

SX-1
REVIEWED INSIDE

AMERICA'S ONLY AMIGA GAMES MAGAZINE

AMIGA

GAME ZONE

ISSUE NO. 3
OCT/NOV 1994
USA \$7.95
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WITH COVERDISK



**REVIEWED
IN THIS ISSUE**



20 STAR TREK GAMES



ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS



BENEATH A STEEL SKY

HANG ON!

**BULLFROG'S THEME PARK
TAKES THE WORLD BUILDER
CONCEPT TO DIZZYING HEIGHTS!**



PLUS THE LATEST NEWS ON COMMODORE!

MORE THAN 50 REVIEWS IN THIS ISSUE!



SX-1 EXPANSION UNIT



CHARMING FIXER-UPPER



LOCK-N-LOAD



SOCCER KID



KING'S TABLE



GLOBAL DOMINATION



KINGMAKER



BATTLETOADS



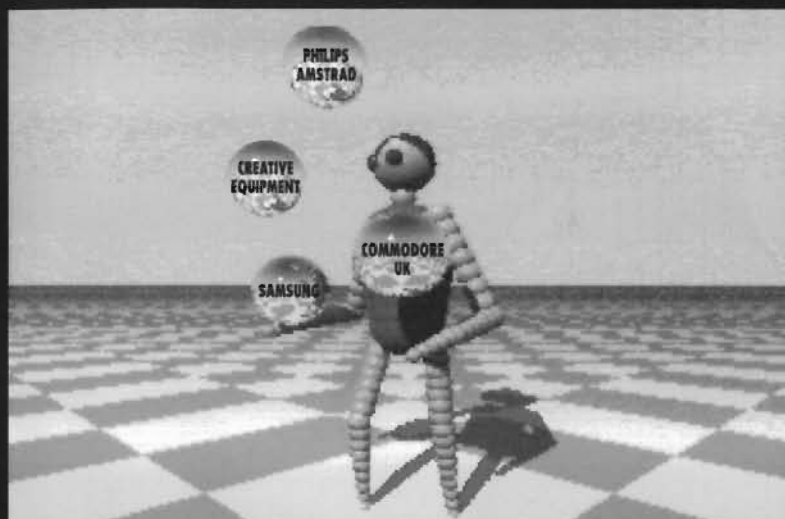
MAGIC BOY



FI, LAMBORGHINI AMERICAN CHALLENGE, MICRO MACHINES, OVERDRIVE, SKIDMARKS & HARDBODY ON SOFTWARE (NATURALLY)

MORE THAN 50 REVIEWS IN THIS ISSUE!

COMMODORE BUYOUT



STILL UP IN THE AIR

It's been an anxious summer for faithful Amiga owners. Since May 2nd when Commodore International filed for liquidation with the Bahamian courts, there has been an incredible number of rumors floating around the nets and user groups. *Which company will acquire the Amiga technology? Will the computer continue to be manufactured? Or will current Amiga owners be orphaned if no one comes forward?* Over 50,000 calls to the toll-free Amiga World hotline (and quite a few to us as well) indicate the genuine level of concern over the slowly materializing picture.

As this issue of AGZ goes to press, the situation is still up in the air. Although there are no concrete answers to the many questions, the funnel has narrowed over the past few weeks. Four major players have now emerged: Creative Equipment, Samsung, Philips/Amstrad, and the current front runner, Commodore UK.

Commodore UK is a completely separate (and profitable, to boot) corporate entity from Commodore International. In a phone interview at the beginning of September, I spoke with the company's managing director, David Pleasance. At that point he was about to make the liquidators an unconditional bid he felt would finalize the deal. By the time you read this article, the creditors will have responded and, hopefully, the situation will be resolved.

Under the assumption that the bid would be successful, I inquired about the immediate and long-range plans for the Amiga. Pleasance stated that he wants to restart production in the UK by manufacturing "tens of thousands" of CD³² and A1200 units for the Christmas season. He also mentioned that Amiga International (the company's new name) plans to send a ship-

ment of A4000s stateside before Christmas. However, Pleasance conceded that this coming month would be a critical period. If something wasn't resolved in time for the Christmas buying season, it would be a potentially fatal blow to the Amiga.

Unfortunately, it looks like people who want to buy a new CD³² or A1200 in America will have to wait until January or February of 1995. Pleasance indicated that he would need to fill the demand for those models in England before shipping any units overseas. He also stated that the A1200 CD add-on drive, the CD³² computer expansion unit, and the Amiga card for PCs would all be delayed until next year so the company could focus on its mass market computers.

Amiga International is definitely looking to the future. Pleasance said that the company was currently attempting to get the original West Chester, PA research and development team back together to complete their next-generation RISC-based system (plans for the AAA chipset have been scrapped). He also mentioned that a support team of 60 people is being assembled in the UK to service the Amiga's 246 current developers.

But, you ask, does this change anything for Amiga game players in North America? Not really. This Christmas season is looking to be one of the best yet, with blockbuster games ready to hit our shores by early November. The Commodore UK buyout is potentially the best scenario for current Amiga owners. The new ownership should provide the necessary support to insure a steady stream of incredible games that will continue to push the limits of the Amiga for years to come. To paraphrase Mark Twain, "Rumors of the Amiga's death have been greatly exaggerated." ■ GEOFF MILLER

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AMIGA GAME ZONE

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR: Geoff Miller

WRITERS: Ralph Barbagallo, Brian Bosley, Chris Burke, Sean Caszatt, Jason Compton, Rob Hays, Jason Lowe, Rick Micetic, Eric Penn, Mark Pulokas, Henning Vahlenkamp, Robert Van Buren

COLUMNIST: Peter Olafson

ARTISTS: Mike Cole, Tim Stiles

HARDBODY ON SOFTWARE:

PRODUCERMike Miller

GAMETitus Software

MODEL.....Lizveth Mendez

PHOTO...Kyle Beachy, Brian Stauffer

CAR.....The Exchange of Lake Forest

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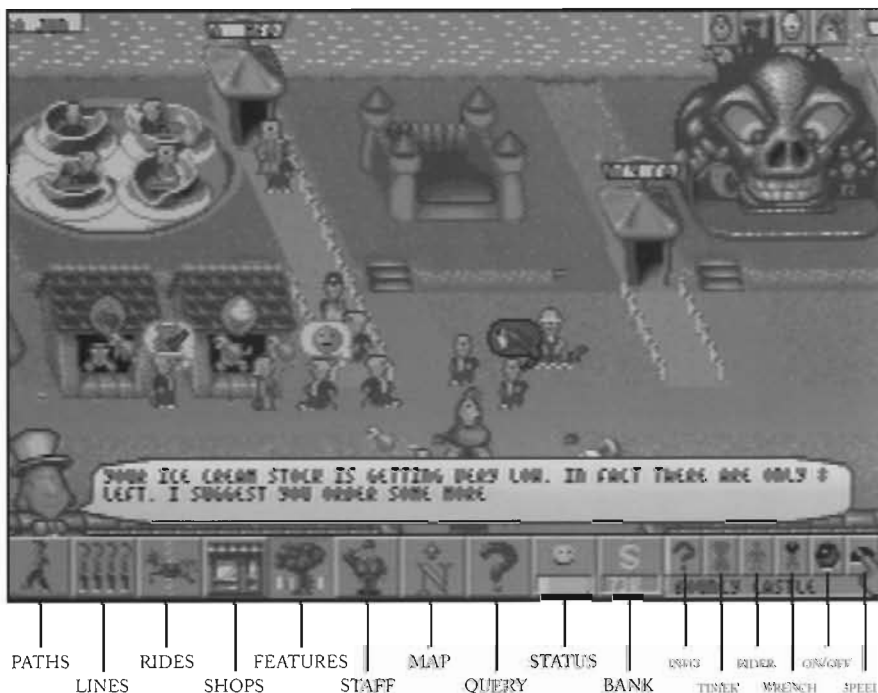
Internet e-mail address:
gamezone@firefly.prairienet.org

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PRINTED IN THE USA

theme PARK ON THE

think you can design and build the greatest amusement park in the world? You select the site; you lay out the rides. In fact, you control every aspect of running a profitable amusement park; from hiring employees, to developing new rides, to maintaining an adequate supply of soft drinks. Any mistakes, and the bustling hordes of fun-seekers will let you know. Oh, and that Merry-Go-Round in flames is a clue too.



PATHS let people walk around your park.
LINEs are made for people to wait for rides.
RIDEs are what your park is based around.
SHOPS are your secondary source of income.
FEATUReS add beauty to your park.
STAFF fix rides, clean up, and entertain kids.
MAP shows an overhead view of the park.
QUeRY activates the mini-icons for an item.

STATUS shows the concerns of your visitors.
BANK charts your income and ticket prices.
INFO allows you to change prices and rides.
TIMER changes the length of a ride.
RIDER adjusts the maximum passenger load.
WRENCH determines the danger of the ride.
ON/OFF starts and stops a working ride.
SPEED increases the RPMs of your rides.

DOOM DEMO MAP



— Moving Light + Start
• Light-source o Light-Pillar

USE THE NUMERIC KEYPAD OR ARROWS TO MOVE
USE F1 - F8 TO CHANGE THE SIZE OF THE SCREEN
USE 1 - 4 TO CHANGE THE PIXEL RESOLUTION

PLUS! DOOM FOR AMIGA?

Well, not quite yet. But that's not stopping everyone from trying to clone ID Software's Doom 3D engine for the Amiga. One of the best so far is TextDemo by John Hendrikx. You must have an accelerated (020+) Amiga to run the demo. There are two versions (ECS & AGA) on the coverdisk, and both must be loaded from the Workbench screen. John tells us that the next revision will have stairs and real-time movement! Meanwhile, you should also check out Poom 0.2 and BSP 1.0, two other Doom engines available on Aminet. It's only a matter of time now..

COVERDISK

One of the most highly-anticipated Christmas releases, Theme Park from Bullfrog puts you in charge of all the amusement rides, concession stands, and personnel in a new twist on the world builder game. And leave it to *Amiga Game Zone* to bring you an exclusive fully-playable demo of the game!

Theme Park has so many different elements that it would be impossible to detail them all here. Thankfully, Bullfrog has included a short but effective tutorial at the beginning of the demo. It walks you through the basics of the game, and then you can continue to build your park for the next three years.

The best way to learn how to play the game is to simply explore the interface and experiment with the different options. However, here are a few tips that might make your new job a little easier...

✓ When you press "O" to open the park gates, the right-hand ticket booth will move up to indicate the gates are open.

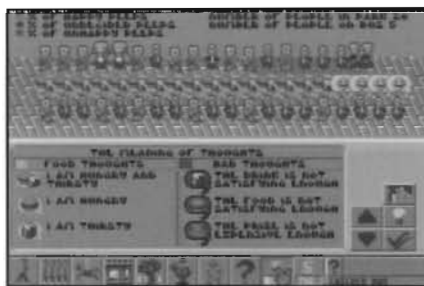
✓ Choose staff in this order for the tutorial: Chicken Man, Handyman, Mechanic.

✓ Use the arrow keys to scroll around the park. Click the right mouse button to remove paths, rides, etc. To access the menus, move to the top of the screen and press the *left* button - hey, this ain't no PC!

✓ Be sure to pay attention to what your visitors are thinking. Catering to their needs and carefully watching the charts on the BANK screen will improve your fortunes.



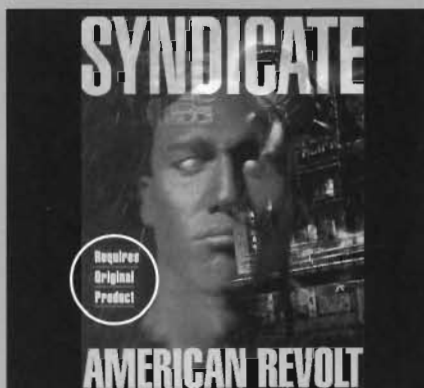
✓ You have only 50 Walley Ices for the entire demo. Jack the price up on these items immediately since you can't purchase additional stock (unlike the full game). To change the price, QUERY the shop and then click INFO. Don't hesitate to raise the balloon and admission prices, either. ■



The park status screen is the key to understanding the needs of your customers.

AGZ #2 DISK CONFUSION

If you didn't try last issue's Syndicate: American Revolt coverdisk, drop everything and start looking for that disk. *The AGZ #2 coverdisk does not require the original Syndicate game as we stated on the label.* The disk contains one complete fully-playable level from the game. And we also failed to mention that a Stardust tunnel mission also appears on the disk. Oh dear. We'll try to be more explicit about future coverdisks. Of course, this info is of no help to the mother who called in wondering why her son couldn't get our coverdisk to work on his PC... ■



THE AGZ #2 COVERDISK DOES NOT REQUIRE THE ORIGINAL SYNDICATE GAME AS WE STATED ON THE LABEL. DOH!

AMERICAN TOP 10



What were the hottest Amiga games this summer? Take a look at our top ten charts for July and August for the answers. Strange, isn't it, that the World Cup was held right here in the good old USA, yet you won't find one soccer game among the best sellers.

AUGUST 1994

- 1 Settlers
- 2 Darkmere
- 3 Syndicate
- 4 Beneath a Steel Sky
- 5 Alien³
- 6 Ishar 3
- 7 Cannon Fodder
- 8 Gunship 2000
- 9 Frontier: Elite 2
- 10 Theatre of Death

JULY 1994

- 1 Frontier: Elite 2
- 2 Alien³
- 3 Gunship 2000
- 4 Settlers
- 5 Oscar
- 6 Naughty Ones
- 7 Assassin Special Edition
- 8 Apocalypse
- 9 D/Generation
- 10 Disposable Hero

AMERICAN TOP 10 COMPLIMENTS OF

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COMING

AGZ's updated list of 150 upcoming Amiga games. Titles in bold have just been released.



BENEFACTOR



BUBBLE 'N' SQUEAK



BUMP 'N' BURN



DREAMWEB



DRAGONSTONE



FLIGHT OF THE AMAZON QUEEN

GAME	COMPANY	FORMATS	DESCRIPTION
Adrenaline Factor	Mirage	CD32	Science fiction adventure game
Aggression	Bloodhouse	AGA CD32	New shoot 'em up from Finland
Akira	I.C.E.	ECS AGA CD32	Manga movie licensed game
Aladdin	Virgin	AGA CD32	Gorgeous cartoon platformer
Alien Breed 2: Tower Assault	Team 17	ECS AGA CD32	All new aliens and 50 new levels
All Terrain Racing	Team 17	ECS	Isometric buggy racing game
Ambermoon	Thalion	ECS	RPG sequel to Amberstar
Arcade Pool	Team 17	CD32	Pool with real pool hall audio
Armour Geddon 2	Psygnosis	ECS	Multi-vehicle 3D combat game
B-29	RAW Entmt.	ECS	B-29 flight simulator
Banshee	Core Design	AGA CD32	Did you like SWIV? Get this!
Battle Isle 2	Kompart	AGA	Strategy/combat sequel
Bazooka Sue	Krisalis	CD32	Could this be Joe's sister?
Benefactor	Psygnosis	ECS	Lemmings meets Loderunner
Benjamin and the Alien	Bloodhouse	AGA	Monkey Island type adventure
Big End	Supervision	AGA CD32	Isometric 256-color racing game
Big Sea	Krisalis	ECS	Trading game similar to Patrician
Biosphere	Bullfrog	AGA CD32	God sim from the god experts
Black Gold	Krisalis	ECS	Could this involve oil?
Blues Bros. Jukebox Adv.	Titus	ECS	Blue Brothers platform sequel
Body Blows	Team 17	AGA	Now with 256-color backgrounds
Breach 3	Impressions	ECS AGA	Strategy game sequel
Brian the Lion	Psygnosis	CD32	Platform game from Beast team
Bubble and Squeak	Audiogenic	AGA CD32	Two character platform antics
Bump 'N' Burn	Grandslam	ECS CD32	Mario Kart style gameplay
Burntime	Kompart	ECS AGA CD32	Adventure in a hostile world
Cannon Fodder	Virgin	CD32	Lemmings meets Syndicate on CD
Cannon Fodder 2	Virgin	ECS	More war - what is it good for?
Casino Vegas	Beyond Ent.	ECS	Gambling without real money!
Clockwiser	Rasputin	ECS	Puzzle game with 100 levels
Clue	Neo	ECS	Mystery adventure from Germany
Creation	Bullfrog	CD32	Three-dimensional god game
Cyberspace	Empire	ECS	Cyberpunk 3D adventure game
Cyberwar	SCI	CD32	CD-only graphics extravaganza
D-Day	Impressions	ECS	Strategic D-Day simulation
Darkseed	Cyberdreams	CD32	Talking update to horror game
Daughter of Serpents	Millennium	CD32	Long-delayed adventure title
Dawn Patrol	Empire	ECS	Rowan Software flight simulator
Death Masque	Apache	ECS AGA CD32	Doom-style blast for 1 or 2 players
Dennis and Gnasher	Alternative	ECS CD32	Full motion video cartoon game
Detroit	Impressions	ECS AGA	Rule the automotive industry
Diggers 2	Millennium	CD32	The little guys keep on digging
Dragonstone	Core Design	ECS	Isometric RPG - Darkmere sequel
Dreamweb	Empire	ECS AGA	Cyberpunk adventure game
Dungeon Master 2	Interplay	ECS CD32	RPG with artificial intelligence
Elite 2.5: First Encounter	Gametek	ECS	Stand-alone prequel to Frontier
Embryo	Black Legend	ECS	3D flight simulator
Evasive Action	Mindscape	CD32	Dogfight with a variety of planes
Exile	Audiogenic	CD32	Adventure rewritten for CD32
FIGP 2	Microprose	ECS AGA CD32	Hope and pray for this 3D racer
Ferrari: Race of Champions	System 3		Lotus-style racing simulation
Fields of Glory	MicroProse	ECS	Historical battle simulation
FIFA Intl. Soccer	EA	ECS	Super soccer console conversion
Fist	Supervision	CD32	Role playing game for CD32
Flight of the Amazon Queen	Renegade	ECS AGA CD32	Monkey Island style adventure
Flying Circus	Empire	AGA CD32	Another flight simulation
Formula One	Krisalis	ECS	Racing management simulation
Genesis	Flair	CD32	Dawn of time adventure
Guardian	Acid	AGA CD32	Starfox-inspired 3D combat
Gulp	I.C.E.	ECS CD32	Lemmings-style game with fish
Harold The Hairy Hermit	Rasputin	ECS AGA CD32	The title pretty well sums it up
Herewith the Clues	Domark	CD32	Detective game for CD32
Inferno	Ocean	CD32	3D stunner from makers of TFX
Ishar 3	Daze	ECS	Third installment of the RPG
Jungle Book	Virgin	AGA CD32	Cartoon platformer
Jungle Strike	Ocean	CD32	Sequel to Desert Strike
Kid Chaos	Ocean	ECS AGA CD32	Platformer features Neanderthal
King of Thieves	Team 17	AGA CD32	Similar to Defender of the Crown
King Pin	Team 17	ECS CD32	Ten pin bowling simulation
King's Quest 6	Sierra	ECS	32-color adaptation of PC game
Kingdoms of Germany	Krisalis	ECS	Sequel to Vikings
KTM Motocross	Renegade	ECS AGA CD32	Motorbike racing game
Kult of Speed	EA	ECS	Similar to Mario Kart
Lemmings 3	Psygnosis	ECS	DMA design's third time around
Lilil Divil	Gremlin	CD32	Cartoon-quality adventure game

SOON

ECS GAMES RUN ON ALL
AMIGAS, BUT AGA GAMES
REQUIRE AN A1200/4000.

We have *no clue* to the exact date when any of these will be released! Waiting is hell, eh?

GAME	COMPANY	FORMATS	DESCRIPTION
Lost in Eden	Virgin	CD32	Do battle with dinosaurs in 3D
Lords of the Realm	Impressions	ECS	Strategy game like Kingmaker
Magic Carpet	Bullfrog	CD32	Fly over fractal-based landscapes
Magician's Castle	Psygnosis	ECS	Invisible hero (with shoes/gloves)
Marvin's Marvellous Adv.	21st Century	CD32	Mario style platform antics
Megamorph	Psygnosis	CD32	Arcade game with puzzle elements
Megarace	Mindscape	CD32	Racing game with scenery on CD
Micro Machines 2	Codemasters	ECS CD32	Miniature racing game sequel
Mighty Max	Ocean	AGA	Shock! Another platform game
Mongol Commander	RAW Entmt.	ECS	Step aside, Genghis Khan
Mr. Magoo	Millennium	ECS AGA CD32	Lovable cartoon platformer
Mutant League Hockey	Ocean	ECS	Brutal Football on ice
MysterX	Millennium	ECS AGA CD32	Good-looking martial arts game
NHL Hockey	Ocean	ECS	Yes! A sports game for Amiga!
Novastorm	Psygnosis	CD32	Microcosm sequel with gameplay
Operation G2	Psygnosis	ECS	First-person arcade adventure
Overlord	Virgin	ECS	Rowan Software flight simulator
Paranoia	AGE	ECS AGA CD32	12MB of rendered terror, anyone?
PGA Euro Tour	Ocean	ECS	PGA Tour Golf pseudo-sequel
P.I.D.	Terramarque	ECS	Private detective racing game
Pinball Illusions	21st Century	AGA CD32	Multi-ball pinball sequel
Pinball World	21st Century	AGA CD32	Fourth pinball game in the series
Pinkie	Millennium	ECS CD32	Cute character in a platform game
Powerdrive	US Gold	ECS	Isometric rally racing
Psycho Pinball	Codemasters	CD32	More pinball action with 5 tables
Putty Squad	System 3	AGA CD32	Putty sequel with elastic hero
Quik	Titus	ECS	Platform game w/o Nestle's license
Raiden	US Gold		Shoot 'em up action
Reunion	Grandslam	ECS AGA CD32	Space adventure game
Rise Of The Robots	Mirage	ECS AGA CD32	Fighting game with 3D robots
Robinson's Requiem	Daze/Simarils	AGA CD32	Dinosaur adventure game
Ruff 'N' Tumble	Renegade	ECS AGA CD32	Smart-looking platform game
Sensible Golf	Virgin	ECS	The Sensible team tackles golf
Sensible Soccer Intl.	Renegade	ECS	Updated for World Cup '94
Sensible World of Soccer	Renegade	ECS CD32	Soccer sequel with tons of features
Seventh Sword Of Mendor	Grandslam	ECS AGA	Role-playing adventure game
Shaq Fu	Ocean	ECS	Shaquille O'Neal in a beat 'em up?
Shenandoah	Black Legend		Shoot 'em up game
Sim City 2000	Mindscape	AGA	AGA-only sequel to Sim City
Simon the Sorcerer	Adventuresoft	CD32	Professional voice-overs added
Simon the Sorcerer 2	Adventuresoft	ECS AGA CD32	Adventure game sequel
Skeleton Krew	Core Design	AGA CD32	Isometric blast like Chaos Engine
Skidmarks	Acid	CD32	New tracks, new cars - killer game
Skitchin'	Ocean	ECS	Road Rash on rollerblades
Soup Trek	Krisalis	ECS	Star Trek parody game
Space Academy	Mindscape	CD32	D/Generation sequel on CD only
Space Checkers	Black Legend	ECS	Er, checkers in space?
Speedball 2	Renegade	CD32	Fantastic future sport - enhanced!
Spherical Worlds	Black Legend	ECS	Shoot 'em up Marble Madness
Spud Boy	Apache	AGA CD32	Dan Quayle licensed platformer?
Strikes 'N' Spares Pro	Beyond Ent.	ECS	Enhanced version of bowling game
Super Loopz	Audiogenic	ECS	Sequel to the puzzle game Loopz
Super Stardust	Team 17	AGA CD32	256-color Asteroids with attitude
Superfrog	Team 17	CD32	The frog is back in 32 bits
Suez '73	RAW Entmt.	ECS	Based on the board game
Syndicate	EA/Bullfrog	CD32	Hi-res version of cyberpunk game
TFX	Ocean	AGA CD32	The ultimate flight simulator?
Top Gear 2	Gremlin	ECS AGA CD32	SNES conversion of Lotus game
Tong Dynasty	Supervision	CD32	Arcade adventure game
Traps 'N' Treasures	Krisalis	ECS	Platformer reminiscent of Yo! Joe!
Troll Islands	Millennium	ECS AGA CD32	Another Trolls license platformer
Turbo Trax	Kompart	ECS AGA CD32	Overhead racing game
Twilight 2000	Empire	ECS AGA	Combat simulation from Empire
UFO: Enemy Unknown	Microprose	AGA	This could be The Game of 1994
Universe	Core Design	ECS	Sequel to Curse of Enchantia
Utopos	Bloodhouse	AGA	Shooter from Bloodhouse
Valhalla	Vulcan	ECS	First talking Amiga game
Virtua Chess	Titus	CD32	Like Virtua Racer, but with chess?
Vital Light	Millennium	ECS	Tetris meets the Rubik's cube
Wild Cup Soccer	Millennium	ECS	Sequel to Brutal Football
Wildfire	RAW Entmt.	ECS	Shoot 'em up with a save feature
World Cup Golf	U.S. Gold	CD32	Golf simulation developed for CD
Zeewolf	Asylum	ECS	3D helicopter shoot 'em up
Zonked	Rasputin	ECS CD32	Science fiction platform game
Zool 3	Gremlin	ECS AGA CD32	You knew it was coming...



GUARDIAN



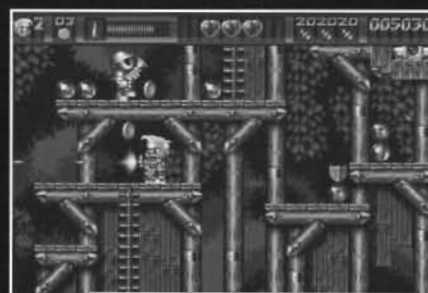
GULP



INFERNO



PUTTY SQUAD



RUFF 'N' TUMBLE



SKELETON KREW



FOR OUR READERS

A GUIDE TO OUR REVIEWS

Our reviewers are truly devoted. They play games until their hands get raw and blistered or until their minds go numb. (For some of us that's about five or six seconds.) Each reviewer then assigns a grade to the game he or she has so painstakingly tested.

To maintain some consistency, each grade is evaluated by the editors. Any major discrepancies between the grade and either the reviewer's text or the opinions of the editors result in debate, re-evaluation, and subsequent adjustment of the grade if needed. This discussion process usually takes place over a sausage and pepperoni pizza at about two in the morning. Take that for what you will. (No, we don't actually levitate over the pizza, I meant... oh, never mind.)

WHAT THE GRADES MEAN



A certified *Amiga Game Zone* hit and a must buy. All gamers should add this to their collection immediately. Violators will be arrested by The Zone police.



An above average game. It is well-designed, but has a few minor problems or does not have mass appeal. Fans of the genre, however, will be very pleased.



Pretty darn average. Nothing to set it apart from others like it. Players interested in this type of game may want to take a peek, though.



Below average. An accident just waiting to happen. Loaded with problems, and only for those dedicated gamers with a masochistic streak.



Forget it. Give this kind a swift three-fingered salute. Buy it only if you're curious, wealthy, and have nothing better to do with your life.

AMIGA
GAME ZONE

THE EUROCHARTS

Listed below are the games reviewed in this issue of *Amiga Game Zone* that have been rated by at least two of the top five Euromags. Their ratings are based on a 100% scale, but frankly we can't differentiate between an 84% and an 86%. Keep in mind that the averages can be misleading since it only takes one extreme rating to distort the overall score. We feel that these charts - in addition to our own reviews - will provide you with an accurate picture of how the industry regards a game.

Game Title	Publisher	Amiga Action	Amiga Format	Amiga Power	CU Amiga	The One	Average
Arcade Pool	Team 17	87	94	60	81	82	80.8
Assassin Special Edition	Team 17	80	87	79	80	92	83.6
Beavers CD ³²	Grandslam	84	67	53	-	-	68.0
Beneath a Steel Sky	Virgin	92	94	86	95	93	92.0
Brutal Football	Millennium	87	77	88	79	88	83.8
Brutal Football CD ³²	Millennium	82	81	78	83	-	81.0
Campaign 2	Empire	90	79	51	81	80	76.2
Chuck Rock 2 CD ³²	Core Design	91	79	64	84	89	81.4
Cool Spot	Virgin	82	78	85	61	84	78.0
Cyberpunks	Core Design	78	75	70	-	53	69.0
Diggers AGA	Millennium	-	91	72	-	76	79.7
Elfmania	Renegade	89	92	61	93	91	85.2
F1	Domark	80	84	90	84	90	85.6
Fury of the Furries CD ³²	Mindscape	86	80	80	83	90	83.8
Global Domination	Impressions	84	77	67	-	-	76.0
Goblins 3	Sierra	84	80	77	53	80	74.8
Kingmaker	US Gold	81	78	-	23	67	62.3
Lamborghini Challenge	Titus	85	79	74	88	83	81.8
Legacy of Soracil	Gremlin	83	83	80	83	74	80.6
Lemmings CD ³²	Psygnosis	85	92	73	-	-	83.3
Magic Boy	Empire	80	83	37	80	79	71.8
Mean Arenas	Ice	82	76	-	-	81	79.7
Micro Machines	Codemasters	83	90	88	89	89	87.8
Overdrive	Team 17	83	74	46	83	83	73.8
Perihelion	Psygnosis	84	75	77	-	82	79.5
Premiere CD ³²	Core Design	71	83	77	-	73	76.0
Skidmarks	Acid	90	90	78	92	88	87.6
Soccer Kid AGA	Krisalis	93	93	85	-	93	91.0
Star Trek 25th AGA	Interplay	90	50	62	86	83	74.2
Striker CD ³²	Gremlin	71	58	-	-	75	68.0
Summer Olympix CD ³²	Flair	-	46	-	-	77	61.5
T2: The Arcade Game	Virgin	71	73	57	90	84	75.0
Theme Park AGA	Elec. Arts	91	-	-	93	-	92.0
Total Carnage AGA	ICE	68	43	10	-	42	40.8
Ultimate Body Blows CD ³²	Team 17	90	90	86	84	81	86.2
Zool 2 AGA	Gremlin	82	90	87	-	63	80.5
Zool 2 CD ³²	Gremlin	82	87	87	-	90	86.5

1993 GAME OF THE YEAR



The votes are in! The 15 top vote-getters in the 1993 *Amiga Game Zone* Game of the Year reader poll are listed to the right. Chaos Engine took top honors by a wide margin, possibly due to its three different versions (ECS, AGA, and CD³²). Flashback just edged out Hired Guns and Frontier. And two very similar games, Cannon Fodder and Syndicate, had almost the same number of fans. Our readers sure know their games, as there wasn't a questionable pick in the entire list!

One area we didn't cover adequately when listing all the 1993 games was the rich field of public domain and shareware titles. Thanks to those who listed titles like Scorched Tanks, Megaball AGA, Nethack, Galaga Deluxe, and Mine Runner.

Of course, some entries had to be disqualified. A few were late, but we know how that goes. The most frequently disqualified entry was Pinball Fantasies – although a great game, only the AGA and CD³² versions were released in 1993. It still placed respectably, though. And, erm, Zool, Street Fighter 2, Elite, and Monkey Island were all released well before 1993. Next time we have a contest, read the rules, Homer! Oh yeah, someone listed Settlers but admitted to have never played it! If you would have kept quiet, your vote would have counted! Doh!

In addition to listing their five favorite Amiga games of 1993, contestants could pick any Amiga game ever published as a potential prize. We received some interesting choices, but ultimately we just drew five entries at random and awarded winners their chosen game. ■

1 Chaos Engine

2 Flashback

3 Hired Guns

4 Frontier

5 Cannon Fodder

6 Syndicate

7 Lemmings 2

8 Dune 2

9 Pinball Fantasies

10 Desert Strike

Stardust (tie)

12 Alien Breed 2

13 Lost Vikings

Settlers (tie)

15 Gunship 2000

CONTEST RESULTS



THE FIVE WINNERS

BUBBA 'N' STIX

Eric Hull
Lantance, FL

CHAOS ENGINE CD³²

Alex Thompson
Hastings, NY

RACTER

Jeff Ernes
Fremont, CA

SHANGHAI

Shane Hebert
New Iberia, LA

SYNDICATE

David Bradley
Champaign, IL

THE FIVE MOST WANTED GAMES

1 SETTLERS

2 SYNDICATE

3 BENEATH A STEEL SKY

4 TFX

5 CHAOS ENGINE

THE FIVE COOLEST NON-WINNERS

ARCHON 1 & 2

BLAZEMONGER!

EXILE

MINDWALKER

RETURN TO ZORK

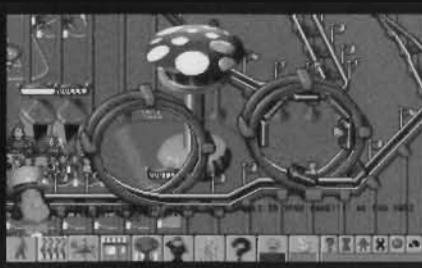
JETSTRIKE CONTEST WINNER

Thanks to everyone who entered the Jetstrike contest from last issue. We especially liked the paper plane entry and the story about the pilot who mistakenly used an air-to-air missile on an air-to-surface target! The winner was Dan Stockelman of Dallas, TX. Dan receives a free copy of Jetstrike from Seascope Software.



BULLFROG TAKES THE WORLD BUILDER CONCEPT TO DIZZYING HEIGHTS IN...

THEME PARK



The last time I went to a good Theme Park, I never really thought about the amount of litter in the park or the number of bathrooms. I didn't care that I had to wait almost half an hour to go on a ride that took less than two minutes, and it never even fazed me to pay three bucks for a hot dog. I was having fun, so I had no reason to stop to think about the inner workings of the park itself. And I realize now that someone had to design that park so I wouldn't ever worry about any of those details. The key to a truly "great" amusement park is that it has to be as convenient to the user as possible. And the more unobtrusive the layout of the rides and shops, the more readily the visitors will part with their money.

By now, I hope you've tried our Theme Park coverdisk. What? You haven't? Are you a dullard? Everyone knows that a Theme

Park must be *experienced*, and mere words can never do it justice. But I'll give it a try.

Theme Park thrusts you into the role of park designer, manager, and accountant. The game is entirely open-ended. You make all the decisions – from the placement of rides and the length of lines to the hiring of staff and price of admission. And your job gets more and more complex as the game progresses. There are more rides to research, more stocks to track, and many more people to keep happy. If pressed to find a drawback to the game, I would have to say it sometimes becomes too much to handle for just one person. After a park reaches a certain size, it would be nice to have an assistant manager who could change the status of rides and shops on his own (using your advice, of course – after all, you are the boss).

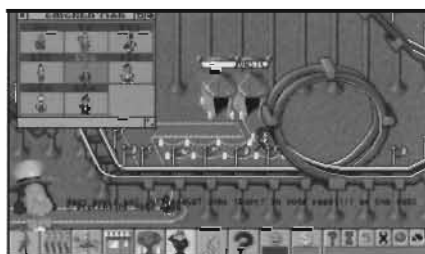
The learning curve is implemented appropriately throughout the game. You can choose sandbox, sim, or full level at the beginning of the game. Sandbox level is for beginners – all the financial and research aspects of the game are done automatically. Sim level gets you involved in research, and full level adds the financial options to the game. At the full level, you can even start buying stock in other parks! As you become more accustomed to the interface and the concerns of visitors, you can opt for a more challenging simulation.

Of course, you have to consider many different factors when designing your park. Place a food stand too close to the exit of a roller coaster and major spewage will ensue (I'm serious! Get that handyman over there quick to clean up the mess!) You'll also have to contend with rides breaking down and adverse weather conditions. Hiring more mechanics will keep the rides from exploding, and a well-placed entertainer (love that Chicken Man) will hand out umbrellas to visitors when it starts raining.

One aspect of the AGA version of Theme Park that you aren't able to see in the ECS demo is the incredible detail in the

graphics. Every ride looks better, and each shop is designed to resemble its product. For example, the Mr. Whippy Ice shop looks like a big sundae, not just a shack with a sign on it.

Theme Park AGA comes on four disks, two of which are used for the cheesy intro animation. It can be installed on a hard drive if you have at least 2.5MB of memory, and play is much smoother if you have an accelerated Amiga. There are so many different configurations of rides and shops to try that you'll soon become attached to your park. I often found myself playing into the wee hours of the night trying to upgrade my park and anticipate every little need and desire of all my park's visitors. Bullfrog has continued its tradition of highly involving world builder games, and Theme Park is destined to become a classic. ■ GM



WHAT ABOUT THE ECS VERSION?

A STANDARD ECS version of Theme Park will follow the AGA release by about three weeks. However, it has been cut down to 16 colors, similar to our coverdisk demo. The ECS version will only have about half the number of rides (13 vs. 22), shops (10 vs. 17), features (5 vs. 19), staff (4 vs. 8), and visitors (2 vs. 4) to choose from. The quick menu option and the intro have also been removed (no big loss). While this may sound like ECS owners are being shortchanged, Bullfrog should be commended for porting such a complex game to the A500. The programmers did manage to keep the most important part of the game – playability.

THEME PARK AGA

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ £35 (\$50)

VIDEO

1.3/2.0/3.0

NTSC

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

PROTECTION

YES

NONE

Hey Bullfrog –
rush a copy of
this game over
to EuroDisney!



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STAR TREK

THE AMIGA GENERATION

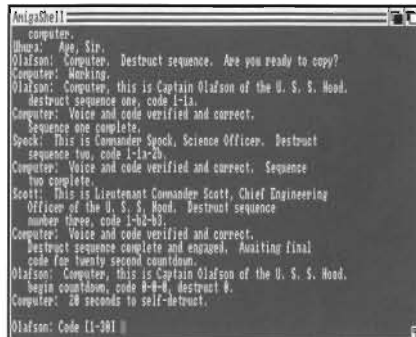
Good things come to those who wait. A trite thing to say, I suppose, and maybe pathetic to anyone who's ever seen an opportunity and seized it, but grimly accurate with respect to Star Trek games and the Amiga. It's difficult to believe that it took eight years, but Interplay's Star Trek: 25th Anniversary is the first commercial Trek game for our favorite computer.

In some respects, it was inevitable. Star Trek was made for the computer. With an abundance of strong and lively characters, a range of slithery enemies, untethered setting and technology, it is an adventure game maker's fondest dream: an open-ended, silly-putty universe. It can be anything you want it to be, and, on its voyages through the star system Amiga, Star Trek has been many entertaining things. That none of them were commercial can be viewed as merely a technicality.

Naturally, what the full-price market is slow to supply typically appears in freely-distributable form by osmosis, licenses notwithstanding. Public domain and shareware Star Trek games began to emerge within months of the machine's birth. Once you start looking, they turn up everywhere. I count around 30 to date, and the progression roughly parallels that of Amiga games in general: graphically rudimentary stuff written in BASIC or compiled BASIC and founded mainly on what had come before (1985-87); a golden age of epics (1988-90); a plateau of interesting but disparate odds, ends, and cancellations (1991-92); reaching a summit only on the cusp of eclipse (1993-94) with multi-player and online games and ST:25. What could be next? Is there a next? It's an interesting question.

Tracking the Enterprise in software for the chronology that follows proved to be a lengthy and occasionally frustrating mission all on its own. PD games from 1985 to 1987 often did not follow the current docs-required-sir dictum. Some of the dates are just guesses, based on upload and file dates. Some of the authors are unknown. And who can say whether this unannotated prehistoric AmigaBASIC game is freeware, shareware or underware? Not me. Hence the PD/SW label (which typically means the game's source suggests it is freely distributable, but that distribution rules weren't specifically addressed).

Mr. Sulu, take us out of orbit.



★ TREK 73

(adapted by Jeff Okamoto and Peter Lee; 1985; PD/SW)

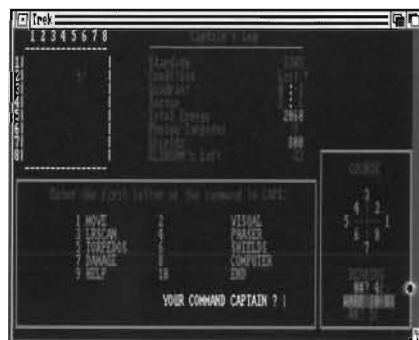
Best evidence suggests this was the first Star Trek game on the block. It is named for the date of its original mainframe version, and it is more influential than you can know. Played within the shell, this ASCII-based game of tactical starship combat gives you James T. Kirk's job as captain of the Enterprise – the usual business of flying around the galaxy dispatching X Klingons in Y days – but with a pleasantly wide variety of non-standard variants. (You can even try out the “Corbomite Maneuver”).

True, mundane tasks here are a bit more complex than they ought to be. And, true, the double-spaced command set (which can't fit in a standard Amiga screen) is intrinsically awkward. But the presence of identifiable characters who appear to talk to you (even if they're just passing on standardized info) lends the game a certain flare – unlike other generic Trek games which could be called simply “Tactical Space Combat Game”.

★ SUPER STAR TREK

(uncredited; circa 1985-86; PD/SW)

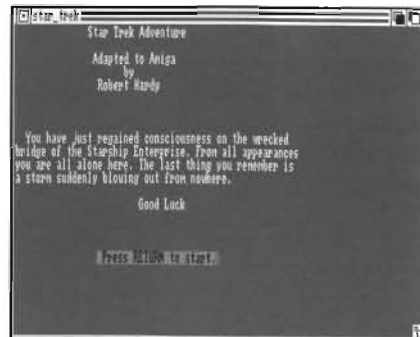
Um, Tactical Space Combat Game. Written in Microsoft BASIC, this is a perfectly pleasant rendition of the basic Trek strategy game – without the frills and bubbly personality of Trek 73, but with an appealing simplicity and directness of approach (also known as “crudeness”). However, if you were to change a couple of names here and there, you could wring the Star Trek element out of it entirely.



★ TREK

(Dave McNeel and Dave Sonnabend; October 1986; PD/SW)

Well, this is getting to be like talking about the difference between Brit platformers. This IBM-to-Amiga conversion is essentially a more-than-usually-colorful compiled BASIC rendition of Super Star Trek. More than usually fun, too, as the authors have made creative use of text-based characters and provided online docs, a friendly environment, and most notably, clever use of the ship's computer for a range of functions.



★ STAR TREK ADVENTURE

(adapted by Robert Hardy; 1986-87; PD/SW)



None of the Star Trek text adventures (The Kobiyashi Alternative, The Promethean Prophecy, and First Contact) were ported to the Amiga, and so this small (11K) tale, written in AmigaBASIC, achieved one-of-a-kind status by default. You're set down on the ruined bridge of the Enterprise amid messages reporting orbital decay and an abandoned ship and given not quite five hours to sort things out.

It's rough-edged, and typing "go sick-bay" may well elicit the haiku-like "turbolift blocked spacesuit with pockets". But the time element gives it an urgency, and the absence of graphics proves to be something of an advantage. You can't help but fill them in from your own memories.

★ STAR TREK: THE FINAL FRONTIER

(Steve Berry; 1988; freeware)

No. Not what you're thinking. This is very much the traditional Trek strategy game – a conversion of Berry's game for the IBM 370 – and notable mainly as one of a thimbleful of one-player AREXX games. (The only other I've seen is a miniature golf game. Most are multi-player online games for the Baud Bandit BBS system.) It will turn up again in a different form later in this story. In this form, it's a nice Tactical Space Combat Game in shades of gray, but nothing particularly new.



★ STAR TREK: THE GAME

(Eric Gustafson; 1988; freeware)

Fascinating, captain. This three-disk, the largest of all released PD Treks, set off a whole era of Star Trek spectaculars on the Amiga. It's essentially a freeware clone of the commercial graphic adventure The Rebel Universe for the Atari ST. (Hence, I suppose, the intro's admonition to zap the disks should a commercial version surface.)

The years have not been kind to The Game. Gustafson's reach here clearly exceeded his grasp, and this basic point-and-click adventure is amateurish in many respects, graphically blurry (the crew pics are in low-res HAM), and thin on play value – especially in the perpetual combat.

But at least he made the effort to reach, and when you consider the primitive state of PD at the time and that this was essentially a one-man project under The Director, it's a fairly remarkable achievement. The best part is when you beam down to a planet, you can consult with different members of the crew for advice on how to get around obstacles.

Notes: There's a flawed warped archive of disk 3 in circulation (doesn't that sound like something Scotty might cry out in a crisis?) and a fix that corrects it. Gustafson was planning a version 2.0 with three-dimensional animations and more and better sound and graphics. It's advertised in the intro as "coming soon", but seems never to have surfaced.



★ STAR TREK: THE GAME

(Jim "Jimbo" Barber; 1989; shareware)

Now there's a good name to know. Barber was the architect of several fine shareware games for the Amiga in the late '80s and early '90s, including Mission: Moonbase (a lunar lander game) and a very playable (if somewhat crashable) Chinese Checkers.

This second "big" Trek game is Barber's crowning achievement. It is attractive, it is technologically adept, it plays quickly, and it uses logical, accessible controls and gadgets and nicely digitized sounds. It has a great mouse pointer, too. And there's a whole online encyclopedia (well, O.K., an online booklet) to read during those especially long inter-stellar trips.

On the other hand, it's also a comparatively formal, dispassionate exploration of the Trek ethos. Still good work, but better things were to follow.

Notes: I only recently discovered that there's an upgrade available for this game. (I've seen it only on Gramma's BBS – a huge and fascinating bulletin-board system in Washington with a wide range of unique game files.) If you're running ST:TG on an A1000 and the game locks up when entering orbit around a starbase, you may want to seek it out; it consists of a new executable and a smaller starbase graphic.



★ STAR TREK: THE GAME

(Tobias Richter; 1989; shareware)

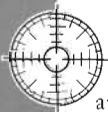
Officially, it's "The Game" yet again, but this production number from Tobias Richter has been variously re-christened "Ultimate Trek" and "Tobias Trek" by devoted players to distinguish it from rivals to the ST:TG title, and the new names have stuck to it like a tribble to grain.

It manifestly deserves the distinction. Get it. Really. Get it. Short of ST:25 – and not that much short – this shareware classic is easily the best and most playable Trek game ever to appear on the Amiga. Five years has scarcely put a dent in its appeal.

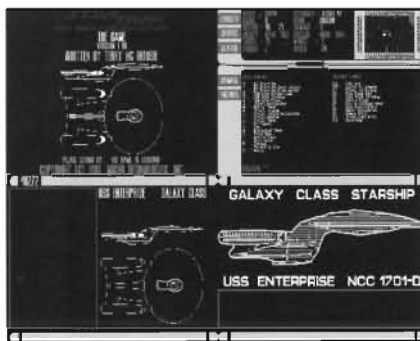
It seems much larger than the two disks it inhabits. Most Enterprises are just a bridge and so much ballast. This one has the sick bay and engineering section you'd expect, but also a cargo deck (with a range of cargo), a hangar deck (with shuttles to pilot), and an officer's lounge where you can assess the crew's morale and check your backlog of missions. And it's the only released game that makes use of the turbolift or that bothers to identify the incidental decks.

That's just the start. Combat is more fun than in any game except ST:25 (where it's nearly perfect), and tactical movement and targeting are handled intelligently. The inter-ship communication is not only quasi-realistic, but lends a cumulative sense of being in a lively universe that is going on about its own business as you go about yours. (Among the meaningful messages you'll receive on the bridge are Post-It notes on engineering meetings and non-essential repairs.) You and the Enterprise exist more palpably here than in other games, and that means that once you get involved, you stay involved.

I'll leave the rest to your discovery. The only thing ST:TG is missing is some semblance of a story instead of merely a series of missions. I never got quite deep enough into the game to see if something really weird happens between the magnetic storms and the visitations by Romulans. Whether something happens or not, the feeling that it will, and can, is enough.



Notes: While Tobias Trek first appeared in PAL with German docs, there's a PatchNTSC version that works very nicely and an English translation of the rules and regulations. As a member of Agatron, Richter released at least two other PD games, Light Cycle 3D and Mad Race. (Pleasant at best, but not up to the level of his Trek game.) And he's done a lot of other non-game Star Trek-related work on the Amiga – most of it elaborate animations readily available from UK public-domain mail order houses. Since creating this masterpiece, he has gone on to the big time. Richter is using the Amiga to build the huge intro for Freelancer 2120 – Imagitec's forthcoming Doom-buster – and is now working full-time for the developer using a Silicon Graphics workstation.



★ ST:TNG THE GAME

(Terry McIntosh; 1989-91; shareware)

This is the last of the great epics. Here the early, combat-oriented PD Trek games reach their zenith. Two years and 55-plus revisions in the works, with the biggest icons you've ever seen, this game represents a shift in the weight of interest from the old series to the new one. This excellent hi-res game (the first of its ilk to approximate the excellent EGATrek from the IBM, to my thinking) essentially updates the old ASCII Trek games to a stylish new format. There's a radio, so the ships and planets you assault can taunt you; lots of ST:TNG-specific touches such as The Borg; online help; and a campaign-like feel. And it's all heavily annointed with a splendid array of digitized sounds and speech. (Wish the tactical map was point-and-click, though.)

And I wish I knew the end of the story. This might have been the Great Amiga Star Trek Game. In its prime, ST:TNG was widely disseminated, and various versions – typically the single-disk 1.47 and 1.55 and the two-disk 1.85 – have turned up on many BBSs, with promises of bigger and better to come. At various points, McIntosh's stated plans included Ultima-like exploration and specific support for the Paragon, Atredes, and Skypix BBS systems.

However, 1.85 would prove to be the

last public sighting of ST:TNG. A version 1.90 (pictured) *was* slated to surface in September 1991. To judge from the sample screens, this would have featured a new interface more like that of ST:TNG and perhaps also the transporter control promised in version 1.85.

But something seems to have intercepted the Enterprise, and 1.9 never graduated the academy. I've tried unsuccessfully to track McIntosh down on BBSs for a status report – eventually even sought to register the game to coax a reply. (The registered version is said to contain animations and a multi-player mode and, since it's compiled, is at least three times faster.) However, I'd had no response by press time. Best guess: ST:TNG has been decommissioned.



★ STAR TREK: THE ARCADE GAME

(Terry Johnston; 1989; shareware)

The arrival of Palace's Shoot 'Em-Up Construction Kit, and its subsequent availability in the U.S. as an Advantage cheapie, unleashed a whole horde of play-alike arcade games on an unsuspecting Amiga-owning public, and it was inevitable some of them would be Star Trek games. (We may not have seen the last of them yet, as you'll read below.)

The Arcade Game (it was usually uploaded as "Trek") plays better and is more original than many of those early entries. (It doesn't draw on the built-in tiles.) However, like many of its brothers, it's a bit too hard too early on and quickly turns into the usual shooting gallery mish-mosh.



★ TREK TRIVIA

(George Broussard; 1989-90; shareware)

Something a bit different here: a stylish trivia game. You're given a number of quatloos (currency of The Providers in the ST episode "The Gamemasters of Triskellion") and a set of 100 well-conceived multiple-choice questions. You lose a quatloo each time you get one wrong and gain one for every 10 you get right. Great fun, easy to use, and equipped with a spiffy little Enterprise at screen bottom which warps off when you quit.

Note: Unlike many Trek games, this one went through three generations, the latter two flush with music samples from the series. Volume one was shareware; nine more are available at \$2 a pop.



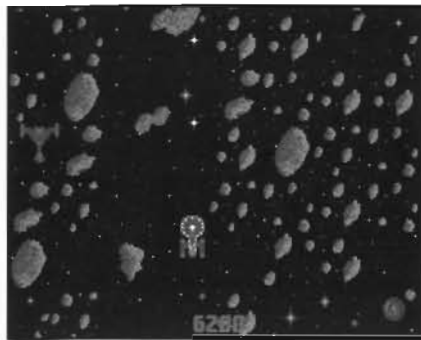
★ STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER

(Mindscape; circa 1990; unreleased)

The closest the Amiga would come to a commercial Star Trek game until Interplay brought out Star Trek: 25th Anniversary last December. Which isn't all that close. Alas, this wasn't finished (if indeed it was ever started) and is mentioned here mainly to satisfy the curiosity of people who still ask about it on the nets. Folks, it's dust. Though an PC version (pictured) was released (and an Amiga version announced), this hybrid of arcade and adventure never made the transition.

Why? Well. (Cough.) Because. I've never been able to get a real explanation from Mindscape. STV is now an ancient product in an industry where shelf life can number in weeks, and the people who would have supervised its construction aren't with the company anymore.

The PC version surfaced in 1989, which would have made an Amiga take likely for 1990 – too early for the game to have fallen victim to the softening of the U.S. Amiga games market. Logic suggests it was downed instead by some combination of mediocre gameplay and lack of marketing for what was pretty widely regarded as a miserable movie. The VGA version looked great, with crisp color photos of the stars, but mediocre action sequences took precedence over adventure. Then again, as Spock said, logic is a bunch of pretty flowers... "that smell *bad*." Or something like that.

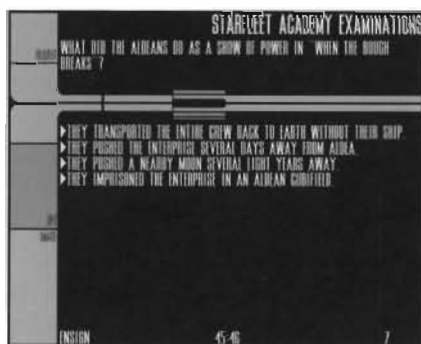


★ STAR TREK: THE ACTION GAME

(Stew Perkins; 1990; shareware)

The Arcade Game was essentially a standard SEUCK blaster with Star Trek graphics. The Action Game belongs to the second generation of SEUCK games, when authors got over the "Look, Ma" rush of being able to make a game and started bringing their creativity to bear. It starts off with a clever asteroid field level that immediately enshrines it in the pantheon of great SEUCK releases. (Yup, there are a few. Try Firefighter or Webz sometime.) Some of the asteroids can be blown up, and some can't, and, either way, you're moving inexorably forward ...

Unfortunately, that level of ambition isn't evident in the rest of the game, which is the usual hyperactive blastfest. But what a wonderful start.



★ ST:TNG TRIVIA CHALLENGE

(Gregory Epley; 1990-91; freeware)

Right up there with Tobias Trek, this is a *very* professionally done 400+ question trivia game founded on (duh) The Next Generation – and it's all the more impressive when you learn that its author is visually impaired.

I know, trivia games of themselves don't do much for me, either. But what's not to like? The title screen is an austere beauty.

The point-and-click interface is based on the Enterprise's art deco computer display, the multiple choice and true/false questions are thoughtful, the sounds come across clearly, the graphics are relatively sharp 16-color hi-res, and the whole thing just reeks of class and polish. Bravo. Charming touch: Epley assumes the persona of a Federation admiral. Downside: Epley's 50K doc file is way too elaborate for this idiot-proof game.

Notes: Epley was genuinely committed to this game, and three variations on NGTC would turn up on Fred Fish disks: the first-season database (June 1990), a second-season upgrade (June 1991), and a bug-fix release (August 1991). Epley indicated that a third-season database was in the works (evidently with a view to a February '92 release), and that he was contemplating an ST:TNG graphic adventure. But Paramount, in response to his renewed effort to shop the game with the company as a commercial product, informed him he was infringing on their copyright and asked him to remove Trivia Challenge from distribution. And that, sad to say, was that.

Note to Paramount: Look at the game and get this guy back on the case. I can imagine an expanded version of Trivia Challenge, with FMV sequences, doing well on any CD platform in the wake of Next Generation's demise.



★ ST:TNG THE MURDERMASTER

(Jason Chin/Aaron Schildkraut; 1990-92; PD/SW, unreleased)

This ambitious, Director-based project (undertaken by two New Yorkers) sadly appears never to have come to fruition. This sophisticated point-and-click graphic adventure, using images and anims culled from videotape, puts you in the catbird's seat on the Big E and sends you out into darkness to face... er, The Murdermaster, I suppose. I never learned what precisely that was. (It opens with a signal from what

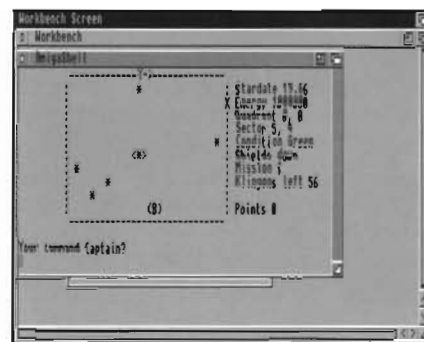
proves to be a giant derelict craft.)

It's always hard to judge a game by its baby pictures, and easier to be more enthusiastic than the final product warrants, but this one was looking especially good. A rough two-disk demo – demonstrating the functions of the eight principal officers – was posted to GENie in mid-1990. (It didn't include some of the more striking portions of the game, like the ability to take the turbolift to different parts of the ship.)

The game itself, on four disks and spreading, was even more promising and close to half complete. And it was being built in such an ambitious fashion: fashion as to accomodate future episode disks (plans called for the second to be a 24th Century Kobayashi Maru scenario).

But things seem to have fallen apart. The end-of-1990 delivery date slipped by. Chin, who was writing the story as an ST:TNG novel, moved to Indiana to take a new job. Last I heard (circa 1991-92), Schildkraut was still planning to finish the project on his own under The Director 2, but I didn't have any luck contacting him for an update and have to guess the project has been set aside.

If so, it's a great shame. I saw the game in semi-working form and, even unfinished, it had a presence to it. When it was on, it was as though there was someone else in the room with you.



★ STAR TREK: THE FINAL FRONTIER

(various; 1991-93; PD/SW)

I *told* you it'd be back. Steve Berry's little AREXX game from 1988 steps into the limelight as a BBS-based Star Trek game for the Baud Bandit (1991), DLG Pro (1992), MAXs (1993), and Atredes (date unknown) BBS systems, gaining Romulans in lieu of Klingons along the way. As of late last summer, this game-by-committee (lots of people have had a hand in it) was still being updated.





★ STAR TREK: 25TH ANNIVERSARY

(late 1993; Interplay; commercial)

Well, you know about this already. It is pretty much this particular column's reason for being. It's a good adventure game, faithful both to the series and to its PC model, with pitch-perfect dialogue and PC-perfect graphics, if a bit rusty in mechanics of mouse and frame rate. (And I wish they'd let Spock and McCoy have lives. They follow old Kirk around like he owes them money.)

Note: Started life in 64 colors and disk-based and was later boosted to current state of the art (256-color AGA) and made HD-only, which accounts for some of the delay in its release. The "talkie" version, and the followup, Judgement Rites, have been mentioned as possibilities for the Amiga CD32. It looks as though they copped the Workbench icon straight from Tobias Trek.



★ KLONDIKE DELUXE AGA

(unknown; April 1994; PD/SW)

No, this isn't the product of a layout snafu at AGZ. It's another curiosity. This three-disk AGA solitaire game has at this writing inspired better than a dozen sets of custom card-back graphics, usually featuring women or fine art. This particular set – available only on CompuServe, to the best of my knowledge – replaces the '40s pinup girls with 53 handsome character pics from the original series. Very nicely done, and a change of pace from the usual Models, Inc. cardsets.



★ NETREK

(various; circa 1989-94; PD/SW)

I have to confess to being a little out of my depth here. This isn't just a game; it's a dimension. You could write a whole article just about the Netrek family tree. (Many variants exist that support different ways of hooking into the Internet: AS225, DNet, AmiTCP.)

It's essentially a multi-player Imperium Galactum using Star Trek references. It pits 16 players (sometimes more), arrayed in two teams of eight, against one another in a campaign to take over planets, build armies on them, and bomb other players off them. It works on a "client-server" system, which is to say that a host computer (the server) runs the game, while the players run clients that connect them to the host. And it is, by all accounts, deeply addictive.

The most recent Netrek client is called Paradise and is recommended for use with DNet 2.4 or later. (DNet is a program for networking two Amigas or an Amiga and a UNIX machine; it was written by Matt Dillon and is maintained by original DNetrek author Eric Mehlhaff.) Paradise has more features than the original: a random galaxy, stars, warp speed, and detailed full-color graphics that look fantastic. And Joe Rumsey, who has been working on the client since November, indicates that there are many features in the code that have not yet been implemented. (Even better things come to those who wait.)

Notes: Yes, the Paradise Joe Rumsey is the same fellow who wrote the original Amiga LodeRunner clone Mother Lode, Crazy Pipes, and BombSquad (and, just recently, a charming puzzle/platformer called Hot Air!) At press time, the Paradise client was up to version 2.38 (a 662K archive available via anonymous FTP from ocf.berkeley.edu or ftp.cis.ufl.edu).

THE FUTURE

This nine year voyage isn't over, but like the actors in the original Star Trek, it's moving a bit slower these days. According to a list of forthcoming CD32 titles posted regularly to Internet, Star Trek: 25th Anniversary was slated for mid-year release and the followup, Judgement Rites (which increases the size of the episodes, adds many a cut-scene animation, and an overarching theme), for late in the year.

However, a call to Interplay UK's press office determined that's less than definite. Neither title is firm yet, and if one is done, it's more likely to be 25th Anniversary (though they didn't discount the possibility of JR). And *that* was before CBM International migrated from its merely vaporous state into liquidity.

Nevertheless, Interplay's probably the best bet. Barring spectacular success of the CD32 in the U.S. (a nice fantasy under the present state of affairs), don't look for Star Trek: The Next Generation. Spectrum Holobyte, a major ST:TNG license holder, bailed on the Amiga in 1991-92 in the wake of Flight of the Intruder and, apart from Super Tetris (which was ported and released by MicroProse UK), has never looked back.

Paramount's own interactive entertainment wing has at least two substantial Star Trek products of its own for fall release on Macintosh and MS-DOS – the RPG Deep Space Nine: The Hunt and the ST:TNG Interactive Technical Manual. When I sat down with their marketing people last January, I dropped in a question about the CD32 and got back a polite but noncommittal answer to the effect that Paramount is "considering a number of platforms". Which at best probably means "We don't know yet" (the "yet" being an act of charity to the CD32), and it's difficult to be encouraged by a "We don't know" – especially when CBM's red alert can be expected to sometimes turn a "yes" into an "I don't know".

Then again, it is relatively early in the console's history. We're still in PortLand, the promise of future greatness still indistinct through the fog of liquidation and potential of the software greater than its substance. And, trite or not, as ever with Star Trek and the Amiga, good things come to those who wait.



STAR TREK

25TH ANNIVERSARY



It's been a long wait, but the Amiga version of Star Trek 25th Anniversary by Interplay has finally arrived. Although it should probably be called 27th Anniversary by now, it's essentially the same game that appeared on PCs years ago. That's the problem. It is a classic case of the low-effort PC port. While I'm not a big Trekkie, it's really the Star Trek theme that saves this game from being a total disaster.

Star Trek 25th really doesn't have just one single plot. Instead, Interplay took the innovative approach of splitting each mission up into separate episodes, each having its own opening similar to the old TV show. This way, the player experiences a sense of accomplishment after finishing every small mission instead of getting involved in a boring, drawn out, impossibly long quest.



There are two basic modes of play in this game. In the first, you are in control of the Enterprise, and in the second, you are in control of an away team. On the bridge of the famous starship, you assume the role of the steel-nerved, melodramatic Captain Kirk. He can call upon any member of the bridge crew to accomplish certain duties. For instance, Uhura can be asked to communicate with other vessels, Scotty can be told which part of the Enterprise to fix, and Spock... well, Spock just basically hangs around the bridge giving advice and various statistics. When Spock's library of knowledge runs out (which happens quite frequently) the ship's computer can be searched for various references on selected keywords.

With Chekov's aid, the Enterprise can not only warp to any location on the included star map, it can also be maneuvered while in close combat. Yet, when embroiled in an epic space battle, one will quickly find

that the Enterprise is really ill-suited for combat. It turns ever so slowly, damage seems to occur instantly yet takes forever to repair, and the standard phaser and photon torpedo combination seems a bit outdated compared to what many of the enemy fighters carry aboard.

Every mission requires an away team to beam down to a certain location, whether it be a semi-hostile planet's surface or the deck of a starship held hostage. Each team consists of Kirk, Spock, the eternally complaining McCoy, and the token ensign in the red shirt who always seems to get killed by that cleverly placed alien hiding behind a rock.

Using a set of icons, each member of the group can be used to perform different tasks such as talking, examining a room, walking around, and other typical adventure game duties. Also, each team is outfitted with standard starfleet issue equipment. The hand phaser, medical tricorder, medical kit, communicator, and scientific tricorder are all in your inventory at the beginning of each mission. Throughout the game different items can be collected, but the main inventory is reduced to the standard items at the beginning of each new episode.

Graphically, Star Trek 25th Anniversary is far from stunning. Despite the use of the AGA chipset, the visuals don't look much better than those found in most standard Amiga adventures. The character graphics often are reduced to a flickering mess when one crosses over another, and the animation leaves a lot to be desired in certain cases.

When in outer space combat, the game attempts to display the oncoming ships with Wing-Commander style scaled bitmaps. While they really aren't all bad, the motion is extremely choppy on anything slower than an A4000. As a result, when ships come up close to the Enterprise's viewing area, the game slows to a near stop.

The adventure portions of the game are also average at best. Most graphic adventure games these days seem to be just vehicles for hintbook sales, and Star Trek 25th is no exception. Some of the puzzles are really the type that would *have* to be looked up in a hintbook to solve. Also, the missions are

very short and there aren't enough of them. To top it off, the ending is quite anticlimactic. Why is it that most games have truly pathetic end sequences?

Star Trek 25th's sound is one of the good points, however. From the bleeping of the computers to the trademark matter transporter noise, the sounds from the old TV show are all present. The music is also well done, but frequently gets blocked out by the sound effects.



Star Trek 25th really isn't a totally bad game. Though the missions are short, the graphics are choppy, and the ending is awful, the Star Trek theme does save this game. People who have been watching the television show for decades will enjoy taking command of the Enterprise and ordering the familiar characters around the screen. While it should be a treat to Trekkies and casual fans of the show alike, the game has some major shortcomings. And compared to most of the better graphic adventures on the Amiga, you can't really say that Star Trek 25th goes where no game has ever gone before.

■ RB

STAR TREK 25TH ANNIVERSARY AGA

INTERPLAY ■ £35 (\$50)

VIDEO

1.3/2.0/3.0

NTSC

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

PROTECTION

REQUIRED

NONE

A mediocre adventure game made interesting by the Star Trek theme.





The year is 2070. Violence has taken over in the sports arena, and the fans are lovin' it. Welcome to Brutal Football.

All cheesy, "the future world is super-violent" introductions aside, Brutal Football by Millennium is a no holds barred version of football in the future. Football is sort of a loose term, since this game is more reminiscent of rugby, but without rules. You play a group of seven bare-chested, muscle-rippling Vikings that battle with other Viking, lizard, wild goat, or rhinoceros teams to claim the championship. The game offers league, single match, and knockout tournament modes, and there is a password facility. Two players can play head-to-head, or, if you prefer, the knockout mode sets up a single-elimination tournament for multiple players.



Actually, there are a few rules to Brutal Football. Each game lasts seven minutes. A team wins by either outscoring the opponent within the allotted time or by slaughtering six out of the seven members of the opposing team. Tie games are for wimps, so if the two teams are tied when time expires, they beat the hell out of each other to determine the winner. A team scores by getting the football into the opponent's goal by any means necessary. This usually entails running, kicking, and passing the football.

While snazzy running can score points, brute force is the core of this game. Players can punch and tackle other players, including their own teammates. In addition, each team has special abilities to assist in dispatching opposing team members. Vikings can stomp on fallen players,

lizards can breathe fire, and wild goats and rhinos can gore opponents with their horns. With each attack comes a gratifying spray of blood and a hole in the turf. While the blood does not stay around, the holes in the turf do. By the end of the match, the playing field looks like a battlefield after a serious shelling.



In addition to bare-hands combat, the playing field is littered with powerups and weapons of destruction. Players can pick up swords, shields, grenades, speedups, and various other powerups. But if a player's energy level gets too low, he can be decapitated (ouch!). Upon severance, the player's lifeless body slumps to the turf, and his head bounces away like a ball. Bodiless heads are so much like balls that players will often pick up a head as if it were the football. And, yes, it is great fun to pass around and kick a head, but alas, it doesn't score when thrown into the goal. (Maybe Millennium will imple-

ment these "header shots" in Wild Cup Soccer, the next game in the series. — Ed)

Brutal Football is a delight to play, especially in two-player mode. The gameplay is good, and the animations are hilarious. When I first started playing, I often had to concentrate to keep my laughing from affecting my performance. There is nothing quite like picking up a sword and proceeding to lop off the heads of everyone in sight, including your teammates! The computer opponent is challenging, and there are four divisions of six games each that you must plow through to claim the championship.

Now for the bad news. Brutal Football is not hard drive installable. In league mode, there is a locker room screen where you can "heal" your players with money earned from previous matches. Since you must wait while the locker room screen loads from the disk each time, this initially interesting scene soon becomes a nuisance.

Despite these gripes, Brutal Football is a good addition to any software collection, especially for sport game fans. The combination of hilarious animations and powerups and good gameplay make for a very appealing game. The difficulty and length of league mode and the side-splitting two-player mode will keep you coming back for more. But enough of this... I have to go bash some heads! ■ JL

BRUTAL SPORTS FOOTBALL

MILLENNIUM ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

1.3/2.0/3.0

NTSC

OK

HARD DRIVE

PROTECTION

NO

DISK-BASED

Horizontal Speedball 2 variant with a higher body count.



BRUTAL SPORTS FOOTBALL AGA

MILLENNIUM ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

1.3/2.0/3.0

NTSC

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

PROTECTION

NO

DISK-BASED

Bashing heads is even more fun in 256 colors.



SKY

painted by Watchmen artist Dave Gibbons (who also did the mini comic book included with the package) are quite good, despite the fact that they were ported down from the 256-color PC version. The graphics are complemented by realistic, detailed character and spot animations, but few of them are especially large. While there isn't any in-game music, Beneath a Steel Sky does feature lots of sound effects that, combined with futuristic graphics, work wonders for the game's atmosphere.

Unfortunately, Beneath a Steel Sky has a few implementation-specific problems. Though the game is compatible with 3.0, it apparently doesn't like the AGA chipset, so you must switch to ECS before running it. Even in ECS mode, a 15KHz screenmode is required, or the game's display will be garbled. Beneath a Steel Sky can't multitask (there's no good reason why), you can't quit the game without rebooting, and you can only restart when you die (unlike loading and saving). On top of that, pressing the restart button crashed my A1200. And what happened to screen scrolling? The PC version gets it – the Amiga version doesn't.

Although the Amiga version may have been shortchanged a bit (*this may be remedied in a rumored AGA version – Ed.*), Beneath a Steel Sky won't shortchange you if you're looking for quality adventuring. Even seasoned players will find some worthwhile gameplay in this excellent offering. As for the inevitable question... no, Beneath a Steel Sky doesn't quite dethrone the reigning kings of adventure, LucasArts' mighty Monkey Island 2 and Indiana Jones 4.

■ HV

BENEATH A STEEL SKY

VIRGIN ■ £35 (\$50)

VIDEO
NTSC

1.3/2.0/3.0
OK (NO A4000)

HARD DRIVE
YES

PROTECTION
MANUAL

Comes very close to the current adventure champs.



Spanning a whopping 15 disks, Beneath a Steel Sky is the largest floppy-based Amiga game ever. This mammoth cyberpunk graphic adventure is divided among 1300+ files representing about 9MB of data. Needless to say, playing from a hard drive is mandatory for those who want to retain their sanity. Installation time is a tedious 1½ hours, but it is well worth the trouble.

Beneath a Steel Sky tells the story of Robert Foster, the adopted son of the leader of a tribe of wasteland dwellers living in a post-apocalyptic future. One day, security forces from the powerful neighboring Union City arrive to kidnap Robert and destroy his home. But their helicopter crashes upon reaching the city, giving Robert a chance to escape.



Now the game begins. As Robert, you must find a way out of the city starting from a recycling plant near the crash site. While tackling that problem, you'll discover your true identity and a destiny that involves the future of Union City itself. You'll also have a handy robot sidekick named Joey to help you along the way. During play, the story takes a few interesting twists and turns, so I won't reveal any more to avoid spoiling it for you.

You won't have any problems using the very simple mouse-driven interface. Basically, pressing the left button directs

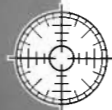
Robert to move somewhere or examine something, and pressing the right one makes him manipulate things in any way necessary. A pull-down icon panel displays all items in your inventory. There's no limit to what you can carry, so be sure to pick up everything that isn't nailed down, as nearly all of it is useful somehow.



Conversation is a key element of Beneath a Steel Sky. Often, you need to talk to someone to find out something to ask someone else. Moreover, there's plenty of incidental conversation that really isn't necessary, but it helps develop the story. Don't expect too much challenge here – you won't suffer any penalties by running through all the dialog choices. Fortunately, the dialog is crisply written with just the right touch of (occasionally dark) humor.

Game difficulty straddles the fence between easy and intermediate. On the one hand, it takes a good bit of effort to die, and it's impossible to get hopelessly stuck. On the other hand, solving puzzles frequently requires sound, logical thinking. For instance, to get past a door with a hand sensor, you need to find a glass with fingerprints and bring it to the biosurgeon so he can transfer those prints to your hand. Throughout the game, the storyline unfolds smoothly. I found the gameplay interesting all the way to the end, which satisfyingly wraps things up in dramatic fashion.

The 32-color full-screen backgrounds



FIGHTER DUEL PRO 2



Most modern day flight simulators are about state-of-the-art fighter jets loaded down with every possible electronic gadget known to science. Instead, Jaeger Software has gone back to the roots of the fighter plane – the planes of World War II. You won't find any missiles, afterburners, or even radar on these planes. In Fighter Duel Pro 2, you will have to rely on pure flying skill.

First, let's start with the basics. You can use any of 25 aircraft from the American, British, Russian, Japanese, or German air forces. These planes range from the P51 Mustang to the British Spitfire XIV to the German Jet Fighter ME-262. Very cool. There are three modes in which you can fly. Standard mode lets you do just about anything from training to combat. Wingman mode gives you a computer controlled wingman, and the two of you go up against two computer controlled foes. And the one that offers the most fun and action, tourney mode, has you flying against four computer controlled opponents. One thing I really liked about Fighter Duel Pro 2 is that you really don't have to learn how to land or take off. You can start at an altitude of your choosing if you want to skip right to the meat of the action with minimal fuss.

Among the strengths of this game are the optional features. Fighter Duel Pro 2 supports a full array of analog joysticks. This means that you could play with one of those awesome FlightSticks. Rudder pedals are also supported. You can even hook up

another Amiga through the parallel port and use it to get a constant rear view while you fly. Best of all, there is full serial support! You can call up a friend with a modem (or use a null-modem cable) to dogfight head to head. You can also work as a two plane team or even have one person fly and the other act as gunner (only on certain planes). This is what computer gaming is all about.



Realism in this game is given the highest priority. Every detail on each aircraft has been given meticulous attention. You can identify details on another plane while it is still very far away. This is important in order to anticipate which way to lead so you can get a shot at your opponent. The flight characteristics are as close to reality as I want to get. I often found myself "fighting the stick" like you see in some old WWII movies, trying to pull out of a hopeless dive and pushing the craft to its limit. These definitely aren't F-16s, folks.

This leads into what I thought were some shortcomings. Maybe I am just being picky, but would it hurt to put a quit back to main menu button in there somewhere? I

didn't like having to reboot every time I wanted to change missions, joysticks, or locations. You can, however, change just about everything else using the in-flight menu (which makes me wonder why the quit option was overlooked). Also, not a whole lot of detail is given to the ground other than the basic monuments that mark the combat zones. Admittedly, the shading for the sky is very realistic, and this is a *flight* simulator. Not everyone has an A4000, but I would like an option to see a little something other than dots on the ground.

The sound is quite soft. Enemy planes could be shooting at me, and I wouldn't even know it until I blew up. I had to crank my stereo up before I could hear sounds from the other planes. I would have really loved to have had radar on the plane. It may not be authentic, but it would make the game much more playable. (*And while you're at it, why not some heat seekers and stealth capabilities for this WWII plane, too?* – Ed) I am just not dexterous enough to fly and look out the side window to see which way the enemy dodged. The computer opponents seemed to be able to run rings around me at first (I guess they have been flying WWII aircraft longer than I have), but I learned to predict some of their tricks after a while.

In conclusion, Fighter Duel Pro 2 is a very challenging flight simulator. The aircraft are accurate to the era, so pulling fancy 9G turns just does not work. If you are a beginner, Fighter Duel Pro 2 might be daunting at first. But if you are into flight sims, I recommend this game. Best of all, get a friend to buy a copy. Then get ready to blow him out of the sky. ■ BB

FIGHTER DUEL PRO 2

JAEGER ■ \$59.95 (\$30 FOR UPGRADE)

VIDEO

1.3/2.0/3.0

NTSC

OK

HARD DRIVE

PROTECTION

YES

NONE

Highly realistic flight sim that self-enhances on AGA machines.



TARGET: JAEGER SOFTWARE

AGZ writer Ralph Barbagallo interviews Matt Shaw, president of Jaeger Software

Jaeger Software has provided us with some of the most successful Amiga flight simulators. The Fighter Duel series has become a standard in Amiga flight sims and has pushed the envelope in the areas of general performance, accuracy, and multiplayer functions. I recently had the opportunity to talk with the president of Jaeger, Matt Shaw. Here's what he had to say about the company's products and the Amiga gamesmarket in general.

Ralph Barbagallo: For years many have considered your simulators some of the most accurate when it comes to flight characteristics. What kind of research did you do for the Fighter Duel series?

Matt Shaw: The flight model in the FD series is based on a model developed by the driving force behind Fighter Duel, Dr. William Manders. It was highly optimized in order to run fast on a stock 7 MHz Amiga 1000, the original design platform of FD. One of the main goals of Fighter Duel was to make the simulator feel as much like flying as a computer could. This meant accurate aircraft response and a fast frame rate. Once this was accomplished, most any aircraft could be added in its simplest form by merely plugging the correct numbers into the flight model. Then individual aircraft flight behavior and idiosyncracies were added and adjusted.

RB: You seem to be having decent success in the U.S. market. Do you believe that there is still an opportunity for sales in the U.S. Amiga market through quality software with good support from the company? Do you have any predictions for the U.S. Amiga games market?

MS: We are having decent success in the U.S. market. Our distributors have referred to the Fighter Duel Pro series as the Microsoft Flight Simulator for the Amiga. Most games sell well for a month or two and then the sales fall off. Ours have sold steadily from release to release, which is about a year apart.

Most U.S. game developers have abandoned the Amiga in America. If they come out with an Amiga version, it is usually farmed out to a European software team. If the CD³² is successful, American compa-

nies may start development again. Unfortunately, they realize that the CD³² is no faster than a stock A1200, and its processor is not as fast as 486 chips. If there is money to be made in that market, developers will come back. It's no secret that we are working on a PC version of Fighter Duel Pro 2. We are having surprising success with a much better framerate and smoothness than we thought possible even on non local bus PCs. It is two-player compatible with the Amiga version. We adore the Amiga, and we will support it as long as we can. We have plans for an Amiga version of every future product.

showing in the U.S., as we feel that Fighter Duel Pro 2 appeals more to the U.S. market.

RB: While a lot of game companies seem to leave out the multiplayer features of their games such as head to head play via modem and networked play, a lot of Fighter Duel Pro's success seems to stem from the multiplayer aspect. Do you see a trend towards networked games in the future of electronic gaming?

MS: We do see a trend to networked games and head to head via modem. We have done quite a lot to the artificial intelligence of the enemy aircraft in Fighter Duel Pro 2. They actually fly the aircraft with the same limitations that you do and are very aggressive, but taking on your buddy via modem or null modem cable is still a whole different story. You can't boast about your abilities and yell back and forth with the computer pilots. There is a certain immediacy to actually being able to talk live, not by keyboard, to the opponent or partner in the air with you. This may never be possible with the larger multi-player network games, but it is possible with Fighter Duel Pro 2 if you get together and play over a null-

modem cable link or if you have two phone lines and use the modem. For some odd reason modem play is often left out of games ported to the Amiga. Our only thinking is that putting in the serial port code is not particularly easy, so it is left to do last and then is dropped to get the product out the door.

RB: What does the future hold for Jaeger Software?

MS: What I can tell you of the future of Jaeger is this: we are making a strong version of Fighter Duel Pro 2 for the PC. We are used to doing hardware level direct machine coding like we do on the Amiga, and we are doing it on the PC. We do have several other flight sims in the pipeline for the PC and Amiga, but it is way too early to discuss those. We try very hard to talk only about projects within a few months of their expected release. We are dedicated to bringing to market combat flight sims that stress the art of the kill over useless bells and whistles. We have a loyal following, and we don't want to disappoint them.



RB: With the CD³² doing well in the European market, and the potential success in the U.S., do you plan on doing any CD³² versions despite the fact that simulators are very computationally intensive?

MS: We have a CD³² version ready, and Fighter Duel Pro 2 performs quite well on CD³². To witness this, run it on a stock A1200 that is running a non-AGA 640 x 400 Workbench. CD³² owners who get one of the add-on boards that allow you to hook it to a RGB monitor capable of DBL NTSC or PAL will get full performance. We are waiting to see the U.S. sales picture before deciding whether to publish it or not.

RB: Will there be a European release for the CD³² version of Fighter Duel Pro 2?

MS: There may be a European release of the game. We are looking more for a good

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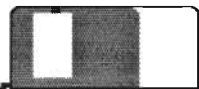
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BETTER CONCEPTS, INC.
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CD32 ZONE



COMPETITION PRO JOYPAD

BUMMED OUT because your CD³² joypad from Commodore makes a strange rattling noise? One of the little tabs that hold the directional pad in place has probably broken off. That's quality Chinese manufacturing for you. But you really can't think of yourself as an intense game player unless you've trashed a joystick or two in the heat of battle, right?

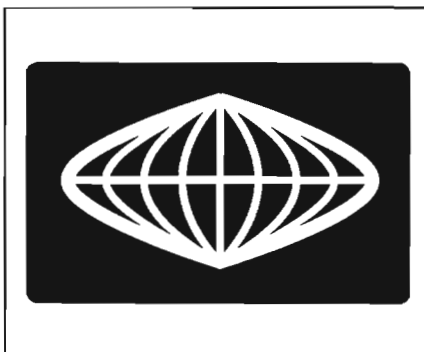
Thankfully, Happ Controls of Elk Grove, IL (708-593-6130) has released a replacement joypad for the CD³² that surpasses the one bundled with the machine. The case is styled similar to a Sega joypad and rests comfortably in both hands.

In addition to all the usual buttons, there are several features that make the Competition joypad an attractive buy even

to those CD³² owners whose joypads aren't broken. There are switches for each button that enable a turbo-fire option, and there is also a switch for the slow motion feature that, in effect, continually toggles the pause button on and off. While this feature can't be used in every game, it certainly comes in handy when trying to get past tricky sections in many shoot 'em ups.

There are really no drawbacks to the Competition Pro joypads. We use and abuse them daily in our *Amiga Game Zone* offices and have yet to see any problems. Since most CD³² sales are to existing Amiga owners, we can only wonder why a joystick hasn't been released for the system. That's what most Amiga owners are accustomed to using — let's see one!

CEI SHIPS MICROCOSM/CHAOS ENGINE BUNDLE



AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR CEI dipped into the company's own coffers to make good on Commodore's CD³² bundle offer that never materialized. People who bought a new CD³² in the U.S. and returned the coupon for the free Microcosm & Chaos Engine software bundle were happily surprised to find the two games in their mailboxes earlier this summer. In such an uncertain marketplace, it's good to see a company make an extra effort to please their customers.

CDTV DISC OF THE MONTH

XENON 2: MEGABLAST



THERE ARE a few CDTV games that should be in every CD³² owner's collection. The Bitmap Brothers went over the top with the CD conversion of their excellent vertical shoot 'em up *Xenon 2: Megablast*. Since the Bitmaps were working closely with Rhythm King Records at the time, they were able to include a dozen audio tracks in addition to the game! Information and pictures of each of the featured recording artists are displayed while the hip hop tunes are playing, and you can also select your favorite to listen to while you play the game.

Gameplay is the standard "shoot everything that moves" fare. Graphics are good, and the background soundtrack really pulls you into the action. There are five levels that start off relatively easy and quickly become incredibly difficult. The only real disappointment is the ending (or lack thereof). But since most of you will never get that far (I'm still stuck on the third level), it's worth the effort to find this rare release. *Xenon 2: Megablast* is a great example of how the music and gaming industries can be brought together on a single compact disc.

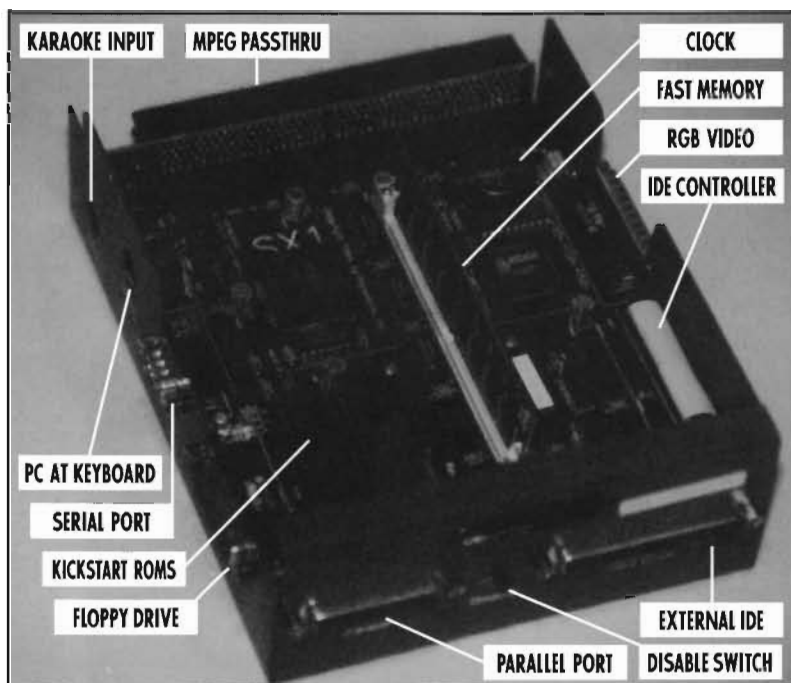
AMERICAN CD32 CHARTS

AUGUST 1994 TOP 10



- 1 FRONTIER: ELITE 2
- 2 LABYRINTH OF TIME
- 3 GUNSHIP 2000
- 4 PIRATES! GOLD
- 5 MICROCOSM/CHAOS ENGINE
- 6 CHAOS ENGINE
- 7 BRUTAL FOOTBALL
- 8 DIGGERS
- 9 ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS
- 10 GLOBAL EFFECT

SX-1 EXPANSION UNIT FROM PARAVISION



Many CD³² owners have been eager to take advantage of the power of the Amiga 1200 hidden inside their "game machine". Paravision's SX-1 expansion unit fills this void admirably with nearly every type of port you could ever want, and incredibly enough, it's all crammed inside a small metal case. The revised 16-page manual adequately explains every feature briefly. Of course, all this expandability carries a high price tag for those people who need only a few of the options. Listed below are the most compelling reasons to purchase an SX-1:

⊕ FULL A1200/CD³² COMPATIBILITY

The SX-1 gives you full compatibility with any ECS, AGA, and CD³² game and application if you attach a mouse, external disk drive, and keyboard. Thankfully, Paravision had the foresight to include a port for an inexpensive PC AT keyboard. Since AT keyboards do not have the left and right Amiga keys, F11 and F12 are used as substitutes. Alternatively, those lucky enough to find an A4000 keyboard can plug it directly into the side of their CD³².

⊕ RGB VIDEO SUPPORT

Tired of playing fuzzy-looking games? Attach a Commodore 1084 monitor to the RGB port (or opt for a multisync monitor for a crisper picture). This makes a huge difference in picture quality, and you can even watch MPEG and CD+G discs.

⊕ HARD DRIVE & MEMORY OPTION

There is space for a small IDE hard drive to fit inside the SX-1, and you can also add 8MB of fast RAM (or 4MB if you

have an MPEG board). A heavy-duty power supply is a necessity if you decide to have both options. Micro R&D (800-527-8797) sells a dependable 200-watt unit with a special CD³² plug at a reasonable price.

⊕ SERIAL AND PARALLEL PORTS

You can attach a high-speed modem and a printer to the SX-1 to make your system complete, or there are even better options for those ports if you have another Amiga. Get a cheap null-modem cable to connect the serial ports of your two Amigas, and you have the chance to run great multi-player games like Stunt Car Racer, Fighter Duel Pro 2, and Populous 2. For some reason, Paravision decided to use a PC-style 9-pin serial port — possibly due to space constraints. And if you already own a hard drive for your other Amiga, you don't need to buy an expensive IDE drive for the CD³². Just get a Parnet cable to connect your two parallel ports. This solution will let you access your second Amiga's hard drive from the CD³² at a very reasonable speed. If either of these options sounds interesting, the folks at Redmond Cable (206-882-2009) can get you up and running in no time.

⊕ COMPILATION DISCS

There is a wealth of PD and shareware titles for the Amiga, and the number of compilation discs continues to grow. The Gold Fish 2 compact disc set is included with the SX-1, and you'll spend hours combing through the thousands of programs offered. Unfortunately, these two CDs aren't self-booting, so you'll need to boot Workbench from a hard drive or floppy to use them.

FAST MEMORY: GOOD OR BAD?

What a stupid question! Everyone knows that fast memory is a good thing. It speeds up the machine and makes games run more fluidly. Or does it? Installing RAM in the SX-1 increases the speed of your CD³² by 2 1/3 times, but you will also face some game incompatibility problems that can only be fixed by manually unattaching the SX-1 from the CD³². Unfortunately, the disable switch does not work on memory. We'll let you decide if you want fast RAM or not.

Games that run more fluidly with fast RAM:

Battle Chess, Frontier, Grolier Encyclopedia 2, Guinness Disc of Records 2, Gunship 2000, Labyrinth of Time, Lemmings, Microcosm, Nick Faldo's Golf, Prey, Trivial Pursuit, Ultimate Body Blows, Video Creator, Zool & Zool 2

Games that will not run with fast RAM:

Chaos Engine, Chuck Rock 2, Dangerous Streets, James Pond 3, Lotus Trilogy, Out to Lunch, Premiere, Sensible Soccer & Wing Commander

The SX-1 also has its share of faults:

⊖ POOR DESIGN

The SX-1 connects to the expansion port in the back of the CD³² to form a highly unattractive L-shape. Cables stick out from each side of the metal box and you're never quite sure if the edge connector is properly secured. The two pieces easily come apart when the unit is bumped. It would have been much more efficient and visually appealing if the SX-1 had been designed to rest underneath the CD³².

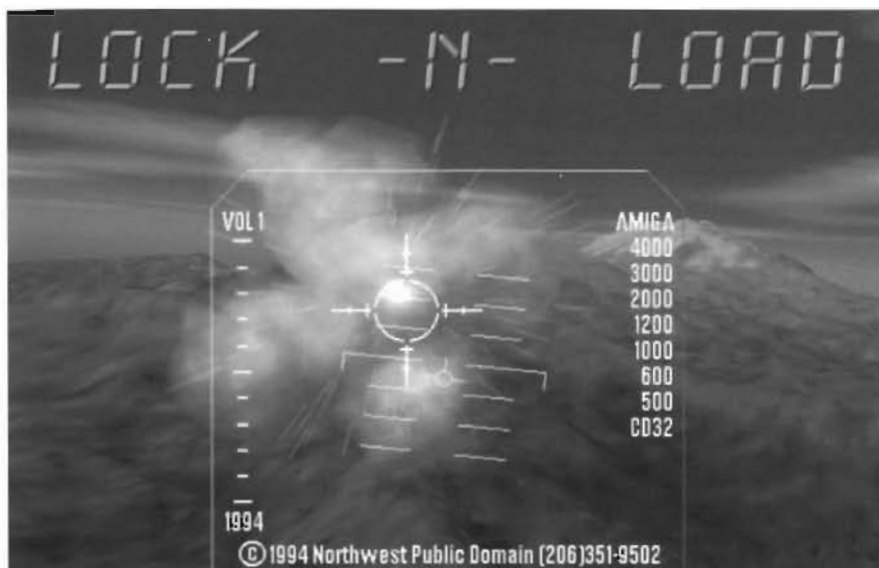
⊖ EXPENSIVE

The suggested retail price of the SX-1 is \$277. Add a hard drive and RAM and your cost increases to \$619. Plus you'll need a mouse, keyboard, and disk drive to fully utilize the system. Don't forget the additional heavy-duty power supply. This adds up to quite an investment if all you're interested in is playing a few floppy-based games.

⊖ FAST RAM INCOMPATIBILITIES

See the box above for more on this problem. Since there is no room for an accelerator on the SX-1, the machine is capable of running only 2 1/3 times as fast as an A1200.

The final decision really depends on what you need in terms of expansion capabilities. If you own an expanded ECS Amiga, the CD³²/SX-1 combo is ideal for a two-computer networked system that shares one hard drive. If you own only a CD³², you'll have to decide if you'll use enough of the SX-1's features to justify the cost. Regardless, the SX-1 is a highly functional (if somewhat poorly designed) piece of hardware that opens up the world of CD-based computing on the Amiga. ■ GM



Being an avid collector of goodies from the public domain and shareware world since purchasing my first Amiga 500 about 7 or 8 years ago, I'm always on the lookout for interesting collections of files. I think most CD-ROM users can identify with this urge to find CDs packed with files. Certainly those of you who navigate through the myriad galaxies of cyberspace aboard your starship modems will understand that this fascination extends to users of all major personal computer platforms. And quite frankly, we in the Amiga community are fortunate to have been blessed with a number of very good collections. Among the better titles are the AmiNet collection, the three discs of 17-Bit's massive library, and the Demo Collection 1 & 2. (In our continuing coverage of Paravision's SX-1 expansion unit for CD³², look for reviews of these CD titles and others in our next issue - Ed.) Sysops of bulletin board systems are also increasingly adding many of these titles to their online libraries, thereby providing a great service to the Amiga community.



The unsung existence of such compilations is an interesting contrast to the widely publicized commercial games and multimedia titles that receive the majority of media attention. Finally, a merging of formats has provided owners of CDTV and CD³² with a means of taking advantage of this underappreciated treasure trove of software.

Leading the pack is Lock-N-Load, a splendid compendium of not only the best of the Amiga public domain and shareware, but practically all of it! Previous libraries on CD have left much to be desired in the way of usability for owners of the stand-alone Amiga CD systems, but even that hurdle seems to have been overcome. Although not perfect, Lock-N-Load is a great way to spend a rainy day (or the entire rainy season, for that matter).

As with any noteworthy collection, there is a massive number of titles in a variety of categories from which to pick. Perhaps the biggest bonus is the inclusion of the Assassins games disks #1-148, a series of game compilations from our friends in Europe. There are generally 3-5 games per disk, including many that you don't find scattered about on BBSs and user group disks. They have been rendered runnable by using scripts and good old IconX in what must have been a monumental effort by Northwest Public Domain. Unfortunately, this scheme is ineffective when running the disk from Workbench if you have a general SCSI (non-CBM) CD drive, since all the necessary system assigns are not executed at boot time. However, users with this type of setup can overcome the problem by using a directory utility like Directory Opus for easy disk navigation. Just click your way into the hierarchy of directories and transfer the files to hard drive, floppy, or RAM disk.

For the rest of you who use the Workbench, you'll be quite pleased with the care taken by Northwest Public Domain to assure a neat and orderly arrangement of icons and the overall ease of use. Operating system files are provided for 1.3, 2.1 and 3.0, assuring compatibility across the board. Other utilities available on the CD include the Fred Fish library database Aquarium, ParNet for A570 users, and a host of others

to degrade beefed-up systems to their lowest common denominator for compatibility (RunIt, RunLame, Degradar, and FakeMem). All angles seem to have been covered, although some programs demand a floppy disk.

The other directory in the games drawer is MegaGames. It features 12 sub-directories of various genres of gaming: adventure, arcade, board, demos, education, modem, puzzle, role playing, sports, strategy, Tetris, and thinking games. It's quite a lot of fun digging around in all of those drawers and discovering so many goodies (can you believe there are 28 Tetris clones online?), but you may have a time trying to decide where to begin. In fact, you may decide to quit your job and play games for a living. I'm still entertaining that notion.

Northwest Public Domain plans on updating the disk every six months and even plans on including a nifty user interface in a future edition. In ordering from this progressive PD house, I have always been struck by the knowledgeable help I have received. This attitude is also evident on the disk and gives me the feeling that Lock-N-Load is a labor of love.

Usually it's the Europeans who come through for Amiga users who are lusting after explosive entertainment both to enjoy and to use to show off their great machines. Lock-N-Load is the exception to that rule. You could certainly do much worse in purchasing the three-disk European series Now That's What I Call Games, which scrimps with meager servings at a higher cost. You'll find everything from those three disks on Lock-N-Load, plus a lot more. If you own a CD drive, you really should not be without this disk in your library. ■ RV

Note: Many of these games require a mouse and a keyboard. Those of you without these peripherals may quickly become frustrated trying to get many of the games to run properly. However, this disc feels like it was created with the SX-1 in mind (or a CD-equipped Amiga system). Let's hope Paravision will bundle the next installment of Lock-N-Load with the SX-1!

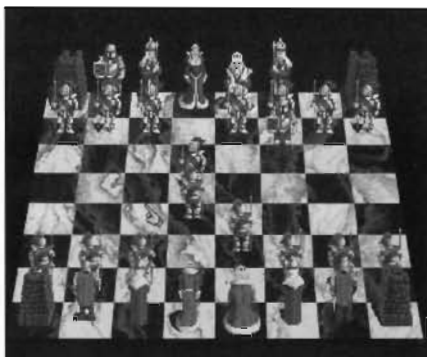
LOCK-N-LOAD CD32

NORTHWEST PD ■ \$19.95

VIDEO NTSC	CDTV YES
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1000 games on one CD - the ultimate collection for SX-1 owners.

BATTLE CHESS



BATTLE CHESS is what it sounds like. The graphics are nice (not outstanding) and the animated sequences are entertaining enough and load quickly enough that it'll take you a while to get tired of them. The included tutorial is professionally narrated. Though long, it's a helpful and humorous guide to playing chess.

However, the tutorial's sound cuts out for about 1 of its 20 or so minutes, and the computer player is intolerably slow about making a move. Battle Chess is enough fun that I don't mind losing to a human competitor. Not to the CD³², though. The agony gets dragged out too long. ■ **JC**

BATTLE CHESS CD32

INTERPLAY ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

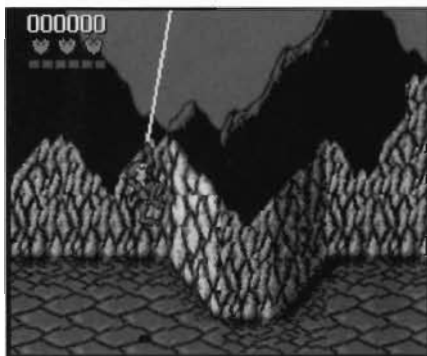
CDTV

NO

Animated board game that taxes both intellect and patience.



BATTLETOADS



OH MAN. Battletoads, originally a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles rip-off for the NES, has suffered in both the conversion process to the Amiga and the amount of time it took before the game was actually released.

Remember when a beat 'em up consisted of walking up to an enemy, rapidly hitting the button a few times to take him out, and then repeating the process over and over *ad nauseum*? This mind-numbing example looks like a C64 release with pathetically small sprites and zero gameplay.

Don't expect any difference from the Amiga version, either. I wonder why Mindcape bothered shoveling it over. ■ **GM**

BATTLETOADS CD32

MINDSCAPE ■ £25 (\$35)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Four toads times 8-bit quality doesn't equal a CD³² game.



BEAVERS



IT'S THAT word again. How many games can you call "cute" without feeling sick to your stomach? Beavers does has this cuteness thing nailed down, but there are some severe control flaws in the game that make you start swearing like a sailor.

The first level is extraordinarily difficult. You must avoid enemies and navigate platforms while the screen continually scrolls from left to right. If you can't keep up, you lose a life and have to start all over again. However, there is a severe control flaw that pops up occasionally and results in certain death. Later levels are more like the standard platform game, but getting to them isn't worth the frustration. ■ **GM**

BEAVERS CD32

GRANDSLAM ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Adorable rodents from hell bent on frustrating you into an early grave.



BRUTAL FOOTBALL



BRUTAL FOOTBALL on the CD³² retains all of the blood-gushing fun of the floppy version and goes on to be a vastly superior product.

Why? Well, the outstanding in-game rock soundtrack would be reason enough. Add to that quicker loading, a slick little intro, a CD³²-friendly password system, excellent use of the control pad, and you've got a perfect "invite the friends over" game... provided they're the right sort of friends.

Complaints? Only that there's no sound in the intro. Millennium must have blown its audio budget on the in-game theme. But that's just fine with me. ■ **JC**

BRUTAL FOOTBALL CD32

MILLENNIUM ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

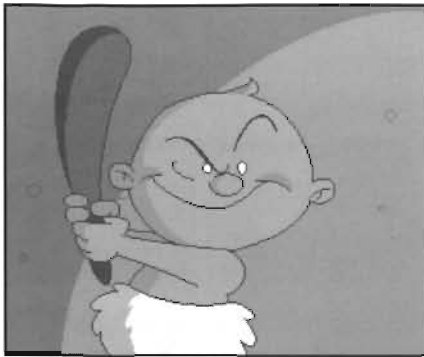
NO

Carnage plus rock n' roll - the next best thing to a Metallica concert.





CHUCK ROCK 2



CORE DESIGN spent a great deal of effort on the new CD intro to Chuck Rock 2, employing a professional animator and a voice actor. The resulting intro is very impressive and could easily be mistaken for a Saturday morning cartoon. Yes, it's that good (and funny, too).

The game itself is a lot of fun also. Brick Jagger has kidnapped Chuck Rock, so it's up to Chuck Junior to save his dad. The game uses extensive parallax scrolling effects and also has some huge enemies to defeat. It may be just another platform game, but everything about it oozes quality. ■ GM

CHUCK ROCK 2 CD32

CORE DESIGN ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

PAL

CDTV

NO

Great cartoon intro plus a fun game – what's not to like?



FURY OF THE FURRIES



IF YOU'VE enjoyed playing Lost Vikings or Morph, you'll want to check this one out. Don't let the silly name fool you – Fury of the Furies is a slickly programmed test of arcade action and puzzle solving.

Fury of the Furies gives you the option during the game of switching among four characters, each with different abilities. You have to decide how to implement each of their unique talents to reach the end of the many levels.

The difficulty curve has been fine tuned by initially introducing you to each of the characters and their abilities, and then by challenging you as the situations become more dangerous. Good stuff. ■ GM

FURY OF THE FURRIES CD32

MINDSCAPE ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Furious fun for arcade and puzzle fans alike.



HUMANS



LEMMINGS IS a fun game, but I hate having to keep track of 50 little things that all want to get themselves killed.

Enter Humans – a puzzler in the same vein, but this time, you're in complete control. Humans don't walk, talk, sneeze, or get themselves killed unless you're 100% responsible for it. All you have to do is beat the clock and your own clumsiness, as some of the moves need to be pixel-perfect. The controls at your disposal are well arranged on the gamepad.

Selectable, very atmospheric CD tracks add style to the game, and the graphics are excellent. If you want to show off a "brain game", this is a great choice. ■ JC

HUMANS CD32

GAMETEK ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

PAL

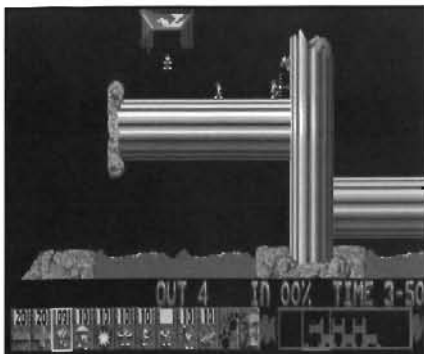
CDTV

NO

Lemmings for control freaks.



LEMMINGS



LEMMINGS IS just a repackaged version of the original CDTV disc at a budget price. I really shouldn't have to explain the premise of the game – every good Amiga owner should have heard of the little rodents by now. Lemmings was really never meant to be played on the CD32. Although you can use the joypad, the game was designed for mouse control. And Psygnosis also decided to remove the two player games from this version. Bummer.

There is also a slick demo on the disc called Planetside. A fighter plane chases a missile over a fractal-based landscape. It's slightly jerky on a stock CD32, but with an SX-1 and fast RAM, it is impressive. ■ GM

LEMMINGS CD32

PSYGNOSIS ■ £10 (\$15)

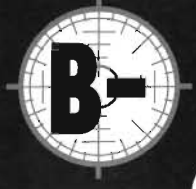
VIDEO

YES

CDTV

YES

Oh no! It's the original Lemmings again on yet another format.



PREMIERE



MAYBE IT'S just me, but I can't recall a better looking game that I had so little interest to continue playing. Premiere is a platform game with sharp cartoon characters and a bouncy soundtrack. However, the control system is so archaic that the game soon becomes a chore to play. First of all, you have to press up to jump. Excuse me, but how many buttons are available on the controller? And to navigate the awkward two-lane paths, you have to press down and then press the red button. Excuse me again, but *how many buttons are available on the controller?* It's really a shame that such a talented artist was wasted on a poorly-designed game like Premiere. ■ GM

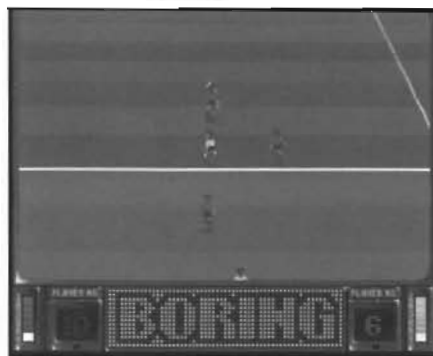
PSYCHO KILLER



PSYCHO KILLER *sounds* like a great game. You're being chased by a deranged madman in a movie-style atmosphere. I couldn't wait for the fast-paced, tension-filled interactive adventure... but was I disappointed when I discovered a Dragon's Lair style game but with *less* playability (if that's possible).

The game remains unchanged from the CDTV version, and a mouse is required. Play is limited to watching a choppy 1/4 screen animation and then choosing a direction. It would have been nice to have some cues to the correct path as in Dragon's Lair. Take my advice: if you see Psycho Killer, run away screaming. ■ GM

STRIKER



I WASN'T raised to be absorbed with soccer, so playmaking doesn't impress me. Give me gameplay!

Striker tries. The manual boasts that it is the "fastest" soccer simulation, and I believe it. It's very fast, but that means it's too fast, because the control system is clumsy. The game plays at an angled top-down view, and it's hard to tell where your player is before he runs out of view.

In its favor, Striker has a great replay feature and a cute message board at the bottom of the screen, inspired by the screens on modern pinball games. But at its heart lies a mediocre soccer game. ■ JC

SUMMER OLYMPIX



EVER SINCE the highly successful Summer Games from Epyx, software publishers have been releasing multi-sport Olympic competition games. The intrinsic drawback to most of these offerings is that they spread themselves too thin by collecting several sub-par games together instead of concentrating on a single well-designed sport simulation.

Summer Olympix is not much different than any game of this type. There are eight different events (some are implemented better than others), and humor is injected throughout the games. It's fun for a while if you have friends over, but don't expect groundbreaking stuff here. ■ GM

PREMIERE CD32

CORE DESIGN ■ £15 (\$25)

VIDEO

PAL

CDTV

NO

Gorgeous cartoon-style platform game with severe control flaws.



PSYCHO KILLER CD32

ONLINE ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

YES

A game only Norman's mother could love.



STRIKER CD32

GREMLIN ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Soccer stuck on fast forward.



SUMMER OLYMPIX CD32

FLAIR ■ £20 (\$30)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Eight different sub-games, none of which are medal contenders.





SURF NINJAS



THE MOVIE Surf Ninjas did not strike me as a game waiting to be made. If this game is faithful to the movie, I advise you to avoid the movie without hesitation.

Surf Ninjas (the game) requires you to fight off ninja warriors while trying to collect various objects to complete each stage. This would be a fairly simple task if the game hadn't been programmed in what seems to be BASIC. As soon as more than two characters are on screen at the same time, the game seems to go into slow-motion. Adding to the disappointment is the music, which sounds more appropriate for a C64 game. Surf Ninjas is a truly horrible gaming experience. ■ **SC**

SURF NINJAS CD32

FLAIR ■ £20 (\$30)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Mere words aren't enough to degrade this game sufficiently.



TOTAL CARNAGE



TOTAL CARNAGE is pretty bad on floppy. It's just as bad on CD³². Not a single thing has been changed. The CD³² controller is treated like a two-button joystick, completely ignoring the potential to make the game playable by using more of the buttons. It still plays badly, it's still impossible to control, and it's still missing all of the things that made Total Carnage fun. The only plus is the quick loading from CD. That's IT.

This game is such blatant shovelware – the dinky 7-page manual talks about the floppy version. Avoid (with a capital A). ■ **JC**

TOTAL CARNAGE CD32

ICE ■ £33 (\$50)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

A horrifyingly bad conversion of a fun coin-op.



TOWN WITH NO NAME



YET ANOTHER rehash of a CDTV title, Town with No Name is set in a tongue-in-cheek western town. You are the Man With No Horse, a gunslinger who accidentally ventilates Evil Eb's littlest brother. I reckon there's gonna be a showdown when Evil Eb catches wind of this.

It would be stretching it a bit to call this a multimedia adventure game. Mediocre cartoon-style graphics and some good music are combined for what comes down to a simple point-and-click storyline. There are some funny touches, but ultimately the game doesn't have enough interactive elements to keep your interest for very long. ■ **GM**

TOWN WITH NO NAME CD32

ONLINE ■ £30 (\$45)

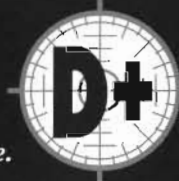
VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

YES

You'll find the Town With No Name on your map of games with no purpose.



ZOOL 2



ZOOL 2 is fun. From the entertaining intro to the amusing levels replete with bad puns (Paper Plains, full of staplers and origami nightmares, is a level added exclusively for the CD version), you're in for a good time. For your playing enjoyment, several CD tracks keep your attention (and most of them are very good).

Gremlin feels, unlike everyone else, that "fire" is the green button, not the red. I spent a good 15 seconds jamming the red button at the title screen... but get past that, and you've got a great platformer. ■ **JC**

ZOOL 2 CD32

GREMLIN ■ £30 (\$45)

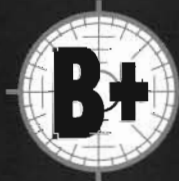
VIDEO

PAL

CDTV

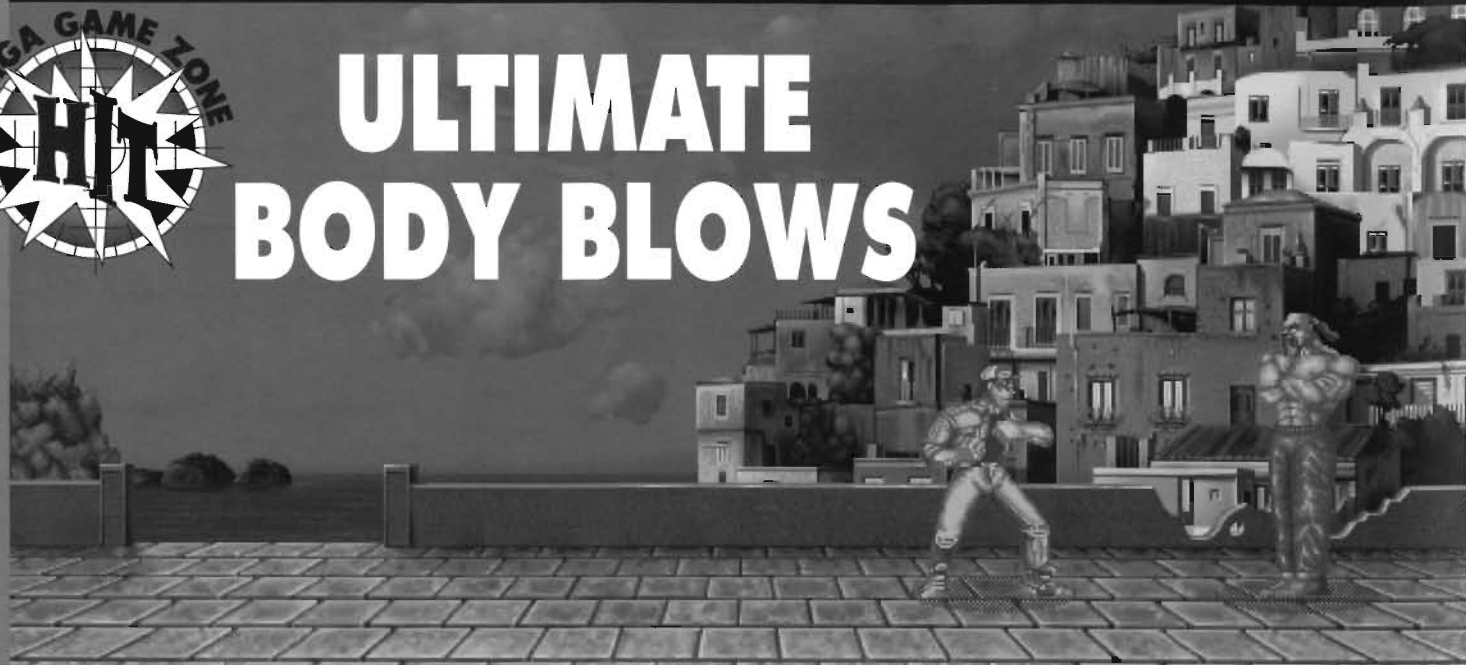
NO

Prepare to be entertained – Zool 2 nears the pinnacle of platformers.





ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS



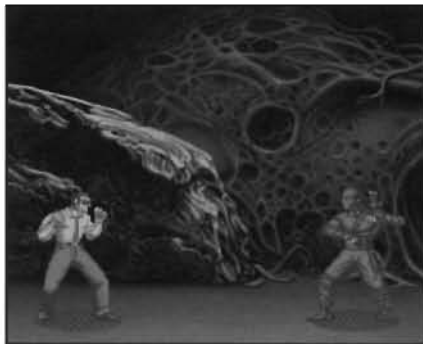
Every good game system has a beat 'em up, right? Unfortunately, the CD32's first example of this genre was *Dangerous Streets*, a pathetic game that was as funny to watch as it was embarrassing to own. The Amiga itself has had some reasonably good examples, most notably *Mortal Kombat*, *Body Blows Galactic*, and *Elfmania*. However, all suffered in some aspect, from a limited color palette to poor collision detection. While it's not in the same league as *Primal Rage* or *Way of the Warrior*, Team 17's *Ultimate Body Blows* for CD32 is probably the best execution of a beat 'em up we'll ever see for the machine.

The main reason that *Ultimate Body Blows* looks so polished is that it draws heavily from the strengths of its Amiga predecessors. But Team 17 has always had a history of improving and updating its games. It's odd that more companies don't do this – how many successful business application programs do you know that are still at version 1.0?

All 22 characters from the *Body Blows* series can be selected, and there are gorgeous new 256-color backgrounds for each location. The wide range of opponents and locations keep the lastibility of the title very high. Pumping CD audio tracks play during

all the grunts and groans of the fighters.

There are several new features as well. Team 17 considered customer input and streamlined the gameplay. The characters really "feel" right – mainly due to the fact that, unlike so many fighting games, gravity is actually acknowledged. The speed of the game has also been optimized for the CD32. You can now choose the speed that fits your style of play. For the "ultimate" gamer, try skill level 3, turbo 2, and mercy off. But look out – you're in for a hyper-speed barrage of punches and kicks.



You can play *Ultimate Body Blows* alone or with a friend, but the game really comes into its own in the tournament and tag team modes. The tournament mode is great when you have friends over, because up to 8 people can compete at once. Tag team mode allows you and an opponent to choose from 2 to 21 characters to participate in a tag team match. When one character wins a fight, a partial amount of his energy is replenished, and he goes on to fight the opponent's next character.

The best part of the game lies in the control system. Every button on the joypad is implemented – green punches, red kicks,

blue blocks, and yellow starts each character's special move. Even the two buttons on top of the controller are used for jumping. Way to go, Team 17! Now if we can only convince other game publishers to stop using a single button, requiring us to press up to jump!

The only element *Ultimate Body Blows* lacks is what I call "attitude". *Primal Rage* and *Mortal Kombat* both offer gritty gameplay and a plethora of special moves. Their level of rugged realism makes *Body Blows*' cartoon characters look sterile by comparison. Don't get me wrong – I have a great time playing UBB, but I find myself cringing when my character wins the match and blurts out some unintelligible noise that is supposed to be a victory yell.

You have to judge *Ultimate Body Blows* on its own merits. It is, without a doubt, the best beat 'em up for the Amiga. What other game gives you gorgeous graphics, atmospheric CD music, 22 characters with unique abilities, a great control system, and speed, speed, speed? I'll take *Ultimate Body Blows* for 1000, Alex. ■ GM



ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS CD32

TEAM 17 ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

NTSC

CDTV

NO

Beat 'em ups:
cathartic or
catalytic? Who
really cares?
We like 'em!





The first thing I noticed about F1 is its amazing similarity to Vroom, a Formula 1 racing game from a few years ago. In fact, this game is just a re-released version of Vroom, likely prompted by its predecessor's disappointing sales. But this isn't another case of trying to get more mileage out of a bad game – actually, F1 is pretty good.

F1's basic premise is to race in one of two available legs of the Formula 1 World Championship. Each leg consists of six famous tracks such as Hockenheim and Monza. Points are scored depending upon how well you do in each race, and whoever has the most points at the end of a leg is the world champion. Besides the championship mode, F1 provides three other playing options: demo, arcade (finish ahead of a

certain number of other cars), and training (practice on a track).

The main menu also has some other selections. You can choose one of four difficulty settings, the track, the number of laps, joystick or mouse control, manual or auto shifting, as well as the type of wings (spoilers) and tires your car will use. To add even more variety, F1 has a two-player mode in which contestants can play simultaneously thanks to a nice split screen view. Not all options are available at all times.

It seems that Lankhor put a lot of effort into making F1 realistic with features such as real tracks and drivers, fast graphics, good sound effects, and crisp handling. I especially like the wealth of trackside scenery (lots of bridges, covered track

sections, light poles, signs, etc.). Many other racing games have only a few token objects near the track. On the negative side, I wish F1 utilized more than 16 colors, as things look a bit drab and grainy. I also would appreciate a choice of cars and some sort of victory celebration.

Even in the lower difficulty settings, the game is challenging. In the final analysis, F1 is a fun game that delivers real racing excitement. **■ HV**

F1

DOMARK ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED

Vroom with a two-player option.

LAMBORGHINI AMERICAN CHALLENGE

Titus' Lamborghini American Challenge is supposed to be a sequel to Crazy Cars 3, but the difference between the two games is hardly noticeable. The game is identical to its predecessor except for a few minor changes and the addition of a simultaneous two-player mode. However, being so similar to Crazy Cars 3 isn't altogether bad.

In Lamborghini American Challenge the player must compete in a series of illegal road races across the United States in an attempt to achieve the American Dream. Behind the wheel of a slightly used Lamborghini Diablo, the player encounters twisting roadways, steep hills, adverse weather conditions, speed traps, oncoming traffic, and ruthless rivals hell-bent on victory.

The player starts out with a small amount of money and must build up winnings by competing in the variety of races across the country. The competitions range from simple road duels to championship races which require expensive entry fees. Though each race has a purse, the costs of repairing the vehicle, buying new hardware, and entering new races can get quite high. To win more than the standard prize money, the player can wager against rivals before each race. Of course, losing too many bets can result in bankruptcy.

Each race is presented in a pseudo-first

person perspective, similar to Out-Run and its ilk. The standard accelerating, braking, and gear shifting controls are present along with a turbo boost which allows the driver to shoot ahead of the competition.



While the first few races may be a bit easy, the difficulty level increases as the game progresses, making it quite a challenge to compete in later races. Not only are the various weather hazards and oncoming traffic major obstacles, but the highway patrol speedtraps present a unique challenge. When the player (or another competing racer) is caught in a speed trap, the highway patrol will relentlessly pursue the offending vehicle. The police are quite experienced at high speed chases so they really get in the way. To throw them off the trail, an opposing racer can be made a target for the police by smashing him into the pursuing police car.

Lamborghini American Challenge's

graphics are identical to those of Crazy Cars 3. That's not a complaint since Crazy Cars 3 had smooth animation and great colorful backgrounds with detailed characters. The audio consists of standard racing sound effects and a mediocre soundtrack. Nothing spectacular.

With everything taken into account, Lamborghini American Challenge plays well and looks good, but it's not much of a sequel. The simultaneous two-player mode is a nice addition, but it doesn't warrant shelling out the money for a full price game to get just a minor update. I'm sure Crazy Cars 3 can be found in a bargain bin somewhere. **■ RB**

LAMBORGHINI AMERICAN CHALLENGE

TITUS ■ £25 (\$35)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED

Crazy Cars 3 with a two-player option.



SKIDMARKS/MICRO MACHINES/OVERDRIVE



AGZ'S RACING GAME TIME TRIALS

Here at the *Amiga Game Zone* test labs, we put two testers, two Amigas, and three racing games in a locked room for 24 hours. Our two victims... er, volunteers were a casual gamer (CG) and an experienced gamer (EG). The two test machines were an Amiga 4000 and an ancient Amiga 500. The three games were *Micro Machines*, *Overdrive*, and *Skidmarks*. We later interviewed the participants and recorded their impressions of the games.

So let's talk about each of the three games. Tell me about Skidmarks.



CG: It's a racing game with a view as if you're watching from the cheap seats. Your car stays in the center, and the scrolling is very smooth and very easy on the eyes.

EG: You race against three other cars. All of the cars slide around a lot so you have to turn your car before you get to the turns and skid through them sideways.

CG: And when you miss a turn and hit the wall, your car bounces off like it was made of rubber. It's hilarious!

Sounds like a lot of fun.

EG: I thought it was too easy once you figured out how to skid the cars around. There are only 12 tracks, and some of them are the same. There are four different cars, but only the Porsche and the Camaro are any good. There really isn't a "goal" to accomplish. You either win each race or you don't.

CG: Yeah, I don't think I'd play it much as a one-player game.

EG: This really isn't a one-player game. The whole game is designed for multiple players. It has a split screen two-player mode, so two people can play on one machine at the same time. Plus, it allows a serial connection so if you have two machines you can have up to four players at once! And it even lets you connect the two computers with a modem, so your racing buddies can be across town, in another city, across the country, or even on the other side of the world!

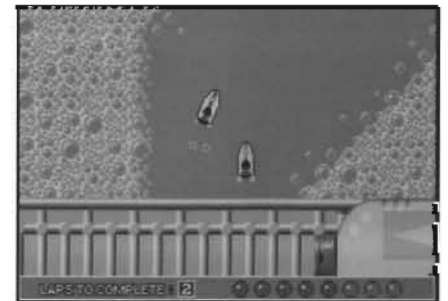
How does that work?

EG: Well, first of all, you have to own a modem. When you start up the game, it gives you a phonebook window where you can enter opponents' names and phone numbers. You click on the name of the person you want to call, and the game automatically dials the number and connects the two computers. It's very simple. Of course both you and your opponent need to be running the game at the same time for it to work.

Sounds great, but are there any technical problems?

EG: Well, it uses a really bizarre hard drive installation setup. You can run the game from your hard drive. However, all the data is stored on floppies, so you end up waiting on the floppy drive anyway. At least you don't have to reboot just to start the game.

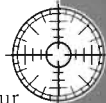
What do you think of Micro Machines?



EG: This one is a top-down view racing game with miniaturized cars on a variety of "tracks".

CG: I don't like the way the controls work. I get confused with left and right being backwards when the cars are going "down" on the screen. But, it's really cute. You race little jeeps on a kitchen table, around a track made of Cheerios. But watch out for the marmalade - it's pretty sticky stuff.

EG: I like the Formula One cars on the pool table. You can push the other cars off the edge.



CG: Unless you miss – then your own car goes over!

EG: And sportscars on school desks. Those one-lane ruler bridges are toughies. I was disappointed with the audio, though. I've played Nintendo games with better sound.

How is it as a single player game?

EG: I thought it was fun. The races start out really easy and get tougher as you go on. There are supposed to be 32 different tracks, but I only made it to number 12. Some of the tracks are pretty long and complicated.

What about the two-player option?

CG: It's no fun. The "bonus" thing is really annoying!

EG: At least with the "bonus" thing, you don't have to worry about losing too badly. It ends up being either a quick win or a real race to the end.

Explain the "bonus" thing.

EG: It's strange. In the other games, the object is to cross the finish line first. In Micro Machines, both players race on one screen. If one player gets far enough ahead of the other that he scrolls off the screen, the leader gets a "bonus", and the two players are re-started at that spot on the track. So no matter how good you are, you never get more than a full screen ahead of the other guy. Each time you get a "bonus", you get a point, and each time the other player gets one, you lose a point. The first player to score four points wins the race. So, if you're really good, it's a quick race since you'll get four points in a few seconds. If you're evenly matched, the race can take a long time to complete. After three laps, whoever has the

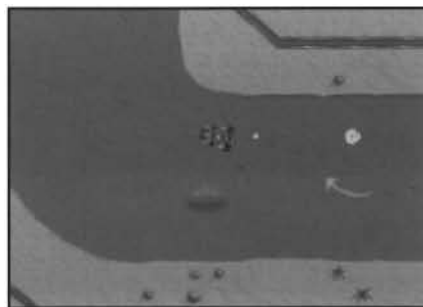
most points wins, even if he crosses the finish line last. If the score is tied, then the next "bonus" wins the race.

CG: But, if one player is better than the other, it's over too fast. You never have a chance to get any better because you lose in 10 seconds. I don't think I ever saw a single two-player race go to the finish.

Any technical problems with this game?

EG: It doesn't run on the A3000 or the A4000. It doesn't install on a hard drive, but since it's only on one floppy, it's not that big of a deal.

What about Overdrive?



CG: I don't like this one at all. It's way too hard.

EG: Hey, I like it. Sure, it's difficult, but I think that's good. It means that I won't beat the game in just a few hours. I can keep playing it a lot longer.

CG: I just think it would take some practice. The computer cars are almost unbeatable. I do like the alternate controls. In all the other games, you steer the car with the joystick as if you are sitting in the driver's seat. When the car is going down the screen, you move the stick right to turn left and left to turn right. I get confused with that. Overdrive lets you change it so the car

moves whichever way you move the stick. When you push the joystick up, your car turns until it is going up.

What about the two-player mode?

EG: Two-player mode is only supported through direct serial link with a null-modem cable. That means you need to have two computers and two copies of the game to play against another human. Unfortunately, we only had one for this review, and the copy-protection prevented us from being able to try it out.

How was this game technically?

EG: It only runs in PAL, and since there is an instrument panel at the bottom of the screen, you can't see what's going on because that part of the screen is cut off. Not being able to see your instruments is a major drawback.

Which of the three games would you choose for yourself?

CG: I'd have to say Micro Machines. I thought it was cute, and this game is fun without having to find someone else to play against.

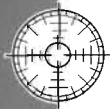
EG: I'd probably pick Skidmarks. I know a lot of people with modems that I could play against, and it's an awesome two-player game.

Is there a clear winner? Not really – each appeals to different types of gamers. Micro Machines is best for the general gamer who likes the challenge of beating the computer. Skidmarks is best for a modem junkie or for two-player competition. While Overdrive wasn't chosen as a favorite in our test, it should appeal to younger gamers who prefer tough arcade-style action. ■ EP

SKIDMARKS	
ACID ■ £25 (\$35)	
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED
<i>Addictive two-player racing game that looks great on AGA machines.</i>	

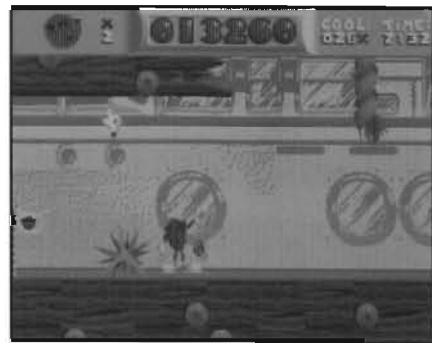
MICRO MACHINES	
CODEMASTERS ■ £26 (\$40)	
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED
<i>Great single-player racing game with Matchbox-size vehicles.</i>	

OVERDRIVE	
TEAM 17 ■ £26 (\$40)	
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED
<i>Overdrive trails the pack – for arcade enthusiasts only.</i>	



ELFMANIA

COOL SPOT



We see a lot of games come and go through our spacious mid-town office: some of them bad, most of them average, but a few of them have that certain *je ne sais quois* quality. In the case of Cool Spot, it isn't the graphics (average at best), the sound (a tad on the annoying side), or the gameplay (just like any other platformer). It could be the music, but... no, it isn't that either. I know: it's Spot himself – that's Cool Spot to you. Spot takes the attitude of such cool greats as the Fonz and Joe Cool and rolls it up into one little red dot with legs.

Boot the game up and Spot's surfing on a soda bottle. Start playing and Spot "walks the walk". Leave him idle and he shines his shades and plays with a yo-yo. All the other attributes of the game just get pushed to the back of your mind because this little guy steals the show.

Admittedly, this game doesn't have that much staying power. Perhaps if the designers spent a little more time on play and graphics, we might be looking at a classic platformer like James Pond II. For awhile, little Spot's antics will have you amused, but there is still a lot of room for something better to come along. Until then, I'll be taking my strut lessons from Cool Spot. Let's see, you swing your arms like this...

■ CB

Fighting games have been getting stale. Ever since Capcom's Street Fighter 2 resurrected the dormant genre, quick-buck cloners have offered nothing really new. A few brought out exceptional takes on the one-on-one martial arts theme, but most of the titles could be described as dull, uninspired games with little or no originality. Elfmania from Terramarque successfully attempts to inject a bit of much needed creativity, but still falls short in actual fighting gameplay, resulting in only a slightly above average title.



In Elfmania the player is a suitor to the throne of the mystical land of Muhmulandia. By winning the throne, the player also receives the mysterious Dragon Fan which is known to unlock the secrets of the universe. The formidable task of assuming the throne is achieved by conquering six countries in a row across a grid of 36 locations. In order to capture a country, an Honor Fight must be held. In each of these battles, the player hires a warrior to fight a martial arts duel against the warrior from the country being invaded. The champion not only collects the rewards and riches of victory, but also gains control of that particular country. Once a string of six countries has been captured, the new ruler must defend his crown against contesting suitors.

As more money is collected from victories, better warriors can be contracted. The various fighters range from bright-eyed elves with incredible agility and Smurf-like high-pitched voices to muscular sultans with amazing swordfighting skills. The more powerful the character, the more costly the fee. Too many losses, however, can deplete the supply of funds. Once this happens, all hope of conquering Muhmulandia is lost.

Graphically, the game is simply incredible. When I first booted this up on my A4000, I was convinced that it must have auto-enhanced the visuals for the AGA chipset (as in the disk version of Liberation). I was truly stunned when I saw that the graphics were identical on an ECS system. The fighting scenes are festooned with brilliant color, smooth parallax scrolling, and detailed perspective warping. Animation and detail of the characters is equally exceptional.

The music is a bit low-key, but it matches the light-hearted spirit of the game. Slow techno tracks play in the background, with different soundtracks for each location around Muhmulandia. There is the standard array of sound effects and also a fair amount of sampled speech for the characters.

The actual fighting bits are the weakest link in this game. The number of moves is severely hampered by the one-button joystick. A paltry assortment of standard kicks, punches, jumping attacks, and extremely unspectacular "special moves" really limits the strategy involved in the one-on-one contests. Sadly, as with most Amiga fighting games, there aren't any throws, either.

Elfmania is a classic example of style over substance. The graphics are fantastic and the concept is good – but it's gameplay that kills it. The land conquest aspect of the game does extend the life a bit, and the difficulty level is just right. Though it's not a complete disaster, it's just not a particularly brilliant game.

■ RB

ELFMANIA

RENEGADE ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

PAL

1.3/2.0/3.0

YES

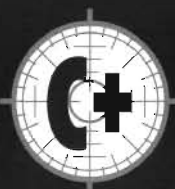
HARD DRIVE

NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

Stylish attempt unhindered by concern for gameplay.



COOL SPOT

VIRGIN ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

PAL

1.3/2.0/3.0

YES

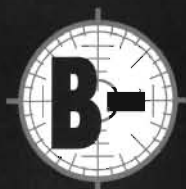
HARD DRIVE

NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

The character is the game.



TOTAL CARNAGE

Williams' Smash T.V. spinoff, Total Carnage, is a humorous and entertaining action-packed blast-a-thon with brilliant graphics and fantastic gameplay. Sadly, ICE's conversion to the Amiga is a total disappointment. It lacks the playability of the arcade and just seems to be a pale shell of the coin-op's greatness.

The plot of Total Carnage is a satirical takeoff on the Gulf War. The maniacal General Akhaboob has built a massive military consisting of radioactive mutants created with his bio-nuclear generator. Akhaboob plans to unleash this force of ungodly creations in an attempt to take over the world. The player assumes the role of the Domsday Squad, a crack two-man team of pure military might, harnessing the talents of the illustrious Captain Carnage and Major Mayhem. During a number of overhead view scrolling battle scenes, the Domsday Squad must infiltrate Akhaboob's Kookistan headquarters to rescue all of his hostages and destroy his evil military force.

The problems with ICE's version of Total Carnage are many. While the game has options for keyboard, joystick, or joypad control, all are equally inadequate. In the original coin-op version, there were two joysticks; one for firing and one for movement. In the AGA version, the firing position is locked when the button is held down. The stream of bullets continues in the same direction until a new direction is chosen and

the button is pressed again. This clumsy method tends to lead the player into a lot of accidental deaths, since the player is required to make a few steps before locking the firing direction. With the two button pad, the same method is used, but the second fire button drops land mines. Even the CD³² joypad doesn't take advantage of the four fire buttons to simulate the arcade's directional firing controls.



Total Carnage's graphics are also a far cry from the arcade game. One of the many deceptive quotes on the box states that the graphics were taken directly from the arcade. This is obviously not true. The background and character details are not of the same caliber as the coin-op. Many other features from the arcade version are also absent, the most glaring of which is the music. It's almost as if the CD³² version was copied to disk without replacing the CD music with Amiga tunes. (Unfortunately, it's

the other way around. The game has no music on disk or on CD! - Ed) A lot of sound effects are missing as well.

Though the cinema displays are present, they are really hurt by the lack of sound effects and General Akhaboob's pseudo-Arabic blabber. The funny messages and in-game commentary, bonus levels, warps, continue codes, and several key game characters are all noticeably absent from ICE's inadequate translation.

All these problems add up to a distinct lack of playability. Total Carnage is an extremely playable arcade game with a challenging difficulty level and plenty of stuff to discover throughout the quest. This Amiga version retains the difficulty level but fails to deliver in all other areas. It loses all of its distinction and becomes just another uninspired shooter. ■ RB

TOTAL CARNAGE AGA

ICE ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO

PAL

1.3/2.0/3.0

3.0 ONLY

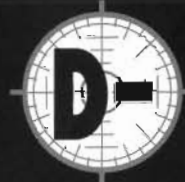
HARD DRIVE

NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

If you buy this you'll feel like a total fool.



First of all, this game should not be confused with Ocean's Terminator 2: Judgment Day. A port from the actual arcade machine, T2: The Arcade Game is a straightforward shooting gallery along the lines of Capone and other old Actionware games. So don't expect too much depth.

Although a few years too late to cash in on the movie's popularity, T2 more or less follows its storyline. The game starts in the future with the human resistance pitted against the machines of Skynet. About halfway through, it shifts to the present with the battle at Cyberdine Systems, and it ends with the confrontation against the T-1000, the Terminator made of liquid metal. If

you've seen the movie, you've seen this game.

In the seven levels, you simply blast all the bad guys (machines, lab technicians, and SWAT team) while trying to avoid hitting the good ones (human resistance fighters and Sarah and John Connor). Of course, there's an assortment of weapons and power-ups, but support for the arcade version's light phaser would have been a nice touch here. Forget about using a joystick - the mouse is much easier. Experienced players should be able to reach the last level without too much practice. The last level is by far the hardest, but by that point you'll



probably be too bored to continue.

T2's shallowness makes it little more than an exercise for your trigger finger. Despite parallax scrolling graphics and some good tunes by the famed Amiga musician Allister Brimble, this game is pretty darn average. ■ HV

T2: THE ARCADE GAME

VIRGIN ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

NTSC

1.3/2.0/3.0

YES

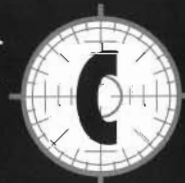
HARD DRIVE

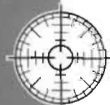
NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

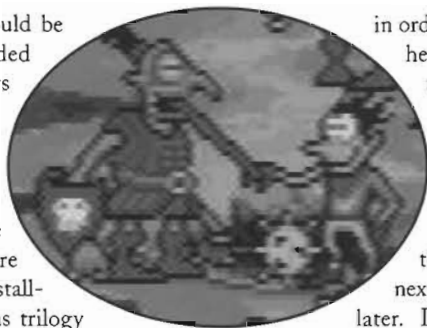
Operation Wolf clone that loses something in the translation.





GOBLINS 3

Gobblins 3 could be recommended for its incredible humor alone. However, it is also a well thought out and complex puzzle graphic adventure game. This final installment in the Gobblins trilogy is presented on six floppy disks. Hard drive owners will be groaning because it won't install on their systems. This fact alone drops the grade from a B+ to a B-. But once I accepted the evil way of the game and waited through all the disk spinning, I found I was rewarded with a gem of a game.



in order to get to the places that he wants to go. The catch is that in order to move to the next screen Blount must figure out how to get out of the one he's in. This involves some doing because many solutions involve going to the next screen and coming back later. Luckily for Blount, the

player is given some handy tools. Five "jokers" are offered in order to get hints on how to solve the screen. In addition, Blount encounters some help from other characters in the game. He may talk to them for information, or they may actually lend a helping hand. The other characters are controlled in the same way as Blount, but only one character can be controlled at a time. This requires some split-second timing with the mouse. A screen solution is accomplished by using objects on the screen and in inventory to obtain results that will get Blount past all the obstacles in his way. CAUTION! You must be creative to the point of goofiness.

But there's even more to Gobblins 3. Gameplay is not limited to simply picking up and using objects. The most important factor is *how* the objects are used (for example, an ordinary golf club becomes a handy weapon à la Jack Nicholson - Ed.) In addition, a wrong action will sometimes elicit a strange reaction from Blount. Other bad ideas just might be cause to get sent back to the last saved position. In other words, careless decisions are not tolerated at any point during the game.



The main character, Blount, is a star reporter for the *Gobblins News*. Not only is he trying to get personal interviews with the ruling monarchs of the two opposing kingdoms, but he's also pursuing leads concerning some dreadful business involving the Labyrinth of Foliandre and a particular cutie named Wynnona. The player must move Blount via mouse through a series of screens

One particularly welcome feature of Gobblins 3 is that the action is fast. None of this "sit and wait for the character to waddle across the screen" business. When you click the mouse, Blount moves immediately! Everything is speeded up to create a humorous atmosphere which surprisingly doesn't detract from playability in the least.

Gobblins 3 also entertains with a variety of sound effects that actually don't sound like generic canned PC ports. And there are lots of sound effects. Every action is connected to some sort of sound. The music is of good quality and in stereo. But of course, like all good game music, a person just has to turn it off after five hours or so. The graphics are great, and the animations are so well done that they even remind me of some of my friends.

This game is certainly a keeper. It contains enough depth to last longer than it will take to save up the money for that next game, and it is easy to learn in one sitting. Now if only we could convince the programmers to make a hard drive compatible version... **■ MP**

GOBLINS 3	
SIERRA ■ £35 (\$50)	
VIDEO NTSC	1.3/2.0/3.0 YES
HARD DRIVE NO	PROTECTION DISK & MANUAL
Engaging six-disk puzzle adventure, yet doesn't install on a hard drive.	

ZOOL 2 AGA

As expected, the AGA update to Zool 2 has arrived. I figured that Gremlin learned from the first Zool AGA and would make Zool 2 AGA a significant improvement over the ECS original. However, once again Gremlin disappoints.

The solid platformer gameplay is still there, but the only enhancements are a few minor visual tweaks including the obligatory extra level of parallax. Mysteriously, this simple addition makes the game extremely choppy, breaking up the smooth scrolling

of the ECS version. Other than that, there really aren't any visible improvements. Same minimalistic music, same gameplay. This is actually a downgrade from the ECS release. It plays the same, despite the choppiness, but Zool 2 AGA is a letdown. **■ RB**



ZOOL 2 AGA	
GREMLIN ■ £26 (\$40)	
VIDEO PAL	1.3/2.0/3.0 3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE YES	PROTECTION CODEWHEEL
Minor enhancements accompanied by choppier gameplay.	



GLOBAL DOMINATION

A world begging for domination and loaded with “wannabe” conquerors is irresistible to strategy gamers. Throw in the possibilities of dealing with revolution by locals, working out treaties, and being able to control the size, location, and punch your armies deliver, and you’ll find that you’re playing Global Domination. For those of you who remember the board game Risk, this is Risk Amiga-style with all of the action and none of the board pieces and dice throwing.

Global Domination opens with some choices as to the type of geographic makeup your world will have, the number of opponents, and the level of difficulty. Next, you and your opponents are randomly placed on the various continents where you have plenty of opportunity for expansion. Each turn brings you supplemental military capability based on how much territory you control. The success or failure of your early strategy is based on control of pivotal geographic locations and the proximity, tenacity, and size of enemy military units. Army size and capability are represented by bullets of varying sizes. Map color is determined by who holds the territory. When an army is attacked, the nation turns red until the conflict is resolved. Resolution of the conflict may take one to five turns depend-

ing on the armies’ makeup. No armies may be added or deleted in a disputed territory until there is a victor. Only adjacently held nations can be attacked, and there is limited access by sea to some nations. The amount of military movement allowed is determined by the number, size, and value of the nations you hold. Elimination of all opposition and occupation of all territory constitutes (what else?) global domination.



This game is inherently loaded with conflict and subsequent strategy. However, conflict is not limited to enemy considerations. Early in the game it is relatively simple, but you find yourself torn between the desperate desire to increase the number of nations dominated (leaving yourself thin in defense of held territory) and the restrictive discipline required to protect your conquered holdings (limiting added military capability needed at your next turn). This internal conflict diminishes as the game progresses, yet the game retains the requirement for strategy to the very end.

The graphics and basic strategy are excellent, and the fact that the game has the ability to include both combative and personal conflict is also a real plus. However, the focus upon pure conflict is both a strength and a weakness of Global

Domination. Much of what is offered as gameplay seems to be extraneous to the game. The computerized version retains the Risk strength of geographical conflict and strategy, but misses the mark at enhancement. For example, you “spend” points to create armies with more or less air defense, artillery, air strike capability, or mechanized infantry. You may buy capabilities to create unrest in enemy territory or to keep unrest down in countries you dominate. You can make treaties with opponents. You can even go to a cheesy, arcade-like mode to resolve specific military conflicts. However, none of these enhancements seem to be of great importance in the large picture. In fact, except for countries at unrest being temporarily unconquerable, these features are inconsequential and awkward to implement at best. Like Risk, the strategy of where, not how, you choose to do battle is what Global Domination is all about. The resolution of conflict boils down to “if mine’s bigger than yours, then you lose”.

I hate to admit it, but I remember when there were no Amigas, and Risk was as good as a board game could get. There is something to be said for being able to tell Phil face-to-face that he’s a weasel for breaking a treaty or to beg Tom to leave you alone until you get back on your feet. The inherent verbal conflict created by Risk’s premise of territorial conflict made the game even more satisfying to play. In Global Domination, the elimination of cumbersome pieces and dice is more efficient, but I miss the human element. When you compare Global Domination with other more sophisticated computer strategy games, it’s decent, but a little too simplistic. Computerization of Risk didn’t really make it better, just easier to play. ■ RM



GLOBAL DOMINATION
IMPRESSIONS ■ £35 (\$50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
YES	NONE

Conquer the world (and your friends) in this computer version of Risk



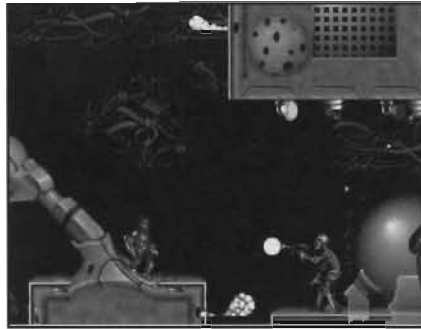
ASSASSIN SPECIAL EDITION

Assassin Special Edition by Team 17 is a re-release of the original Assassin game but with more weapons, bonuses, and mayhem. You are an assassin who must seek out and destroy the evil villain Midan who lurks deep within an underground lair. Armed with a pulse-laser, body armor, and sheer athleticism, you must overcome a total of 17 levels to finally defeat the evil Midan and break his reign of power.

Assassin Special Edition is a scrolling platform game with a few twists thrown in to break up the standard run, jump, and shoot gameplay. You can climb almost anywhere in this game, including up vertical walls and across ceilings. In addition to your pulse-laser, there are "Mega-Weapons" that can be picked up along the way. These include Robo-Walkers, Proxim-Mines, Heat Seekers, Flame Paths, Fire Storms, and Star Bursts. There are also bonus stars and continue coins (which are sometimes hidden) that can be collected. At the end of each level is a huge boss that must be defeated.

The levels are large in this game and can take quite some time to finish. With 17 levels in all, there is plenty of gameplay in this package. Scrolling and sprite animations are very smooth, and the controls are logical and responsive. The hidden bonuses in each level usually require careful exploration and thought.

On the downside, the continuation system leaves something to be desired. In order to continue a game, you must collect a continue coin. These coins are hidden on each level and are not always easy to find.



Combined with the fact that there are 17 levels, it could take a marathon session to complete the game without being able to restart past level one.

Assassin Special Edition is not a top-notch game, but it is well worth the budget price. There is quite a bit of gameplay packed into this title, and except for a few flaws, it is well done. If you're on a tight budget and looking for a platform shooter that's a bit different, then Assassin Special Edition is it. **■ JL**

ASSASSIN SPECIAL EDITION

TEAM 17 ■ £11 (\$15)

VIDEO

PAL

1.3/2.0/3.0

OK

HARD DRIVE

NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

This budget platformer gives you your money's worth.



LEGACY OF SORASIL: HERO QUEST 2

Legacy of Sorasil: Hero Quest 2 has nothing to do with Sierra's Hero's Quest (renamed Quest for Glory). Rather it's the sequel to Gremlin's earlier HeroQuest, based on the popular Hasbro fantasy role-playing board game.

Here's the plot: you must free the lands of Rhia from the control of Lord Venthax and his evil elf hordes. Doing so requires completing eight increasingly difficult levels before facing Venthax himself. The goal in each level is to obtain a certain item that will aid you later. While the game is more or less linear, you do get some choice over the order of the scenarios. Between stages you can enter trading posts to buy and sell weapons, equipment, and magic potions and spells.

Legacy of Sorasil's gameplay reveals its board game heritage. Your party consists of

up to four members from a choice of eight characters with varying abilities. Team members take turns doing things such as moving, fighting, using magic, and searching for treasure in the 3D isometrically-depicted scenarios. Most actions use up some of your 20 allotted action points per turn, so you must plan them carefully. Enemies also take turns, but their strategy is very predictable and shallow: fight to the death if near an opponent – otherwise do nothing.

The game's interface is a simple point-and-click affair that's easy to learn. And the automapping feature is especially handy to prevent getting lost. Graphics and sounds are pretty good, except for a bug that causes random flashes of garbage onscreen if you run the game from Workbench on an AGA Amiga.

Most basic role-playing elements are here, but there's hardly anything to set Legacy of Sorasil apart from the crowd. Forget about interacting with other characters, crafting complex magic, or solving many puzzles. Although casual players may appreciate its simplicity, advanced players will find the game limited and largely uninspired. **■ HV**



LEGACY OF SORASIL

GREMLIN ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

NTSC

1.3/2.0/3.0

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

YES

PROTECTION

CODEWHEEL

Turn-based role-playing game with limited appeal.



MEAN ARENAS

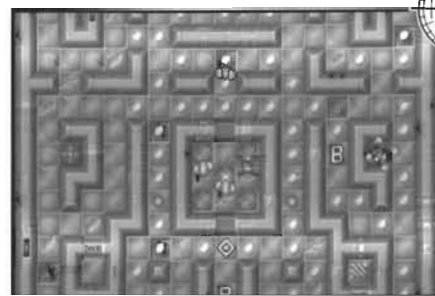
A combination of Pac Man and Killing Game Show, Mean Arenas is set in a future where machines do nearly all the work, leaving the populace with little else to do other than watch TV. Consequently, there's a great demand for exciting programming, and a highly-rated new game show called "Mean Arenas" seems to fit the bill.

As a contestant in this unique show, you must collect all the money scattered about in 26 maze-like arenas divided into four zones (Robo, Dungeon, Rainbow, and Starship). That goal alone isn't too challenging, but you must also avoid hazards such as minefields, rockets, and guardians who are intent on giving you the consolation prize of death. In addition, there are various other items including weapons, keys, bonuses, and first aid kits waiting to be found. Getting through an arena usually involves a bit of puzzle solving, ranging from simple "find the key to open the lock" tasks to complex problems which require clever thinking.

Each arena consists of one to eight floors and is shown from the familiar overhead view. You guide your onscreen character via joystick. Since things get very difficult later in the game, it pays to read the hints given before starting an arena and in the message disks. And be sure to find the passwords in each arena, so you don't always have to start at the beginning - this is a long game!

Although Mean Arenas is essentially a typical maze game, its TV game show theme is interesting. There are even two personable hosts who have funny slapstick mishaps between arenas and provide such insightful commentary as "Oh, damn!" and "That'll help him!" during play. The music also has a high energy game show flavor.

Mean Arenas appeals to both cerebral and action gamers, and it has that addictive quality common to good games. The game show twist also helps elevate it to above average status and makes it a worthwhile investment for your game library. ■ HV



MEAN ARENAS

ICE ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	MANUAL

Pac Man clone with all the bells and whistles.

CYBERPUNKS

When you hear the word Cyberpunk, what image comes to mind? Perhaps it's a vision of that high school kid who read the latest issue of *Mondo* and now thinks he's the techno-prophet of the new age. Maybe you think of one of those guys who calls a BBS with his 300 baud modem and types in all capital letters intentionally misspelling words to feign coolness. Possibly you imagine a person with a decent technological background and a true view of the future information age free of corporate hype and misinformation. But if you pose that same question to the team at Core Design, they'll show you their new game, Cyberpunks.

Cyberpunks isn't a Blade Runner-esque depiction of a bleak Orwellian future. It's more like a Saturday morning cartoon ripe for action figure, comic book, and

Happy Meal prize tie-ins. It's a light hearted, overhead-view trek through deadly missions inside a multitude of danger-filled labyrinths. Sort of like a cross between Chaos Engine and the Muppet Babies. In Cyberpunks, you assume the role of three members of the elite 501st Cyber Assault Squad, each with his own monosyllabic name: Raa, Bee, and Gee. The Cyber Assault Squad's mission is to enter various intergalactic hotspots and stabilize the situation. Each mission involves a different trouble area that must be secured.

The three cosmic troubleshooters must venture through several stages ranging from investigating mysterious power surges to rescuing scientists held hostage by vicious aliens. Each level is an overhead view maze with several floors. Each stage has a variety of locked doors, killer aliens, logic puzzles, and other obstacles to navigate. Luckily, many items such as power ups, access cards, and other goodies can be picked up along the way to aid in the quest. However, the main enemy in this game is not the horde of blood thirsty aliens - it's time.

You have 1000 minutes to complete each mission. That's barely enough time to get through the later mazes. One has to really memorize the layouts and know where all the access cards are on each level to survive.

Graphically, Cyberpunks is nothing new. It has a Japanese animation look that's nice, but not really anything special. There is

also a fairly drab techno theme that plays throughout each mission. Aside from the various sound effects, the audio is nothing fantastic either.

In the gameplay department, Cyberpunks really loses out. It's just plain boring. The first few levels are entertaining, but after awhile the whole process of finding the key and rushing to the exit becomes old hat. Similar games like Alien Breed II and Chaos Engine have a bit more variety to keep the player interested. Cyberpunks really doesn't have much to break the "key and exit" monotony.

So, while some people may call Cyberpunks another step in the process of commercializing a formerly underground movement, I'll just call it a decidedly average game and nothing more. ■ RB



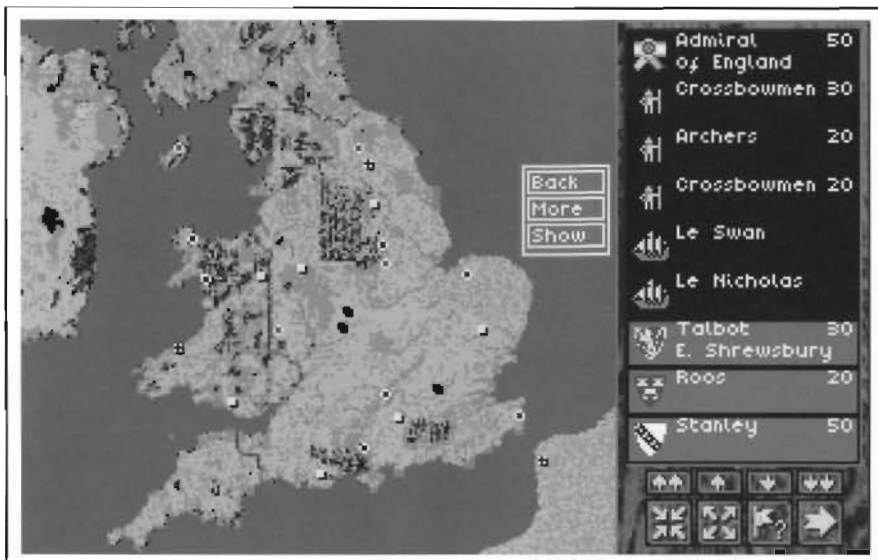
CYBERPUNKS

CORE DESIGN ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED

A second-rate version of Chaos Engine for the younger set.

KINGMAKER



Based on a board game, Kingmaker challenges you to become the controlling faction in the battle for the British crown during the War of the Roses. No one in the player's faction can be king, so the player must capture at least one heir to the throne and see to it that other potential heirs are killed off. The successful player thereby becomes master to the puppet-king. When the game begins, there are nine heirs and up to six factions. Only one faction can be human controlled, so forget about inviting your friends over for dinner. At the start, the player receives a variety of assets, such as nobles, titles, offices, ships, mercenaries, and clergy. The selection process for awarding these assets is completely random (good luck!). The player then must utilize these assets in an attempt to win the crown. Victory is achieved by laying siege to castles and fighting opposing factions. Pretty simple.



I guess the idea behind the game is sound enough, but there isn't much depth to it. The player is stuck in the same scenario every game. The only differences are the number of factions selected and the type of assets received. To put it bluntly... booooo-

ing. The gameplay leaves much to be desired and the graphics are less than interesting. Music is almost nonexistent and when there is some, you wish it would go away. Sound effects are cheesy, and the digitized speech from the PC version is nowhere to be found.

Movement in the game is confusing at best. Sometimes there are legitimate obstacles that hinder movement, and other times movement is impeded for no apparent reason. Sometimes one move increment will get the player across the screen, but other times the same attempt takes the player nowhere. After playing Kingmaker for awhile, I figured out that the land is divided up into different sectors. One sector is one movement point. It still doesn't make much sense because some sectors are huge while others are very tiny. Logistics in Kingmaker is not an exact science, either. The player has no way of knowing if he is in position to attack an enemy or not. In this respect, the computer has an advantage. It knows the rules, but the player is in the dark.

When the player has finished the movement phase, he goes on to combat. Combat is an extreme disappointment. When combat has been initiated, a requester comes up asking if the player wishes to attack, evade, or control. The control option is supposed to allow you to take command of the action. However, this option crashed my machine almost every time. (Please note that Mark reviewed this game on an A3000, so your mileage may vary. — Ed) One time I did get to the battlefield and was delighted to wait as the machine stumbled through the sequence in slow motion. After an entire

episode of Letterman had gone by, I decided it was time to pull the plug.

Another quirk about combat phase is that if the armies of two warring factions are rather large, the battle is more likely to be "indecisive" or called off due to storms. All is fair in love and war but when this happens every single time, it becomes just a bit ridiculous. Of course, the computer has to contend with this erratic behavior as well, but that is little consolation.

The "crowning" disappointment is not being able to fight on the high seas. Ships are just for transportation purposes, and they have a capacity of only 100 troops. Usually 200 troops are needed to capture royalty. At the end of the combat phase the winner can ransom the loser, release him, or kill him. Don't bother ransoming. The computer does not recognize this action and will refuse the ransom. On the other hand, if the computer wins, it is more than happy to ransom the human player.

I particularly don't like the icon-only interface and the lack of menus or hotkeys. Nothing about this game would indicate that it has been redesigned for the Amiga. It doesn't even multitask. Since there is no digitized speech, the introductory picture of Shakespeare narrating the tale looks ridiculous. When it is the computer's turn to play, you are forced to wait and watch everything that happens. When there are five other computer factions... well, get ready for a narcolepsy attack.

Overall, the game is not system friendly or user friendly and needs some major debugging. I suggest you buy the board game instead. At least it won't crash your machine. ■ MP

KINGMAKER

US GOLD ■ £38 (\$60)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
YES	MANUAL

If the plot sounds interesting, invest in the board game instead.

ARCADE POOL



Team 17's latest release, *Arcade Pool*, is a bit of a change from its usual offering of action platformers, shooters, and fighting games. Obviously, it's a pool game, but it contains many different varieties of pool along with a nice interface, reasonable graphics, and a fitting ragtime soundtrack. It even includes a rule editor to create custom pool games for just about any taste.

Arcade Pool contains eight different flavors of the game, including: U.K. 8 Ball, U.S. 8 Ball, Trickshot, 9-Ball, 8/15 Ball, 9 Ball Challenge, Speed Pool, and perhaps one of the most enjoyable varieties, *Survivor*. Each game has its own rules and various other options (such as the color of the table) to make it all the more realistic.

The basic interface of *Arcade Pool* uses only the mouse. To shoot the ball, the strength of the shot can be altered by clicking on a power meter at the bottom right-hand side of the screen. Then the stick can be aimed by clicking on the cue ball and using the graphical extrapolation of the ball's movement to judge the shot. The menu options can be selected by clicking on a variety of buttons lining the bottom of the screen. All the menus, including a great on-line manual, can be accessed through these buttons.

Probably the easiest games to start with are the various 8 ball varieties. Both the U.K. and U.S. 8 ball games involve beating the competing player by getting all balls of a certain color pocketed. Then finish off the round by sinking the 8 ball. The rest of the games follow the standard rules and can be played in any of three formats: singles (the player with the best score after 1, 3, or 5 games wins), tournament (several players



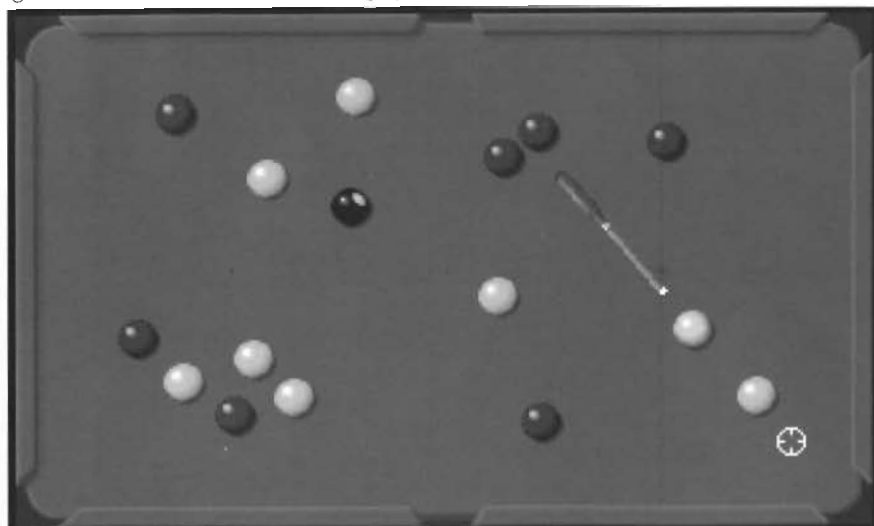
compete and are gradually eliminated, leaving one final champion), and challenge (one player tries to beat the various formidable computer opponents).

Two of my personal favorite games in *Arcade Pool* are *Speed Pool* and *Survivor*. *Speed Pool* is a fast-paced game in which a player attempts to sink all the balls on the table in the shortest amount of time. The best scores are kept in a list that is saved to disk. *Survivor*, originally a betting game popular in pubs across the U.K., consists of several players duking it out to see who's left. Every time a player sinks the cue ball or misses a shot a "life" is lost. When all lives are gone, the player is out of the match.

Instead of going for the elaborate 3D approach that Archer Maclean's pool games

display, *Arcade Pool* uses a simple and effective overhead view of the table. The balls move realistically except for one problem: the solid colored balls appear to be sliding around rather than rolling since there aren't any rotating patterns on them. Other than this small quirk, the graphics are fine. The sound is adequate as well. When the music is turned off, the player can hear the clicking of the balls and the clapping of the crowd when a particularly good shot is made.

Team 17 did a fine job with this budget release. It's got all the makings of a great pool game and the rule editor really extends the usefulness of the program. It runs on any Amiga with 1MB and even auto enhances the graphics for AGA machines. *Arcade Pool* is well worth the budget price. ■ **RB**



ARCADE POOL

TEAM 17 ■ £10 (\$15)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED

Team 17 racks up the classic table game at a budget price.



SOCCER KID AGA

These days, platform games are a dime a dozen. It takes quite a bit of originality to elevate one above the rest of the pack. Krisalis' Soccer Kid attempts to breathe new life into the platform genre with a few new and interesting concepts coupled with standard gameplay and solid audio-visual support. However, in the end, Soccer Kid comes off as merely average.

In Soccer Kid, the nameless hero must rescue the 1994 World Cup Trophy from the clutches of Scab, the intergalactic space pirate. The challenge is taken up when Scab steals the trophy minutes before the championships are to start. During transport to Scab's ship, the cup collides with a wandering asteroid, shattering it and sending the pieces back down to the Earth's surface. Miraculously, the trophy segments survive re-entry. Soccer Kid must crisscross the planet, continually battling to retrieve the trophy pieces and return them to the U.S. World Cup championships.

Basically, Soccer Kid's gameplay is standard run and jump stuff. However, to spice it up a bit, instead of just jumping on or shooting enemies, our hero must hit the oncoming baddies with his soccer ball. He

can also jump on the ball to achieve greater height (or to just plain show off).

The biggest problem with trying to utilize the ball is that the controls are a bit complex. A single button initiates a wide variety of kicks. The programmers could have implemented the second fire button instead of consolidating all the moves into one. With a little practice, however, the ball will become a manageable and effective weapon. Aside from the ball gimmick, the rest of the game is a textbook platformer.

The graphics in Soccer Kid are decent. In the AGA version there is plenty of smooth parallax scrolling and fairly large animated characters. Probably the most notable AGA enhancement is the use of the extra chip RAM for more samples in the music. The audio is probably one of Soccer Kid's best points.

In a market full of platformers, Soccer Kid does spark a little interest in the genre with some engaging new ideas. The rest of the game is fair, but not really an over-the-top production. While not the best example of a top-notch Amiga platformer, Soccer Kid contains an sufficient helping of entertainment value. **■ RB**



SOCCER KID AGA

KRISALIS ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

PAL

1.3/2.0/3.0

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

YES

PROTECTION

NONE

You don't have to know anything about soccer to enjoy this game.



MAGIC BOY

Poor old Hewlett is in trouble. He was working late one night at sorcery school to finish up some homework when he accidentally tripped over the hidden trap door to the Grand Wizard's personal zoo, letting all the bizarre creatures loose on the magical countryside. Of course, if the Wizard found out that his top scholar let his beloved animals escape, that would ruin his rep, and no doubt go on the ominous "personal record" that all schools seem to keep. So, to avoid the Grand Wizard's wrath, the Magic Boy himself must comb the surrounding area and try to grab all the Wizard's animals and toss them back into the cellar.

Empire's Magic Boy is a nice return to simplicity. Instead of fumbling around with

complex game mechanics, Magic Boy presents a nice arcade adventure with a distinct Parasol Stars feel to it. It's the kind of game that is easy to pick up, but has just the right combination of playability and challenge to keep a player interested.

Each of the four zones surrounding sorcery school is divided up into eight smaller, vertically scrolling levels. Every zone must be completed in order, starting at the acrid Sandy Land and progressing to every technophobe's nightmare, Future Zone. To complete each level, Magic Boy must jump from platform to platform, stun the animals with his wand, and return each one to the cellar until all have been recaptured.

It sounds easy, but some of the stages are fairly involved. There are plenty of enemies to dodge, mazes to navigate, and other obstacles that make Magic Boy a fun-filled excursion. While Magic Boy has a limited number of attempts at each stage, there is an unlimited number of continues available, and this fact dampens the playability somewhat. However, the gameplay remains the strongest feature of this game.

Magic Boy's graphics have a great cartoon look to them. They seem more at

home on Saturday morning cartoons than a computer game. Each monster is drawn with satisfying detail, not to mention the variety of backgrounds and parallax scrolling. Though the music and sound effects are mildly annoying, the audio-visual package is still exceptional.

As a whole, Magic Boy is a satisfying arcade experience. While it doesn't have breathtaking graphics or a revolutionary theme, it's great mindless fun. Considering the fact that Empire includes Cool Croc Twins from a few years back as part of the package, it's a good value. **■ RB**

MAGIC BOY

EMPIRE ■ £26 (\$40)

VIDEO

NTSC

1.3/2.0/3.0

OK

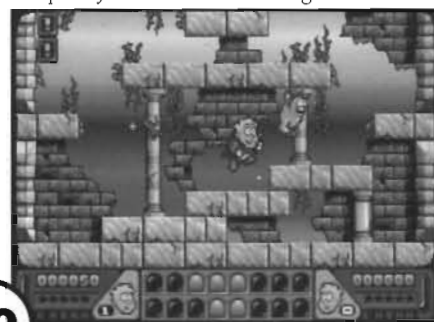
HARD DRIVE

NO

PROTECTION

DISK-BASED

Fulfill your Marlon Perkins fantasy with this simplistic arcade game.



PERIHELION

While usually an action game fan, I like a good adventure game every once in a while. What turns me off to most adventures and RPGs is the medieval theme. There seems to be a lack of good science fiction adventure games, so I was very interested in Psygnosis' latest effort, Perihelion. The game has fantastic graphics and a decent plotline, although the user interface is a bit quirky, and there are a few gameplay problems.

The game is staged amidst a bizarre amalgam of highly advanced technology and powerful mysticism on a planet called Perihelion. The planet is being threatened by The Unborn, an ancient evil force attempting to enshroud Perihelion in complete darkness. The player controls a genetically engineered crew of six characters immune to The Unborn's direct manipulation. This crew, ranging from cyborgs to half-breed reptilian humans, travels the desolate plains of Perihelion and combats the chaotic influence of The Unborn.



All crew members start off with a standard stock of clothing, armor, and weapons. Each individual has to be engineered from a wide range of classes, dispositions, and skills. A special computer can further endow the characters with such psi-powers as unleashing poisonous acid clouds to creating reality shifting mental disruptions.

These characters travel the planet, solving complex puzzles while encountering a variety of creatures. A personal computer terminal is utilized by each adventurer to talk to each creature and to access the information network connecting the globe. Through this system, objects of interest can be scanned, creatures can be analyzed, and alternate sites can be monitored.

Perihelion's combat system is very similar to SSI's Goldbox series of RPGs. From a bird's eye view, each character cycles through a turn. Often characters can



improve some of their attributes while in combat. The computer operates its combatants in the same method, although some of the enemies' logic seems a bit simplistic. Combat can be a bit tedious and, in many cases, very difficult. Even the very first battle takes quite a few tries to successfully complete.

The graphics and sound in Perihelion combine effectively to set the dark and somber mood. The first-person view graphics when travelling through cities and buildings are done in extreme detail, creating a stunning result. The eerie music and ominous sound effects convey the bleak atmosphere engulfing the desolate countryside, decaying cities, and squalid living conditions on Perihelion.

Gameplay is the weak point of this title. Early on, most players will be frustrated by the high difficulty level. The first battle and some of the early puzzles serve as real roadblocks. This hampers the enjoyment of what could have been an incredible adventure experience. The user interface is also a bit uneven, requiring many different screens to be accessed in order to process simple commands. These shortcomings are punctuated by the fact that this game comes on four disks, yet is not hard drive installable.

Perihelion could have been one of the best Amiga adventure games of all time, but the game is let down by uneven gameplay and a clumsy interface. However, considering the gorgeous graphics and absence of many sci-fi RPGs on the market, Perihelion is still worth a look.

■ RB

PERIHELION

PSYGNOSIS ■ £30 (\$45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
OK	DISK-BASED

Stylish cyber-punk RPG marred by a weak interface.



WIN COOL STUFF!

- **PSYGNOSIS game t-shirt**
- **HIRED GUNS keychain**
- **PUGGSY inflatable doll**
- **THEATRE OF DEATH ski cap**

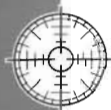
Psygnosis of America has donated tons of prizes to give away to 50 lucky Amiga Game Zone readers in this colossal contest! Just fill out the entry card on this page and send it in by December 31. We'll pick 50 entries at random, and each winner will receive a package chock full of the items listed above.

FIVE GRAND PRIZE WINNERS RECEIVE

- **All the cool stuff listed above**
- **PSYGNOSIS missile cannister**
- **PSYGNOSIS game (your choice)**

BRIAN THE LION
MICROCOSM
PERIHELION
SECOND SAMURAI





BATTLETOADS

Back in 1991, Rare produced Battletoads, which was to become one of the most successful games of that year for the NES. Battletoads capitalized on the whole mutant amphibian craze that was sweeping the planet due to the rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The human-like toads, all named after various skin maladies were featured in a Double Dragon style beat 'em up. With a three year lag and the 16-bit hardware of the Amiga, it would be expected that the Amiga version would eclipse the original NES game by several orders of magnitude. However, Battletoads hasn't been enhanced at all, and considering the hardware it's running on, it's actually worse in some respects.




These warrior toads were once a crew of enthusiastic teenage game testers at the Psicone Corporation's video game division. The hapless gamers fell victim to a hidden computer virus contained in Psicone's newest game, Battletoads. The teens were transformed into the game's protagonists and thrust into an alternate dimension known as the Gamescape. But there's trouble in Gamescape. One of the Battletoads, Pimple, and the princess have been captured by the Dark Queen. It's up to Zits and Rash to save their friends and vanquish the evil captor.

Basically, the game is comprised of twelve scrolling levels. While most of the levels consist of horizontal fighting action, there are other challenges such as scaling cavern walls and races. The Battletoads fight their way through the game using a variety of punch, jump, and kick moves. Each final blow is punctuated with an exaggerated animation such as a giant fist smashing a creature to bits or an oversized foot kicking a villain off the screen.

Battletoads looks and sounds very dated. The characters are extremely tiny and poorly animated. Smooth scrolling is nonexistent, and the game is restricted to an

unusually small portion of the screen. As for sound, there is an option to listen to the sparse sound effects or the equally obnoxious musical score. The best bet is just to turn the volume off.

Of course, it all comes down to the gameplay. Battletoads is sorely lacking in this respect. The whole concept is stale, and it just isn't any fun. The simplistic Double Dragon style action gets quite boring, and the levels' slight deviations simply don't enhance the overall game much. It may have been a good game in 1991 on an 8-bit platform, but in this day and age on the Amiga, I expect more. ■ RB

BATTLETOADS	
MINDSCAPE ■ £25 (\$35)	
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED
<i>A beat 'em up with lots of warts.</i> 	

KING'S TABLE

Often new computer games are just rehashes of what's been done countless times before, so it's nice to see a developer take a chance on an original idea. Gametek has done just that with King's Table, a computerized version of an ancient Nordic board game loosely resembling chess.

In Norse mythology, Ragnarok is the Apocalypse, the destruction of the Heavens and the Earth. Odin, king of the gods, took on a human form and challenged people at his game of King's Table, hoping to learn strategies that would help him prevent his own doom at Ragnarok.

This version is actually two games in one. Both take place on an 11 x 11 check-



ered field, and each player has a group of pieces featuring Norse mythological figures. The white player, starting at the center, must move Odin to one of the four corners of the board, while the black player, starting on the four sides, must prevent this by surrounding Odin. In Ragnarok, the primary game, both players get pawns plus a choice of four pieces with special abilities. In King's Table, a slight variation, there are no special pieces. The white player plays as Odin in both cases.

The game isn't any more difficult than chess, but it does require very different playing strategies, preventing it from being merely another clone. And after you learn how the game works, you'll find it every bit

as interesting as chess.

On the negative side, the Amiga implementation has problems beginning with an annoying control scheme requiring both a joystick and a mouse. There are also some random bugs including control lock-ups and crashes during animation sequence loading. No hard drive support and a tedious bootup are not appreciated in this type of game which can be played again and again. This PC port could have been much better if it didn't treat Amiga users as second class players. ■ HV

KING'S TABLE	
GAMETEK ■ £26 (\$40)	
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK (NO 3000)
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED
<i>An alternative game for chess lovers.</i> 	



DIGGERS



kill your opponents provides an added dimension of fun, be aware that even if you secure all of the zones this way, you still can't win the game unless

up to a challenging and substantial game that will keep your interest.

Besides offering great gameplay, Diggers is a model for what AGA games should be. Great care was obviously lavished on the superior 256-color graphics and catchy music. The game even installs on a hard drive with Commodore's Installer utility and exits (unfortunately only from the title screen) back to Workbench without trashing the system. Of course you can load and save games, which you should do after finishing a zone.

Lemmings was undoubtedly a milestone in the history of computer gaming. It created a whole new genre of games in which you control a bunch of mindless little creatures. There must be something about this premise that makes it interesting – maybe it's the feeling of godlike power or perhaps the sense of accomplishment from successful leadership. Whatever it is, Lemmings has spawned a number of imitations, as well as a few innovations such as Diggers.

Diggers gives the Lemmings concept a new twist. In Diggers, there are only five characters instead of dozens, and they aren't quite as mindless. There's also much greater independent control over each character. The result is a unique style.

The scene is the mineral-rich planet Zarg, and the day is the Glorious 412th, the first day in a month of unrestricted mining designated each year by the authorities. A stranger seeking your fortune, you must first choose for your operation one of four native races of diggers who are also seeking their own fortunes. The choices are the Habbish (clerics), the Grablins (dwarves), the Quarriors (ogres), and the FTargs (nerdy trolls). Each race has its own strengths and weaknesses, and it pays to consider this during the game. The Grablins seem to be the best overall choice, as they are reasonably strong and dig the fastest, although you can try the others for greater challenges.

Next it's time to choose one of Zarg's 33 zones for mining. At the beginning, you get a choice between only the first two. After completing a zone, you can move on to any adjacent ones, thereby working your way around the map. Zones are acquired in one of two ways: raise a specified amount of zogs (the monetary units of Zarg) before an opposing computer-controlled team of diggers does or eliminate that team. Salaries and any death duties for your diggers are deducted from this amount (or your bank account), and you get the rest. If you manage to accumulate the rather odd amount of 15,500 zogs in your account, you win the game. While the ability to hunt down and

you have enough zogs.

The actual gameplay takes place in a scrolling cross-sectioned view of a zone. Each zone is depicted in one of seven themes and comes complete with its own set of hazards (monsters, water, etc.) and



puzzles such as how to get to a particularly valuable gem. All your diggers begin at a home base which is used to sell gems and to buy mining equipment, and they can teleport back to the home base anytime. Selecting a digger reveals an icon panel from which you give various instructions including digging, walking, waiting, and picking up and dropping things. The controls are quite intuitive once you get the hang of them. There's also a permanent control panel at the bottom of the screen for information and for easy access to each digger.

With five diggers each doing his own thing, the game really tests your organizational and management skills. This is especially true since the diggers perform tasks for a limited time before getting bored and wandering off, so you must regularly reassign tasks or give new ones. You must also plan good strategies for mining and/or killing opponents and wisely buy equipment with your working capital. All of this adds

If you liked Lemmings, try Diggers. It's different enough to avoid being just another Lemmings clone, and it's one of those games that will probably become a classic.

■ HV

DIGGERS AGA

MILLENNIUM ■ £35 (\$50)

VIDEO

NTSC

1.3/2.0/3.0

3.0 ONLY

HARD DRIVE

YES

PROTECTION

NONE

Miniature miners break new ground on the Lemmings theme.





CAMPAIGN 2

Empire Software has broken several rules with the release of Campaign II for the Amiga. Don't get me wrong — mostly the right rules were broken, such as the rule that says sequels are never as good as the original. And in the bargain, Empire has also managed to produce a game that is difficult to describe. For instance, if I start talking about a war game involving tanks and aircraft and go on about pitched battles between opposing groups of these vehicles, you would likely decide this is an action-based, "drive the tank" or "fly the plane" type of game. On the other hand, if I describe it as a strategy-based simulation involving regiments and battalions, a completely different type of game would be pictured. Like its predecessor, Campaign II is both types of games, depending on how you want to play.

In a nutshell, you can fight land-based battles anywhere in the world, in the period 1945 to the present. There are three sections to the game: the campaign section, the battle section, and a map editor. In the campaign section, you are presented with a screen consisting of a scrolling map on one side and several icons on the other. Depending on the scenario, the icons allow control over such details as map scale, speed of operations, organization of units, and the status of your soldiers.

When you maneuver your units so that they come into contact with enemy forces, the game switches to the battle section. The first screen in this section uses bar graphs to show you the relative strengths of the opposing forces. If you have planned well, you will see your tanks facing enemy foot soldiers, meaning an almost sure win for you. If you have planned poorly or run across a previously hidden enemy, the situation may be reversed. In any event, you are given the choice to fight the battle manually or have the computer determine the winner.

This is when the dual nature of the game really becomes apparent. If you are mainly interested in the big picture, click on automatic. The outcome of the battle is determined and you are informed of the

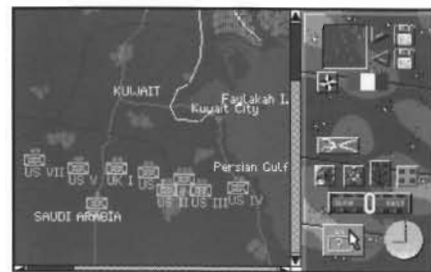
outcome and the casualty figures. This allows you to get back to moving brigades and divisions. On the other hand, if you like to feel more in control of your destiny or want to try for a miracle against overwhelming odds, click on manual.

If you do choose manual, you are taken to the battle map. This is arranged much like the campaign map, except that the map is fixed on maximum magnification, and you see the individual platoons represented. As before, you can give movement commands to direct your platoons to the enemy. You can either watch this map as the battle unfolds or choose the 3D view icon which will give you a viewpoint behind and slightly above the lead vehicle of the currently selected platoon.



Also available from the battle map screen is the ability to alter game parameters. You can choose either automatic or manual control of a number of options, depending on how many details you wish to handle yourself. If you choose to use the 3D view of an individual vehicle, you can decide between manual or automatic control of each of three aspects: driving, shooting, and strategy. This choice gives you the luxury of controlling only those aspects that you feel you can handle. Graphic detail levels are adjustable as well, allowing for lower detail levels for slower processors. The graphics themselves are of the filled polygon variety, for speed rather than beauty. The game is played almost exclusively using the mouse, with the exception of vehicle controls in the battle section.

In the original Campaign, the re-supplying of troops required you to devote factory production to needed components. You then had to provide clear supply lines for the replacements to reach the front areas. Since the original game was limited to the WWII era, this approach made sense, as it was historically accurate. However, modern warfare moves much too quickly for factory production to be allocated or for supply convoys to transport goods. In the current game, re-supply is handled through the use of supply dumps. These are pre-positioned



either in the scenario or through the use of the map editor. The only unrealistic fact is that there is an infinite amount of supplies.

Included with the program are 14 training scenarios to familiarize you with all of the features and functions. When you have mastered the gameplay, you can try your luck with one of the six real war zones included. These consist of Korea (1950), Vietnam (1962), the Six Day War (1967), the Yom Kippur War (1973), the Iran-Iraq War (1980), and the Gulf War (1991). Each of these has historically accurate equipment. The map editor will allow you to change any facet of a scenario, including terrain, forces, minefields, and supply dumps. You can also create your own scenarios from scratch.

Games can be saved at any point, but doing so bizarrely activates the copy protection scheme. Since you have already supplied requested information to start the game, requiring another trip to the manual in order to save a game makes no sense. Campaign II does not multitask and requires a reboot of the system in order to quit.

While Campaign II is not perfect, it does give you a greater appreciation for the complexities in directing a modern war. Even if you have the original Campaign, you won't be disappointed if you buy this game.

■ RH



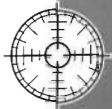
CAMPAIGN 2

EMPIRE ■ £25 (\$35)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	OK
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
YES	MANUAL

Combining an action game and a strategy game, Empire asks, "Can your game do this?"

CHEATS & TIPS



ASSASSIN SPECIAL EDITION *cheat*

Type ANOTHERCHEATMODE for infinite energy, then W for weapons, N to skip levels, and D to die.

BENEATH A STEEL SKY *walkthrough*

To keep this walkthrough a reasonable size, it only reveals the bare minimum necessary to win the game. But if this is *all* you do, you'll be missing out on a lot of the game!

Directions (N, S, W, E, NE, NW) refer to exits from "rooms". Up and Down require the use of ID in lift slot before stepping into the lift.

Recycling Plant: Get rung. Use metal bar on door. Open door. W. Climb down stairs. E. Step on lift, then quickly go E when Hobbins appears. Open cupboard and get spanner before Hobbins returns (repeat distraction process until you have spanner). W. Use circuit board with right junk pile. Examine transporter, talk to Hobbins until he reveals what's wrong with it, then ask Joey to fix it. When transporter puts canister on lift, climb down hole. Examine lock. Ask Joey to open door. Search corpse. E.

Upper Level: E. NE. Talk to Anita until Lamb arrives. Tell Lamb you're with security. E. Use spanner with cogs, then retrieve spanner. W. Use spanner on robot, then ask Joey about it. E. Look through window. Ask Joey to check out storeroom, then to disable fuse box. NW. Move gangway. Get putty. E. W. W. Examine cable, then ask Joey about it. W. W. W. Use spanner on both buttons. Ask Joey to press right button, then press left one. Flip switch. Get light bulb. Use putty in light socket. Flip switch. Flip both switches in control panel. E. E. E. Down.

Lower Level: Get cable. W. N. Use ID in left slot; enter Reich's apartment. Move pillow and get magazine. E. S. E. E. N. Ask travel agent about economy tour. Trade magazine for ticket. Get ticket. W. W. Up. Wait for Lamb, then give ticket to him. NE. Ask Lamb about tour. E. Talk to Anita until she mentions jammer, then give ID. Talk to Anita until she mentions schriebsmann port. W. W. W. Use ID in terminal. Press 4, 2, 1, 1, 2. Down. W. W. W. Use projector. Ask for schriebsmann port. Ask Joey to talk to hologram (charm). W. Talk to Burke until he gives you port. Ask Burke about ground level. E. E. E. E. E. E. Talk to Anchor; ask about special policies (Burke). When Anchor leaves, ask Joey to weld statue. Get anchor (repeat distraction process until you

have anchor). W. W. Up. Wait for Lamb, then ask him about problem. Down. W. N. Use ID in right slot; enter Lamb's apartment. Get videocassette. W. S. E. Up. W. W. NE. Climb stairs. E. Tie anchor to cable. Use grappling hook with sign. E. Use ID in interface slot. Use interface. Get ball. E. Open carpet bag. Get glass and surprise. E. Use decompress on data (red & green passwords). (G=Use green; GG=Get green; R=Use red; GR=Get red) G. E. R. W. GG. N. G. E. S. GR. N. R. W. GG. N. E. S. E. S. G. N. N. N. Get bust and book. Use decrypt on documents. Disconnect. Use ID in terminal. Press 4, 1, (read files), 0, 2, 2. Use ID in door slot. W. E. Down. W. Down.

Ground Level: W. Ask doorman about joining club. NE. Wait for Mrs. Piermont, then ask her about Overmann, sponsorship to club. E. Press button. Say Robert. Talk to Piermont until she sponsors you. Use video cassette in VCR. Examine dog bowl. Get dog biscuits. W. W. Examine door. Use ID with lock. E. Get secateurs. W. NE. NW. Use dog biscuits on plank. Wait for dog, then pull rope. NE. N. Open middle locker. W. W. Up. E. Up. NE. E. E. Open middle locker. Get overalls. E. Use control panel. Press 2. N. Get LINC card. W. W. Get coat. W. W. W. W. NE. Use ID in slot. Use Anita's ID in interface slot. E. Use blind on eyeball. N. N. Use playback on well. NW. W. W. Use blind on eyeball. E. Use blind on eyeball. N. N. NE. Get tuning fork (before blind wears off). Disconnect. Use ID in door slot. W. E. Down. W. Down. E. Ask gardener about blue flowers. Talk to boy until he mentions dandelions. Ask gardener about dandelions, Anita, name. NW. W. W. (club). Use jukebox. Make selection. Get glass when Colston gets up. W. NE. Up. W. W. W. Give glass to Burke. E. E. E. Down. W. W. (club). Use metal plate.

Subway: Use metal bar on packing case. Get wooden lid. Use box. Use box. Use metal bar on grill. Use secateurs on grill. Enter narrow passage. E. N. E. Put light bulb in socket. E. E. E. (quickly).

LINC HQ: Use metal bar with plaster, then with brickwork. Get brick. Put metal bar in swelling, then hit bar with brick. Get bar. E. N. Use control unit. Press 2. Pull grill handle. W. Look through window. E. E. Use circuit board in robot's slot. Ask Joey to check out tank room, then to open tap on nutrient tank. NW. NE. NE. Use ID in terminal. Press 2, 1. W. Search robot and

corpse. NE. Use Gallagher's ID in interface slot. Use interface. E. Use blind on eyeball. N. Use divine wrath on crusader. Disconnect. Use Anita's ID in interface slot. Use interface. E. Use blind on eyeball. N. E. Use oscillator on crystal. Get helix. Disconnect. W. E. Use Anita's ID in console. E. Open center cabinet, then put circuit board inside. Use center console. Press 2, 0, 3. E. Ask Joey to put hand on right sensor, then put your hand on other one. W. W. Get tongs. Get tissue with tongs. Use tongs with liquid nitrogen. E. E. E. E. Tie cable to pipe support. Climb down rungs. Use tongs with orifice. Grab cable. Ask Joey to sit in chair. You win!

BUBBA 'N' STIX *level codes*

LEVEL 2	T1QKPF?CMG
LEVEL 3	PXMYGFFW7D
LEVEL 4	913XPD1LZ5
LEVEL 5	12IFX?5RJ

CYBERPUNKS *level codes*

LEVEL 1	471174
LEVEL 2	159361
LEVEL 3	066990
LEVEL 4	135642

HIRED GUNS *cheats*

Type APPLEGATE to open all doors or CHRISTINA to choose any mission and to select the same player more than once.

JET STRIKE *level codes*

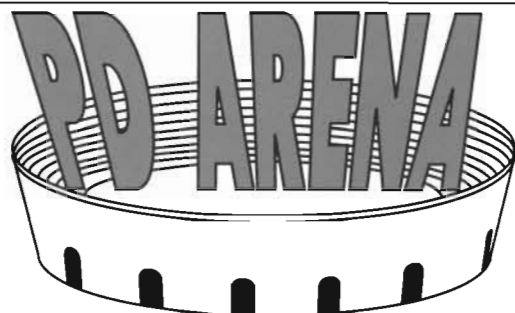
LEVEL 1	TDEJQNQL
LEVEL 2	JHALMROB
LEVEL 3	R2WVUVC
LEVEL 4	VZQRUDOP
LEVEL 5	HTEAPOJ
LEVEL 6	NFYHOTAR
LEVEL 7	RPSREBSX
LEVEL 8	TREFCPMJ
LEVEL 9	XHYJMVKX
LEVEL 10	HHSFMBQX
LEVEL 11	HXEXWPWV

MEAN ARENAS *cheats*

Type CHEAT as the password and you will enter an arena without enemies. Collecting the bonus item in the arena will allow you to use B for bombs, E for energy, L for lives, W for weapons, DELETE for shield, and HELP to skip levels.

STAR TREK 25TH ANNIVERSARY *cheat*

In the arcade sections, press D right after you fire your weapons. Your weapons will recharge even though the game is paused to access damage control!

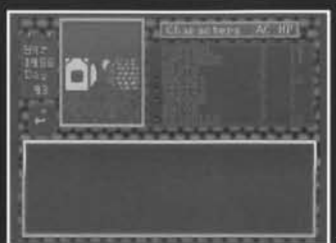


BY RALPH BARBAGALLO

Among all the freely distributable games released every year, a few stand out as being of commercial quality. While the games in this column may not be perfect, they still represent some of the best recent releases in the PD/Shareware arena.

SWORD OF FOLKLORE

MICHAEL KRAMER



When SSI ceased producing Amiga games, few users missed the company's rather poorly-produced titles. However, RPG fans did miss SSI's Gold Box Advanced Dungeons and Dragons adventures and thought they would never see another Amiga RPG equal to this classic series. Fortunately, shareware author Michael Kramer has released a dead ringer called *Sword of Folklore*.

While it may not equal today's more sophisticated adventure releases, *Sword of Folklore* is still a good chunk of RPG. It is very similar to such games as *Pool of Radiance* and *Curse of the Azure Bonds*. Gold Box fans will really appreciate this new release.

The graphics are incredibly detailed and offer a first-person perspective. While you wander about the cities, birds fly overhead, the sun rises and sets, and even the weather conditions change frequently. The elaborate mazes and dungeons will take many hours to navigate, and the monsters encountered will present a formidable challenge.

I have only a few complaints about *Sword of Folklore*. The fact that the registered version has a lame copy protection scheme is puzzling. Manual look-up copy protection may be acceptable in a commercial release, but I think it's a bit out of place for a shareware game. Also, I could not get it to run on my A4000 despite experimentation with Degradar. And finally, instead of printing the various characters' dialogue on the screen, the game's quotes must be looked up in the manual. This is one "feature" I found very tedious in SSI's adventures, and I hope that Kramer will improve the game in future revisions, or maybe even in a sequel.

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HIGH OCTANE

**PAUL
OVERY**



Paul Overy and his crew, Fry-Up Software, have cooked up a frenetic, overhead view racer called *High Octane*. This system-friendly AMOS production is very slick. It has all the elements of a good competitive two-player title, but still plays well solo.

In *High Octane*, an unsuspecting civilian gets sucked into a world of high-speed, hard core, no holds barred racing by a deceptively innocent looking ATM machine during a midnight cash run. The hapless citizen can either race against other unlucky contestants drawn into this dangerous dimension or compete with drone vehicles controlled by the mastermind computer.

With all plot aside, what's left is a decent racing game in the same vein as Psygnosis' *Nitro* from several years back. The screen is split into two parts for each player. Both sections of the screen have a view of the track from above and a small computer screen which displays the physical status of the car. As with most any racing game, the winner is whoever completes a designated number of laps first.

Of course, there is a little bit more to *High Octane*. Each vehicle is equipped with a variety of missiles and land mines to put the competition in its place. When the supply of arms runs out, more ammo can be picked up from crates conveniently scattered around the tracks.

High Octane has great graphics, good sound, and reasonable gameplay. It is somewhat difficult to control the car with the tiny view of the road displayed, and I think it runs a bit too fast on accelerated machines. But in the end, *High Octane* is one of the best shareware productions of recent times.

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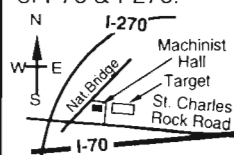
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ON TARGET



SEND YOUR LETTERS AND COMMENTS TO AMIGA GAME ZONE, 103 WEST CALIFORNIA, URBANA, IL 61801

I'D LIKE to respond to B.J. Weiss' letter from AGZ #2 where he states that *Hired Guns* is boring. I wish he'd told me this before I spent so many sleepless nights at my computer, leading my team through all those nasty caverns, blowing away aliens, setting traps for them (That ambushing stuff is over-rated!), moving blocks around (What is this, Tetris?), and solving some of the most devious puzzles ever designed! It's a shame I didn't read his letter before so much of my life was claimed by this awful excuse for a game. If you believe that, then I've got some ocean-front property in Tennessee...

James Perry
Vidalia, GA

We'll back you on that, Jim. Now how about sending us an onion?

NOW THAT there is finally a good source for Amiga game-related information, I'd like to take advantage of the expertise of your staff. Several years ago, in my C64 days, I discovered the Dougherty brothers and their excellent games *Legacy of the Ancients* and *Legend of Blacksilver*. I also played *Questron 2* on my Amiga and enjoyed it very much. The best part about the games was that it was unnecessary to draw maps or memorize complex commands, and there were many different castles, towns, citadels, etc. to explore (not just dungeons). Also, the gameplay was not bogged down by tedious details, like which pocket the food goes in and which hand carries the dagger.

My question is, have the Dougherty brothers written any games besides the three I've mentioned? And if not, can you recommend some games that are similar?

Lisa Mallette
Ft. White, FL

The Dougherty brothers also did Questron, but unfortunately it was only available for 8-bit machines. Questron 2, which had little in common with the original, was designed by the brothers and the Amiga version was coded by SSI.

WHO IS this guy that reviewed *Mortal Kombat* and what is his problem? Of course a home version isn't going to be as good as an expensive arcade machine! However, the Amiga version of *Mortal Kombat* is without a doubt one of the best Amiga games ever! I have also played MK on the Genesis and PC, and neither was as good as the Amiga version (both were slower, based on Raiden's torpedo move, and there is very little sound/blood on the Genesis version, despite exactly the same graphics). Please, Mr. Editor, keep this reviewer on a short leash!

As an incentive, I offer this cheat for *Mortal Kombat*: at the menu screen, type "dullard (space) cheat (space)" repeatedly until a cheat option appears. In the cheat menu, there are various settings. For example, you can set how often you want to play the bonus rounds (select chop x 0 to turn them off altogether). If you activate the death option, the computer opponent will always use the fatality move on you. An easy way to find the hidden character, Reptile, is to activate the weak and ninja options, then choose the Pit as the first stage (the weak option will allow you to kill your opponent with one hit!)

Mark Wood
Federal Way, WA

Thanks for the Mortal Kombat cheat, but the idea of keeping good writers with an opposing point of view on a "short leash" went out with the Commies. We realize there are two schools of thought on how to compare games that have been released on multiple platforms. That's why we printed the rebuttal at the end of the review. But, publishing a magazine with articles that always take the popular point of view sounds kind of boring to us.

YOUR REVIEWS are very good. You usually don't put in much extraneous information and cut right to the chase. Because of this you often fit more useful information in a half-page review than the *Euromags* do in two.

Brad Marshall
Lyons, NY

Sorry to have to cut your two-page letter - it's just a habit of ours. And thank you for this issue's obligatory "Amiga Game Zone is great" letter!

I HAVE noticed from various reviews that *Jurassic Park* has some 3D sections in it like *Wolfenstein 3D* and *Doom* for the PC. If Ocean can do it, why can't another software company produce a full-length 3D shoot 'em up like *Wolfenstein 3D* for the Amiga? I have played *Wolfenstein 3D* and found it quite boring. I'm sure the Amiga has the power to match and better the PC games mentioned above.

Brad Arndt
Waterloo, Ontario (Canada)

Take a look at our coverdisk demo, Brad. There are quite a few individuals and companies designing Doom-style games and demos for the Amiga. Team 17 has been rumored to be working on one, and we can't wait to see it!

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY agree with your policy regarding hard drive support. (*We will never give a straight "A" rating to a game that cannot be installed.* - Ed) I would like to add that it would be nice to have analog joystick support in more games as well (there are only a handful now) as it makes an enormous difference, especially in simulations and the like. There are several analog joystick adapters in the Amiga marketplace, with the Smart Port and its complement of rudder pedals, steering wheels, and joysticks being the standout. As well, it opens up the selection to the vast world of quality PC joysticks, yokes, etc.

Richard G. Graham
Kamloops, B.C. (Canada)

We will be doing a hardware review on the Smart Port Plus by Interactive Digital Devices in our next issue. The great thing about the device is that it comes with analog-support software patches for about 20 popular games!

YOUR HARDBODY on Software feature is a stroke of genius! I'll vote for Meri Cunningham to be the center of a new ad campaign by Commodore. I don't even like soccer, and I'm considering buying Premier Manager 2 based on her persuasive technique!

Doug Venable
Birmingham, AL

Our favorite non-subscriber Cliff wrote us recently regarding the same feature: "I don't quite understand Hardbody on Software. Is it an inside joke?" Obviously, you get it, Doug. Could you get ahold of Cliff and clue him in? You can reach him at the Institute for the Sexually Repressed in Philadelphia, PA.

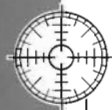
STUPID IS AS STUPID DOES

NO, OCEAN hasn't obtained the *Forrest Gump* movie license for their next platform game (well, as of this writing at least). We just thought we'd bring you up to speed on our most blatant goofs in the last issue of *Amiga Game Zone*. Get out that back issue and prepare to laugh at our expense...

PAGE 2 - Henning Vahlenkamp should be credited with the *Ishar 2* AGA and D/Generation AGA reviews. We were reliably informed that his brother "Hans" is not a writer.

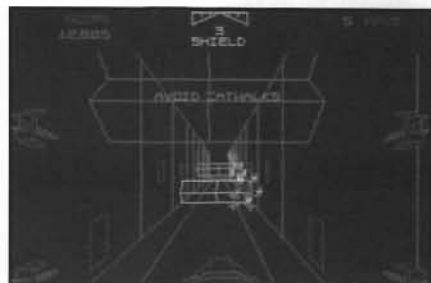
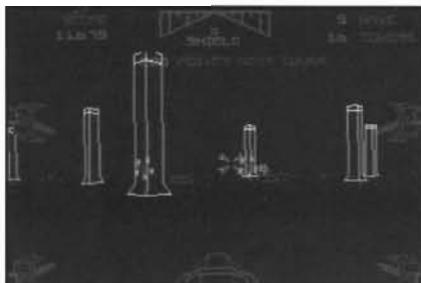
PAGE 39 - Brian Bosley (BB) wrote the *Burning Rubber* review, not Rob Hays.

PAGE 42 - Tim Patrick called in to let us know that the commercial version of *Bubba 'N Stix* has disk-based protection.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

BY RALPH BARBAGALLO



The year was 1983, the twilight of the Golden Age of gaming, and Atari had graced the planet with perhaps one of the greatest coin-op video games of the era, Star Wars. Based on sequences from the first film in George Lucas' universally popular space opera trilogy, Star Wars captured players' imaginations with its lasting playability and science fiction appeal. Star Wars' use of Atari's Quadrascan technology created smooth wire-frame vector graphics that were unmatched by anything in the industry. From the Sinclair Spectrum to the Atari 5200, Star Wars made its way on to many popular platforms. By the late '80s the Star Wars mythos was still alive and, as a result, updated ports of the arcade classic were programmed by Domark. The Amiga version is one of the best conversions to date, but even it has some problems.

Star Wars is a three-event game with each level viewed from the cockpit of a fully armed X-Wing fighter. The first stage involves a harrowing dogfight with a swarm of Imperial Tie Fighters, including Darth Vader's own indestructible craft. In the second stage the X-Wing must fly over the surface of the intimidating Deathstar, while avoiding fireball shots and destroying gun turrets. In the finale, the perilous trench has to be navigated and a shot must be fired down the exhaust port at the end of the alley in order to destroy the Deathstar. The trench is a formidable maze of deadly gun emplacements and obstructing catwalks. Upon destruction of the Deathstar, the sequence of events is repeated. However, each new cycle begins with a greater number of Tie Fighters which are more adept and more aggressive. Laser turrets are encountered more frequently and their accuracy improves. And the trench quickly becomes crowded with an unmanageable number of catwalks and deadly fireballs.

Domark's Amiga version is a well-executed port. Graphically, it's as close as one can get without buying the genuine coin-op. The Tie Fighters gracefully fly through space, the onslaught of fireballs will have any player ducking for cover, and the Deathstar's green circular outline still looks as ominous as it did in 1983.

The most noticeable difference from the coin-op version is the lack of music. A fair amount of the speech samples are missing, and the only time the trademark title theme appears is in a sub-par composition during the title credits. While lack of a soundtrack makes the action a little less inspiring, it certainly doesn't ruin the game. The control system, however, does cause a problem. Using the joystick does not simulate the fine degree of movement present in the arcade version. Though the mouse option does simulate

this to a greater degree, it's really not an ideal control method when intense button pushing is necessary.

All things considered, Star Wars is a great adaptation of the arcade game. Graphics are decent, and although the sound is a letdown, gameplay more than makes up for it. Star Wars is one of those games that can be considered a true classic, as most anyone who remembers that era would agree. Every true arcade game fan should own Star Wars.

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MEGA PSYGNOSIS CONTEST – SEE PAGE 41



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