars and undertake all manner of other railway-related tasks.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: **AF42.**

AP12.

Waterloo



(£24.99, **AF3** p55, 92%)

Designed by military historian (and computer games' hidden genius) Dr Peter Turcan, *Waterloo* is one of those war games that relies on historical accuracy for much of its appeal. You play either Napoleon or Wellington and take an overview of the campaign. You control the strategy by issuing orders to your troops via messengers and can view the state of battle by looking at the action through the eyes of your commanders. As far as we know *Waterloo* is the only battle to be named after an Abba song, unless of course there has been a skirmish called Fernando.

Software House: US Gold (021-635 8888)

Lure Of The Temptress



(£30.99, **AF36** p80, 92%)

Created by the Revolution programming team from Hull, *Lure Of The Temptress* is an immensely playable graphic adventure firmly set in the Dungeons & Dragons/fairytale tradition. You play Diermot, an unwilling hero who gets caught up in a plot to overthrow the evil Temptress and rescue her prisoner. The characters possess some basic intelligence, which means that if you annoy them at one point in the game, they won't be too co-operative the next time you meet them. *Lure Of The Temptress* is also notable for its humour and self-parody, which helps make it an absorbing game. A must for adventure games fans.

Software House: Virgin (081-960 2255).

Tips: **AF41, AF44.**

AP18, AP19.



Conqueror



(£24.99, **AF9** p32, 93%)

David Braben, creator of the classic *Elite*, also put together this extremely nifty tank game. You control an American, Soviet or German World War II tank and go to war with the

enemy on a battlefield littered with many hazards. The speed of movement and depth of the missions make this an enormously playable, above-average shoot-em-up. Many of the **Amiga Format** team get nostalgic and are often heard to sigh: "Ah Conqueror, tanks for the memory." **Software House:** Rainbow Arts/IDG (071-243 2878)

Crazy Cars 3



(£25.99, **AF38** p64, 93%)
Something of a surprise this one. The two previous incarnations of *Crazy Cars* did little to get the **Amiga Format** review team's pulses racing. However, *Crazy Cars 3* is a damn fine urban racing game with gripping gameplay. It's fast, frantic and fabulous, with upgrade options and mapreading bits to enhance the basic racing theme. There's also a nice touch in the plot about escaped convicts and traffic police. Motoring mayhem.
Software House: Titus (071-700 2119).

Flashback



(£29.99, **AF45** p54, 93%)
A combination of slick graphics and compelling gameplay that involves aspects of adventure, puzzle and shoot-em-up styles, earned this offering a **Format** Gold. You control a scientist called Conrad as he battles with Morph agents and solves puzzles against an animated background.
Software House: Delphine via US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: **AF50**.

Player Manager



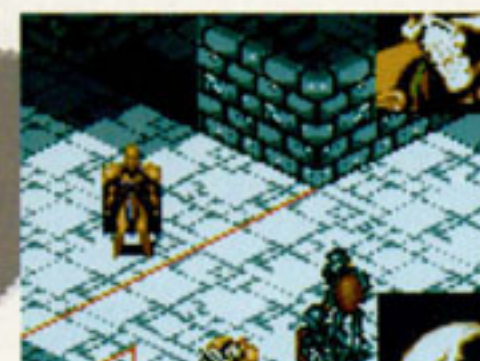
(£19.95, **AF10** p65, 93%)
You could be excused for thinking that Dino Dini's next excursion into the world of footie sims after *Kick Off* was *Kick Off 2*. In fact the running order goes *Kick Off*, *Extra Time* (an expansion disk that bombed), *Player Manager* and then *Kick Off 2*. *Player Manager* combines football strategy with arcade action and is still regarded by some footie fans as the finest Amiga football game ever, *Sensible Soccer* or no *Sensible Soccer*. You start the game as the newly-appointed manager of a team and must buy and sell players, supervise training sessions and decide on the teams tactics. You can then either watch the Amiga play out a game, or control the team yourself when Saturday comes. The ultimate aim is to guide your team to the top of the (then) First Division, winning oodles of silverware for the trophy cabinet along the way. A truly great game.
Software House: Anco (0322 292518).

Laser Squad



(£19.95, **AF5** p52, 93%)
Although this one or two-player tactical war game doesn't score too highly in the sound and graphics departments it still has an enduring and endearing addictive quality and requires lots of the old grey matter. Written by Julian Gollop, *Laser Squad* is played over a set number of turns on a pseudo 3-D board. Each player controls a variable number of troops and must gain victory points by destroying specified targets. Played against the Amiga *Laser Squad* is good, played against another human it's excellent.
Software House: N/A.
Tips: **AF6**.

Shadowlands



(£29.99, **AF33** p72, 93%)
Programmed by Dean Lester's Teque

team *Shadowlands* is an absorbing and atmospheric role playing game in the Dungeons & Dragons genre of dimly-lit underground passages. Although some RPG buffs don't put *Shadowlands* in the same division as *Eye Of The Beholder* or *Legends Of Valour*, others rate it as one of the most playable RPGs thanks to its atmospheric feel, excellent graphics and absorbing gameplay.
Software House: Domark (081-780 2222).
Tips: **AF36**, **AF37**, **AP14**.

Stunt Car Racer



(£24.95, **AF6** p45, 93%)
Produced by racing game guru Geoff Crammond *Stunt Car Racer* is a simple, effective and hugely enjoyable exercise in hurling a stunt car around various death-defying tracks. You start in Division Four and work your way up to the top flight, with the eventual aim of winning the championship. Like Crammond's other racing games, most notably *FIGP*, *Stunt Car Racer* has great graphics and easy, but addictive gameplay. It's so realistic you can almost hear Murray Walker's high-pitched platitudes above the roar of the engines.
Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).
Tips: **AF13**, **AF42**, **AF55** (Q&A).

Xenon 2



(£24.99, **AF3** p52, 93%)
This Bitmap Brothers' shoot-em-up was received with universal praise when it was released in October 1989, but since then there has been something of a critical backlash, and *Xenon 2* has been accused of being predictable and too easy. However, many

people still have a soft-spot for *Xenon 2* and there's no denying that the graphics and the Bomb The Bass soundtrack are excellent. *Xenon 2* is a vertically-scrolling shoot-em-up set over five stages. You control the spaceship Megablast and must find and destroy the five bombs that the fiendish Xenites have hidden at various points throughout the history of your civilisation. *Xenon 2* was released by Robert Maxwell's Mirrorsoft outfit, which, like Maxwell, has ceased to be.
Software House: N/A.
Tips: **AF38**.

Wizkid



(£25.99, **AF37** p54, 93%)
A beautifully bizarre, seriously off the wall game, the basic idea of *Wizkid* is to collect 10 cats by bouncing various objects, including bricks, marbles and penguins, off butterflies' heads. You also have to solve puzzles to collect colours that enable you to solve other puzzles. Although it is usually put in the platform category, *Wizkid* is notable for its distinct lack of platforms. *Wizkid*, the sequel to the very excellent *Wizball*, was conceived by Jon Hare's Sensible Software team.
Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).
Tips: **AF41**, **AF42**, **AP20**, **AP23**, **AP27**, **AF55** (Q&A).

Pacific Islands



(£29.99, **AF35** p50, 93%)
More than just another war game, *Pacific Islands*, programmed by Rik Yapp, combines tactics and shoot-em-up skills to produce an absorbing, if slightly frustrating game. Your task as an American tank commander is to

control the units (up to four) under your command and liberate the Yama Yama Islands. But it's no good just sending your tanks rolling in with all guns blazing, because depending on the amount of damage you inflict on innocent villages and the speed of your campaign, you get a variable amount of cash to spend on re-arming and repairing damaged tanks. There are five islands to be liberated, which makes a total of 21 battles.

Software House: Empire (0268 541212).

Tips: AP16.

Striker



(£25.99, AF36 p59, 93%)

Although *Striker* has an immediate appeal, it is now regarded by the AFS team as second best to *Sensible Soccer*. On the plus side *Striker* is easy to control and encourages passing and teamwork. Charging down the middle of the pitch doesn't get you very far, whereas playing the ball and passing leads to goals. Downsides - it's difficult to change team formations mid match, you can't customise your teams.

Software House: Rage Software (051 933 2688).

94%

Lemmings 2: The Tribes



(£29.99, AF46 p54, 94%)

Oh, you were waiting to see where *Lemmings* came were you? That tells us a great deal about you. You could be a vicar, a First Division footy player, a Major General, in fact you could be anyone because *The L-word* game is that bloody popular. The original *Lemmings* came from nowhere to become one of the best-known games ever, so there was an awful lot expected of this follow up. *Lemmings 2* more than satisfied those expectations. The main difference between the two games is that *Lemmings 2* has a plot. The Lemmings have migrated to Lemming Island and split into 12 tribes, each of which has kept a portion of the sacred Lemming Talisman. But disaster threatens the Lemmings and the only way they can avoid it is to collect together the 12 pieces of the Talisman at the centre of the island. Your task is to guide the tribes, each of which has different attributes, to the centre of the island. Once the Talisman is complete the lemmings can summon up a giant flying boat to take them to safety. It's charming, it's frustrating, it's addictive and it's even got plot.

Software House: Psygnosis (051 709 5755).

Tips: AF47.

AP26, AP27.

HistoryLine 1914-1918



(£34.99, AF43 p104, 94%)

Quite possibly the best Amiga war game, it's perhaps surprising that *HistoryLine* was produced by the Thomas Hertzler's German software house Blue Byte. The attention to detail is remarkable, with accounts of the many treaties and pacts of the First World War and a stunning animated sequence of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, which set the whole ball rolling. The actual wargaming itself is equally well-crafted making it easy to check on the status of units and move them around. With a large range of authentic battle scenarios to choose from and a wonderfully atmospheric animation, *HistoryLine* is a truly compelling game.

Software House: Blue Byte via Kompart UK (0727 868005).

Tips: AF46, AF48.

AP26.

AFS5 (Q&A).

Gunship 2000



(£35.99, AF49 p90, 94%)

This outstanding helicopter flight sim combines flying skills with strategy and wargaming to make one of the most absorbing Amiga games. You can play *Gunship 2000* at warrant officer level, where you control your own copter, or you can go into Campaign mode which puts you in command of a squadron and makes it possible to work your way up the promotions ladder. Everything about *Gunship 2000* oozes class, from the smooth graphics to the well-crafted gameplay.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: AF50.

Civilization



Civilization makes up for what it will agree not to crush you unless civilization in exchange for the secret of The Republic ignore your hollow threats.

(£34.99, AF38 p51, 94%)

You either love it or you can't see any point whatsoever in the huge, huge test of wit and intelligence from MicroProse. Designed and programmed by Sid Meier, *Civilization* is a massive god game that could easily keep you occupied for months. The object is to start off with one tribe, and by developing its skills to explore and take over other tribes and countries. As your subjects develop they build cities, trade with other nations and raise armies - all under your watchful gaze. An enormous exercise in strategy, *Civilization* will change your life - and stop you going down the pub for at least a month.

Software House: MicroProse (0666 504326).

Tips: AF39, AF41, AF42.

AFS5 (Q&A).

John Madden American Football



(£29.99, AF33 p58, 94%)

Okay, to be brutally honest about this, American nerdball is not the favourite choice of office viewing. All those tedious grunts, tactics, uniforms, dull commentators and people who actually believed that the London Monarchs bore even the slightest affinity to London. So it was always going to be hard to convince us of a good Amiga simulation. Damn! *John Madden's American Football* is an exceptionally good game, well deserving of its **Format** Gold rating. The gameplay is particularly realistic, with enough Defensive and Offensive options for hours of absorbing grid-iron. Incidentally, John Madden was a particularly distinguished football coach, who is now a television commentator. A bit like Steve Coppel.

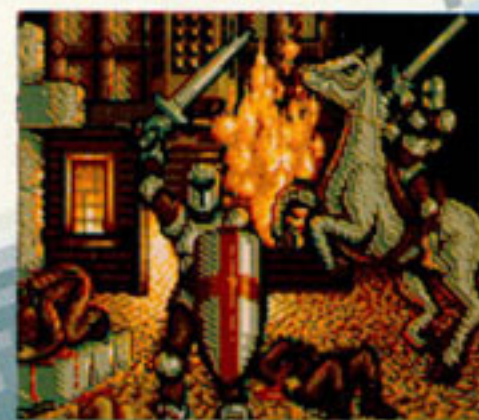
Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Tips: AF44, AF45.

AP15.

AFS5 (Q&A).

Powermonger



(£29.99, AF18 p42, 94%)

A massive earthquake has hit the world, sweeping away political and social institutions and changing the geographical structure of the planet. Three new leaders emerge from the debris of the old order and challenge your position of top dog. Do you negotiate with them to ensure global harmony? Do you hell! Recruit armies, get food for the soldiers from friendly villages, deploy and command your forces and wipe the pretenders to your throne off the face of the world.

Powermonger is a strategy game that is both complex and humorous, at the

time of its release (January 1991) it had innovative graphics and still has a lasting appeal.
Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).
Tips: AP1, AP8.

F-16 Combat Pilot

UEL: 6972 lbs ROUNDS:

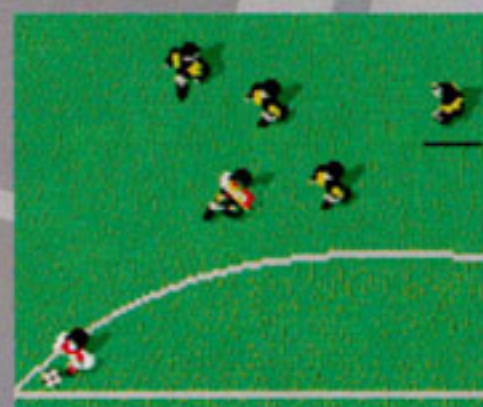


65D MK-82 MK-84
 AGM-65E MK-83 DURAND

(£24.95, AF3 p42, 94%)
 Although it's getting on a bit now, this flight sim is still worth checking out, especially as it was released on the Action 16 budget label for £9.99 about a year ago. F-16 combines plenty of high-flying action with a large dash of realism and therefore satisfies those who want to blast everything out of the sky as well as those who are more interested in executing a perfect landing. There are plenty of gameplay options, from a full campaign to dog-fight missions. Although F-16 has been surpassed in the graphics and sound departments by more recent flight sims it remains an addictive and challenging game.

Software House: Digital Integration: (0276 684959).
Tips: AFS5 (Q&A).

Kick Off 2



(£19.95, AF13 p38, 94%)
 When Dino Dini created Kick Off, the game was an instant success, and Kick Off 2 built on that popularity by improving the graphics and sounds, ironing out a few bugs and introducing a host of new features including different playing surfaces, defensive walls at free kicks, and aftertouch. The gameplay is much the same as Kick Off (why meddle with a winning

formula?) and Kick Off 2 remains one of the best football games ever to appear on the Amiga.
Software House: Anco (0322 292518).
Tips: AF19, AF42.
 AP14.

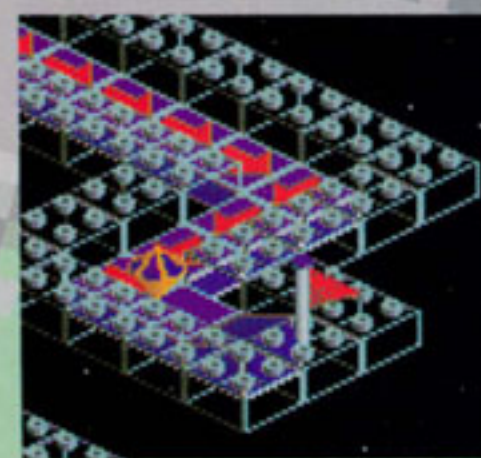
Dragon's Breath



(£29.99, AF9 p36, 94%)
 This unusual god game, from the now defunct Palace software house, is a sort of medieval version of Sim City in which you've got to locate the three pieces of a mystical talisman before your computer opponents do so. To do this, you have to do something really, really simple, you have to hatch out dragons from eggs. Then you have to dispatch them to far-flung hovels in order to frazzle peasants and then carry out various other dastardly deeds. Dragon's Breath is an engrossing game with very excellent graphics and it has an extremely high playability rating.

Software House: N/A
Tips: AF18.
 AFS5 (Q&A).

Spindizzy Worlds



(£24.99, AF18 p82, 94%)
 Ah, Spindizzy Worlds, a peculiar but compelling exercise, regarded by many devotees as the best ever Amiga game. You control a spinning top masquerading as a space probe, called GERALD (Geographical Environmental Reconnaissance And Landmapping Device) that zooms around exploring various worlds. GERALD is attacked by aliens and runs out of fuel if you don't top up

from the diamonds scattered around the place. GERALD travels between the different worlds via teleports, which are only accessible if you complete certain puzzles. Spindizzy Worlds is difficult to find nowadays, but if you see a copy, buy it!
Software House: Activision, via The Disc Company (010-331-4910-9995).

Speedball 2



(£24.99, AF20 p58, 94%)
 A classic Amiga game, Speedball 2 is now more than two years old, but is still an automatic choice in many Amiga gamers' top ten. The reason this futuristic American football game is so popular is probably because it relies heavily on violence and cheating. The scoring system is intriguing, and includes bounce domes that send the ball flying away and multiply your score and warp gates that transport the ball to the other side of the pitch. Although it's useful to know about these niceties it's far more important that you adopt an attitude that says "...it's not the taking part, but the winning that counts," and then employ all manner of illegal tactics to ensure victory is yours.
Software House: Renegade (071-481 9214).
Tips: AF23, AF42, AF48.

The New Zealand Story



(£24.99, AF1 p38, 94%)
 This tremendously popular coin-op platform game was a huge success when it was transferred to the Amiga way back in 1989, and four years on it's still great. The Japanese game is in the long tradition of introducing wacky platform characters, in this case a little yellow kiwi-bird in blue and white running shoes, who rushes around rescuing chums who have

been captured and locked in cages by a big bad walrus and his teddy bear hordes. New Zealand Story is an overwhelmingly cute platform game with surprises and neat touches.
Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).
Tips: AF12, AF17.
 AP16, AP19, AP22.
 AFS5 (Q&A).

95%

Monkey Island 2 - LeChuck's Revenge



(£37.99, AF36 p62, 95%)
 The original Secret Of Monkey Island is a classic adventure game, and this sequel is even better. Yes, this is the rarest of rare things, a sequel that does justice to the original game. The Secret of Monkey Island II - LeChuck's Revenge is one of those games that has people who have never played RPGs (who would prefer to be beheaded with a rusty copy of Kick Off) falling over themselves to get on to the Amiga. The plot continues the struggle between the hero Guybrush Threepwood and the ghost pirate LeChuck, with Threepwood setting off in search of the Big Whoop, a secret power that will rid him of LeChuck once and for all. So what makes Monkey Island 2 probably the best Amiga RPG ever? Is it the fiendish puzzles, the gameplay, the brilliant graphics, the excellent sense of humour (this is one of the very few genuinely funny games), or is it the game's hugely addictive quality? It is of course all of these things. A classic.
Software House: LucasArts via US Gold (021-625 3366).
Tips: AF38, AF39, AF42, AF44.
 AP17, AP18, AF24.

Zool



(£25.99, **AF39** p74, 95%)

The Amiga's answer to Sonic and Mario, *Zool* is a fast, frenetic and completely brilliant platform game set in six worlds (Music World, Fruit World, Tool World, Toy World, Funfair World, and Shoot-em-up World). You send Zool, a ninja from the nth dimension shooting, kicking, punching and collecting things in time-honoured platform fashion. Although *Zool* is not a particularly innovative game, the graphics are exceptional and it out-classes the efforts of Sonic and Mario. *Software House: Gremlin (0742 753423).*

Tips: AF42, AF47, AP21, AP25, AP27.

Putty



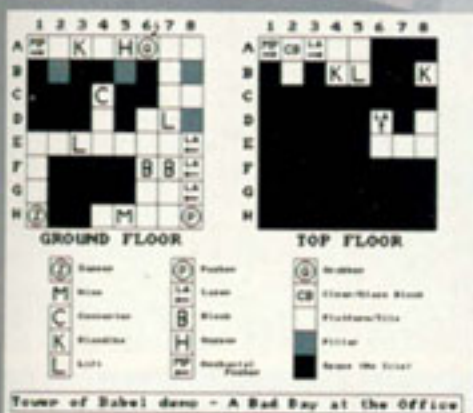
(£25.99, **AF40** p82, 95%)

The eponymous Putty is a blue blob whose aim in life is to liberate the Bots from the evil clutches of the wizard Dazzledaze and his sidekick Dweezil. Among the hazards Putty encounters on the many levels are a deadly sausage, a psychotic carrot, Shockapillars (electric caterpillars) and a clockwork orange.

Software House: System 3 (081-864 8212).

Tips: AF43.

Tower Of Babel



(£24.95, **AF11** p42, 95%)

Highly original combination of strategy and puzzles in which you control three robots, the Zapper, the Pusher and the Grabber, and must use their respective skills to make your way up a group of towers. Sounds easy, but it ain't. *Tower Of Babel* is a remarkably tricky, and frustrating game that will test your powers of logic and deduction to the limit and is therefore tremendously addictive. Although it has stood the test of time reasonably well, *Tower Of Babel* probably wouldn't get as high a rating if it was released today, rather than way back in June 1990.

Software House: Rainbird (N/A).

Tips: AF13.

Deuteros



(£24.99, **AF21** p54, 95%)

This stunning strategy game with atmospheric backdrops and moody sound effects is an adventure in space exploration with a gripping plot and several surprises along the way. The idea is to train people to carry out various tasks, such as piloting orbital space factories, build starships and send them on missions to explore new planets and exploit their mineral deposits. *Deuteros* makes full use of the Amiga's sound and graphics capabilities to produce a truly wonderful game with the right amount of tension, confusion and reward. A classic. *Software House: Activision (010-331-49-1099-95).*

Rainbow Islands



(£24.99, **AF10** p36, 95%)

Rainbow Islands is an outstanding platform game with excellent graphics, challenging gameplay, and a rare depth that means you can play for months and still discover new sub-games, warps, extra bonuses and secret rooms. You are in control of Bub'n'Bob who must rescue the inhabitants of the *Rainbow Islands* from the grip of the Boss Of Shadow and his minions. You fight the baddies by hitting them with rainbows which you can also use to make bridges. If you spend too much time on a given island, water rises and you drown.

There are a total of seven islands and each is made up of four stages, with an end of level guardian at the top of the last stage. Even if you get through that lot, you'll find there's much, much more to *Rainbow Islands*.

Software House: Ocean (061-832 6633).

Tips: AF34, AF42, AF46.

AP1, AP2.

AF55 (Q&A).

Populous 2



(£29.99, **AF30** p80, 95%)

As god games go, this one has gone and gone and gone and gone, capturing new disciples in its march to world dominance. *Populous 2* is an absolutely huge game that could quite easily take weeks, if not months to complete, and you can still get more out of it. You control of a deity who must conquer islands and their inhabitants and in doing so move up the ladder of deities, and take on more difficult foes. Each island you conquer gives you different powers to use against other deities and to protect, promote or punish the population(s). This is essential gaming for all megalomaniacs. A true Amiga classic if we're not very much mistaken.

Software House: Electronic Arts (0753 549442).

Tips: AF33, AF35, AF42.

AP12, AP14.

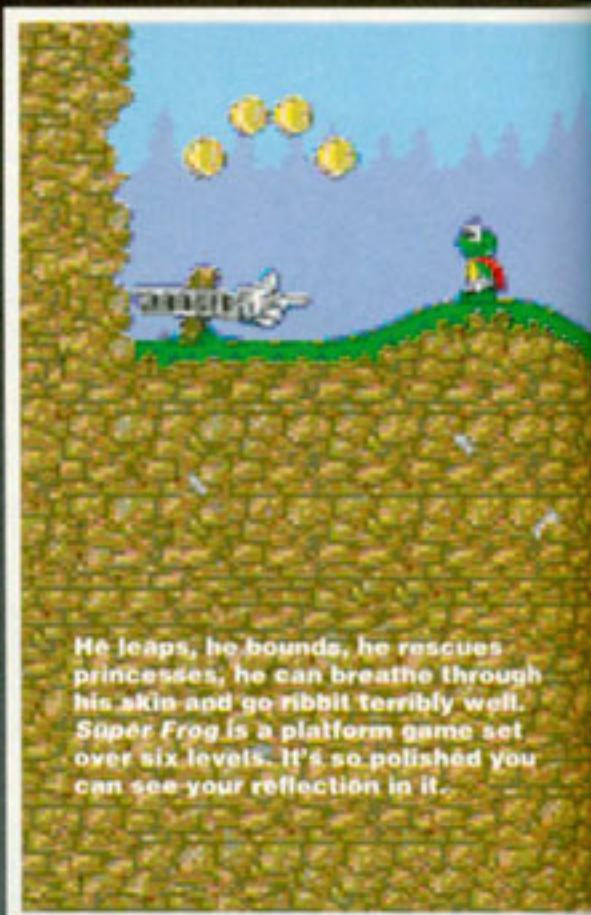
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Top Ten
Amiga
Games
and win a
prize...**

**(well it won't be
much, but you
will get your
name in
the magazine!)**

Our next Special is the 1993-94 Annual and we want to include your choices of Top Ten (of all-time) games, so send us a list and a picture of yourself. Oh, send it to: Oi Tim Make Me Win!, *Amiga Format* Specials, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Cheers!

95

GIMMIE GIMMIE GIMMIE



He leaps, he bounds, he rescues princesses, he can breathe through his skin and go ribbit terribly well. *Super Frog* is a platform game set over six levels. It's so polished you can see your reflection in it.

TEAM 17



Aliens eh? Lucky you packed a copious amounts of hideous weaponry along with the tacky shorts you couldn't get away with wearing on your own planet. *Alien Breed* is an overhead view blaster with smooth scrolling, loads of missions and bags of gameplay, essential stuff.

Like playing games do you? Of course you do, what sane person doesn't. Team 17 has produced some of the most seriously playable games ever released on the Amiga. The 17 lads have also come over all unnecessary and decided to give away their entire catalogue of games. Despite desperate pleading by the editor you have a chance to win them for yourself.

There are some truly classic games here, *Project-X*, *Alien Breed*, *Body Blows*, *Super Frog* and more. Weeks of wrist-numbing, brain-curdling gameplay, easily enough to make the most hardened gamer go wobbly.

All you have to do is answer a series of cunningly confusing trick questions and the whole caboodle is yours. Ten runners up will win some rather groovy A1 and A2 posters of the Team 17 games.

Send your carefully considered answers on a postcard or on the back of an stuck down envelope to - I want those games, **Amiga Format Special**, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

All the correct entries received before 31st of October go into a big pile on the office floor and the first one to stick to the editor's shoe wins.

Your chance to win the entire range of games from Team 17, are we good to you or what?

THE QUESTIONS

1. The game *Alien Breed* is inspired by which film?

- A. *Star Wars*
- B. *Honey I Shrunk the Kids*
- C. *Alien*

2. Where is Team 17 based?

- A. Lancashire
- B. Yorkshire
- C. Somewhere else

3. In *Assassin* you are armed with what weapon?

- A. A particularly sharp slice of mango
- B. A boomerang
- C. A tactical thermonuclear missile

4. Which character doesn't appear in *Body Blows*?

- A. Dot Cotton
- B. Nik
- C. Maria

5. In *Super Frog* who whisked away your girlfriend?

- A. An evil witch
- B. The really ugly one from *Prisoner Cell Block H*
- C. Kirk Douglas

6. What does the managing director of Team 17 call his cat?

- A. Fluffy
- B. Tigger
- C. This is a bit of a silly question isn't it?

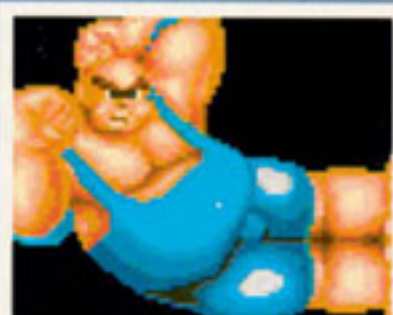
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ALL OF
TEAM 17'S
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Boomerangs have never been so deadly, Assassin has you fighting your way through 1500 screen of baddies, baddies dogs, the baddies big brothers and the baddies big brothers even bigger friends. Instead of a gun you wield a curved stick with remarkable destructive power.



The best beat-em-up for the Amiga, *Body Blows* deals out plenty of wince-inducing moments as the protagonists beat the hell out of each other. Ouch.



RULES OF THE GAME

1. The competition isn't open to employees of Future Publishing or Team 17. That wouldn't really be fair now would it?

2. No duplicate entries, we will undoubtedly notice and laugh at you.

3. The judge's decision is final, so no moaning.

4. All valid entries must be received before the 31st of October, so send them in right now.

5. No hitting below the belt.

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AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

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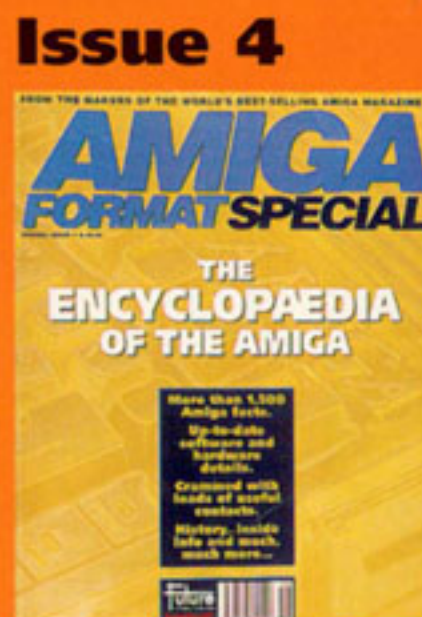
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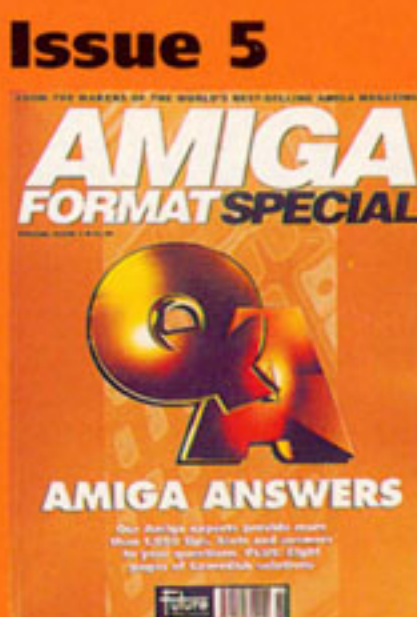
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AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

GAMES

GOOD GAME, GOOD GAME

The feeling you get after forking out more than £30 for a game on the back of some good-looking packaging, a decent review, and some adverts that have been running for years, range from the extremely smug to the downright furious. **Tim Smith** looks at the games that leave you with a warm glow of satisfaction

Great. Classic. Epoch Making. Awesome. Astonishing. Fab. Groovy. Mega. All these words (well expect for 'mega') have been used by **Amiga Format** writers about one game or another over the years.

These are the games that rise above the run-of-the-mill, the half-decent, the just about adequate, the outright awful, the cynically pointless and the laughable.

Attaining a **Format Gold** rating of 90 per cent plus is far from easy (see our feature on Reviewers, How to be One on page 133 for more details on this). In fact many programmers and software houses have never achieved this accolade.

But there is another, more difficult prize for the software houses to grasp, and that's winning the loyalty and affection of the playing public.

Reviewers are a notoriously pernicky bunch (some would say pernicious) who play down their emotional responses to games in an attempt to seek out unbiased responses.

Gamesplayers on the other hand, pay for games, and

then play them for hours on end, for fun. Gamesplayers are the people who ensure that a **Format Gold** winner becomes more than a game that got a very good review and becomes 'The game that people are always comparing other games to!' (see our example box-out).

Once a game has attained this standard there is nothing to stop it coming out on budget, coming out in several compilations, spawning sequel after sequel, and of course there is nothing to stop you or your mates going on and on and on about them to other newer games players (see our special tutorial box-outs on how to be stupidly well versed in Amiga games in under two minutes).

So let's look over some of the games that have attained the heady heights over which we have just glanced:

Adventure scout

You have to keep in mind that before legendary games such as *Eye of the Beholder* and *Monkey Island*, there were only three kinds of adventure game:

i) The funny Infocom game: *Zork*, *Planetfall*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and more (check out *The Lost Treasures of Infocom* compilation that was reviewed in **AF40**, gaining a massive 90 per cent and costs £39.99). These games were text-only but were so laden down with humour and subtle touches that, even without tarty graphics, they are still playable today.

ii) The unfunny Sierra game: games such as *Les* (pronounced Less in America) *Manley Lost in LA*, and the interminable *Leisure Suit Larry* series that seemed to drag on and on and on with puerile frat' (so easy to mis-spell) house humour making grown-up college boys State-side bust themselves with

laughter and sexual zeal. iii) The historical/dwarven/elven adventure game. Games such as Level 9's *Knight Orc*, were a step up from the text-only Infocom games, these babies had text and a static picture or two that you could 'stipple' (make spotty) or 'dither' (make dotty).

But happily, once pictures and sound had found a way into the adventure game, once humour and action had been seen as central to longterm value, we ended up with *The Secret of Monkey Island* (I&II), *Eye of the Beholder* (II being the better game - pictured above) and the rampagingly fun *Legends Of Valour* - and it's either good luck or great planning that sees US Gold distributing all of these games.



★ The Amiga is a machine where platform games go when they want to have a good time ★

What we didn't have was a game that could bridge the humour of the Infocom classics with the graphical ambition of the Sierra debacles (for the most part they looked OK) with the style of Level 9's *Jinxter* or Rainbird's *The Pawn* or *The Guild Of Thieves*.

Then the LucasArts Games people got together in some office over on the west coast of America and decided to produce a game that did just that... and then some. The two *Monkey Island* games had graphical, musical, special effectual and humoural

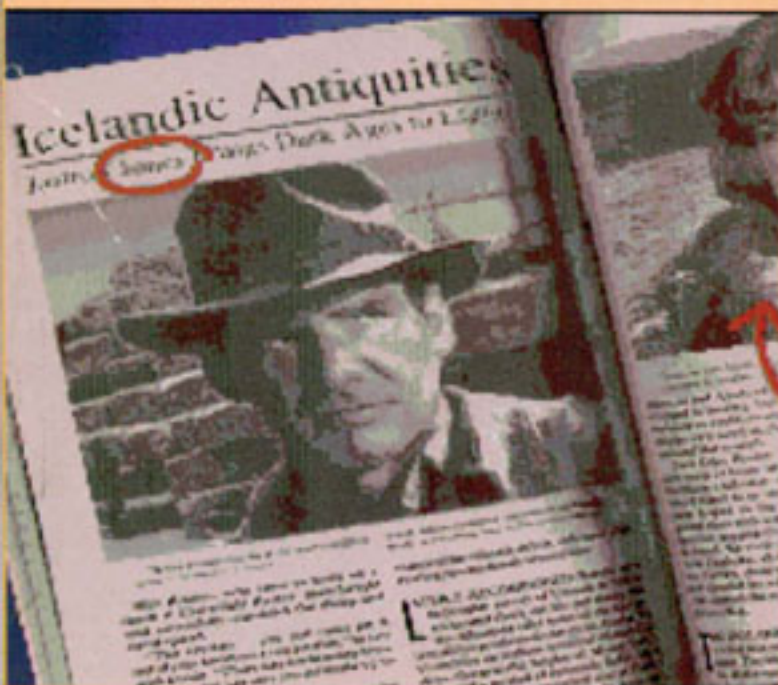
THE AMIGA FORMAT TOP TEN GAMES OF ALL TIME, HONEST GUV!

Yes, although opinions differ, tempers rise and some people even go off in a sulk with their joysticks and their copies of the game never to appear again, the statistics speak for themselves. In fact, as a famous member of the **Format** staff once said: "In 1,000 years time all the history books will care about is the result" (but he's an idiot). So what we have here is the spreadsheeted, most unfeeling grading of Amiga games ever. Games are judged by their **Format** review rating and by their age.

1) Putty	95%	AF40
2) Zool	95%	AF39
3) Monkey Island II	95%	AF36
4) Populous 2	95%	AF30
5) Deuterios	95%	AF21
6) Tower of Babel	95%	AF11
7) Rainbow Islands	95%	AF10
8) Historyline 1914-1918	94%	AF43
9) Civilization	94%	AF38
10) John Madden Football	94%	AF33



A good film licence? Yes! Sadly though, *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* never made it to the cinema. Hah!



overload. The Amiga has never seen games like them (well except for *Indiana Jones And The Fate of Atlantis* from the same people, £37.99 and 92 per cent in **AF43**).

Next up the line is...

The platform games to end all platform games...

Zool (**AF39** 95% £25.99). Even the name makes you think of a platform game featuring a Ninja-thing from the Nth Dimension (no, for the last and final bloody time, he is NOT an ant, just ask *Gremlin*), leaping, swooping, diving and weaving through level after level of multi-coloured, multi-layered fun-fun-fun.

Doesn't it?

Well, *Zool*'s heritage straddles the Amiga and the new upstart console-toys with a heap of other bits and pieces put together.

Let's get the console-toys out of the way first, quite obviously *Zool* pays some homage to *Sonic the Hedgehog*. Right that's over with, now let's move to the real stuff.

For some reason, probably to do with extraordinary skill and style, the Amiga has always been seen as a machine where platform games go to have a really good time. Games such as *New Zealand Story* (94 per cent in the very first issue of **Amiga Format**) or coming more up to date, *Yo! Jo!* (91 per cent in **Amiga Format**'s 50th issue) show off the Amiga's abilities to shove sprites around the place, display graphical wonderments, and most of all, they show the Amiga programmer's delight in springing surprises on us players. We go back to *Wizkid*, *Toki*, *Apidya*, *Ghouls'n'Ghosts*, *Gods*, *Putty* and *Sleepwalker* which are all qualified as platform games but all offer very different challenges the Amiga gamer.

★ **The two Monkey Island games boasted graphical, musical and special effects overload** ★

But nothing had quite offered the sheer speed and intensity of *Zool*. This platform-classic sent *Gremlin*'s fortunes soaring and made a lot of people who had never played a platform game and really enjoyed it (me for example) sit up and take notice.

Now we have...

Be a sport...

There are several football (that's 'soccer' to you horrible little twerps) out on the Amiga. These range from management sims such as



STOP PRESS: *Soccer Kid* from Krisalis. As we go to press, this stupendous plaformer has just received a 93 per cent rating. It's well worth a read of **AF51** to see why.

YOU BORING OLD KNOWALL!!!

or

The Games That Other People Are Always Comparing Other Games To

Game

Response

The Secret of Monkey Island
Sensible Soccer 92/93
Wizkid
Zool
Eye of the Beholder

"It's not as funny as..."
"It's doesn't feel as real as..."
"It's not as weird as..."
"It's not as fast as..."
"It's not as scarey as..."

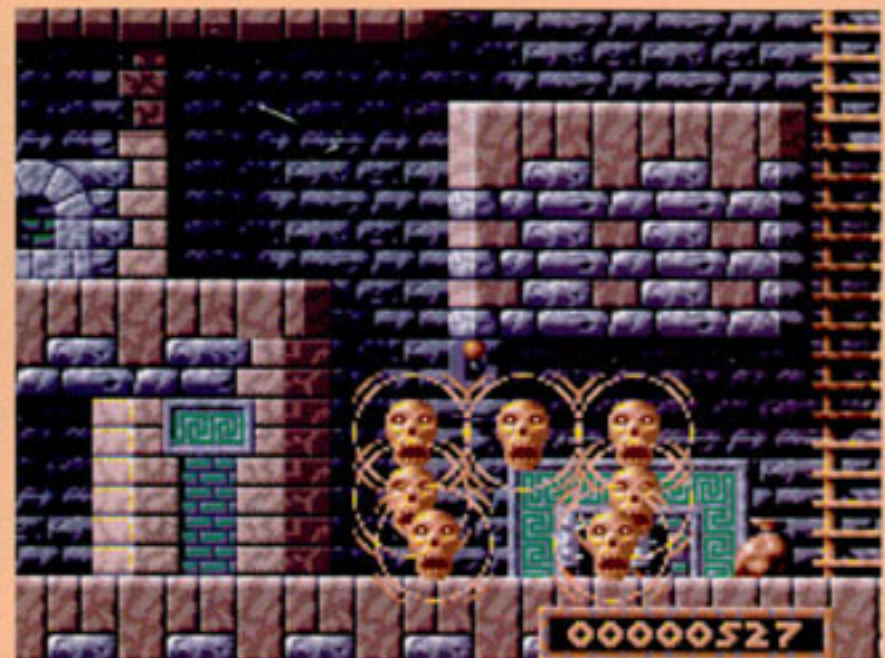
Parasol Stars - (below) and ancient and revered classic of all times ever.



Charity begins *Sleep Walker*. Aaaaaaaah!

Premier Manager (83 per cent in **Amiga Format** 43), *Graham Taylor's Soccer Challenge* (82 per cent in **AF36**) to on-the-field sims including *Manchester United Europe* (received 80 per cent when it was originally launched way back in issue 25 and is now out on £9.99 budget) and *Striker* (which received a massive 93 per cent in **Amiga Format** 36). But the footy game to beat all footy games has to be *Sensible Soccer* (original version 91 per cent in issue 36, the 1992/93 Season version was hideously underrated at 80 per cent). Opinions are mixed however, as to whether the great Dino Dini - the lad responsible for the game of the 1980s (*Kick Off*) - has come through with *Goal!* (88 per cent in **AF49**).

Now, because we're dealing here with Great Games, there's very little point in



Ye Gods this was *Renegade*'s go at adding to the platform genre. Excellent it was too.



A *Wiz* of a game. *Wizkid* cheered everybody up in this time of recessionary gloom.



PGA Tour Golf: oh no! Don't boot it up. No don't! You'll never finish that really, really important piece of work you have to do.

looking at other areas of sport, well apart from golf maybe. With the exception of the immaculate *PGA Tour Golf* (90 per cent in **AF22** and now part of the *Sportsmasters* compilation) and the technically superb but very, very, very memory and processor hungry *Links* (92 per cent in **AF36**), we're really left with a horrific mess of awful ski-ing, fishing, rugby, Olympic, gridiron (except *John Madden's Football* which got 94 per cent in **AF33**) and cricket games that don't deserve to kiss the feet of the budget releases of the games we've mentioned here. Pah.

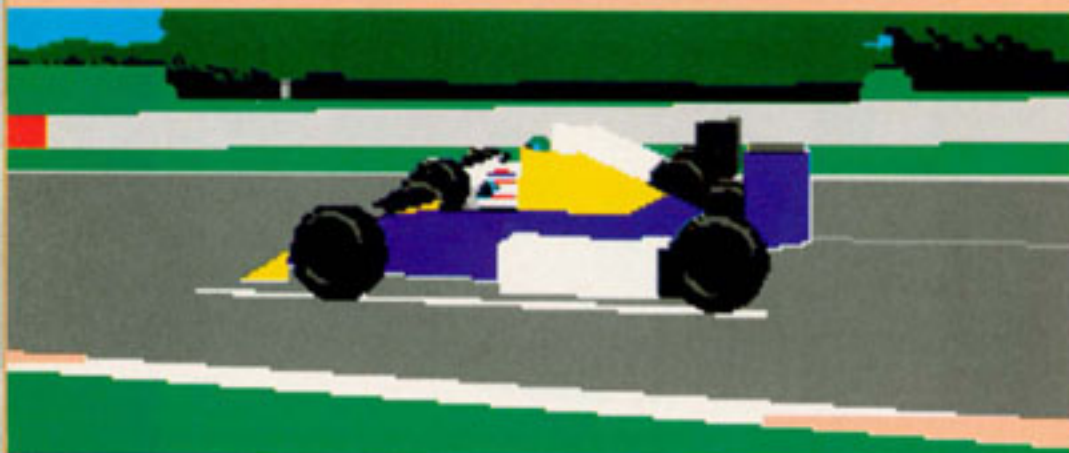
Driving games

Whether or not you consider driving to be a sport or merely a method for getting from Point A to Point B while causing the maximum amount of pollution, there are some fabulous driving games out on the Amiga. Take for example the still-winnerful *Stunt Car Racer* (now there's a Spoonerism waiting to be had). This drive-very-fast-and-even-link-up-two-Amigas kind of game first saw the light of day, and a 93 per cent **Amiga Format** Gold rating back in issue 6 (now out on budget for £7.99!) and came from the coding of Geoff 'Revs' Crammond. This fine gent is also responsible for the best Amiga driving game ever, *Formula One Grand Prix* (F1GP) which attained 92 per cent in **Amiga Format** issue 32. Keep 'em fast, smooth and full of tight curves is what we say.

Flighty bitches

That, I'm sure is how some young chaps from South Central Los Angeles would describe flight sims. Now admittedly, the Amiga isn't the first computer that would leap into your mind when someone said Flight Sim but there are still some good ones

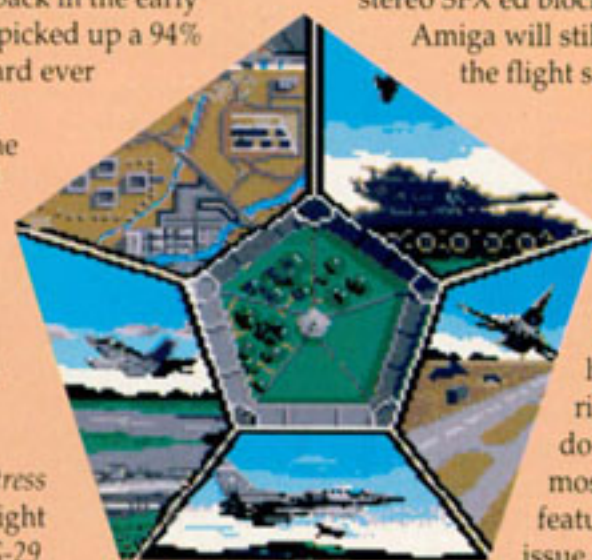
Formula One Grand Prix they don't come any more racey than this marvel.



Hell! We've mentioned *Sensible* so much in this mag, that it's about time that *Striker* got a look in too. A stout game with plenty of punch.

around. For example, back in the early days *F-16 Fighter Pilot* picked up a 94% rating (the highest award ever given to a flight sim in **Amiga Format** by the way). Since then, good 'uns have come out but none of them have quite lived up to the mark. The exceptions come in the form of the helicopter sim, *Gunship 2000* (94% in **AF49**), *B-17 Flying Fortress* (91%, **AF46**) and the flight sim for beginners, *MiG-29 Super Fulcrum* (91% and now out on budget). Essentially though, until we get some full 360-degree, texture mapped, fractally landscaped, very loud digitised

stereo SFX'ed blockbuster of a game, the Amiga will still be a second home to the flight sim.



And there's more

But sadly we don't have any space for it right now. To be honest, doing this piece was the most difficult of all the features in this packed issue. The main reason for this is that, while awful

games are generally accepted as being awful, Class games are very subjective. Amigaland is packed with Classics and opinion.

DROP THAT NAME SO HARD IT HURTS

That's right, you can be ridiculously well versed in games without trying very hard with our Expert Guide. This one will have everybody you know, and even some that don't, working under the impression that you are more well-versed in games than even we are. So easy it's almost sinful, read on...

You: By heck, that's a good pint/burger/attacking midfield/pair of legs.

Pal: "Yeah, it reminds me of David Braben's classic space combat and trading game, *Elite*, now available as part of the *Space Legend* compilation (£29.99, Empire). It got an **AF** Gold of 91% I seem to recall.

You: Good gracious me yes, wire frame like the ancient classic, *BattleZone*?

Pal: You mean the one where you looked through the binoculars at the 3D wire-framed tanks?

You: That's the one. My how things have changed with games such as *Battle Command*, £24.99 from Ocean, making tank games gritty, realistic and graphically stunning.

Pal: Crivvens! yes, and talking of Manchester-based Ocean did you know that it was responsible for the charity classic that went with the A1200?

You: *Sleepwalker* I think it was.

Pal: You're quite right. I scored 91% in **AF44**.

You: It did. Coincidentally, so that is one percentage point less than the eruptively superb *Lemmings*...

Pal: Originally reviewed in **AF20** if I'm not very much mistaken...

And so on and so on and so on. Simply turn to our essential pull-out reference guide to *Amiga Format* Golds starting on page 81, take the relevant information and you can use this conversation in all sorts of places to really get on people's nerves.

There you go, couldn't be easier could it. For a fuller, more in-depth set of How To Be... tutorials send a cheque for £1,200, made out in Siamese Dongs to ©Beerlitz Learning School, Tim&Rich&John&Chris, Bath, Bathshire.

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JOYSTICK

A gamesplayer and their joystick are about as inseparable as a console owner and their inferiority complex, a journalist and their drink, or an England cricket selector and their lame excuses. The **Amiga Format Specials** team understands the special relationship between player and stick, that's why we've joined forces with Cheetah in the quite wonderfully fantastic Take Some Sticks giveaway

Play games do you? Like to win them do you? Then you'll need one of those joystick chappies then won't you?

We've got an incredible £500 worth to give away. They hail from Cheetah, manufacturers and purveyors of the finest quality joysticks lovingly crafted from fine quality plastic and metal bits.

All you have to do to have one of these beauties squeezing through your letterbox is spot the five cleverly hidden differences in the two pictures of a cheetah (facing page). Either cut out the second picture or photocopy it, ring the differences and get it in the post or fax it to us.

The first 30 correct answers out of the editor's roomy head wear win one of Cheetah's superb joysticks.

Once again, thanks very once again to Cheetah. For more info call: 061-7077080.

THE CONTENDERS

Hand-picked from the large range of Cheetah joysticks come these three beauties. If you're seriously going to get to grips with a game you need a good stick in your hand, as it were.

THE BUG

It's called a Bug cos it looks like one. It features an indestructible steel shaft, positive action buttons and an ergonomic design, all sounds a bit suspect, but the Bug is a serious contender for the best-joystick-you-ever-used category, and one of our personal favourites.

THE BOLLISTICK

This one looks like a small chunky boomerang and has a distinctly dodgy name but the Bollistick is a comfortable and responsive joypad. Just the job for wasting hordes of alien scum in the comfort of your own home.

THE ARGOSTICK

Looks like something you might expect to burst through the wall covered in slime. It isn't, it's a joystick in the classic stick-it-on-your-desk-and wiggle-frantically style.

Digital Masterpiece - Cheetah1.gif



(Above) The cheetah, the fastest land animal, capable of bursts of up to 60 an hour. Although a member of the cat family it has characteristics of the dog family too including non-retractable claws and the ability to be trained. Try this on the family cat and all you'll get is a condescending look.

(Below) Another cheetah, almost but not quite the same as the first. Spot the five devious little changes we've made and you can pick up an excellent new joystick from Cheetah. Cunning link huh?

Digital Masterpiece - Cheetah1.gif



The Bug: if you're going to play a good few rounds of *Sensible* then you'll need this.



The Argostick: it's big and brash and bad and will look great on your desk.



The Bollistick: another 'interesting looking stick' with which to batter aliens.

RULES

1. No multiple entries, you know the kind of trick, sending in half a dozen different entries with slightly different handwriting. You won't fool anybody, it's all a bit pitiful really.

2. The competition is strictly out of bounds to Future and Cheetah employees, their families, friends, pets, everyone they know and anyone who smiles at them in the pub.

3. The judge's decision is final, even if it is usually highly suspect.

4. Entries to be sent to - Give Me A Joystick You Mean Sads(?), *Amiga Format Specials*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

5. Closing date for entries is October 30. Late entries will be eaten.

From *Xenon* to *The Chaos Engine*, the Bitmap Brothers are famous for the quality and ingenuity of their games. Steve Kelly explains how it all began...

Steve Kelly (left) and Eric Matthews, two of the founder members of the Bitmap Brothers.

Right: the timeless shoot-em-up *Xenon* was one of the Bitmaps early hits.



computers. He bought a ZX81 and taught himself how to program by following the listings in the 8-bit mags.

"I didn't have any background in computers, but I was seriously into games and I thought I could do better than some of the games that were around. I wrote three or four games and sent a couple of them to Microgen and they published them."

Steve then joined a company called Psion full time, but it was when he was working as a freelance in 1985 that he met Mike Montgomery (who had also worked at Psion) and Eric Matthews and the classic shoot-em-up *Xenon* and The Bitmap Brothers were born.

After *Xenon* the Bitmaps decided to try something different: "We'd been playing a football game we were impressed with," said Steve, "and decided to do something similar but different so we designed *Speedball*."

For those of you who don't know, *Speedball* is a futuristic sports game in which the players wear body armour and score by cheating, kicking, gouging and hacking the opposition into submission.

★ Some of the software houses turned down *Speedball* because they said it was too original ★

Speedball and its successor *Speedball 2* are now widely regarded as exceptionally good and highly original Amiga games, but when the Bitmaps first showed *Speedball* to the software houses it was greeted with a less than enthusiastic response: "They all said it was too original and they weren't interested in it," said Steve.



One of the many landmarks in the development of the Bitmap Brothers was the release of *Xenon 2*. This was an important event not just because the five-stage vertically scrolling shoot-em-up is a classic game, but also because of its soundtrack by Bomb The Bass. Working with Bomb The Bass brought the Bitmaps in contact with the band's record label, Rhythm King and eventually led to the formation of the Renegade software house.

"We thought we could learn a lot from the way Rhythm King structured their company and treated their artists because we felt there were similarities between the games and the music business," said Steve.

And so Renegade was formed with six directors, Martin Heath, Dan Thompson and Tom Watson from Rhythm King plus Eric, Mike and Steve of the Bitmaps.

If you look at the Bitmaps' impressive diskography you'll notice that games such as *Xenon 2*, *Speedball 2*, the platformer *Gods* and the recent puzzle/shoot-em-up *The Chaos Engine* all have one thing in common - they are all different. That, says Steve Kelly, is because the Bitmaps put the emphasis on action games regardless of the genre.

"What we are good at is writing action games, we can transfer that action into different styles of play, use them in a different way," said Steve.

The Bitmaps' taste for a wide range of games flavours comes across in Steve's personal all-time favourites which include *Dungeon Master*, *Fire And Ice*, and *Sensible Soccer*: "It virtually brought the company to a grinding halt," said Steve.

Steve Kelly

FAVOURITE FOOTBALL TEAM: Manchester United.

FAVOURITE AMIGA GAMES: *Dungeon Master*, *Fire And Ice* and *Sensible Soccer*



WITH RICHARD JONES

STEVE KELLY INTERVIEWED

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93% CU Amiga



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piece of software and
has years of enjoyment..."
85% MacFormat

"Intriguing, very deep
and absorbing, easy to
use, great fun..."
85% PC Home



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FOUL PLAY

It would be naive to suggest that every Amiga game is a classic. So, join our esteemed panel of Amiga games experts as they pull on some stout wellies and wade through the worst releases in the history of the Amiga. **Andy Hutchinson** is our master of ceremonies

What makes a game truly awful? Cack graphics? Twee sound? Naff game-play? All of the above?

Whatever it is, since the first Amiga rumbled off a Commodore production line, programmers have been creating games that don't quite cut it, games that redefine boredom, games that make you want to hit something small, cute and furry.

There aren't any hard and fast rules determining the sort of game that turns out bad. The largest software houses have produced more than their fair share of dogs, but then the smaller companies can't exactly boast an untarnished reputation. We've had crap movie licences (by the skip load), crap shoot-em-ups, crap simulations, crap racing games, crap adventures and crap puzzle games. We've had games that start off well and then fade and others that never get going in the first place.

Here though are the **Amiga Format Special** official low points. These are the games that we wouldn't even wish on Saddam Hussein, Margaret Thatcher, Thora Hird, Dan Quayle, Graham Taylor, Loyd Grossman, or Brett out of Suede.



AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

GAMES

Review Squad

We canvassed opinions on the worst Amiga games ever from the *Amiga Power* team (Stuart Campbell and Tim Tucker), Trenton Webb and Maff Evans (both ex-*Amiga Format* games reviewers), Marcus Dyson (*AF* editor), Tim Smith (*AF Specials* editor) Andy Hutchinson (*AF Specials* consultant editor) and Mark Ramshaw (former *Amiga Power* editor). Here are some of their comments:

● Hutch

4D Sports Driving: "Matchbox and Tonka toy games on the carpet floor are more realistic"

WWF European Rampage: "I'd rather have a wedge of brie shoved up each nostril"

Web of Terror: "The most aptly named game ever"

● Stuart Campbell

Flight Path 737: "Rushed, bugged and worthless"

International Rugby Challenge: "Ah hee hee hee hee hee hee"

WWF European Rampage: "Ah ha ha ha ha ha ha"

● Nutts

International Rugby Challenge: "An utter, utter travesty!"

Plan 9 From Outer Space: "At least the film was funny"

Leeds Utd Champions: "The art of management sims taken to an all-time low"

● Marcus Dyson

All Dogs Go To Heaven: "Except this edutainment spectacular which went nowhere at all"

Cover Girl Poker: "Badly digitised pictures of ugly girls. What more could you want. It didn't even play a good game of poker"

Necronom: "Great looking horizontal scroller like *Project X* and *R-Type 2*. Except they were good"

● Tim Smith

Epic: "Words fail me"

Leeds Utd Champions: "The real Leeds Utd have more style"

Paperboy 2: "Pointless"

● Mark Ramshaw

Plan 9 From Outer Space: "Perfect movie licence"

Psycho Killer: "Comedy classic"

Epic: "I think not"

● Maff Evans

Pursuit to Earth: "This one boasts crap graphics, crap sound, and crap gameplay"

Psycho Killer: "CD based joke"

Hare Raising Havoc: "Hard drive only, slow, no gameplay"

● Tim Tucker

4th And Inches: "American version of *International Rugby Challenge*:"

International Rugby Challenge: "An English version of *4th And Inches*"

Cover Girl Poker: "Ugly girls playing crap poker"

● Trenton Webb

Cardiac: "Adds in all manner of funky extras to the *Defender* equation but unfortunately overlooks the basic point - that games are supposed to be fun"

Flight Path 737: "Peering at the world through what looks like a fish tank, 737 treats you to a sprite-based extravaganza of green bits (the ground) and blue bits (the sky). And if you blink your eyes really fast then it almost looks like you're moving"

Vector Championship Run: "Imagine taking some of those tablets that say 'do not operate heavy machinery', then drinking 15 pints of scotch and taking one of the world's most powerful race cars for a spin"



This peculiar artifact is known as a cigar-store Indian and is an integral part of North American folk-lore. It is absolutely useless to you.

Playing *Plan 9 From Outer Space* once is a misfortune. Playing it twice can be regarded as carelessness.

For 'Classic'... ...read 'Tragic'

There's a line of thought that surmises that (like jokes) there are only five different kinds of game. As a result, the software houses continually foist re-packaged, reinterpreted and otherwise rehashed games on us. The perfect example of this is the gloriously bad *Classic Invaders*. This was released with the 20-something ("Wasn't *Phoenix* great") crowd in mind. It was designed to make you say things like, "Hey, I remember this," and "Wasn't this a wonderful game." What it actually had people saying was, "Urgh!" and "I'll never slag off a PD game again." It was desperately bad. Somehow, the programmers managed to completely avoid even the minuscule amount of playability to be found in the original. An incredible feat we think you'll agree.

Gremlin hit on the idea of picking up a licence for the acknowledged worst film of all time: *Plan 9 From Outer Space*. Unfortunately, the game was as bad as the film. *Plan 9* pretended to be a graphic adventure, but it was so sloppily programmed with such a nightmarishly bad plot that it played more like a graphic murder. All of which led to all but the hardest of explorers giving up in desperation after five minutes. Nobody, to our knowledge, played the game twice.



We tried our best to find a good word to say about *Plan 9* but we couldn't, we really couldn't.

★ These are the games we would not wish on Dan Quayle, Graham Taylor or Brett out of Suede ★



Judge Dredd was anything but a triumph...



...In fact this distinctly average shoot-em-up was truly, err, dreadful.



Paperboy 2 is very similar to *Paperboy*. The main difference is that in *Paperboy 2* you can ride up both sides of the street. Wow!

Some time in the latter half of the mid 1980s, a bored arcade game design executive said, "Hey, lets put handle bars on one." Thus was born *Paperboy*. Inevitably, the game was 'converted' to the Amiga and surprise, surprise it was as monstrously dull as its progenitor. All of which makes you wonder why on earth a sequel was ever considered. *Paperboy 2* carried on in exactly the same way as its forebear except that you could ride up either side of the street and be either a paperboy or papergirl. Either way it is exactly the same game and it possesses all the charisma of a drunken football supporter in a curry house.

You would have thought that a licence such as *Judge Dredd* would have offered an incredible number of cyberpunk possibilities. However, what Virgin actually produced was an exceptionally average shoot-em-up. Dredd chugged around Mega City One on what looked like a mountain bike with panniers, firing a peashooter-sized gun at fat people. It is about as much fun as *The Best of Praise Be!* with Thora Hird. Chuck.

This sporting strife

The Amiga has seen more than its fair share of duff sports simulations. Obviously, capturing some of the thrill of a sporting event is a tricky affair and the programmers who can manage the feat are few and far between.

However, the following games go beyond mediocre, these are the truly awful.

When we had a vote among all the Amiga games reviewers, past and present, one of the games that stirred up the most hatred was *International Rugby Challenge*. Admittedly this is a recent game and therefore fresh in everyone's mind, but it still stands out as one of the worst games ever. Everything about the game oozes shoddy programming, from the bland graphics to the absolutely cack gameplay. One of the AF team's favourite manoeuvres is the one man sprint up the field with the ball. This happens every time one of your team gets the



After grappling with WWF European Rampage we came to the conclusion that it isn't a well-rounded game.



If ever there was a game that sold itself on gratuitous violence it was the truly tacky The Executioner.

ball and almost always leads to a try. Another high point is when all the members of your team completely ignore the rugby ball and proceed to potter around, heads down like pensioners at a bring and buy sale. This is the lowest of all sports games.

Quite often, the worst games are conversions from other formats. The perfect example of this is *4th And Inches* (or *4th and Wince* as it has become known). This gloriously bad American football simulation is a conversion of the Commodore 64 game that actually runs slower on the Amiga. The animation and gameplay are supremely dreadful, with only two sprites being used for the players (left leg forward and left leg back) and everyone running in perfect synchronisation up a jerky, scrolling screen.

If you let an infinite number of monkeys loose in a room with an infinite number of Amigas for an infinite length of time, they'd probably come up with something as crap as *Leeds Utd Champions*. Even the knoggiest of footy games have some sort of jerky graphic movement, but the excitement of Premier League football was captured in this game by the words Defence, Attack and Midfield flashing on and off in the middle of the screen. And, ermm, that's really all there is to it. There no sound, there's no gameplay and no reason to load it twice. Someone, somewhere is taking the you know what... eh Mr G Taylor?

WWF European Rampage claims to be an

American wrestling game. However, it is so shockingly lacking on the gameplay front that the only wrestling you do is in getting the game into the bin as quickly as possible. The game's flashy front end and raucous samples do little to hide the shallow beat-em-up within. This is commercialised Amiga entertainment at its most derisive.

No-one can hear you scream

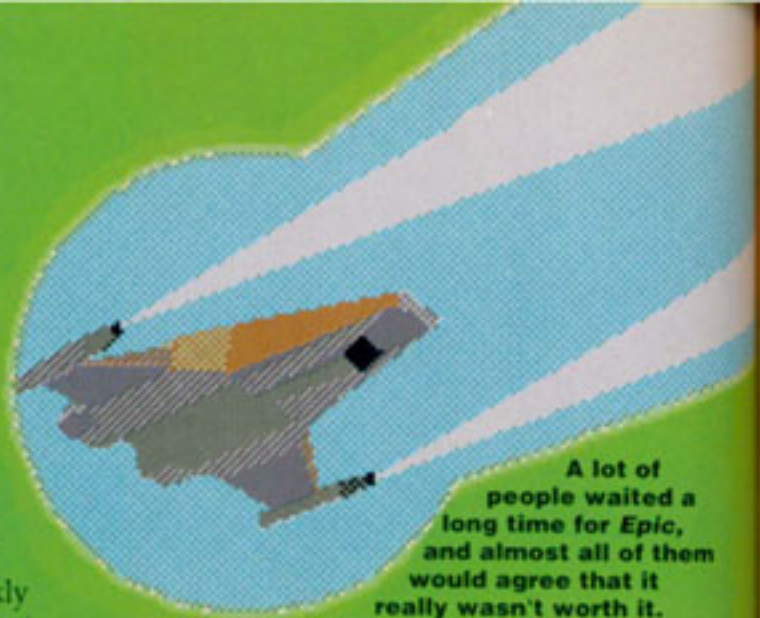
Software houses often create Amiga games around a space environment, because it means they can make up the rules as they go along. Unfortunately, they often muck things up and instead of devising fantastic realms where anything can happen, they devise dull worlds where nothing happens, even when it gets busy. *Epic* was one of the

most eagerly awaited games of 1992. It was also one of the most eagerly awaited games of 1991, 1990 and 1989. Not only was it four years late, but it was also quite dull when it finally got here. It wasn't that the graphics weren't good (fast, funky 3D actually), or that the plot wasn't spacey enough, it was just that it was too easy. Even without using the ultra-obvious cheat key that replenished all your weaponry, it was all over within a few hours, even if you were really bad at games. Looked good on the ST though.

No piece about bad games would be complete without a mention for *The Executioner*. This non-entity of a game was supposed to appeal purely on the basis that it included scenes of torture and execution. The game was distributed by Robert Maxwell's Mirrorsoft company. Amnesty International complained to Maxwell and Cap'n Bob did the decent thing and insisted that the offending scenes were removed.

Have you ever been standing in a newsagents and noticed those Amiga

★ They devise fantastically dull worlds where nothing happens, even when it gets busy ★



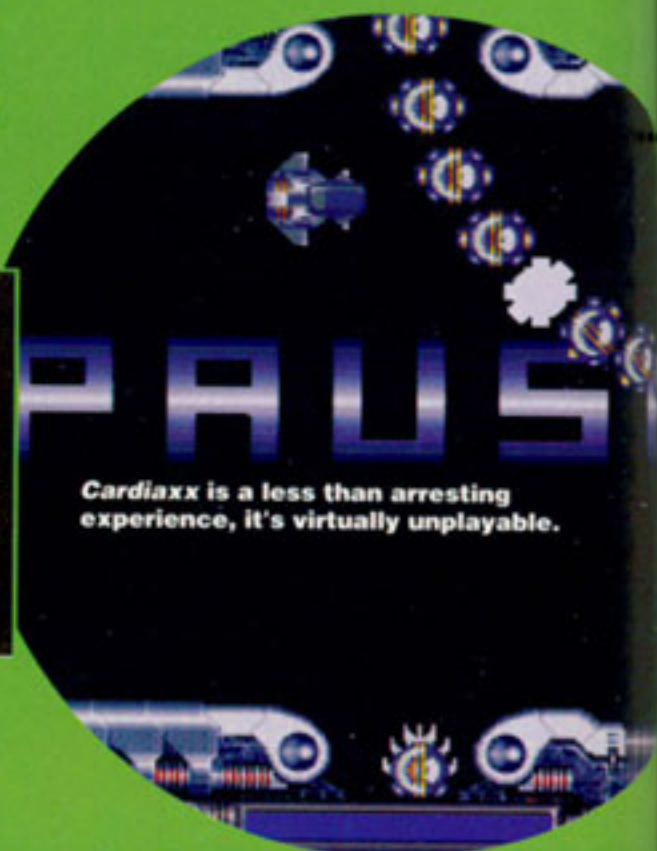
A lot of people waited a long time for *Epic*, and almost all of them would agree that it really wasn't worth it.

games disks nestling next to the chewing gum rack? Ever wondered whether you'd get any game for your £2.99? Wonder no more. The lowest rated Amiga game ever is one of those £2.99 games and it's called *Flight Path 737*. This was meant to be a flight simulator, but in reality it was little more than a couple of triangles moving around the screen. Even *International Rugby Challenge* had some amusement value, but this is duller than a hot Sunday afternoon spent touring antique shops with your parents in some quaint village.

Then of course there's *Cardiaxx* (always beware of a game with a double x in the title). You'd think that you'd be on fairly safe ground with a *Defender* clone, but *Cardiaxx* has the fatal flaw of featuring a spaceship that is virtually uncontrollable. To add insult to injury the programmers saw fit to make *Cardiaxx* incredibly difficult. As wave after wave of aliens scroll towards your pathetically wobbly craft all you can do is console yourself that it's not you, nobody has ever been any good at *Cardiaxx*.

It's not all bad though is it

Now obviously these are the worst Amiga games ever. Over the years **Amiga Format** has reviewed well over a 1,000 games. Of these only 14 per cent managed to get a rating under 50 per cent. Half of the games reviewed got a score of between 51 per cent and 79 per cent, 25 per cent got between 80 per cent and 89 per cent and one in ten managed to get a coveted **Amiga Format Gold**. All of which suggests that although there aren't too many really bad games, there are a lot of average ones.



Cardiaxx is a less than arresting experience, it's virtually unplayable.

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Charles Cecil's Revolution team have already made a name for themselves with *Lure Of The Temptress*, and their new game *Beneath A Steel Sky* could take them even further

Charles Cecil started making games about 10 years ago when he was involved with a company called Arctic Computing that produced a 1K chess game for the ZX81 called, you've guessed it, *1K Chess*. He went on to work on text-only adventures including *Ship Of Doom* and *Espionage Island*. Two years ago he formed the Revolution software house. They created the classic graphic adventure *Lure Of The Temptress* and, as we speak, Revolution's exciting new graphic adventure *Beneath A Steel Sky* is about to hit the streets. Although Revolution only employs 10 people, *Lure Of The Temptress* is as good as graphic adventures such as *Monkey Island* and *Hero Quest* that were created by the

giant US companies LucasFilm and Sierra Online. How do they measure up with the big boys?

"I think that our programmers are fundamentally better than the American programmers," says Charles Cecil.

He's not claiming that British programmers are somehow born with better programming skills than Americans, Charles believes British programmers are better because of the way the industry developed in the 1980s when the Americans had state of the art computers and British programmers were working with fairly crude machines.

"10 years ago we were writing on the Spectrum and the ZX81. Because of the limitations those machines impose on you, our programmers developed disciplines that the Americans don't have. Now that we are on a level playing field, our programmers are better because the Americans tend not to have those disciplines."

★ We have the best programmers because of the way the industry developed in the Eighties ★

Graphic adventures are Revolution's speciality, but what makes a good graphic adventure, and is Revolution's approach different to other software houses?

"One of our strengths is that our characters are very believable. In a LucasFilm graphic adventure the characters tend to be fixed. In ours you can wander around the

Charles Cecil

FIRST COMPUTER GAME: *1 K Chess on the ZX81*

BEST COMPUTER GAME: *Lure Of The Temptress*

world and you get to know the characters inside out.

"In a graphic adventure you are only allowed one coincidence. If you have too many coincidences the player won't believe the world, and it's very important that the player believes the world and is drawn into the plot."

In an industry where many games are based on similar ideas, Charles says the only way forward is to be innovative.

"A lot of people copy what already exists, but you have to be innovative. I think that if you come up with totally new ideas, but don't get the game quite right, the public will forgive you. The public likes new ideas."

And what about *Beneath A Steel Sky*? We know that it's set in a Big Brother future world that is run by corporations, and that the hero uses a character board to control robots in a bid to defeat these corporations. We also know that graphic artist Dave Gibbons, who worked on *The Watchmen*, has brought his distinctive style to bear on the game, and that as Revolution employs a full-time author (Dave Cummins) there's going to be a lot of attention paid to the text. But is the game going to be innovative?

"It's got a huge plot," says Charles. "It was written about two years ago and has taken 10 man-years to complete. There are no coincidences, but we've built in features that will raise doubts in the players mind about why certain things happen."

It all sounds too much like real life for comfort but judging by the few leaks that Revolution has permitted from its Hull headquarters, it's going to be more fun than have previously been used to.

Right: Just three of the many eerily atmospheric screens from Revolution's future shocker *Beneath A Steel Sky*



REVOLUTION INTERVIEWED

SOCCER KID™

Disaster! An alien of the cup collecting kind has stolen the World Cup.

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93% Amiga Format



"To put it mildly it's stunning"

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"Quite simply in a class of it's own"

93% The One



..."an absolute masterpiece from start to finish"

93% Amiga Action



"Soccer Kid is absolutely excellent"

93% Amiga Computing



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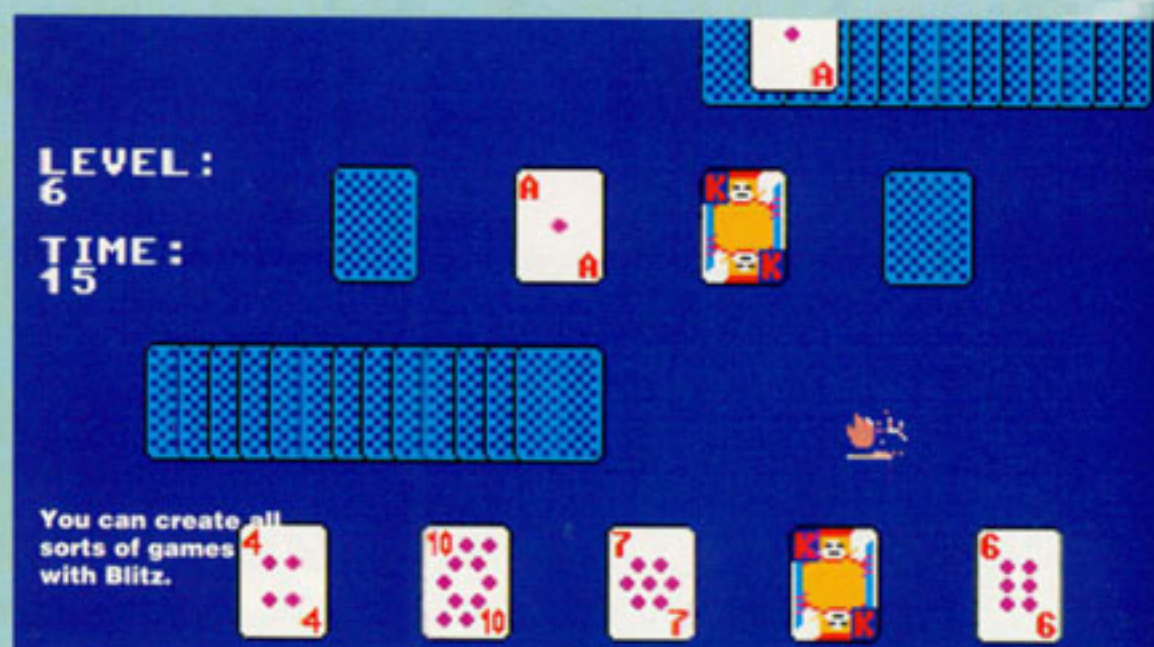
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AMP/AFS/8

Here comes a whole new kind of programming language for the Amiga, Blitz Basic comes from New Zealand and features on the cover of **AF52**. Everyone should try it. With this in mind, we're giving you some history, and three listings to try for yourself. Get inside gaming now...



BLITZ B A K



Simon Armstrong of Acid software. Blitz is his babe. Social-niceties are an anathema to it. New Age Programmers unite at last!

Acid Software is a New Zealand software company comprising programmer Mark Sibly and programmer/marketing/support man Simon Armstrong. Their programming language Blitz2, recently launched in the U.K. It's a new BASIC compiler for the Amiga (see review in **AF50**).

We go live with a direct satellite link to the other side of the world for more information on this new language, cue masses of feedback as a satellite link is established with New Zealand. Crackle, crackle...

AFS: Simon, we've been seeing a lot of games written in Blitz Basic, often involving flying saucers and space people.

Simon Armstrong: Yeah, PD written in Blitz so far includes *Defender*, *Insectoids2*, *Zombie*

Apocalypse and *Buzzbar*.

We've also got a October release date set for our first commercial game written in Blitz2 called *SkidMarks* which is going to be truly massive. (There's a demo of this on **AF51**'s Coverdisk).

AFS: You mean to say Blitz2 is a games authoring system?

SA: You could write a game authoring system in Blitz2! It's an all round development system. Our extensive Intuition support means that you can create well behaved applications that work in windows along side all your other software. We support C structures so you can also talk to the operating system at a system level, and of course there's all the BASIC commands. There are commands for adding ARexx access to your programs, serial port commands for driving all those external devices, doublebuffering

for flicker-free animation, the list goes on. In fact we're adding new commands every two months which are sent out with our *Blitz User Magazine*, BUM for short!

As for Blitz Mode, which closes down the operating system and hits the hardware hard, well we figure the games speak for themselves.

AFS: Who's using Blitz?

SA: We've been selling Blitz2 in Germany the U.S. and Australasia for 12 months. I thought it would be wise to hold off the U.K. launch because of the strength of the competition and we waited until we had revised the manuals and had a decent collection of PD to help promote it. As it is, the second revision of the Blitz manuals got mixed reviews. But generally speaking, the programmers seem to have given it the thumbs up.



Isometric 3D is also quite possible if you use Blitz2 properly, as are good old shoot-em-ups such as *Insectoids* (inset).

1UP 0004375

Games such as
Zombie Apocalypse,
a frightening
prospect indeed!



And you can get your hands on it if you get a copy of *Amiga Format* issue 52. What a wonderful thing.

MOCKOUT!



Just think, no more relying on software houses for your fun and games.

AFS: How hard is it to program in Blitz2?

SA: First up, you need to be able to think things through logically. Soon people will be putting on head gear and gloves and creating programs by physically plugging things into each other, it's a funny old world! Blitz2 has a friendly front end called Ted, a friendly text editor with the Blitz2 compiler built in.

AFS: But to answer the question, how hard is it to program?

SA: That's a difficult question. Our German users never complain and are producing some cool stuff. In the U.S. it's pretty unique to program your Amiga so they are an elite crowd anyway. The Australians are writing some nice educational software with very little support from us.

The British have got a reputation as innovators, producing some of the best programming teams around. I don't think Blitz2 will fall in the 'too hard' category for

many here, certainly not to those who have proved that they actually have what it takes to program.

(Editor's note: from what I've seen, it's reasonably straightforward to start out with, but the more you learn, the more complex it becomes. There, that's answered it)

AFS: But it's not your standard BASIC is it?

SA: No, Blitz2 is also an assembler, a C environment and contains a strong Pascal flavour to boot.

I prefer to think of it as an alternative Amiga programming environment. An alternative language which we hope is going to be more successful than our various attempts at playing loud, heavy, fast guitars.

AFS: How fast is Blitz2?

SA: It's definitely fast, no questions there. It's pretty tight software and produces nice tight code. Making your code run fast is as much technique as which programming lan-

guage you use. There will always be decisions that directly influence the speed the program will run at.

AFS: O.K., so what are you going to be telling people about Blitz?

SA: Well I spend most of my week telling people how to do scrolling text in windows, tracking aliens, sorting lists, saving memory and so on. We're living in the information age, the growth of computer networks means that more than ever before word of mouth (if you can still call it that) is going to be responsible for selling our product. And besides we're not in it for the money, we want to be responsible for an Amiga shareware revolution and of course help people write good commercial grade stuff, we're the nice guys!

Right, that's the interview over with. Now on to the good bit. We are going to hit you with three amazing Blitz type-ins. You'll need a copy of *Blitz Basic* (from the Coverdisk of *Amiga Format* issue 52) and some time. All you have to do is to type the listings, as they are printed here, into a text editor (anything from *Wordworth* to *Protext* will do) but don't worry about bolds or italics and save the file as ASCII. Also, don't expect to get it right the first time - there will always be typing mistakes. Then simply run the programs on your Amiga. If you read our programmer's interviews in this issue, you will discover that quite a few of them got started by typing in programs this way, so you never know what might happen!

The programs are: *Dungeon Editor* (create your own worlds to explore); *A Dungeon game that enables you to make use of your own worlds and fight in them*; *A tremendous darts game that will keep you happy for hours (typing it in for a start!)*. Have fun...

This one will serve you well in times to come. It not only helps you to understand the basic principles, once you've typed-it in and debugged your typing, you can use this to create your very own dungeons!



And this is what the finished Darts game should look like at the end.

```
;; Dungeon Editor by Simon Armstrong;
width=128; height=64
size=width*height
MaxLen pa$=160 ;fix length of strings for use with Blitz2
MaxLen fi$=64 ;file requester
Gosub initmap ;dimension array and draw border
Gosub initchars ;string array for our objects
Gosub initui ;open user interface
Gosub sizewindow ;refresh map window

Repeat ;main loop based on Intuition events
  ev.l=WaitEvent
  Select ev
    Case 2:Gosub sizewindow
    Case 8
      If EventWindow=0 AND MButtons=1 Then Gosub draw
    Case $40
      If GadgetHit<2
        posy=Int(VPropPot(0,0)*height) ;scroll map
        posx=Int(HPropPot(0,1)*width)
        Gosub drawdungeon
      Else
        brush=GadgetHit-2 ;select brush from tool window
      EndIf
    Case 256
      If MenuHit=0 AND ItemHit=0 Then Gosub loadmap
      If MenuHit=0 AND ItemHit=1 Then Gosub savemap
      If MenuHit=0 AND ItemHit=2 Then End
    Case $40000
      Use Window 0:Redraw 0,0:Redraw 0,1
  End Select
Forever

;initmap
Dim map.b(width-1,height-1)
For y=0 To height-1:map(0,y)=1:map(width-1,y)=1:Next
For x=0 To width-1:map(x,0)=1:map(x,height-1)=1:Next
Return

;initchars
Dim c$(4)
c$(0)=Chr$(32):c$(1)="*":c$(2)="O":c$(3)="M":c$(4)="B"
Return

;draw
Repeat
  Use Window 0
  cx=QLimit(Int((WMouseX-6)/8),0,ww-1)
  cy=QLimit(Int((WMouseY-10)/8),0,wh-1)
  map(posx+cx,posy+cy)=brush
  WindowOutput 0:WLocate cx*8,cy*8:Print c$(brush)
Until Event
Return

;sizewindow
Use Window 0
ww=Int(WindowWidth/8)-3 ;num blocks we can display
wh=Int(WindowHeight/8)-3 ;with current window size
Gosub drawdungeon
SetVProp 0,0,posy/height,wh/height ;position sliders
SetHProp 0,1,posx/width,ww/width
Redraw 0,0:Redraw 0,1
Return

;drawdungeon
WindowOutput 0
posx=QLimit(posx,0,width-ww) ;get topleft coordinate with
posy=QLimit(posy,0,height-wh) ;limit of upper/lower value
For y=0 To wh-1
  WLocate 0,y*8 ;position cursor on new line and print
  For x=0 To ww-1 ;character based on value in map
    Print c$(map(posx+x,posy+y))
  Next
Next
Return

;initui
```

```
MenuTitle 0,0,"PROJECT" ;set up menus for our editor
MenuItem 0,0,0,0,"LOAD" ;"L"
MenuItem 0,0,0,1,"SAVE" ;"S"
MenuItem 0,0,0,2,"QUIT" ;"Q"
PropGadget 0,-16,10,2+16+128,0,16,-20 ;gadgets for sliders
PropGadget 0,4,-9,4+8+64,1,-22,10
For i=0 To 4 ;gadgets for brush select
  TextGadget 1,i*24+12,12,512,2+i,c$(i)
Next
brush=1:Toggle 1,3,On
Screen 0,10,"Dungeon Editor" ;and a screen and windows
Window 0,0,12,640,240,$1001,"DUNGEON",1,2,0:SetMenu 0
Window 1,400,0,140,28,$1002,"BLOCKS",1,2,1:SetMenu 0
Use Window 0:Redraw 0,0:Redraw 0,1
Return

;loadmap
a$=FileRequest$("LOAD DUNGEON",pa$,fi$) ;do a file request
If ReadFile(0,a$) ;if file there
  If Lof(0)=size Then ReadMem 0,&map(0,0),size;read into map
  CloseFile 0 ;array (raw!)
  Gosub drawdungeon ;refresh screen
EndIf
Return

;savemap
a$=FileRequest$("SAVE DUNGEON",pa$,fi$)
If WriteFile(0,a$)
  WriteMem 0,&map(0,0),size:CloseFile 0;write array to file raw
EndIf
Return
```

Monsta's in the Dungeon. A fun game in which you can make use of the program you have just created. That's right, all the hard work was for a good reason. Have a go and see what you think!

; MONSTA's IN THE DUNGEON by Simon Armstrong;

```
DEFTYPE .w ;all variables are integers
console=False ;make true to run on std console (cli)
width=128 ;standard map size as in editor
height=64
size=width*height
dispw=32
disph=16 ;display width and height
map$="map1"
nummonsters=256 ;maximum number of monsters

If console
  home$=Chr$(9b)+"H":mycls$=home$+Chr$(9b)+"J" ;strings for consoles
Else
  FindScreen 0
  Window 0,20,20,270,170,$1400,"MONSTER GAME",1,2
  WindowInput 0:WindowOutput 0
EndIf

NEWTYPE .monstyp ;the monster object
  x.w:y.w
End NEWTYPE

Dim List monster.monstyp(nummonsters) ;loads of monsters!
Dim c$(4):c$(0)=Chr$(32):c$(1)="*":c$(2)="O":c$(3)="M":c$(4)="B"
Dim map.b(width-1,height-1) ;standard 2D array for the map

;maingame:
turn=0:gameover=False ;reset game variables
myx=10:myy=10 ;in case no B found on the map
Gosub readmap ;read file map$ into map array
Gosub welcome ;do front end
Repeat ;main loop
  Gosub drawmap ;refresh display
  Gosub yourmove ;get player's move
  Gosub monstermove ;move the monsters
Until gameover=True
Print "PLAY AGAIN? (Y/N)"
If UCase$(Edit$(1))="Y" Then Goto maingame
End

;readmap
If ReadFile(0,map$) ;if file found
```



```

ReadMem 0,&map(0,0),size:CloseFile 0;raw read into array
ClearList monster() ;find the monsters!
For x=0 To width-1:For y=0 To height-1 ;and record all their
  If map(x,y)=3 ;positions in list
    If AddItem(monster()) Then monster()\x=x,y
  EndIf
  If map(x,y)=4 Then myx=x:myy=y ;found start position!
Next y,x
Else
  End ;couldn't find file (we're in the wrong directory?)
EndIf
Return

```

```

welcome:
NPrint "WELCOME TO THE DUNGEON!"
NPrint " HIT RETURN TO PLAY"
a$=Edit$(1)
Return

```

```

monstermove:
USEPATH monster()
ResetList monster()
While NextItem(monster())
  map(\x,\y)=0 ;clear current pos on map
  dx=Sgn(myx-\x):dy=Sgn(myy-\y) ;calc direction to move in
  oldx=\x:oldy=\y ;remember old position
  If Rnd(2)<2 ;home in on either x or y priority
    If dx<>0 Then \x+dx Else \y+dy
  Else
    If dy<>0 Then \y+dy Else \x+dx
  EndIf
  Select map(\x,\y) ;whats in new pos?
    Case 0:map(\x,\y)=3 ;empty space cool!
    Case 1:\x=oldx:\y=oldy:map(\x,\y)=3 ;wall back up!
    Case 2:map(\x,\y)=1:KillItem monster() ;down a hole!
    Case 3:\x=oldx:\y=oldy:map(\x,\y)=3 ;another monster!
    Case 4:NPrint "HA GOTCHA!":gameover=True ;he got me!
  End Select
Wend
If NOT LastItem(monster()) Then NPrint "SUCCESS!":gameover=True
Return

```

```

yourmove:
turn+1:Print "Turn #",turn," (U,D,L,R or Q)"
map(myx,myy)=0 ;rub out old position
Select UCase$(Edit$(1)) ;edit$=input
  Case "U":If map(myx,myy-1)<>1 Then myy-1 ;up
  Case "D":If map(myx,myy+1)<>1 Then myy+1 ;down
  Case "L":If map(myx-1,myy)<>1 Then myx-1 ;left
  Case "R":If map(myx+1,myy)<>1 Then myx+1 ;right
  Case "Q":Print "BYE NOW":End ;quit
End Select
If map(myx,myy)=2
  NPrint "ARRRRR YOU FELL DOWN A HOLE!":gameover=True
Else
  map(myx,myy)=4 ;place in new position
EndIf
Return

```

```

drawmap:
If console Then Print home$ Else WLocate 0,0
posx=QLimit(myx-dispw/2,0,width-dispw)
posy=QLimit(myy-disph/2,0,height-disph)
For y=0 To disph-1
  For x=0 To dispw-1:Print c$(map(posx+x,posy+y)):Next:NPrint ""
Next
Return

```

Here's an example of a Blitz2 program that is definately; not for the faint hearted. The first half is indeed assembly; code and yes it is only of interest to advanced coders, those with intermediate skills should go straight to the second half. Those with no experience should wait for AF52 where we start from scratch and treat everyone as mere mortals.

PART 1 where we demonstrate how advanced you can get with Blitz2 and list sections of code from our upcoming 3D command library (don't let the pros see this!).

DARTS

Blitz2 Darts (c)1993 Simon Armstrong.

darts=10 ; increase the dart variable to slow things down!
 NPrint "Setting up, please wait..."
 ; The Blitz2 CLS command uses the blitter to clear the screen, this is a much faster
 technique, especially now your average Amiga has an instruction cache!
 ; A Statement is a Blitz2 procedure and can contain either BASIC or Assembler, as ;A4
 is used as a local; variable base we unlink it when using assembler

```

Statement mycls[a.1]
UNLK a4:MOVE.l d0,a0:ADD.l #40*256,a0
MOVEQ#0,d0:MOVEQ#0,d1:MOVEQ#0,d2:MOVEQ#0,d3:MOVEQ#0,d4
MOVEQ#0,d5:MOVEQ#0,d6:MOVEQ#0,d7:MOVEQ#0,d8:MOVEQ#0,d9
MOVEQ#0,d10:MOVEQ#0,d11:MOVEQ#0,d12:MOVEQ#0,d13:MOVEQ#0,d14
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```
MOVEM.l (a7)+,a4-a6:RTS
End Statement
```

```
Statement genline(object.l)
```

```
UNLK a4:MOVEM.l a4-a6,-(a7):MOVE.l d0,a5:LEA lp(v),a6
MOVEM.l (a6),d0-d7:MOVEM.l d0-d7,4(a6)
MOVEM.l lp(x),d0-d2
ASR.l#2,d0:ASR.l#2,d1:SWAP d2:DIVS d2,d0:DIVS d2,d1
MULS#640,d0:MULS#512,d1:SWAP d0:SWAP d1
ADD#160,d0:ADD#128,d1:MOVEM d0-d1,(a6)
MOVEM.l (a7)+,a4-a6:RTS
```

```
End Statement
```

*; PART 2 And now for some BASIC, Blitz2 style. As I mentioned
; if you can't understand a word don't worry a proper step by step introduction to
; Blitz2 commences in AF52*

```
NEWTYPE .vert ;a .vert can hold both and x and y value
x.w:y
End NEWTYPE
```

```
NEWTYPE .object ;a .object can hold the following information:
x.q:y.z ;the objects position in 3D space
vx.vy:vz ;it's velocity
thrust ;thrust which accelerates object in z (forward)
rotx:roty:rotz ;the objects bearing
rvx:rvy:rvz ;rotational speed
v.vert[64] ;vertices go here
id.w[9] ;id matrix goes here
```

```
End NEWTYPE
```

*; The following 4 lines not only dimension arrays holding more than 1 variable
;(in fact each item references a whole object as above) but they are special list arrays
so we can add, delete & process them with Blitz2's special linked list
;handling commands (way faster than standard arrays!)*

```
Dim List nme.object(darts) ;wow variable dimensioning in a compiler!
```

```
Dim List bul.object(20) ;bullets
```

```
Dim List fire.object(5) ;laser weapons
```

```
Dim List bang.object(10) ;explosions
```

```
Dim rots.w(2048):rt.l=&rots(0) ;generate sin_cos table, yes
```

```
For i=0 To 2048 Step 2 ;its a normal array! it holds
```

```
rots(i)=Sin(i*2*Pi/2048)*32766 ;a "look up table" which is the
```

```
rots(i+1)=Cos(i*2*Pi/2048)*32766 ;programmers primary speed up
```

```
Next ;device (besides coffee);setup display
```

```
BitMap 0,320,256,1 ;standard lo-res 1 bitplane bitmap
```

```
BitMap 1,320,256,1
```

```
For i=0 To 7 ;and the following for a nice backdrop
```

```
BitMap 2+i,320,256,1 ;anim, sorry to say from an AMOS demo!
```

```
BitMapOutput 2+i:Locate 2,0
```

```
NPrint "BLITZ DARTS BY SIMON ESC TO EXIT"
```

```
For n=0 To 2*Pi-Pi/32 Step Pi/32
```

```
j=r+i*Pi/256
```

```
Circle 160,128,Tan(j/4)*50,1
```

```
Line 160,128,160+Sin(j)*320,128+Cos(j)*256,1
```

```
Circlef 160,128,12,1
```

```
Next
```

```
Next
```

```
BLITZ:Slice 0,44,320,256,$tffa,2,8,32,320,320 ;wo close down os and setup
```

```
RGB 1,15,12,15:RGB 9,4,4,8 ;our own display!
```

```
f=2 ;frame of anim
```

```
xo=1000 ;current laser
```

```
Mouse On:MouseArea -150,-150,120,120:BlitzKeys On
```

```
.mainloop
```

```
Repeat
```

```
VWait:ShowF db:db=1-db:Use BitMap db ;double buffer display
```

```
ShowB f:f+1:If f=10 Then f=2 ;flip thru backdrop anim
```

```
mycls[Peek.l (Addr BitMap(db)+8)] ;clear current bitmap
```

```
x=MouseX:y=MouseY ;read mouse
```

```
Line x+155,y+128,x+165,y+128,1 ;position cross hair
```

```
Line x+160,y+123,x+160,y+133,1 ;then let em fire...
```

```
If Joyb(0)=1 AND reloadThen Gosub addfire:reloa=15
```

```
Gosub dofire:reload-1:If Joyb(0)=0 Then reload=-1
```

```
Gosub addnme ;poor innocent darts!
```

```
Gosub movenme ;why blow em away?
```

```
Gosub dobang ;bloody Reaganite!
```

```
Until RawStatus($45) ;hit ESC damn you!
```

```
End
```

*; The following shows off two nice features in Blitz2, macros in BASIC are cool ;and the
list array handling is dead simple.*

```
Macro myline Line v[ 1]x,v[ 1]y,v[ 2]x,v[ 2]y,1:End Macro
```

```
USEPATH bang()
```

```
.dobang ;handle vector explosion
```

```
ResetList bang() ;start at first entry in array
```

```
While NextItem(bang()) ;loop through all entries
```

```
lx+lvx:ly+lvx:lz+lvz ;add velocity to position
\rotx+\rvx:\roty+\rvy:\rotz+\rvz ;same to rotation
calcid(bang(),rt) ;generate id matrix
If genstar(bang()) ;and either draw
For i=0 To 4 Step 2:myline (i,i+1):Next
Else
KillItem bang() ;or remove from array as it's left the screen!
EndIf
Wend
Return
```

```
USEPATH nme() ;save some typing (insert nme() before all lvnames)
```

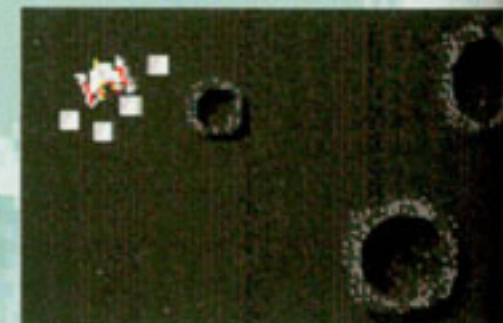
```
.addnme ;bring on a dart!
newnme-1
If newnme
If AddItem(nme()) ;only if array is not fill of course
newnme=5
lx=Rnd(8000)-4000,Rnd(24000)-12000,6000
\rotx=0,Rnd(4096),512
\rvx=0,Rnd(16)+16,0
\thrust=Rnd(4)+6
EndIf
EndIf
Return
```

```
.movenme:
ResetList nme() ;loop through the nme
While NextItem(nme())
calcid(nme(),rt) ;generate their ID matrix
moveonz(nme(),\thrust) ;move forward by amount of thrust
lx+lvx:ly+lvx:lz+lvz ;(see dobang)
\rotx+\rvx:\roty+\rvy:\rotz+\rvz
If lz>1000
If gendart(nme())
For i=1 To 5:myline (0,i):Next
myline (2,3):myline (1,4):myline (1,5)
ResetList fire() ;and if he's shot
While NextItem(fire())
If Abs(x-fire())<d
If Abs(y-fire())<d
If Abs(z-fire())<d
If AddItem(bang()) ;create explosion
bang()lx=lx,ly=ly,lz=lvz,lvx=lvz
bang()rvx=100,130,90
EndIf ;and kill the poor guy
KillItem nme():KillItem fire():Goto popout
EndIf
EndIf
Wend:popout
EndIf
Else
KillItem nme()
EndIf
Wend
Return
```

```
USEPATH fire()
```

```
.addfire ;add a laser if you press mouse button
If AddItem(fire())
xo=-xo
lx=xo,1000,1000
calcid(fire(),rt)
genline(fire()):xx.w=lv[0]x:yy.w=lv[0]y
For i=1 To 7:lv[i]x=xx,yy:Next
EndIf
\vx=x*6.5-xo/24,y*8-32,1000
Return
.dofire:
ResetList fire() ;move all laser fire through 3D space
While NextItem(fire()) ;until they get too far away
lx+lvx:ly+lvx:lz+lvz
If lz<16000
genline(fire()):myline(0,7)
Else
KillItem fire()
EndIf
Wend
Return
```

There we go then, a few listings to get you on
ou call the Amiga Format reader line on Tues



Good quality
graphics (above
and gameplay
(below with the
excellent
Defender clone
such as you see
here, are possi-
ble after you've
spent some time
and expended
some of your
patience quota
for the year with
Blitz. Go for it.



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COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH

To the victor... £10,000



Remember this guy? Last year, Allan Brett became a celebrity overnight after he scooped the National Games Championships. Not only that though - as well as the glory, he also walked off with £10,000 IN HARD CASH.

Using outrageous skill, the 18-year-old from Hull managed to be the best on Sega, Nintendo and Amiga machines.

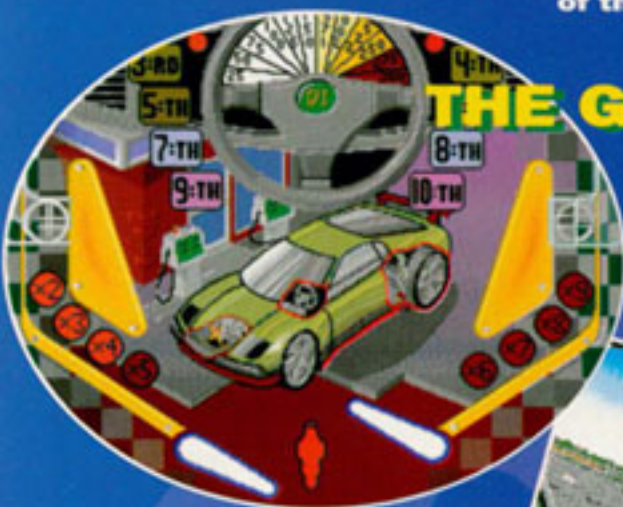
THIS YEAR THE GAMES CHAMP COULD BE YOU!

On this page you'll see the dates and venues for the first round eliminators. They're being held in Virgin Retail outlets in the major cities of Britain over the next few weeks.

All you have to do is turn up, and play. If you're good enough - and you'll have to be very good - you'll be into the next round. And after that... the finals at the Future Entertainment Show in London on 11 - 14 November.

The National Games Championship is organised by Future Publishing, producer of this, and many other great games magazines, and organiser of the Future Entertainment Show.

FREE ENTRY!



Thunderhawk - MEGA CD



Mario All Stars - SNES

THE GAMES YOU'LL BE PLAYING

Pinball Fantasies - CD32



National GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP

THE DATES AND VENUES

18 - 21 October

**EAST KILBRIDE
FALKIRK
EDINBURGH**

Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Megastore
Megastore

**Final on 22 October
GLASGOW
5 heats**

GLASGOW

25 - 28 October

**BOLTON
STOCKPORT
MANCHESTER**

Games Centre
Games Centre
Megastore

**Final on 29 October
MANCHESTER
3 heats**

**BIRMINGHAM
COVENTRY**

Megastore
Megastore

**BIRMINGHAM
2 heats**

**BROMLEY
CROYDON
GUILDFORD
ILFORD
KINGSTON
LONDON GAMES
WATFORD
MARBLE ARCH
MEGASTORE**

Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Games Centre
Megastore
Megastore

**MARBLE ARCH
9 heats**

**BRISTOL
CARDIFF**

Games Centre
Megastore

**CARDIFF
2 heats**

DUBLIN

Games Centre
Megastore

**DUBLIN
2 heats**

BELFAST

Megastore

**BELFAST
1 heat**

**GATESHEAD
NEWCASTLE**

Games Centre
Megastore

**NEWCASTLE
2 heats**

SHEFFIELD

Games Centre
Megastore

**SHEFFIELD
2 heats**

NORWICH

Megastore

**NORWICH
1 heat**

The second
**Future
Entertainment
Show**



Most role playing games are set firmly in the fantasy tradition of ancient lands, mighty warriors, magic spells and dimly-lit tunnels. It's all a bit *Lords Of The Rings*-ish isn't it. But at Oxford Digital Enterprises the team are busy working on a new RPG that they hope will move the genre on a step or two, as programmer Richard Horrocks explains.

The new game is called *Cyberspace* and should be released shortly, but how does it differ from the traditional RPG?

"It's going to be a 3D, first person game.

★ To create a good role playing game you really have to imagine yourself in the game's world ★

You can wander around a world filled with more than a million people," says Richard.

"A lot of games that are classified as role playing games aren't really RPGs. We think that to create a good role playing game you really have to be able to imagine yourself in the game's world. In many ways *Elite* is a role playing game because the world is so realistic, but it's never classified as an RPG. People tend to think of role playing games and the traditional fantasy theme, but that needn't be the case."

"We're amazed at the lack of RPGs set in different environments, and surprised that nobody else has come out with a game like *Cyberspace* while we worked on it."

Richard is one of the generation of programmers who started writing code as a hobby on 8-bit machines: "I wrote my first program in a maths class at school when I was 13 years old. It was a program to work out pi over four to 16 decimal places and we had to write it out on paper and send it off to Hatfield Polytechnic to get it programmed."

So, presumably you have to be a mathematical genius if you're ever going to get anywhere with programming?

"It's not essential," says Richard. "There's a certain way of approaching problems that comes more easily if you are good at maths, and there are some areas where you need a good understanding of maths, but I know several people who came into programming from an artistic background. You don't need a maths degree or A level maths to be able to program."

Among the games that Richard has worked on at Oxford Digital Enterprises are *Hunt For Red October*, *Sleeping Gods Lie* and *Team Yankee*, but the game that has given him most pleasure is *Volfied*, a conversion of the Taito coin-op *Qix*: "I was the main coder on *Volfied* and it was the first game I'd converted from an original. But my favourite ever game is *Dungeon Master*. When that came out I must have missed two weeks at work. I just had to finish it," says Richard.

In common with many of the program-



Left: The ODE team go wild in the country.

Oxford Digital Enterprises are planning to make waves with their new game *Cyberspace*. Richard Horrocks explains why.

ODE's Richard Horrocks

FAVOURITE AMIGA GAME: *Dungeon Master*

MOST PROUD OF: *Volfied*

mers we spoke to Richard feels that the price of games is too high: "I think they should be a comparable price to a music CD, £10 to £15," he said.

But unlike some of the other programmers Richard doesn't see piracy as a valid excuse for the price of games. "I think there's a lot of hype about piracy. When I was in my teens and I used to copy music to tapes, I still used to spend as much as I could on LPs, and I think that that is the case with people who buy games."



Far left: *Cyberspace* is set in a huge city populated by over a million fully animated characters.

Left: You can even create the look of your own character by using this photo-fit system.

THE ODE TEAM INTERVIEWED



WITH RICHARD JONES

WHAT KIND OF GAMER ARE YOU?

Do you consider yourself as a potential Pro, a halfway decent tryer, or totally rubbish? Find out about yourself by using the entirely trustworthy AFS Gamers Personality Test.

Here it is at long last, the find-out-about-yourself questionnaire that really takes you to the edge of your own understanding of yourself.

None of that stupid 'What side of the bed do you get out of?', the answer to which means that you're a mass murderer or have a strange affection for

Conservative MPs with leather masks. Naaaaaah, this questionnaire will tell you whether or not you can hack it at the top of the league in the growing sport of gamesplaying.

Simply answer the multiple choice questions, then turn to the box at the end of this spread and find out about yourself. Let's kick off...

1) You've got two hours to live. Do you:

- a) Thank the lord you've just got time to back up your hard drive?
- b) Load *Rainbow Islands* and try for the high score?
- c) Virtualise yourself and enter your Amiga?
- d) Remind yourself that death comes to everyone in the end and make a nice hot cup of tea?

2) The really hot babe who lives next door says she'd love to play *Doctors and Nurses* with you. Do you:

- a) Ask her if that requires *Quarterback Tools*?
- b) Tell her that *Syndicate* is a lot more fun?
- c) Nip inside and code a medical game with Amos?
- d) Smile knowingly at your parents, look heavenwards and mouth "Thank you", adjust your hair and leap over the fence?

3) The local vicar is of the opinion that computer games turn you into a devil-worshipping saddo with odd taste in trousers. Do you:

- a) Ask him if he wants to see your new Copper parallax routine?
- b) Ask him if he'd like to explain the church's role in the Spanish Inquisition?
- c) Chide him severely for interrupting your game of *Street Fighter 2*?
- d) Pause *Syndicate*, remove your Slam City Shorts and blow him away with an assault rifle?



Mr Cool or what. No game causes him any grief. But maybe he's a little too smug?



Oh dearm Mr Not-quite-so-cool. He needs to re-examine his attitude to life maybe?



Okay Mr Cool, take your pal and have a go at the AFS patent Personality Test!

4) Your teenage sister is demanding the use of the telly for an extended bout of *Home and Away* watching. Do you:

- a) Tell your parents that she really fancies that gun-toting biker down the road and watch her get sent to her room leaving you in peace to play *Starburst*?
- b) Thank her for the reminder, save your game and settle down with a can of Diet Coke while those gorgeous Summer Bay nymphs strut their Lycra stuff?
- c) Construct an overhead RGB splitter and display the television signal on her bedroom wall?
- d) Reluctantly save your position in *Gunship 2000* and go to the pub?

5) It's a beautiful summer's day and your exams are looming. Do you:

- a) Play *War in the Gulf*, *Campaign* and *Their Finest Hour* and convince yourself that you're actually revising your history?
- b) Keep plugging away at *Hired Guns*, *Syndicate* and *Dune 2* and hope you get a question that says: The computer is responsible for the mainstream dissemination of Cyberpunk attitudes. Discuss?
- c) Do about an hour's work, convince yourself that you know all the stuff anyway and head for the swimming pool like every 16 year old has since the beginning of time?
- d) Create an artificial intelligence program and get it to work out exactly what your exam questions are going to be?

6) The local neighbourhood bully has seen you snogging his girlfriend. He's not very happy and would like to remove some of your limbs. Do you:

- a) Construct a cunning time/space loop using your Amiga's serial port and a jubilee clip and transport him back to the stone age where he belongs?
- b) Try out a few of the moves you learnt in *Street Fighter 2* for real?
- c) Run like hell?
- d) Challenge him to a game of *Sensible Soccer* in front of all the neighbourhood kids, secure in the knowledge that you're unbeatable?

7) While playing in a skip behind the local bank you discover £50,000. Do you:

- a) Invest the money in an obscure UK-based Amiga hardware company and develop the first 512-bit processor for the good of us all?
- b) Buy out the local computer shop, stock up on Wotsits and Tab Clear and not emerge for five years?
- c) Buy yourself an A4000, then order a customised Harley and clear off to the south of France for the summer with that foxy babe next door?
- d) Immediately rush into the streets and buy yourself a copy of *Microcosm*, relieved that you can finally afford that CD game?

8) You're ten points off an all-time high score on *Pang* when there's a power cut. Do you:

- a) Pat yourself on the back for having the foresight to build a nuclear power generator in the cellar?
- b) Console yourself with the thought that you would probably have died before you'd beaten that high score anyway?
- c) Hit your head repeatedly against the wall and explode in a shower of blood and giblets?
- d) Nip downstairs and take the opportunity to console your teenage sister's terrified friends with a friendly hug and a knowing smile?

9) It's late at night and as you glance out of the window into the dark you notice the girl across the street dancing around in her window in her underwear while singing into a hairbrush and pouting at her poster of Johnny Depp. Do you:

- a) Suddenly feel a strange urge to play some exceptionally violent games in which ordinary citizens get blown away for no apparent reason?
- b) Remind yourself to gargle with Listerine, squeeze that spot on your chin and tell her how much you admire the work of Johnny Depp when you see her at the bus stop in the morning?
- c) Complete that facial rendering package you've been working on, remodel your face to look like Mr Depp's and nip across the street for a quick chat?
- d) Consider how similar she looks to Chun Li?

10) You've missed the last tube/bus home after a wild night of clubbing. While you sit down and wait the three hours for the network to start up again, you notice two girls who have also missed their bus. Do you decide to:

- a) Offer to play them at *Smash TV* in the video arcade until the next train turns up?
- b) Rush to the video arcade to make sure they don't beat you to the *Smash TV* game?
- c) Take your personal miniaturising three man electric skateboard out of your ample pocket space and offer them a swift lift home?
- d) Congratulate yourself for wearing that new, and expensive aftershave and ask them if they fancy pooling resources with you and sharing a cab home?

Now calculate your score!



125



Bingo! We are left with a pair of well-balanced individuals who can cope socially.

Personality key

Now all you have to do is tot up your score and compare it to the table below.

- 1) a) 2, b) 1, c) 3, d) 0 2) a) 2, b) 1, c) 3, d) 0 3) a) 2, b) 0, c) 1, d) 3 4) a) 3, b) 0, c) 2, d) 1
5) a) 1, b) 3, c) 0, d) 2 6) a) 2, b) 1, c) 0, d) 3 7) a) 2, b) 3, c) 0, d) 1 8) a) 2, b) 1, c) 3, d) 0
9) a) 3, b) 0, c) 2, d) 1 10) a) 1, b) 3, c) 2, d) 0

Scoring

0-8: You're a reasonably sensible human being with a life beyond your Amiga. Shame about your GCSEs though.

9-17: You're a moderately well adjusted Amiga gamer. Although you like playing games, you're still aware that there's a life beyond the monitor screen. Give up the Pot Noodles now though.

18-24: You show an amazing grasp for the possibilities of technology. You should really get out more though, because all that pale skin isn't very sexy.

24-30: You're a hopelessly addicted, video fiend with a seriously anti-social attitude. You're only hope is to join the Amiga Format team right now. Leave your assault rifle at home though, because Nutts gets scared by loud noises.

"THE LAD D OR... WIN S



That's right, as we were going to press with this issue, we managed to look over the shoulder of the *Amiga Format* reviewers and were stunned to see the review of Krisalis' *Soccer Kid*. To give you some idea of why we immediately got on to the blower to Krisalis in order to claim 20 copies of this great little platform game (and 20 t-shirts) on your behalf, here's what *AF* said about *Soccer Kid*: 'One of the best platformers ever! Fabulous graphics and gameplay which is incredibly difficult in places - it'll take weeks of practice to complete.' And you can't have much more praise than that can you?

In fact from what we've seen, the game has little if anything to do with football, and a great deal to do with amazingly fine platform action with some marvellously deft touches, a few superb hidden level type things, a bit of plot, and enough playability to keep you going during that vast, long, huge, dull, tedious, heart-breaking period of void and dead time that the powers that be would like us to call The Off Season - but which we really know is hell on earth.

All we want you to do is to send us the correct answers to the following 10 really easy questions. Then make sure to send them to us on the back of a sealed envelope or on the back of a postcard. Make sure we get your answers by October 31 this very year. The address: That Lad Trevor, *Amiga Format Special*, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

Now it's time for the Questions though. So get your pens, pencils and paper at the ready. Dig out your *Rothman's Yearbook*, and prepare to win one of 40 prizes - that's right, we're giving 20 lucky winners the games, and 20 kinda-smug runners-up the T-shirts.

THE QUESTIONS

- Which of the following is not a Great British football team?
 - Queen-of-the-South
 - Swansea City
 - Auxerre
- Who of the following has never captained England?
 - Bobby Moore
 - David Platt
 - Bobby Davro
- Which of the following is not an English Premiership ground?
 - Highbury
 - Hyde Park
 - The County Ground

ONE WELL!! SOCCER KID!



127



4) Who does Gary Lineker now play for?

- a) Grampus 8
- b) Amstrad
- c) Barnet

5) Which of the following teams has never won the FA Cup?

- a) Blackburn Rovers
- b) Dinamo Kiev
- c) Wolverhampton Wanderers

6) Who has kept goal for Scotland?

- a) Cool Hand Luke
- b) The Virgin Mary
- c) Jim Leighton

7) Who has refereed a World Cup game?

- a) Jack Taylor
- b) Jack Charlton
- c) Jack Snit

8) Complete the following phrase: "My old man said be a City fan..."

a) "I said no thanks Dad, I hate football, you know that."

b) "I said, right-ho Dad, you're a man with a sound knowledge of footy."

c) "I said, @@@@-off, %\$%^%, your a *%@%!"

9) Which is not a valid football term?

- a) Off-side
- b) Hand-ball
- c) Jimmy Hill

10) Who has never played in Italy?

- a) Gary Lineker
- b) Luther Blisset
- c) Jimmy Greaves

That's yer lot then, simply get the answers right and hope that the good lord of luck looks nicely upon you. Oh, there are a few rules too. So here's the small-print:

The Small Print Rules

1) No employee of Future Publishing or Krisalis can enter. 2) Multiple entries are not acceptable. 3) The editor's decision is final and he will not change his mind for anyone. 4) Entries must be recieved by October 31. 5) Sending in football-related postcards will in no way effect the editor's decision. No way, no how mates.

The **future** of
videogaming

Mega Drive, Super Nintendo, **PC**, Amiga & then some

EDGE

onsale
at selected
newsagents
now

Move **fast.**

At the start of this games special we sat down to choose the names of programmers we wanted to talk to: Braben, Braybrook, Madcan, Crammond... famous names, respected names. Then we thought, they're all blokes? Where are the women? We just couldn't understand why there weren't any major-name females programming for the Amiga. Here's what the men had to say about the complete lack of a female touch in Amiga games:

Women

LEAST FAVOURITE PASTIMES: *Programming (it seems).*

BEST GAME: *Centipede?*

and secretarial side. I'd love to see more women programmers, because I'm sure there would be subtle differences in the way they would approach things which would come across in the finished game."

Jeff Minter (LlamaSoft): "I guess it's because playing video games has been a predominantly male phenomenon and most video

game designers start out as video game players. Mind you there really have been some exceptionally good female game programmers such as

Carole Shaw who wrote *River Raid* for Activision, which is definitely one of the best Atari VCs shoot-'em-ups; Dona Bailey, the main programmer and designer of the arcade game *Centipede*, and there was Anita Sinclair at Magnetic Scrolls."

★ **Programming is a very solitary business, perhaps women don't want to isolate themselves** ★

Steve Kelly (Bitmap Brothers): "It's a shame. I worked with one who left to have a baby and unfortunately didn't come back. I can't recall ever having a job application from a woman programmer."

This was the interview in which we were going to talk to a woman programmer, but it seems that there are no women at all programming for the Amiga, so we asked the leading male programmers why that is...

David Braben (Independent): "I think that it's partly historical. There are more and more women coming into programming, but at the time I started the things that attracted people to programming were male oriented because most of the games were male oriented. It has only been with the advent of non-confrontational games (such as

Populous) that it has all begun to change."

Richard Horrocks (Oxford Digital Enterprises): "Most people get into programming as an extension of a hobby and I would imagine that girls are not interested in that sort of thing. I'm sure that there's no reason why women can't be programmers."

Andy Willon (Asylum): "Perhaps it's because programming is a very cold and very much a non-people business. The essential experience for programmers is not being able to talk to anybody about what you do, not because of secrecy, but because other people probably won't understand what you're talking about."

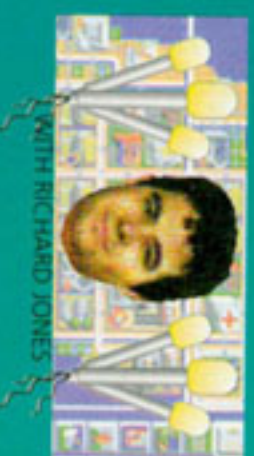
Mev Dine (Vivid Image Design): "Maybe it's because women tend not to play games as much as men. Whatever the reason, it's such a shame that there aren't more women programmers."



Left: still no sign of The Chippendales' Strip Poker then eh, lads? Of course this sort of portrayal of women has nothing to do with their apparent lack of desire to write games software.

Far Left: Chun Li explains the theory of self-empowerment to Ken in Street Fighter II.

WHY NO WOMEN? INTERVIEW



WITH RICHARD JONES

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**WHAT
THE
REVIEWERS
REALLY THINK**

One day, if you are passing through Bath, you might like to stop off in one of the several hostelrys surrounding the Monmouth Street HQ of Future Publishing. Outside you might see several jean and T-shirt-clad journalists screaming: "Don't drink kids! It's bad for you!" at the drinkers therein.

The chances are that you've sat down and read a review, and have then thought: "Tommy-rot! Tosh! Pish! Rotten shame! I could do better than that flouncy buffoon of a reviewer" (or words to that effect) but you've not had the confidence to actually

House Style: nothing to do with a bunch of well dressed semi-detacheds out for an evening, every magazine does things in a certain way. For example, some maga-

Play the game: of the reviewer's arduous life, a mere 20 per cent comprises writing the words. Another 10 per cent is spent grabbing pictures. The other 70 per cent is spent playing the damn game. Even if you don't finish, it won't matter. In fact, if you can finish it, it's probably rubbish.

**Above: an Amiga
Format games
review page.**

GAME ZONE

Contact the right person: If you send in an example of your work, make sure it lands on the right desk by addressing it properly. Include a covering letter explaining who you are, what games you like, how old you are and what Amiga you have. Make sure you address the letter to Mr Tim Smith, Editor, Mr Marcus Dyson, Editor and not The Editor or Dear Sir or Madam. This works for you on two counts... firstly the letter gets to the person who counts: secondly, you look like an organised human being.

Never trust the spellchecker. Its just knot a good idea too do this because their knot good at picking up on words that sound the same but that mean different things. Check you're work yourself.

Also, make sure that you don't repeat yourself and avoid using the same adjectives to describe a game.

Write what you mean: give an honest opinion of the game, and don't just say what you think we want to hear. If you honestly think that a game is good - but every one else has destroyed it (it probably means your judgement is dodgy) but argue your case.

TIPS FROM THE PROS

134

We went out and about in our quest to find the ultimate method by which you could become a game reviewer and earn heaps of cash for doing what you love most anyway (except for the boring writing bits), and we asked some of the most respected game reviewers ever for their pearls of wisdom.

Here's what the cream of the reviewers had to say about how they go about tackling a game review, and to see how close your opinions are to those of the reviewers, we've asked them to list their favourite and their most hated Amiga games.

Trenton Webb:
"if it ain't fun,
then it ain't a
game"

**Trenton Webb - Amiga
Format Games Editor
1991-92 (now edits
Game Zone)**

Remember what you're doing. You're writing a game review that folk will base a buying decision on. You're not there to show off, you're not there to milk a dead nice freebie from a software house, you're not there to make yourself famous. Games cost people cash. So a few basic facts should be considered at all times.

A game has to be just that, a game. It's all well and good if the software in question is 'a perfect simulation'

TOTAL!

or features 423 levels of parallax scrolling. If it ain't fun to play then it ain't a game. To understand a game system you've got to play the game. Too many reviewers in too many mags don't play a game long enough to make fair decision.

Favourite Games:

Battle Isle, Eye Of The Beholder, Deuteros, Sensible Soccer

Least Favourite

Games: *Utopia, any Infocom adventure.*

Frank O'Connor:
Amiga Format con-
tributor from 1990-
(now edits Total!)

When I review a game, there are some very important factors I have to take into account. Not least of these is the price versus the quality. Then there's the cosmetics:

graphics and sound are definitely a secondary factor to gameplay. Some games have the most annoying music, chunky graphics and dull backgrounds, but the gameplay shines through.

If there is disagreement between reviewers, we sit down, talk about the various aspects of the game and come to a compromise based on several opinions. We never take the business of reviewing lightly. We always bear in mind that your £50 could be many months of pocket money.

Favourite game: *Rainbow Islands*
Least favourite: *Zool*

**Andy Hutchinson - Consultant Editor
Amiga Format Specials (now edits
Commodore Format)**

You've always got to remember that people will be making purchasing decisions based on your recommendations. It's all very well going easy on a particular game, because you have a soft spot for the genre, but when games cost upwards of 30 quid, you've got to take a serious reality check. Equally, you've got to avoid being too hard on a game because you happen to dislike that particular genre.

What should be at the forefront of your mind at all times is the fact that you're reviewing what claims to be an entertainment product. It doesn't matter two figs whether your review puts jobs at risk, or whether an advertiser doesn't like what

you're saying, because all that counts is the reader; the punter who'll be handing over a great stash of hard-earned cash to buy the wretched thing.

Above and beyond that, what counts above anything else is gameplay. Time and time again, you'll get husks of games with great graphics or sound, but with zero game in there. Similarly you can get the crappiest looking game since Commodore Pet *Invaders*, but with stonking gameplay. It doesn't matter if the licence cost more than a

Bill Clinton coiffure, if there's no gameplay then forget it. Oh and it's always nice to have several litres of coffee for reviewing sessions.

Favourite Game:
Syndicate (multi-player).

**Least Favourite
Game:** *WWF European
Rampage.*

**Steve Jarratt: Amiga
Format contributor
from issue 1 (he is
now editor of Edge,
magazine for the
expert player)**

Basically, I just play them. I try to play them as if I'd bought the things - that's why I

often like to take them home and have a bash at night on my own. It can bias your opinion when there's some smart arse in the office going 'hur, hur, oh look, there's the game over screen again'.

I try to play as much as possible within the time constraints, to see how enjoyable and how easy it is. Often I've managed to complete a large proportion of the game, and that's a bad thing - the more I can complete before deadline, the lower mark it gets.

My main criteria for marking are: Gameplay - this is paramount. Otherwise *Tetris* would have scored about 20 per cent.



Frank O'Connor:
looks for good
gameplay at the
right price.



Andy Hutchinson: The
reader always comes first.



Technical innovation – if the programmers aren't trying very hard then they don't deserve your attention – or money.

Comparison to other games – If there's another game that does pretty much the same thing only does it better or cheaper, then what's the point?

How long will the game last – too many games cost a load of money and can be finished in a day or two.

Gut feeling – I find I get attracted to the strangest games. But you can't argue with it: if I've enjoyed it, then other people might enjoy it as well.

Favourite game: "It's like asking Nick Faldo what was his best shot, I've played so many I can't pick one."

Least favourite game: See above.



Jim Douglas: "What a game plays like and feels like are the important factors."

Jim Douglas: editor of *GamesMaster* magazine (which features a wide coverage of Amiga games)

At *GamesMaster* we have a particularly trite little saying which states that there are three things to look out for when you're reviewing a game:

Playability, playability and playability. Now, while this is obviously nonsense, it does illustrate the point that a game can fall

EDGE



Steve Jarratt: "I try to play the games as if I'd actually bought the things."

down pretty badly in the visual and audio side and still be sufficiently redeemed by storming gameplay to receive a bumper score. *Dynablasters* is a prime example. Very simple visuals, not particularly brilliant sounds but all-conqueringly excellent gameplay.

Obviously there are lots of bonus points which a game can earn by looking and sounding great, but what it plays like and what it feels like are the important factors.

Our Lastability rating isn't supposed to indicate how long it'll take you to complete the game, but how long you'll keep playing it. If a game has the appeal to bring you back for more once you know what happens at the end, it'll score pretty well on our Lastability dial. Most of our reviews carry Second Opinion boxes, giving the reader an even greater breadth of, er, opinion. Oh, er, is that enough? My head hurts.

Favourite Game: *Syndicate*.

Least Favourite Game: *Super Cauldron*.

James Leach: *Amiga Format* budgets man from 1992 (now the editor of *SuperPlay* magazine)

Why are nearly all games rubbish? Why are we, the consumers being ripped off? And why aren't we being told the truth about games? Reviewing Amiga games is easy. Play them, and if you like them, bung a good percentage down.

But reviewing Amiga games well is much trickier. You've got to ask the above questions. You've got to start off with a neutral view. You've got to be won over by the best and ruthlessly chop down the worst of the games you see.

When you review a game, you're effectively spending other people's money when you give games good reviews, so it's your responsibility to make sure you tell them what they must hear.

Favourite Game: he loves *Formula One Grand Prix*.

Least Favourite Game: *International Rugby Challenge*.

MEMORABLE REVIEWER QUOTES

What follows are extracts from reviews of games that were awarded *Amiga Format Gold*, that show what was in the reviewer's mind as he or she cruised to the end of their hard labours...

"When a character lets slip a piece of juicy information, you can't help yourself shouting out: 'Aha! The plot thickens!' (Well I can't)." Maff Evans is carried away by *Cruise for a Corpse* in *AF27*. Obviously what we have here is atmosphere.

"Next time you tune into Channel Four on a Sunday night, and you find that there's a Bulgarian opera on instead of the Redskins and Dolphins, there's no need to switch over in absolute disgust." Maybe a little philistine (that's the San Fernando Philistines) from Neil Jackson's issue 33 review of *John Madden's America Football* but it does suggest enthusiasm.

"A captive is what you start this game as and soon a true captive of this immense challenge is what you will become." Trenton Webb shows off the reviewer's fave trick in his issue 16 review of... *Captive*.

"Weeel, it's easier to complete the levels than it is to stop playing." A superb recommendation from Maff Evans' *Rick Dangerous* review of issue 16.

"Astoundingly fast solid 3D graphics give a marvellous feeling of movement." Even way back in issue 1, Bob Wade was far from reticent to indulge in the kind of hyperbole usually seen in John Motson's house. The game was *Powerdrome*.

"Yes, it's derivative of lots of games such as *Commando* and *Gauntlet*; but it's done so well, and includes so much detail, that all that is forgiven." This is the 'look, there's very little wrong with this game, so I'm going to show off a bit of my knowledge' school of reviewing brought to fruition in issue 45 by Andy Nuttall in his *Chaos Engine* review.

James Leach: "Reviewers are spending other people's money."





Chris Lloyd: features editor *Amiga Format Specials*

No matter how flash a game's graphics and sounds are, it's that elusive quality of gameplay that counts. If you check your watch after a session and find that four hours have mysteriously disappeared then it's a good game. If you have to have the joystick forcibly removed

Chris Lloyd: "It's the elusive quality of gameplay that really counts."

in the middle of the night, then you know that it's definitely an absolute corker.

There is far too much emphasis on the initial look of a game. A graphically superb introduction might look fab first time, but after the 12th time, it palls. Despite the mountain of games available there are precious few different formats. Once you've



Marcus Dyson: "We make sure that a game really deserves the score it gets."



played a dozen platform games then the next one better have something special or it adds nothing to the gamesplaying experience.

Favourite Game: *Llamatron*.

Least Favourite: *Leeds United Champions*.

Tim Smith - he is the editor of the *Amiga Format Specials*

Free T-shirts, free badges, appallingly unimaginative dreary gameplay, good pictures on the box, loads of advertising hype, free trips abroad, whining software house executives hauling journoes into offices threatening to pull advertising and that they "...know your boss!!" These are some of my least favourite things, but they happen.

But every so often, once in a wonderful while, a game of true beauty, originality and style comes along. These are easy to spot. The real skill of the reviewer is being able to see through the rest of the garbage.

Favourite Game: *Sensible Soccer*.

Least Favourite Game: *Terminator 2*.

**AMIGA
FORMAT**

Marcus Dyson - editor *Amiga Format*

Ninety-nine per cent of everything is crap. Fortunately this isn't true, not when it comes to computer games. Only 50 per cent of computer games are crap, and it's our job to tell you which ones. If only 50 per cent make the grade, how come so many get more than a 50 per cent score?

That's easy, review scores work on a completely non linear numeric system. As far as the software company is concerned, anything less than 85 per cent is a kicking. As far as the public are concerned, if it doesn't get over 80 per cent it's a real dog. Given theses constraints, even we bend a little. I mean how can we give a perfectly

COULD YOU BE A REVIEWER?

The answer to this question is quite probably, probably. There are however, a few skills which every reviewer must have. Despite several death threats and an offer to 'Come outside cos my mate Gary wants a word wiv ya' tied to a brick and lobbed through a closed AFS office window, we are going to print the Reviewers Guild Rules and Regs 1992/93. These closely guarded secrets came from the last Guild of Reviewers AGM held in secret in a pub in Berlin. They may well be the last words I ever write...

A qualified member of the Guild must be able to...

Use the phrase 'If you like this kind of game, then this game is the kind of game you'll like' at least once a year in order to keep the European Lazy Obvious Sentence Mountain at its proper height.

Be unbiased and even-handed about flight sims when you hate flying.

Use the words 'parallax', 'copper lining', 'isometric', 'fractal mapping', 'Garoud shading' and '3D wireframe is like *Battlezone*' when you can't think of anything interesting to say about a game AND make people believe that you know something about the words.

Not have English GCSE!

Be either 'a 24-hour-a-day gamer' or 'a mad, bonkers, freaked-out, mega, mogga, magga, dude(ette) with serious attitude' without laughing.

Love games loads and loads



The sight that makes it all worth while, an Amiga game review in print.

AMIGA POWER

average game 50 per cent, when every other magazine is going to give it 79 per cent?

Our reviewing creed is to only review complete games, to only review a game that a software house will let us keep, none of this reviewing it in one day while the software house guy sits beside you. And to make sure we really believe the game deserves the score it gets.

Favourite Game: *Spindizzy Worlds*.

Least Favourite Game: *Sensible Soccer*.

Stuart Campbell - deputy editor
Amiga Power.

My sure-fire route to reviewing success is a simple yet sinisterly effective one. Whenever a new game comes out, I just wait until it's reviewed in *Amiga Computing*, then I rewrite that review, replacing a few carefully-chosen words with the aid of a thesaurus and knocking 20 per cent off the mark in order to preserve my own 'hard-man' reputation.

The only time I've ever deviated from this plan was with Domark's fine *International Rugby Challenge*, and what a cropper I came then. I certainly learned my lesson there, and no mistake matey.

Favourite Game: *Sensible Soccer*.

Least Favourite Game: *International Rugby Challenge*. ☹

DO THE WRITE THING

Right, so you've read all the advice, but can you put it into practice? In conjunction with *Amiga Format*, we're offering you the chance to be a games reviewer in the world's best Amiga magazine.

Here's what you have to do: Send us a 500 word review of any Amiga game, we'll judge them and the writer of what we consider to be the best review will be invited to review a game for a future issue of *Amiga Format*. Easy, eh?

When you've written your review, send it to: Tim Smith, editor, *Amiga Format Specials*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

All entries must be received by October 30. No entries will be accepted from anybody who is a full-time journalist. And what's more relatives of employees of Future Publishing are not allowed to enter. The editor's decision will be absolutely final, so there's no point sending abusive or whingeing letters if you don't win.

OK, get writing and get those entries rolling in!

NO, WAIT, SERIOUSLY, HOW TO BE A REVIEWER

As a well-known reviewer, I am often accosted in the street by people who say: "You're a fat old git. How do I become a game reviewer and make heaps of money without working hard. Fatty!" And, do you know, that's a very good question to which there are many answers. But only one good one, and this is it. Follow these Ten Top Steps and one day you could be in my chair....

1) Study hard at English at GSCE, 'A' Level, degree and PhD level. Then forget all of it and watch *Rude Dog'n' The Dweebs* or *Bevis and Butthead* to pick up style tips.

2) Play games.

3) Play more games.

4) Forget what your parents say about games frying your mind (then come back after working for a games mag for a year and flash your enormous paycheck in the face of your civil servant dad yelling: "I'm rich, you're not!")

5) Forget that bit about the enormous paycheck, that's just a touch of poetic licence.

6) Pass your poetic test and then get a licence.

7) Write to every single magazine publisher in the world with a 500 word review of your fave game, include some ideas for captions. Remember to keep with the house style of the magazine you are applying to.

8) Send the letter in every week for 22 weeks.

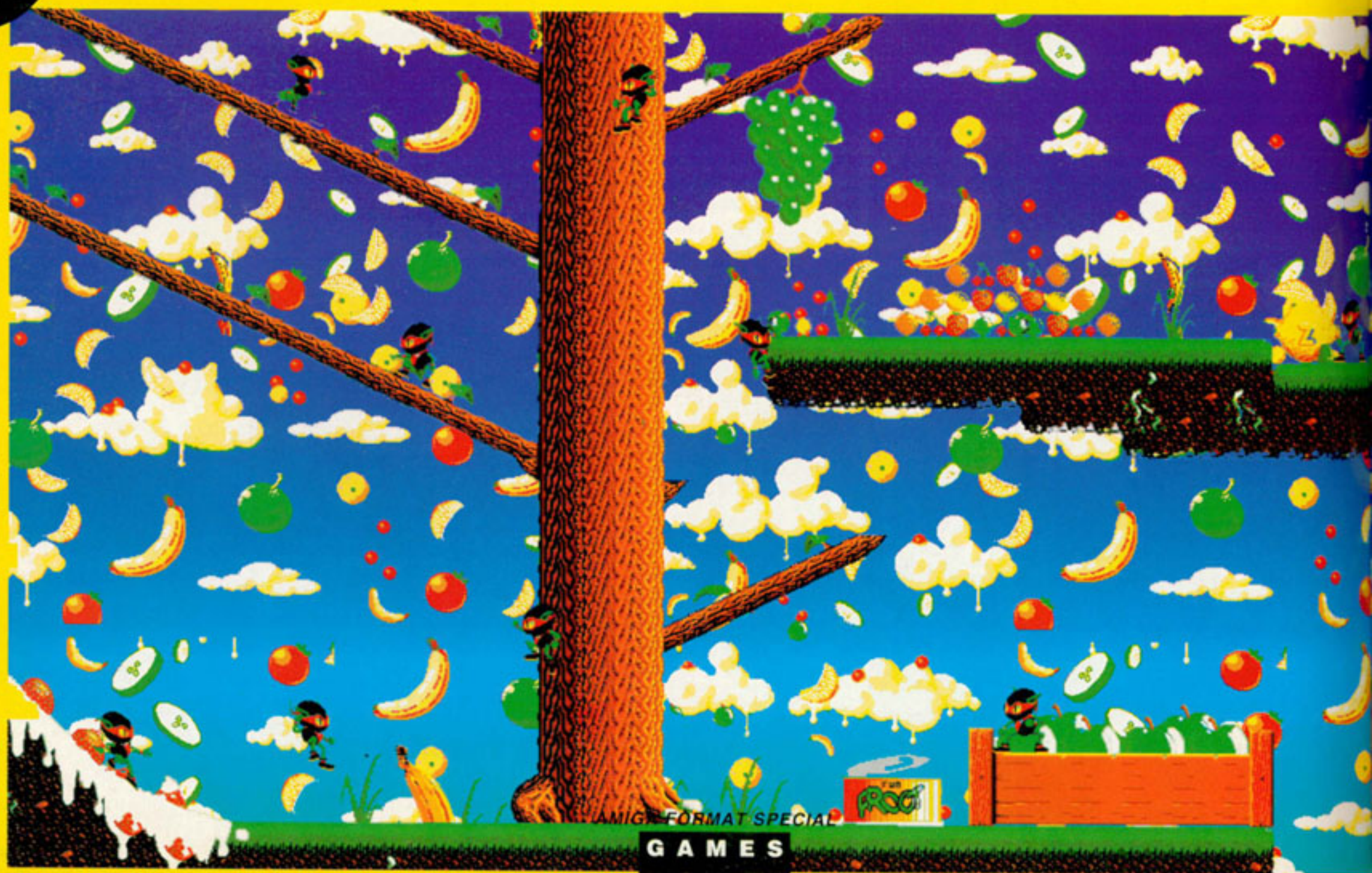
9) When at the Future Entertainment Show, track down your fave reviewer and ask him or her loads and loads of questions.

10) Develop the ability to listen to people moaning and whining for hours on end when you've given their fave game 92 per cent and not 99 per cent. This breeds character and will enable you to cope with people asking you tedious questions at the Future Entertainment Show (most of which are about the review they have been sending you for the last 21 weeks).



**ARE YOU MAD ABOUT GAMES?
WELL YOU'D BE MENTAL TO
MISS ALL THIS... OH YES INDEED!**

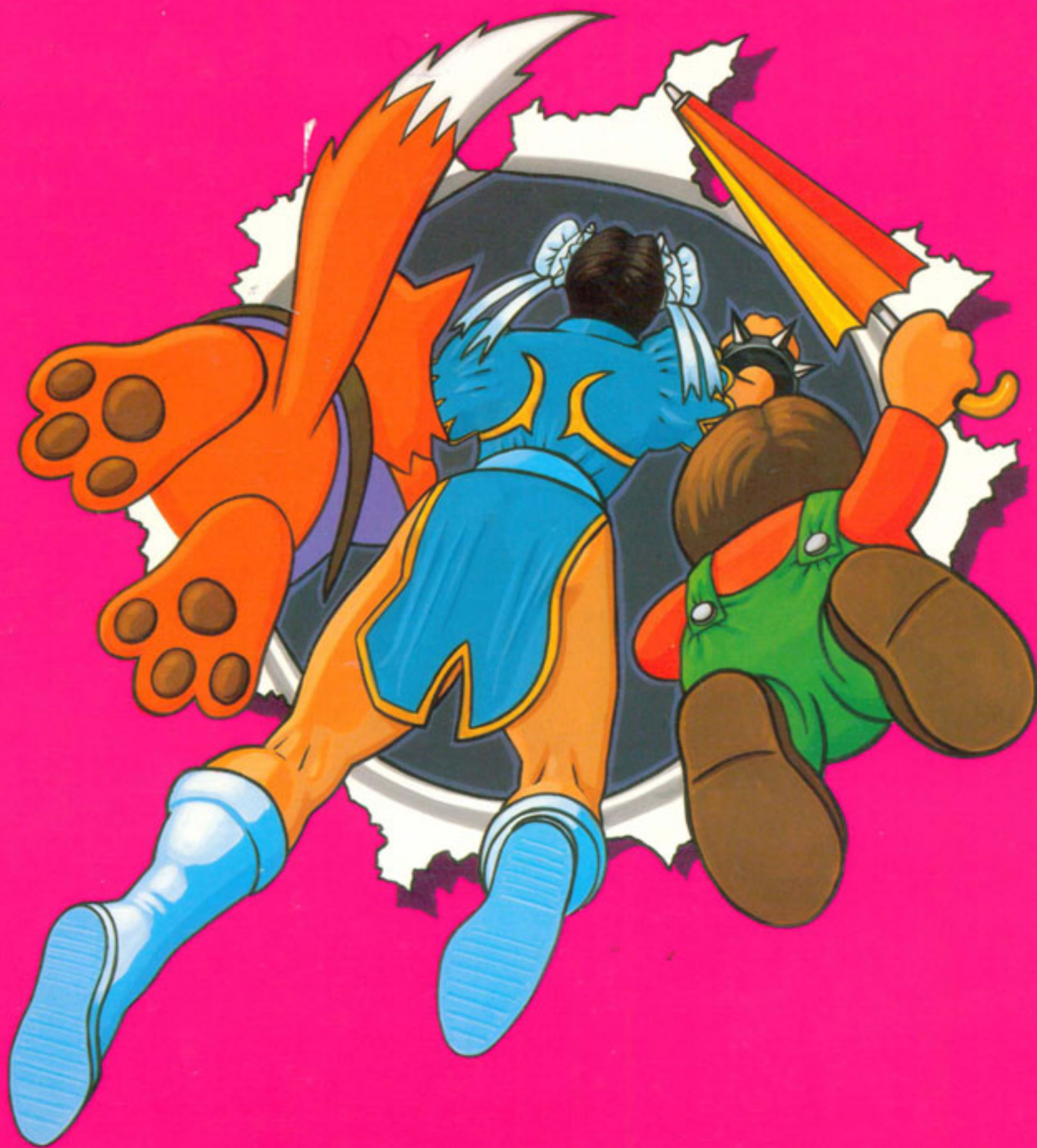
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