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NOVEMBER 1993 ISSUE 8

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Legends of Kyrandia II

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KEYBOARD
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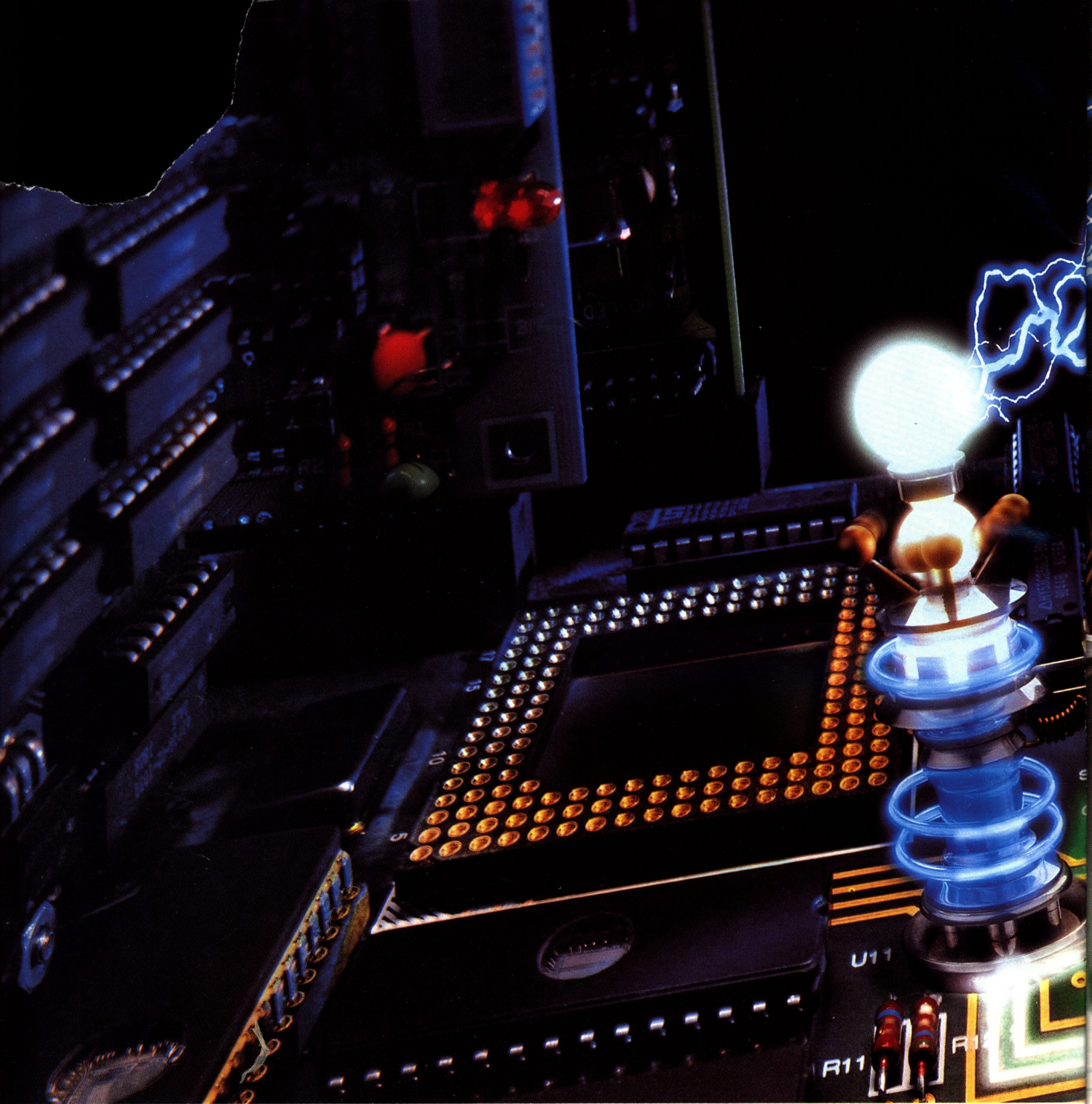
Sim City 2000

*First Look At
Tomorrow's World...*

★ Lands of Lore ★
Complete Solution!

BRAND NEW
CD ROM REVIEW
SECTION INSIDE!

9 177096 7821014



The affordable power source in

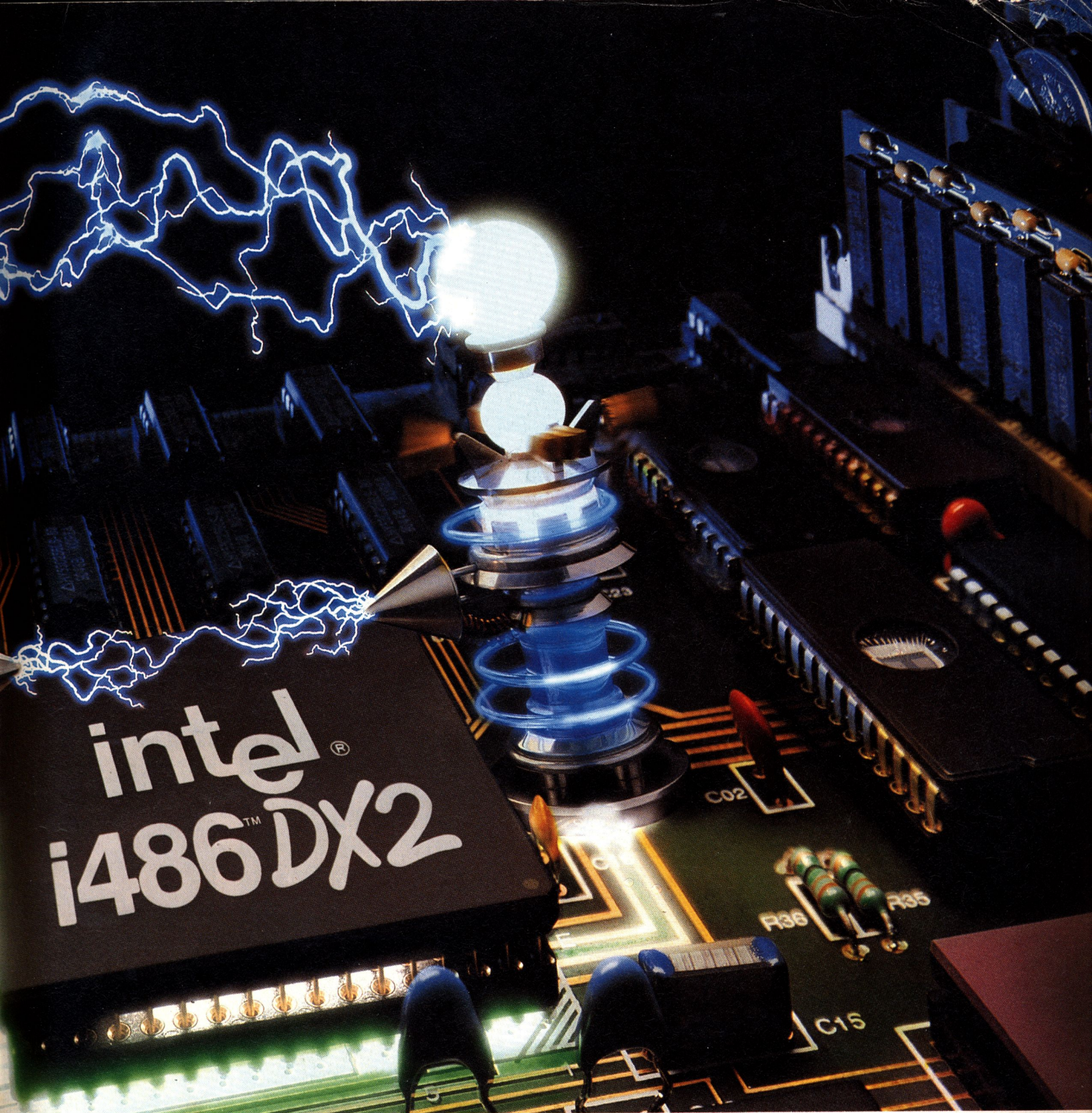


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FLIGHT SIM 5

Test your piloting skills with the ultimate photo-realistic flight sim **PAGE 77**

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REVIEWS

100%
GAMES

PC ZONE

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LOSE YOURSELF in a world of time travel packaged with stunning graphics, interactive video and mind-numbing puzzles.

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THE SECOND Legend game based on the Heechee books and their own text based control system.

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SCRAMBLE YOUR brain cogs in a maddening mechanical puzzler.

50 Silver Seed

WHILE YOU wait for *Ultima 8* here's some extra adventuring in the world of *Ultima 7*.

53 Troddlers

A NOTABLE addition to the world of rodent guidance games.

59 Patriot

RE-FIGHT THE Gulf war in this game from the makers of *Harpoon*.

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RPG MEETS CITY planner in ssi's game of combat, conquest and conurbations.

68 Arcade for Windows

WHY PLAY the latest in game technology when you can load up *Missile Command*.

70 Solitaire's Journey

TEST YOUR PATIENCE to the limit with 105 variations on solitaire.

73 Conquered Kingdoms

MAKE AND BREAK alliances, take part in full pitched battles and do indelicate things to fat green creatures in your attempt to be top dog.

77 Flight Sim 5

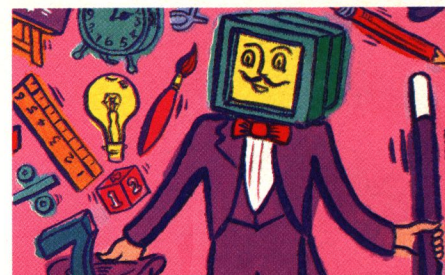
TEST YOUR PILOTING skills at the controls of the latest version of Microsoft's photo-realistic flight sim.

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From naked models to model cars **PAGE 82**



EDUTAINMENT SPECIAL

Learn while you laugh
PAGE 125



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Kingdoms **PAGE 73**



Stronghold
PAGE 64



Patriot
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Cover Girl Strip
Poker **PAGE 83**



RETURN TO ZORK

Outstanding graphics and
dodgy old actors **PAGE 23**

CLASSIC STUFF

How did
computer
games begin?
What were
they like? Are
they still
there?

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PC ZONE

November 1993 Issue Eight

BLUEPRINTS

23 Return to Zork

THE ORIGINAL ZORK games were text adventures of great complexity and even greater popularity. Now Infocom have added some outstanding graphics and digitised speech using professional actors. Duncan MacDonald casts an eye over the result and asks 'Isn't that the guy who used to be in...?'

102 Dreamweb

SEEING THE WORLD from a different perspective Patrick McCarthy checks out Empire's top down cyberpunk adventure and comes out shooting. If you like a bit of gratuitous sex and violence then you're gonna love this.

107 Hand of Fate

LEGEND OF KYRANDIA was good. Its sequel *Hand of Fate* looks to be even better. Mark Burgess immerses himself in a world of imagination, magic and eco disaster.

FEATURES

27 Sim City 2000

HAS THERE EVER been a game more popular than *Sim City*, the revolutionary game that managed to make urban development exciting? Well Maxis now hope to go one better with a completely updated version of the game. Patrick McCarthy casts a structuralist eye over it and God games in general.



94 Let Me Edutain You

LEARNING WHILE he laughs, Phil South finds himself more than a little impressed by the latest crop of edutainment software.

REGULARS

6 Bulletin

THE GAMES industry has gone into overdrive before Christmas so this month we've got eight pages crammed with news.

18 Cover Disk Guide

BEFORE LAUNCHING into our outstanding *Seal Team* mission make sure you read the instructions. You'll be nowhere without them.

20 Club PC/Subscriptions

GET PC ZONE delivered to your door, a free game and the chance to be part of the PC Zone review team.

82 CD Review

AN ESSENTIAL round up of the new CD releases.

91 Bargain. Bin

OLD GAMES AT even older prices in the wondrous world of budget software.

110 Bits & PCs

PROBLEMS WITH your PC? Get your technical problems solved by Mark Burgess.

113 Troubleshooter

SOLUTIONS TO *Lands of Lore* and *Return of the Phantom* plus more from the urban guerrillas of the games world, the HackMasters™.

120 Wordprocessor

EXERCISE YOUR right to reply in the PC Zone letters page.

123 Off The Boards

JOIN MARK BURGESS in a visit to the world of PD and Shareware and a trip down memory lane.

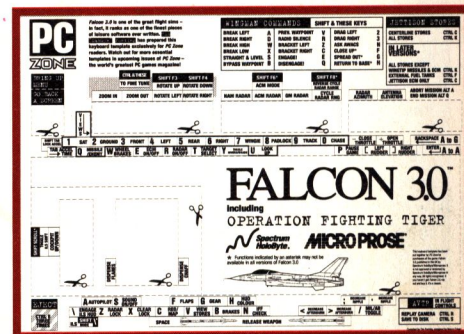
128 Mail Order/Back Issues

INVEST IN CUT price software and, more importantly, our wonderful back issues.

130 Mr Cursor

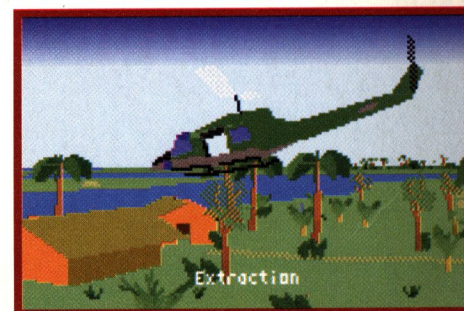
PC ZONE is dedicated pc games. So why is Mr Cursor going on about his cooking?

FREE!



FALCON 3.0

KEYBOARD OVERLAY



SEAL TEAM

PLAYABLE DEMO

Bulletin

+ As the software companies build up to what they hope will be a bumper Christmas it's time to strap yourself in for *PC Zone's* bumper news section. Eight pages on all that's new in the world of PC games.



Goblins 3

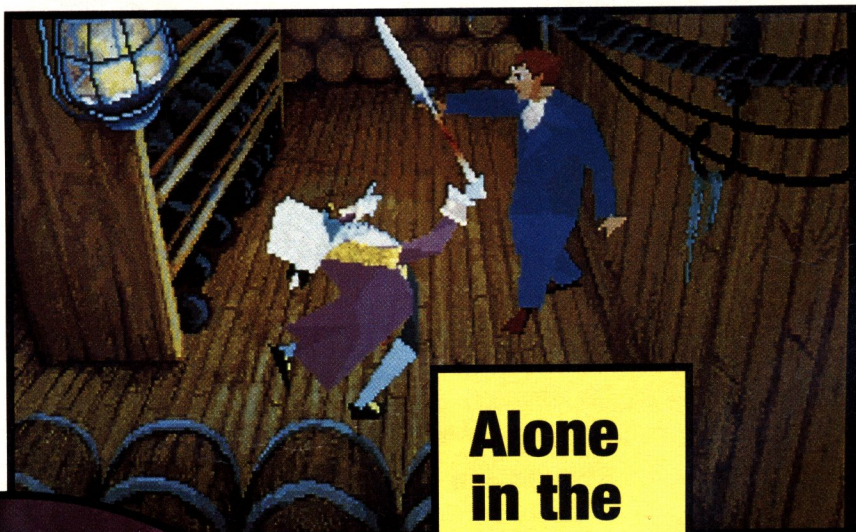
+ Blount is a journalist in search of both a story and a jewel of legendary promise. He's also the hero of the latest episode of this popular cartoon style adventure with the emphasis very heavily on the humour. *Goblins 3* is crammed with puzzles, shape changing and some extremely wacky graphics.

Publisher: Coktel Vision
Out: November **Price:** tba

CyberMan

If you feel that using a mouse or keyboard somewhat detracts from the atmosphere of the latest interactive PC software then you might want to take a look at *CyberMan*, a 3D controller which combines all the characteristics of a mouse, joystick and trackball providing single-handed control of movements in all axes without having to resort to the keyboard. It looks quite funky too. *CyberMan* is compatible with all existing games which use a mouse interface.

Released by: Logitech
Out: November
Price: £85.00.



Alone in the Dark 2

☐ ONE OF the most eagerly awaited games of the year will be appearing on PC screens in November. Sequel to one of the outstanding games of the year, the game boasts improved graphics, more locations, more action and a rather natty Santa Claus costume.

Publisher: Infogrames
Out: November **Price:** tba

Alone In The Dark 2: More behind the sofa action and suspense.



Ultima VIII: Pagan

+ *Ultima VIII* is the first of three games that will bring the *Ultima* cycle to a close. The Avatar has been captured by The Guardian and stranded on the Isle of Pagan in his domain. This is a complete rewrite of the *Ultima* engine. Although it's only a quarter of the size of *Ultima VII*, designer Richard Garriot has added a lot more detail to individual elements of the game, specifically the animation. The Avatar, for instance, now has 1500 frames of animation, compared to a measly 33 in *Ultima VII*. Final price and release date will be announced soon.





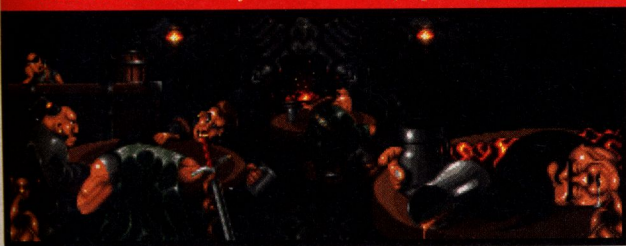
Monopoly it ain't.

Sex and Swordplay

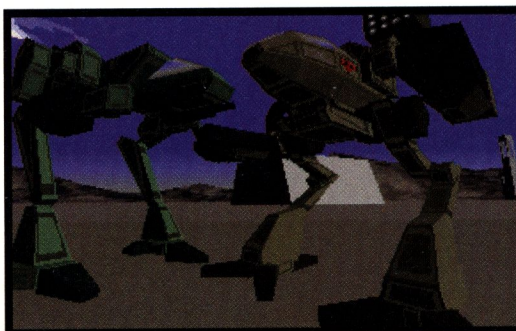
The recently formed software arm of Waddingtons Games is already demonstrating its versatility. Following its very graphical version of Monopoly (reviewed in Issue six), it is having a complete change of scene for its next PC release, the *Interactive Lovers Guide*. Based on the phenomenally successful video and containing material by Dr Andrew Stanway and Dr Leonard Kristal, it contains all of the subject matter covered in *The Lovers Guide volume 2*. Nine chapters use full motion video extracts to explore a range of issues from safe sex to planning erotic moments and sexual games. The interactive version includes a range of psychometric tests to evaluate your relationships and sexual attitudes and can be yours truly in October for £39.99.

From swings to roundabouts again for the company's third PC release, *FIST*. Based on the popular interactive telephone game by renowned fantasy author and game designer Steve Jackson, it is set in Castle Mammon, from which you must escape, avoiding the fiendish traps set by the demon prince Kaddis-Ra and collecting as much treasure as possible. It will be available in October on CD ROM only, at a price to be announced.

The Lovers Guide Part 6: Beyond The Bedroom. (Or possibly FIST. Ed.)



After 10,000 years the wheel finally goes out of fashion.



Activision activity

Activision is back with a vengeance. Kicking off with *Return to Zork* (previewed on page 23), it also has a second *Mechwarrior* game, *Mechwarrior II – The Clans*, in the pipeline. This futuristic simulation is the latest development in the FASA Battletech virtual reality series. Strap yourself into one of 16 BattleMechs armed with up to 40 different weapon systems and stride out onto the battlefield to fight and destroy the enemy 'mechs'.

Battlemech II features full support for the Thrustmaster flight and weapon control systems and rudder pedals, and an option to link two machines for head-to-head battles or co-operative mode.

The game is already looking so impressive that it scooped the Best of Show award at the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago earlier this year.

In a rather different vein, Activision is joining the growing edutainment market with the launch of two titles based on the work of popular childrens' author Richard Scarry and one using the wacky artwork of Rodney Alan Greenblat.

Richard Scarry's *The Busiest Neighbourhood* and *The Best Neighbourhood Ever* will both be released as CD ROM titles designed for pre-school and infant school children aged between 3 and 6 years. Featuring the strange occupants of Busytown, Huckle the cat, Lowly Worm, and Mr Fumble, the two games will help young children to develop pre-reading skills, pattern recognition, counting, memory skills and vocabulary. *Rodney's Funscreen* is also aimed at children of the same age, but the emphasis is entirely on fun, as the game aims to engage children with silly sounds, wildly coloured landscapes, fanciful characters and crazy objects. Sounds like this one will be very popular in the *PC Zone* office.

DISPATCHES

+++ FANS OF QQP'S PERFECT General will be pleased to hear that the sequel is underway. Author Andrew Visscher tells us that he's adding higher SVGA graphics to the VGA artwork. We've no release date or price yet, but watch this space for the first news.

+++ ALSO DESTINED TO APPEAR in glorious SVGA is the much anticipated *Falcon 4.0*. Spectrum Holobyte are keeping tight-lipped about all the other aspects of the product, but we will of course be first with the news when it breaks.

+++ DARK SUN IS THE NEXT step on from SSI's ageing Gold Box games. Although this new role-playing system has phased combat, like the standard Gold Box games, it has infinitely superior graphics and a less linear storyline. The release is imminent, so look out for a full review in the next issue.

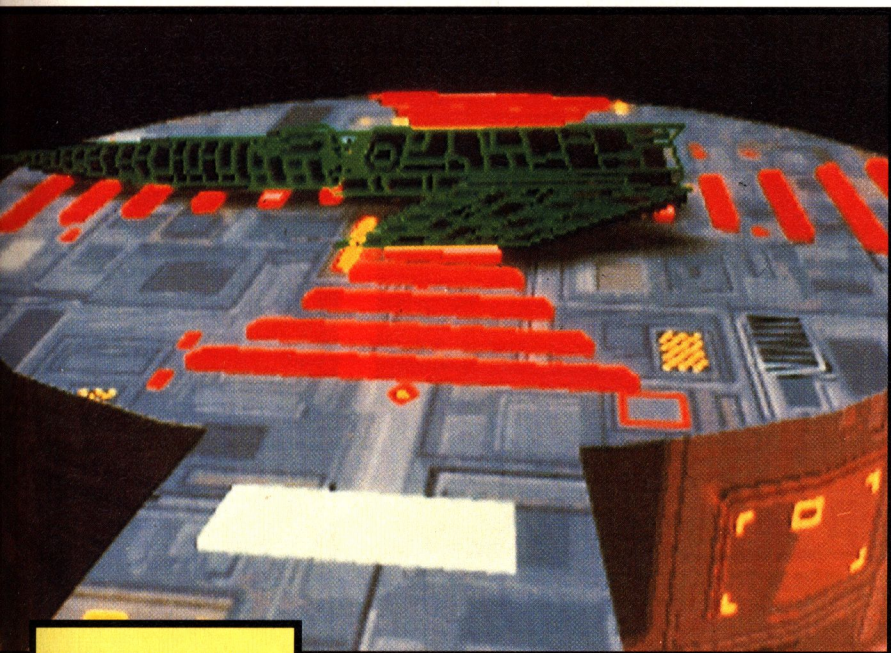
+++ SSI HAVE ALSO REVEALED that there will be a fourth *Eye of the Beholder* game, provisionally entitled *Hack*. The major difference will be that it will be a single character game, whereas the earlier games in the series were based on parties of four.

+++ ALSO FROM THE WORLD OF people-who-don't-like-vowels comes *Companions of Xanth*, the first *Xanth* game for the PC which will come with the paperback edition of the latest *Xanth* novel *Demons Don't Dream*.

+++ RENEGADE WILL BE offering adventuring of a more light hearted kind early next year with *Flight of the Amazon Queen*, a graphic adventure being developed by *Binary Illusions*. The game leans on 1940's B Movies for inspiration, and some very hyperactive imaginations.



Bulletin



Delta V

A GAME that runs faster than the speed of thought launches you into a world of lightning quick Netrunning with a modem option for six player action.

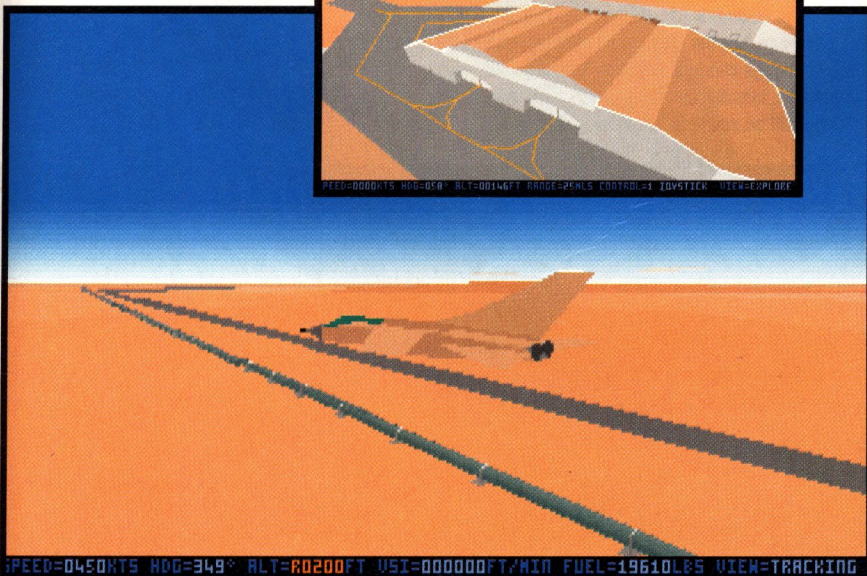
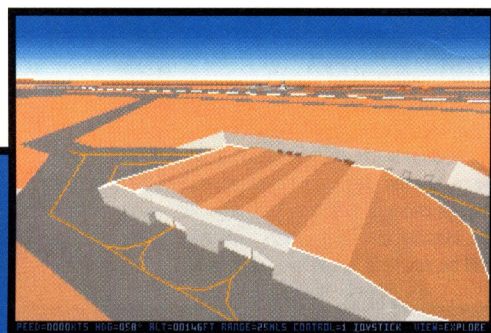
Publisher: Bethesda /US
Gold Out: October
Price: tba

Tornado - Operation Desert Storm. Ahh, the beautiful variety of a desert location.

Tornado - Operation Desert Storm

Any fans of the excellent *Tornado* flight sim who've actually managed to complete all the missions can prepare to go back into action with the not entirely unpredictable *Operation Desert Storm* scenario disk. New 3D objects, desert style scenery, a new warzone based on the Gulf and a whole host of new and deadly missions make this an essential for *Tornado* fans.

Publisher: Digital Integration **Out:** November **Price:** £25.99



The Elder Scrolls

+ Time to buckle up the leather armour and brush up on the spellcasting as *Elder Scrolls Chapter 1: Arena* takes you on an RPG adventure with a dynamic new combat engine and a Spellmaker™ system which allows you to create pretty much any spell you want from over 50 combinable effects.

If 400 cities, towns, villages and dungeons to explore and over 2500 magic items to collect isn't enough for you then be warned. This is just chapter one. There will be plenty more to follow.

Publisher: US Gold/Bethesda
Out: November **Price:** tba

Victory At Sea

From the team that brought you *Harpoon* comes *Victory At Sea*, a World War II naval game covering events in the Pacific Theatre. One exceptional feature of the game will be the GameBook™, an on-line book containing World War II pictures and over 100,000 words of text. Does this mean *Victory At Sea* should be classed as Edutainment?

Publisher: Three-Sixty Pacific Inc./Electronic Arts
Out: October **Price:** £44.99



DISPATCHES

+++ FOLLOWING ITS SUCCESS with *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary*, Interplay has begun work on a starship simulation called *Star Fleet Academy*. There are no specific details as yet, but the game is expected to be finished some time in 1994.

+++ STILL IN SPACE VIRGIN ARE releasing *Alien 3* in November which follows the plot of the film with the slight change that Ripley is now tooled up with the weaponry from the first two films.

+++ FANS OF BREACH AND *Breach 2* need hold onto their breath no longer, because we have heard news that there will be a third *Breach* game and it should be available at the end of this year.

+++ JORDAN IN-FLIGHT COULD soon be facing some stiff competition from Bethesda Softworks' *NCAA Basketball - Road to the Final Four II*, which also features 3D flight simulator technology and digitised players. The sophisticated VoxFX sound engine delivers four audio tracks to create real on-court atmosphere. Watch this space for further details.

+++ ACCOLADE ARE ALSO weighing in on the basketball scene having signed a licensing agreement with player Charles Barkley who is the all time NBA leader in fines assessed. Expect a game high on... er... commitment. The same will be true of Accolade's *Unnecessary Roughness*, an American football game incorporating many of the features from the successful *Mike Ditka*. Both games should surface in the first quarter of 1994.

+++ HOWEVER, FOR REAL football action check out Ocean's *European Champions*, an arcade game featuring a host of crack teams from England, France, Italy, Germany and Spain and total video control. For the more cerebral football fan Ocean has *Super League Manager*. And if you're both cerebral and an action fan you can link the two games. Both games should be available in October.

+++ WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF management games Domark are releasing a *Championship Manager '94* data disk which updates *Championship Manager '93* with all the pre-season transfers, management changes promotions and relegations that have occurred since the end of the last football season.



Made up from multiple screenshots.



THE HOTTEST GAME ON ICE JUST PASSED MELTING POINT.



Get out the asbestos mitts and get ready for NHL® Hockey – PC style. Skate with the greats at speeds that'll make your eyes water. Shoot glass-breaking slap-shots. Make jarring body checks. Don the goalie's mask then lunge, dive and kick to keep out the puck at 100 mph.

And after the on-ice action, take a breather and study the stats. NHL Hockey lets you compare the strengths and weaknesses of every player in every team in the NHL.

Then chart their progress through a full 84 game

season, before you battle for the end of season honours.

The million-selling sports game has more action, more strategy and more realism on PC than on any other format.

Astounding graphics bring every confrontation to life, while the outstanding depth guarantees accuracy down to the players' inside leg measurements.

Plus NHL Hockey supports Sound Blaster, Ad Lib and Roland MT-32 sound cards, so you can soak up the atmosphere as the crowd chants and the organ music mounts.

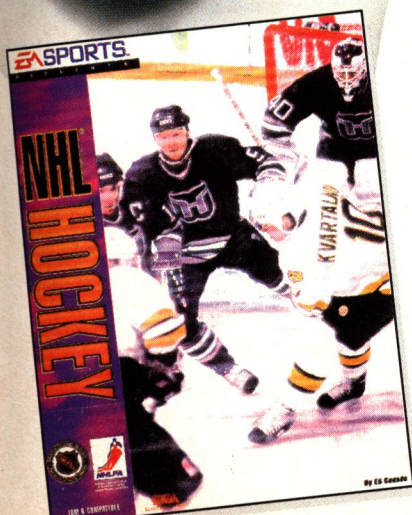
Video gamers – eat your heart out. On PC NHL Hockey is the only game that cuts any ice.

EA SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS
Electronic Arts, 90 Heron Drive, Langley, Berks SL3 8XP.



To buy your copy of this game, visit your local retailer. In case of any difficulty, contact EA Direct on: 0753 549442.

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Bulletin



Theme Park

FROM Bullfrog, the creators of *Populous* and *Syndicate* comes a game of weird wonderfulness in which you must build the world's biggest and best theme park. Having chosen the location, you need to start building rides, burger bars and organising entertainers (including a man in a shrimp costume) to keep the guests amused. Then there's maintaining the rides to worry about to say nothing of litter collecting. Whatever you do, you must keep the visitors happy.

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Out: March **Price:** £44.99

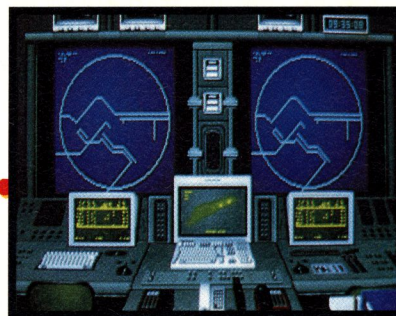
Theme Park: Did anyone mention the word cute?



TFX

+ Before you ask, TFX stands for Tactical Fighter Experiment. What it means is a flight sim that has you, as a member of a UN rapid response force, flying F22s and F117 Stealth Fighters in around 200 multiple objective missions in 8 theatres of operation including Africa, Europe, South America, South East Asia and the Middle East.

Publisher: Ocean **Out:** November
Price: PC £44.99 CD £49.99



Harrier SVGA

+ If you thought *AV8B Harrier Assault* was pretty impressive then wait until you see the Super VGA version. The on-screen resolution has been doubled so everything is sharper, cleaner, smoother and can be seen for miles.

Publisher: Domark **Out:** October **Price:** tba

Kasparov's Gambit

The involvement of the (at time of writing) World Champion is only one of the features that promises much for this latest entrant to the somewhat crowded chess market. As well as coaching from the master himself the game contains a multi-featured opponent setting allowing you to choose the levels of aggressiveness, creativity etc. of your opponent.

Kasparov's Gambit uses the Socrates II algorithm which won the 1993 International Computer Chess Championship. A walkover it ain't.

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Out:** September **Price:** £44.99

B.Nb1-c3
B...Bf8-b4
Nimzoindian Defense. Named for the hypermodern theoretician Aron Nimzowitsch, people got tired of saying and writing Nimzowitsch-Indian so it got shortened. A very good opening but it requires a good knowledge of positional play.



Chess moves:
1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4
4.
5.
6.



Games with Genetics

+ Aficionados of *Sim Life* or *Jurassic Park*, must watch out for Maxis' latest acquisition *Unnatural Selection*. Developed by Disney Software, *Unnatural Selection* is a technological strategy game based on genetic engineering. A genetic scientist has gone mad and begun deliberately breeding artificial creatures capable of destroying mankind, and he is threatening to let them loose on the Earth. You must evolve your own creatures and use them to defeat the malign mutants. The game features exciting battle sequences and claymation images showing the creatures changing from one form to another.



NOW ... a soccer simulation that combines realism with fast arcade action!



EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS

COMPETE TO BECOME THE PREMIER TEAM IN EUROPE

AMAZING GAME-PLAY FEATURES:

- * **TACTICS** - Select one of the many, easy set up BUILT-IN-TACTICS options or DESIGN YOUR OWN!
- * **INTELLIGENT PASSING** - Choose one of three different modes for pixel-perfect passing.
- * **ONE TOUCH FOOTBALL** - Build up moves quickly and fluidly. Anyone can look good, and if you are good you'll PLAY LIKE A GENIUS.
- * **SPECTACULAR** - Large, SUPERBLY ANIMATED players look as if they're ready to burst out of your screen!
- * **REALISTIC** - Variable wind direction, wind speed and pitch conditions that really INFLUENCE THE GAME-PLAY.
- * **ACTION REPLAYS** - Select to replay in either GRANDSTAND or TOP-DOWN mode. Featuring FULL VIDEO CONTROLS (rewind, fast forward, freeze frame, slow motion). You can even change the camera angle during a replay to find out what was happening elsewhere on the pitch!

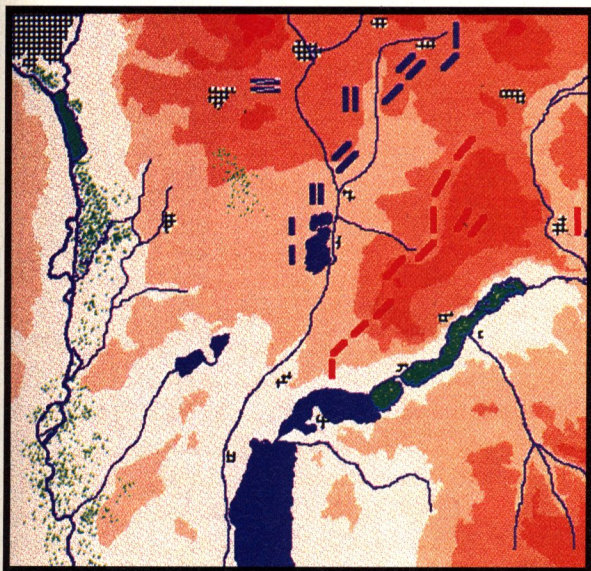


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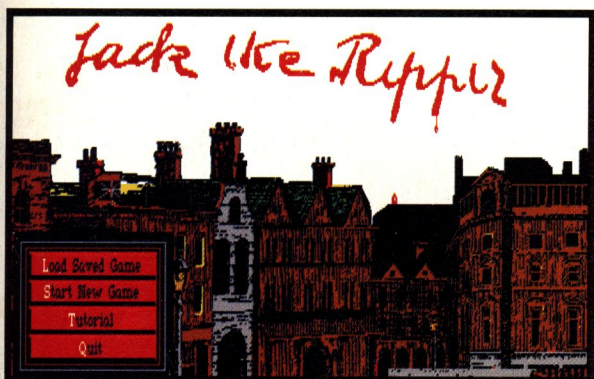
ocean

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Bulletin



Beyond UMS: The War College.



Olde Worlde London, in the days before SVGA.

From Military to Murderers

Intergalactic Development Ltd, the creators of *Universal Military Simulator* have now teamed up with Mirage. The first product to be released under the new deal is *Jack the Ripper*, a point and click investigation simulator in which you must piece together evidence to track down a vicious killer terrorising Victorian London. The game includes a massive database of extensively researched material drawn from casebooks, newspaper reports and accounts from the time.

UMS is to be revived in the form of a compilation containing the original program plus *UMS II: Nations at War*, *UMS II Planet Editor* and *UMS* scenario sets for: Arbela; Hastings; Marston Moor; Waterloo and Gettysburg. The compilation also contains *UMS II* scenario sets for the American Civil War. Intergalactic has recently finished a scenario entitled *Intervention in the Balkans* for a US military college, which may also be included in the compilation!

Intergalactic Development is currently working on a third military simulator, *The War College*, which, unlike the *UMS* products will feature three dimensional, coloured terrain maps and greater detail. It will also incorporate an extremely advanced artificial intelligence engine. At present no decision has been made as to whether the game will be released for public sale or confined to military institutions. We'll bring you further news as soon as we have it.



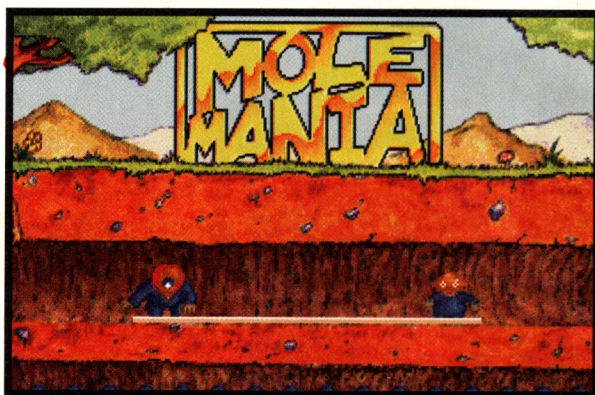
EA Kids Are Alright

+ Two more examples of Electronic Arts' involvement in the edutainment market are *Peter Pan: A Story Painting Adventure*, in which you use drawing and painting to help you through 30 scenes with over 250 interactive choices, and *Scooter's Magic Castle* in which the hero has to grapple with matching, counting, keyboarding and many other skills way beyond the reach of the *PC Zone* crew.

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Out: January Price: £39.99

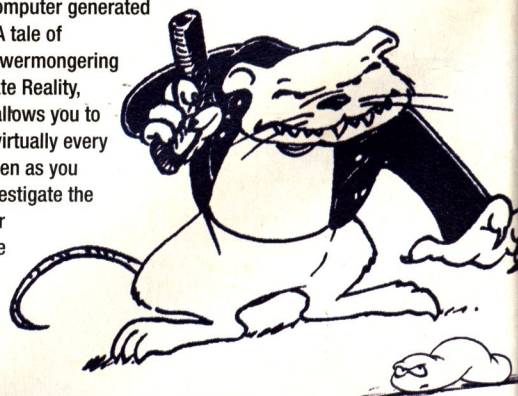


If you've been wondering where all the cartoon figures littered through Bulletin come from, the answer is Mole Mania. Read on for more info.

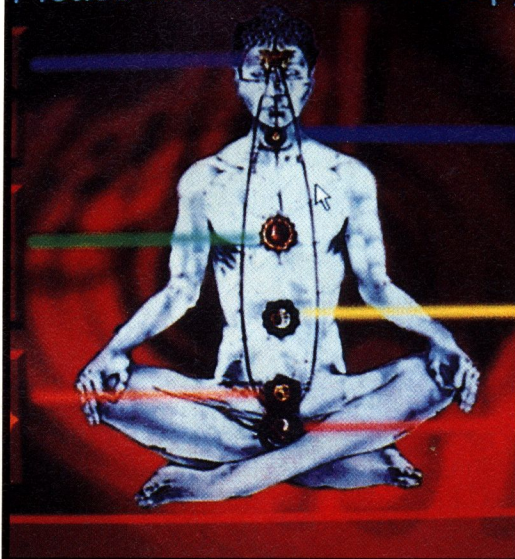


Four Developers in search of freedom

Having worked on PC conversions such as *Sensible Soccer*, *Alien Breed*, *Mega-lo-Mania* and *Brat*, Audio Visual Magic Ltd are attempting to strike out alone. Currently they are working on four projects. *Mole Mania* is a sideways viewed platform game in *Boulderdash* style while *The Apprentice* is a point and click adventure with cartoon style animation and backgrounds and a fair littering of classic nursery rhyme and fantasy characters. Nursery rhyme characters also turn up in *The Hare and the Tortoise*, a two player race/chase game set against an eight way scrolling background littered with all manner of objects to help you or hinder your opponent. In more serious mode is *Critical Error*, an interactive adventure for CD ROM with all the locations rendered in computer generated 3D Graphics. A tale of corruption, powermongering and immaculate Reality, *Critical Error* allows you to interact with virtually every object on screen as you attempt to investigate the murder of your friend. Release of all these products is aimed at next year.



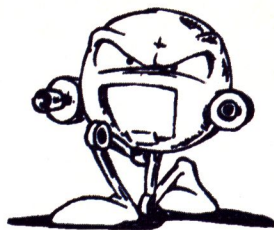
Please select a colour therapy



Digital Love

NO MISSUS, it's not what it sounds like. *Digital Love* is a CD ROM product to provide relief from the tension of modern living. A mixture of 'ambient' music and computer generated visuals the disc also includes a sequence of yoga moves, performed by a 3D animated figure and a selection of chants accompanied by ancient mandala symbols. Guaranteed appeal to all those who knit their own yoghurts, the rest of us will just nip down the pub.

Publisher: The Software Toolworks
Out: November Price: £29.99



Sam & Max Hit The Road

The cute world of cartoon graphics meets the shady world of the streetwise detective as a canine Sam Spade and his hyperkinetic (Look it up. We had to) set off in search of the surely not inconspicuous Bruno the Bigfoot and his girlfriend, Trixie the Giraffe Necked Woman.

Publisher: LucasArts/US Gold
Out: Mid November **Price:** Tba



NFL Coaches Club Football

+ As we announced last issue MicroProse are entering the American Football market with a game designed with assistance from NFL players and coaches. Player interaction has been developed from the study of human physics so collisions are affected by player size and strength. Basically, you get to trample the little guys.

The game is also strong on the tactical side with a Playbook Editor allowing you to create your own playbook with up to 80 offensive and 80 defensive plays.

Publisher: MicroProse **Out:** October **Price:** tba



DISPATCHES

+++ MEANWHILE RENEGADE have announced the release, in 1994, of *Sensible World of Soccer* which will be playable as manager, as player or as a combination of the two.

+++ STILL ON THE SPORTING front Ocean has *Ryder Cup Golf*, the officially licensed game of the tournament in which you must lead your team of 12 players to victory.

+++ SOMEWHAT MORE VIOLENT sport is provided by *Mortal Kombat*, the hyper-fierce game of one to one combat already causing considerable controversy as an arcade machine and in its console form. Due to be released by Virgin for the PC in November.

+++ HEAVYWEIGHT FLIGHT simulations are in vogue this Autumn. Swiftly following Domark's *Flight Simulation Toolkit* will be *FACT* (Fighter Air Combat Trainer) from MicroProse. It combines a videotape, workbook and disk. Videotape lessons are given by Pete 'Boomer' Bonanni, a real F-16 pilot instructor. More news soon.

+++ IF YOU'RE A MAJOR FAN OF *Civilization*, be sure to look out for the Windows version which is destined for release at the end of the year.

+++ ACCOLADE HAS RECENTLY revealed that, despite the promise in *Star Control II*, they have no plans to release a third *Star Control* game. The *Star Control* fans in the PC Zone office think this is an outrage. If you agree with us send a note to Accolade telling them how disappointed you are that there will be no *Star Control III*, and let them know how many potential buyers there are out there. Write to: Accolade, Bowling House, Point Pleasant, Wandsworth, London, SW18 1PE.

+++ LUCASARTS HAVE ALSO revealed that they currently have no plans to release a CD version of *Monkey Island 2*. So lets have plenty of letters to show that there is a market for it. Send them to LucasArts, c/o US Gold, Units 2 & 3, Holford Business Park, Holford, Birmingham, B6 7AX.

+++ A NEW VERSION OF DELUXE *Paint II Enhanced* will shortly be available. Version 2.4 will feature scanner support, an updated Convert file conversion utility with a point and click interface, VESA support for the Gallery slide show utility and the addition of printer drivers for the Hewlett Packard models 500c, 550c and 300.



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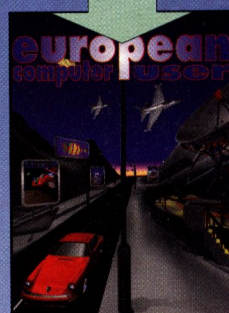
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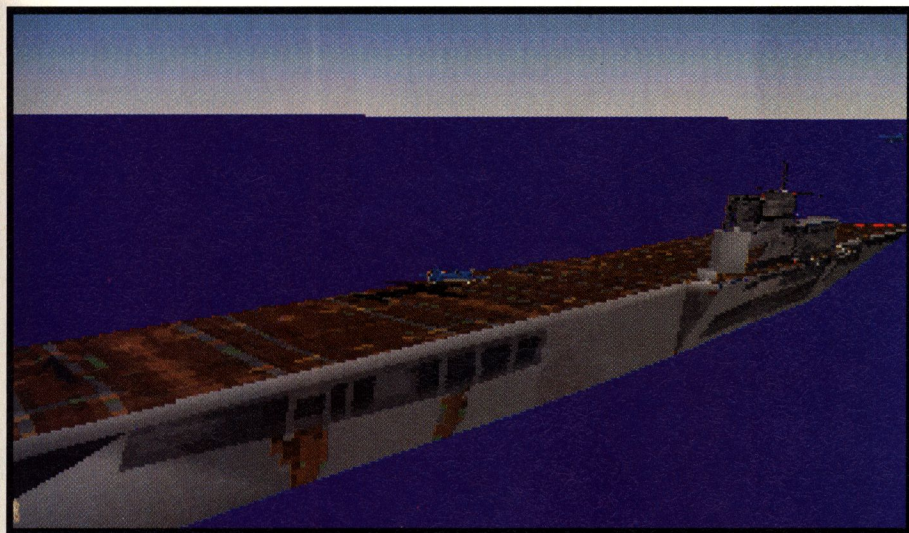


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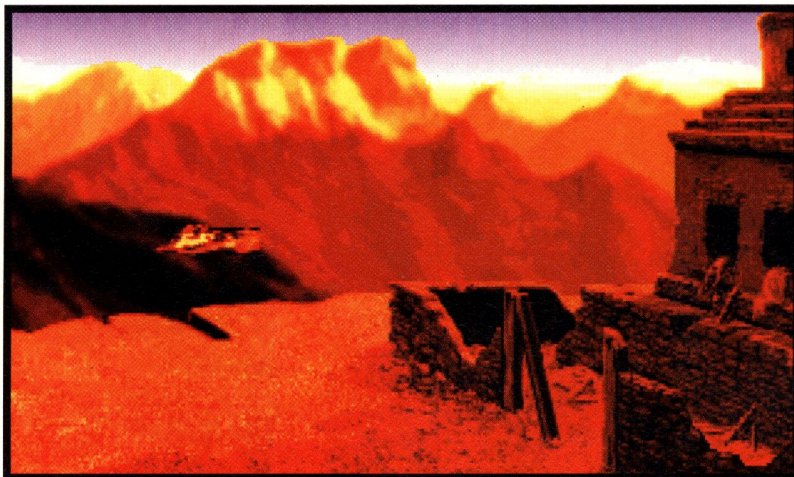


Pacific Strike

FOLLOWING hot on the heels of *Strike Commander* comes a game that uses the same Realspace™ engine but pitches it into the dark days of World War II. As the pilot of a number of US aircraft such as Wildcat fighters, Dauntless torpedo bombers and Hellcat dive bombers, you take part in every major Pacific campaign of the war with the opportunity to change history. If, for example, you fail to destroy a Japanese carrier during the battle of Midway then it will turn up at the next mission, dramatically changing the odds and maybe altering the outcome of the entire war.

Publisher: Origin/Electronic Arts
Out: December **Price:** £49.99

Why is that plane not moving Petty Officer?
It's on Pacific Strike sir ho ho.



Inca II

+ Combining adventure with arcade style action, all of it wrapped up in the sort of graphics that made such an impact in the original, *Inca II* sees you on a crusade to save the balance of the empire against the threat of a mysterious asteroid. Along the way you can try and pronounce names like Atahualpa or Wiracocha and greet someone as 'Accla the Great Lama' without sniggering.

Publisher: Coktel Vision
Out: November **Price:** tba



Forgotten Castle: The Awakening

There are no end of first person 3D role playing games around these days but this is one that really catches the eye. The scenario might not vary wildly from the standard family avenging quest but the 3D rendered 256 colour graphics boast some of the smoothest scrolling around. Add to this a non linear plot, indoor and outdoor locations and a full cinematic score and maybe *Ultima Underworld 2* will have to start looking to its crown.

Publisher: Dolphin Games Inc./Electronic Arts
Out: October **Price:** £44.99



Lords of Midnight III: The Citadel

With 24 leading characters and a host of intelligent extras, *Lords of Midnight III* is a fantasy adventure in a ray-traced terrain with a fractally generated landscape and real time action. It's also been programmed by Mike Singleton who has got a somewhat impressive track record.

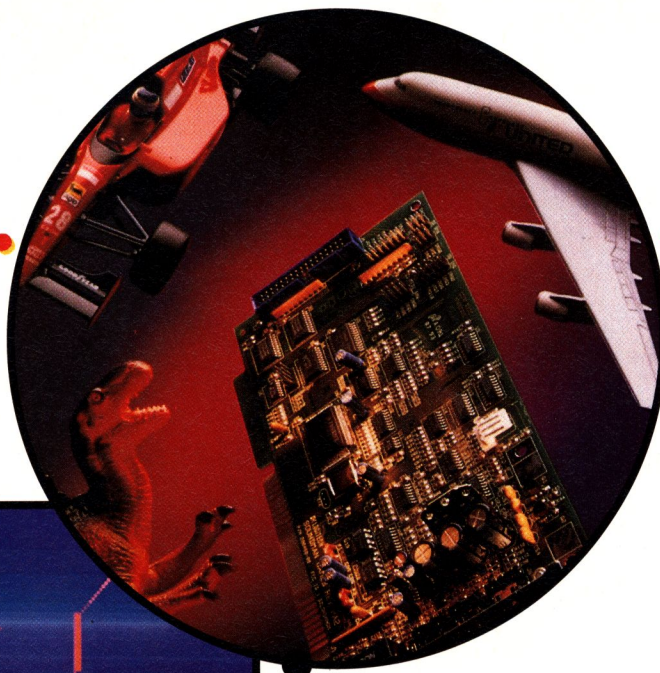
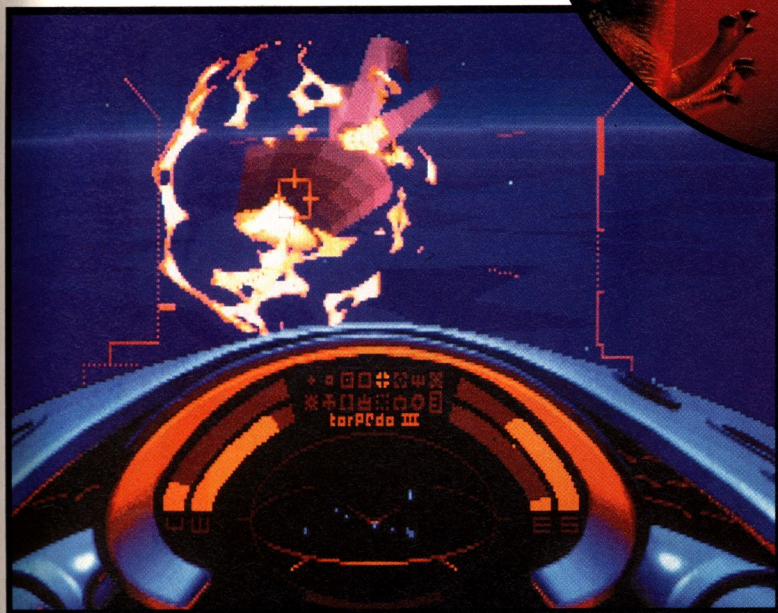
Publisher: Domark **Out:** May **Price:** Tba



Inferno

With the whole solar system as your battleground, *Inferno* plunges you into hard hitting 3D space combat against 300 individually controlled deathcraft.

Publisher: Ocean Out: February Price: tba



Soundman Games

➤ Aimed specifically at the PC games player Soundman Games is equipped with a 20-track stereo Yamaha OPL-3 synthesiser and is fully compatible with Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro and Ad-Lib. It will be bundled with two utilities for DOS and Windows, MCS Music Rack plus a games program.

Released by: Logitech Out: November Price: £79.00.

DISPATCHES

+++ THE LATEST NEWS ON

Sierra's forthcoming *Gabriel Knight: The Sins of the Fathers* is that the voice-over for the lead role is to be recorded by Tim Curry, with other major roles played by Michael Dorn (Worf from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*), and Mark 'Star Wars' Hamill. We can't wait!

+++ GOOD NEWS FOR M1 TANK

Platoon fans is that, following its trend for remakes like *Pirates Gold* and *Railroad Tycoon Deluxe*, MicroProse has definite plans to make *M1 Tank Platoon* the next classic to be given a facelift.

+++ CODIES FANS CAN LOOK

forward to further releases this Autumn, kicking off with the PC version of the massive hit, *Micro Machines*. In this unusual racing game you race miniature vehicles, from sports cars to power boats and helicopters, over 27 different tracks including a snooker table, a workshop and a bedroom floor. Following this in November will be *Cosmic Spacehead*, a graphic adventure-cum-platform game featuring the first alien tourist, and the latest game in the *Dizzy* series, *Fantastic Dizzy*, which will be available in January.

+++ MINDSCAPE HAS SECURED

an exclusive European distribution deal with Viacom New Media. The first fruits of this will be PC Windows versions of adventure games *Deja Vu I & II*, *Shadowgate* and *Uninvited* plus the three CD ROM *Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective* games and a brand spanking new CD ROM release, *Dracula Unleashed*.

+++ US GOLD ARE UPPING THE

quality of their already impressive range of budget/mid price product by signing a deal with Sierra which should see titles such as *Leisure Suit Larry*, *Police Quest*, *Red Baron* and *Heart of China* appearing on the Kixx label.

+++ CONTROVERSIALLY SAVING

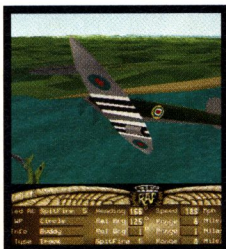
some of the hottest news until last; Virgin have signed a long term deal with horror fiction author Clive Barker who will be involved in developing a series of original products for the CD market. Barker will be involved in projects at every stage from concept through story boarding, scripting and design; drawing on his experience as both writer and director of horror.

Evasive Action

For those would-be Top Guns who prefer action to simulation comes

Evasive Action, a game of head to head air combat. There are four scenarios (France 1917, Pacific 1942, modern day Middle East and future space) each of which can be played against the computer, against a player on another machine or, via a split screen, against another player on the same machine. In each scenario the emphasis is on accessible arcade style action rather than manual, heavy accuracy.

Publisher: Mindscape Out: November Price: tba



Overlord D-Day

➤ Presenting a somewhat unusual perspective on the D-Day landings, *Overlord* puts you in the cockpit of a Spitfire, Mustang and Typhoon (presumably not at the same time) in the battle for that all-important air superiority. Missions range from bomber escort, ground attack and good old dogfights. If you opt to play the game in campaign mode the last mission will be over the Normandy beaches on D-Day itself.

Publisher: Virgin Interactive Entertainment Out: Spring 1994 Price: tba

DISCETTE
RIDES LIKE
THE WIND..

RAPTOR

POWERFULL
LIZARD MOUNTED
BY A SMALL ELF

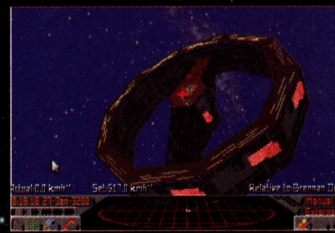


A New PC Team

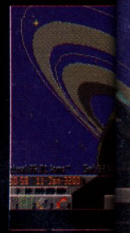
If you also own an Amiga, you'll undoubtedly have heard of Team 17. In the past two years it has taken the Amiga market by storm and put the products of most of the larger software publishers to shame. Now it is about to make a big noise in the PC market too. Its first PC game, a conversion of the popular Amiga beat 'em-up, *Body Blows*, was released quietly back in August and has given Team 17 a good indication of its potential strength in the PC market. By the time you read this, you should also be able to buy the PC version of the hit strategic shoot 'em-up, *Alien Breed* (£29.99).

These will be followed by three further games, *Silverball*, a smooth scrolling pinball game from the States, and the sequels to the first two releases, *Body Blows Galactic* and *Alien Breed 2*.

Look ahead. Look far, far ahead to the
year 3200 and imagine a basic space craft
as your only worthwhile possession. If you
are to fulfil your burning ambition to be the
best, you must defeat the best by coupling
your inherited flying skills with a vast
knowledge of the Universe. Outwit the
pirates by beating them at their own game.
Be merciless, be wise, beware.



PC Screen shot



AMIGA Screen shot

DA
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1985 — ELITE

"Elite. Game? It's a way of life!"

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only the very best

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shot



PC Screen shot

WID BEN ENTS

FRONTIER

TE I

Intergalactic trading has its rewards and its downfalls. Trade with the international stock markets and play one against the other to get the best deal. Watch your back at all times. Adding to your bank balance could well be adding to your criminal record! The Feds may or may not like what you do. Tough! They will have to catch you first. In a galaxy full of challenges, — **this Frontier has no limits.**

GAMETEK

1993 - FRONTIER - ELITE II

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CU Amiga - 97%

mature with time

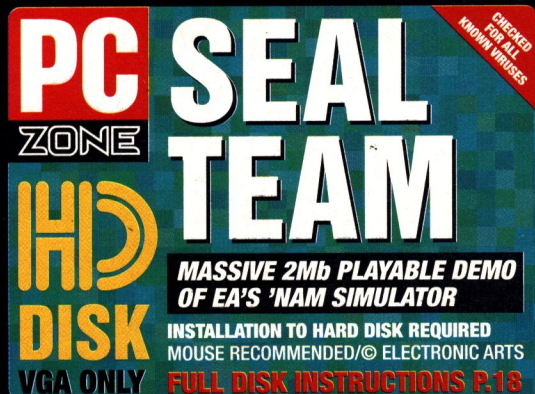
AMIGA, ATARI ST

Konami. Distributed by Gametek

COVER DISKS

We were determined this month to bring you our red hot exclusive demo of Electronic Arts' *Seal Team*, but it's so unbelievably huge that we had to place a high density disk onto the magazine just to squeeze it on. This is undoubtedly the best magazine demo you'll be playing this month, so we recommend that you get it installed right now, turn down the lights, turn up the sound and get ready to kick ass. See you back in the mess...

(Below) The Map screen from which you can issue orders to men and vehicles and realise that you've misplaced two of your party.



SEAL TEAM

How to install the demo

To install the *Seal Team* Demo, you must specify the drive containing the disk that you are installing from, and the hard drive you are installing to. For example, if you are installing from floppy drive A: to hard drive C: then you should type:

INSTALL A: C: [ENTER].

The install program will create a directory on your hard drive called STDEMO, and will copy all the files to that particular directory.

Once all of the files have been copied to your hard drive, the install program will ask for your sound preferences. You must specify a general MIDI card (through which music will be played) and a card through which sound effects will



be played. For some selections you will be required to enter additional setup information, but if you are unsure of the answer to these prompts, simply press ENTER to select the default option. You can re-configure the sound options later by changing the directory to STDEMO and typing:

SETUP [ENTER]

How to start the demo

Change the directory to STDEMO and type:

DEMO [ENTER]

How to play Seal Team

In *Seal Team* you control a team of Navy Seals, operating behind enemy lines in the Vietnam jungle. Your overall objective is to undertake vital covert missions that are beyond the capability of normal troops. Before your mission begins you should read the pre-briefing comments, and then carefully watch the animated briefing which explains exactly what to do and when. You may also wish to view the Mission Order and Marching Order at this stage. You may navigate through the briefing screens using the mouse or, alternatively, the cursor keys and enter key.

When the briefing has finished there will be a short, animated sequence showing your team leaving the Seals' base and being inserted at the mission location. From this point, the team is under your control.

Seal Team operates like a flight simulation, except that it works on the ground and with people rather than planes. You can select a number of views, but we recommend that you use the Point Man View most of the time. The Point Man is the squad leader and the man that you control directly. You should also use him to give orders to the other three members of your team.

Your current waypoint is indicated by an inverted 'V' shape at the top of the screen. You must head towards this to reach your next objective. Change your team's formation and position to suit the situation.

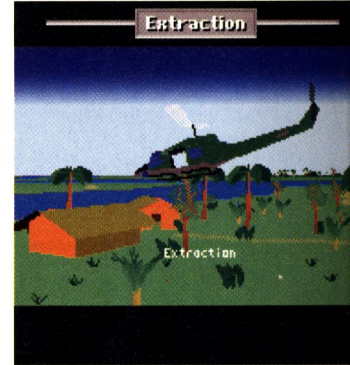
When you sight a target, like a bunker or Vietcong, it will be highlighted by a diamond. The diamond changes colour as the target comes within range of your current weapon.

If you run into trouble, try splitting your team so that two of your men can provide cover for the other two. You can also request an attack from your support craft.

Once you have achieved your primary and possibly a secondary objective, you should head for the extraction point. If you run into serious trouble, you can call for an emergency extraction at any stage.

When the mission ends, view the de-briefing animation to find out how well you did.





CONTROLS

Movement

Cursor upspeed up
 Cursor downslow down
 Cursor leftturn left
 Cursor rightturn right

Position

3upright
 2crouch
 1prone
 +next position
 -previous position

Weapons & Tools

Enterfire weapon
 Nselect next weapon
 Gthrow grenade
 Alt-Nselect next grenade
 TABselect next target
 Rset rate of fire control
 Xexpose booby trap
 [.....use tool
]select next tool

Insertion

Rrequest reinsertion
 ESCskip zoom-in sequence

Team Formation Orders

Lcolumn formation
 Iin-line formation
 Ddiamond formation
 Vvee-wedge formation

Team Movement Orders

Hhalt
 Ssearch action
 Psplit teams (2 - 2), (1 - 1 - 2)*
 Jjoin teams (2 - 2), (4)*
 Qdive quickly

Team Fire Orders

Ffire in field of fire
 Tfire at player's target
 Wfire at will
 Ccease fire

Split Team Orders

Lstealth movement
 Isnipe action
 Ddemolition action
 Vprovide cover fire action
 Hhalt
 Ssearch action
 Pmovement ASAP
 Jjoin with point man

Map Screen Commands

Mswitch to map screen
 Enterset the waypoint
 Z, -zoom map
 X, +expand map
 Tabselect next team

Support Orders

Bboat attack
 Uhelicopter attack
 Aaircraft attack
 Kcease attack
 Oloiter
 Eextract
 Yemergency extract

Menu Commands

Enternext screen
 Spaceadvance dialogue
 Escprevious screen

View Modes

F1point man view
 F2team view
 F3support team view
 F4support team view
 F5support team view
 F7split team A view
 F8split team B view
 F9target view

System Commands

Alt-Ppause game
 Alt-Ttime compression on/off
 Alt-Dadjust detail level
 Alt-Mtoggle music
 Alt-Stoggle sound effects
 Alt-Xexit to DOS
 Escend mission

(Far left) As you wade ashore, all firm jawed and aggressive, your thoughts are on nothing but victory and mom's blueberry pie.
 (Left) Then you catch sight of a couple of these guys, Vietcong guerillas (or freedom fighters depending on your viewpoint).
 (Right) All of a sudden you'd swap mom and her blueberry pie for a short, but immediate, ride in a helicopter.

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*(denotes where Point Man is)

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

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

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

THIS MONTH'S PANEL

Turn to page 77 and find out what Stuart Shapes and Tom Rees-Herdman had to say about *Flight Sim 5.0*.

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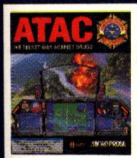
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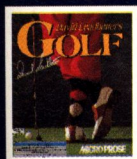
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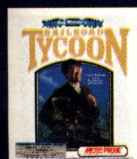
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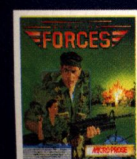
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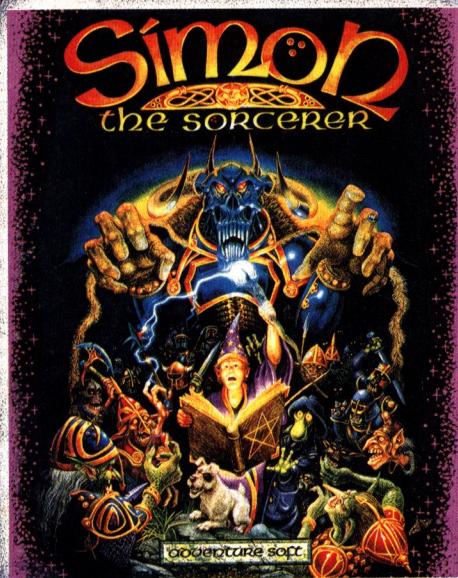
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"What are you leering at?", I snapped. The rock continued to stare at me but said nothing. It came as no surprise, dear reader. Everything in this magic forest seemed destined to rouse my anger. Only tomorrow a beery dwarf will tell me to naff off and a socially inept Swamping will lay a guilt trip on me. Banishing the shapeshifting witch and freeing Calypso the Wizard had sounded like any old computerised graphic adventure for hot rodding gamers. Yet having savoured the armpit aromas of an angry troll, been eaten by an amphibian and having discovered how utterly uninteresting fungi and flora can be, I find myself in no ordinary quest.

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Screen shots from IBM PC version. Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the gameplay and not the screen graphics which may vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

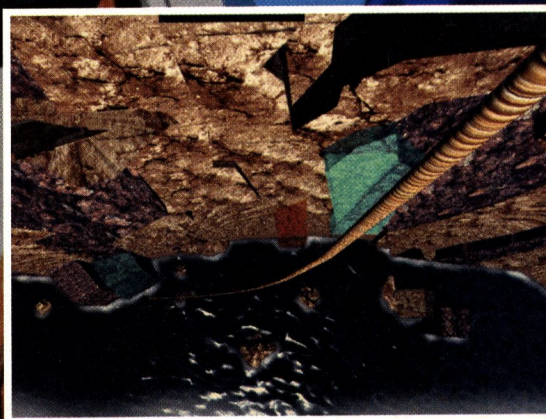
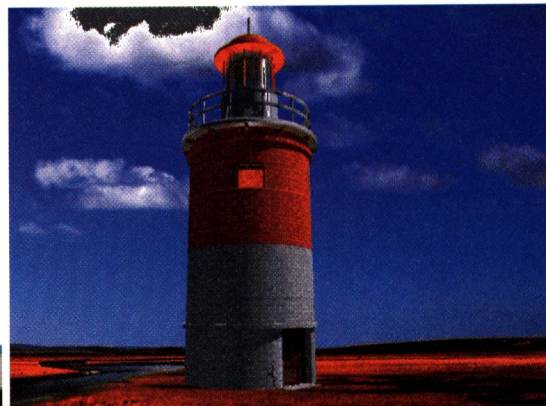
Return to Zork

PRICE: £49.99

OUT: October



Duncan MacDonald
checks out *Return to Zork*, the latest addition to Infocom's never-ending adventure series.



(Top) Little Lighthouse on the Prairie.
(Above) It's times like these that I wish I were a bush baby.
(Main picture) She'll make you regret even mentioning playing Cover Girl Strip Poker.

And lo, there were no words. Or, to be more precise, no typing. All commands in *Return to Zork* are entered via an extremely comprehensive but amazingly simple to use interface. Fans of the old games will still be able to do all the 'texty' things they

And there was light. Yes, pictures. But not just your tired old adventure game 'static' pictures of blocky hobbits and things. Oh no. Technologically speaking, *Return to Zork* leapfrogs far beyond the shoulders of its ancestors and lands smack bang in the



(Above) Naaah. If you wanna impress me do it with weights on the end.

(Below) Here Jaques models this years RPG collection. Hat by Miss Selfridge (£15.99).

the land of complete up-to-dateness. The semi animated computer generated location pics, although very nice on their own, aren't particularly 'modern', but what is special is that they've been enhanced by the inclusion of overlaid digitised animation: any characters you happen upon are 'real'. They've been filmed. They are 'actors'. If somebody in the game talks to you, their mouth will move, and they will gesture. If someone attacks you then they will, er, attack you. If you attack someone else they will cower. Or fall over dead. Or whatever. And there are cut-scenes too - you sit back and enjoy as full motion video clips play before your eyes.

Let there be sound...

And lo, there was sound. And it was digitised. Suddenly the reason for our beta version of *Return to Zork* coming on 12 disks becomes apparent, because every single thing said to you throughout the entire game can be heard by your very own ears. Yes, you read correctly. Every single thing. Every sentence. Every word. Every grunt. There's no conversation text whatsoever. The only text you'll see is text demanded by the storyline, such as the writing on different pieces of paper when rifling through the drawers of a filing cabinet, or the writing on a sign, or on a door. It's like life really, the rule being that speaking things speak while inanimate things don't. Suddenly all those people who had *Zork* filed under the same heading as *The Oxford English Dictionary*, *Old Thizzards Guide To Medieval Footwear* and the informative if weighty *'The Definitive Vexiologist'* are going to be in for one heck of a surprise.

Let there be a tape recorder...

And lo, there was a tape recorder - it's in your inventory when you begin the game. Every time you have a conversation, with any character, the speech is automatically recorded. Why? I'll illuminate. Imagine you've spoken several times with character 'D', and now you happen upon character 'Q'. What you can do (using the aforementioned interface) is to ask character 'Q' about bits of the conversation with character 'D'. Simply whip out your recorder, fast forward to the part you're interested in, and click on the PLAY button. When character 'Q' has heard what was said, he or she may have some comments to add. (Or not, as the case may be).

Let there be a camera...

Along similar lines to the tape recorder is the camera - which is also with you from the word go. Open your inventory box, click on it, and FZZZZT, a flash goes off. You've taken a snapshot of your current location. The picture is automatically assigned to your photo album, along with any others you've taken along the way. When talking to a character later on, you might like to ask him or her about a location you visited previously, so out with the photo album and flick through the pages until you find the one you want. Easy as pie. (Unless you forgot to take the photo you need, of course, in which case it isn't as easy as pie and instead becomes impossible.)

Let there be a plot...

And of course, there is a plot. The thing is, however, is that it unfolds as you play the game and so if I were to tell you anything about it here it'd only spoil things for you. Suffice to say that you're in this place and you don't really know what's going on, but eventually you probably will. Hey, how about that? The definitive description of all adventure games, coined by me. Yippee!

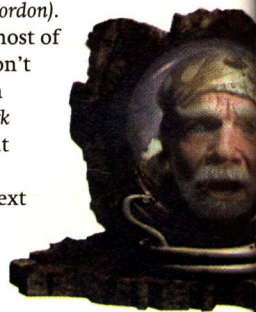
Let there be a cast...

And, as you'd expect from a game with digitised people and digitised voices abungo, there's a cast list as long as your arm. And the brilliant thing is that none of them are as bad at acting as Lord British (anyone who's heard his 'Through

The Pillars' speech from *Ultima VII* part II will know what I'm on about). As I mentioned earlier, the characters in *Return to Zork* have been played by real actors, ones who do it for a living. Some of them have actually been in films and tv. You want proof? Okay then. It's a bit of a D list I'm afraid:

Jason Hervey (*The Wonder Years*), Robin Lively (*Doogie Howser, M.D.*), Ernie Lively (*Passenger 57*), A. J. Langer (*Hangin' With Mr Cooper*), Edan Gross (*Northern Exposure*), Julie St Claire Capone (*Sid & Nancy*), Nino Surdo (*Major Dad*), Sam Jones (*Flash Gordon* in the film *Flash Gordon*).

And there are many more too, but most of them have only been in tv progs we don't get over here in Blighty. Still, the main point is that the acting in *Return to Zork* won't make you cringe and, all in all, it looks like it's shaping up to become something of a corker - even if it is a text adventure in disguise. Z



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 600K free RAM

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: Not specified

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 2.5Mb plus 4Mb total RAM

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: All major soundcards

Comments: Needs IBM compatible



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Sim City 2000



One of the few games unquestionably deserving the title 'Classic' was Sim City. Not only did it cause a sensation when it was released but it's still one of the most played games

on any hard drive. Now Sim City is being completely overhauled and revamped as Sim City 2000. Crack squads of programmers, programmers' mates and graphic artists are working around the clock to produce the new version of the game that made Maxis what it is today; the game that launched a thousand poor imitations and the game responsible for more lost sleep and missed buses than any other. We sent **Patrick McCarthy** to have a

sneak preview of the game and, while he was about it, muse on the vast collection of Sim City data disks and other examples of the genre.

NB: The images used in this feature are from the Apple Macintosh version of the game which is at a more advanced stage of development.

SIM CITY THE FIRST

The original *Sim City* is available on just about every format you could possibly think of, from the SNES, Mac and PC to Arkwright's Spinning Jenny. On the PC it's had more than a few data disks released for it to add to your *Sim City*ing pleasure, although none of them alter the way the game is played in any way.

The *Terrain Editor* allows you, perhaps not surprisingly, to edit terrain, creating your own bizarre chunk of land which you will later ruin by overdeveloping. The other data disks come in the form of additional *Sim City Graphics* sets. There are packs containing Ancient Cities (Ancient Asia, Medieval Times and Wild West) and Future Cities (Future Europe, Future USA and Moon Base). It has to be said that these aren't exactly 'must-buys.' They don't add anything to the gameplay whatsoever (power cables being replaced by water pipes, etc.) and even as an attempt to introduce a different atmosphere they're rather lacking, as the graphics aren't at all evocative of the time they're supposed to represent: multi storey sheriff's offices and Ancient Asian Police Departments are typical (and they're still all priced in dollars).

The only (rather pathetic) difference is the way in-game messages are phrased: In Ancient Asia and Medieval times 'More industrial areas needed' becomes 'Master (or Sire) we need more industrial areas'. In the Wild West 'More residential areas needed' becomes 'More homesteads needed' etcetera.

The original PC version has been given a smart and jazzy 256 colour upgrade and is now available as *Sim City for Windows*. These data disks aren't available directly for the Windows version, although the installation routine does have a built-in facility to convert the DOS packs for use with the Windows version. There's something of a dispute going on at the moment as to who owns the rights to *Sim City*, so it's not the easiest game to get hold of in its original form. Informed opinion seems to think that this will all be sorted out in the near future, and that a bumper budget package will be released next year, containing at least some, and possibly all, of the above 'extras' at a low, low price.



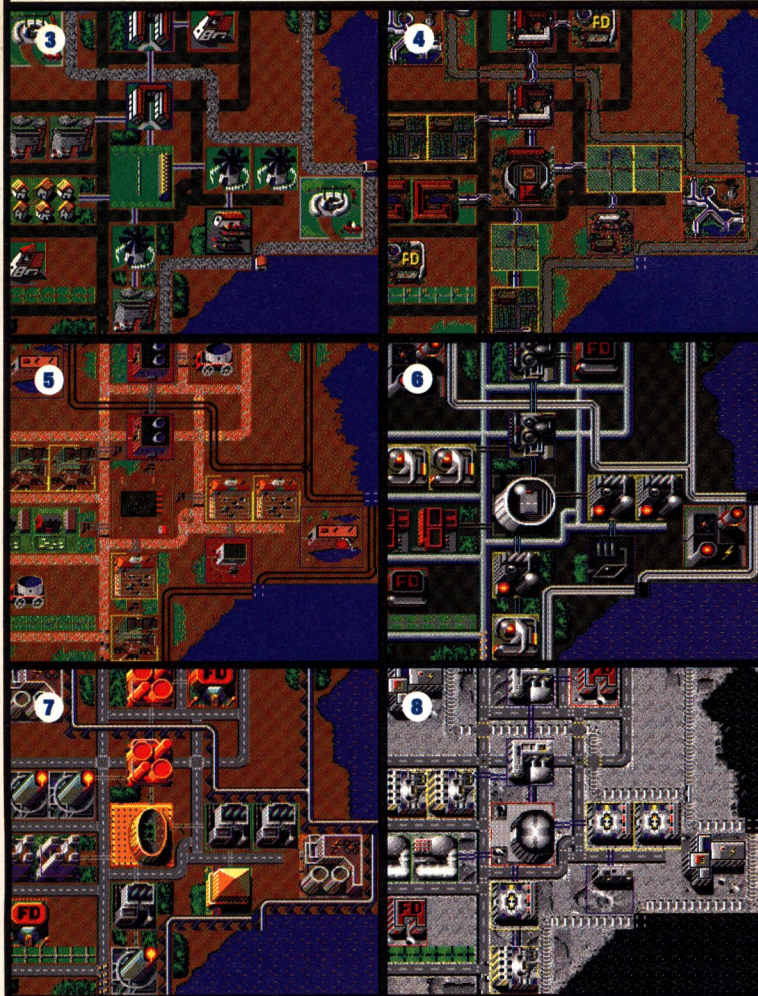
THE GOD GAME

God games are so-called because the first time you see the number of icons splattered all over the screen you say: 'God.' There have been any number of games released in which you get to lord it over the scumbags on-screen, controlling and toying with their destinies for your own amusement.

Two or three can justifiably be called 'classics': one is *Populous*, in which you really are a god, and, as such, responsible for a warlike people at odds with their neighbours who worship a different god. Raising and lowering land to enable your people to settle and breed, you gain power from your people's worship. As you gain strength, an arsenal of special effects become available to you – earthquakes, floods, and so on – which you can unleash on the enemy's people to help your own to victory.

In *Civilization* you attempt to lead one small, unarmed tribe from the dawn of civilisation all the way into the space age, hopefully becoming the first to colonise a new planet. You start by establishing a new city and, with a combination of exploration, scientific research and development, and plain old war, you discover new lands, establish new cities and make new inventions to help you in your task.

Many cheap imitations of these games are around, amongst them are *Caesar* which is essentially a poor *Civilization*, and *Moonbase* which is a very poor *Sim City*. Other not-quite classics are two other 'Sim' games, *Sim Life* and *Sim Earth*, which are based on scientific theories of evolution and planetary development. They suffer from the lack of any real target for you to achieve: however much you tinker around with things, the planet and life continues to evolve. They don't really have any kind of edge that makes them addictive. Yet another is *Sim Ant*, in which you control an ant colony in a garden, fighting off rival colonies before launching a raid on the house. Strange indeed, but not without interest.

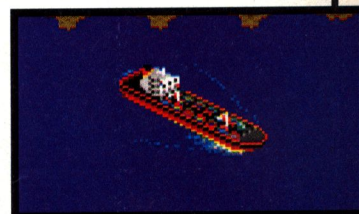




KEY

The original Sim City and its panoply of add-on scenarios.

- 1 Sim City (DOS version)
- 2 Sim City (Windows version)
- 3 Medieval Europe
- 4 Ancient Asia
- 5 Wild West
- 6 Future USA
- 7 Future Europe
- 8 Moonbase
- 9 Terrain Editor



The three ages of a planet, the age of innocence, the age of commuter belt and the age of Milton Keynes.



THE IDEA BEHIND *Sim City* is simple but captivating: you take over and develop an expanse of land, hoping, in your role as Mayor, to transform it from an inconsequential village into the nation's capital. Starting with a budget (fixed at a sum dependant on the difficulty level you select), you try to build and lay out a good balance of residential, commercial and industrial areas, linking them with roads and railways, and ensuring a good supply of electricity. Raising funds by taxation, you try to battle with the likes of pollution, crime and traffic congestion, while ensuring your town becomes an attractive place to live, thus attracting more people, increasing the revenue from your taxes... you get the idea. Get it wrong and the population will start by being annoyed, and end up simply moving elsewhere.

As well as the economical and logistical problems there are the disasters to contend

with: fires, floods, plane crashes, whirlwinds and even rampaging monsters will do their utmost to destroy your good work, making you spend on repairs the money you were saving up for a sports stadium or a park. All very dull sounding, but it's extremely addictive. It's one of those games where you suddenly look up at 2am with a cold cup of tea next to you that you made four hours ago. And so to the new version...

What's the same?

You're still the Mayor of a patch of mud that you would like to do an Eliza Doolittle to. You still build things, demolish things, battle against all the same misfortunes and delight at the same triumphs, in the hope of finally making it big.

And what's different?

Absolutely everything, from the gameplay and the options to the level of complexity (it's about five million times more complicated). But by far the most obvious enhancement is the view of the land you're developing. All that top-down

ICON SEE CLEARLY

One of the easiest ways to show the kind of depth the new game goes to is to run you through that vast bank of icons staring balefully at you from the left of all those screenshots.

1 BULLDOZER Although this icon is still used to demolish (one click) and clear (two clicks) a square of land, it now has many more uses besides. It also represents your Capability Brown talents as well: you can use it to raise and lower land, and to flatten an area to a level selected by you. (Click on the level you want, then the squares you want changed to that level). It's also used to 'de-zone' land.

2 TREE Believe it or not, this adds trees to the landscape. The more times you click on the square of land, the more trees are added, from one tree per square to whole forests.

3 WATER This is used to turn areas of land into areas of water. It's a way of fine-tuning the rivers that are already present, or adding the odd spot of decorative wetness.

4 POWER BOLT This used to just signify the power lines. Now, holding it down will bring up a mini-menu with which you choose between power lines and power plants. There are now potentially nine power plants available to you (they become available to you as they did historically, and the newspaper keeps you in touch with developments). Instead of being restricted to coal or nuclear power, you now have the options of gas, oil, hydro-electric, solar, wind, microwave and fusion power.

5 TAP Water distribution is now just as important to the success of your city as power was in *Sim City*. The tap allows you to lay water pipes (see underground, overground...), and site water pumps, storage towers, sewage treatment and desalinisation plants.

6 PARTHENON This option is ghosted out until options become available to you. For example, when your village first becomes a town, Founders Day is announced and you're invited to build a mansion for yourself to live in. As you become more successful, you will be able to reward yourself by erecting a splendid statue of yourself, building a City Hall, and erecting vast Arcologies, huge frightening things whose exact use escapes me.

7 ROAD This is still used to build roads, but there are now more types of road available. Normal, single lane roads can be run together to create plazas (which look very nice when they get little lights alongside them). You can also build raised multi-lane highways complete with ramps to join them to more lowly roads; you can bore tunnels through hillsides and even build little bus depots so the poorer members of the public have transport.

8 RAILWAY TRACK The railway track builds good old fashioned rails, but can also now build underground railways (see underground, overground...), railway stations and underground stations.

9 SEAPORT/AIRPORT Builds seaports and airports – the difference being they're not of a set size, and so can be built a square at a time. They don't cost as much this way, and you can expand them as your city needs it.

10 HOUSE Housing (or residential space, to give it its correct title) now can be designated Light Residential or Heavy Residential areas, depending on whether you want poor ghettos or plush suburbs.

11 OFFICE Again, the commercial areas can be Light or Heavy...

12 FACTORY ...as can industrial areas.

13 MORTAR BOARD One of the big new developments in this version is that you'll be judged on how well-educated the people in your town are. To enable you to hold your head up and not be seen as 'a bit of a Clarke,' you'll have to build schools, universities, libraries and museums. This is where you select them.

14 LIGHT The emergency services and the correctional institutions. Build police stations, fire stations, hospitals and prisons with this. (Slap a prison down in the middle of your most exclusive development and watch the rich move out.)

15 BALLOONS Build the fun things in life – parks, zoos, sports stadiums, and brothels. What, no cinemas? No theatres?

16 SIGN Click on this and then on an area of land, and you can use it to remind yourself what the hell you were planning on doing when you put that small roundabout in the middle of nowhere.

17 QUESTION MARK AND ARROW Click on this and then on a square and you'll be shown a pop-up status window which will provide you with all sorts of information about the square, including its precise grid location, whether it's powered or not, whether pipes run beneath it and other stuff vital to the diligent town planner.

18 DIRECTIONAL ARROWS Since buildings are now three-dimensional, and could have all sorts of problems hidden behind them, you can now use these to rotate the map 90 degrees at a time.

19 TWO CROSSES AND A SIGHT The first two zoom the map in and out, and the third can be used to centre the picture on a particular square (very useful for precision revolving).

20 SIX INFORMATION ICONS Provide a wealth of facts and stats (see right for full breakdown).

21 RCI An at-a-glance view of the balance of residential, commercial and industrial zones in your city, and the demand for each. (The higher into the plus area the bar, the less you need of that type of zone.)

22 BUILDINGS Switches the buildings on and off, but leaves foundations visible.

23 SIGNS Toggles the display of the signs you've written for yourself on and off.

24 DETAILS Toggles on and off the display of the smaller items in the city, including roads, trees, power lines and railway track.

25 ZONES Show or hide designated 'zones' in the city.

26 UNDERGROUND This switches to underground planning, and displays underground railways, water supply pipes and any underground road tunnels you've built.



Architectural Exam. Question 1.
Does the picture show a subtle
blending of modern and neo gothic
principles or a bit of a bodge job?



INFORMATION ICONS

These six small icons, if clicked on and dragged to the right, can all be used to provide information on an absolute wealth of subjects. They can all be kept on-screen as separate windows (if you have the room).



1 MAP Hold the mouse down on this to show a small overhead map of the city. It can also be used to move quickly around the city, and it rotates as the city is rotated by the directional arrows. This mini-map has, in turn, its own range of icons which give information on a number of subjects tied in with areas of the city (it also alters the large display to reflect the info supplied):

A MAP shows the structures and zones of your city.

B ROAD SYMBOL shows roads, rail and traffic layouts and density.

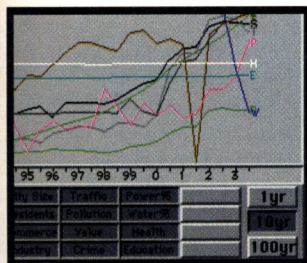
C POWER shows power distribution.

D TAP shows the water distribution.

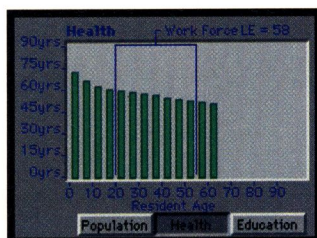
E PEOPLE shows population density and rate of growth by area.

F PERSON behind bars shows you the crime rate, the police power and the police stations.












G FACTORY shows pollution levels.



2 GRAPH This shows the evolution and development (over a span of one, ten or 100 years) of city size, population, commerce, industry, traffic, pollution, land value, crime, availability of power and water, education and health.



3 PEOPLE Displays the education, population and health of each age group in your city.

City Industry		
Steel/Mining		7%
Textiles		7%
Petrochemical		7%
Food		7%
Construction		7%
Automotive		7%
Aerospace		7%
Finance		7%
Media		7%
Electronics		7%
Tourism		7%

4 FACTORIES Gives you information about the ten different industries now capable of running in your city; showing national demand, local tax rate and amount of each currently in your city. Industries available include steel, textiles, petrochemical, aerospace and automotive.

5 PLAYING BOARD Shows the names and sizes of your immediate neighbouring towns and cities, from where, hopefully, you will entice people to come and live in your own fair town.

6 MAN WITH TOP HAT This icon displays the current city ordinances which have been put into effect by the city council, and which will cost you a large wedge. For example, you might be running an advertising campaign to promote tourism and a public no-smoking policy. (See Budgets.)



plan-view stuff has gone right out the window. It's all rendered in sumptuous three dimensional 256 colour VGA graphics. You have proper hills and valleys and you can raise and lower it yourself, *Populous*-style. To allow for the fact that things will be hidden from your view behind the lush graphics, it's rotatable through 360 degrees in 90 degree steps. The graphical detail has improved tenfold: there are lights on airport runways, little street lamps and mini stop-signs at road junctions. The planes and helicopters even have shadows. There's a far wider range of buildings and facilities, including prisons, schools, universities, marinas and libraries. You can allocate high and low density residential, commercial and industrial zones, with irregularly shaped boundaries.

There are new and different objectives and more 'vital statistics'. The latter are key areas in which you must be successful: no longer is it sufficient merely to keep down crime, traffic jams, taxes and pollution. Education is now high on the list of priorities. No longer is it enough to merely make sure each home has power: water must now be provided to all, via pumping stations, desalinisation plants, water treatment works, storage areas and a whole network of pipes. Larger buildings are erected complete with their own pipes already laid beneath the ground; you have to link everything up and provide the pumps to get it all circulating. Yes, there is an underground view.

BUDGETS

Budgets have got a lot more complicated than they were when I was a boy, I can tell you. Budgeting is now split into several areas, all of which can have differing amounts of expenditure. Each area will usually give you advice if you click on the appropriate question mark bubble. Each also has a book icon next to it, which gives you more detailed information and finer control over their budgets.

For example, **Education** allows you to separate the funding for schools and colleges. **Transit** separates funding for roads, rail, power wires, subways, sewers, bridges and tunnels. **Property Taxes** allows you to distinguish between taxes on residential, commercial and industrial property. **Finances** even allows you to issue Bonds, which is a bit scary.

The most interesting option, though, is the *Community Programs* (or programmes, as I prefer to say). This makes it possible for you to fine tune the policies by which you run the city with special public programmes; some may be popular and some unpopular, but it's up to you to decide if the city needs it. There are four specific areas and one general.

Finance allows you to add a one percent sales tax and one percent income tax; you may also legalise gambling in your city and introduce metered parking.

Education programmes include the introduction of anti-drug and pro-reading campaigns, and also CPR training and water safety programmes.

Under *Safety and Health* are the options to introduce neighbourhood watch schemes, a volunteer fire department, a public smoking ban and shelters for the homeless. In addition, you can go all un-American and initiate free health clinics.

Promotional endeavours include advertising for tourism and business purposes; promoting a sister city and an annual carnival.

General areas of civic improvement include the introduction of car-pool lanes, nuclear-free zones and toxic waste testing. The cost of all the programmes you're currently running is detailed below, and in your annual budget report.

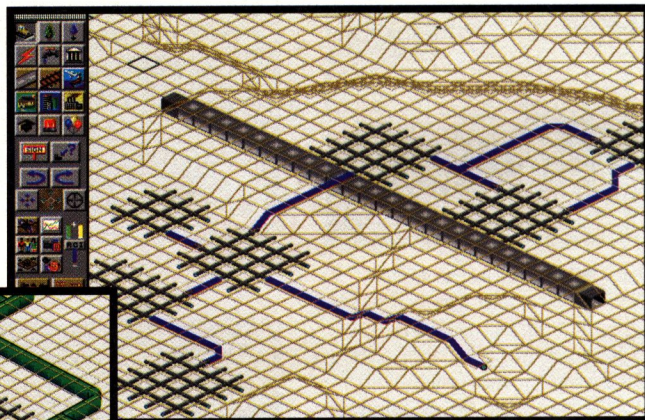
This shows the cost of all the programmes you're currently running.

Finance			Education			Other		
1% Sales Tax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pro-Reading Campaign	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carpool Lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1% Income Tax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anti-Drug Campaign	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nuclear Free Zone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legalized Gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPR Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toxic Waste Testing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metered Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Safety Program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safety & Health			Promotional			Program Costs		
Neighborhood Watch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advertising - Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer Fire Dept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advertising - Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Smoking Ban	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sister City	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homeless Shelters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual Carnival	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Free Clinics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




Now you have to contend with the logistics of underground planning too, since your population needs hot and cold running water and efficient road and rail networks.



Underground, overground, wombling free...

As if all the above ground planning wasn't enough, you now have to take 'down below' into account as well. The facility for the existence of road tunnels doesn't make underground planning any simpler. You can also plan and build an entire tube/underground/subway/metro (call it what you will) layout, if you feel you should do something to ease traffic congestion. Alternatively, of course, you could build one and under fund it, generating an extremely poor, unsafe and unreliable service; driving people back into their cars and boosting lead poisoning related deaths in the under five's.

And...

And there are whole new ways to provide power to the people, including wind, solar, hydro-electric, gas and oil power. There are new 'real scenarios' for you to play (the original had these too - San Francisco earthquakes, Hamburg bombing raids, Tokyo monster attacks, etc.) and cope with. There are also more refined methods of keeping track of the city's budget, land value and industries, and the population's age, health and level of education. All in all, it looks as if this is going to be a bit of a belter when it's finally released, another in the fine tradition of games that wreck homes, relationships and careers. 

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Pro Audio Spectrum, Roland MT-32, Roland MPU 401, Sound Blaster and 100% compatibles

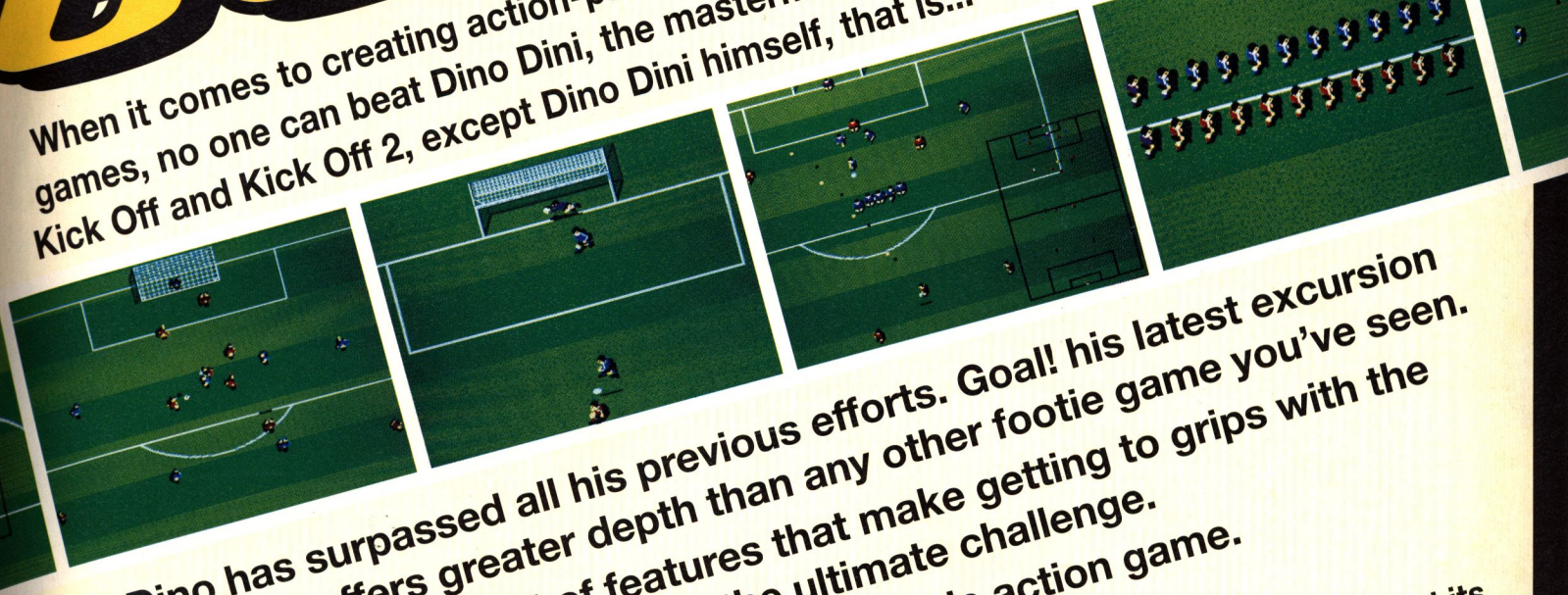
.....
Controls: Mouse

Price: tba **Out:** Spring 1994 **Publisher:** Maxis

FANTASTIC FOOTBALL ACTION!

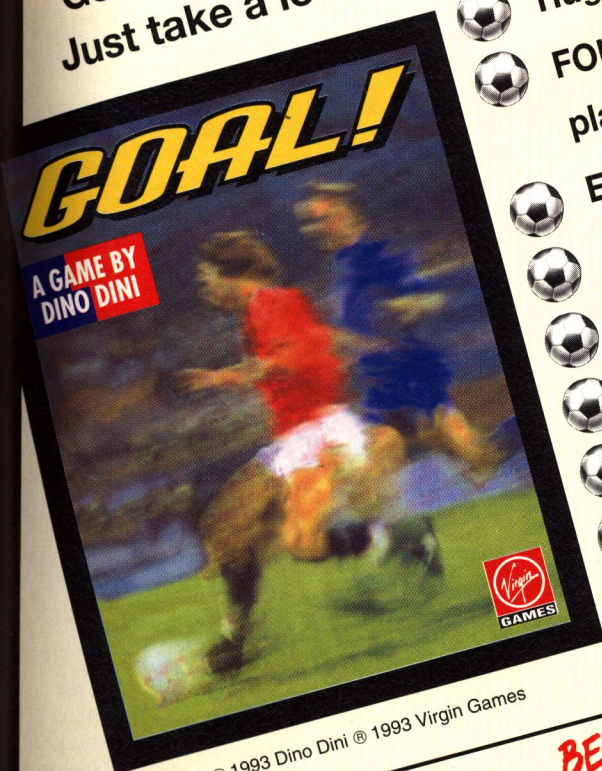
GOAL!

When it comes to creating action-packed, super playable football games, no one can beat Dino Dini, the mastermind behind Kick Off and Kick Off 2, except Dino Dini himself, that is...



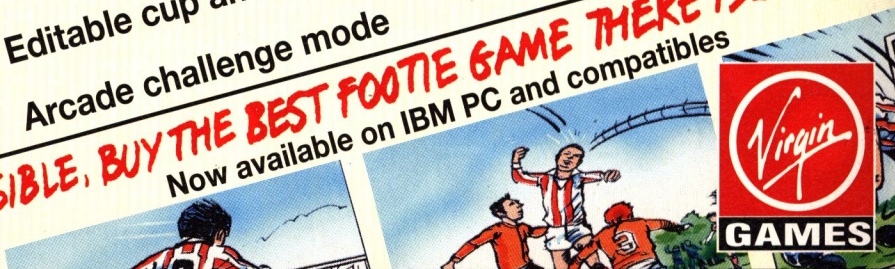
Now Dino has surpassed all his previous efforts. Goal! his latest excursion onto the pitch, offers greater depth than any other footie game you've seen. What's more, it's got a host of features that make getting to grips with the gameplay a delight and mastering it the ultimate challenge. Goal! has all you'll ever need - or want - in a footie action game. Just take a look at a few of the unique features:

- Huge selection of fully editable teams, real player names and kits
- FOUR pitch views - Wembley, Normal, Wet and Muddy - all playable in full and half scale, horizontal and vertical
- Enhanced graphics with better view of the action
- Atmospheric spot sound effects - listen to that crowd roar!
- Superb refined gameplay and computer controlled players
- Every player has 8 carefully selected attributes
- Rewind, Fast Forward, Slow-Mo savable action replays
- Precise control of corners, throw-ins and free-kicks
- Editable cup and league systems
- Arcade challenge mode



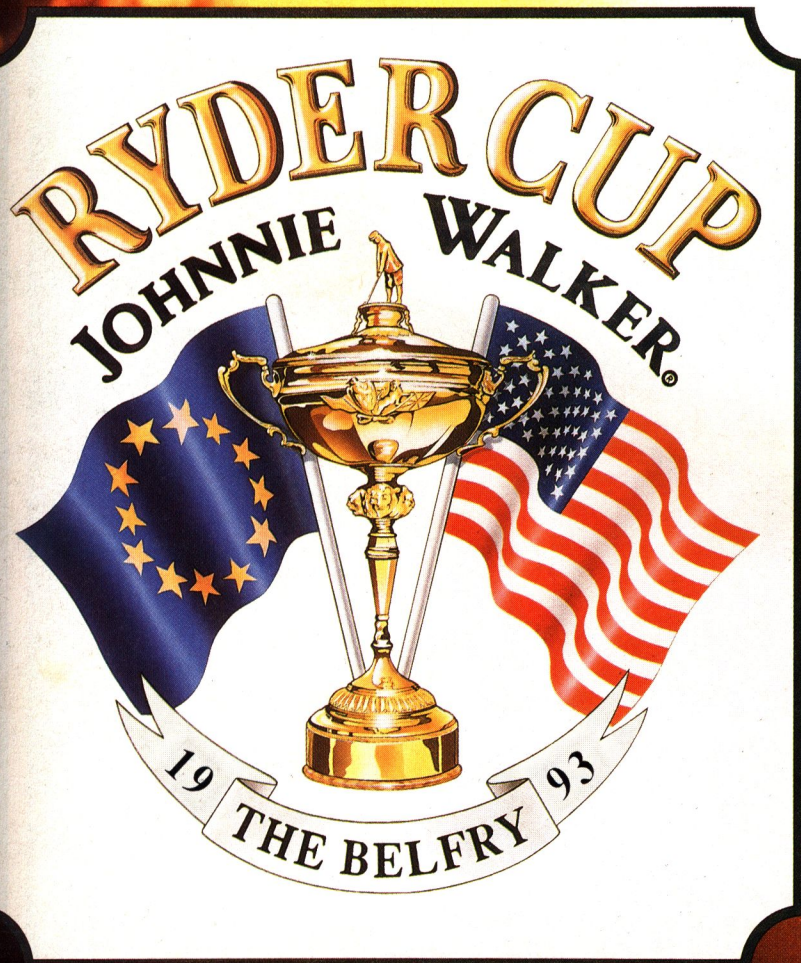
© 1993 Dino Dini © 1993 Virgin Games

BE SENSIBLE. BUY THE BEST FOOTIE GAME THERE IS!
Now available on IBM PC and compatibles



CAPTAIN YOUR TEAM TO VICTORY

IN THE GREATEST INTERNATIONAL
TEAM MATCH IN GOLF -
THE RYDER CUP BY JOHNNIE WALKER.



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OCEAN SOFTWARE LIMITED, 2 CASTLE STREET, CASTLEFIELD, MANCHESTER, M3 4LZ
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Falcon 3.0 is one of the great flight sims – in fact, it ranks as one of the finest pieces of leisure software ever written. **aim** "Mabuse" Ponting has prepared this keyboard template exclusively for *PC Zone* readers. Watch out for more essential templates in upcoming issues of *PC Zone* – the world's greatest PC games magazine!

WINGMAN COMMANDS

BREAK LEFT	A	PREV. WAYPOINT	V
BREAK RIGHT	D	RADIO SILENCE	R
BREAK HIGH	W	BRACKET LEFT	Z
BREAK LOW	X	BRACKET RIGHT	C
STRAIGHT & LEVEL	S	ENGAGE!	E
BYPASS WAYPOINT	B	DISENGAGE!	Q

JETTISON STORES

CENTERLINE STORES	CTRL C
ALL STORES	CTRL K

IN LATER VERSIONS*

ALL STORES EXCEPT WINGTIP MISSILES & ECM	CTRL K
EXTERNAL FUEL TANKS	CTRL F
JETTISON ECM ONLY	CTRL C

CTRL & THESE

TO FINE TUNE

ZOOM IN	ZOOM OUT
---------	----------

SHIFT F3

ROTATE UP	ROTATE DOWN
-----------	-------------

SHIFT F6*

ACM MODE

NAM RADAR	ACM RADAR	GM RADAR
-----------	-----------	----------

SHIFT F8*

REVERSE CYCLE RADAR RANGE

CYCLE RADAR RNG

SHIFT & THESE KEYS

DRAG LEFT	2
DRAG RIGHT	3
ASK AWACS	N
CLOSE UP*	F
SPREAD OUT*	G
RETURN TO BASE*	H

RADAR AZIMUTH	ANTENNA ELEVATION	ABORT MISSION ALT A	END MISSION ALT Q
---------------	-------------------	---------------------	-------------------

V I E W S

SHIFT TAB LOCK ACCEL

TAB ACCEL TIME

1 SAT

2 GROUND

3 FRONT

4 LEFT

5 REAR

6 RIGHT

7 WINGIE

8 PADLOCK

9 TRACK

0 CHASE

1 MISSILE /ENEMY

2 WHEEL E

3 ECM ON/OFF

4 R

5 RADAR ON/OFF

6 TARGET SELECT

7 Y

8 TOGGLE RIVERS/ROADS

9 U

0 LOOK UP

1 P

2 PAUSE GAME

3 CLOSE THROTTLE

4 OPEN THROTTLE

5 RIGHT RUDDER

6 LEFT RUDDER

7 ENTER

8 BACKSPACE A to G

9 A to A

0 ENTER

FALCON 3.0TM

including

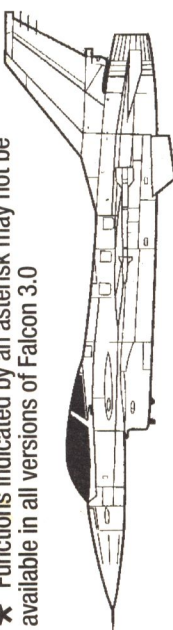
OPERATION FIGHTING TIGER

Spectrum HoloByte[®]

MICROPROSE[®]

* Functions indicated by an asterisk may not be available in all versions of Falcon 3.0

This keyboard template has been put together by PC Zone for purchasers of the game Falcon 3.0, published in the UK by Spectrum HoloByte/Microprose. It is not approved or endorsed by Spectrum HoloByte/Microprose in any way. All rights recognised. If you haven't got Falcon 3.0, nip out and buy it. It's a classic.



SHIFT SCROLL*
TOGGLE ILS SHIFT
COCKPIT UP/DOWN

DISPENSE FLARES

DISPENSE CHAFF

EJECT

CTRL E
THREE TIMES

A AUTOPILOT

S SOUND ON/OFF

Z ENGAGE ILS HUD

LOCK

C CLEAR LOCK

X

REO/ MAP

C

F FLAPS

G GEAR

H HUD COLOUR

B BRAKES

N IFF CHECK

RELEASE WEAPON

MIL/AB TOGGLE

INCREASE AFTERBURN

DECREASE AFTERBURN

INCREASE RIPPLE

DECREASE RIPPLE

INCREASE RIPPLE

IN FLIGHT CONTROLS

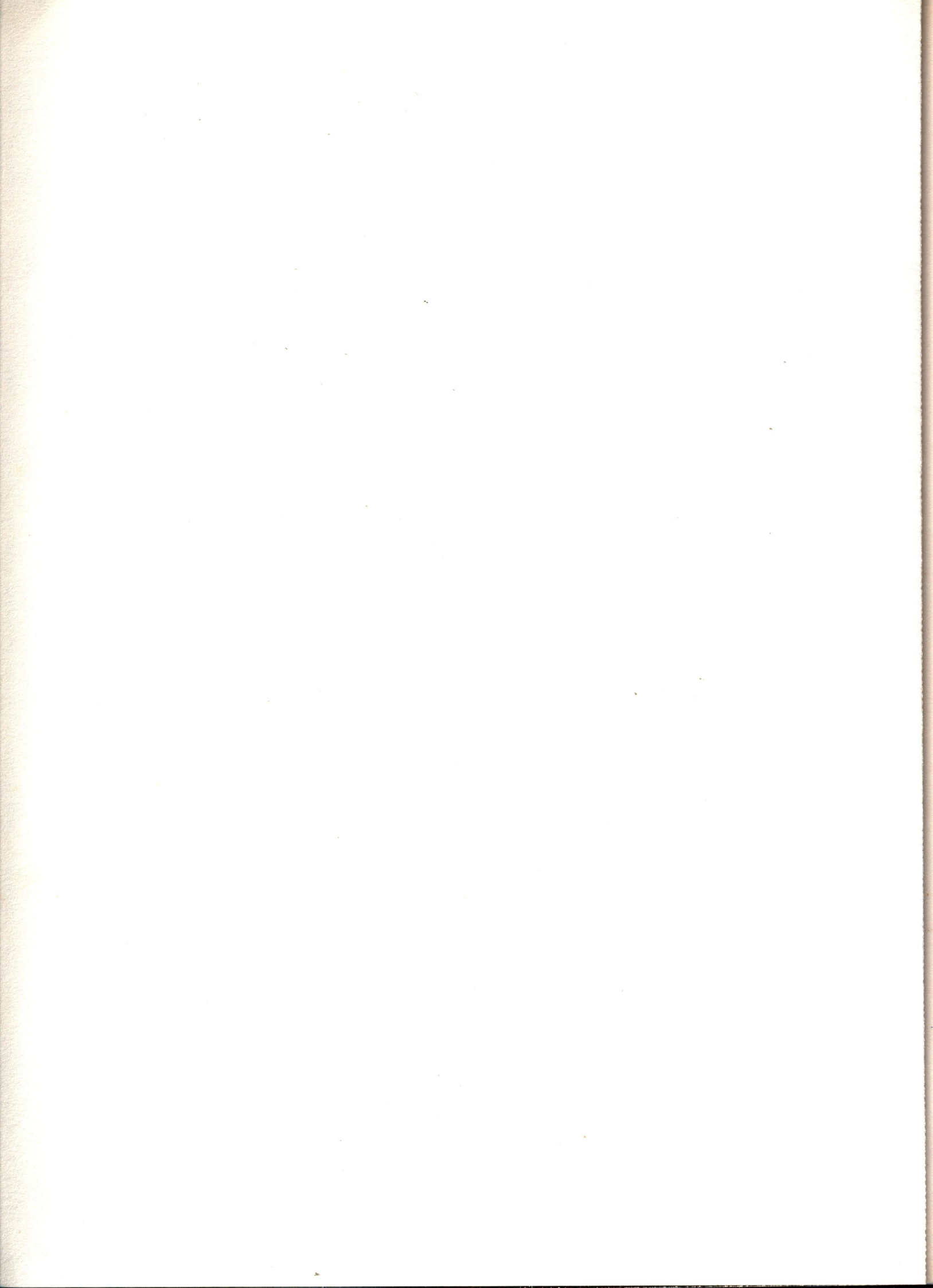
AVTR

REPLAY CAMERA

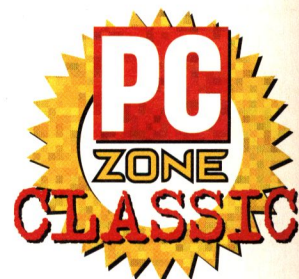
CTRL R

SAVE TO DISK

CTRL S



PC ZONE



reviews

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

PC ZONE score

A game of truly
monumental
averageness

50

Price: £35.99 Out: Now
Published: Dennis
Telephone: 071 631 1433

THE SCORE

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

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

90+ (PC Zone Classic)

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

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70-79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However, weaknesses do not seriously impair playability. and it has a reasonably long life.

60-69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you won't' category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa.

50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

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

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution.

20-29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10-19 Bin jobs

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

THE SPECS

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

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

WHAT'S ON OUR HARD DISK?

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

- 1 Flight Sim 5.0
- 2 Stronghold
- 3 Rules Of Engagement
- 4 MicroProse Grand Prix
- 5 Star Control 2



IN PERSPECTIVE

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

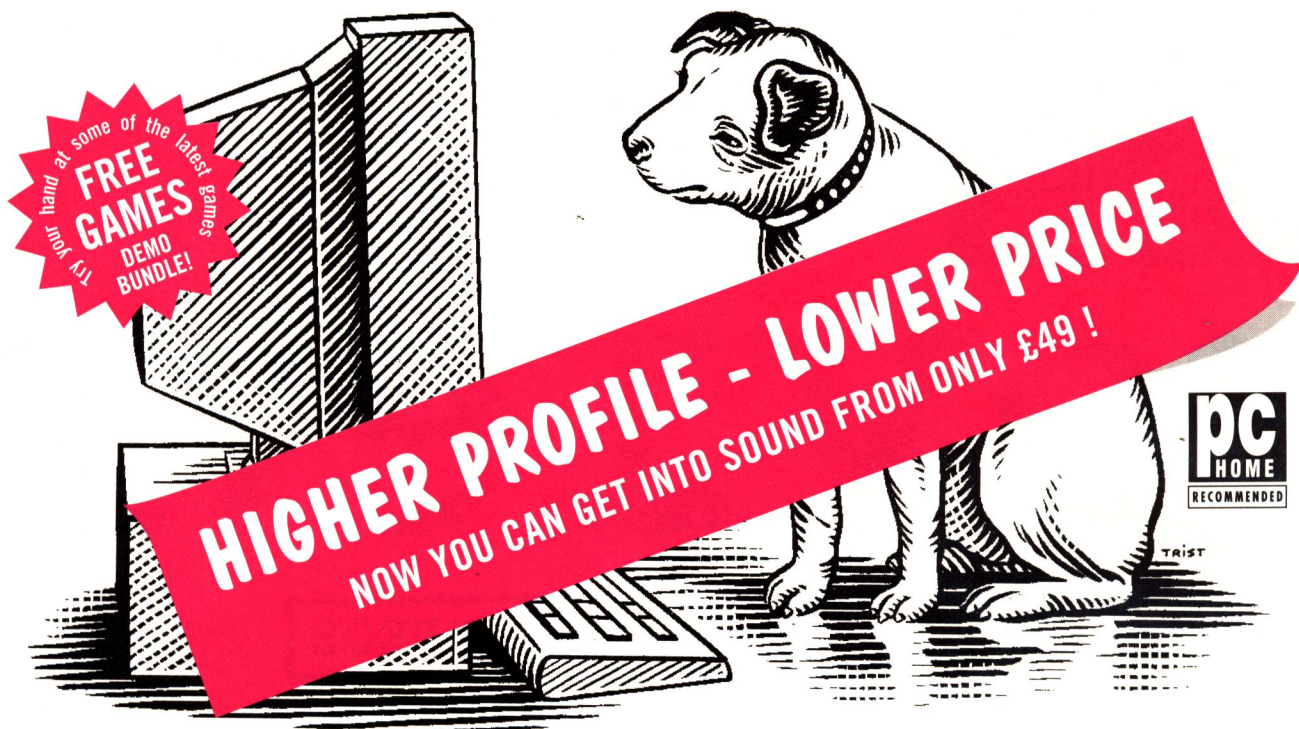
IN PERSPECTIVE

A Better Game

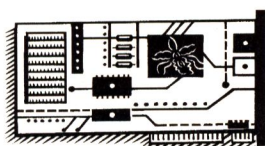
The Game Being Reviewed

A Worse Game

HIS MASTER'S CHOICE

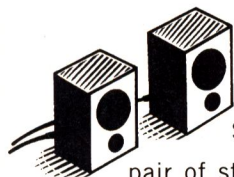


Orchid Sound Producer



Since his master introduced Sound Producer, a year ago, to bring quality sound to his PC, astoundingly it's become the popular choice!

For Multimedia to games, fully compatible with SoundBlaster and AdLib, it's been so well received that *PC Home* made no bones about recommending it!



Which could be because the Sound Producer system includes a pair of stereo speakers, a built-in 4 watt amplifier and its MIDI interface affords access to the world of professional music production.



Or because Sound Producer/Pro - with

20-voice stereo FM synthesizer, CD ROM interface, software-controlled studio standard stereo mixer/volume, microphone and Voice Notes software - sounds even better!

What *is* clear is that its successful pedigree has enabled his master to take a bite out of its bark and cut its price to only £49 for Sound Producer and to £89 for Sound Producer/Pro!



So, if you want to run with the pack, take their lead, call (0256) 817722 - lines are open

daily 8 'til 8 including weekends - for details of your nearest dealer,



order the higher profile Orchid Sound Producer at a lower price... and make his master's choice!



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THE THREE LOCATIONS

The game is set in the three locations shown above – an island, a ship and a manor.

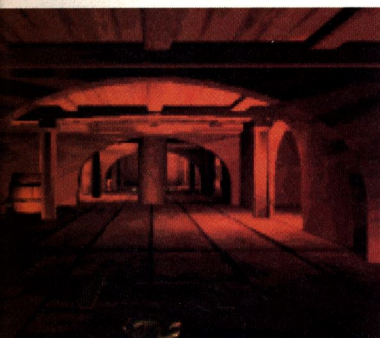
Lost in Time

Paul Presley's never been on time in his life. You can see where this is going can't you?

R

RECENTLY, WHILE MINDING my own business, a thought entered my head. It wasn't deliberate and I did my best to ignore it but it surfaced and made its way across my brain regardless. I'd like to share it with you: having just seen both *Nikita* and *Delicatessen* on TV, and having just finished both *Flashback* and *Lost in Time* on the PC (yes I finished it, which means this will actually be an authoritative review for once. Cripes!), and having eaten in a number of French restaurants, I've come to the following conclusions: firstly, the French creative media (be they film, TV or computer game manufacturers) seem to have a bit of difficulty with endings with regard to pulling them off satisfactorily; secondly, they use too much cheese in their food. (Apart from that I've nothing but respect for our French cousins. They did give us Jean-Michel Jarre and, um... oh, now that's interesting. I've tried to come up with two internationally beneficial things the

'The puzzles in Lost in Time are pretty darn tough.'



Deep in the bowels of the ship.



That's a stool alright...

Your powers of observation haven't left you.

French have given us and come a cropper after the first. I wonder if that's a criticism on me or them?) (You, definitely you - Politically Correct Zone lawyers.)

Anyway, to tie this back to the review of *Lost in Time*, (just in case you'd lost track of what this drivel was all about) after what was a very promising start, the game tends to fall away towards the end as if everyone involved just wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It's a shame because, had more time been spent developing a really gripping ending, *Lost in Time* might have been on for a nomination in the Best Adventure Game of 1993 award. As it is, I think it's just on for Best Special Effects and the Richard Attenborough Most Innovative Contribution to the Adventure Game Genre Award.

Back in time

But let's go through the game step by step, starting with the plot. Hoo boy, and you thought *Back to the Future 2* was confusing. You know how usually with games you often know more than your on-screen alter ego? Here, it seems, Doralice (our heroine) knows a lot more about what's going on than you do. That's quite disconcerting when you actually think about it; a fictional character under your control that has more knowledge of what's going on than you.

The plot's actually a lot cleverer than you would think. It would seem that a certain Jarlath Equis (I can't work out whether it's pronounced 'E-Kews' and as such is a satirical swipe at our potential single European currency, or just 'E-Cus' and is just a strange futuristic name), all round bad guy and resident of the year 2092, has gotten his hands on some kind of rare metal with immense manufacturing power - allowing for kettles and toasters which can survive atmosphere re-entry burn-ups, that sort of thing. There is a drawback, however, in that it's radioactive and has a half-life of 3000 years.

Fortunately, time travel is as common in 2092 as regular trains aren't in 1993. Taking the Americium 1492 (as the metal is known) back 3000 or so years in time, Jarlath buries it and tries to keep track of it until it will be safe to unearth. During this time, however, it gets discovered and moved around a bit so Jarlath has to keep jumping back and forth in time to keep possession of it. His last move was in 1840. Taking the 'treasure' away from its current

owners (a tribe in Africa) he hires a ship to take it to a seaside manor in Europe and wrecks the boat off its shore, hiding it for good. Jarlath then buys the manor ensuring that no one will discover it.

That's where you, as Doralice, come in, or rather it isn't (this is the confusing bit). The game actually starts on board the ship in 1840, but as you get further into it you suddenly enter a flashback bit (and yes, the screen does go all wobbly) as you play the events in 1992 where Doralice inherits the mansion, discovers the shipwreck and goes back in time (the reasons for which are never fully explained). This is what I mean about the heroine knowing more than you. Throughout the initial shipboard segment, events keep happening that don't seem to phase Doralice at all, but leave you going 'Huh?'. It's only when you play the 1992 section that things fall into place.

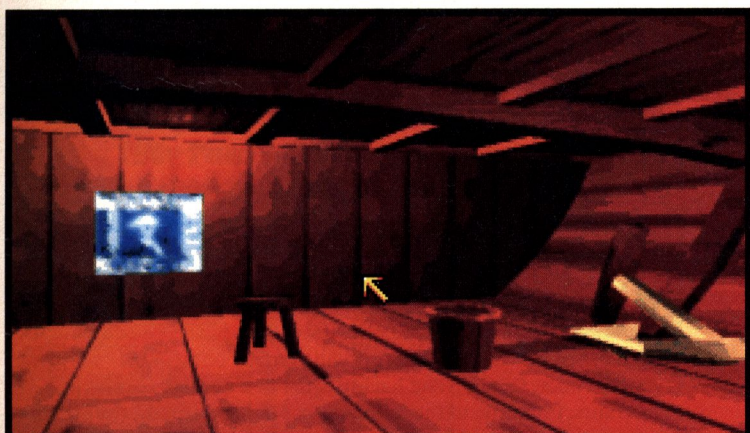
The other part of the game is also in 1840 and takes place on the African island. This is where Doralice discovers exactly how she manages to inherit a mansion that belongs to someone from the future, has to save her own great great grandfather from being killed as an infant and finds out that her great great step-grandfather (or something) is someone who isn't likely to be born until she has been dead a good 30 years (this is also a rather confusing bit).

That's enough about the plot

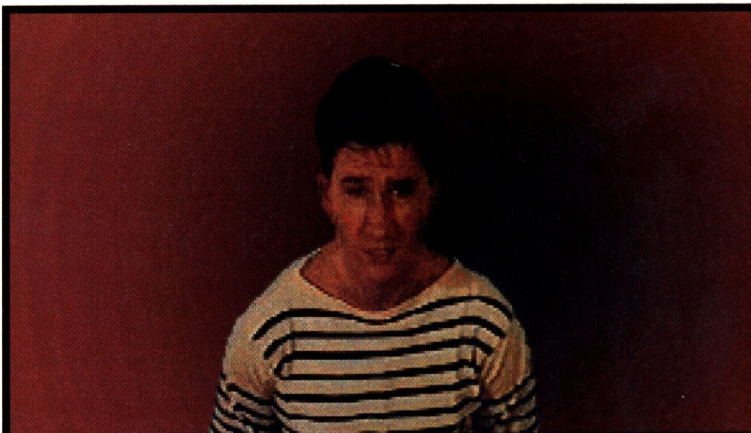
How true. I'll leave you to find out all the precise details since my brain hurts and I want to get on to more familiar territory, that is, talking about graphics and sound and atmosphere and so on. On the subject of atmosphere, this is possibly the weakest part of the game. You're definitely playing an adventure game here, not really experiencing an interactive movie (or whatever the current us buzzword is). *Lost in Time* seems to have trouble actually working the story into the game, especially when you compare it to something like that old benchmark fave *Monkey Island II*. Whereas there everything you do feels like a continuation of the story, here it's very much 'here's a situation, work out the puzzles and I'll explain some more of the plot to you as a reward'.

Now, it's true that the puzzles and situations are good enough to keep you plugging away at it, it's just that when you do get through them it doesn't leave you feeling

(Below) Every woman's nightmare: waking up in the hold of a strange ship in the middle of the sea. (Below right) To help you out, the Space-Time Police have sent Agent Melkior to track down Jarlath.

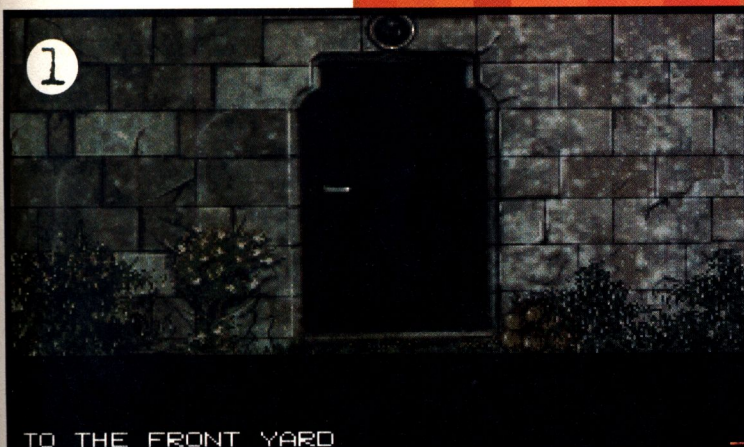


Oooh... My head... Where am I?
I must be drunk! Or am I dreaming?
The ship... The box... The man...



Haven't you found other clothes yet?
You must hurry and change!

1

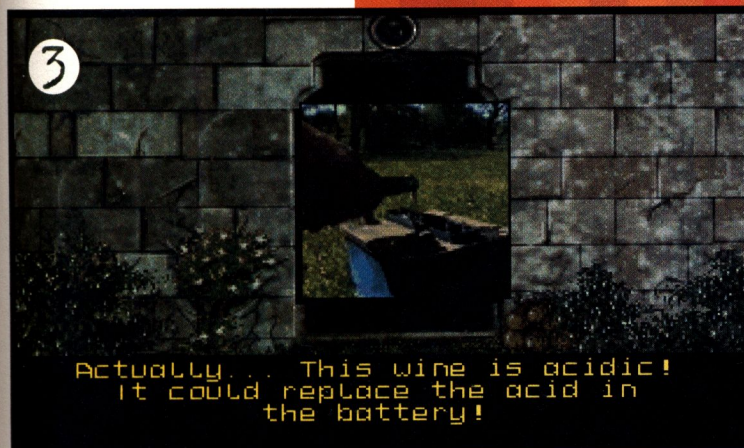


TO THE FRONT YARD

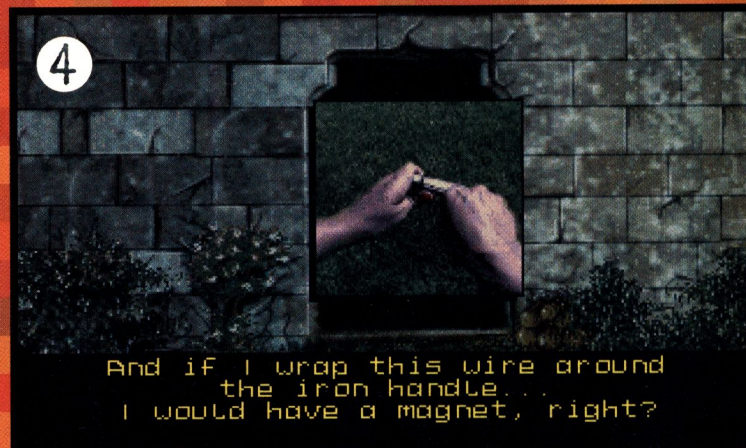
2



3



4



5



6



MY, WHAT
A HARD
ONE VICAR!

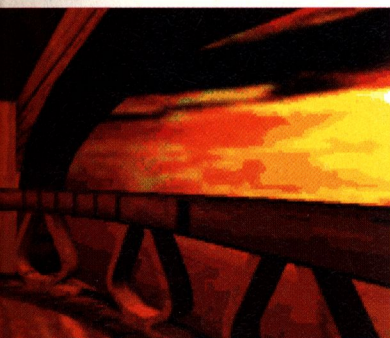


A

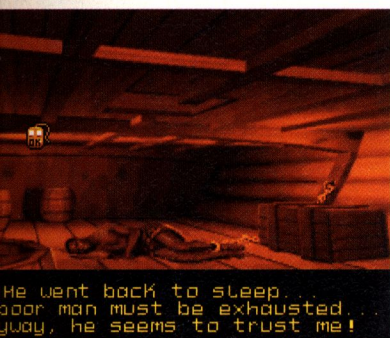
s has been
said, the
puzzles in

Lost in Time are pretty darn tough. They mostly resemble the kind of posers that MacGyver has to face week after week (oh come on, don't tell me you don't watch it). Here's an example. (Obviously if you don't want your enjoyment of the game spoiled slightly don't read any further! Seriously.)

- 1 A locked door with a key in the keyhole. How to get inside? The handle comes off in your hand and you don't have anything to slide underneath to catch the key.
- 2 What are we carrying? A flat car battery, a small pipe, a packet of cigarettes, a log, a bottle of vinegar and a dart? Is there anything else around? A portrait hanging by a wire above the door.
- 3 Okay try this. First use the dart to push the key onto the floor. Next use the acidic properties of the vinegar to recharge the battery slightly.
- 4 Next wrap the portrait's wire around the door handle to create a potential electromagnet.
- 5 Power the magnet by connecting the wire to the battery and hey presto...
- 6 Thanks to the magnetic properties of the door handle you can attract the key from beneath the door. Smart!



Taking time to admire the scenery.



He went back to sleep. Poor man must be exhausted. Anyway, he seems to trust me!

That's your great great great great grandfather. (With maybe a couple more greats, who knows?)

'What I would like to have seen more of would have been time travel related posers.'

The captain of the ship locks you in his cabin. This is beginning to sound like a Barbara Cartland novel.



I leave you with Galipo, my parrot. Don't worry, I am not going far. And don't try anything... Galipo will warn me!

I'm particularly satisfied with your achievement. If the designers had put a touch more effort into spreading the development of the story throughout the game's puzzles, adding some nail-biting, heart-a-flutter tension and more capacity for mistakes to be made (the only time death is possible is at the end and, as such, it comes as such a surprise to the rest of the game you are tempted to shout 'Cop out!' at the screen), the atmosphere would have been much more intense.

Love me, love MacGyver

I'd often wondered how you judge whether an adventure game is suitable for beginners or experts or whatever; now I know. The puzzles in *Lost in Time* range between difficult and 'trying to get a freelance cheque to arrive in time to pay the rent' (i.e. impossible). The manual describes Doralice as having a love for *MacGyver* and *Mission Impossible* and programmes of that ilk and believe me, to solve some of the puzzles you need to have very thorough experience of scientific application and lateral thinking. I was only able to solve a couple of the puzzles because I'd been shown them before at a press showing of the game.

This is perhaps the strongest aspect of the whole game. It may not tell the story well but it certainly keeps you plugging away at it. Oh to have the storytelling and presentation skills of LucasArts combined with puzzles of this calibre. A good demonstration of this is shown in the 'My, what a hard one vicar' panel. What I would like to have seen more of in this regard would have been time travel related posers. Remember the apple tree problem in *Day of the Tentacle*? With a game that has time travel at its core you'd think that we'd see some pretty outlandish situations. All we have are good old fashioned brain-stumpers. Good enough to keep you going for a while but like I said, not rewarding enough to make you feel as though it's all part of the plot.

Out of Africa

Up until now we've had an adventure with good points and bad points but one that, on the whole, has been fairly enjoyable. All that changes once we reach the third section of the game - the African island. This is what I meant at the start of the review by weak endings. The puzzles suddenly become very simple, almost ridiculously so compared to the rest of the game. Plus you are suddenly given the chance to fail completely by missing one thing (leading to being suddenly and very unceremoniously dumped to a black

AFFECT COCKNEY ACCENT AND...



'Peckham, on a wet Saturday afternoon...'



'Auntie Beryl...'



'The Dog and Duck...'



'Catching the last bus home... if you're drinking Bacardi!'

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- Unequalled authenticity
- Night flying & low visibility
- 2 player head-to-head



Pilot's cockpit



Stunning detail



Navigator's cockpit



Sophisticated mission planning



Awesome missions

IBM PC - £44.99

Amiga - £34.99

Atari ST/STE - £34.99

PC Screen Shots





for the flag of convenience

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

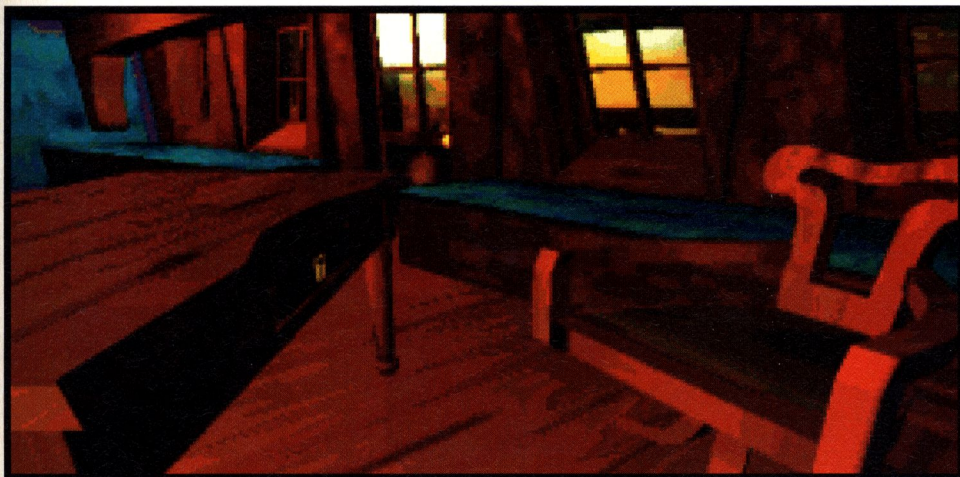


Yes! It worked!
Kior, thanks for your help

Jeepers creepers!

'I really hope
there will be
a sequel,
simply because
there are some
very nice ideas
here.'

The perks of being a
captain. Your own chair.



screen with a small box saying essentially: 'You failed, try again'). Add to that the plot winding itself up so fast you don't realise it's over until it dumps you back into DOS.

I felt very disheartened by this end piece, especially the final confrontation. It fell very solidly into the *James Bond* syndrome. ('So you see Mr Bond, because you are going to die in a moment, I might as well tell you what I'm up to...'). The plot is then explained and Bond escapes and manages to foil it. See also *Scooby Doo Syndrome*, The.)

Holiday snaps

I haven't mentioned the technology yet, simply because it was covered in issue five's preview and I don't want to make too much of a fuss about it here. You can see what it looks like from the pictures and I'm sure that if you wanted to see it moving that nice man with the suit at your local games store would be happy to give you a demonstration.

Do they suit the game though? Well again, 'yes' to the first two sections but 'no' to the third. The video and the rendering are both very nice indeed, but the cartoon artwork of the island comes across quite messily and doesn't seem to mesh with the overlaid digitisation of the characters as well as the other two parts did.

I'm going to say 'well' now...

Well, here we are again, dear friends, safely tucked away in Sum-Up Corner. What's the overall verdict of the game? It's an odd cookie, this one. Technologically gifted yet communicably challenged. The graphics are very nice (with a few pixelly exceptions), especially the video sequences. I wouldn't mind seeing a whole game using the 1992 segment's photo-realistic images as they helped to keep me hooked amidst the protests of the storytelling.

If it wasn't for the final island chapter I would probably be standing with the nice folks in Recommended City. Because of its rushed climax, though, I'm looking at a two up, two down in Try Before You Buy-Ville. I really hope that there will be a sequel, simply because there are some very nice ideas here that should be explored further and the game just doesn't deserve to end this weakly. Maybe something with some real time travelling paradoxes to mull over and something much, much longer and with equally clever puzzles. Oh yes, and something with a real ending, real nail-biting edge-of-your-seat stuff. That would be nice. *Lost in Time* though? Well, first decide if you really want another adventure game then decide if you can overlook the ending and hey, go for it. If not, well there's bound to be something better waiting just around the corner. **Z**

PC ZONE score

Tough, good looking
adventure that comes
a cropper at the end.

69

Price: £44.99 Out: October
Published: Coktel Vision/Digital
Integration
Telephone: (0276) 684959

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 550K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb (17Mb max)
Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster
Controls: Microsoft Compatible Mouse
Comments: 386 recommended. Full
installation takes 18Mb of space.
It can be split into two sections of
9Mb for easier access.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Monkey Island II is still the benchmark
adventure game but *Day of the Tentacle*
uses similar time-travelling antics to
entice the player. It also makes much more use
of the time travel feature in its puzzles. *Blue
Force* uses similar photo-realistic images to tell
its story but falls way, way short on actual
game content.

Monkey Island II

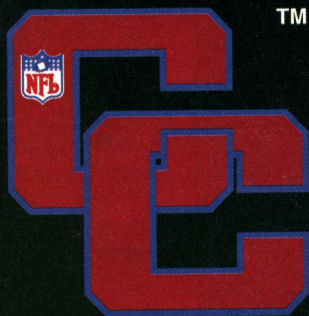
Day of the Tentacle

Lost in Time

Blue Force



TM



TM

NFL COACHES CLUB



FOOTBALL

When it comes to the crunch - tackle the best!

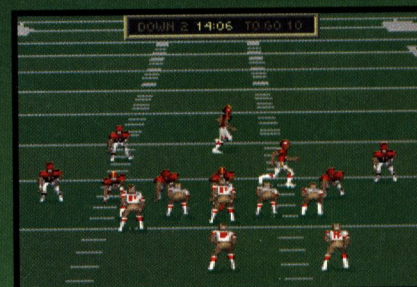
This is pure American football. NFL Coaches Club Football produced by MicroProse, the leaders in realistic sport simulations. It's the game American football fans have been shouting for!

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No other game comes close - if it did it'd get flattened!

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MICROPROSE
Seriously Fun Software

Homeworld: Gateway II

Homeworld's vision of the future is not un-Bladerunner-esque.

You've heard of Asimov. You've heard of Heinlein. You've even – in some way or another – heard of Dick. Well, allow me to introduce to you the latest member of the 'Strange Surnames of Sci-Fi' club': Frederick Pohl. He's the author of *Gateway*, a seminal novel about lost civilisations and deadly electronic assassins. The seminal book made a seminal game, says David McCandless, who, not without some excitement, has to review for you the sequel, Homeworld.

LET ME TAKE YOU back to the year 2077, a rather spiff year for the human race by all accounts: 'twas the stardate during which they made the first contact with an alien race. An ancient space station was found beyond Pluto, uninhabited but packed with over a thousand faster-than-light alien vessels. It had belonged to the Heechee, a huge space-faring race of yore, who had done a runner in the face of discovery by a murderous 'other' race of electronic beings, simply but appropriately called the Assassins (due to their questionable habit of wiping out civilisations in the blink of an eye).

Meanwhile, thousands of people flocked to Gateway to become prospectors. The Heechee ships, although in working order, ran on autopilot, warping to pre-programmed co-ordinates and then back to Gateway. Piloting one, therefore, became a gamble. You could discover a planet, stuffed with Heechee artefacts and technology (and so swap the loot for vast sums of lolly back home); or you could come out of warp in the middle of star, planet or, worse, a BBC sit com. Just imagine – stuck for the rest of your life in an episode of *So Haunt Me*.

Firstly

In the first game you played a lottery winner, transported in the year 2102 from your tedious job in the food mines of Wyoming to the exciting metropolitan Gateway station. With as much chance as anyone of becoming rich (i.e. 0.005 per cent), you mixed with the denizens of the space station culture, spent months in Tau Space (or warp space as we Trekkies call it), discovered worlds unknown and, after many adventurers with strange elephantine aliens and nubile young alienettes who did not know the meaning of 'love', recovered loads of artefacts and clues to the Heechee exodus. Gradually you pieced together these clues to form the whys and wherefores of the disappearance.

About 500,000 years ago the Heechee had discovered the Assassin's method of

discovering strange new worlds and new civilisations. Not, as you might expect, a large spacecraft with a Vulcan aboard, instead huge (planet-sized) scanners which picked up FTL travel and communications and relayed it back to the Assassins. In response the Heechee conceived a plan to warp space around the main scanner, the WatchTower, effectively 'cloaking' half the galaxy from the Assassins. Clever alien species the Heechee were; hard brave and strong they weren't. Just before activating the four points of this shield, the Heechee suffered from a bout of 'bottle trouble', deciding instead to hide inside a black hole rather than risk being discovered by the unapproachable and rather heavily tattooed Assassins. The human race, in discovering Gateway, now faced the same decision the Heechee had in the past: turn on the cloaking device and risk being annihilated, or sit down, shut up, and stay still for the rest of time. Luckily, they had you on board, and before anyone could say 'But-?', you had confronted an Assassin, defeated it, and then flicked the shield switch, saving humanity from certain carbonisation.

Secondly

Now, you pick up the story, ten years on. You've retired on your 50 million dollar fortune to a nice pad in the unpolluted section of San Francisco. Spending all day every day, being rich, oozing wealth, and talking money is not such a hard life. But then, on the news, you hear that an alien spaceship has entered the solar system. Is it a Heechee ship? Is it the Assassins come to duff up the Earth? Nobody knows, but the ambassador scheduled to be sent out there wants to be briefed by none other than you, expert that you are on Heechee internal affairs.

But there is another aspect to this equation: New Age terrorists. A sect of lentil crazed, fanatical murderers want – actually want – to contact the deadly Assassins and have them cleanse Earth in holy fire. Just as you're ready to travel to NASA for the briefing, they hijack the launch pad, kill everyone with nerve gas, and leave you to save the day (sigh).

THE PUZZLES

PUZZLE 1

You're waiting in your penthouse for your appointment with the ambassador. An anonymous FBI agent phones to warn you that some members of The Cult are racing up your building in the lifts to kill you. Not being a particular fan of their music, you decide to do a runner. But how can you escape in time? Remember: in case of fire, do not use lifts.

KRYPTON FACTOR RATING 3

PUZZLE 2

The launch pad has been invaded and everyone's dead except you. You've initiated the countdown sequence but there's been a malfunction in the fuelling system. Agents are rushing to your location. Time is ticking away. You must log on to the computer and learn, from scratch, how to fix the fuel conduits. Remember: if you're stuck, look at the clue book.

KRYPTON FACTOR RATING 6

PUZZLE 3

On board the artefact at last and a surprise awaits. It's not just a spaceship but an astro-zoo too, packed with three complete ecosystems for you to trawl through. But watch out – the robot spider monster is but a breath behind you.

KRYPTON FACTOR RATING 8

PUZZLE 4

One of the zoos contains strange poisonous crab things. Nick one as a specimen and then use the genetic inducer to produce a warping virus.

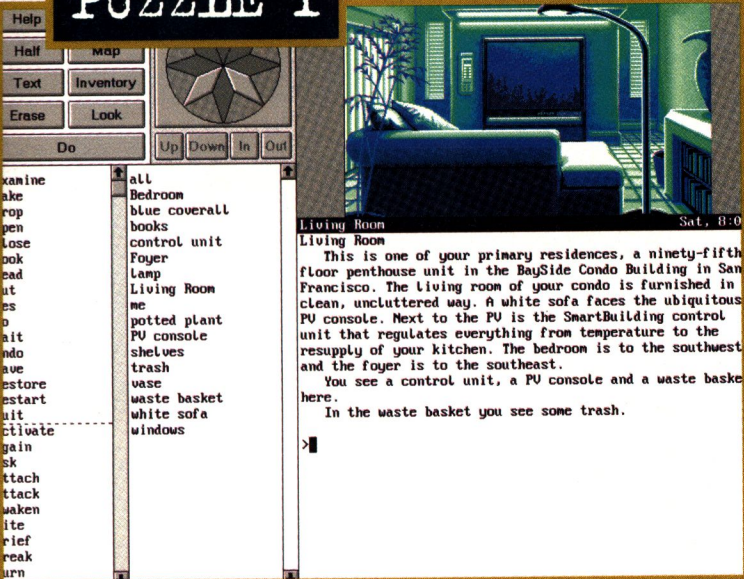
KRYPTON FACTOR RATING 2

PUZZLE 5

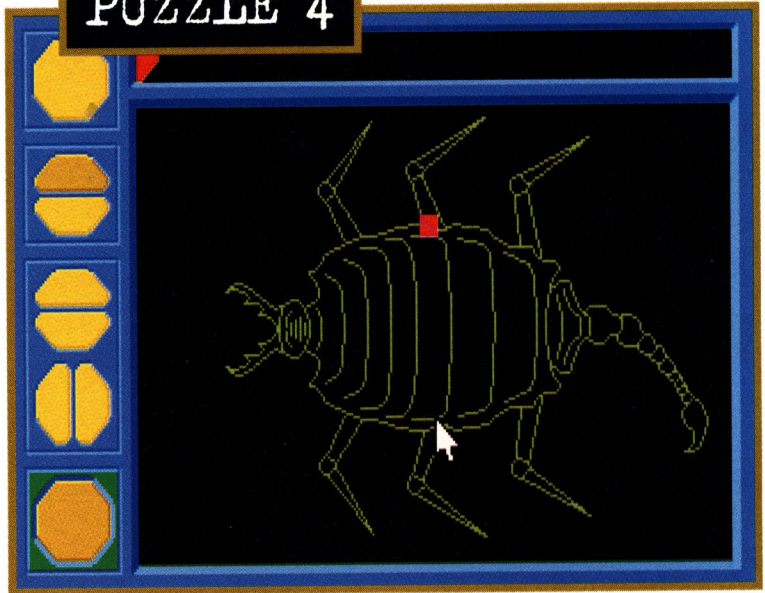
Landing on a distant alien planet inhabited by animated ice creatures called Kords is not without its problems. Number one on the problem list: communicating. Remember: there's a clue book.

KRYPTON FACTOR RATING 9

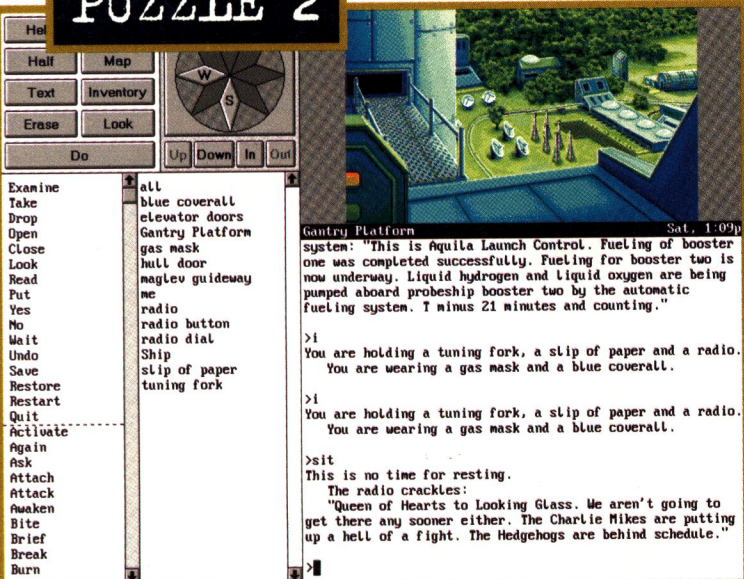
PUZZLE 1



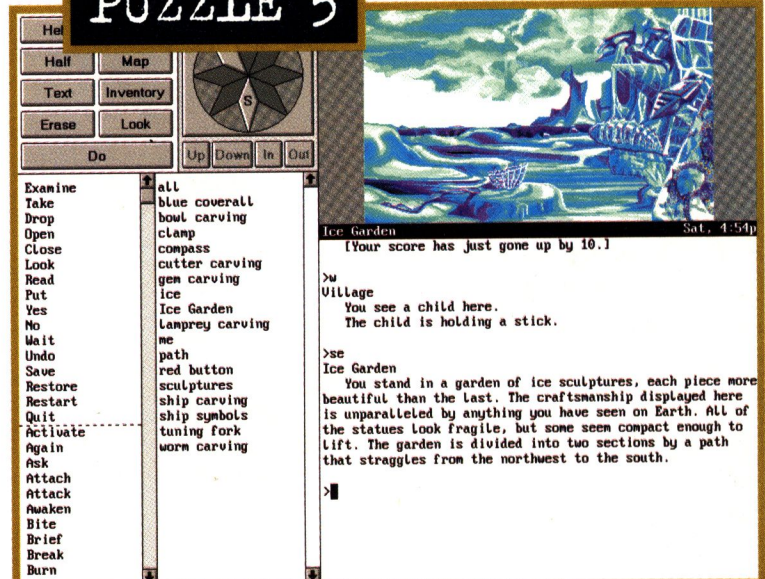
PUZZLE 4



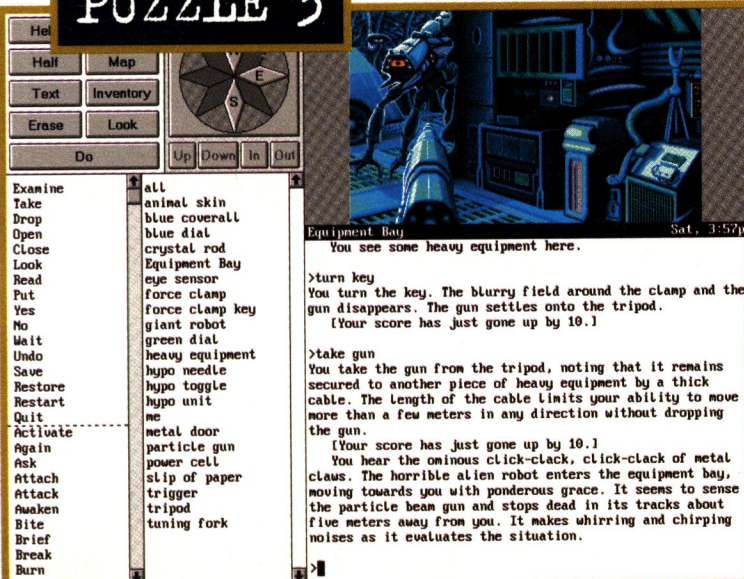
PUZZLE 2



PUZZLE 5



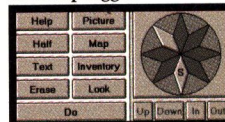
PUZZLE 3



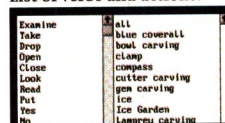
Current location.



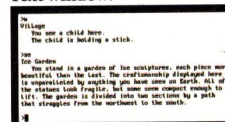
Automap toggle.



List of verbs and actions.



Text window.



THE SYSTEM

For those Legend virgins who haven't played the first *Gateway* or stuff like *Eric The Unready*, then the system is pretty self-explanatory from the screen shots. (I'll just do it quickly and stropilly for those still in the dark. Four squares, right? Top right: graphic representations of current location. Will change if somebody appears or something is moved. Got it? Top left: buttons, toggling automap, just text, save, load etc. Okay? Bottom left? See it? Right, that's a scrollable list of verbs you can use. There are loads. Tons. They range from your usual 'take' and 'drop' to more esoteric functions like 'bite', 'dismount' and 'pray'. Next to that are the list of things you can do things to in your current locale (including your inventory). Right? Finally, the square on the bottom right is the text window, where you type in commands and directions, and the computer says 'I think there's a verb missing' a lot. Un-der-stand? Comprenez? Good.)

PC ZONE
score

Long hard trek
through pretty
unatmospheric space.

75

Price: £39.99 Out: Now

Published: Accolade

Telephone: 081 877 0880

PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: Not specified

Installation: Essential

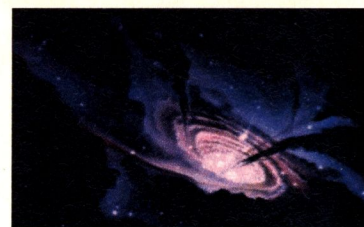
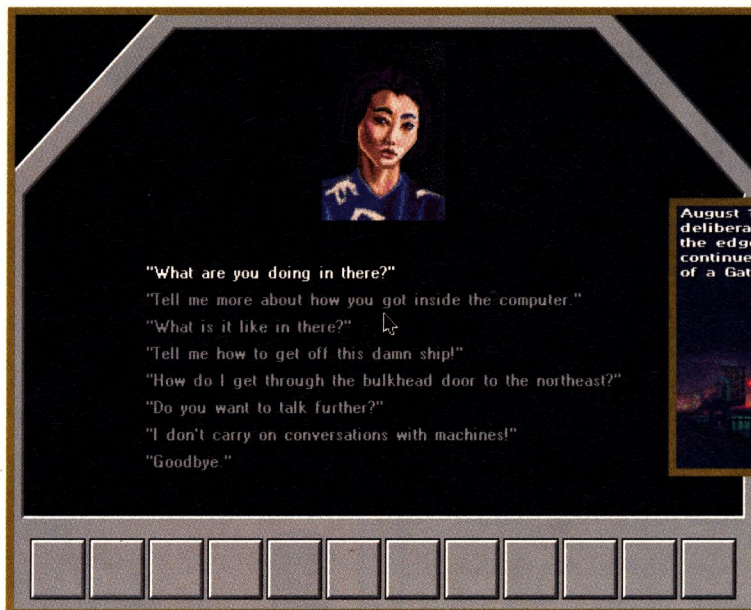
Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb

Minimum Graphics: VESA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster and
compatibles, Ad-Lib, Roland MT-32
with MPU 401 compatible interface.

Controls: Microsoft compatible mouse.

Comments: needs MS-DOS



August 15, 2112. San Francisco. While the UN deliberates and the rest of the world races close to the edge of panic, you ignore the hysteria and continue to enjoy your early retirement from the life of a Gateway prospector.



(Top) The cowardly Heechee are a bit 'chicken' and have hidden their heavily yellow streaked behinds inside a black hole.

(Above) San Francisco circa 2112.

(Left) One section of the game demands you interrogate a bank of 'digitised' personalities to get some info.

The game

The storyline is clever, the puzzles are challenging, the interface is hassle-free but the game is, ah, flawed.

Gateway – the original – was a great game. As essentially a text adventure with secondary graphic bits, it summoned as much atmosphere and intrigue as any graphic adventure twice its size. But, above all, it felt like an adventure – a rip-snorting, torn shirt, slight bit of stubble, heroic, all male, final frontier fantasy adventure. It made you feel like you were traversing the unknown; made you think that (perhaps) it was a bit nerve wracking to hyperspace to random co-ordinates; made you feel like part of the Gateway community; made you believe that this Heechee thing was a mystery beyond your imagining and, at the same time, taxed the Krypton Factor parts of your brain to maximum and forced you want to read Pohl until your nose bled.

Homeworld seems to be lacking these formidable characteristics, especially atmosphere and mystery. There are a few excellent graphic sequences – one in particular when your Earth ship soars over the Heechee artefact, all in filmic 3D. And the small graphic location boxes do their job admirably. But they are few and far between. Why aren't there more, I asked myself. Text adventurers were invented because the technology couldn't support anything else. Graphics were introduced gradually where memory permitted. Why can't we now, with a ninja hard disks and throbbing great CPUs, have loads of text and loads of graphics? It's no use being told you're thrusting into hyperspace. We all know it's defeating the object (i.e. to use your imagination) but a grey box with black lettering telling you that your ship is pummeling through the atmosphere and ten gees of pressure are crushing you isn't good enough. It all dents the atmosphere too much.

The mystery element just isn't milked enough. You find out what the enigmatic artefact is within moments of docking with it, and when you discover the Heechee homeworld you'll be disappointed after hearing so much about them, to find a whole society of egg-headed Spielberg-type aliens, caught up in a rather dull soap-opera power struggle. Also, the episodic nature of the storyline forces too linear a game, disregarding the freedom (and so excitement) of the original.

And so...

The text is well written and witty although the computer has a few pithy replies for you if you try anything too rude. However, occasionally, the humour goes a bit off line. Witness a caveman duo called 'Oonga & Bonga' in-between pissed off sabre toothed tigers and few 'I'm outa here, dude' Day of the Tentacle style conversational options. These jar with Pohl's deadpan storyline, making anyone caught up in the atmosphere just ask 'Huh?'

And finally, there's the free cluebook. Why oh why oh why oh why? This is such a faux pas. How many adventurers are there who are iron-willed enough not to look a cluebook after six hours of clueless pounding at a particular puzzle? Which TruePlayer™, faced with the promise of meeting the Heechee and crossing the event horizon of a black hole, would not 'speed up' their progress with a few sinful glances at the cluebook? I tried not to, but I did. There endeth my case. Z

It's nice to see that the phallic design for spaceships extends throughout the known universe.



IN PERSPECTIVE

Legend seem to have a development monopoly on these rather unfashionable text things. Their first Gateway game was a stunning game, a true text adventure, with loads of text and adventure and atmosphere in large gameplay-sized dollops. Homeworld is more of a retread of the original's formula and trips up badly. Their other games, the SpellCaster series mainly, are hit and miss depending on your sense of humour.

Gateway

Eric The Unready

Spellcasting 301

Gateway II: Homeworld

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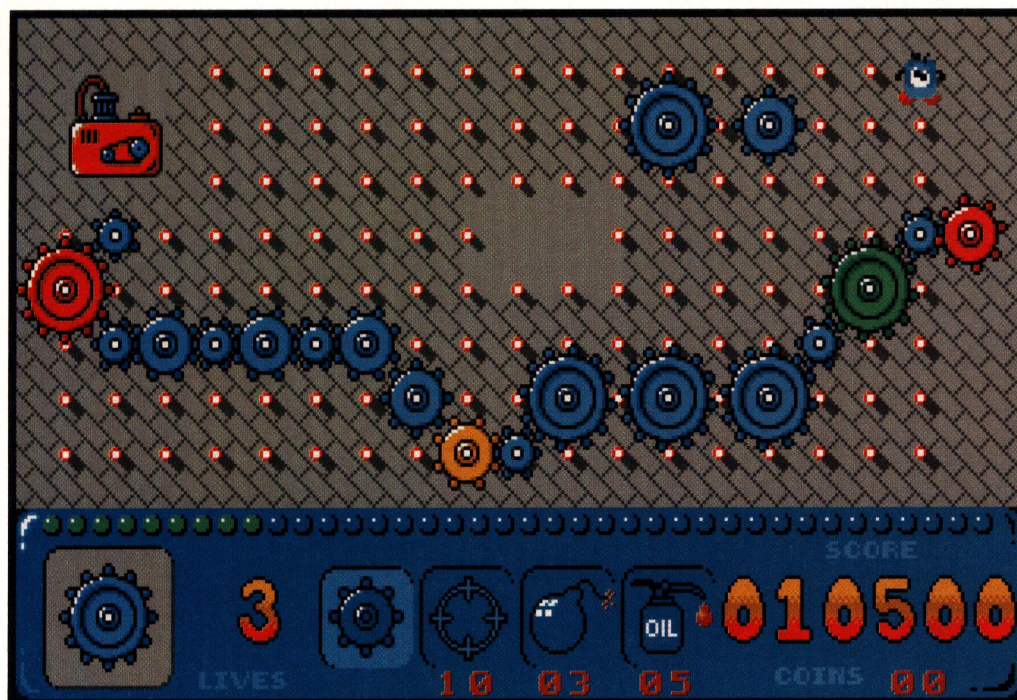


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Getting from A to B in Gear Works. No marks for the spare cogs at the top right.

Gear Works

Mark Burgess does something constructive for a change and tries to remember the name of that thing at the end of the gear chain in cars.



GEAR WORKS is like *Klik Klak*; it's a game where you have to connect cogs together with an aim to building a gear train from the drive cog to the object cog. There is a 'plot' of sorts, in that you have to convert 12 famous monuments to clocks. You know, like those tasteful china ones modelled on the Eiffel tower.

The play area is a board with lots of pegs. The gears can only be placed on these pegs and some of

them are vital to finishing a level. The cursor gives you an idea of the size of the gear and it will change colour when it can be placed. A look ahead window shows you which size is coming next; there are three sizes of gear in

four colours. There are also a few that only turn in one direction. At the end of a level points are awarded for every turning gear and subtracted for every idle gear. If you put a gear in the wrong place, then either build round it or blow it up. You have a limited number of bombs per level.

Two sorts of gremlin hamper your efforts: one breaks off pegs and the other rusts the mechanism. Fortunately, you can shoot them and free rusted

gears with an oil can. It isn't just a puzzle-solving game, there is a time limit, shown by the engine temperature, which gets tougher the further into the game you get. Rusty or jammed gears will cause a dramatic temperature rise.

There are also 'bonus' gears and, if you manage to link two of these, you get a chance to increase your score by gambling on a fruit machine. You only have a limited number of lives with which to solve each level.

Gear Works is a good puzzle solving game along the lines of *Pipe Mania*, but I can't see it having long term appeal. It lacks variety; neither the backgrounds or the challenges change much. **Z**

IN PERSPECTIVE

The obvious one is *The Incredible Machine* which has more features, but is full price. *Contraptions* is the same price as *Gear Works* and far more varied. There are dozens of *Pipe Mania* clones about, budget and shareware.

Contraptions

Gear Works

Incredible Machine

PC ZONE score

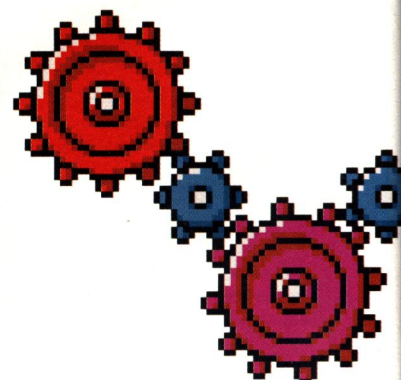
Not good enough for the price and not cheap enough for what it is.

62

Price: £19.99 Out: Now
Published: The Software Business
Telephone: 0480 496497

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: Not Applicable
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib or Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick
Comments: DOS 5.0 or higher



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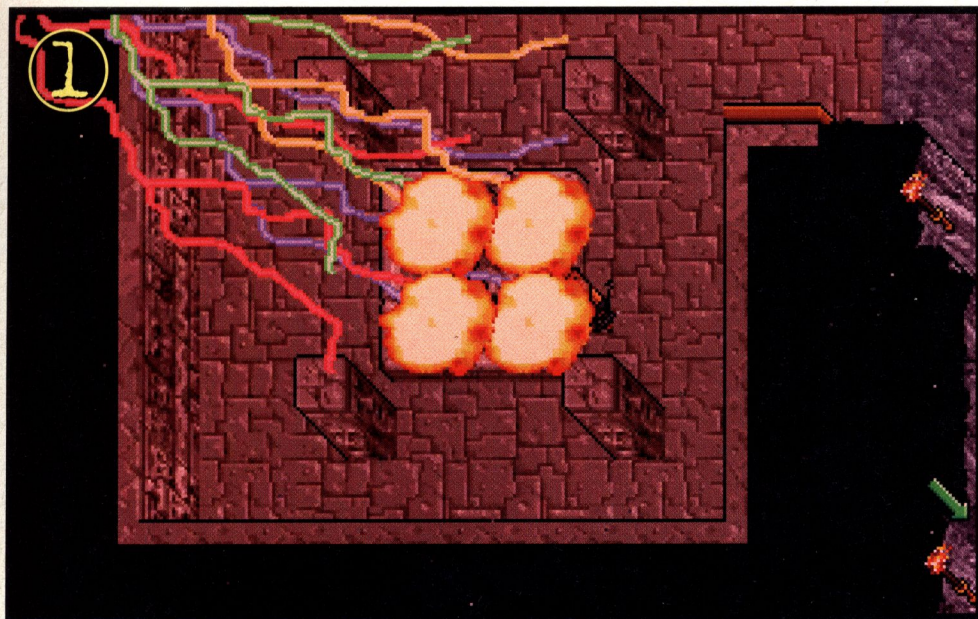
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The Silver Seed

ULTIMA VII PART TWO SERPENT ISLE

Just when you thought it was safe to go into Britannia, along comes Lord British with an add-in disk full of brand new puzzles and challenges. Paul Presley's brain starts to hurt.



O, NO, NO, NOOO. Sob. Isn't my life hard enough already? Isn't it enough that I have to contend with more plots than the combined works of Shakespeare, Dickens, Edgar Allen Poe and the Neighbours scriptwriters; more characters than a typical issue of *The Uncanny X-Men* and more quests than an entire Sierra catalogue? Now you want me to wrap my brains around 20 quid's worth of extra plots, sub-plots and sub-sub-plots? Sigh. I'm beginning to hate the word realism. I seem to spend more money on notepads than anything else these days.

A spot of gardening

Yes, you did read the intro correctly. *The Silver Seed* is an add-in disk. You install it to the same directory as *Serpent Isle* and then start the game as normal. Then, once you've uncovered a certain piece of the main story, you can enter and leave *The Silver Seed* section almost at will.

What it entails is actually a spot of time travelling, back to the history of the *Serpent Isle*. If you were enough of an RPG fanatic to have actually read any of the original game's manual then you'll probably recognise what's going on. You arrive in a place called Serpent's Fang in the middle of the War of Imbalance between Chaos and Order. Your task is to find four magic orbs used to unlock the doorway leading to the Silver Seed which when planted will grow into the Tree of Balance, easing tensions and bringing an end to the war.

Of course, each orb is contained within its own quest and it's here that this product starts to fall down. None of the quests are particularly difficult (with the exception of Aram-Dol who is a real bitch to kill) and I was able to finish the whole thing within three days and not even gain any sense of satisfaction either! Not bad for an *Ultima*! About the only thing I did gain was a couple of rather useful magical items.

A pointless exercise

And what does it add to *Serpent Isle*? Unfortunately not that much. It's an odd program to describe since, not being a full game in its own right, it uses all the technology, controls and presentation devices of its host

(all of which are, if you remember, excellent), but has at its core a collection of uninspired quests and stories. It all keeps within the traditional *Ultima* way of doing things and adds to the history of the *Serpent Isle's* land, but the actual game content is both smaller than you would expect and not nearly as engrossing as what we've seen before. For the price I was expecting a whole lot more.

The upshot

I see, so what you're saying is that, although we are only paying half the price for a program that enhances the original title, we are in fact only getting a small fraction of the amount of game you would expect for the full price. With that in mind, the price you pay is actually still too expensive and the whole affair is one that you would classify as a non event? Yes.

I have a theory...

Actually I think I can guess what's happened. I suspect that Richard Garriott, the Britmeister himself, has hit a snag while developing the plot for *Ultima VIII*. While exploring the

mysteries of Balance, Order, Chaos and the rest he's discovered a problem that could only have been solved in *Serpent Isle*. Since this has already been released to a most grateful public he was too late to change it and to just say it happened would make it appear as out of place to long-term Ultimaniacs as the word 'aardvark' in the W section of Collins' dictionary. So an add-in disk is called for (it worked for *Ultima VII*). This way if you do buy it then you'll benefit from full knowledge of what's to come, if you don't then at least you won't feel as though Garriott is just taking liberties with the plot. Well, that's my theory anyway. I guess we'll have to wait for either its release or a legal writ from Origin to see if I'm right.

Should you buy it? You already know the answer don't you? If you want a full *Ultima* collection then you'll have to. If you want some extra animations for the Origin Windows Screen Saver then you can find them here. If you want an adventure to keep you glued to the monitor throughout the night, cutting you off from the outside world and limiting your social skills then you're a bit of a sad case really aren't you. At least *The Silver Seed* won't be damaging in that respect. Z

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K + 1Mb

Minimum Processor: 386SX

Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 27Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Details such as memory requirements and minimum speeds are redundant since if you don't have *Serpent Isle* you can't play *The Silver Seed*. If you do then you already know what your machine needs. You'll need 4Mb of hard disk space.

PC ZONE score

An utterly pointless addition to a brilliant game. One can only turn to Origin and ask 'Why?'

50

Price: £19.99 Out: Now
Published: Origin/Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549442



- ① The Avatar gets hit by a magic teleportation fireball cum lightening bolt.
- ② The Avatar gets hit by a wall of fire.
- ③ The Avatar gets hit by a serpent-medusa thing.
- ④ The Avatar gets hit by an arrow firing giant spider (notice a trend here).
- ⑤ The Avatar gets hit by a cutting remark.
- ⑥ The Avatar hits back big time.

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Toby Finlay has the IQ of a three year old, so he seemed ideal to review the Sales Curve's new puzzler, *Troddlers*. (*It's Troddlers you idiot. Ed.*)

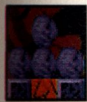
Troddlerland - a selection of bits and bonuses



ENTRANCE There are two types of entrance, one for the Troddlers and one for the zombies. Both entrances gob out their contents at a high rate of knots, meaning you'll have to work fast with those building blocks.



BUILDING BLOCKS The fire button places or absorbs blocks in any direction adjacent to Hokus or Pokus, but their numbers are limited, so careful planning is in order. Although it's fun it's not a good idea to build blocks on top of Troddlers.



ROCKS You can shove them; if they hit anything living, it dies. Smart. They may also be thrown at enemy aliens, which promptly transform into diamonds.



DIAMONDS You're frequently told to collect these as well as save the Troddlers. The time limit can often be unforgiving, so think fast and build faster.



A TRODDLER One of your charges. Take good care of him and don't let him anywhere near...



THE CANNON because otherwise it's Troddler soup all round.



EXIT Once they're in, the Troddlers are safe. You, on the other hand, have another four billion levels to solve. Ho hum.

Troddlers



REMEMBER THOSE little toy animals made of compressed sponge? You know, they expand magically on contact with water, rather like Angel Delight but without the taste? Well *Troddlers* are small creatures which, when wet spring to life and start scuttling aimlessly around the place. but with the added, if socially embarrassing, novelty of transforming into lethal zombies. This is where, as a wizard's apprentice named Hokus, you come in. You're responsible for mistakenly unleashing thousands of the darlings and it's up to you to fetch them back, providing a convenient, if thematically weak, excuse for a variation on the old, yet undeniably popular rescuing suicidal rodents game.

A walk around the block

The idea of each single-screen level is to direct the Troddlers to a safe haven, represented by a doorway which is generally found in the most ludicrously remote location the programmers could think of. 'Oh,' scream the masses, 'it's a total *Lemmings* rip-off'. But 'Nay,' I scream right back, for, whereas it was possible to manipulate individual lemmings, you can't control any of the Troddlers. In fact, despite being a later game than *Lemmings*, it's more limited. You're in charge of Hokus with whom you must create stone blocks and build platforms with which to guide the Troddlers to the exit door, in the same way that the rolling ball needed to be assisted in *Spherical*. Unlike the lemmings, who minced nonchalantly to their doom over precipices and off platforms, the Troddlers take the far safer option of defying the laws of physics and walking up and down walls and across the bottom of blocks, making them slightly easier to guide away from danger.

All the usual bonuses for a game of this ilk are present. Bits of fruit which score points, extra time and blocks all help to make it a bit more interesting and, if you tire of the hundred or so levels of one player action, there's a simultaneous two-player option to boot. Actually, there are two of them. In the first you and a chum, controlling another inept wizard called Pokus, team up in a bid to save the Troddlers and kill the zombies. The second is more of a head-to-head affair, with Hokus and Pokus competing for the level.

But is it any good?

With all these options there's plenty to keep a player occupied, and the game remains quite addictive, even at its most frustrating - and *Troddlers* can be very frustrating indeed. This is partly because it takes a while to get to grips with the nature of the Troddlers themselves (the way they climb relentlessly all over absolutely everything that crosses their path) and partly because the control system is more than a bit irritating, it's very easy to put bricks in the wrong place (or create when you want to destroy and vice versa) through pressing the keys in the wrong order or because you're standing a pixel out of place.

The graphics are pretty good, but nothing special, being mostly small sprites against colourful backdrops, and the sound is also acceptable in an irritating sort of way without being exceptional. This much is true of the package as whole; *Troddlers* won't be heralded by future generations as a classic which made critics go all dribbly and weak at the knees, because it owes itself so heavily to true pioneers, such as *Lemmings* and *Spherical*. But still, it's fun, it's addictive, and it provides lorryloads of longevity, so who's complaining? ☹

**'It's fun, it's
addictive and it
provides lorry loads
of longevity.'**



IT'S A LOAD OF B'LOCKS

In order to save on word wastage while still giving a clear idea how *Troddlers* works here's a guide to one of the earlier levels.

① This is a one-player level called Red Gems, in which you not only have to rescue the Troddlers, but must also collect some gemstones. Spookily enough, they're red. Missions often require you to do something other than be charitable and help tiny deficient creatures; good old fashioned greed and violence creep in, meaning that you get to blag treasure and dismember zombies.

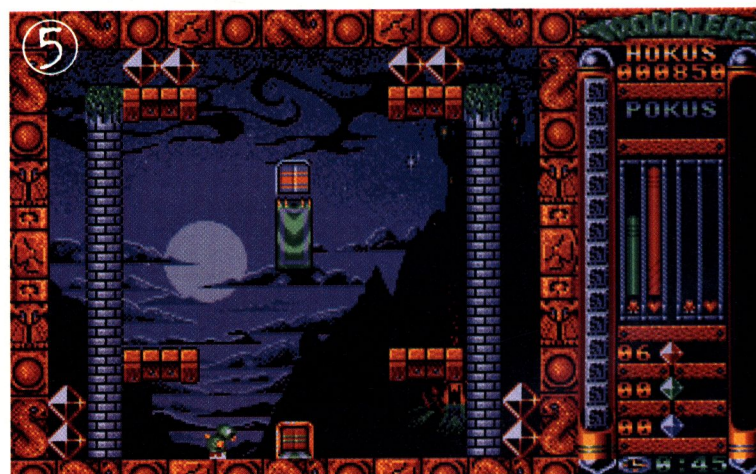
② Okay, first things first; having dropped to the ground, make Hokus grab the two jewels on the right by building a little stairway. Then absorb the blocks and come back down.

③ Now you've got to build a pillar running between the exit and the platform on which the Troddlers are walking. Having done this, block the side of the doorway and then create some more stairs so Hokus can pocket the other gems.

④ Now you need to get the Troddlers to stroll on down the pillar towards the exit. Hop onto another block and put a further one between Hokus and the Troddler platform, so they can simply follow the wall.

⑤ When they pile out of the level it's time to dismantle the pillar to replenish your supply of blocks, because now you're going to have to swipe another six gems before you can finish the screen.

⑥ Having cunningly constructed a mammoth set of stairs to the top, Hokus can now bridge the gap to take the treasure there, before dropping down to collect the final two diamonds. That's it; Hokus now starts frantically waving his arms high in the air to celebrate his victory. Smug git.



PC ZONE score

Not at all bad, but it smacks too much of other games to achieve classic status.

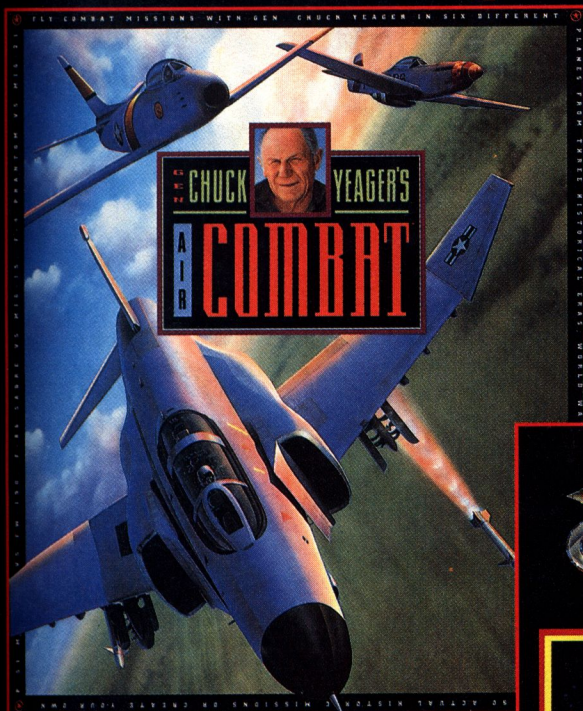
79

Price: £29.99 Out: 24 September
Published: The Sales Curve
Telephone: 071 585 3308

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 580K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 1Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

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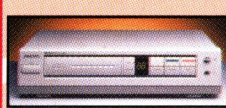
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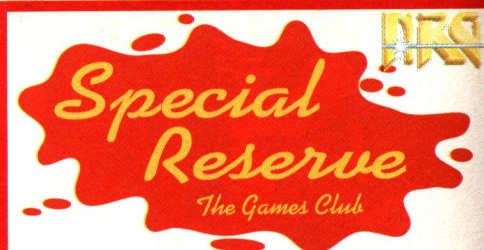
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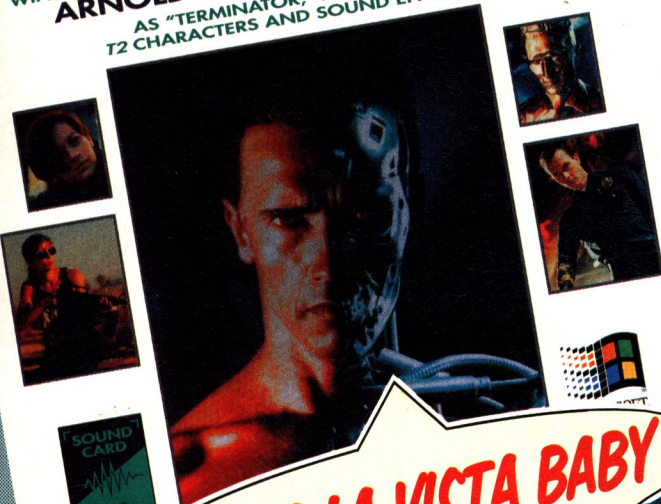
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ARPOON ON LAND was how most Three-Sixty fans had envisaged *Patriot*. The former game has become legendary among wargame players because it proved that it is possible for wargame designers to completely throw away the traditional concepts of how to

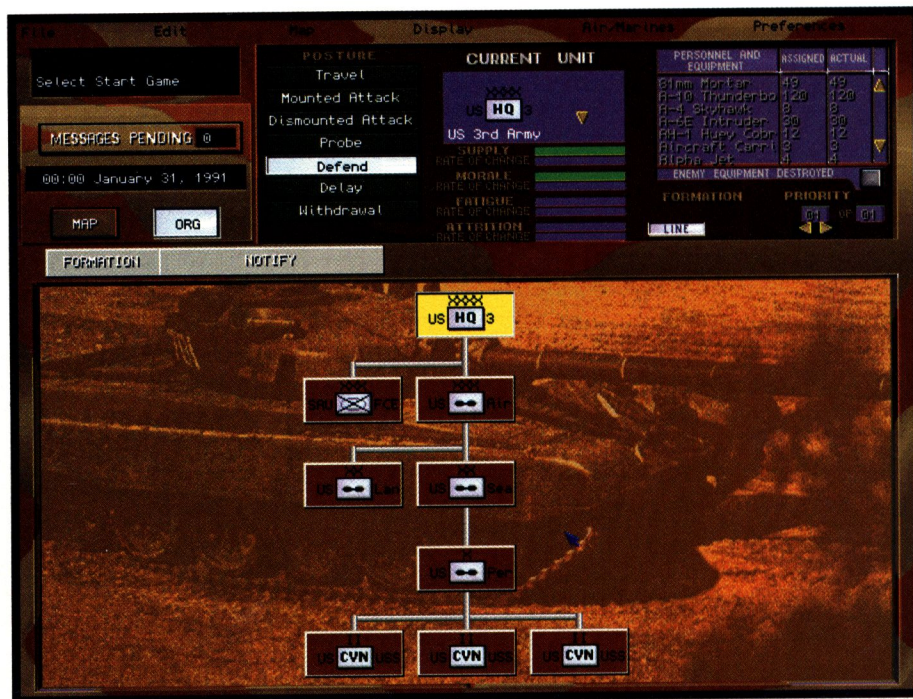
construct a computer wargame (most of which were largely hangovers from the methods used in designing board games) and create a game that is a closer and more realistic simulation of actual war.

Because it is a simulation of land warfare rather than sea warfare, *Patriot* couldn't have been created using the engine that was used for *Harpoon*, but *Harpoon* fans had expected, at the very least, that it would be as absorbing, as playable and as well-designed as its predecessor. I have tried hard to think of a way to let all those people down lightly, but I can't, so here's the low-down: *Patriot* is tedious, frustrating and not at all playable. Why? Because there are fundamental design faults in the implementation of the game – particularly in the user interface – and the current version of the game (version 1.1) is still riddled with bugs. The cherry on this rather unpalatable cake is that the documentation is obscure, insufficient, occasionally inaccurate and generally poorly written.

A wealth of information

In one respect *Patriot* is excellent. The amount of information that the designers have packed into the game is extremely impressive. They have undertaken a superb research job, and this has given them the means to construct a huge database containing very accurate orders of battle. The order of battle for Iraqi divisions is naturally more hypothetical than those for the coalition forces, nevertheless it's a tremendous achievement. In addition, there's an equipment database to rival that in *Harpoon*. ☛

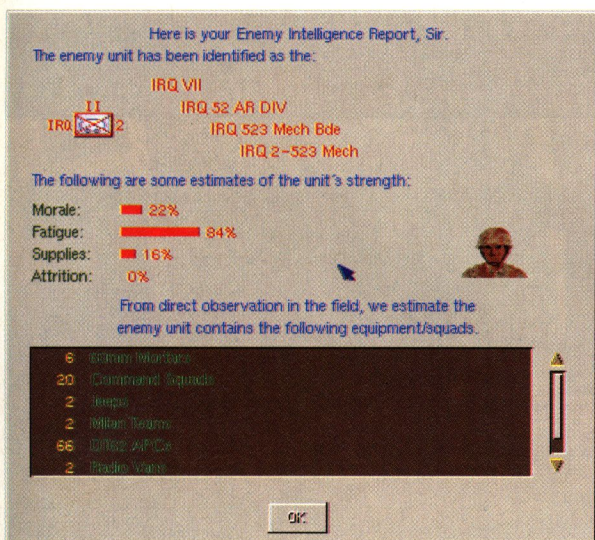
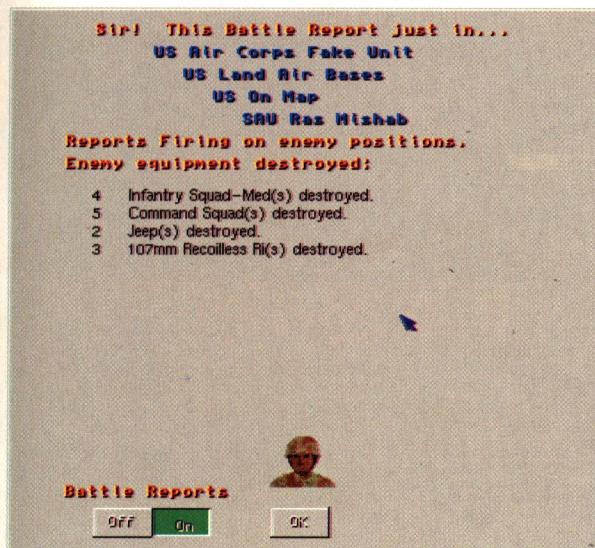
(Below) The interactive organisational chart shows you how your troops are structured and allows you to make changes in the placement of units.



Following its success at sea with *Harpoon*, Three-Sixty has turned its attentions to land warfare in the Gulf and given **Laurence Scottiord** an opportunity to show Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf a thing or three.

PATRIOT



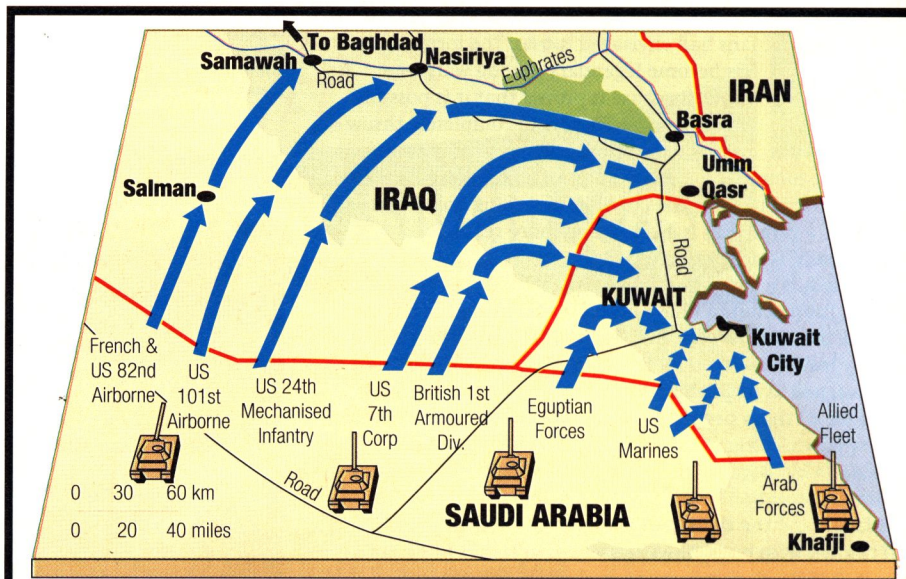


(Top) Unlike Harpoon, Patriot has no animations when units are attacked. Instead you are simply presented with a list of kills. This is not a game for those seeking visual gratification.
(Above) Rather unrealistically, you can call up accurate intelligence on enemy units simply by right-clicking on them.

The organisational charts which show the structure of each force are not just there for decorative purposes; they provide you with the opportunity to shift units around as you want them. The way the organisational charts work – by showing the chain of command to the selected unit, and ‘hiding’ all the units that are not in the same division – is actually one area of the game that works very well. Assigning air and artillery support is also achieved very easily, but more on that later.

The chain of command

One of the supposedly revolutionary aspects of *Patriot* is that the player is given the opportunity of deciding at which level of command he plays the game. At Theatre level, you are in Schwarzkopf's shoes, conducting the broad sweep of the battle and leaving the nitty gritty to you juniors. But you can also play at Corps, or Division level, which give you progressively more detailed control over the actions of individual units. In theory, this sounds like a really good idea which would add considerable depth and variety to the game, but in practice there seemed to be little real difference between the different command levels. There is also an additional Custom level, but none of the three somewhat slimline manuals explained what this was for.



AVOIDING A WAR OF ATTRITION

Despite the high-tech intelligence gathering equipment available to them, the Allies had very little idea of what to expect from Saddam's army. They did not expect the resistance to be strong, but they couldn't be sure, and they had a very vague idea of exactly how many men were in the field.

Politically, it was essential to avoid a war of attrition, and it was for this reason that the initial campaign was conducted almost exclusively by the air forces. The aim was two-fold: firstly to achieve total air superiority before ground troops were committed, and secondly to do maximum damage to Iraqi troops and facilities on the ground while sustaining a low and acceptable level of Allied casualties.

It was in conducting the ground war however, that the Allied strategy really proved itself. Saddam had been expecting an attack in the form of either an amphibious assault from the gulf, or a full-frontal attack from the Saudi border northwards into Kuwait City. The Allies did everything they could to encourage this belief. In fact, even the Allied troops on the ground in these places believed that they would be leading the main assault.

On February 24 1991, Allied divisions south of Kuwait began a guarded push into Kuwait. This, and a massive naval bombardment, seemed to confirm the Iraqi commanders' expectations. However, far to the west, other Allied divisions were speeding into Iraq itself and heading directly for the location of the elite Republican guard. Having reached its objective along the expected line of Iraqi retreat, the Allied army wheeled about and began to push forward into Kuwait.

There was little the Iraqis could do. Their remaining lines of supply, communication and retreat had been severed and they were now pinned between two forces with superior morale and firepower. The end was inevitable.

Losing your way

A range of scenarios, all based on the Gulf War, are supplied with the game. These include some ‘what if’ scenarios like pressing on with the attack to Baghdad and finishing off Saddam Hussein for good. Be thankful for the latter type, since without these, and the ability to change the others by pretending that Iraq did actually have an effective fighting force, none of the scenarios would be particularly challenging.

Patriot is at its best when you stick to the pre-set battle plan for each scenario, simply changing the posture of each unit at the relevant time; for instance, changing the advance infantry from probe to defend or changing the reserve brigades to line and making them come forward to attack. Generally speaking, the game works well at this level, but restricting yourself to such a limited role is going to get boring very quickly.

You should be able to add a little excitement to your life by changing the battle plans to implement your own strategy. This, unfortunately, is easier said than done. The main problem is with the waypoint system. There are three different ways of presenting waypoints: as objective arrows, waypoint arrows and boundary lines. To further complicate matters, the extent to which you can alter each type of waypoint depends on what you have previously done with the others.



(Top left) The map screen is where the main action takes place. It can be set to update automatically or be manipulated with a range of manual controls.

(Bottom left) Air strikes are set by moving a crosshair onto the target unit or area. What a shame they don't always work.

'Patriot is at its best when you stick to the pre-set battle plan for each scenario and do nothing more than change the posture of each unit at the relevant time.'

THE LEGACY OF IMPERIALISM

Who caused the Gulf War? Saddam Hussein? No, the United Kingdom did. To understand why this statement is not as outrageous as it sounds we have to go back to the beginning of the century – a time when Iraq did not exist and Kuwait was no more an independent country than Cornwall is.

For hundreds of years the Middle East had been under the thrall of the mighty Ottoman Empire. Its domains included Mesopotamia – the lush region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers – a region which was later to be incorporated into the new country of Iraq. At that time, Kuwait was a part of the Ottoman Empire, although the local Shiek, Sabah bin Jabir al-Sabah, was allowed a limited authority over the region.

Gradually the Ottomans began to lose their influence over Kuwait, and in 1899 Britain reinforced its own influence in the Middle East by making the province a formal protectorate, disregarding Ottoman claims to it.

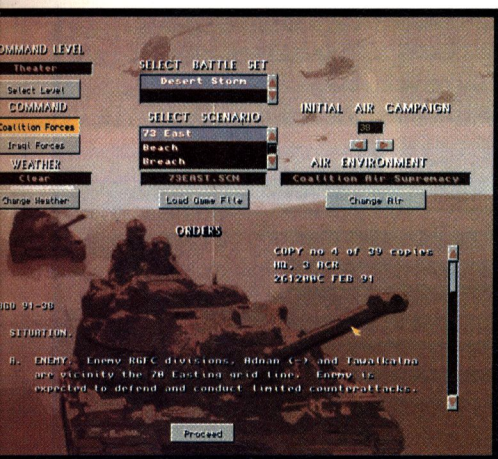
When the Great War began the Ottomans unwisely sided with Axis forces, giving the Allies a convenient excuse to overrun the whole of the Middle East. In doing so, they enlisted the help of some local ruling families in exchange for the promise of territory. So it was, that at the end of the war, Britain carved up the area to suit herself. One of the countries created in this process was Iraq, with King Faisal installed as its ruler. Not only

was the arbitrary border – which incidentally failed to take into account the distribution of the existing Ottoman provinces – a potential flashpoint, but Britain had deliberately denied Iraq a significant portion of the coast to limit its power and influence.

Iraq was made fully independent of Britain in 1932 and King Faisal took this as an opportunity to propose a union with Kuwait. Under considerable pressure from Britain to do so, the ruling Sabah family turned the proposal down.

In 1958, after a coup, the new rulers of Iraq claimed Kuwait as part of Iraq, and when Kuwait gained its independence in 1961 Iraq sent troops to the border. Britain had no hesitation in sending troops back to Kuwait, and Iraq was persuaded to withdraw. Kuwait had been saved, but even so, the stage was set for a bloody showdown 30 years later.

(Right; top to bottom) There are three different ways of showing waypoints: simple, but coarse, objective arrows; slightly more complicated waypoint arrows; and incredibly complicated and frustrating boundary lines. (Far right) One of the best features of Patriot is the extensive equipment database, which can be called up throughout play.



The options screen is also where you'll be given your orders. Before you can make sense of them, however, you'll need to be very well versed in military jargon.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Although *Harpoon* is a naval simulation, it's included as an indication of the heights that *Three-Sixty* is capable of.

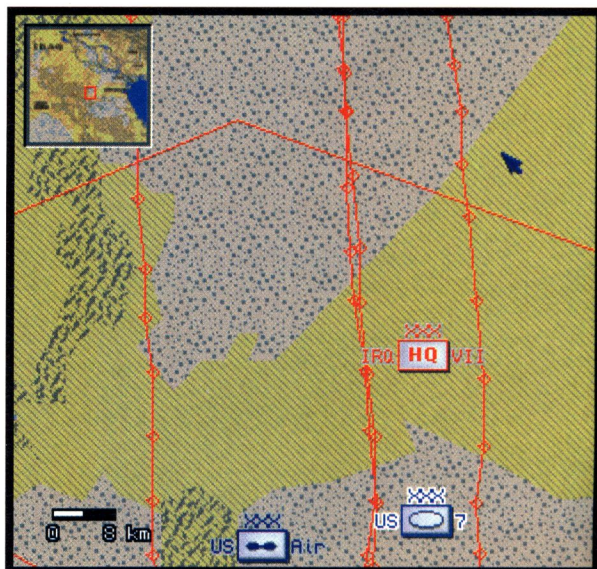
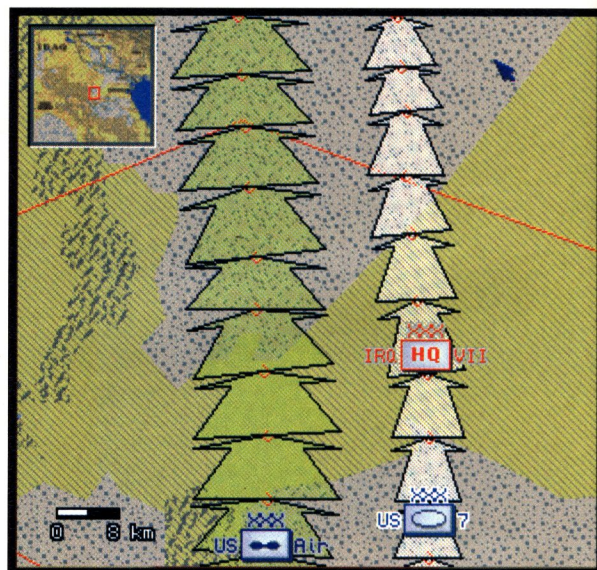
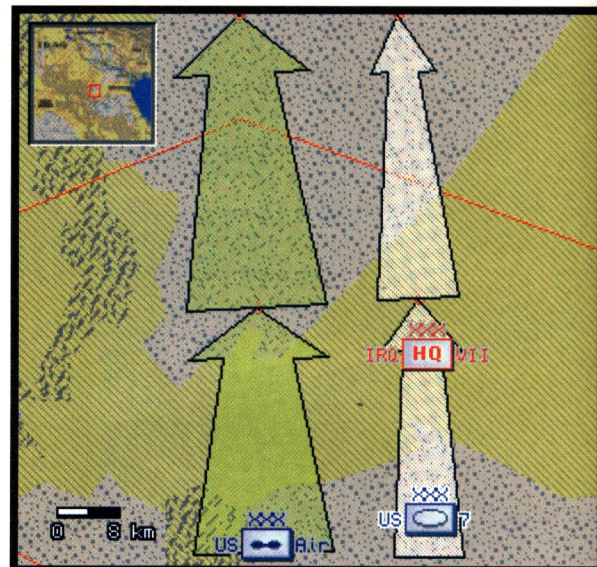
The *V for Victory* sticks to conventional hex based maps, but includes some of the very best games of this genre. Finally *A Line in the Sand* is a purely exploitative Gulf War game, put together in a shabby and unappealing manner with barely a trace of long term playability.

A Line in the Sand

Harpoon

Patriot

V For Victory



TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE GULF WAR

1 H. Norman Schwarzkopf doesn't have a first name because his father objected so much to the traditional family name of Herbert that, by way of a protest, he inflicted his son with nothing more than the initial.



2 Britain's tri-service commander in the Gulf, General Peter de la Billiere, had Kylie Minogue, Phantom of the Opera and other popular music playing in the background during briefings to defeat any bugging devices which might be listening in.



3 Britain's Desert Rats refused to fight alongside the US Marines because of the gung-ho, glory-seeking attitude of the American soldiers.

4 The only member of the Kuwaiti royal family to stand and face the invading Iraqi soldiers was the emir's brother and manager of the national football team, Shiek Fahd. He stood on the steps of the palace armed with only a pistol, but was shot immediately.

5 The allied air forces were not as effective as they claimed to be in destroying the Iraqi scud missiles. Most of these had actually been destroyed by SAS squads operating behind enemy lines.

6 On the eve of the invasion of Kuwait, General Schwarzkopf is reported as saying of Saddam Hussein's threat: 'This is another smokescreen - he's not going to do anything.'

7 It is believed that state officials at the Kremlin used images from Russian satellites passing over the battlefield to convince Saddam Hussein that his cause was hopeless and he should withdraw his troops.

8 When the Allies reached one objective in the final push they found that Iraqi soldiers were not only ready to surrender, but had saved them the trouble of building a POW camp - the Iraqis had used barbed wire to build a makeshift camp and were already sitting inside it when allied soldiers arrived.

9 When the allied airforces made the final attack on the Iraqi convoy fleeing back towards Baghdad, they met no resistance and the only danger to aircraft was mid-air collisions. The attack, in which planes queued to bomb the defenceless vehicles - one plane making a pass every 30 seconds - was allowed to go on for seven hours, long after the convoy had been completely disabled, and conscripts attempting to flee on foot were strafed with gunfire by passing planes.

10 The final score - Iraqis: 154 human beings (16 courtesy of the US Air Force) and 600 oil wells. The Allies: 100,000 human beings.

PC ZONE score

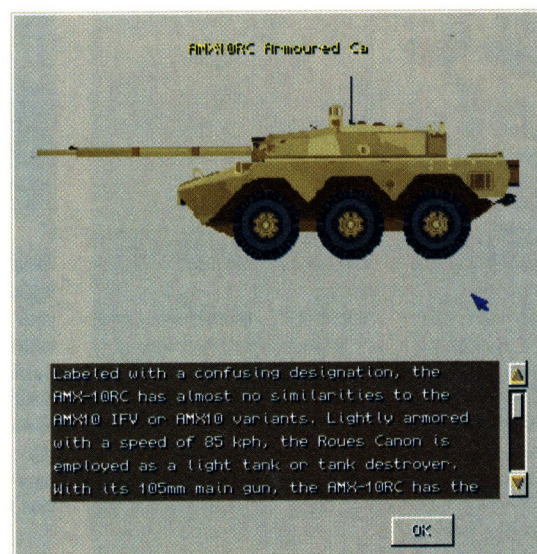
A revolutionary, but seriously flawed approach to land-based wargaming.

45

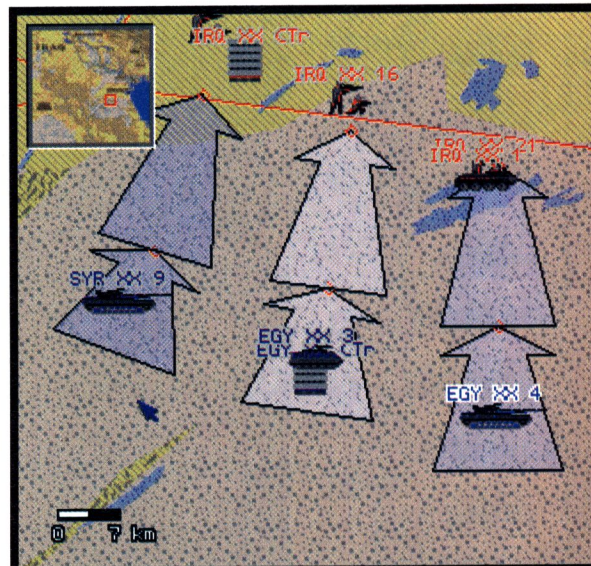
Price: £44.95 Out: Now
Published: Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549442

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 6.5Mb
Minimum Graphics: SVGA
(640 x 480 256 colours)
Sound Cards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
Controls: Mouse



Patriot REVIEW



If you're not that enamoured of the standard NATO symbols, you can opt to have pretty pictures of little tanks and aircraft instead.

Boundary lines are supposed to indicate the path that units are to take through the desert, but also how concentrated those forces are. By making the boundary lines further apart you can cover a wider area, but at the expense of having your force less concentrated. This is another area of the game which sounds ideal in theory but proves to be a nightmare in practice. Boundary line editing is complicated: some boundaries are shared by two or more units and all the boundary lines are shown simultaneously, so where they overlap each other you may spend many frustrating minutes trying, without much success, to select the right one.

Out of control

Even if you do manage to get your force heading in the right direction at the right concentration, your worries aren't over. Units frequently seem to get stuck and will just sit and take a pounding from the enemy without attempting to fight back. I also found that air strikes I had set up before the battle began were not always carried out. There seems to be no reason as to why or when this happens, so I can only put it down to faults in the game engine that have been left unremedied.

There were certainly a couple of bizarre happenings that were down to bugs and nothing else. On switching certain units from reserve to line, the symbols representing them would make a sudden leap from one side of the formation to the other, often traversing many miles in the space of a few minutes.

Not a foregone conclusion

There is a provision for Three-Sixty to release additional battlesets for *Patriot*, but I sincerely hope it doesn't do so. At least, not before it has gone back to the drawing board and ironed out the game's most serious faults. Having seen what Three-Sixty is capable of and being able to identify much unrealised potential in *Patriot*, I would like to think that within the next 12 months there might be a new, improved edition to review. Until then, I really can't recommend that you do battle with it. ☒

Stronghold

The man who would be king, Paul Lakin, flexes his muscles in SSI's new kingdom simulator *Stronghold*.



STRONGHOLD FITS, in a slightly uncomfortable sort of way, into the God sim pigeonhole. You take the part of a ruler with up to four vassals whose aim is to conquer new lands and rise through the ranks to the dizzy heights of Emperor. Along the way you grapple with both economic challenges and other races who view your rise with something less than sympathy.

The prince and the pauper

The game is based on the characters and system used in *D&D*™ and, as with any *D&D*™ game, your first task is character generation. The key character is the leader who starts off as a Baron/Baroness and your success is measured by their promotions. However, you are allowed up to four other party members each of whom you're able to control. Their help is absolutely essential.

Each character has the standard collection of attributes: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom – you know the sort of thing. It's also necessary to select each character's alignment (Lawful, Neutral, Chaotic). This is especially important in the case of the Baron since the alignment determines the overall game objective (from rising through the ranks to destroying everything else on the screen). As well as alignment there's the small matter of race; there's the usual mix of cleric, fighter, mage, elf, dwarf – you know this sort of thing too. The best strategy is to mix your party since the troops of different races have different skills. Make sure at least one is a mage or you'll end up like I did on my first time of playing: everything going hunky dorey then one of my valiant sorties into enemy territory comes up against a

'Success is going to depend on wiping out these guys. Even the fact that you're a do-good Lawful type isn't going to stop them taking potshots at you so, since the best form of defence is attack, you'd better go piling on in there.'

gang of vampires. 'Can't be harmed by non-magical weapons' says the screen in smug mode. 'Bye bye valiant sortie, bye bye any hope of world domination,' says I in defeated mode.

Little house on the prairie

However, before your armies can start rolling across the plains to do battle with your foe you need to build up the economic base to support them. Remember the old adage: it takes ten civilians to keep one soldier in the field (or something to that effect). After placing your Baron's castle (or stronghold if you will) and the subsidiary keeps of his four companions, it's time to build like an ant on acid.

Initially you'll be able to build housing and farmland which will encourage your subjects to breed like rabbits and also generate some income for you. As your lands and population increase you can start building more ambitious structures such as bazaars, granaries, vaults, towers, walls, inns: the list is endless... well that's not strictly true but it's certainly far too

long for me to bother to type them all out. The various structures can provide further income, more food, better training or simply, but importantly, more storage space. However these structures can also prove to be a drain on your own purse. If you run out of money you'll no longer be able to maintain buildings which will start to crumble away and eventually

collapse. The same will happen if you don't station at least one unit on the same screen as a building.

Wealth of nations

The short term aim of the game is to produce a thriving, nay booming, economy with surplus food and housing so that your population continues to grow and cultivate more land. This involves planning ahead. Since land is less productive during winter, in order to get through those difficult months you'll need to have stored away plenty of food and gold. This means having built plenty of storage facilities as well as



DRAGON

Dangerously Welsh in its ancestry, the Red Dragon is both intelligent and dangerous: a lethal combination. Tooled up with flame breath, (*Stronghold* is set in the days before *Listerine*) he should not be approached by beginners.



MANSCORPION

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but even the mothers of these genetically confused monsters would be reluctant to give them a cuddle. Armed with a longbow, a poisoned tail and an inferiority complex.



WIGHT

Although they may look like your average Rave fan after 12 hours in a warehouse outside Basildon, these guys are complete bastards being immune to non magical weapons and a fair share of charms too. Oh how you wish you'd picked that mage.



HARPY

According to legend, Harpies have the lower body of an eagle and the upper body of a woman. In reality they have the body of an eagle with a large pair of novelty breasts. In combat they charm characters to fight against their friends. That's women for you.



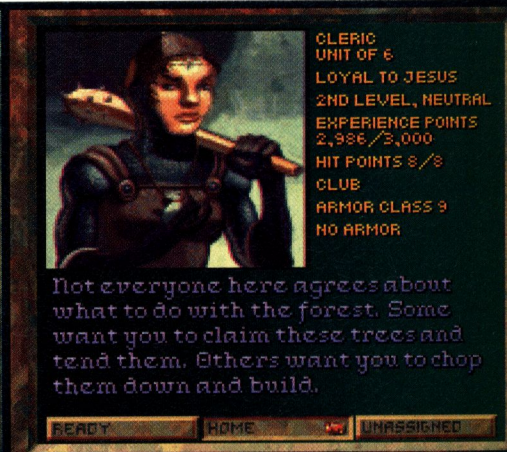
- 1 **Main Screen:** Where you view building and combat.
- 2 **Small Screen:** A top-down view of the kingdom.
- 3 **Pyramid:** The setting of the pinnacle dictates what proportion of effort is being expended on Building, Training and Recruiting.
- 4 **Bar:** Summons units to current area.
- 5 **Players:** All of your leaders, each with their own Pyramid and bar.
- 6 **Combat Thermometer:** Charts progress of battle. The higher the white, the better you're doing.



MAGE: Although initially little help in combat mages, once they reach higher levels, gain powerful magic spells without which some monsters are undefeatable.



DWARF: Short doughty fighters, dwarves are particularly useful for finding and mining minerals - an essential source of income to a hard pressed overlord.

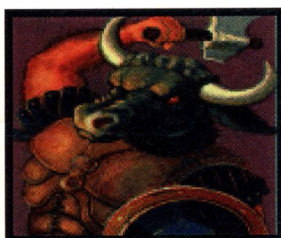


CLERIC: A fine example of the church militant, clerics are not only capable of casting spells they also can hold their own in a brawl. Must be all those vicarage tea parties.



MEDUSA

As with any person who's had an unfortunate experience at the hairdressers you'd be ill-advised to laugh at Medusa's green Afro. Her look can turn a character to stone and a statue's life is a lonely one.



MINOTAUR

A giant human with the head of a bull (which means he'd not be out of place down my local), the Minotaur is tough with a capital uff. Not famous for his social graces or love of early Chinese poetry.



(Right) The beautiful country home of Robert Runcie, my cleric leader. All units are rallying here in anticipation of an attack.



Ah to be young at the dawn of the Earth. A blank canvas crying out for huge shopping centres.

producing plenty of surplus during the blissful months of the long, hot summer. Remember at primary school when you learnt that story of the ant and the field mouse and how one had a merry old summer and starved in winter while the other worked all summer and so survived the winter? Well little did you realise that this fable was laying down the basic tactics for *Stronghold*. That's the power of Aesop for you.

As with most games of this ilk, success in *Stronghold* is initially measured by the popularity of the Leader. To achieve promotion to higher ranks your popularity and amount of buildings have to reach certain levels. However, there are short cuts, which leads us rather conveniently onto...

Arms and the man

While you're happily building up your region, ploughing through back issues of *House and Garden* and discussing interior design with a slightly effeminate chap called Lucien, other forces are at work. They too are building away, throwing up what passes for housing in the world of evil doers.

Unless you've opted to play as a Lawful character your ultimate success is going to depend on wiping out these guys. Even the fact that you're a do-good Lawful type isn't going to stop them taking potshots at you so, since the best form of defence is attack, you'd better go piling on in there.

God is on the side of the big battalions so your best action is to amass a substantial army (having ensured that there are enough units left at home to maintain the buildings and iron the curtains) and launch it at your opponent's citadel. Your control over actual combat is minimal to the point of non

existence. All you are really able to decide is where your units go and even then they're a bit wayward. The battle itself is a complicated matter of hit points and armour ratings because in its heart of hearts...

This is an RPG

As I said at the beginning, *Stronghold* is based on *Dungeons and Dragons* and this shows not only in the types of character, both good and evil, but also

in the gameplay itself. The game is turn based and also regards the play area as divided into invisible blocks. For much of the time you can, if you wish, ignore these elements (turn-based for instance does not mean you have to wait for the computer to make its moves) but to really play the game to its full you must, at the very least, be aware of them. For example, for proper planning you need to know that one unit of stored food will feed one unit of population for one turn.

Endgame

Anyone of advanced years who has a leaning towards medieval games will probably remember *Castles* from Electronic Arts: one of those eagerly awaited but, in the end, slightly disappointing games. It involved - surprise, surprise - building castles and fending off those of a Vandal leaning. The graphics were really sweet but in the end the game fell down (like most of my castles) because it was too easy and too limited. *Stronghold* lacks the top notch graphics of *Castles* but, in terms of gameplay, it wins hands down.

If I'd been told that someone had attempted to mix *Castles* with *D&D*, I'd have expected it to fall between two stools: too RPGish for the unconverted; too simplistic for the *D&D* buff, but then that's the sort of tired old cynic I am. In fact the game works extremely well. It's not without its flaws: the use of pyramids to decide the relative efforts expended on building, training and recruitment has a lot in terms of novelty value but is somewhat imprecise. More seriously, the game can occasionally be a bit slow and action will completely halt while everything updates. This is particularly noticeable during combat which is very stop-start. The graphics are also rarely more than reasonable and there seemed to be a problem with some on-screen messages: occasionally I'd be informed that units were being defeated when they were nowhere near combat. However, all this pales into insignificance against the sheer ruddy addictiveness of the whole thing. I can see its faults, I wince when people tease me for playing it, but I just can't get enough of this game. Its strength is that, even if things are going badly, you can just about hang on in there with success seemingly within your reach.

At first glance, or even first read, *Stronghold* is not the most exciting game in the world. All I can say is that I can't stop playing it. And it's not just me. People completely unconnected with PC Zone have been known to sit in the office until two in the morning on a Friday just playing it. Whatever else it is, *Stronghold* is horribly addictive. ☑

PC ZONE score

Extremely addictive even if you'd normally steer clear of *D&D*™.

80

Price: £35.99 Out: Now

Published: SSI/US Gold

Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: Ad-Lib Gold, Sound Blaster Sound Blaster Pro, Pro Audio spectrum, Roland

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

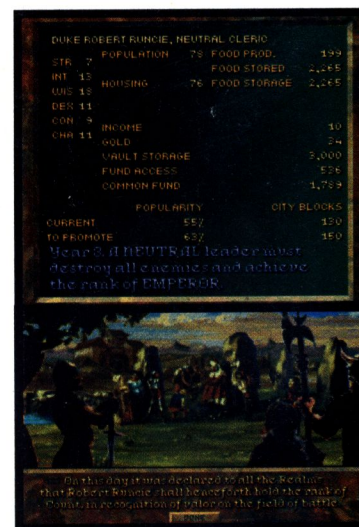
IN PERSPECTIVE

As a kingdom simulator *Stronghold* does, perhaps, have to be compared to *Sim City* but something like *Castles* is a fairer comparison.

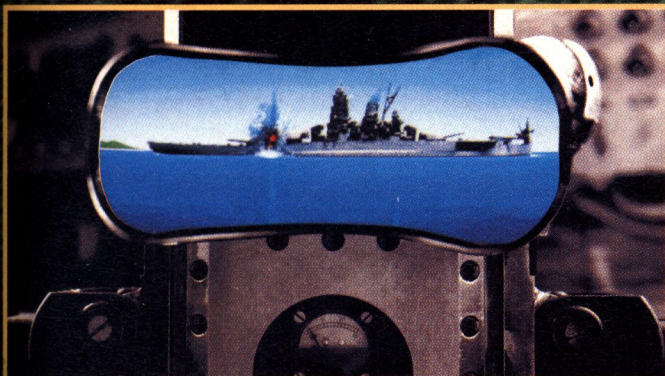
Castles

Sim City

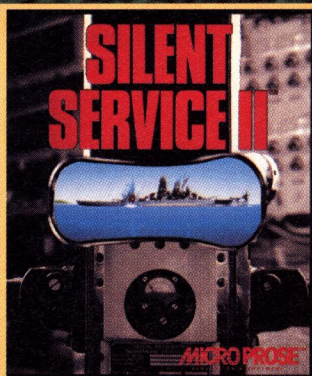
Stronghold



Fame and honour are but fickle mistresses, but they're great fun while they're around.



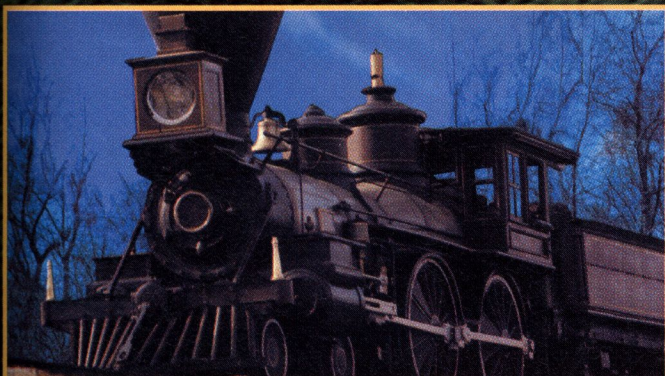
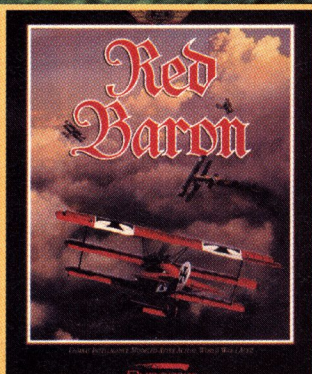
SILENT SERVICE II : Silent Service II is the sequel of Silent Service, the great sub-battle simulation. This new version benefits from great technological improvements and many new missions.



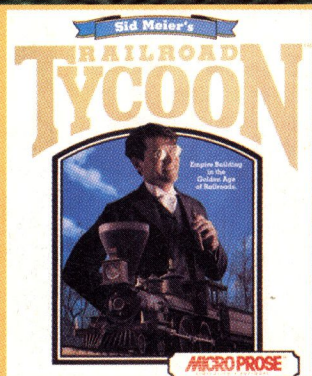
**Battles &
Strategy...**



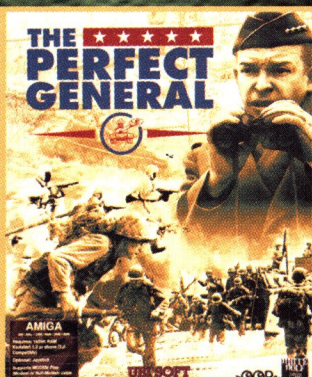
RED BARON : 1914, World War One breaks out in the sky; thanks to Red Baron you now have the chance to become one of the aces of all times.



RAILROAD TYCOON : In the 19th century Industrial Revolution begins in Europe and America; thanks to Railroad Tycoon you will be able to take part in this epic running a railway company.



THE PERFECT GENERAL : The Perfect General includes a highly refined yet intuitive playing system; in this wargame you will be able to challenge either your computer or another player through various battles.



THE LORDS OF POWER

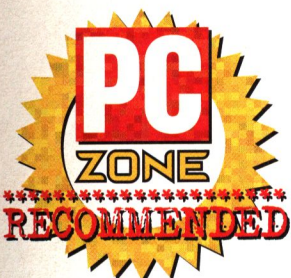
**...4 hits for
glory.**

*Available on PC 3.5
and AMIGA*

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UBI SOFT Ltd.
Finchley House,
707 High Road, North Finchley
London N12 0BT

Microsoft Arcade for Windows



When it comes to games, Mark Burgess still longs for the days of dedicated 8-bit motherboards driving knackered old TVs. Microsoft seems happy to oblige.



IF YOU ARE READING this magazine back to front, you already know that *Off The Boards* this month is devoted to

shareware versions of arcade classics. Here is a suite of such programs from Microsoft. Yes, I know that they are not a games company. *MS Golf* was written by a bloke who was actually working on MS Works.

All that has changed. Microsoft now has a game team of 15. Do they arrive on the scene with a game to rival *Ultima Underworld* in complexity? Do they hell. They start, like any programmer of sense, by knocking out an Asteroid clone.

There is a sound marketing reason for an arcade collection. Microsoft aims its leisure products at affluent 30-something males. These may be power users now, but their first experience of any kind of computer is likely to have been feeding quarters to a *Space Invader* machine. They are stuck in offices in front of computer screens all day now. Closing down factories, moving money. It's all tense. They need a break. And what could be better than a quick blast of *Centipede*? That's why this program runs under Windows – an otherwise crazy idea. While your spreadsheet is

beavering away in the background you can use the computer for what it's designed for – shooting aliens.

Microsoft Arcade has the full, officially licensed versions of *Asteroids*, *Centipede*, *Missile Command*, *Tempest* and *Battlezone*. All of these were made by Atari in the days of the great Nolan Bushnell (the man who invented *Pong*). These were the days when arcade games made six billion dollars in America alone and consumed 75,000 man years.

'The program features the best use of the Windows' help feature I've ever seen, with tips on strategy, sound samples and a brief history of the game.'

Remember the good old days?

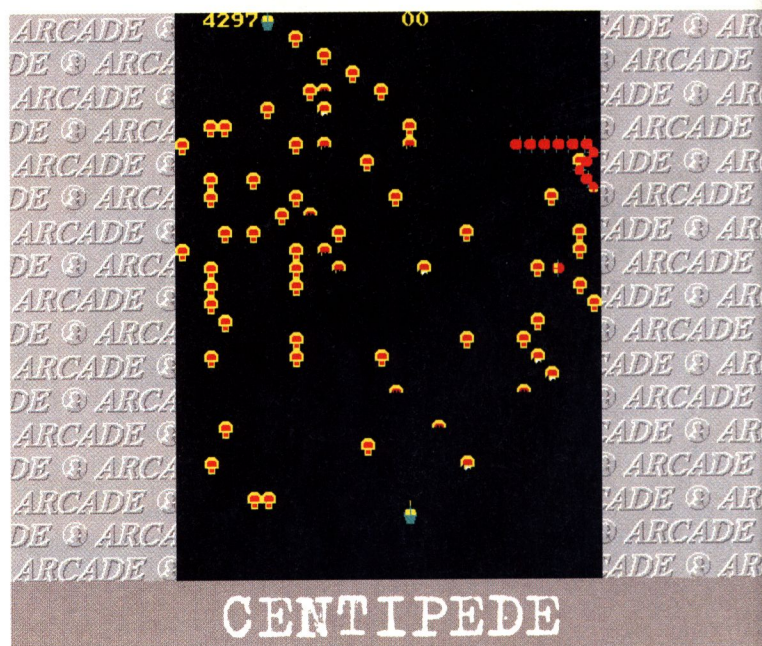
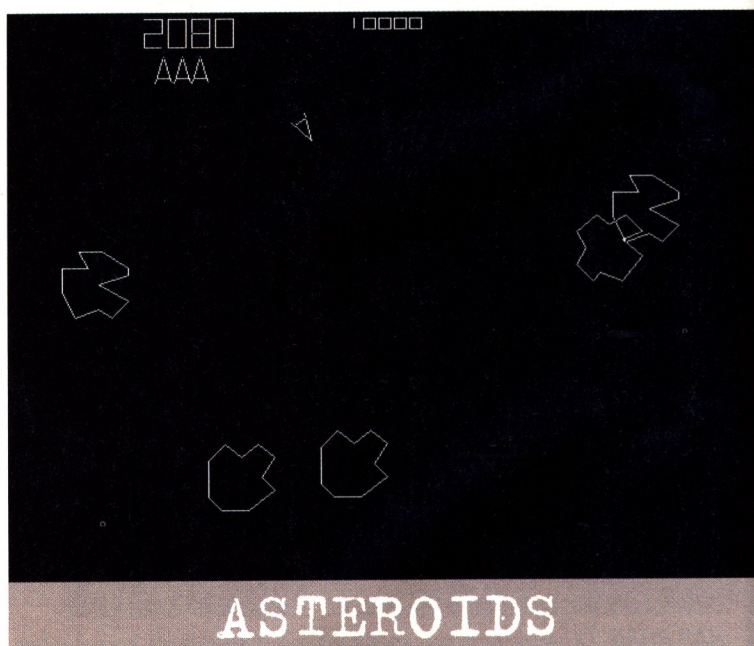
ASTEROIDS (1979): Asteroids is a classic vector graphic in which you are in control of a space ship surrounded by asteroids. The merest touch is

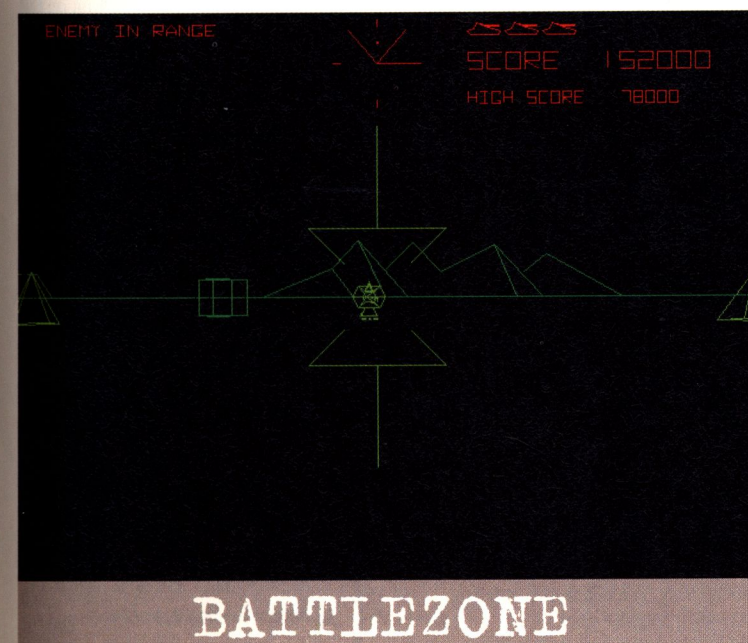
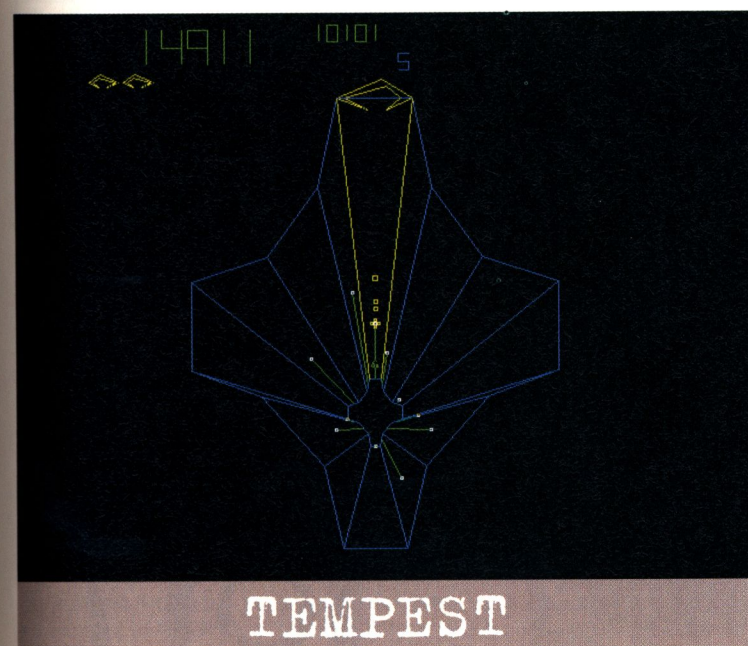
fatal, but you can use your missiles to break them up.

Hint: Don't shoot all the asteroids at first. Go for the small, fast ones and always shoot the flying saucers as soon as they appear. Take care when using hyperspace, you sometimes land on top of something.

CENTIPEDE (1982): Here you have to shoot centipedes, spiders, fleas and scorpions. The screen has a number of mushrooms that have a habit of getting in everything's way.

Hint: Keep the bottom of the screen free of these so you can manoeuvre. Remember that the spider only goes





one way; dodging it gives vital seconds until it appears from the other side.

MISSILE COMMAND (1981): Defend six cities with three bases of ten missiles. Missiles, MIRVs, bombers, killer satellites and smart bombs pour from the sky.

Hint: when the wave is at the top third of the screen launch a spread of ten missiles from one of the bases. Then you don't have to defend it anymore and will have broken the back of the attack. Don't waste time intercepting missiles heading for destroyed cities or bases.

TEMPEST (1980): You guide a blaster around the rim of a cosmic tube whilst shooting aliens that stream up the corridors.

Hint: shoot them as early as possible; once on the rim they are a real pain. Avoid missiles and spikes.

BATTLEZONE (1983): A really absorbing game in which you guide a tank through a lunar landscape. Tanks and missiles hunt you down.

Hint: use the objects to blank off fire. Keep moving and aim carefully. When missiles come, back away and get them once they stop jinking and start homing in. Don't get distracted by the flying saucers.

Classic cuts

All these games look, play and sound just like the originals. The sound has been sampled from the actual arcade games and every effort made to capture their atmosphere.

The one thing that has had to change is the controls. *Battlezone*, for instance, used two joysticks, one for each tread. *Tempest* had its wonderful paddle. The other games used a trackball (*Missile Command*, *Centipede*) for which the mouse is ideal, or buttons (*Asteroids*) for which you use the keyboard. You can change any of the controls, apart from forcing the program to use a joystick.

The program has the best use of the Windows' help feature I've seen, with tips on strategy, sound samples and a brief history of the game.

One last bit of praise: the price. It's under £20.00: cheaper than many shareware versions. And Microsoft has overheads; marketing bods, advertising whatsits, plush offices, drinks bills for press launches... I mean, it's not run from someone's bedsit or anything. If Microsoft can produce arcade conversions of this quality and this price, shareware authors had better give serious thought to their pricing policies. **Z**

PC ZONE score

At last, a serious application for Windows.

87

Price: Average of £18.00 Out: Now

Published: Microsoft

Telephone: 0734 270001

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 2.5Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Any card driven by Windows

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: DOS 3.2 or later.

Windows 3.1 or higher.

Soundboard recommended.

Solitaire's Journey



Forget the piddling little solitaire games you get free with Windows and various mice, this one has 105 different variants. Trouble is, only **Laurence Scottford** had the patience to play them all.



IT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA, I'm amazed that nobody has done it before. Just consider the popularity of those freebie games of solitaire (or patience, if you want to be very English about it) – you know, the ones that you'll inevitably find 'à la bonus' with everything from Windows to your new mouse. They're absolutely ideal for those occasional empty moments in the office. Let's face it, you don't really have much choice since by the time you've loaded *Strike Commander* or *Day of the Tentacle* your boss will be out on his snoop round again, and while you can always pass solitaire off as the latest newfangled screen saver – 'Yes Mr Fotherington, it plays a game of cards all by itself: isn't that amazing?' – even the most dense of taskmasters isn't conceivably going to be fooled into believing that the ledger screen in *Strike Commander* is a genuine spreadsheet.

Packing them in

Solitaire's Journey does have a USP, however, that isn't shared by freebie solitaire games. When you get bored of your freebie, that's it: no more solitaire. When you get bored of a solitaire game in *Solitaire's Journey*, you've still got another 104 variants left to play. Yes, it's going to take even the most ardent solitaire player a great deal (*Cringe. Ed.*) of time before he or she tires of this.

The games vary from the mundane, like *Klondike* – how many times have you seen this before? – to the exotic, like *Wings* in which the reserve and the tableau are laid out in the shape of a plane or bird. To be fair, although the game has 105 variants,

many of them differ only in one very minor way. For example, *Eagle Wing* is identical to *Wings*, the only difference being the way that spaces are filled and the number of re-deals.

Great layout

The game has been superbly designed with an intuitive point and click interface. Even if you don't have a mouse the game is quite playable with the keyboard. In fact, this has been cleverly designed to be as simple to pick up and play as it could have been. Take the rules for each game for example. They are initially presented as a single summary diagram, using consistent notation. If you can't

follow the game from that, then you can ask for the rules in full, and if that isn't enough and you are still somewhat confused, every single game is described in as much detail as you need in the manual.

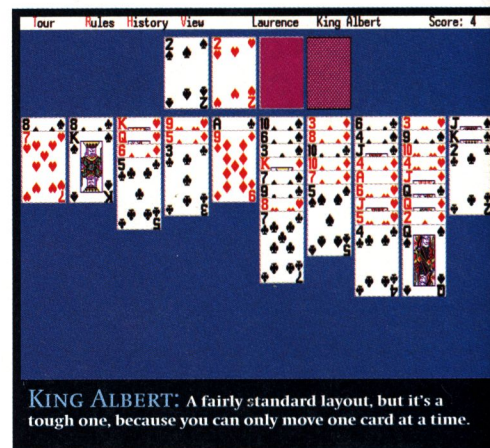
Another example of the way this product has been thought through is the individual player logs. QQP have evidently realised that this is the sort of game that is going to get a lot of usage in offices, so each player

has his or her own log which keeps track of scores for each game (these statistics can be viewed while playing) and maintains saved games for that player. The handling of saved games is also very intelligent: once you have finished a game, the saved game disappears, so you don't have to tidy up old saved game files yourself.

A whole new card game

Rather than just lump 105 variants of solitaire together, the designers have also come up with five different ways of playing them. You can select individual games to play, get the computer to choose a game for you, or take part in a tournament, quest or journey.

A Right Royal Game



KING ALBERT: A fairly standard layout, but it's a tough one, because you can only move one card at a time.

PC ZONE
score

The closest that
solitaire fans will get
to Heaven on Earth.



Price: £44.99 Out: Mid September
Published: Mirage
Telephone: 0260 299919

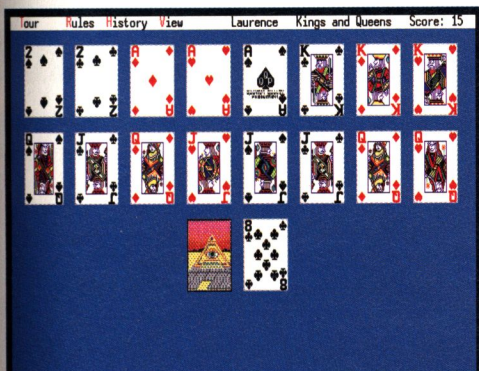
PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2.5Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1, Pro Audio Spectrum
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

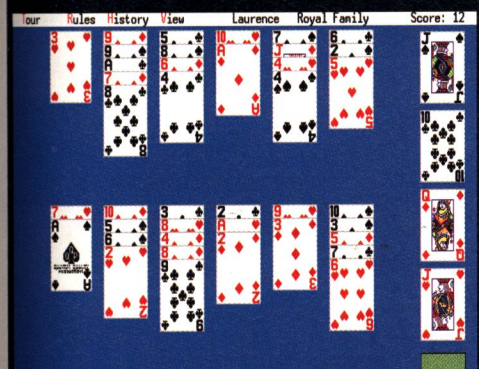


There is a selection of card designs to choose from to suit your mood.

One of the shorter, but most interesting tournaments is Royalty, consisting of the six games below:



KINGS AND QUEENS: This two deck game provides a bit of early light relief. There's no skill involved and you should only get stuck on the last dozen or so cards.

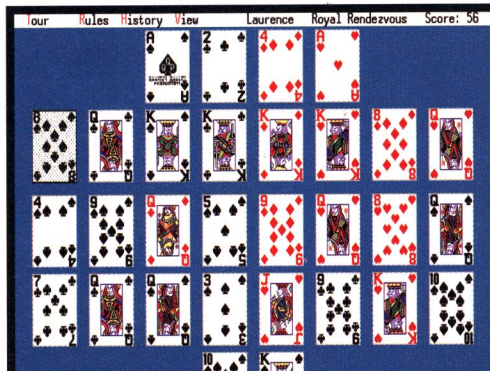


ROYAL FAMILY: You can see the whole deck in this game and it's very easy to complete - you just shift cards about until the ones you're after are released.

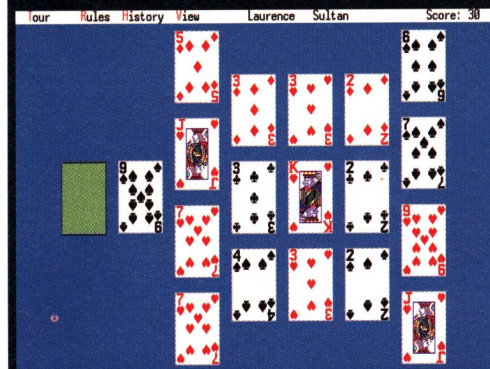
Tournaments are collections of up to ten games with a theme, each of which you play once. The objective is to accumulate as high a score as possible. The tournaments range from *Arachnophobia*, which has ten games with spider related titles, to *Nine Holes of Golf* in which you play *Golf*, nine times! A nice feature is the ability to design and save your own tournaments. Up to 20 user defined tours can be created, each containing between one and ten games.

Quests are set in houses, the object being to find your way to the exit as quickly as possible. To gain access to a room you must first win one of the three games of solitaire being played in that room. At this point regular solitaire players will be turning pale knowing that actually completing a game of solitaire is often well nigh impossible. Well, in this case, winning means passing a set number of points rather than actually completing all of the foundations. Points are scored by playing cards to foundations in most games, or simply by forming sequences in others.

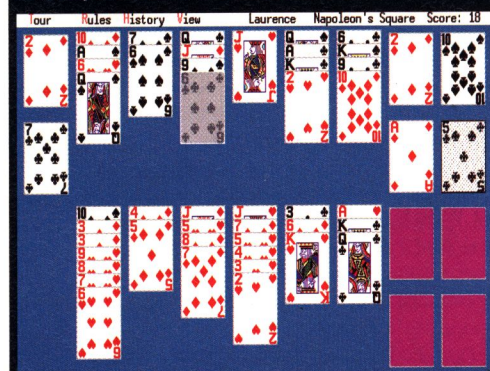
Journeys involve travelling between two cities in the United States. You begin with a small amount of cash, but each step of your journey costs you travel fees, and bed and board if you don't play well enough. At each city you visit you can play one of three games, and you are awarded cash depending on how well you played. Easier games offer smaller winnings than more difficult ones. The aim is simply to reach the destination city with as big a wad of cash as you can get.



ROYAL RENDEZVOUS: This is a bit more interesting. The top row of foundations is built up in sequence as usual, but the bottom row is built up in twos.



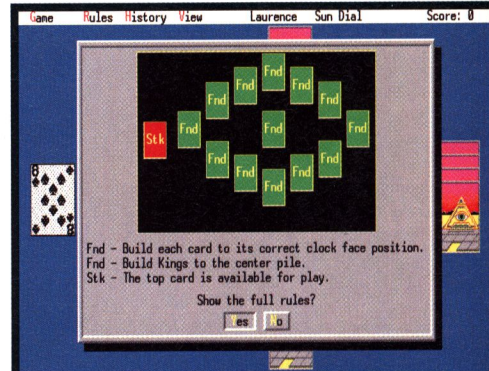
SULTAN: An unusual layout, but this game involves more luck than skill - you simply have to be careful not to miss any cards that can be laid to foundations.



NAPOLÉON'S SQUARE: This is a nice strategic game to finish off with. It's a case of releasing cards in the right order so that you don't force yourself into a dead end.

Sharp cards

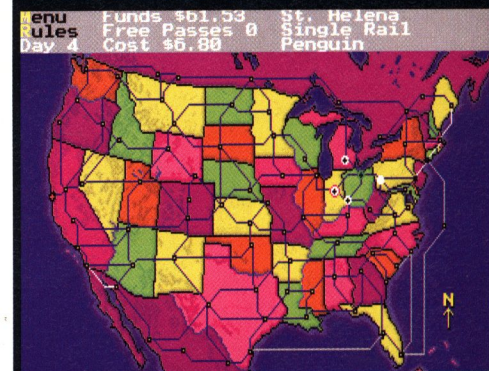
It would have been very easy to bundle together a couple of dozen solitaire games, throw them into a pretty box, and make a killing, so it is heartening that QQP have enough respect for their customers to actually spend some time and money creating a very imaginative and well thought out product. This game isn't going to turn you onto solitaire if you aren't already a fan but if, like me, you keep a pack of patience cards tucked in the end of a bookcase ready for frequent excursions onto the kitchen table, then *Solitaire's Journey* may well turn out to be one of the most worthwhile and value for money games you'll buy this year. **Z**



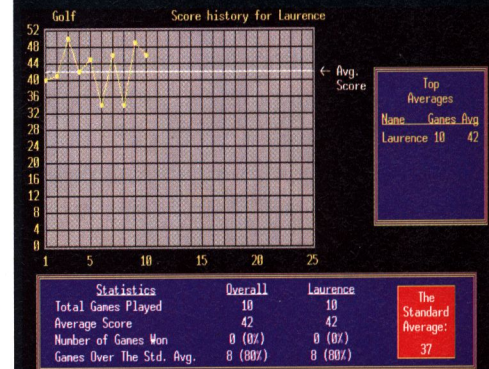
The instructions for each game are summarised in a single diagram.



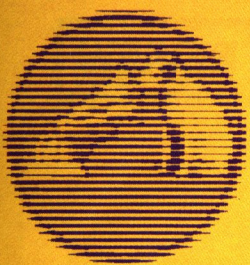
The Quests have you exploring a house trying to collect the required number of gold pieces, and then finding the exit as quickly as possible.



Journeys are between two cities in the USA. You must pay your way to each destination, but can make money by doing well in the games you play at each stop.



Once you've played a few games you can compare your results with QQP's average.



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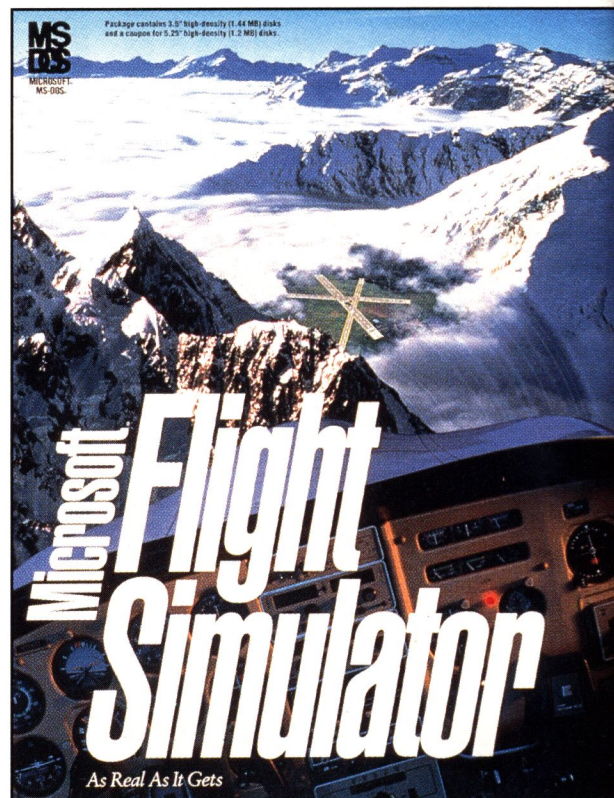
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Ever wondered what would happen if cavalry charged a gargoyle? Or a troll jumped on a bunch of bowmen? Andrew Wright hasn't either, but we told him to try.

TWO THINGS CAN happen when you come up with a game that's part wargame, part strategy and part RPG. The first thing is that reviewers will waffle on for at least a paragraph or two before you have any idea of what sort of game you're reading about. The second thing is that there's a better than even chance that the fans of each individual genre will be mightily disappointed or avoid it completely.

Very few games of this type have really made it: *Civilization* got away with it by combining brilliant gameplay with superb detail and, although it hasn't yet been bettered, there are still people trying. Witness the latest offering from the US, *Conquered Kingdoms*.

Don't ask me why it's called *Conquered Kingdoms*; if all the kingdoms have been conquered, it's hard to see why you're supposed to do it all over again. Mind you, once you read the manual, you suddenly realise just why they dreamed up the illogical title: they can't speak English. In places it reads as if it's been translated in stages from Taiwanese through a dozen different dialects of Swahili. There are even spelling mistakes on the game screens. Well, okay, bad spelling and grammar won't bring about the end of the world, even a fantasy one, but if it's been this loosely flung together, what hope is there for the game?

The state of play

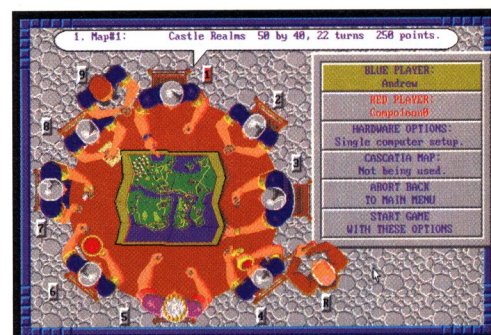
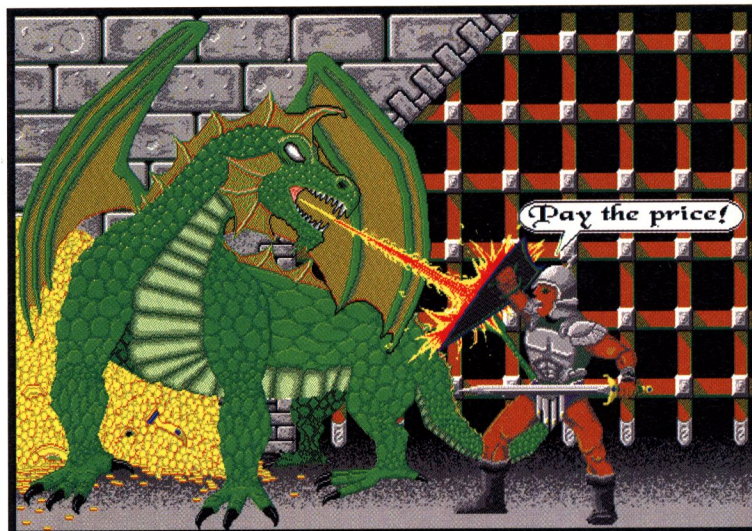
Actually, *Conquered Kingdoms* is quite a competent little fantasy wargame that's stronger on strategy than anything else I've come across in a while. Conquest is what this game is all about, and it can be set on any one of nine pre-drawn maps or a randomly generated map up to several screens in size. You can either play with human units only – archers, cavalry, knights, swordsmen, lancers, boats and catapults – or a combination of humans and fantasy creatures. The latter category includes all sorts of things from wizards and dragons to trolls, ogres, gargoyles, phantoms and rogs. And don't ask me what a rog is because I don't know except that it's fat, it's green and it walks on water, okay?

The game revolves, not surprisingly, around combat, but production of new units and the capture of castles, towns, villages and other resources play an important part too. Resources include gold, coal and wood, all of which can be exchanged for units in various combinations. To start with there are single battle options on any of the game maps but for the more adventurous there's a campaign game too. This adds a few extra rules and includes officer figures with various healing powers and advancement capabilities. Play is harder in the campaign, and the maps can be quite huge, with up to 120 different countries to conquer and hold.

The opening screens consist of several layers of rather second-rate fantasy pictures and some digitised music that is nothing at all to write home about. The first task is to choose a commander – confusingly referred to as a 'personal officer' (I though they were people who sifted through cvs) and a 'royalty' in the same section. That done, it's on to the map selection screen and finally the set-up screen from which you can change the default options such as army size, type of units, starting locations and so on. Although the manual claims you can fight with human armies only, it isn't possible on most maps, so that option quickly gets forgotten.

You then get to choose and place your pieces on any or all of your chosen start locations, paying close attention to the whereabouts of resources and castles. Castles are vital as reinforcements can only appear inside an owned castle.

Pieces can be selected with the right mouse button and moved using the left button. One minor grumble is that you can't give a unit marching orders beyond a single turn's movement which is a pity. The pieces move on an almost invisible square grid. The squares are actually rectangles so allow two units to each. This can be rather confusing and placing units is awkward until you get the hang of it. The map tends to get cluttered too and, quite



(Top) £44.99 do you mean? The graphics are pretty naff as you can see.
(Middle) Get the beers in, Genghis. Now who shall we conquer next?
(Bottom) Yum. Red swordsmen on toast.

Conquered Kingdoms



(Left) Walk on water they might but rogs aren't that good in a scrap...

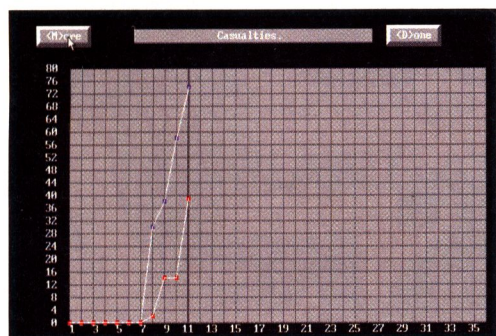
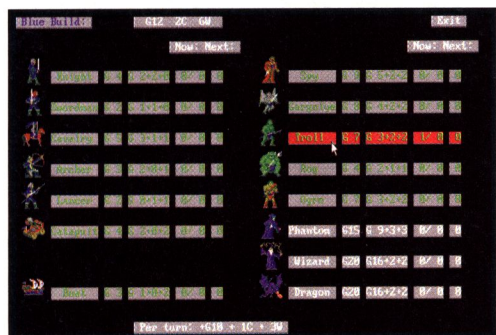
Fights are really slogging matches with little or no tactical skill involved bar some defensive advantages if you happen to be in a castle. There's no value in surrounding or flanking enemy forces for example: it's just point for point with the winner being the one left standing.

The computer plays a good game but it's not long before you're playing at the upper levels. Games can be short or long – always worth extra points in my opinion – but tend to end

honestly, I'd hate to see it on an EGA screen even though the colours are good and the detail clear (as long as too many units aren't stacked in one spot). Scrolling around the map isn't too smooth either, even on a fast PC, and some screens seem to take ages to clear and change.

Mental disorders

Once you're into the game, the quality of the sound effects leaves a lot to be desired but at least you can turn them off and speed up some of the animated combat sequences if need be. Combat is a little simplistic and it won't endear itself to purists.



up in the same way, with forces of dragons and gargoyles (which seem to be the best pieces on the map) slugging it out with the knights defending the last castle. Apart from the knights, the human units are invariably too weak to be useful for anything more than guarding captured resources.

While play is predominantly against the computer at one of 21 difficulty levels, there are options for modem play if you really do have money to burn. According to the manual, the game's artificial intelligence simulates several different personality types, offering even more variety. Not only is it dyslexic, it's schizophrenic.

Useful bits and bobs

Conquered Kingdoms comes on two disks, and both 3.5" and 5.25" formats are present in the box. The ever helpful manual's troubleshooting section says it needs 'quite a bit' of free memory but the game seems quite tolerant of other TSRs and indeed a disk cache such as SMARTdrive is recommended. Installation is quick and easy using the supplied utility. Also in the box are the 55 page manual I've already bemoaned, a full-colour booklet showing the nine pre-drawn scenario maps and a simple photocopied card showing the combat results table.

In the end, though, the gameplay itself is good and varied enough to keep you coming back. If you can stand the nonsensical manual and the pretty ropy finish, there's a good game waiting to get out. It certainly won't be leaving my hard drive for some time yet. **Z**

IN PERSPECTIVE

Nothing like the detailed addiction of *Civilization* but miles better than most other simplistic wargames.

Castles

Civilization

Conquered Kingdoms

Defender of the Crown

PC ZONE score

The rather second rate packaging and laughable manual conceals a highly playable fantasy wargame.

71

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

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: XT/AT
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 3.5Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA/VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib or PC speaker
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

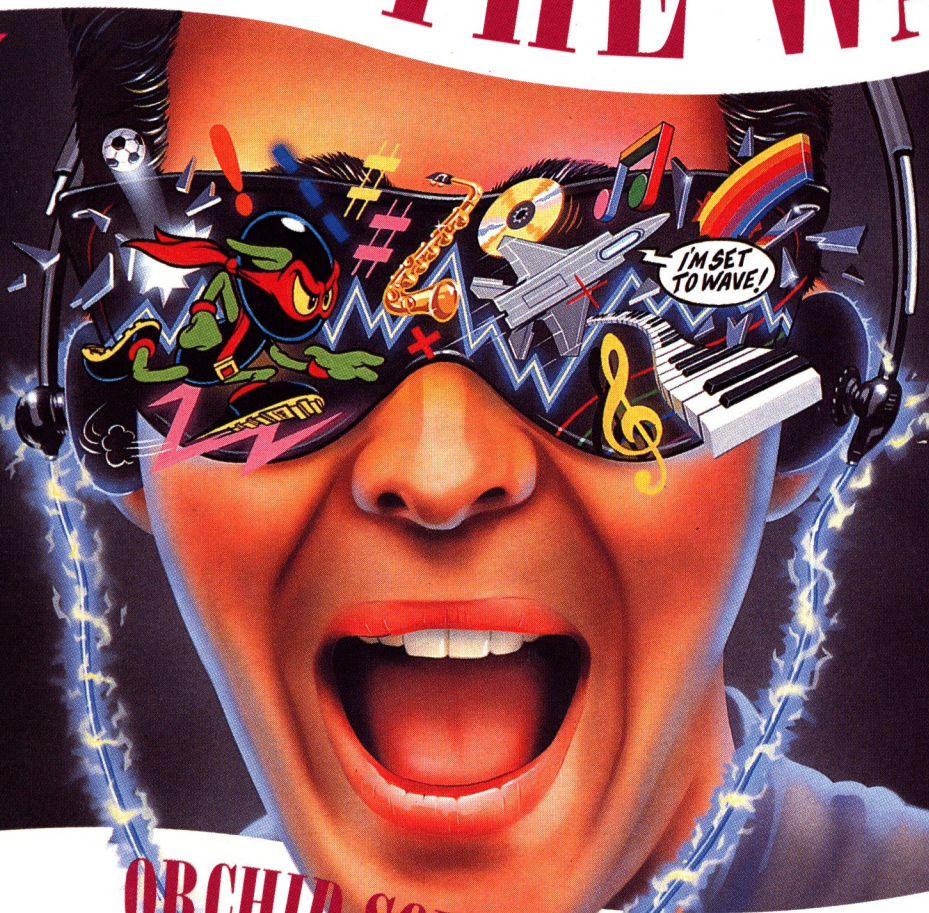


(Above left) I'll have two ogres, a rog and a troll please, thankyou...
(Middle left) Ten things you always wanted to know about dragons but were far too mature to ask.
(Bottom left) After each game, you get treated to pseudo-scientific mumbo jumbo about all sorts of nonsense.

RAVE TO THE WAVE

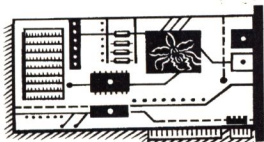
REVIEW

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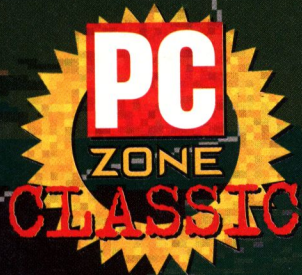


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100	65.00	95.00	49.99	72.99	44.99	62.99
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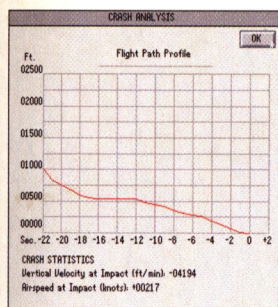
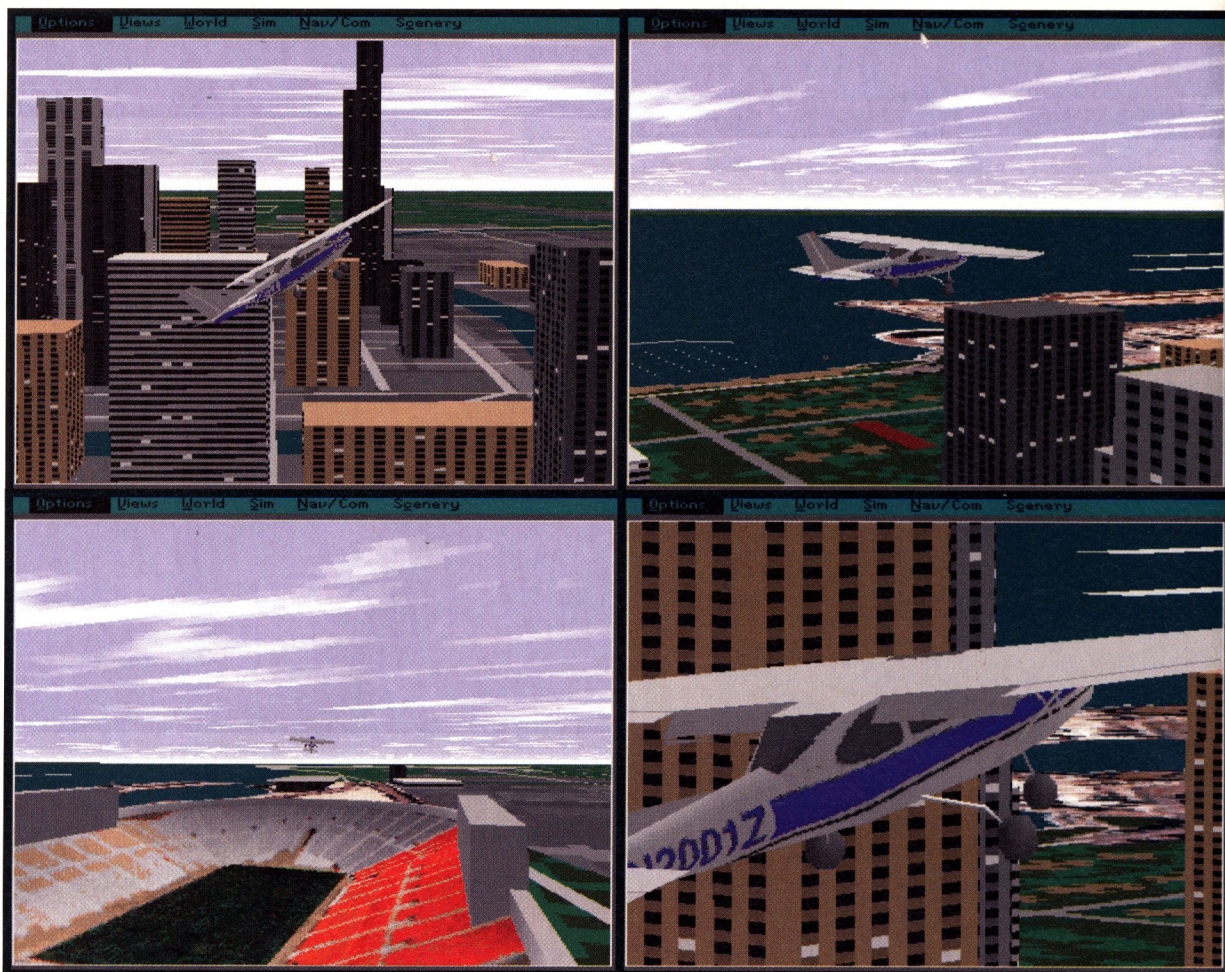


Flight Sim 5.0

Duncan MacDonald took off from Chicago Meigs Airport at precisely 9.36 a.m. and aimed his Cessna Skylane at Oregon. At 4.52 p.m. he crashed in the Atlantic Ocean, somewhere off the New England coastline. (Microsoft's *Flight Sim 5.0* allows the user to set up hurricane force winds, you see.)



(Clockwise from top left) Go on Frank, sing the new version... 'Chicago, Chicago, it's my kind of collection of texture mapped polygons.' (Next) Stunt Island fans might be tempted to try something 'clever' here, but unfortunately it's impossible. (Next) Zoomed right in you can clearly see your registration number - useful to know in case you get pulled by the old bill. (Next) Another trick for Stunt Island fans to try, i.e. landing on the football pitch. (Below) Here's the graph that resulted shortly after I tried it.



AINING A REAL life pilot's license is a pretty expensive business, as you'll no doubt be aware. First of all you've got to join a flying club (a clever con which sets you back about 100 quid), and then you've got to actually pay for the lessons themselves, which cost about 80 quid a shot. Considering that you need 40 or more lessons before you're ready to take the 'test', you'll be forking out somewhere in the region of (er, intense mathematical computations in brain)... blimey, over three thousand quid. Microsoft's *Flight Sim 5.0*, on the other hand, costs under 50.

Oh yeah? So what's the combat like?

No, no, no - you're missing the point already. You don't shoot anyone down in *Flight Sim 5.0*. It's not that sort of game. In fact, to be perfectly honest, it's *not* a 'game'; it's a simulation so deadly serious it'll make your eyes sweat and your forehead go all crinkly. Let me put it another way: you don't get back home from the pub at midnight, slump in front of your PC and say to yourself/your partner/your dog: 'Hey, I'll just have a quick blast on *Flight Sim 5.0* before crashing out.'

What do you do with it then?

Ah. Now there's a question. Well, basically - as I heavily hinted in the prologue - you can learn to fly. Like for real. This may sound a trifle far fetched, but believe me, it's true. I'll tell you a story. A couple of years ago I did a feature on *Flight Sim 4.0* (the prequel). The idea of the feature was as follows: I was to do some basic groundwork on the simulation and then, when confident, would book in for a few real lessons and see what transpired. And it all went rather well... in fact I found the real plane was actually easier to fly than the simulation model (unrestricted views, better 'graphics' etc). To cut a long story short, nothing my instructor threw at me, from dodgy trim settings to incorrect power/pitch scenarios, posed a problem because I'd done it all before on the

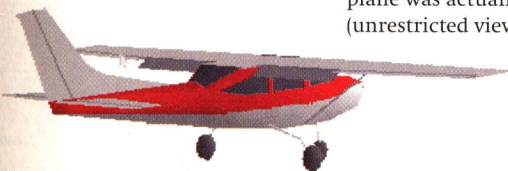
computer. Now, this next bit may sound like some sort of obnoxious boast, but I need to mention it to illustrate the overall success of the experiment and therefore the accuracy of the simulation: my instructor decided that I was proficient enough to land the plane on my *first* lesson. Unaided by him. (Actually it was a boast, but it's still true.)

I couldn't give a toss

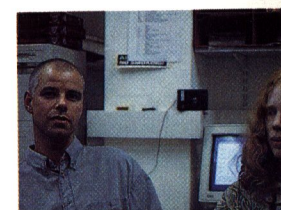
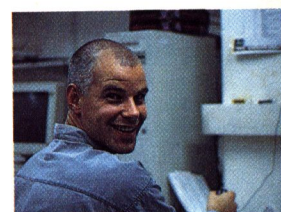
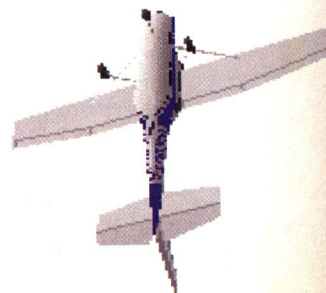
But the brilliant thing here (regardless of whether or not you care that I landed on my first, I repeat yet again, first real life lesson), is the fact that *Flight Sim 5.0* (like *Flight Sim 4*) mimics the mechanics of genuine flight to a remarkably accurate degree. For instance: (1) If you land a tad heavily with your throttle too far open, your plane will bounce; (2) If you lower your flaps while flying through turbulent air, the buffeting effects experienced inside the plane will be magnified in direct proportion to the amount of flap deployed; (3) You lose height in tight turns; (4) Flying inverted (at low level) is a complete nightmare and will definitely result - if you don't flip back over pretty damn sharpish - in a crash; (5) As your altitude increases and weird things happen to the air pressure, so the aerodynamics of your aircraft subtly change, meaning you'll have to set your trim controls. (6) And the list goes on and on and on. Take just about any aerodynamic fact (or even mechanical, such as carburettors freezing), and you can be 99 percent certain that *Flight Sim 5.0* has implemented it. (I hedged my bets a little with that figure of 99 percent just in case someone has an aerodynamic or mechanical 'ace' up their sleeve.)

It looks pretty bloody brilliant...

Indeed it does look pretty bloody brilliant. And that's really the main difference between this latest Microsoft Flight Sim and the last: the spanky graphics. This time round it's a Guru shading extravaganza in which rotating bitmaps and texture mapped buildings battle to the death in an orgy of 256 colours (SVGA if you've got it). Now might be a good time to have



(Main) The Golden Gate Bridge at night, resplendent in lightbulbs of different hues. Pretty, innit? Yes, that's all very well, you may be thinking, 'but can I land on the bloody thing?' And the answer is no, although you can fly under it if you like. Oh, and note also your cockpit instrumentation and its subtle 'night lights'. Not so bright that they obscure what's going on outside, but not so dim that you can't read any of the information. Modern technology eh? It's a wonderful thing, to be sure.



IN PERSPECTIVE

If you like your flight Sims serious, but want some sort of a 'game' in there as well, then you should check out Digital Integration's *Tornado*. If you just want to have fun, however, then buy *Stunt Island*: and don't believe what you've heard about all the flight models being crap, because although some may be a bit iffy, others (such as the Pitts Special) are excellent.

Flight Sim 5.0

Stunt Island

Tornado

VOX POP

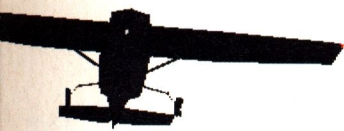
Do you read subscription pages? No of course you don't, you just flick past them and get on with the rest of the magazine. Which means you won't have read about Club PC. Every month we'll be inviting some subscribers into the office to let us know what they think about one of the month's big games. Due to one of our subscribers suffering 'an essay crisis' (students, we love 'em), Stuart Shapes, who rang up about something completely different, got roped in at the last minute along with Tom Rees-Herdman. Tom plays flight sims and God games and is very softly spoken. Stuart Shapes plays *Chuck Yeager*, *Aces of the Pacific* and *Falcon 3.0* (on the easy setting with infinite ammo) and isn't.

Stuart eloquently summed up the overall feeling about *Flight Sim 5*: 'You can't bloody shoot anything.' Tom was slightly more reasonable. 'My experience of flight sims is based on the likes of *F19* and *F15 II* and I found this quite hard to get into. However, after a few good goes the depth of the game really hit me. I like the way you can configure everything.' Stuart wouldn't be moved 'It's boring. I want to kill something.' By now he was getting quite worked up and people were beginning to quietly leave the office.

Back to Tom for some more balance. 'Flying long distances can be dull though you can speed the game up so it's not too bad.' On the plus side 'the graphics are totally amazing.'

So for an overall summing up. Tom: 'Personally this game is not quite my cup of tea, but that is due to the subject matter, not the quality. For the right person *Flight Simulator 5.0* is essential.' Stuart (in a by now empty office): 'What's the point? Where's the blood?' So saying he hit the table and spilt coffee over the instruction manual.

(Clockwise from top left) A not very good final approach, in a Learjet. (Next) External view of the Cessna at night. See its headlight beam? Well, as the nose bounces up and down, so the illuminated area lengthens and foreshortens. Smart, eh? (Next) There now follows a government health warning: 'Weaving in and out of the skyscrapers at night is detrimental to the health and can prove fatal.' (Next) A not very good final approach in the Cessna.



IF I HAD TO SLAG THIS GAME OFF

Aimed as it is at total propeller heads, *Flight Sim 5* uses a sort of Windows system whereby the graphic view boxes can be dragged about and overlaid. Personally – and call me a philistine if you like – I'd have preferred a more 'gamey' set-up rather than a utility style one: let's say a single screen where you gain access to the options. And for the in game graphics it would have been nice if there was some sort of *Falcon 3* or *Dogfight* style 'padlock view'. No longer the need to press the horrible keypad combination of **SCROLL LOCK** and **6** when you wanted to look out of the right window. Indeed no, because instead you could just hold down joystick button 2 and perform a simulated turn of the head. You could look down too. And all with the greatest of ease. Anything else to slag off? Er, let me think. Oh yes – the collision detection engine isn't very good at discriminating between land and water. I taxied onto lake Michigan hundreds of times.



peered out of the window. Flying from A to B in *Flight Sim 5.0* still has you in total control, but you'll be far more ready to sightsee. In fact, believe it or not (but take note that this is for seriously sad people), there's actually an option in *Flight Sim 5* to take a 'photo' of the scenery, whenever you feel like it. Pull down the relevant menu, select said option, and 'click' – the screen is saved as a pcx file on your hard drive. At a later date whoever actually uses this feature may want to invite some of his or her equally pathetic friends around to partake in an excruciatingly unabsorbing DPaint 'slideshow'. 'That's Paris at night.' 'Really?' 'Yes, look, there's the Eiffel Tower.' 'Oh yes, I can see it now you point it out.' 'I was running a little low on fuel when I took it, you know.' 'Really? How interesting.' 'Yes, and in this next one – landing lights at Chicago Midway runway 4R I call it – the oil temperature was running a little high.' 'Fascinating.' And so on.

Tell me more

Okay, so we've ascertained that the graphics are fab, but as we all know, fab graphics often induce Jerkvision™ – and the bad news is that in *Flight Sim 5.0* Jerkvision™ is most definitely in residence: especially when every single detail toggle is turned on and the object densities are turned to mega. However. Yes, a full stop, a pause for breath and I'll say it again. However. With a bit of thought you can lose certain details and not really notice they've gone. For instance, I turned off the texture mapping on the buildings – and to be frank actually discovered that I preferred the plain vectors left behind anyway (the bitmapped wrappings were always a bit ostentatious). I also turned off the animated propeller graphic on the Cessna (it's ridiculously oversized and makes the plane look very silly indeed). And that, on a 486 DX 33MHZ, just about did the trick. Then I did my 'simulate a 386 sx 33' trick, and

turned off the turbo. Blimey, not as bad as I'd have expected was my first response. Then, after turning the scenery complexity down a tad and simply losing the bitmapped registration markings on the side of the plane (no big deal), things were fine. I mean, I'm still not talking exactly 'fluidly smooth' here, but you know what I mean: it's perfectly liveable with. (Unless you've got a 286 12MHZ, in which case you may as well go and top yourself right now.)

Map area? How big? Tell me now!

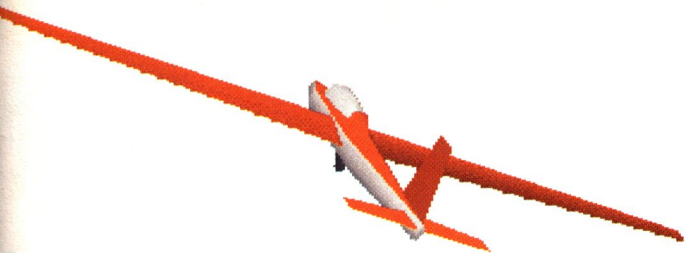
How does North America sound? Like *Flight Sim 4*, there are going to be squillions of add on disks so that you'll eventually

be able to have the *entire world* squeezed onto your hard drive, but with the main game you get 40 different US airports, some big some small, scattered liberally around Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Seattle. More than enough to be going on with as I'm sure you'll agree – especially if you don't use the new time compress feature – because do you know how long it takes a Cessna Skylane to fly from Chicago to LA in real time? No? Bloody bastard ages, that's how long.

You mentioned weather in the intro...

Oh yes, the weather. *Flight Sim 4* owners will be familiar with this, and it's the ability – from one of the many pull down menus – to create your own weather. Winter? Sure. Freezing cold but getting even colder at night? Go ahead. Wind? Set the speed and the heights. Clouds? Go crazy, why don't you. Once you've created your conditions you can even save them to disk so you don't need to faff about next time. (Or you could just let *Flight Sim 5.0* hit you with its own random weather conditions, whatever.)

'Indeed it does look bloody brilliant. This time round it's a Guru shading extravaganza in which rotating bitmaps and texture mapped buildings battle to the death in an orgy of 256 colours.'



So there's a Cessna Skylane?

Yes, but, as you may have noticed from the screenshots, it's not the only choice. There's a Learjet for instance: stuffed full to overflowing, I like to think, with fat bourbon-swilling American businessmen. Fly these imaginary fat-cats into areas of extreme turbulence... and then pitch forwards on the stick so your money grabbing passengers can experience the eye-popping wonder of pushing negative two G's whilst drunk. Don't want to go up in the little Cessna? The Learjet doesn't tickle your fancy today? Then take to the skies in a Schweizer Sailplane instead. Try your hand at catching thermals, or at ridge soaring. See how high you can get, and then test yourself by seeing how far you can fly. NFI? Then take up the Sopwith Camel and buzz about in a leather hat and goggles. Whatever lights your candle.

Are there any, er, missions?

'Missions' isn't quite the word here, but there are certainly some pre-set scenarios to load in and try your hand at. runway approach during a thunderstorm in a Learjet for instance. Or hangar buzzing in the Sopwith. Or Golden Gate bypass. Or land on an aircraft carrier in the Cessna. And many more. You can mix 'n' match the various scenarios with different planes, too. And as well as the scenarios, there are also flying lessons, from basic to advanced to aerobatics. You have an instructor (scrolling text) who shows you what to do, then lets you do it yourself, and finally comments on your performance at the end. He even shows you graphs of what happened, but as far as I was concerned the graphs may as well have been beamed down from the planet Zong... didn't understand a single squiggle.

So what's the verdict overall?

It's really hard judging something like *Flight Sim 5.0*, because, as I've been stressing all along, it's not really a game. More of a utility really. Okay, so you can set up your own scenarios and have some fun with crosswind landing approaches, barrel-roll-on-takeoff-and-then-land-again-before-reaching-the-end-of-the-runway style stunts (© Laurence Scotford, Dep Ed), or anything else that takes your fancy. But, at the end of the day, you're going to have to be a slightly odd person to actually love *Flight Sim 5.0* to bits and never want play anything else again. It's a bit like a dog really: a commitment for life, and not just for Christmas. Study the complicated maps that come with the packaging. Work out how to use the fully functioning radio navigation aids. Fly 900 miles from A to B. Experience a minor fault in the engine en-route. Refuel. Fly from B to C (15 squillion miles). Marvel at the fact that you occasionally see other air traffic in the distance. Drink 200 cups of coffee. Pay an actor to hide behind your sofa and occasionally say things like 'Victor Charlie Foxtrot, Victor Charlie Foxtrot, this is air traffic control, we have you vectored, my old man's a dustman, over and out,' and so forth. Hmmm, so what more can I add? Well, I suppose the most obvious thing is that *Flight Sim 5.0* is now the definitive civil aviation simulation, while its older brother, *Flight Sim 4*, has been forced into retirement due to its rather shonky graphics. At the end of the day I'd also better hammer home that *Flight Sim 5.0* will be a highly valuable (to some) learning aid with beautiful graphics. The fun may not last for long, but then again seeing as 'fun' is such a subjective experience, maybe it'll never stop. Or maybe 'fun' shouldn't enter the equation in the first place. Horses for courses. Different strokes for different folks. One man's meat is another man's 'yes, but it's a bit boring'. You know what's what by now though, so decide for yourself and either up or down the score as you see fit. **Z**

PC ZONE score

The definitive flying simulation, but not the definitive flying 'game'.

90

Price: £35.00 Out: Now
Published: Microsoft
Telephone: 0734 270001

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 530K conventional memory. 256K extended memory. (1Mb expanded or extended memory needed to view all elements.)

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: Not specified

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: Not specified

Minimum Graphics: VGA, EGA (SVGA and colour recommended)

Soundcards: All major soundcards

Controls: Microsoft or compatible pointing device

Comments: MS-DOS 3.2 or later.
Needs high density disk drive.
Soundboard recommended

(Top) If you're flying to San Francisco, be sure to wear a flower in your hair (especially if you're in a Learjet). (Next) Here's a screenshot for people with less than powerful PCs, meaning this is what it's like with the detail turned down low. (Next) Flying above the Seine at 160 knots you spot, in the distance, the Eiffel Tower - and you know there's something that you've got to do.



CD-ROM

REVIEW



Lord of the Rings

CONSIDERING THE wealth of good material that was handed to them when they gained the Tolkein licence, Interplay didn't do an exceptionally good job with the original version of this role playing game. It was considerably marred by weedy graphics and a badly designed interface.

In creating the CD version, Interplay had a good opportunity to revise the weaker aspects of the game. They've chosen to bolt on a new, spoken tutorial and some clips from the animated film, but fortunately these have still left room for some welcome enhancements to the original interface. The most useful of these is an automapping feature - it was very easy to get lost in the huge game world of the original and end up wandering about aimlessly.

While it's not the greatest role playing game you'll ever have

played, *Lord of the Rings* is an enjoyable enough game once you have got used to the interface which, despite the improvements, is still quite quirky. It covers approximately the territory and plot of the first book in Tolkein's classic fantasy trilogy which concerns the Hobbit, Frodo Baggins' journey to the Elven home at Rivendell.

Initially there's a lot of wandering about to be done, but once you have talked to a few characters you will be given clues as to the minor tasks you have to achieve. In this respect the game is more like an adventure than a role playing game, but the RPG elements become more important as you get involved in combat. At these points in the game you will be all too concerned with the likes of Strength and Dexterity ratings, hit points, magic spells and special skills.

Although the manual claims that there are enough new features in the CD version to attract players who are already familiar with the original game, I'm not entirely convinced that they won't be disappointed. However, if you

have yet to play the game, this a good value package (it's stuffed with playable and rolling demos of other Interplay products), which is worth a look if you are prepared to be patient with it. *Laurence Scotford*

New and improved role-playing Tolkein jaunt for patient fantasy fans only.



specs Min. Memory: 2Mb
Min. Processor: 386SX
Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential
Min. Hard Disk Space: 3.5Mb
Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported:
Ad-Lib Gold, Pro Audio Spectrum, Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £44.99 Out: Now Publisher: Interplay Telephone: 0865 390029

Welcome to the first of our CD review slots. Now that there are new CD releases every week, we've decided to make this a monthly spot to keep you up to date with both original releases and CD versions of existing games. This month we kick off with some enhanced CD versions of games from Interplay and On-Line Entertainment, and a look at a new concept in model-making.



(Above) As so oft happens in the magical world of Tolkein, a man with a pointy hat meets one who carries much in facial hair.

(Right) By the hair on my feet I do see a Hobbit of rustic complexion.

(Below) It might like an abstract painting to you matey but this is an excerpt from the Lord of the Rings film.



Cover Girl Strip Poker



ONE THING THAT CD game developers aren't short of is space. That means you can shove in nice extras like photo-realistic images and video clips and not have to worry about those poor souls who only have a 40Mb hard drive.

Of course, once you've got photo-realistic images and video clips, it isn't long before some dodgy geezer comes up with the idea of injecting an unhealthy dose of soft porn into the occasional game. To be fair, this game has already had an outing as a disk based game, and the CD simply elaborates the visual offerings of the latter.

So what do you get for your 30 quid? Naked women who all play a lousy game of poker – here's how I thought my way through a typical hand: 'Oh dear, I've only got a pair of Aces, and she's betting \$600. Must have a smart hand. Oh well, I'll call anyway – might get another Ace if I'm lucky. Nope, still two Aces. Hang on a minute, she's just exchanged three cards, meaning she only had a pair at best. Why is she betting 600 dollars on a pair!' Sure enough, she's bluffing. The trouble is, I can always tell, because she always bluffs with exactly the same bet: \$600. In the same way, I can always tell that when she bets \$50.00 at the end of a hand she's got diddly squat. Two and a half hours later I've seen all there is to see.

So what is there to see? Not a lot actually. Yes, they all strip right down to their birthday suits (apart from Maria Whitaker that is, who point blank refused to remove her French frillies even when I'd beaten her hands down), but the pictures are so badly digitised that what you end up looking at is a lurid collection of flesh coloured smudges. Still, if you're a Pollock fan it might be enough to turn you on.

Four of the eight ladies featured also indulge you in a monochrome video sequence as they remove everything from nurse's outfits to bridal gowns. These are of a much higher quality than the colour stills, and occasionally they are very entertaining. How so? They trip wobble and stutter as they make valiant attempts to remove unwieldy stockings and long dresses without going arse over tit. It's a laugh a minute – much better than old Laurel and Hardy films.

So is it titillating? Well yes, but only if you've never seen a naked woman before. And since you have to be 18 or older to buy this product, if you haven't seen a naked woman by now, perhaps you ought to stop playing with your computer and get out and meet a few people. *Laurence Scotford*

An appallingly bad poker game; a weak excuse for some dirty pics.

SCORE
40

specs

Min. Memory: 640K

Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: None

Min. Hard Disk Space: N/A

Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported:

Ad-Lib, Roland Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £34.99 Out: Now Publisher: On-Line Entertainment Tel: 081 558 6114



(Top) Eight girls whose careers presumably didn't follow the ones they'd planned at Primary School. (Above) If you think this picture is dodgy you should see what Laurence was wearing at this stage in the game.

(Left) The moment when the game gives up the fairly unconvincing pretence that it has anything to do with cards.

(Below) The sneer says it all.

Battle Chess

B

ATTLE CHESS was the first chess game with animation. The pieces moved about the board and fought before your very eyes. The latest version was *Battle Chess 4000*, which featured smooth animation and some robust humour. However *Battle Chess 4000* took up a sizeable part of one's hard disk (17Mb). With the huge storage capacity of CD ROM, it was natural for Interplay to produce a special version of *Battle Chess*. Unfortunately, there is nothing particularly special about this.

When you run the installation program, it asks if you want to copy the animation files to your hard disk. They take up 33Mb. Why would anyone want to do this? You find out when you start to play. The animation is cripplingly slow – and this on a 486DX and a Toshiba CD drive.

If you opt for the tutorial, the pieces come onto the board and introduce themselves and their moves. You can't skip the boring bits of this; the terrible Mae West impersonation of the Queen, for instance, or the Elmer Fludd-type whinging from the Pawn. It's best to get straight onto the game.

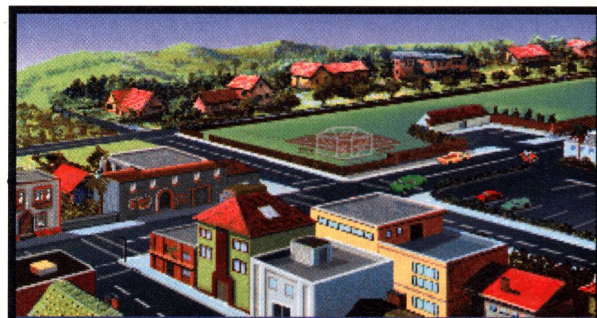
You can play on a two or three dimensional board and swap between the two. There are nine levels and a 'timed' option. The chess engine is good, as it usually is with *Interplay*, but, as with everything else in the game, the computer takes an inordinate amount of time over its moves.

The animation scenes kick in when a piece is taken. These scenes are as violent as those in *Battle Chess 4000* but not as smooth or as funny. The music and the sound effects are nicely implemented, but this game could have been so much better with very little effort. *Mark Burgess*

Stalemate for the Battlchess series.



(Right) Another attempt to pretend that chess is something it isn't; i.e. a beat 'em-up.



(Top) You can tell this is a town with a criminal element: all those flat topped houses are crying out for roof-top chases.
(Above) The gravediggers considerably prevent the bodies from getting wet.

Blue Force

R

ETIRED POLICE officer Jim Walls built himself something of a reputation during his time at Sierra for his gritty, adult *Police Quest* adventures. With his first effort for Tsunami, however, he seems to have lost his way. This tale of small town police work is too dull to appeal even to dedicated *Police Quest* fans.

The CD version is identical to the original in every respect; there are no additional graphics, no additional sounds or music and no voices. Since the CD version costs no more than the disk version you can't really complain, but I'm sure that most players would have been prepared to pay a fiver or so more if there were digitised voices to replace the dialogue printed on screen.

As with the *Ringworld* CD (reviewed last issue) there are some extras to fill up all that underused storage capacity: demos of *Protostar* and *Ringworld*; an interview with Jim Walls and a few tracks of music from the game. Again you'll listen to it all once and then forget it.

If you are determined to buy *Blue Force* then the CD is good value, but it's not an investment I can really recommend. *Blue Force* was originally reviewed in issue six. *Laurence Scotford*

A criminal waste of a CD.

SCORE

4/5

specs

Min. Memory: 2Mb

Min. Processor: 386

Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential

Min. Hard Disk Space: Less than 1Mb

Min. Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported:

All usual cards Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £44.99 Out: Now Publisher: Interplay Telephone: 0865 390029

SCORE

4/0

specs

Min. Memory: 640K

Min. Processor: 386SX

Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential

Min. Hard Disk Space: Less than 1Mb

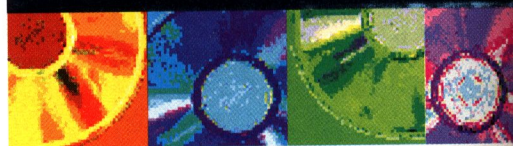
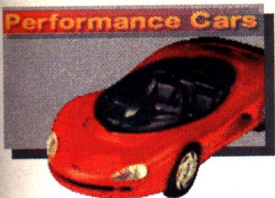
Min. Graphics: VGA (MCGA not supported) Sound-

cards Supported: Roland MT-32/LAPC-1, Ad-Lib,

Sound Blaster Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Accolade Telephone: 081 877 0880





Motor Stars



PROBABLY WASN'T the ideal person to review this one. Any plastic model kits I've had in the past have always ended up looking interesting, but never anything like the image on the box. Long before some trendy exec at a toy company came up with the idea of Transformers, I was creating plastics toys that transformed automatically over a period of 24 hours, as inexpertly glued parts slowly separated and tiny pools of white spirit ate through mutilated aircraft fuselages and luxury car interiors. The effect was made even more absorbing by the kaleidoscopic effect caused by thick layers of desperately applied lime green and purple paint defiantly peeling off and waiting to stick to the sole of an innocent shoe.

Thinking about it, perhaps I'm the ideal person to review this, since much of the CD is packed with animated advice on how to make your kit look more like a shiny new Porsche 911 Carrera and less like a post Gulf War Iraqi T-72 tank.

The kit covers four of Revell's luxury sports car kits. From a 'showroom' which shows each of the cars, you can select the model you are interested in and either race or build it.



Building the car invokes the meat of the CD: a series of guides to building, painting and finishing kits in general, and specific instructions for building that particular kit.

You can take any of the cars for a spin in a rather lame 3D driving game which has some nice touches, like the sarcastic traffic cop who pulls you over occasionally, but it certainly isn't going to be your main reason for buying *Motor Stars*.

All in all this is a pretty slick product - the only things that let it down are the poor technical quality of the video sequences and a distinctly average driving game. The price is high, but you do get a kit with it. *Laurence Scotford*

Sex on CD for kit-heads, coffee mat for everyone else.



specs Min. Memory: 2Mb
Min. Processor: 386SX
Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential
Min. Hard Disk Space: Less than 1Mb*
Min. Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported:
Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro
Controls: Mouse, Keyboard, Joystick

Price: £59.99 Out: Now Publisher: Revell

*Requires up to 12Mb hard disk space if you choose to install the graphics.



(Above) It's not the car that's so impressive; it's the size of the garage and, even more, the sheer, stunning tidiness of it.

(Far left) An officer of the law attempts to put his 'Teach Yourself Irony' book to good use.

(Left) Oh dear the driver appears to have banged his nose on the steering wheel.

(Below) Come on then clever clogs, what's the white thing on the left of the car?





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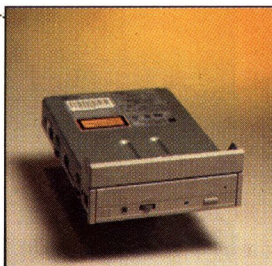
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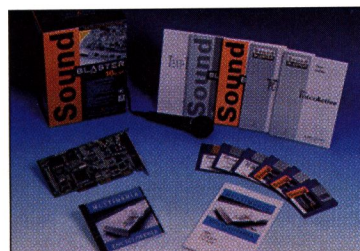


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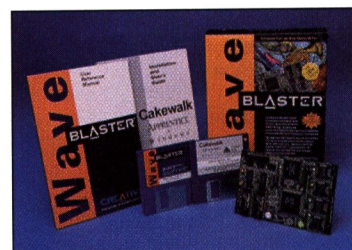
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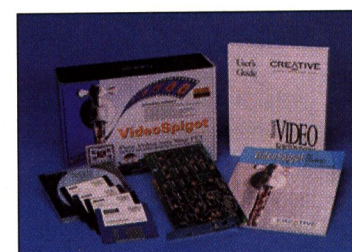


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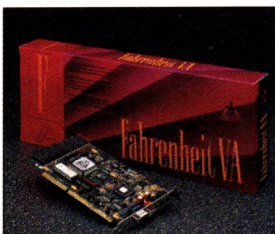
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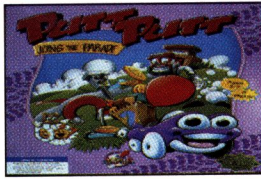
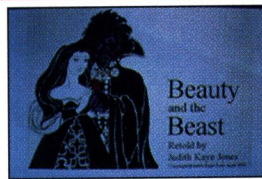
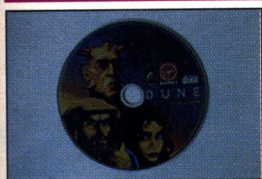
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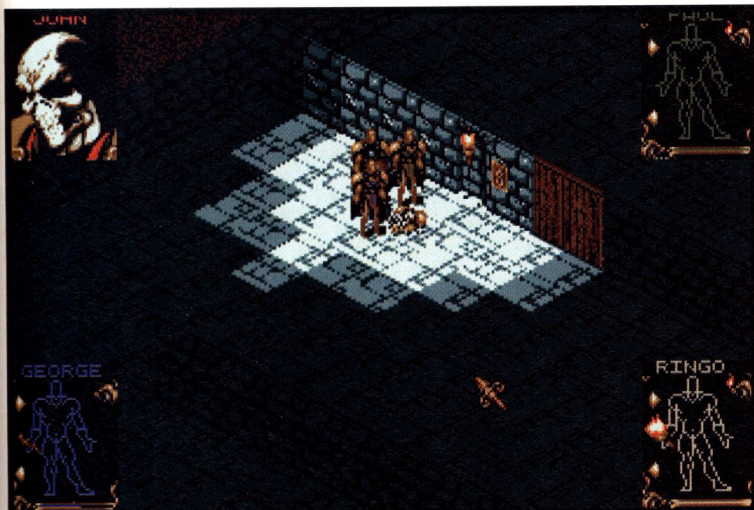
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The Beatles have a cameo role in a budget RPG. It doesn't make the game any better, though.

Shadowlands

BIRROVA CLASSIC this; in other words: it's old and full of nostalgia. People reminisce about once playing *Shadowlands*. However the reminiscers tend to be divided pretty evenly into those who go misty-eyed with fading adulation and those who go red-eyed with hatred because *Shadowlands* is, indeed, one of those 'love it or hate it' games.

In scenario and general gameplay it is not terribly unusual: it's the standard wander around, collect weapons, cast spells, waste baddies scenario; in frighteningly numerous levels. Your four adventurers (warrior, magician, orc, priest) each have different attributes and abilities, a large backpack and a low regard of life. The puzzles are a fairly good mix of style and challenge.

Where *Shadowlands* is (or rather was) different is in its graphics (lots of use of light and dark, with areas around you shrouded in shadow) and its control system which for me is its primary failing. Actions are accessed by highlighting some limb or organ of one of your four team members. For example highlighting a right leg will cause him to walk with his pals in tow; his left leg makes him walk alone; highlight a left arm and he picks things up - it's all pretty obvious but hardly speedy. I and my four brave adventurers had fallen asleep in the time it took us to pick up an apple.

The cursor, shown on-screen as a large, groping hand, makes accuracy hard to achieve. So walking through a door, attacking a moving adversary or dropping an object within a reasonable area will often take several attempts. None of this makes for pace, tension or excitement.

On its side, *Shadowlands* is cheap and amply RPGish for fans of the genre so if you're so inclined, it could keep you active for a great deal of time. As I said before, a lot of people loved *Shadowlands*. I wasn't one of them. Nick Griffiths

One for the RPG addicts

SCORE

65

specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk Space: N/A Minimum Graphics: EGA
Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £12.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: Ocean 061 832 6633



Having blown your money on that new piece of hardware you might like to save some cash on the latest crop of Budget software.



Yippee! This beats fending off extra terrestrial castle rustlers any day.

Super Space Invaders

IN 1679 SCARLATTI's first opera was performed; in 1779 the first cast iron bridge in the world was built; in 1879 Degas painted *Dancers awaiting their Cue* and in 1979 Toshiro Nishikado invented *Space Invaders*. Ah, the march of civilisation. I don't want to sound like Tony Palmer but when was the last time you played *Gli Equivoci nell' Amore*? Or looked at Broseley bridge? Or payed ten pence to see a Degas? But I know you've played *Space Invaders*.

The game was manufactured by Taito, which had started off making pinball machines. The success of *Space Invaders* took even them by surprise. So like any good software house, they churned out sequels until everyone got sick of the thing and moved on to *Defender*.

Super Space Invaders is the licensed version of the last, great incarnation. This features aliens that split in two or expand when shot, saucers that drop bombs, footballers, cattle kidnapping and end of level guardians. It's got 12 levels split up into several waves. This is a good, smooth implementation at a price that should make many shareware producers hang their heads in shame. Mark Burgess.

A blast from the past for less than a round of drinks

SCORE

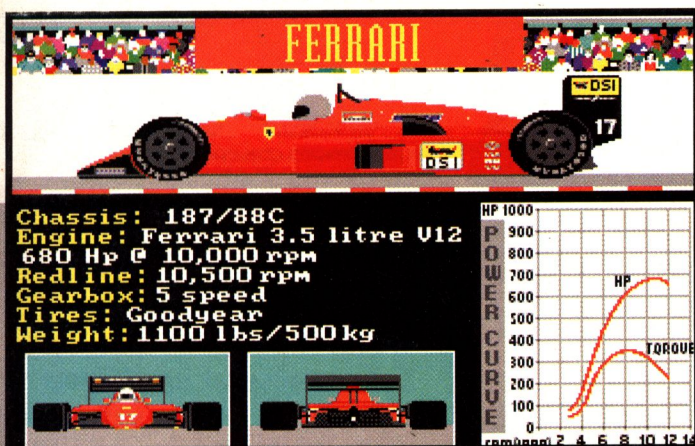
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specs

Minimum Memory: 640K free base RAM
Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz Installation: Recommended
Minimum Hard Disk Space: 1.5Mb free Minimum Graphics: CGA
Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Tandy, Roland, Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard

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Insert your own Michael Andretti/Aguri Suzuki joke here.

Grand Prix Circuit

GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT is easy to sum up because it's a racing car game, and racing car games are always easy to sum up. In this one there are eight tracks, right? So called 'real ones', like Monaco, Mexico and so on. You can opt for practice mode (just you on the track of your choice, no other traffic), single race mode (after having completed your qualifying lap for grid position purposes, you pick a course, choose the number of laps, and race against the computer controlled opposition) or championship circuit mode (which is the same as the single race mode except that you go through the whole season and all eight courses, and your points for winning are accumulated).

'So it's like a cut down version of MicroProse Grand Prix,' you might suggest. Er, no, not quite. In fact not by about a squillion miles. Don't forget, this is budget fare. We're talking 1989 EGA graphics. And 1989 animation. And sound, too for that matter. (PC speaker). Let's just say: 'The game doesn't exactly bomb along at a cracking pace and doesn't win any awards for sonics', and have done with it. 'So it's crap then?' you might well be assuming now. And yes, in a way it is crap, but then it is only 13 quid. There again 13 quid isn't really a throwaway amount; unlike, for instance, two pounds. Let's put it like this, Grand Prix Circuit would be just about passable as, let's say, a five quid release. It's maybe be a good game for kids. But for 13 quid? Naaah. Duncan MacDonald

Playable but crap for the price.

SCORE	specs	Minimum Memory: 640K
50		Minimum Processor: 286
		Minimum Speed: 12MHz
		Installation: Optional
		Minimum Hard Disk Space: N/A
		Minimum Graphics: EGA
		Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
		Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

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Two cars/cows/hovercrafts or something collide.

Hard Drivin' 2

INOW REPRODUCE extracts from *The Diary of Adrian Dole, unemployed*.
Friday afternoon: My giro arrives. After watching *Neighbours*, I sprint to the post office where I claim 60 quid. Straight to the Happy Shopper for a fortnight's food and drink.

Saturday afternoon: 13 pounds left. I decide to splash out on some entertainment, to help ease my blues.

Sunday Morning: Blimey, it's morning... back to sleep.

Sunday afternoon: Down to the local car boot sale, where there was a heavy police presence. Honest John Bloggo was being led away by his collar.

Monday afternoon: Down to the shops for a kosher budget purchase. Hmmm, a car game. *Hard Drivin' 2*. I remember playing it in the arcades. And it's under 13 pounds. I buy it, and still have one whole penny left. Excellent.

Monday evening: Oh dear. I seem to have wasted £12.99 on what appears to be a slow motion hovercraft sim (not that I've ever driven a slow motion hovercraft, of course, but I can guess what it'd be like).

Tuesday evening: Having had nothing better to do I've persevered, and have beaten all the courses on offer.

Wednesday afternoon: I suddenly notice from the appallingly uninformative manual that I could link with another PC, an ST or even an Amiga for some head to head action. Unfortunately the penny I have left isn't enough to buy the required connecting cable. Not that I have any computer-owning friends anyway.

Wednesday evening: I discover the 'edit' option. I can actually create my own tracks - something that couldn't be done in the arcade original, to be sure - but, unfortunately, I can't create my own driving model, so I'm stuck with the 'hovercraft'. I fiddle about in vain with the edit option for 45 minutes before becoming bored.

Thursday afternoon: I am so depressed I decide to commit suicide.

Thursday evening: (No further entries).

The moral: Don't buy this game.

Duncan MacDonald

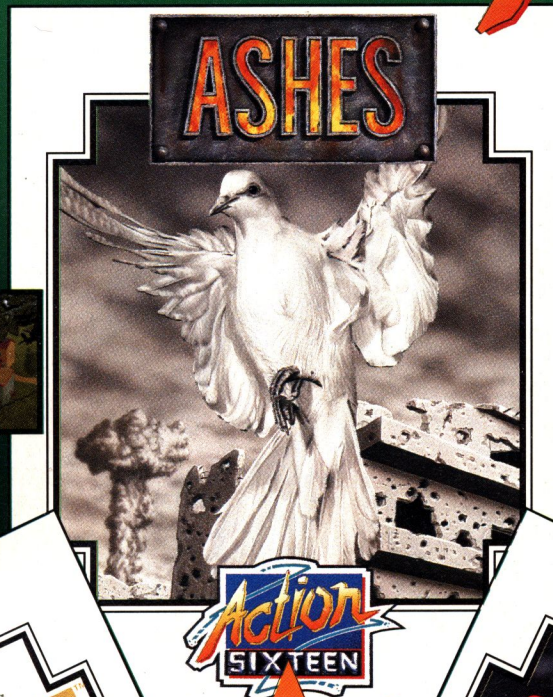
Unplayable and crap for the price.

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		Minimum Processor: 286
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	Minimum Hard Disk Space: N/A	Minimum Graphics: EGA
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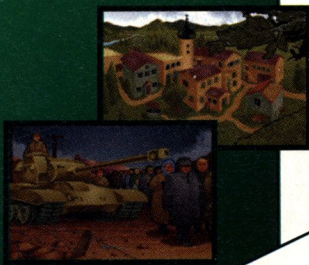
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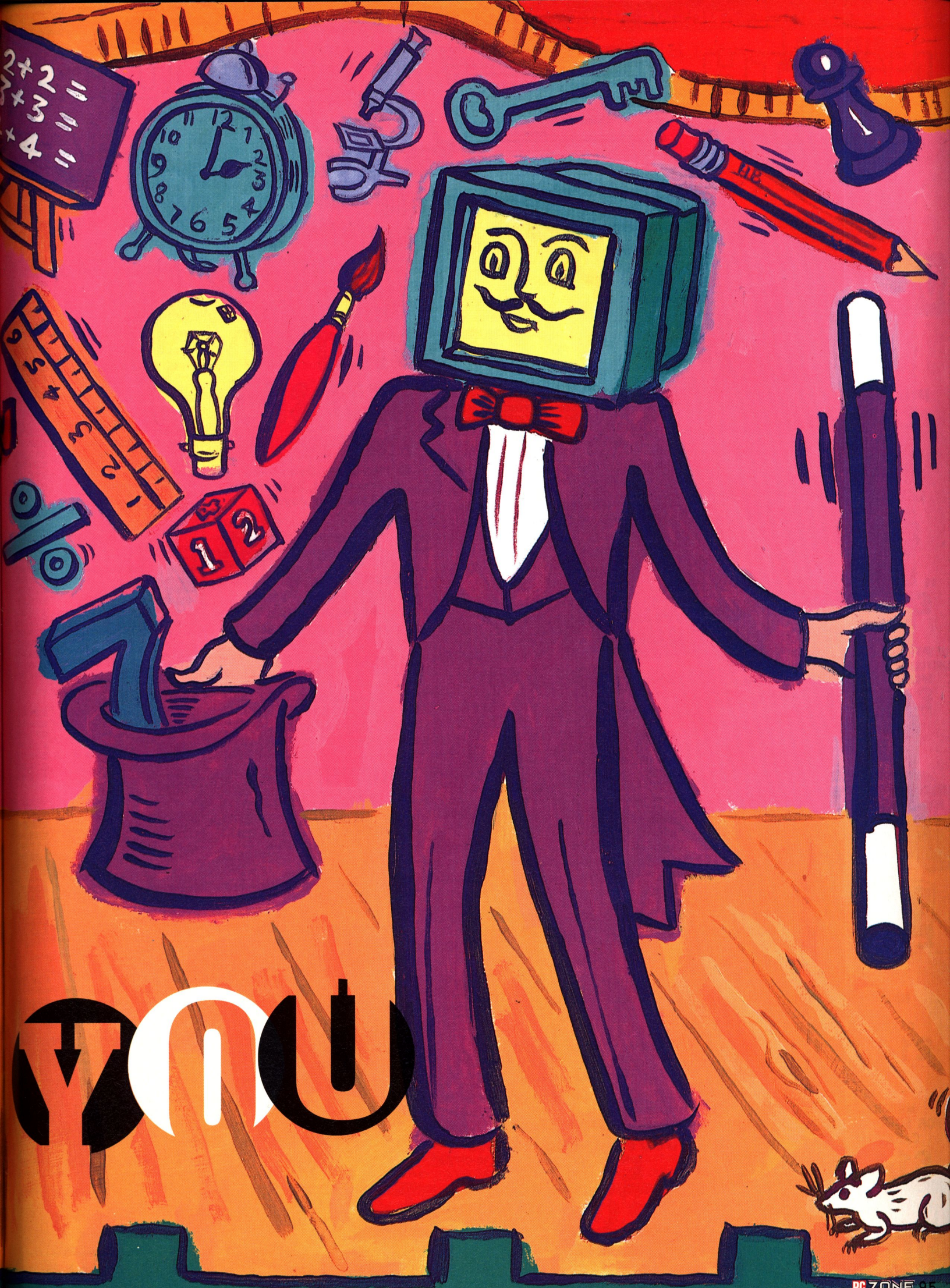




Phil South looks into a pile of education software and finds *Mickey Mouse*, *Dr Brain* and even a copy of the *National Curriculum*.

ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE products are becoming increasingly popular with computer users. Obvious really, since if this wasn't the case this magazine wouldn't actually be in your hands and you'd be standing there looking at the floor like an idiot. Education software though? Not so popular. No dedicated magazines for that lot, and precious little support in games mags. Why? Because, up until very recently, education software has been as dull as an unpainted wall; or indeed as dull as watching someone paint it, dry it, and hang ducks on it. But now the softies are clueing up to how much people want education software, or 'edutainment' as it has been dubbed. The programs you'd buy for your kids or little brothers and sisters is education software but with a new twist: the game content is way up, the dull 'watching paint





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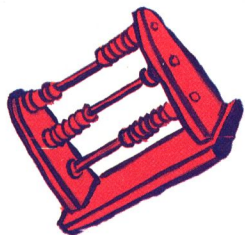
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dry' syndrome is down, and there's no way we're ever going to go back the other way. So once again we're off into the world of edutainment: a world where one plus one equals two, every word is spelled correctly and even fat teddy bears have lots to talk about.

Edu-trends '93

Something which only becomes apparent when you see a lot of education software together in the same room is how alike they all are. They fall into a lot of ready categories: age group; UK and American with the bulk coming from the States of which some are good and some are not. Something you notice right off the bat is that, on the whole, US stuff is much more fun than UK stuff which tends to be very National Curriculum based and about as much of a laugh as doing a face plant off your bike onto gravel studded Tarmac. Educational they may be, but twice as dull as a not very shiny thing. (Did I mention that they were dull?)

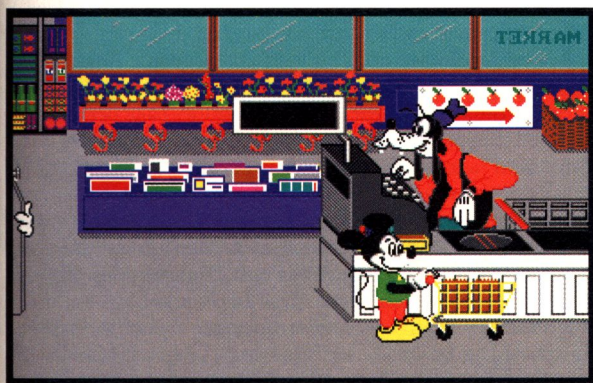
There are few exceptions to this rule of course; fun UK software and dull US, but the rule holds up quite well under close scrutiny and I'd argue that the fun stuff is a lot more educational as it sneaks the facts under the door while you're still laughing at the gags. But we'll get to all that in a sec. And, by the way, the next time you're in a room with a teacher say: 'National Curriculum' without warning and watch what a nice shade of lime green they go. It's not a booklet, it's a row of folders all packed with pages of documents. A little educational library in itself.

Generally speaking there is a lot of very good stuff out there, and if you're thinking of buying for younger members of your family then there's a huge bulging sack to choose from. To help you pick a winner we've rated the games for their informational value and their fun, plus a general overall rating for how good the games look if you're wearing an overall. Hang on that's not right...

Anyway, Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle aside, let's get up to our elbows and see how much we can learn without gnawing our own head off out of sheer frustration.

DISNEY/ NINEGAMES

THE DISNEY PRODUCTS are just getting up steam. From very quiet beginnings in the software zone, Disney is starting to stretch its legs a bit and show that it has the muscle to turn its three fingered hand to anything. Mickey Mouse – second to none and the unparalleled Arnold Schwarzenegger figure for the under fives – is featured in the software to a massive extent. The key factor here seems to be the Disney Sound



Source, a sound device which plugs into your parallel port (with a pass through for printers etc.) providing playback of digitised sounds, like when Mickey's piping voice talks you through the programs. (There's also text on the screen for more literate types.)

Favourites of the range were Mickey's 123, where there's a lot of counting of things for various Disney characters' surprise birthday parties; Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzles, where you have to put together an electronic jigsaw with the mouse (where's the Mickey Mouse mouse then, Disney?), and Mickey's Memory Challenge, a version of the standard memory game where you turn over two cards and try to recall where all the pairs are.

Top of the heap, though, is *Beauty and the Beast*: well timed for the release of the video into the shops (a joy for lovers of the film), but which has the educational content of a banana. It is one of the slickest bits of film tie-in software I've ever seen and, although not education, it is really for younger children.

The odd thing about Disney product is that it isn't really consistent, as if several different companies produce the stuff. Some support the Sound Source, some support Sound Blaster (or Ad-Lib at least), some support Sound Source voices and buzzer music. The digitised stuff meant for the Sound Source sounds okay on the native machine, but when played through a better quality speaker, like a Sound Blaster, the voices sound a bit crackly and aliased. Some of the product was EGA only which was graphically a bit of a let down, but there was more than enough VGA stuff to make up for it.

On the whole, all the products were well made and useful, as you would expect from Disney.

Top Product:	<i>Beauty and the Beast</i>
Comments:	Great graphics, good sound
Age Range:	7 to 12
Fun Rating:	8/10
Edu Rating:	2/10
Overall Rating:	7/10

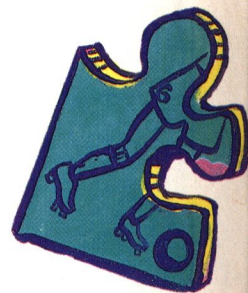
10 OUT OF 10

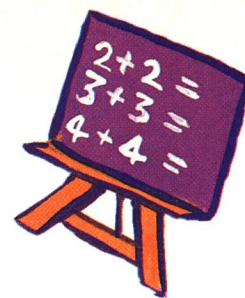
10 OUT OF 10 are a UK outfit and their approach is quite different to that of Disney and Sierra. There was no sound to speak of and, although the educational content was very high indeed and all parts of the programs address the National Curriculum, the products were about as interesting as a wet bank holiday and look like they were put together in an afternoon with QBasic then compiled. Perhaps that's a bit harsh since it's really all a question of balance. You must have content, certainly, but if you are supposed to be appealing to young people you have to do stuff that appeals to young people. And what do they like?



(Top) Have tremendous fun while teaching your child spatial reasoning in Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzles.

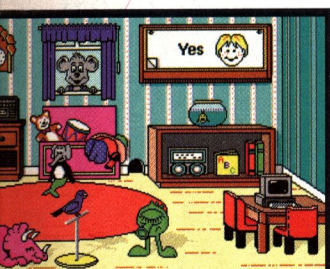
(Above) Activate the old memory cells in Mickey's Memory Challenge. (Left) Learn to count with your favourite Disney characters.





Young chaps who play Super Nintendo *Street Fighter II* all day are not really going to be into clowns and puppies. This is software written by adults for what they think children are (or should be) like. A whole lot of educational content jazzed up a bit is not going to fool any self-respecting child into playing with the programs. What they want is adventure and a fun experience, and this is what the successful companies supply in abundance... music, graphics, groovy characters doing groovy things. This is all edu and no tainment, this is BBC 2 country. (*None of that dirty talk in here. This is a family show. Ed.*)

Top Product:	English
Comments:	Educationally solid but very dull
Age Range:	6 to 16
Fun rating:	2/10
Edu rating:	7/10
Overall rating:	4/10



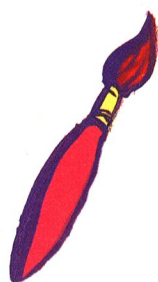
BBNDRBUNN

KID PIX IS SOMETHING we've looked at before, but it's worth another look in the light of all the new stuff which has come out. (*Oh the new edutainment software gives off light does it? That's enough 'Metaphors 'R' Us'. Ed.*) It still holds up pretty well, and comes across more like *Sesame Street* than a graphics program. All the brushes and pens make a sound, and if you stamp letters or numbers on the screen they say themselves in a variety of voices. You can even alter the voices to speak in a foreign language or two, as well!

You can make real pictures with it, but the real joy is to be had scribbling all over the screen with a particularly noisy pen.

Top Product:	Kid Pix
Comments:	The best children's drawing program ever
Age Range:	3 to adult
Fun rating:	10/10
Edu rating:	5/10
Overall rating:	9/10

(Top) Gone are the days when a child's bedroom contained nothing more than a box of lead soldiers, a crumpled copy of *The Beano* and a home-made catapult. (Above) An early minimalist blending of post structuralism and anti-cubism satirically entitled 'A few stars over a sort of balck grey splodge'.



JUMPING BEAN

THE JUMPING BEAN COMPANY (boing) were set up specifically to produce high class edutainment software, and they deliberately spun off one of the few well known characters which wasn't already owned by Warner Brothers or Michael Jackson. Noddy, of course, is as English as a roast dinner and as much fun. The two products made on the back of this are *Noddy's Playtime* and, more recently, *Noddy's Big Adventure*.

Noddy's Playtime covers many of the same areas as the 10 out of 10 programs, but much more entertainingly. There's Sound Blaster sound, really quite cool animation and lots of fun to be had by everyone. A good rule of thumb to apply to education software is that it has to be like an episode of *Sesame Street*. If the parents are laughing as much as the kids then you've got a successful and appealing game. Noddy is one example of this idea. Our group of testers included a 33 year old computer

bore, a two year old keyboard-wrecking maniac, a 29 year old mother of two and a couple of teachers. They all said what a nicely put together product *Noddy's Playtime* was.

There's no skill involved, just a bit of common sense, and you are taken effortlessly through a lot of different areas of interest, driving around town in Noddy's car to see his friends and engage in various fun games, or painting by numbers a lot of line-drawn pictures. It's fun, it's educational, it's made in the UK. What more do you need to know?

Top Product:	Noddy's Playtime
Comments:	Fun for all the family (Blimey did I really say that?)
Age Range:	3 to 7
Fun rating:	8/10
Edu rating:	7/10
Overall rating:	8/10

FISHER PRICE

HAVING THE NAME of a toy company is a pretty good intro into the world of education games, and Fisher Price is a name to conjure with, to be sure. There are two products so far: *Little People Main Street* and *Little People Farm*. Both are charming and do all manner of interesting things, with full colour animation and sound support, and are for very young kids. As well as being able to explore the scenarios on screen you can print out 3D paper versions of them. So as well as visiting all the shops in *Little People Main Street*, you can print them out, build them and colour them in with the pencils supplied.

Everything you click on does something. It doesn't mean anything but who cares, it's a blast. The added element of also producing something to do in the real world with pencils and paper is something which anti-computer parents should feel more comfy with. Although why anyone would dislike their offspring spending hours in front of computer games is beyond me. These are of course the same people who sit for four hours in front of the TV of a night, but I digress.

The games are done by GameTek on the behalf of Fisher Price, and a very good job they've done too. Good for little kids to get their little fluffy pink brains around.

Top Product:	Little People Main Street
Comments:	Good fun with pen and paper too
Age Range:	3 to 8
Fun rating:	8/10
Edu rating:	5/10
Overall rating:	7/10

HUMANOUS ENTERTAINMENT

THIS IS A COMPANY which specialises in outlandishly designed adventure games, and the two products on show here are *Fatty Bear's Birthday Surprise* and *Putt Putt Joins the Parade*. Fatty Bear is the teddy of a little girl called Kayla, and when she goes to bed on her birthday Fatty Bear and the other toys bake her a cake and spell 'Happy Birthday' on her notice board. There are lots of different tasks to perform: for instance, the little puppy (Kayla's main present it seems) keeps escaping and jumbling up the letters of the birthday greeting, and you have to find all the ingredients to the cake which are hidden around the house and kitchen. As with all the really funny games everything you click on in the game does something. But the difference here is that everything does something (1) totally unexpected and (2) really very amusing. I laughed myself stupid so a child is going to go stark bleedin' haywire.



There's also a lot of nice feelies in the box, like a glow in the dark Fatty Bear frisbee, some colouring pens and an activity book. Again the emphasis is on getting the kids away from the screen once in a while. (Someone has their paranoia hat on too tight, I reckon.) The educational content is high, even with all the fun stuff, which proves my point.

The most disturbing part of the game is that all the way through Fatty Bear doesn't realise that when Kayla gets the puppy he might end up in the trash. But the best aspect of the game is that it's extremely funny and keeps you guessing: the perfect thing for families with young children to play all together. Both games are available on CD ROM as well, and of course are easier to play and no fiddly installation procedures. Fatty Bear alone takes up 12Mb of hard disk space! Flippin' Porky bear more like!

Top Product:	Fatty Bear's Birthday Surprise
Comments:	Corking good fun for everyone
Age Range:	3 to 7
Fun rating:	10/10
Edu rating:	7/10
Overall rating:	9/10

SIERRA

SIERRA IS WELL KNOWN for its big, graphically stunning adventure games, and it was someone at Sierra's bright idea that this concept could also be turned to educational games. The *Dr Brain* series and the *Eco Quest* games *Search For Cetus* and *Lost Secret of the Rain Forest* proved that you could mix hard educational content and fun games and end up with something which works on both levels. *Quarky and Quaysoo's*



Turbo Science was the first attempt at a really hard science quiz with a games edge. *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* and *Mixed-Up Fairy Tales* have won awards all over the world for being the best early learning games, and so the Discovery Series is now a regular feature of the Sierra line-up.

The games have a lot in common with those from Humongous Entertainment: they are fast, colourful, screamingly well presented and not a DOS prompt in sight. They also make full use of the sound and graphics capabilities of an MPC class computer.

New titles are *Alphabet Blocks*, a game for early readers, *Pepper's Adventures in Time* all about American history (useful) and *Mojo's Monster Maths*, which is all about quantity surveying, I think.

Top Product:	Island of Dr Brain
Comments:	Wonderful general science and maths game
Age Range:	12 and up
Fun rating:	10/10
Edu rating:	9/10
Overall rating:	10/10

MINDSCAPE

SOME OF THE BEST known players in the regular games business are getting into the act; we've already seen Sierra, but Mindscape are in there too. *Mario is Missing* is a sort of *Carmen Sandiego* clone: Mario is stolen by Koopa and his brother, Luigi, has to travel all over the world to find him. A Mario game without any Mario in it. I'd have thought it would have been better to have Luigi snaffled and have Mario look for him but I suppose 'Luigi is Missing' hasn't got the same ring to it.

The Mindscape company also distributes stuff from Software Toolworks, like *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing*. Who the hell is Mavis Beacon anyway? This has been going on for years and I've never heard of Mavis... blare... froth... (*That's enough frothing. Ed.*) This is a new Windows 3.1 version of the typing program for every computer ever made and a few which haven't even been thought up yet. Can't wait for the Super NES version. Another really t'riffic bit of stuff is the *Guinness Book of Records* on CD ROM. Not only do you get all the piccies but also sounds and bits of moving video digitised onto the disk.

Finally, my favourite is the *World Atlas for Windows*. This is just like those dusty old atlases you've got on the shelf at school or at home in the loft except, being digital, it only shows you the information you want to see, allows you to call up countless reams of information and maps on every country in the world. You can even cut and paste it into your wordproces-



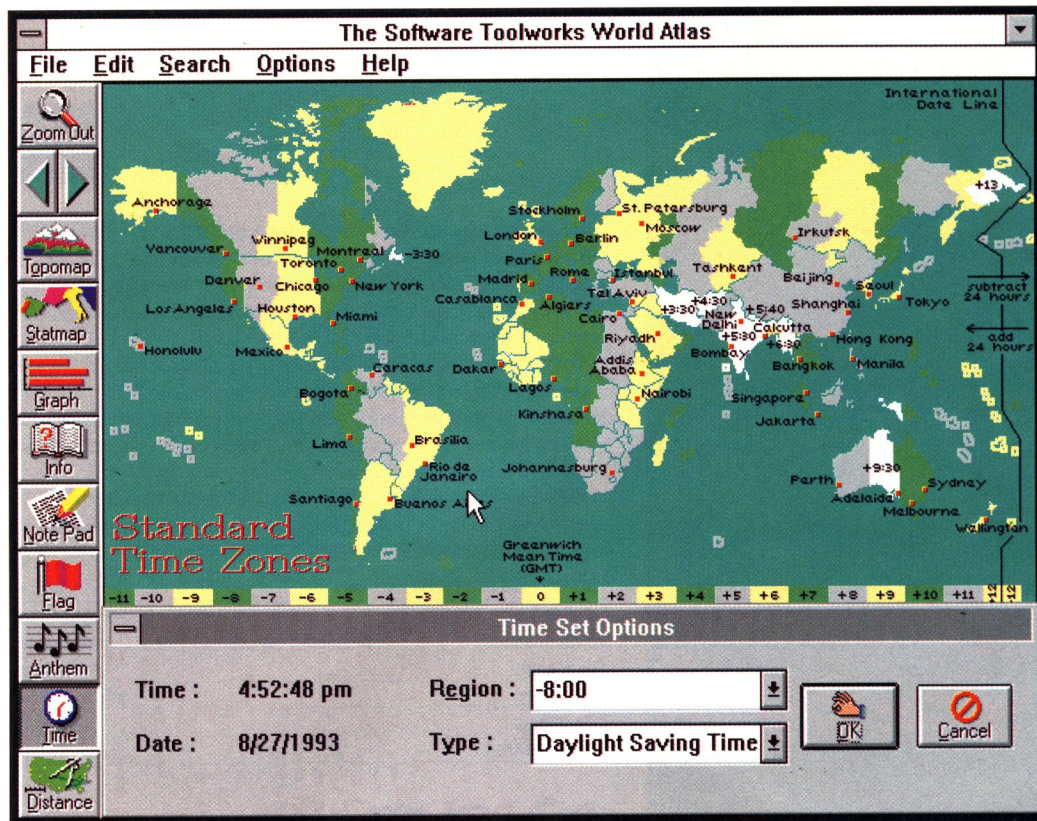
(Left) Fatty Bear, if you're a child he can help raise your intellectual level. If you're an adult he can help reduce you to a second childhood. He certainly had everyone in the PC Zone office making sickeningly childish noises along the lines of 'Oooh', 'Aaaah' and 'Isn't he sweeeet'.



(Below) Luigi makes a strike for solo fame. A cynic might claim that he might have a vested interest in not finding his better known brother. Sibling rivalry is a dangerous thing.



(Right) Improve your knowledge of geography or play desperate drinking games where you have to name a song for each city shown. (Bottom) The moment when you discover that those trendy earings you bought actually mean 'Your mother wears bover boots' in Japanese.



months. The claim, and having tried the system I'm happy to believe it, is that you can be reading, writing and speaking real Japanese inside six weeks. Sounds too good to be true, but as a demo I tried to see how many Hiragana (one of the three writing systems used in Japan) I could learn to read and write in three days. I guessed I might learn ten at the utmost. As it turns out

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sor. It will even show you a little animated flag and play the national anthem of the country in question. I must admit I found it hard not to spend all day just listening to all the silly national anthems of obscure countries just so I can whistle them on the bus to confuse everyone. 'What is that tune you're whistling, it sounds familiar?' 'Oh, that's just the national anthem of Kiribati, or the Gilbert Islands, which in fact are in the North Pacific.' Cool.

Top Product:	World Atlas for Windows
Comments:	Windows maps of the world, with music
Age Range:	8 to adult
Fun rating:	5/10
Edu rating:	8/10
Overall rating:	9/10

POW-WA Nihongo

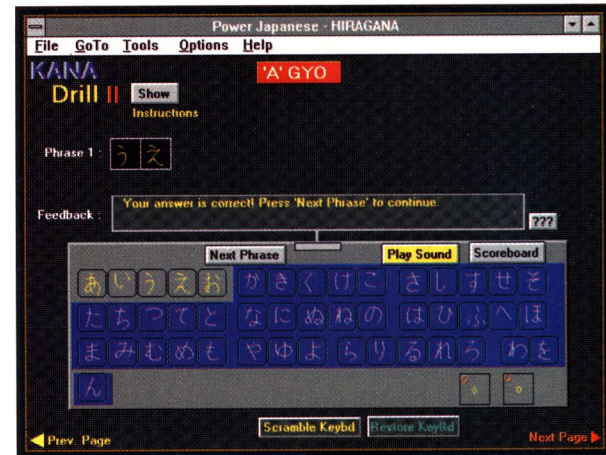
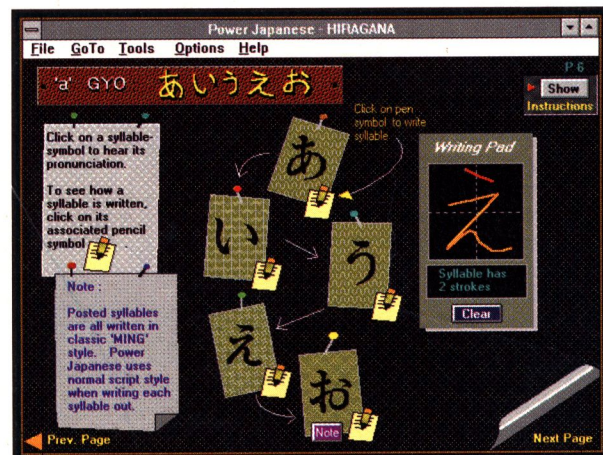
AND SPEAKING OF cool things in the Pacific, how about Japan. Want to learn Japanese? Well, you're luck's in my old Igrisu-jin (English person) as 'Pow-Wa Nihongo' (Power Japanese) is easy to learn, certainly more fun than sitting with a pile of books and tapes and cheaper than going to Japan to live for six

I crammed in 35 and could read them correctly off a set of flash cards jumbled up which, for someone like me with the attention span of a goldfish, is some going.

The program comes with a set of flash cards containing all the Hiragana and Katakana symbols, plus three books. One is the manual, the second a dictionary and grammar guide and the third is an exercise book for you to write your characters in. You also get a simple sound adapter if your system doesn't have a soundcard, and a program to convert the sounds to wav format if you do. Plus you get a set of headphones to go with the adapter and voilà! You have your own Learn It When You Please language lab.

The program runs under Windows and when you click on a word or symbol it is spoken for you by a Japanese person. It couldn't be easier. You learn the language as a Nihonjin (Japanese person) would, character by character, practice makes perfect. But it works and frankly all those other courses can go hang. This is the way to learn the language.

Top Product:	Power Japanese
Comments:	Brilliant and quick language program
Age Range:	12 and up
Fun rating:	6/10
Edu rating:	9/10
Overall rating:	9/10



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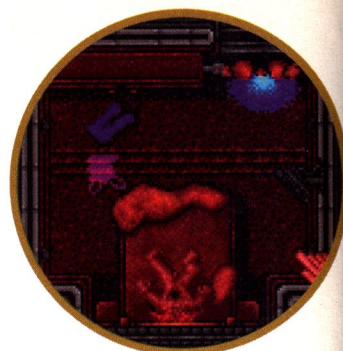
Dreamweb

PUBLISHER: Empire

PRICE: £39.99

TELEPHONE: 081 343 7337

OUT: January 1994



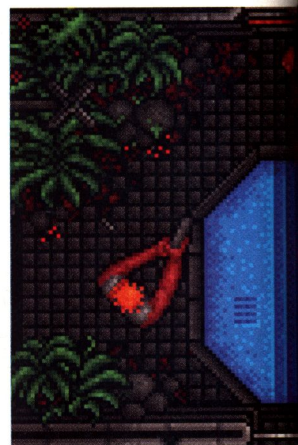
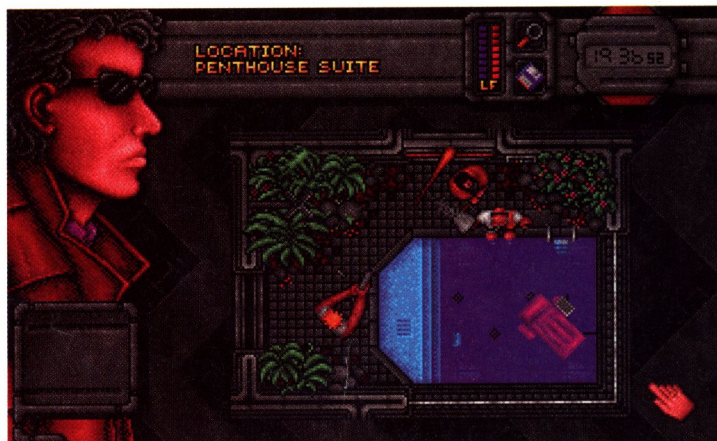
(Below, left and above)
Bonk! Bang! Blood and Guts!
Dreamweb has an
unashamedly adult content,
as is admirably demonstrated
by the bedroom sequence.
(Inset, bottom)
That toilet in full.



SEX, VIOLENCE AND TOILETS

Examine Toilet

Dreamweb is not the product that is going to dispel recent fears about the increasing sex and violence content in computer games, but quite frankly, we fail to see why computer games should avoid subjects that are given laissez-faire treatments in films and on television.



Your day (and game) begins with you losing your job, but don't worry, things go downhill very fast from here...

Empire's newie, *Dreamweb*, seems to be based on sleeping. We gave it to Patrick McCarthy – a man whose lifestyle resembles that of a tortoise in January – for the insider's angle.

P

ERHAPS UNDERSTANDABLY for a science fiction role-playing game, *Dreamweb* is set in the far distant future. A dark and really rather scary far-distant future, in which one all-powerful force controls the lives of everyone. It's not the normal kind of all-powerful force, though. For once, a prediction of the future does not include a world dominated by multinational conglomerates like Happy Shopper and What She Wants. What we have here is an all-powerful pseudo mystical force: the Dreamweb. The Dreamweb, if the publicity handouts are to be believed, is a kind of virtual reality (spot the buzzword) of the subconscious, or, to be more specific, the unconscious. People are connected when they sleep, and their dreams are influenced and controlled by it. Imagine, if you will, a kind of Wide Area Network for the land of nod.

Cue lengthy plot explanation

The Dreamweb itself is controlled by seven disembodied 'powers' who influence the thoughts and actions of their physical hosts on earth. Some are good, but some are evil. Not surprisingly, the two sides don't get on: there's none of this 'all lads together in the pub after the game' stuff. A psychic battle for overall supremacy, and thus control of the Dreamweb, has continued for centuries. The overall 'vibe' of the Dreamweb is affected by whoever has the upper hand – too many bad guys and it's nightmare city and tortured sleep all round, with people waking up in muck sweats having just been Lesley Crowther's navigator in the RAC Rally. If the good forces get control, however, it's pleasant dreams time, and everyone has the kind of gooeey, slushy sleeping experiences that make *Little House on the Prairie* look like a slash movie.

Unfortunately, (or fortunately, depending on how much you like wearing white and skipping through fields of corn) the baddies have gradually gained control of the Web. 'How? How?' you're probably crying in outright dismay. You might well ask. Whenever any of the 'host' people on earth die, their controlling power dies with



them. The vacant controlling spot is then up for grabs, and the bad forces seem to have been a bit quicker off the mark than the good ones, to the extent that the Web's controllers are now exclusively inclined towards the naughty. Thus it is that everyone on earth is now suffering terrible nightmares, feelings are tending toward the downright tetchy and lack of sleep has given everyone eyes like Michael Aspel after a 72-hour rave. Eeek, lumme, blimey O'Reilly, etc.

Fortunately

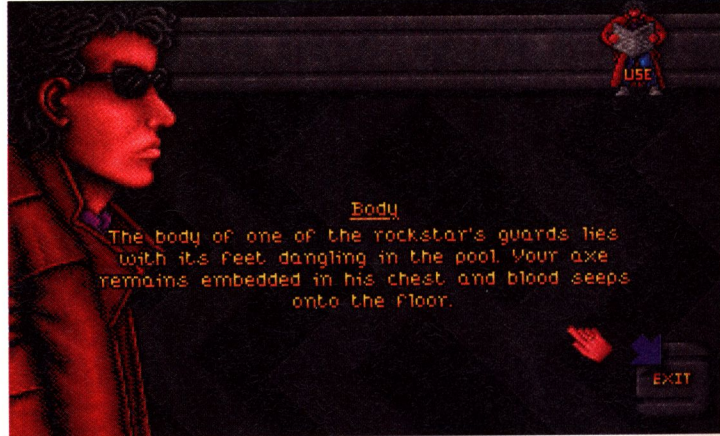
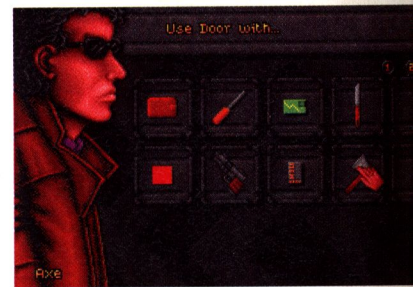
Fortunately, there exists the Dreamweb equivalent of a United Nations impartial observation party known as the Keepers. Worried by developments, they decide to appoint a representative on earth who will act for them, hopefully restoring the balance of power by the somewhat '80s method of killing the seven evil hosts before they can 'entropy'. As each of the hosts is killed, their evil soul is consumed and the hero is sent into the Dreamweb. The hero's name is Ryan. Ryan has been told in his dreams to seek out and kill the seven people concerned. That's going to look good in court. In case you haven't already guessed, you control Ryan.

Science fiction – or adventure?

So, it's pretty obvious that *Dreamweb* combines science fiction with the kind of 'dark force' stuff that's essential for any true role playing game if it is to appeal to the average bearded gamesplayer. Unlike most adventure games, however, it has an adult theme. It's the first game since those Larry games to feature a toilet in it, for a start. It's funny how toilet humour is supposed to be childish, ☹

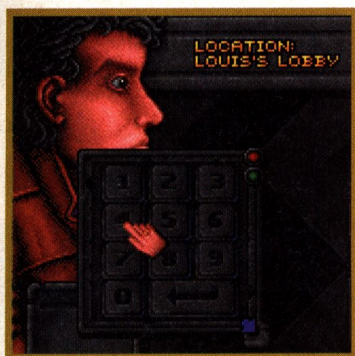
"Well I'm sorry," says Sparky, "but I've fired you. You've turned up late just once too often. This morning was the last straw."

Our model is seen here adorned with the fashionable Peckham night club survival kit.





(Left) Realism is everything in this game: unwisely searching your girlfriend's apartment, you come across little of value; only a collection of half a million unwashed coffee cups. (Below left) The ultimate in door security for pathological key losers.



but toilets in computer games is deemed to be adult, isn't it? Anyway, there's the toilet. And you can see people 'doing it'. There's even quite a bit of swearing, and more than a smattering of bloody, violent death. So far, you're probably thinking it doesn't sound a lot different from an average episode of *George and Mildred*. In fact, it's quite different. For a start, you can shoot people in this.

How it works

Dreamweb has an unusual viewpoint and a new and specially developed control system. Unlike most adventure games, your view of the world is from directly above the action. It's the kind of top-down view which normally indicates that you're about to take part in a fast and furious shoot 'em-up, rather than an adventure game, and diehards may well shy away, but fear not, it works.

Each location is divided into a number of single screen rooms, which occupy the area in the middle of the screen. At the top right is the icon for an extremely useful 'zoom' mode, handy for examining garbage, half eaten mouldy cheeseburgers and other interesting effluvia in greater detail. This facility can be toggled on and off. When it's on, the enlarged view is shown at the left of the screen, and as you move the cursor around the screen, both views scroll together.

You're automatically provided with short descriptions of objects and areas as you move the cursor across them. Rather like LucasArts games, clicking on any object activates the default command and makes your character walk towards it. Clicking again examines the object. Your view of the object will then change according to its type. Usually you're given a larger view of the object and a

written description of it. If it's portable and you want to pick it up, clicking on it again will enable you to place it in your inventory.

Usable items activate a bar across the top of the screen, with a selection of icons depicting yourself carrying out the various actions you can perform on the item. If the item is something like a button to press, or a security keypad on which you have to enter codes, these appear in enlarged form on-screen, too. The game revolves around the solving of puzzles and traps by the use of this intricate object manipulation, with certain objects being capable of holding many other smaller objects.

Social misfits

The game's taken over two years to make. Creative Reality, the developers, consists of only two people: Neil Dodwell does the programming, and Dave Dew produces the graphics. Among their credits are two old Spectrum titles based on characters from *2000AD*: *Slaine* and *Nemesis the Warlock*. They also produced *Myth* for System 3 and have carried out various 8-bit console conversions, including *The Last Action Hero*, which paid enough to partly finance this.

Rather like a Hollywood film, all they had to start from was the name. The first development was an editor, or game system, from which all locations for the game were developed and filled with objects. Several parts of the game were specially programmed – the game contains a complete Network on-line information system, along with various computers, terminals and security machines.

As you progress through the game, solving puzzles and wiping out the evil hosts, you'll find yourself zapping back and forth between the real world and the *Dreamweb* itself. There are 30 locations to explore, comprised of more than 200 rooms. There are literally hundreds of items to be picked up and used, and over 4000 hand-drawn frames of animation. The fact that the development has been carried out on 286, 386 and 486 machines should ensure the game runs smoothly at 70 frames per second on nearly all PCs. According to the makers, its target audience consists of the kind of people who are into the likes of *Bladerunner* and *Akira* – presumably they don't mean the social misfits who lecture you at inordinate length in the pub about the 'what the folded up origami bits in *Bladerunner* really mean,' because those people tend not to have lives, jobs or money to spend on computer games. *Dreamweb* is the first of what the creators say will be several adventure games utilising the editor they've developed. Anyway, we'll be producing a full review of this one when we've seen the finished game. **Z**

PC ZONE specs

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Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Soundblaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

VOICES: A PSYCHO-ANALYST WRITES

People come to me all the time with their dreams. Everyone knows that there's nothing in the world more boring than being forced to listen to someone else's dreams at great length, especially at the breakfast table. That's when most domestic knifings take place. This is why I get paid so much. As to the central character in this game, I can only say that the old 'a message in my dreams told me to kill those seven people' argument isn't usually the best defence in a court case, unless the jury is composed of the kind of imbeciles who ring Russell Grant's astrological hot-lines at 96p a minute. As a leading psychoanalyst, I'd recommend the 'Jesus made me do it' line instead. He'd be out in three and a half years, have the book written by four, and coining it from the film rights in five.



Riding the elevator roof is an ideal solution for those with claustrophobia, but not recommended when making trips to the top floor.

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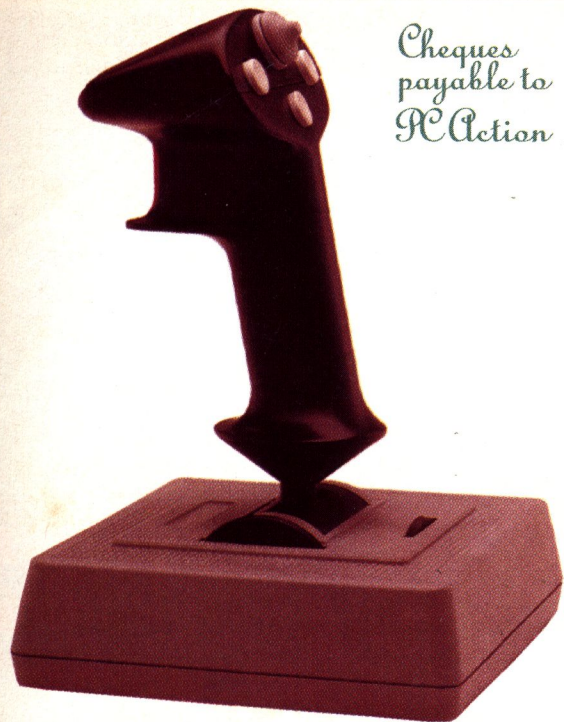


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Blueprint

BLUEPRINT

The Hand of Fate

PUBLISHER: Virgin/Westwood Studios

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OUT: December



Come Christmas you'll barely be able to move for adventure games, each promising a liberal mix of puzzles and humour. **Mark Burgess** has a look at one of the more promising entrants in a very crowded market.

GIRLS ON TOP

As is usually the way with adventure games, the hero of the original *Kyrandia* was a man. He was also something of a drip (as is usually the way with adventure games). Hardly the sort of guy you'd take down The Pestilent Peasant on a Friday night for a drink and a scrap. However, Zanthia, who appeared as one of the minor characters in *Kyrandia*, is more than capable of sinking nine beers and then laying out a gang of Millwall supporters with a rusty bike chain. So it's not surprising that Westwood Studios have decided to pluck her from obscurity and make her the heroine of *The Hand of Fate*.

Zanthia is the youngest of the Kyrandian mystics, and consequently somewhat impulsive and sharp tongued. She also has an alarming habit of changing her dress every few minutes – good to see software companies getting away from narrow sexual stereotyping.



(Left) It's nice to see the computer games industry flying the flag of recycling and conservation. This beautiful house, made entirely from 'natural' products will be featured in this year's Ideal Homes Exhibition.



WESTWOOD STUDIOS' first game in the *Fables and Fiends* series, *Legends of Kyrandia*, was an interesting and very playable game, albeit stuck in a fairly traditional rut. The plot was of the something-rotten-in-the-state-of-Kyrandia mould and the puzzles were

challenging, if occasionally traditional. It was also Westwood Studios' first release under their own banner. Now, a couple of successes later, they're returning to *Kyrandia* and aiming to produce a game that is considerably better than its forebear.

The Hand of Fate once more involves evil doing in the land of Kyrandia. According to Westwood you 'travel through gorgeous countrysides and dramatic seashores, ominous swamps,

farms, coastal towns and other previously uncharted realms of Kyrandia...' Any game that pitches you against dramatic seashores can't be all bad.

Your aim is to lift the curse that has fallen on the fair land of Kyrandia, causing it to disappear tree by tree (and no doubt ominous swamp by ominous swamp). To do so you must place a magic anchor stone at the centre of the world.

Big is beautiful

Westwood are aiming to make *The Hand of Fate* the biggest fantasy game ever. We can't judge that until we've seen the finished product. However, on what we've seen already it's certainly going to be one of the most attractive games around.

(Right) Imagination runs riot in The Hand of Fate. Where else do you get fish drawn ships and a hand with a mind of its own? Where else do you get very weak jokes about Easter Island?

'Particular attention has been paid to adding a twist to many of the solutions so that even when you've solved a problem, the manner in which it resolves itself is not the one you anticipated.'

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

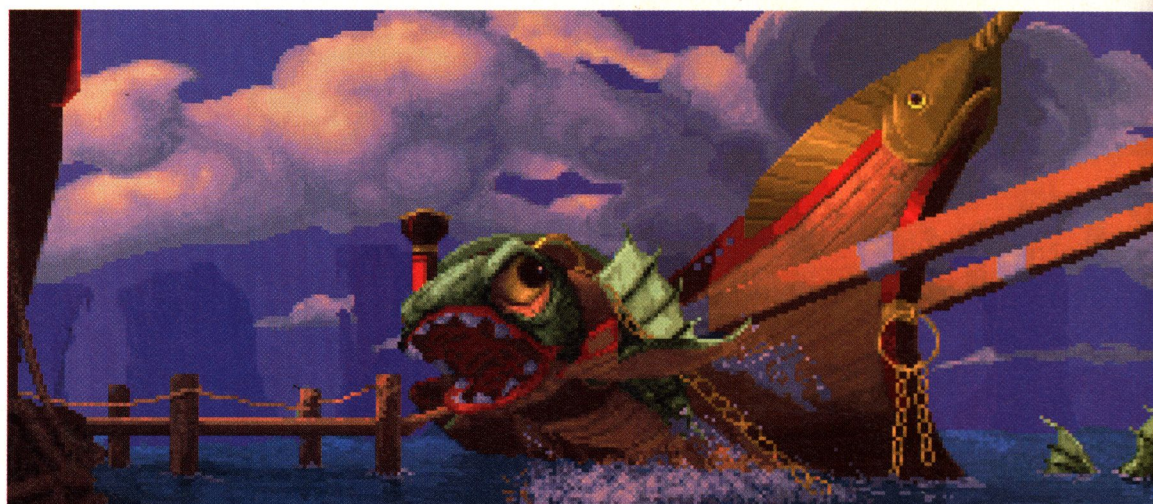
Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1 and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Minimum memory 555K without digitised sound.





WESTWOOD HO!

Westwood Studios, producers of *The Hand of Fate*, started life in 1984 as Westwood Associates and, like many new software companies, started off doing conversions of other companies' products. However, they were soon peddling their own wares to a variety of publishers and notched up such notable successes as *BattleTech I & II*, *Hillsfar*, *Dragonstrike* and *Eye of the Beholder I & II*. Not a bad track record really so it's not surprising that Westwood Associates decided it wanted to publish its own product.

Under the new name of Westwood Studios (and in association with Virgin) this is exactly what they do. Initial releases have included *Legend of Kyrandia* and *Dune II* (which was much loved in the PC Zone office). Now of course there's *The Hand of Fate*.

The graphics are really impressive, dripping with colour and detail. Lighting within the game is also tracked in a more realistic manner than before. Combine this with a multitude of digital effects and an all-new music score and you find, rushing through your brain, words like atmosphere and... well I can't think of any words like atmosphere but if there are any they are the sort of words that would start rushing through your brain.

Cleaning up the act

Although at the time of writing the control system on *The Hand of Fate* is not wildly different than that in *The Legend of Kyrandia* (if it ain't broke...) it has been improved upon with a more intuitive interface which allows, for example, easier scrolling through the inventory. Enhanced scaling technology and free movement also allow you to investigate scenes more thoroughly than in *Legend*.

More importantly the puzzles are both more challenging and more imaginative. Particular attention has been paid to adding a twist to many of the solutions so that even when you've solved a problem, the manner in which it resolves itself is not the one you anticipated.

Game for a laugh

From what I saw of *The Hand of Fate* one of its strongest points could well be the assured humour and imagination behind the whole project. A personal favourite is the ship which is



pulled dramatically through the sea by two giant fish which are beautifully drawn and almost worthy of Terry Pratchett in its concept.

More satiric is a scene in which in attempting to get advice, you come up against a wall of mind numbing bureaucracy complete with lengthy waits for the person you need to speak to, who probably won't be much help anyway. Anyone who's ever tried to get any money from the PSS will feel very much at home in this sequence.

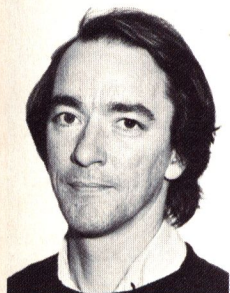
The F factor

The Hand of Fate is going to have to face up to some pretty stiff competition when it's released. In fact there are so many light hearted graphic adventures around at the moment that I'm beginning to wish that someone would go back to the really serious and boring adventures of yesteryear. How about a jokeless adventure in which the hero is a real pig? Perhaps I'm just getting a bit twisted and cynical in my old age. As long as the end product is of as high a quality as what we've seen so far then *The Hand of Fate* is going to be an outstanding product. My only serious problem with it so far is the name of the series. With all the imagination that's gone into the game it would have been nice if Westwood Studios could have come up with something a little better than *Fables and Fiends*, *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Swords and Sorcerers*, *Might and Magic*, *Fables and Fiends*... why is it adventurers are so obsessed with repeating first letters? ☒

(Top) Zanthia studies a statue from the Nodentist Era.
(Above) Our plucky heroine refuses to let the guards stonewall her.



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Who else but Mark Burgess would shed light on some rather strange goings-on in DOS 6 whilst getting somewhat weepy

and nostalgic over the merest mention of the word 'Spectrum'.

Upgrade path

I HAVE A GOLDSTAR 1425 AT with a VGA monitor, 40Mb hard drive and a 3.5" floppy drive and want to upgrade it from a 286 to a 386. Is there any way possible for me to do this? If so, could you give me a rough idea how much it would cost, where I could purchase the parts and who I could get to do it? Is it worth simply getting a 486? Also, when I boot up my computer it says at the top of the screen: 'WARNING! SHARE SHOULD BE LOADED FOR LARGE MEDIA'. What does it mean?

G. Barton, Aberdare, Wales

Because the 80286 is a 16-bit chip you could only upgrade to a 80386SX which has 16-bit external connections. Frankly, a 386SX isn't worth it. You should look at buying a new motherboard: a 486DX/33MHz should cost between £250 and £300. Or you could buy a 386DX motherboard for about £100 and upgrade from that to a 486 later. But it is important to check that the pin out will let you do this.

Share is the program that supports file sharing/locking on a network or for multi-tasking. In older DOS versions it was a way of getting round the 32Mb hard disk size limitation (that's the 'large media' referred to). **MB.**

Misty-eyed

A WORD IN YOUR ear if I may. I recently picked issue five off a shelf at my local newsagent and must confess to being impressed by what I saw (the latest 'girlie' magazine had been loitering behind it). Upon flicking through to get the gist I noticed a few old 'mates' from those heady ZX Spectrum days in the form of ex-members of the *Your Sinclair* team. 'Cripes!', said I (as we did then) as I positively swooned with nostalgia.

Anyway, because I was a Speccy enthusiast, I don't really know much about computers and would be much obliged if you would give me an assist with the odd dilemma. I realise you must get a sack load of such letters, but I think my problems are shared by so many that your answers could also be of use to others.

1. What sort of space do I need in order to be able to play games in general on my PC (regarding memory, hard disk space, graphics, sound, speed and video RAM)? In other words what are today's standards (with a view to tomorrow's)?

2. Is there any way to get your mag without disks as I don't have a PC yet (only an Amstrad 1640), or is this just 'life'? ~

3. How easy is it to simply fit a soundcard (such as a Sound Blaster 2.0)?

4. In the same vein, how easy is it to fit an internal CD ROM drive?

5. Can I get an external 5.25" drive anywhere to run my old 1640 software. (And will this software even work with a better PC or will my new machine be too embarrassed?)

6. What is *Landmark v 2.00* and does it really make a PC so very much faster?

7. I last bought a PC mag in December 1992 and it was saying that without a 286 you had no hope, now you say a 486 is needed! Have the 286 and 386 done a Bros or have I done a Buck Rogers?

8. Please may I have a job as I am skint?

With this in my scabbard I can positively swashbuckle my dad into coughing up for such a piece of kit since I will actually know what I am doing with his money.

Yours M-JAS, Nailsea, Bristol

Ah yes, we still grow misty-eyed at the memory of the Spectrum. Those snazzy graphics, the brilliant sound, the user-friendly keyboard. But to your questions:

1. About 4Mb memory, 210Mb hard drive, SVGA/VGA graphics with 1Mb on the video card, Sound Blaster compatible soundcard, at least 25MHz 486DX. That should be fairly 'future proof', but you must remember how fast things change in the computer world.

2. If you have an Amstrad 1640, you do have a PC, albeit an XT clone with CGA graphics and no hard drive. We don't do a diskless version of the magazine.

3. It's easier than changing a tyre. You open up the computer, find an empty expansion slot and push the soundcard home. the computer must be switched off and you should take precautions against static.

4. Even easier than a soundcard; provided you have an empty drive bay of the right size. On some computers you have to take out the PSU (power supply unit) to get at the drive bays, but that's not a problem.

5. Yep, by why not fit an internal 5.25" drive? They're significantly cheaper.

6. *Landmark* is a bench test program. It measures how fast a PC is. It doesn't speed up the machine itself.

7. 386 machines were on the way out last year and 286 machines the year before that. Because the new Pentium chip is 64-bit there will be no way to upgrade from a 486, but the 486 should be around for a while - say another 18 months.

8. What makes you think that you'd be any less skint working here? **MB.**

Joystick driver

1. IF I BUY A joystick do I need any particular software to go with it - in the same way as my mouse driver - or is it standard, as my computer came with a joystick port?

2. Will Sound Blaster 'compatible' soundcards do everything a Sound Blaster v 2 will do? Specifically, will an Orchid Soundproducer?

3. How do I arrange jumpers so that a new card will not clash with those already there? (I have three in situ.) I have had my PC for about a year, but have no idea what goes on inside the box.

4. I have found that lots of games don't work under Windows 3.1 (not least demos of *Syndicate* and *Space Hulk* - two PC Zone classics). Why? I can still run them from DOS, but what if I buy OS/2, where quitting to DOS is not an option?

5. Can you recommend nice simple book to make me less of a Mr Cursor in these respects?

Rupert Smyth, Kineton, Glos

P.S. I quite like your magazine thingy.

You do not need a driver for a joystick; the program should sense it and react accordingly. Sound Blaster compatible cards should do everything but, to get round patented designs, they can never be 100% like Sound Blaster. The emulation of the Orchid is supposed to be good but I've not tried one myself. Try and talk to someone who has. Typing 'MSD' at the command line prompt will, if you have DOS 5 or above, bring up Microsoft Diagnostics. This will display the current status of your IRQ interrupts. Soundcards normally use IRQ 7 but you can experiment with 2, 3, 5 or 10. The manual that comes with your card will explain how to set the jumpers: it's a painless procedure unless you drop the damn things.

Man with money seeks nice PC

I am an Amiga 500 owner but will be upgrading to a PC very soon, so I am writing to *PC Zone* for some advice. There are so many PCs on the market I don't know which one would be most suitable for games playing only. I have between £1400 and £1500 to spend on the machine alone and am aiming for a 486.

What else would I need to add to the machine to make it a games playing computer in terms of soundcards, speakers and the likes, and which would you recommend.

Please help as you are my only hope.

G. James, Aberystwyth, Wales

You need a 486DX with at least 4Mb memory and a hard drive of about 210Mb. A soundcard should come with a port for your joystick. You can buy expensive speakers with built in battery amplifiers or just use the ones that are sold for Walkmans. I try not to recommend things here because we don't get review copies of hardware and so I have to rely on other people's experience and various bits of gossip. Having said that, if you want an 8-bit card, try the Sound Blaster (any card you buy should be Ad-Lib/Sound Blaster compatible). Many games are now using 16-bit sound (all Sierra games for instance) and if you can afford a 16-bit card I would go for a Pro Audio Spectrum; everyone raves about it and apparently it doesn't have the difficulty Sound Blaster 16-bit cards have with 8-bit samples. **MB**

Game boy

Help me please! I am getting lost. There seems to be so much technology coming out now with CD ROMs, Multi-Media etc. that I don't know where I stand. At present I have a Compaq LTE 386s/20MHz portable computer and an interest in upgrading it in some way. I've looked at joysticks, soundcards, CD ROMs and even new computers. I really need to know where, if anywhere, I can plug these into my computer if it has no room for ports. Is there a joystick that can be plugged into a mouse port? Can I get a soundcard without having a games port to put it into? Where do CD ROMs fit into computers? Do they use leads or more ports? And finally, should I get a new computer? I have about 120Mb of disk space and enough memory, it seems, at the moment. I need all of this so I can play *X-Wing* in full detail and full sound mode (because at the moment it is very quiet).

Timothy Welch, Epsom Downs, Surrey

To turn a portable into a games machine, you will have to use external drives. For the CD ROM drive, make sure your computer has a proper SCUSI interface. To fit soundcards you will need a parallel port adapter or get an add-on that gives your portable pukka AT expansion slots. Some Compaqs are easy to expand, others don't have any scope at all. At least one even has a non-standard VGA connection. You might find yourself restricted to Compaq's dedicated peripherals. MB

4. I would go for the CH Flight Stick. If your computer doesn't have a games port then you need a games card or a soundcard with a joystick port.

5. Any scanner designed for PCs should work; check that the one you go for is supported by standard drivers like the DLL (dynamic link library) Twain and that you have a SCUSI port to plug it into.

6. Super Hang On isn't available for the PC and Activision do not have any plans to release it in the near future. MB.

Twilight zone

HEY! I DON'T want to become a Mr Cursor. I like my PC and I'm not afraid to use it, well, maybe I'm getting just a tiny bit scared.

A few days ago I was using my unregistered version of NeoPaint 2.00. After about 20 minutes I went downstairs to... well anyway, let's just get on with the technical stuff. When my dad came to use the computer about ten minutes after I had, the computer rejected everything in CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT when he booted up. For example: 'BAD OR MISSING C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS; INVALID PATH OR FILENAME'. It gets worse. I tried booting the system by floppy disk, everything was fine but again it rejected everything stored on the hard disk. I could do anything from the floppy drive but when I tried to log on to the hard disk a message came up saying: 'INVALID DRIVE'. By this time my dad was at my throat. I then tried a cold boot thinking everything would be okay but like before it rejected lines in the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT and gave a message saying: 'BAD OR MISSING COMMAND INTERPRETER' (e.g. C:\COMMAND.COM). By this point I was really pissing my pants because it looked like my hard disk was non-existent. For some strange reason, though, I had a C> prompt. I typed DIR, it replied the message 'BAD COMMAND OR FILENAME', so I typed COMMAND and the same message

appeared. I typed: COMMAND.COM, it paused and the same message appeared so, as a last resort, I typed in C:/COMMAND.COM and the system crashed. I made another warm boot, this time it didn't attempt to execute any of the commands in either CONFIG.SYS or AUTOEXEC.BAT, instead it displayed a message in the middle of the screen saying: 'EMM386 EXCEPTION ERROR #12, PRESS ENTER TO REBOOT'. Wondering what on earth the ERROR #12 error was I rebooted in good faith and then suddenly everything was executing completely normally. My hard disk wasn't in Limbo after all. I checked the start-up files and they were fine. I was gobsmacked; whatever happened must have been pretty serious. Please can you find out what has happened because I really don't want to end up like a Mr Cursor.

If it will aid you in your answer I have an Apricot Qi series 386SX 16MHz. I have just recently upgraded from MS-DOS to MS-DOS 6, and I have installed Doublespace. Now, I don't know about you but I have heard some rumours about MS-DOS 6. In one of my dad's magazines it said that dos 6 clashes with a lot of Norton software. My friend's dad (who works for Tandem Computers) says that because of all the hype about the new dos 6 being released Microsoft wanted to get it written quickly to avoid disappointment. This caused it to be written with mistakes. I'd like to get to the bottom of this. Are the rumours true? If so, what is going to be done about it and would my near disaster with my hard disk be related to the alleged bad configuration of dos 6?

Oh, and another thing, tell that editor of yours, Paul Lakin, that my name is James Weston and not James Eston as he put at the end of my letter to Word Processor printed in issue six. Phew, just needed to get that off my chest.

James Weston, Aylesbury, Bucks

This happened to me once. The problem was that the CMOS had given up (the battery was fine; it was just a glitch), so the system didn't know I had a hard drive. The error reports suggest that DOS was no longer in the path. I know it sounds crazy to say: 'don't worry', but I really think it was just a transient system error that sorted itself out. The other possibility - which you should worry about - is that you have a virus like Telecom. Use a virus checker.

EMM386 Exception error #12 is a 'stack exception'. Try increasing the number and size of stacks specified in CONFIG.SYS (for example, STACKS=18,256). Note that STACKS= only affects hardware interrupts. If the stack is overflowing (trying to store too much information) because of what an application is doing, this will probably not solve the problem.

If changing STACKS doesn't help, try minimising the configuration you're using. Remove any unnecessary drivers/TSRs including third party printer or video drivers from the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT as well as from Windows,

Several games refuse to run under Windows because they take over the whole system and therefore play havoc with any multi-tasking system like Windows. The simple solution is to quit Windows and run them from the DOS prompt. Otherwise you could try to mess about with PIFs - try clicking the 'Exclusive' box.

OS/2 has a shell called CMD.EXE which is a DOS compatible command line interface (and contains proper DOS code).

Look at the PCs/DOS/Windows for Dummies series, they're nice easy introductions and not as patronising as they sound. The best thing is just to browse through the computer section of your nearest bookshop until you find a book that is right for you. They're criminally expensive, so you don't want to make the wrong choice. MB.

Copy taking

AT THE MOMENT I am using a Unisys 386 (80Mb) at work and I'm thinking of buying an Amstrad 386sx. What I would like to know is whether the programs on the Unisys hard drive, i.e. Microsoft Windows, would work on the Amstrad (40Mb). I'd also like to know whether it is possible to record the program on the hard drive of the Unisys onto the hard drive of the Amstrad?

Yousuf Akjee, Manchester

Both computers are IBM compatibles and therefore the same programs will work on either of them. You can't copy commercial programs: it's illegal. Non-copyright programs and data can be copied by simply transferring them to floppy disks and re-installing on the hard drive of the other machine. MB.

Soccer fan

I WAS WONDERING if you would be so kind as to answer these questions I am about to put against your vast knowledge about PCs:

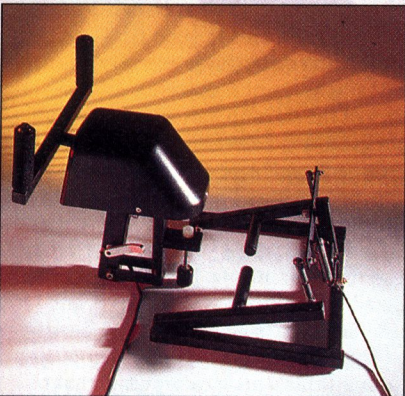
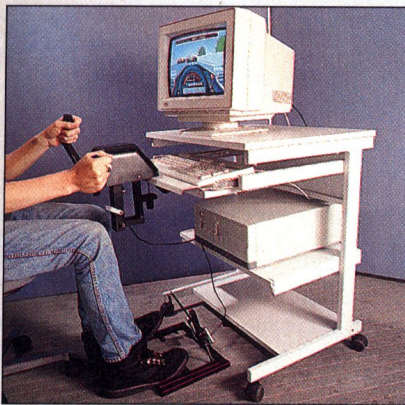
1. When will Front Page Sports Football Pro, Sensible Soccer 2, and Streetfighter 2 be released and how much would they cost?
2. Which, out of these is the best football game: Football Manager 3, Championship Manager 93/94 or Premier Manager?
3. Is Emlyn Hughes International Soccer by Audiogenic available on PCs and, if so, where can I buy a copy?
4. Which out of the joysticks advertised in Special Reserve is the better one and does it need a games card?
5. Do the following two scanners work with a Dell 326sx? 64 Halftone Level Version and True 256 Greyscale Version?
6. Is Super Hang On available on the PC, if so where could I buy it?

Tomas Carreiras, London

1. Front Page Sports Football Pro will probably be out by Christmas. The Amiga version of Sensible Soccer 2 out soon; PC version probably Christmas again. Streetfighter 2 has been 'in the pipeline' for ages; it should be out soon. The prices of games are rarely known until a few weeks before release.

2. Championship Manager '93.

3. There are no plans to release Emlyn Hughes International Soccer for the PC as yet, but Audiogenic are working on another football game for Ocean called Super League Manager, which should be out some time in October.



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YOU FIND THE HACKMASTERS™ rather subdued this month. The constant flow of RPGs has dried to a trickle over the last few months, leaving us, the HackMasters™, gasping and smacking our gums together for some hefty savegames to dig into. We look forward to pulverising Shadowcaster, Stone Keep, and the numerous other new-wave Ultima clones pegged for the latter half of this year. In the meantime we have to occupy ourselves with raiding old strategy games (Civilization) and boring sport sims (Michael Jordan). Oh well.

Backup

Most, if not all, of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files. It is then, sensible, if not prudent, to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example SAVEGAME.SAV, and back it up thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.SAV SAVEGAME.BAK
```

If you make a bad mistake restore the files thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.BAK SAVEGAME.SAV
```

Simple as pimples. But remember the bottom line – don't ring us unless it's an emergency.

Hexadecimal

We count up in base 10. The PCs count up in base 16. Like this: 01, 02, 03, all the way up to 09 and then 0A (for 10), 0B (for 11), up to 0E (14) and 0F (15) and then 10, which, in decimal, is the number 16. If this sounds complicated then it's because it is. But for the HackMaster's™ experience you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers (and remember all hex numbers on this page will be suffixed with an 'H' e.g. FFFFH).

HEX	DECIMAL	HEX	DECIMAL
0AH	10	40H	64
0FH	15	63H	99
10H	16	64H	100
20H	32	C8H	200
28H	40	FAH	250
32H	50	FFH	255

Debug

Somewhere in the depths of uncharted territory (i.e. your dos folder) is an extremely useful program called *debug*. It allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data. It is the program we will use most in the HackMaster Zone™ and, since it is the most user unfriendly program on this planet, I think that a brief introduction/explanation may be in order. Here's a step by step guide to a *debug* hack:

To run it just type *DEBUG* in the appropriate directory (i.e. the one mentioned in the hack blurb). It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a 'file not found' style error then your dos path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS DOS manual and remember the bottom line – don't ring us.

```
1>NCHEAT.DAT <return>
```

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above, the 'N' command. This tells *debug* which program is to be hacked. There should be no space between the 'N' and the full filename.

```
2>L <return>
```

This command actually loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the awaiting hands of the hacker.

```
3>E 98 A2 v <return>
```

This is the Edit function. Type it as it appears above, i.e. with a space between the E and the address (026F) and the 'v'. The 'v' stands for a value you will enter yourself ranging between 00H and FFH (0 to 255 in decimal).

```
4>E 5CB6 90 90 90
```

If the edit command looks something like this then press RETURN after the address and *debug* will repeat your command. Then simply type in the values which follow (90, 90 etc.) pressing SPACE between each one, except the last when you should press RETURN. So basically the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type in red):

```
>E 5CB6 <RETURN>
```

```
21FB:5CB6 FE.90 <space> 0E.90 <space>
```

```
D1.90 <space> 9D.90 <return>
```

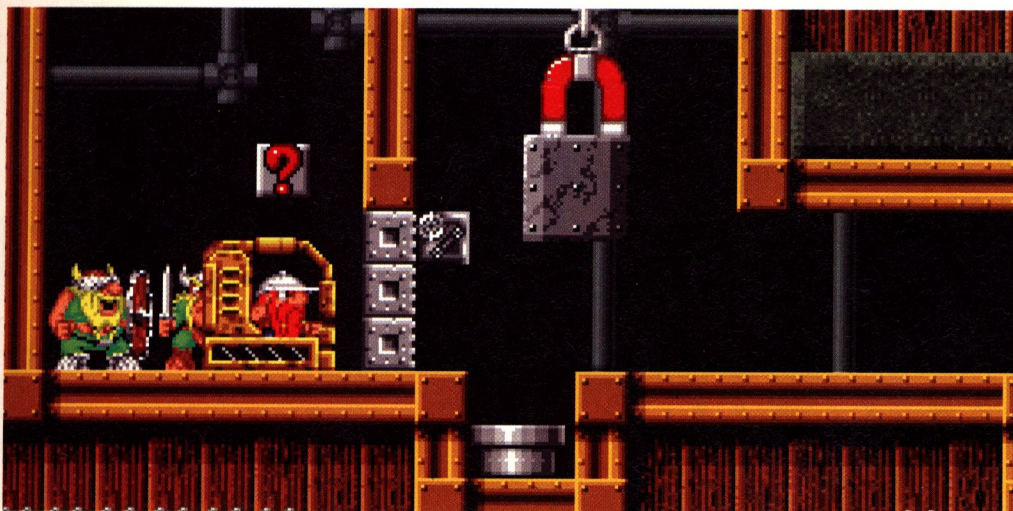
```
>
```

```
5>W <return>
```

This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying: 'writing xxxxx bytes' will appear (xxxxx is the size of the file). Nothing has been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. So if you've made a mistake earlier just quit *debug* and start the process again.

```
6>Q <return>
```

This quits you back to dos.



Pillage all the levels in The Lost Vikings with the HackMaster™ level codes.

TROLLS

(MicroValue/Flair)

We, the HackMasters™, can understand the twisted logic of inhabiting an RPG with trolls and thereby calling it *Trolls*. But the foul RPG scourge now seems to be infesting and corrupting the most un-RPGesque action-packed arcade platformers. To wit: this cutie *Trolls* game. It gives us a sick churning sensation in our bellies, it really does. A quick *debug* emetic is urgently needed we think. For infinite 'trolls', backup the file TROLLVGA.PCN and then *debug*:

```
>NTROLLVGA.PCN
>L
>E 5CB6 90 90 90 90 90
>E A3BA 90 90 90 90 90
>E A482 90 90 90 90 90
>W
>Q
```

MICHAEL JORDAN

(Electronic Arts)

Quite why anyone would (a) play a sport sim, surely the apotheosis of couch potato-ness; and (b) risk the wrath of the mighty Jordan by cheating at his namesake, is quite beyond the HackMaster™ mentality. But nonetheless, Jonathan Mell, eager to please as he is, has conceived a *debug* hack for the game. Play the game as per normal and then save your tournament as HACK. Backup HACK.TNM and then *debug*:

```
>NHACK.TNM
>L
>E 010C v      v = round number minus one
                (i.e. semi finals = 07)
>E 0150 v      v = games won 1st place team
>E 0152 v      v = games lost
>E 0156 v      v = games won 2nd place team
>E 0158 v      v = games lost
>E 015C v      v = games won 3rd place team
>E 015E v      v = games lost
>E 0162 v      v = games won 4th place team
>E 0164 v      v = games lost
>E 0168 v      v = games won 5th place team
>E 016A v      v = games lost
>E 016E v      v = games won 6th place team
>E 0170 v      v = games lost
>E 0174 v      v = games won 7th place team
>E 0176 v      v = games lost
>E 017A v      v = games won 8th place team
>E 017C v      v = games lost
>W
>Q
```

ELITE PLUS

(Empire)

You may find this venerable old fruit on the new compilation *Space Legends*, or you may have possession of the first MicroProse release (circa 1824). Either way, this hack is dedicated to Steven Griffin, who seems to belong to that sad caste of people who get a nostalgia head-rush from playing extra-ancient, badly-graphicked games (like *Elite*). Backup the file ELITE.EXE as ELITE.BAK and then copy the file ELITE.EXE to ELITE.TMP. Now *debug*:

```
>NELITE.TMP
>L
>E 9A28 EB      Buy any weapon
>E 9AFE EB      Buy anything else
>W
>Q
```

CIVILIZATION

(Electronic Arts)

We know this game is old, but neophyte HackMaster™ Jonathan Mell is trying to impress the elder HackMasters™ with his subtle range of effects for the classic God simulator. The method is simple. Build your capital city and then save your game in the top slot. Exit and backup the file CIVIL0.SVE.

Then *debug*:

```
>NCIVIL0.SVE
>L
>E 05DF FF FF FF FF FF FF FF      Loads of knowledge
>E 05E9 FF FF FF FF FF FF FF      Loads of knowledge
>E 05F3 FF FF FF FF FF FF FF      Loads of knowledge
>E 023A 30 75                      Lots of money
>E 0244 30 75 30 75                Lots of money
>W
>Q
```

Alternatively, if you need some research done sharpish, start the research, save the game as above, quit out and...

```
>NCIVIL0.SVE
>L
>E 05DA 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
>E 05E1 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
>E 05E8 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
>E 0E60 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
>W
>Q
```

THE LOST VIKINGS

(Interplay)

Here are some tasty level codes for you.

LEVEL	CODE	18	PLNG
1	GRET	19	BTRY
2	TLPT	20	JNKR
3	GRND	21	CBLT
4	LLMO	22	HOPP
5	FLOT	23	SMRT
6	TRSS	24	V8TR
7	PRHS	25	NFL8
8	CVRN	26	WKYY
9	BBLS	27	CMBO
10	VLCN	28	8BLL
11	QCKS	29	TRDR
12	PHRO	30	FNTM
13	C1RO	31	WRLR
14	SPKS	32	TRPD
15	JMNN	33	TFFF
16	TTRS	34	FRGT
17	JLLY	35	4RN4

IMPERIAL PURSUIT

(US Gold)

There may be not a Death Star to aspire to but we guess you're sweating to reach those later levels. So ready your pilot (let's call him CHEAT) and *debug*:

```
>NCHEAT.PLT
>L
>E 03F3 v      v=mission complete 00-1F
>E 0378 v      v=mission number
>W
>Q
```

If your pilot's called something other than CHEAT then simply replace the filename in the first line. (e.g. ALAN.PLT or BUNGLE.PLT)



he bottom line is that you'll have to have a specky chromosome in your genes to achieve maximum satisfaction from the HackMaster's™ experience. If you are not very brave or are having teething troubles the bottom line is 'Do not ring us' unless it is an emergency.

£50

For complete spoils

Send, send, send is what we say. £50.00, £50.00, £50.00 is what we pay (for complete spoils). Make any solutions as brief as possible, and any hacks or cheaties clearly explained and preferably in *debug* format. Send to David McCandless at this address:

Spoiled!
Troubleshooter
PC Zone
19 Bolsover Street
London W1P 7HJ

LANDS OF LORE

PART ONE



Allow us to introduce you to the first part of our *Lands of Lore* spoil. Shake it warmly by the hand and listen to it say that it intends to be a full, complete and every inch mapped sort of affair, which will lead from the grubby undergrowth of Opinwood to the soiled chambers of Scotia (the Hag). Solved and scribed by Robin Matthews, this spoil assumes you've completed the first 'plot element' and are now on your way to Draracles Cave...

General Tips



- 1 YOUR CHOICE OF CHARACTER type at the beginning is not that important. The main thrust of the game is combat orientated, the magic and thievery aspects in *Lands of Lore* are very low, so engage in as much combat as possible.
- 2 There are lots of items to find or buy but money isn't a problem, so the trading element is almost non-existent. Equipped items alter your Might and Protection and are effective in different circumstances against particular foes.
- 3 Stock up on ginseng at the beginning of the game. There are plenty of poisonous baddies throughout the lands.
- 4 The simplest tactics for combat are hit, run and hit (always be prepared to retreat and heal up around the corner).
- 5 The swarms can be sold to Victor or can be used as a useful weapon. Press the swarm over your character's face.
- 6 Characters will come and go throughout the game, so don't give away your best armour and weaponry.



The Draracles Caves

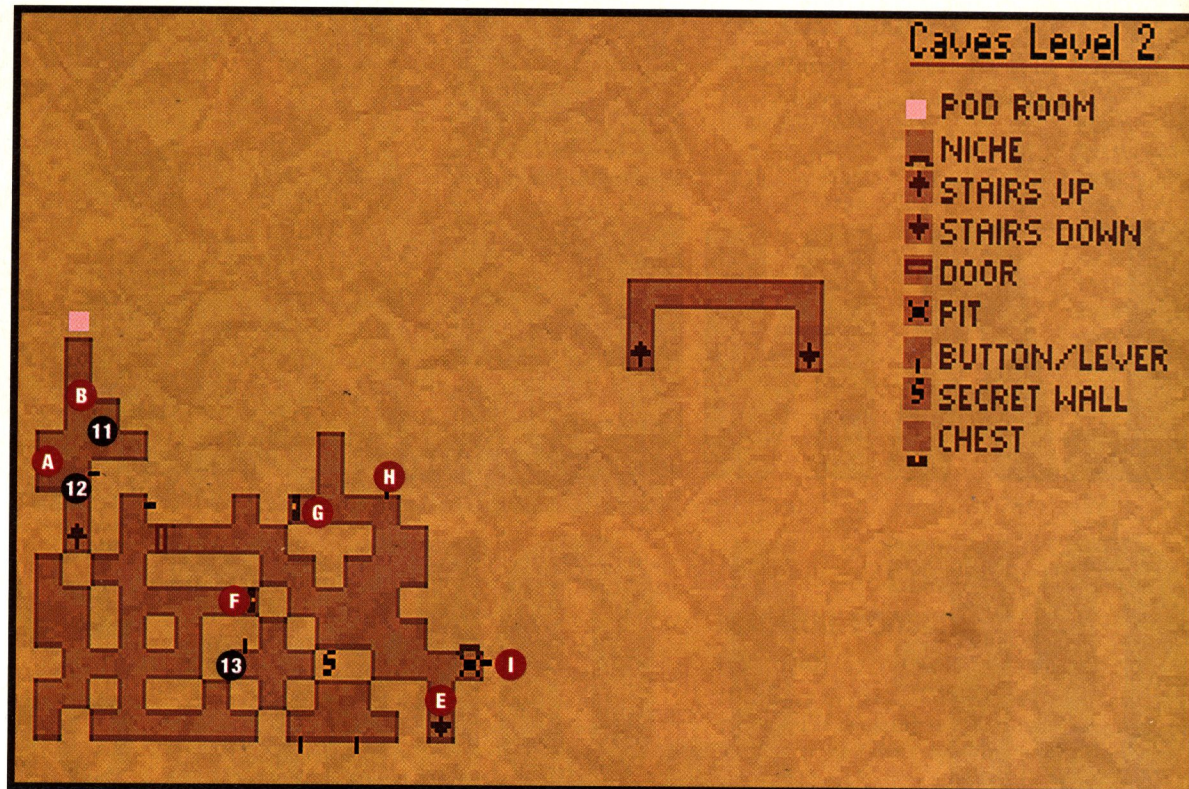
Your six-handed team (you plus Bacatta) plunge into the caves, a four level complex which involves quite a bit of to-ing and fro-ing between levels. By this stage you should have the lantern, the magnet stone compass, the magic atlas and the spell book. It is also prudent to have a sizeable stash of ginseng on hand (although as your magic skill increases the Heal spell will also cure poison).

Level one

On level 1 pull the horns at A to open up the nearby door. Red, blue, green is the combination for the pit traps at 1. The pits will re-open once you've crossed. If you want to save time, jump back down the first one. This drops you down to level 2 and two buttons will give you a ladder up and a sledgehammer (at 11). Press the button to open up 'B' and splat the pods to rescue Lora.

CAVES LEVEL 2

- A From pit C on level 1
- B 3 bones
- E 14 Coins and dagger 'Stilletto'.
- F Chest: oil flask, 2 tars, Sapphire Eye.
- G Chest: helm, Jewelled Dagger, Freeze spell scroll
- H Dagger alcove
- I Throw stones across to close pit to south.
- 11 Sledgehammer.
- 12 Button to open up ladder.
- 13 2 ginseng.



Caves Level 2

- POD ROOM
- NICHE
- STAIRS UP
- STAIRS DOWN
- DOOR
- PIT
- BUTTON/LEVER
- SECRET WALL
- CHEST



Go back up to level 1, press the buttons again and this time keep going. At 3 there is a pressure plate which activates nasty flying knives from the east. Weigh this down to stop the metal and you'll have a toughish fight at 4. This will give you a very important Emerald Eye, and if you did get down to the pits you will be able to muscle through at 7. There are other goodies on this level including oil flask and ginseng.

Use this level to finalise your battle techniques; note that hit and run may not work too well because of the open pits. Press the button to get through to the chest at 10 and then jump down into the main part of level 2.

Level two

The first cross-roads has a spinner square so use the compass to re-orientate, while a chest at F contains some extra oil and the Sapphire Eye. The parallel passageway to the north is the main track and the dragon mural will give you one of two ways to proceed. Use your eyes and proceed east to enter the Dagger path. Go north and go down the Goblet route. For the purposes of this solution we will look only at the Dagger solution, but try the other when you can.

To complete the Dagger option you must have any two old daggers (if you do not have any with you there are examples on the west of level 3 and the south-east of level 2). Now open up the alcove at G by pushing the button at H. Do the following: read the note and then push the button, pull the horns, press the button on the north wall, pick the lock, push the button again and put one dagger in the niche. Press the button and then put the second dagger in the niche and press the button one final time to open up the west wall.

Beat the monsters and then open up the chest at G to get the Jewelled Dagger; make sure you hang on to this. Note: in *Lands of Lore* there are a couple of 'critical' items which are unique but can be thrown away, making it impossible to finish the game! Do not lose this dagger. Also, in this area, you will find a useful helm and the Freeze spell. At



Caves Level 3

- DRARACLE'S LAIR
- NICHE
- STAIRS UP
- STAIRS DOWN
- DOOR
- PLATE
- PIT
- BUTTON/LEVER
- SECRET WALL
- CHEST

CAVES LEVEL 3

- 14 Empty flask and illusory pit.
- 15 Iron key (opens chest at 18).
- 16 Sabre 'cutter' (10 Might, 11 Protection).
- 17 Spinner.
- 18 Rapier 'dicer', scale mail (0,19), oil flask.
- J Red key, ginseng, boots (0,5), and oil flask.
- K Dagger 'reed' and alooe.
- L Red lock.
- Z Put any item in here to get dagger 'back-biter'.

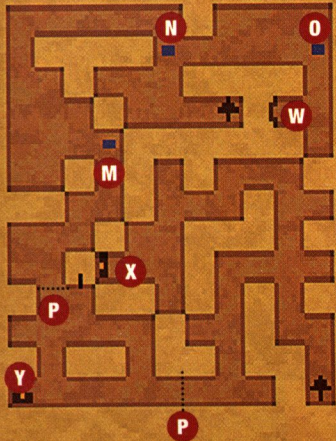
F throw an item across the Pit to hit the button and close things up. The stairs take you down to level 3 (where you can find the daggers mentioned above if you need them).

Level three

Level 3 is straightforward. Collect the empty flasks, pick up any keys and don't be deceived by the pits: they aren't what they seem. Push buttons to open up daggers, and walls to end up at a crossroads getting dizzy. Use your compass and head south-east to find another chest to pick or bust and get the red key at J - this opens up the stairs to level 4.

Caves Level 4

-  NICHE
-  STAIRS UP
-  PLATE
-  BUTTON/LEVER
-  CHEST



CAVES LEVEL 4

- M,N,O** Weigh these down to stop fireballs.
- P** Crumbling wall - use sledgehammer.
- X** Chest, 10 silver coins, crossbow
- W** Salve, Bezel ring
- Y** 24 silver coins

OPINWOOD


- 50** Star 'Polaris'
- 51** Longsword 'Flayer' (17,0)
- 52** 9 Silver coins
- 53** Ginseng
- 54** Swarm
- 55** Chest: kane leather jerkin, lightning scroll.
- A** Droek & dawn key 1

Level four

Level 4 has some nasty monsters but not a great deal more. The pressure plates trigger the fireballs so you must weigh down all the pressure plates. Look for shoddy plastering and use the sledgehammer to wall-bang your way through to the other stairs back to level 3 and Draracles. Once you've clicked on the altar on Draracles' screen, you'll need either the Jewelled Dagger or the Silver Goblet to satisfy demands and receive the Riddle scroll. The way you've come will no longer be available so take the new route and surface back in Northland Forest. Timothy's demise is pre-ordained; listen to what he says and note that you must take it all 'on board'. Go to the lake to Opinwood and speak to a previous acquaintance.

Opinwood and the swamps

The best course in Opinwood is to head towards the swamp and visit the Gorkha. Save some time here and use an empty flask on a swamphole to get one of the elixir ingredients. The sinkholes can be traversed by casting the Freeze spell. Follow the passages around to the Gorkha chieftain. You'll need to be disarming and then he'll set you your quest. The swamp monsters have the item in their possession (a fairly innocuous helmet) and you'll need to kill them off until you find it. Take the helmet back to the chieftain and get your reward. Equip your main player with this trinket and then return to Opinwood.

The Witch Doctor in the swamp can be manipulated to give you free advice (save, ask and restore) but money isn't too much of a problem anyway. In Opinwood seek out Droek's wagon, .

Opinwood

-  LAKE DREAD
-  SWAMP
-  BEGGAR
-  DROEK'S WAGON
-  URBISH MINES
-  SECRET WALL
-  CHEST





and, as long as you have an honest look gained from the swamp quest the reality of things will Dawn on you (ho ho). This will give you the first of a four part key. Hang on to those that make most noise (if you do the Urbish mines *before* you speak to Dawn, she will now also give you another item). The north-east corner of Opinwood is well worth a visit and will net you the Lightning scroll.

Its now coming up to the time for the Urbish mines, but before you take that on you will need an item from Upper Opinwood. Go through the Mine entrance but *do not* open the door to the west (that of course will ensure that most players will now take a save game and try just this!); this monster is just too tough and you need a special item to get past him.

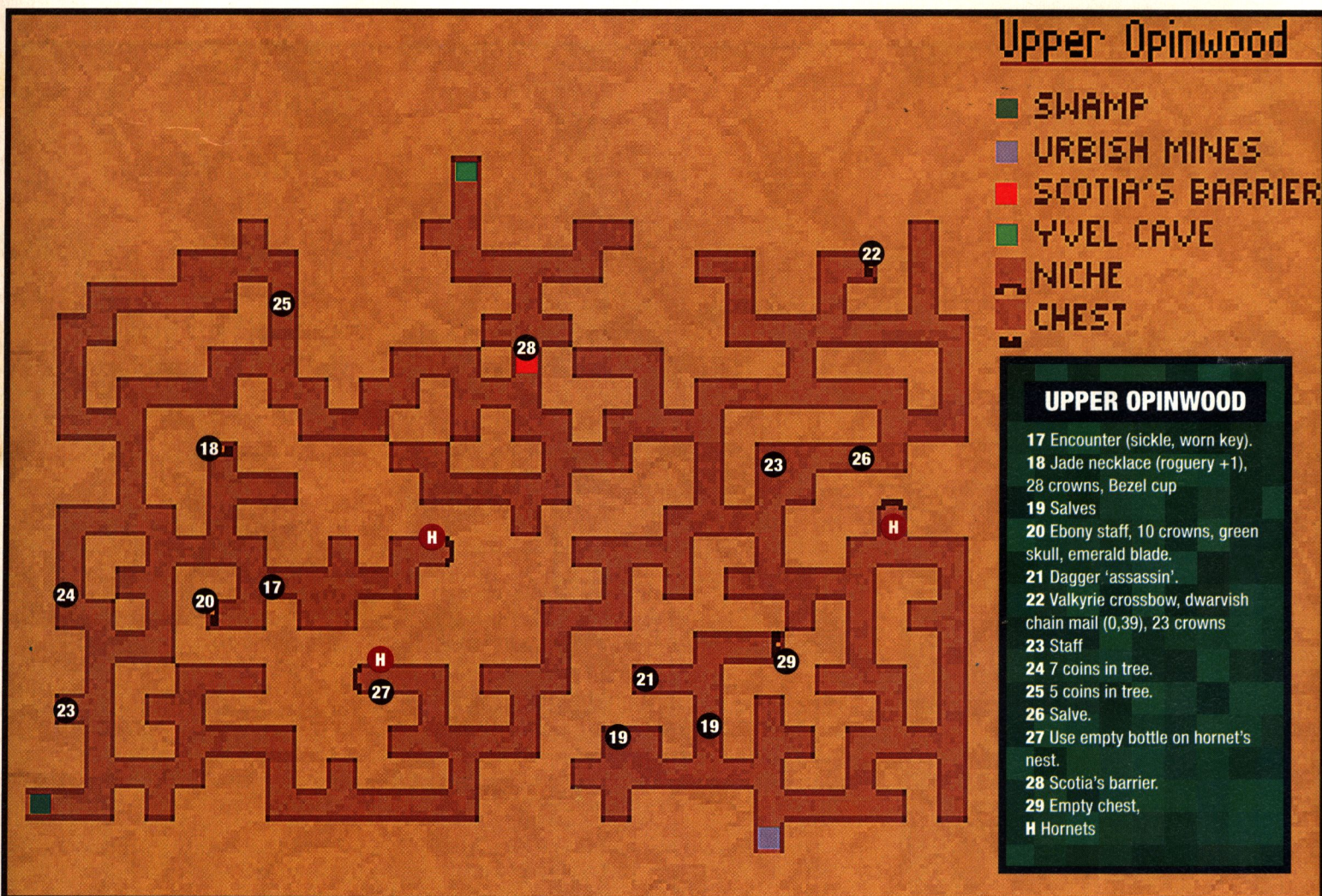
So now (you did try that monster out in the mines didn't you, well you were warned) go north into Upper Opinwood and fill an empty flask with honey. This is the second of the elixir ingredients needed to cure King Dick. The chests here contain some useful items - a Valkyrie crossbow, Dwarvish chain mail (+23) a jade necklace (roguery +1) and the essential cerebral accessory. This green skull is the only way to survive the first fight in the mines so make sure that you don't leave Upper Opinwood without it.



LANDS OF LORE PART TWO NEXT MONTH!

GORKHA SWAMP

- 30 Entrance from Opinwood
- 31 Chest: Axe 'Slitter' (11,0), duple ring, salve.
- 32 Staff 'beater' (11,5)
- 33 Chest: dagger 'assasin', oil flask
- 34 Drop your weapons.
- 35 Ruby of Truth, mantis trident (28,0)
- 36 Bronze horseshoe.
- 37 4 silver coins.
- 38 Dwarvish buckler (0,7)
- 39 'Hole in the Wall' cash machine.
- 40 Fletcher.
- 41 Blacksmith (great sword 32,0; trident 24,0)
- 42 Witch doctor.
- 43 Use empty bottle here to get elixir ingredient 1.



Upper Opinwood

- SWAMP
- URBISH MINES
- SCOTIA'S BARRIER
- YVEL CAVE
- NICHE
- CHEST

UPPER OPINWOOD

- 17 Encounter (sickle, worn key).
- 18 Jade necklace (roguery +1), 28 crowns, Bezel cup
- 19 Salves
- 20 Ebony staff, 10 crowns, green skull, emerald blade.
- 21 Dagger 'assasin'.
- 22 Valkyrie crossbow, dwarvish chain mail (0,39), 23 crowns
- 23 Staff
- 24 7 coins in tree.
- 25 5 coins in tree.
- 26 Salve.
- 27 Use empty bottle on hornet's nest.
- 28 Scotia's barrier.
- 29 Empty chest,
- H Hornets

RETURN OF THE PHANTOM



'The Spoilllll for the Phantom is here – inside these pages'. Thus 'sang' Michael Crawford and thus chorused the TruePlayers™ with their full and complete, boring to read solution.



Part one



TALK TO MONSIEUR BRIE and complete the entire conversation. Go to the trap room, climb the prompter's stand and go through the prompter's box. Raoul will sit himself down and look through the box. He will see the Phantom walk across the stage. Push the button on the wall to open the trap door. Push the stand beneath the trap door and go through it. Go stage left and talk thoroughly to Charles (the stage manager). Pick up the yellow colour frame stage right and then go backstage. Try to go down the spiral staircase and survive a close encounter with a sandbag. Pick up the sandbag and continue down the stairs to the stairwell. Pick up the red colour frame (push the thunder machine if you want). Head back up the stairway and exit stage right. Go up to the Dressing Room Corridor. Enter Julie Giry's dressing room and talk to her. Go up to the second Dressing Room Corridor and slip into Christine Florent's room. Talk to her and read the note from her dressing gown.

Go back backstage and head up to the fly loft. Walk along the catwalk to the Alcove Above Chandelier. Take the large note and read it. Pick up the blue colour frame on catwalk A and the green colour frame from catwalk B (in easy mode). Head for the library and find the book written by Madame Giry. Read it. Note that the glass case is broken and some choice items are missing. Go to the manager's office and talk to Monsieur Brie again. Take the parchment and read it. Go to Florent's room when you hear Giry scream. Find Florent dead as a doughnut. Go to the fly loft to chase the killer. Be, er, pushed off the loft.

Part two

Wake up on stage. Talk to Christine Daac and Monsieur Richard. Pick up the yellow colour frame from stage right. Go backstage and pick up the cable hook. Go down the staircase to the stairwell and pick up the red colour frame and the lantern. Carry on down to the cellar and grab the rope. Go up to the trap room. Talk to Jacques. Note which Bach fugue Jacques claims to hear through the walls. Go to the Grand Foyer and talk to Degas. Go to the manager's office and chat to Richard. Find the letter and note and read them. Now, zip to the Loge corridor and talk to Madame Giry. Go back to the fly loft and pick up the blue colour frame and the green colour frame (in easy mode). Go back to the loge corridor with all three (or four)

colour frames. She will unlock box five. Enter box five. Look at the column and realise intuitively that it is hollow. Find the crumpled note and read it.

Go to the dressing room that was Florent's in 1993 and find Daac there. Talk to her and leave the room when she asks you to. Overhear the Phantom talking to her. Take the fire axe. Walker will chop the door down. Enter the dressing room and find Christine... gone!

Part three

Talk to Monsieur Richard and wait as Christine arrives and departs. Go to the box office and talk to the ticket seller. Get the envelope, open it and read the paper inside. Go to the loge corridor, give the ticket to Giry and she will open box nine. Enter box nine, watch the opera and Christine being kidnapped on stage.

Part four

Talk to Monsieur Richard and then go to the trap room. Find the dead Jacques. Search for and take the skeleton key. Go to box five. Unlock the hollow column with the skeleton key. Enter the passage and follow it down to the junction. Turn on the lantern and enter the maze. In Easy Mode the solution is: E, N, E, N, E, E, E, N, W, W, N, E, E, E, N and into the puzzle room (go north after the puzzle room). In Challenging Mode try: E, N, E, N, E, E, E, W, W, N, N, W, N, W, N, E, S, E, E, E, N and into the puzzle room (go N, N, W, W, W, N, E afterwards). In the puzzle room find the dead adventurer and take the sword. Solve the puzzle by imagining an alphabet superimposed over the switches. Push the ones corresponding to E, R, I, and K.

Enter the Phantom's Lair where you'll be trapped in Puzzle Room 2. Push the panels on the wall until you have constructed a picture of the Phantom's mask. The trap door in the ceiling will open. Attach the cable hook to the rope. Grapple the rope with the hook. Climb the rope up through the trap door. In the living room talk to Christine through the door. Play the organ. When asked, play the fugue Jacques mentioned earlier.

In the bedroom, unlock the sarcophagus with the skeleton key. Push the third skull from the left to open it. Christine will emerge. Talk to her and she will give you a wedding ring. Go back to the living room and ready yourself for a fight with the Phantom. Attack him with the sword. Once he's disappeared, take the music score from the organ. Leave with Christine. Take the oar from the secret passage and then get in the gondola. Christine will follow you as you cross the lake. At the junction enter the column passage and go up to box five. The Phantom will reappear in box five and abduct Christine. Get back into the passage and go up to the catwalk level. Go to the alcove above the chandelier and climb down the rope onto the chandelier. Attack the Phantom with the sword and when he has you pinned, push the cane. When you have the Phantom pinned, grab his mask... and... and...

The game's finished. **Z**

WORD

processor

SEND YOUR POST TO: **WORDPROCESSOR, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ**



We've all had those evenings in the pub where everyone else chats away telling you what they think about life, the universe

and their interest in juggling. Finally, late in the evening there's a lull in the conversation and you get a chance to say something. Wordprocessor is a bit like that. For the previous 120 pages we've done all the talking. Now it's your turn. And if the chance of hearing (or reading) your own voice isn't incentive enough, each month we're giving away a smart piece of software to the Star Letter.

Sensibly slower

AFTER READING your review of *Sensible Soccer* (September '93 issue) and agreeing with your reviewer about the fast speed of the game I tried the following and it worked! Press the Turbo button on your PC (to slow it down), re-calibrate the joystick and run the game. On my 486sx 25MHz machine it slows the game down to just the right speed for all those skilful touches which were impossible when playing at full speed.

Apologies to those readers who do not have a Turbo button.

John Matthews, Kingswood, Bristol.

Indygnant

I HAVE JUST READ your article about the new game called *Indycar Racing* and I can't believe some of the things that you said in it. First of all you said that the thing that drives Indycar is TV. This, as we all know, is wrong. The thing that drives Indycar is Nigel Mansell. If he wasn't in Indycar then half the people in the UK wouldn't have a clue as to what this was. You then went on to say that Indycar is 'a hundred times more exciting to watch than Formula One.' I suppose this would be true if people wanted to watch some low-tech slow accelerating machines race around in a circle. Indycar is so easy to do that even a film star can become a member of a team, and Nigel Mansell is showing how rubbish American racing drivers are by beating them all at their own game in his first season in the sport. Formula One has always been and will always be better than Indycar. The drivers

are more skilled, the cars are better and it's a much more hi-tech sport altogether. The writer of this article has shown us all that he obviously knows nothing about Formula One (the one with fast accelerating cars and good drivers) and Indycar (the one with slow accelerating cars and actors for team managers). And by the way *Formula One Grand Prix* is the best racing simulator on any format and when this game comes out everyone will be able to see just how much better F1 is than Indycar.

I won't be buying your magazine again.

Stephen Naismith, Ramsbottom, Bury.

You don't think you might be over reacting a little? Ed.

Bargain.bin

HAVING READ LAST month's *Off The Boards* feature about Shareware games I thought I'd pop down to my local software shop to find out more about them. They were charging a fiver for unregistered versions of the most popular ones, so I had a quick browse and liked the look of *Baron Baldric* and *Hexxagon*. I then wandered over to the magazine rack to buy my monthly copy of *PC Zone* and imagine my surprise (original huh?) on seeing that you were giving *Baron Baldric* away free on your cover disk, along with *Defender* (which brought back fond memories of my BBC Micro days) and a couple of other decent looking programs, all for a pound less than *Baron Baldric* on its own.

So I bought the mag and *Hexxagon* and still had enough money for the bus fare home. (Well I walked actually but who am I to miss out on a cliché?) Anyway thanks for a decent magazine, here's to another five. Also, the *Space Hulk* demo was brilliant, how did you manage to pack all that digitised speech stuff onto just one HD disk.

Philip King, Letchworth, Herts.

Pay by mail

I'VE COME ACROSS a game for the PC that will keep your readers occupied for months; I've called it 'The amazing world of dodgy dealing with PCs'.

I started this game almost four months ago and still haven't completed it. It began in May with my buying a new PC from an 'established company'.

After debiting my Barclaycard account (for approx £1000) the system arrived two days later and promptly went wrong on its first boot up; giving me a CMOS error and clearing out all the setup variables (including the format of the hard disk). After a number of suggestions from their technical services it was returned for repair.

A week later it comes back, with the same fault, and is sent back. A period of three weeks goes by then miraculously it is returned again, only for the same thing to happen again. Well, I was getting a bit fed up with this by now (it was getting a bit repetitive) so decided to move on to the next part of the game: get a refund. It started fine with agreement to credit me once the computer was returned to them (which it was). Now one month later this bit's getting a bit boring too: despite numerous phone calls, still no sign of a refund.

On the software side I haven't fared much better. A copy of *The Legacy* I mail-ordered from another firm failed to turn up even though the firm said it had been sent out. Another firm cashed my cheque and then told me the game I'd ordered from them (from a list they'd published that month) was out of stock - I'm still waiting (though since I haven't got a PC now it doesn't really matter).

This game could keep you enthralled for months. It involves tons of phone calls, letters etc. and I've even involved a number of other people in it; Barclaycard and the Royal Mail to name a few (both of whom have been highly helpful, I might add).

Have other people played this game? Or am I the only one to know about it. it could really catch on in a big way.

Andrew Harry, Teddington, Middx.

We've all probably suffered similar problems at some time or other. The best guideline, when buying from a mail order company, is to go for one whose adverts you've seen regularly in the computer press. To protect our readers against companies going into liquidation PC Zone is a member of the Mail Order Protection Scheme. Ed.

Hardly obsolete

IN ONE OF YOUR issues you mentioned that games producers will soon start producing games on CD ROM instead of disk. Is this a scare mongering tactic by games producers to make PC users part with their cash and buy a CD ROM? Over the past few months the first generation of low cost CD Recorders have been on the market. Two years ago they were only for recording audio CD's. Phillips announced a CD ROM version for a cool £4000. Desktop CD ROM's give you the ability to create a CD ROM as quickly as loading data onto a floppy. Will the hard disk become obsolete? Will CD ROM take over in the next few years? will the BeeGees make another album? Does anyone understand the Red Mountain coffee adverts? I am a terrified Hard Disk user.

Stephen 'Wedge' Beattie, Arbroath Angus, Scotland.

The Hard Disk is safe for now since the disk accessing time on CDs somewhat prohibits their use. However, as a storage medium their time has come. When you consider that two of the most recent games we received on floppy arrived on 12 high density disks you can see why some companies are moving towards CD in a big way. In answer to your other questions. Probably, and I've never actually seen them. Ed.

The wrong platform

AS MUCH AS I ENJOY reading *PC Zone* and find its reviews informative and usually fairly accurate, I have a slight criticism of its content. In your desperation to make the point that the PC is a games machine you put rather too much emphasis on platform games that are, to be quite frank with you, kid's stuff and better suited to the Sega format. For all the attempts of software houses to convince us otherwise, the PC games player is looking for sims and RPGs, not mindless leaping about with small animals.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Technically speaking

Congrats for a great magazine. What about that *Space Hulk* cover disk? Ta or what? As one who knows the board game I can say it's even better. Knowing the usual Games Workshop marketing strategy we can expect oodles of *Space Hulk* add-on missions, new nasties to gun down, new weapons to do it with, 3D Hulk scenarios with lifts and stairs and holes in the floor and no end of other groovy goodies. I baggy the Dreadnought armour with twin assault cannon and missile launcher. Not that I'd want to overdo it or anything.

A couple of marginally more serious points now. First, the (contrived?) adversity of the HackMasters™ and TruePlayers™ works well, why not extend this to the reviews? Have one primary reviewer who likes the sort of game under review and a secondary reviewer who might not and can then give a brief second opinion. One reviewer's excited ravings are then tempered by the criticism of another so there's no need to buy other mags for second opinions and trees are saved. Hurrah!

Second, the issue of the techy, speccy stuff. It's a bit daunting to those of us who just want to switch on and blast, hack, fly or drive away. DOS manuals are okay at telling you how to fiddle with memory but unfortunately games manuals aren't too good at telling you when and why you should. They're either a slip of paper that basically says: 'Load the game and play it' or one of the rather better ones that provides instructions for numerous formats in countless different languages, but still doesn't help much. Take an example; I have Windows and therefore a mouse on my computer at work. Everything works fine under Windows. I soon learned that most games don't like it when you click on the .EXE or .BAT file in Windows and generate error messages like 'Oh my God you've done it now! Switch everything off and start again before I gobble all your data.' Exit Windows to DOS, tappety tap and off we go. Aha, control options. Well, I like the mouse so I'll go for that please. 'You haven't got one' replies the black box, rather confusingly since it's still warm from all the (perfectly functional) scooting about with Windows. Much gnashing of teeth and one DOS manual later I discover that I do have a mouse, what I don't have is a mouse driver. Problem solved. *Space Hulk* works and I'm a happy chappy... until I tried to get clever and install the mouse driver in high memory which locked up the system and denied me victory in Mission 3. Now someone clever has to come and sort it out.

So, to the point (at last). Why not produce a funky feature explaining, in essence, how best to configure a system for games – covering everything: memory, soundcards, joysticks, EMS – the lot. What to do and more importantly, what not to do. I firmly believe that one of the major reasons the PC has been neglected as a games format is precisely because of the techy mumbo jumbo to contend with before it'll work. You are obviously clever folk (he said hoping for a prize) so why not bring this jiggery pokery lark down to earth once and for all? As a psychologist, I think Mr Cursor should be given the job, for aversion therapy.

Graeme Battison, Histon, Cambridge.

So instead of wasting pages reviewing games like *Zool* and *Prehistorik 2* let's have more on games like *Blade of Destiny* and *Ultima Underworld 2* (the solution was brilliant). Don't waste your time on games aimed at people who probably aren't even capable of reading your magazine.

Richard Allen, York.

Obviously sims and RPGs will continue to dominate the PC (a state of affairs that is reflected in our coverage) but I can't agree that we shouldn't cover other styles of product. Variety is the spice of life and all that. Ed.

Watch it

I HAVE JUST purchased the September issue of your magazine. the *VersionWatch* caught my eye and I thought it might be an idea to make sure that I had the latest versions of my software.

I own *Wing Commander: Special Operations* so I gave the Origin number a call. To my amazement nobody had heard of the fix and the chap told me that your information must be wrong as if there was a fix they would know about it.

I also tried phoning LucasArts who told me to phone the us Gold helpline. I have 3 of their games for which you mention fixes: *Secret of Monkey Island*, *Their Finest hour* and *X-Wing*. I am hoping for a more fruitful response.

Dare I say it? Is your information correct?

Shouldn't the software companies automatically inform me of these updated versions, especially since I have registered my games and they were not cheap either?

Andrew Jakins, South Humberside.

To the best of our knowledge all the information contained in *VersionWatch* was correct. Since we obtained much of it direct from the States some of the information may not have filtered through to the software houses' UK offices yet. Yes you should be informed automatically of any fixes/patches but not all companies are very reliable at this. Ed.

A close relation writes

FOR FEAR OF preaching to the converted, I will refrain from over-praising your mag. Suffice it to say I have just received my first copy and can only say 'brilliant'. I am one of the army who must have taken up your unbelievable subscription offer so no more walking out in the rain and more time to spend on the games

I have read *PC Zone* from cover to cover and back again. I have to say I receive other computer mags but often find that I flick through them in the hope of finding something that I can translate into English, bearing in mind that you have to face a deluge of advertising that is repetitive, mostly out of date and very heavy.

Reading through your mag I gather that your wit is not always met with approval, well tough; life is to be enjoyed so why can't you have a funny or two in your mag. Keep it up.

Finally can I make a request or two? I am looking forward to my next copy, but why not put a few lines in the previous mag stating what's coming up next month and what's on the free disk scene. Surely this would be attractive to the man who has to buy from the newsagents, and would make the walk worthwhile. Secondly have you ever

considered a private ads section for swapping games or just selling them on. After all we all get tired of a game eventually!

I look forward to renewing my subscription albeit 11 months away. In reference to your letter of the month I agree – long live the 386.

M.R. Illegible, York

Er... does that mean you like the magazine? Thanks for the comments and sorry we couldn't read your signature. In reference to your two suggestions an 'up and coming' would certainly make interesting reading – especially to us! As for a readers' ad page, well although it's a great idea in theory it does cause problems in terms of piracy. However, I wouldn't rule it out as a future possibility. Ed.

Steamy windows

I PERSONALLY think that Windows is a load of old #@!£&! My dad has been using a simple menu system with DOS for six years, since he bought his computer. After six months of having the computer, I, at the age of nine, had discovered enough DOS commands to copy, delete, load and rename any files or directories to maintain the then minuscule hard disk space. I have also encountered so many problems with Windows (purchased recently) to make me reload my original menu and run my games, art program and utilities from that. And Windows is supposedly meant to be user-friendly!

Peter Brothwell, Stourport on Severn, Worcs.

The unacceptable face of PC Zone

HAVING JUST READ the last issue of *PC Zone* magazine I must say that it is probably the best yet. The stuff you wrote about upgrades was dead right and it was good to see that you had the bottle to have a go at companies who seem to take the piss by just releasing the same game over and over again.

The best thing about the latest *PC Zone* was that you'd changed the look of it too. You've finally dumped that rogues gallery of thugs who are trying to pass themselves off as reviewers (probably an attempt to hide from the long arm of the law). I'm sure that now you've got rid of those pictures, especially that one of you, Mr Editor, in the front of the magazine, new readers, who used to be too frightened, will now be brave enough to buy *PC Zone* and take it home. No more worries about giving the kids nightmares or putting the dog off his dinner.

M. Pendle, London.

What are you trying to say? Ed.

Cursory funding

I HAVE A QUERY about Mr Cursor. How does he make a living? How much do you guys at *PC Zone* pay him for writing one article. However, it is always entertaining in a strange sort of way. Have you ever considered starting a Mr Cursor fan club? He's more popular than you think. You could give signatures away and sell mugs with Mr Cursor written on the side. You could make a whole range of Cursor products!

Anon, Ferryhill, Co. Durham.

Only Mr Cursor would fake a fan letter then forget to put a name on it. You're a sad man, get to the back. Ed.

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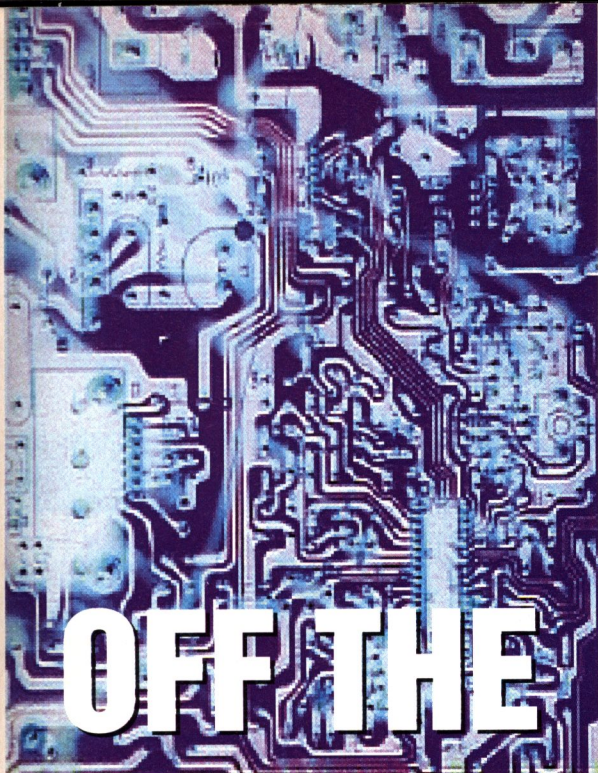
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3.5"



BOARDS

Drop tiles into buckets, pick up bimbos, fight monsters, interrogate monks and breach the Geneva Convention; Mark Burgess looks at the latest Shareware releases.

PD/Shareware

OFF THE BOARDS

BIO MENACE

PREVIEWED in the cover disk section of last issue (issue five), it doesn't leave much more to say except that *Bio Menace* is a platform game which is a mixture of *Commander Keen* and *Monster Bash*. The are some difficult levels, though nothing as tough as the buzz saw level of *Monster Bash*. A good feature is the ability to try a level, although this is restricted to 15 seconds.

Needs a 286 or better and will use CGA, EGA, VGA or SVGA graphics. Early versions suffered an svga compatibility problem and the program won't work with Qemm. *Bio Menace* is programmed by Jim Norwood for Apogee and registration costs \$29.95 (£36.08 from PSP).

(bio.zip 628,110.)



Bio Menace: The final level.

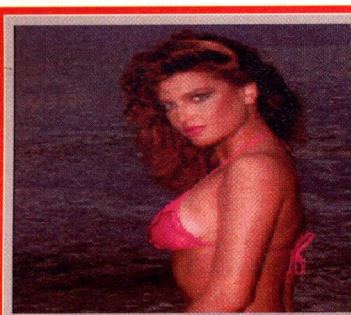


Shoot parachutists in Nightraid.

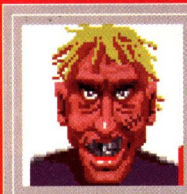
NIGHTRAID

NIGHTRAID is a game from Software Creations in which you must shoot down cruise missiles, enemy paratroopers and the planes that carry them. If you let as many as three paratroopers survive, they will blow up your gun emplacement. You can't just spray the screen with fire, though, because every shot takes one point off your score. With paratroopers worth two points and planes between five and ten points, you have to aim carefully. More complicated than it at first appears. Minimum system is 286 (386 recommended), 535k free RAM and VGA graphics. It supports EMS, Mouse, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster and Sound Source. Registration \$17.00.

(ntraid.arj 606,500.)



Thanks. What do you do for kicks?



I amuse myself in the closet. Ha, Ha

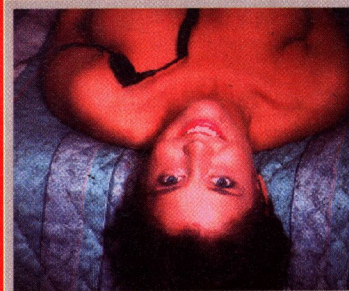
Score: 19



Get That Girl: could you respect a woman who found this funny?

GET THAT GIRL

SLIME-OLA! This is a rutting simulator. The aim is to tell the girl whatever will get her into bed. It doesn't matter whether it's true. How unrealistic. In the guise of one of six characters you choose the answer to the girl's questions from a short list. Subtlety will get you nowhere as this is heavily in *Wayne's World* territory. The screen starts with only the girl's face showing, but as you get closer to the goal line more of her appears - though it's nothing to set the world alight. Lots of digitised speech and music ripped off from famous pop songs and films, or at least sounding as if it has been. The loud intro, with American voices shouting: 'Get that girl! Get her today!' never failed to attract a crowd. It's appalling of course, but worth a try. Needs Windows 3.1 and a 256 colour driver; 386 processor recommended. Registration is \$15.95 from Jab software and brings extra levels, features and a screen saver. (gtg.zip 644,678.)



Well, at least you're honest. Is sex a taboo subject for you?



Not at all

Score: 12



< Shadowvillage > Score: 0 Move: 0

What Now? EXAMINE VILLAGERS

No, they aren't really undead — they just act that way. Actually, they appear to be in emotional shock.

At least, the ones you see closely aren't really undead. But you can't be sure about them ALL, can you...? Ever?

What Now? ASK ABOUT SHOCK

He mumbles: "It's gone ... it's gone"

What Now? WHAT'S GONE

I don't understand WHAT'S as a verb.

What Now? ASK ABOUT DRUIDS

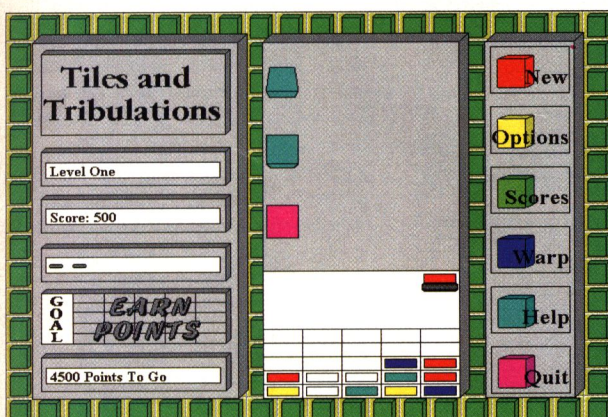
"Weel, I guess it can't hurt to tell you, anybody else could tell you if they weren't too shocked to talk ... Right the camp were attacked and the Ankh, well, WHATRUER happened to it ... all the Druids in town vanished too — and sent a ransom note."

What Now? ASK ABOUT ANKH

Text only adventures: don't ya just love them?

THE STOLEN LANDMARK OF DELOS

ADMIRE COURAGE. M.M. Ezzell has just brought out a text only adventure in which you have to explore a turbulent country and find out the secret of the Ankh. You question monks, druids and others, form alliances and scramble through dripping caverns — all the stuff to delight an adventure player. Unusually for a text adventure it has a help feature and a command that resurrects you when you foul up and die. This is against the spirit of the thing but at least it means that you can get help when you're stuck without having to talk to some RPG geeker for an hour. I quite liked it, but I'm not claiming to have played it through to the end, you understand. Any compatible with 512K RAM will do. You can even play it from the floppy. (land.zip 344,448.)



Catch the tiles and stack them up.

TILES AND TRIBULATIONS

THIS IS A NEW Windows game from Technological Computer Innovations. Catch the falling tiles with a paddle and dump them in the bins. There are five bins holding five tiles each and points are given for vertical, horizontal or diagonal patterns. The paddle holds up to five tiles.

Each level also has a specific goal, such as getting a special arrangement of the tiles or number of points. This, as well as what else you have to do, is shown in the goal window.

Minimum system 286 (386 recommended), 2Mb RAM, 1Mb free on hard disk, Windows 3.1, Mouse, VGA. Supports MPC compatible soundcards. Shareware; registration is \$21.95 and brings 50 levels, digitised sound effects and a stereo soundtrack. (Tiles.zip 189,993.)



Classic

How did computer games begin? What were they like? Are they still there?

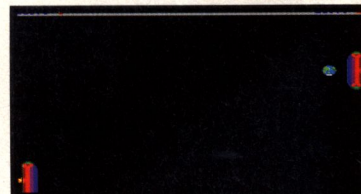
PONG



MARTIN AMIS ON ARCADE GAMES:

'They take up all my time and all my money. And I can't seem to find any girlfriends.'

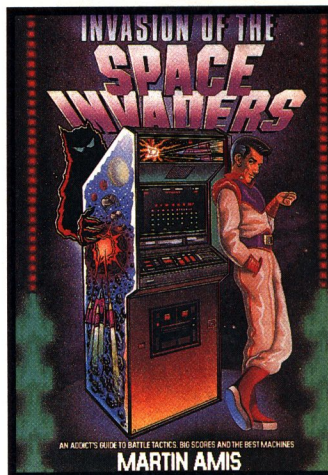
IT STARTED in 1972 with Pong from Atari; a game which called itself 'electronic tennis' because a block drifted between two 'bats'. The instructions were laconic: 'Avoid missing ball for high score'. The graphics were black and white, displayed on old televisions. I don't know of any versions that are true to the original, but we are not talking programmer's challenge here.



ME AND MARTIN AMIS



Did you know that great British novelist Martin Amis played *Space Invaders* before he got into tennis? And that he wrote a book about arcade games which had an introduction by Stephen Spielberg, another media wunderkind? The book was called *Invasion of the Space Invaders* (catchy, huh?) and was published by Hutchinson in 1982.



SPONG is an elegant version of the original Pong. The graphics are smooth and (surprise) an improvement on the original. Unfortunately, there is only a two-player mode. Minimum processor: 286. Needs VGA or MCGA graphics and supports Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib and EMS/XMS. Shareware from Pyramid Software (registration: \$4.00).



PONG for Windows has a green bat and ball but with a vertical action. Why can't people leave well alone? Never mind, this is the only widely available one player version of Pong for a 386 or better computer running Windows 3.1 or above. Phew! Needs VGA graphics and supports Multimedia. Patrick Faustino wrote it and there are no registration details in the 1.0 beta test version.

Stuff

SPACE INVADERS



MARTIN AMIS ON SPACE INVADERS:

'It took me thirty or forty games before I could destroy the first wave.'

THE FIRST PROPER video game and the one that launched a rash of horror stories in the early '80s, *Space Invaders* was blamed for glazed looking kids robbing people or selling their bodies to get change. In 1981 George Foulkes MP tried to have *Space Invaders* banned by Parliament (the vote went 114 to 94 in the invaders' favour).

The game is simple and addictive. You defend a number of bases (usually four) along the bottom of the screen. The aliens shamble down in a wave maybe 12 across and five deep dropping bombs as they go. Shoot out the aliens by column. That way it will take them longer to descend.

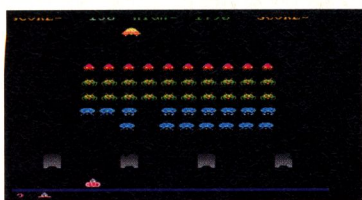
SPACE INTRUDER is by the indefatigable Sarwan Narine. Needs a 386 or better, VGA and 520K free RAM. It's a good, colour version with the high quality graphics and sound expected from this programmer.



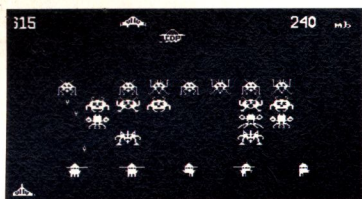
The classic stance for saving the world.



MARTIN AMIS ON SPACE INVADERS:



CLONE INVADER is freeware from Gray Quiring. Colour, but otherwise close to the original. Supports CGA - VGA and any processor better than 8088. Although the speed is adjustable, you will still have to disable the turbo on 486 machines.



SPACE COMMANDER is from Columbia Data Products (freeware?). CGA graphics and close to the original, except the ship starts at the top.



ASTEROIDS

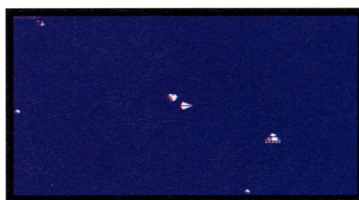


MARTIN AMIS ON ASTEROIDS:

'I imagine an Asteroids tutor would resemble an old Chinese sage or guru.'

ASTEROIDS WAS THE first vector graphic arcade game. In visual terms it is minimalist. *Asteroids* owed its popularity to the fact that it has a less frantic atmosphere than its competitors. You are a tiny triangle (okay, spaceship) in the middle of the screen. Shoot the asteroids drifting towards you and they split into smaller pieces and disappear. Flying saucers attack every so often and must be destroyed without delay. Wait in the centre of the screen and shoot the asteroids one or two at a time.

'Spraying' the screen was a common mistake made by people new to the machine and the result is disastrous: the whole screen fills with rubble.



EGAROIDS is a standard conversion. It differs from the original in colour and texture but the gameplay is faithful. Shareware by Designer Software, registration \$5.00. Needs a 286 or better with EGA and 256K free RAM.



ROX is a more recent version by Kurt W. Dekker who has written a number of good clones. Registration is \$10.00 and the game needs an AT or better with EGA graphics. It's close to the original, even in such details as the inertia of the ship.



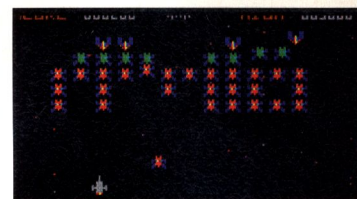
GALAXIANS



MARTIN AMIS ON GALAXIANS:

'It can be quite restful playing Galaxians. The game is melodious, easy on the eye...'

THIS WAS A NATURAL development of *Space Invaders* that came out during 1979. Instead of a steady advance, the aliens swoop at you dropping bombs all the time. There used to be a table-top version in pubs.



PC GALAXY WARS by Stephen Haigh is a shareware version that is very close to the original. Supports graphics from CGA - VGA needs only 64K free RAM, will work on any version of DOS above 2.0 and the speed of the game is processor independent. Registration is £10.00.



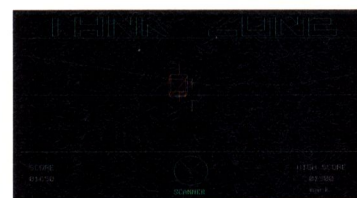
BATTLEZONE

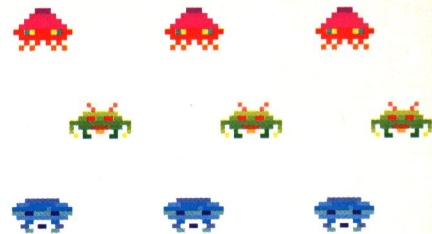


MARTIN AMIS ON BATTLEZONE:

'Its patrons and admirers are intense, thin-lipped characters whose fantasy lives are clearly of martial bent.'

ONE OF MY FAVOURITE games of all time. You pick off tanks and missiles in a sparse, vector-graphic landscape. A new shareware version has just arrived from Stephen Haigh, the man who wrote *Galaxy Wars*. It's part of a collection called *Arcade Collection 1* which includes versions of *Snooker*, *Defender*, *8 Ball*, *PacMan*, *Galaxians* and *Battlezone*.

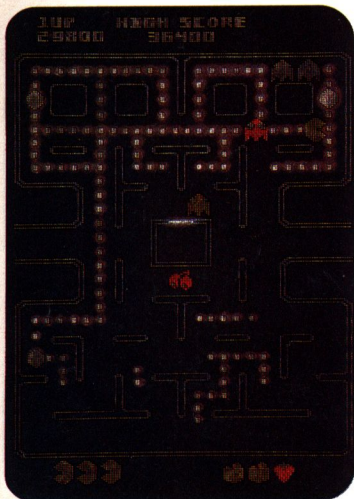




PAC MAN

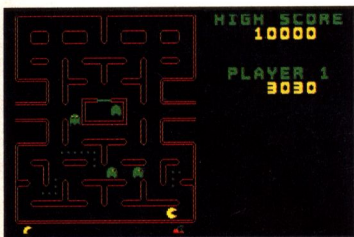
MARTIN AMIS ON PAC MAN:

'A silly idea but a good game, giving rise to an addiction that is fierce, consuming and (in my experience) short-lived.'



Going for the power pack and two ghosts.

THIS WAS THE FIRST non-violent game. There was nothing to shoot, just things to eat and ghosts to avoid. The gameplay of *Pac Man* - moving around a maze collecting things and avoiding trouble - is echoed in thousands of technically superior games. The reason is simply that it's so addictive. Use the four power packs wisely and be careful in the central avenue that wraps round the screen.



CD MAN One of several 'improved' versions, *CD Man* was on the cover of issue five.



PACMANIA by Gregg Seelhoff is closest to the original - in graphics, sound and everything else. CGA graphics, shareware.

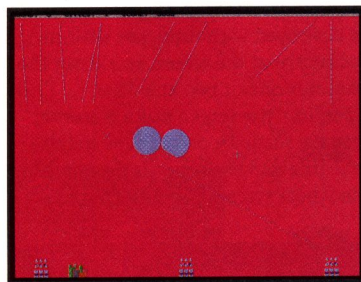


MISSILE COMMAND

MARTIN AMIS ON MISSILE COMMAND:

'An enigma, a mystery; one of the most beautiful and imaginative of all these curious games.'

MISSILE COMMAND has affinities with *Space Invaders*. You have to protect six cities with three bases of ten anti-ballistic missiles each. Missiles pour from the sky and you use ABMs to make a curtain of explosions to stop them. There are also planes and flying saucers to contend with. The arcade original used a trackball, so all these versions let you use a mouse.

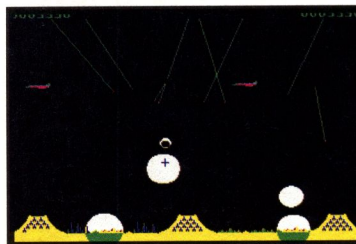
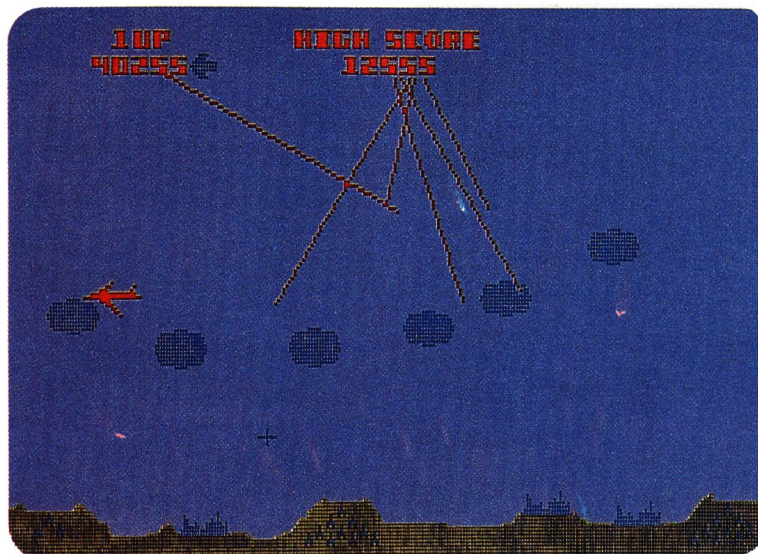


MISSILE COMMAND 386

is freeware by Feynman Software and needs a 386 or better, 256K free RAM and VGA. This is a nice smooth version which even implements the annoying bit of the original: choosing which base to fire from. Uses mouse or trackball.



Missile Command: get that plane.



NUKEM is an accurate freeware version by Takeshi Inoue. Every feature of the arcade classic is here. Needs 286 or better, VGA and DOS version 3.3 or higher. Mouse is strongly recommended and the game supports Ad-Lib or compatibles. Freeware.



ABM is *Missile Command* for Windows. A good version with easy mouse controls. Needs a 386 or better, VGA graphics and Windows 3.1. Freeware by Kent Rollins.



DEFENDER

MARTIN AMIS ON DEFENDER:

'Of all the video games, *Defender* is perhaps the most thrilling, sinister and tortuous yet devised.'

THE BEST GAME EVER. A horizontal scrolling shoot 'em-up where you must protect humanoids from landers. If the lander grabs one, you must shoot the lander and catch the humanoid otherwise the lander becomes a mutant: a nasty, weaving thing



You must remember this: up/down, reverse hyperspace, smart bomb, thrust and fire.

that tracks you down. There are pods filled with swarms (use smart bombs for these) and bombers which lay a glistening trail of mines across the sky. The innovation in *Defender* was the scanner, which showed the whole arena.



DEFENDER by Sarwan Narine is the version closest to the original. This was on the cover disk of issue five. Needs VGA and a 386 or better with 520K RAM free. Sarwan Narine is a name to keep a look out for: he's producing some excellent versions of the classics.



DEFENDER Another notable arcade game converter, Kurt W. Dekker, has produced a version also called *Defender*. It's fast on a 486 and the sound isn't very good. The gameplay is true to the original, although some liberties have been taken with the graphics. It isn't restricted to five levels as Narine's version is.



THE 486 CENTRE

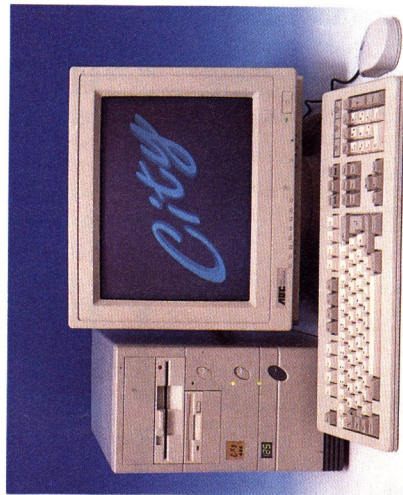
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FEATURE That's Edutainment.

ISSUE 4 Order Ref. AW04A

FREE DISK Space Hulk - 3 missions.

REVIEWS Space Hulk/Freddy Pharkas/Eye of the Beholder III/Cohort II/The 7th Guest/Nippon Sates/Where in Space is Carmen Sandiego?/ Sim Life/Tom Landry/Maelstrom/V For Victory 3: Market Garden.

FEATURE Add Missions (data disks).

ISSUE 5 Order Ref. AW05A

FREE DISKS Disk A: Baron Baldric (complete game).

Disk B: F Prot: anti-virus utilities.

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FEATURE CD ROM Guide.

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Disk B: Electroboby.

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ISSUE 7 Order Ref. AW06A

FREE DISKS Disk A: Sink or Swim (5 playable levels)

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REVIEWS Lands of Lore/Seal Team/Lost Vikings/Clash of Steel/Rules of Engagement 2/Patrician/NHL Hockey/Ambush at Sorinor/Simon The Sorcerer.

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Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC



FRIEND OF MINE, Nick, (who's girlfriend won't let him have a computer until he's finished their bathroom) came round to my place the other evening for a PC session. 'So what've you got on your hard drive?' he asked, settling down. Quick as a flash I typed out DIR/W (he's impressed by things like that), and he studied the screen for a few seconds. 'Aaahh, STAR2,' he said, nodding at the third folder. 'Is that *Star Control 2*?' I told him that it was indeed *Star Control 2* – the game I'd been telling him he'd love – but that we couldn't play it because I'd lost the copy protection map. Slightly disappointed, he scanned further through the list. 'What's THING2?' he asked. 'It's an empty folder,' I said. 'Why have you got an empty folder?' he asked. 'I thought it might be useful in an emergency,' I replied. 'In what way?' he wondered. I had to admit that I didn't really know. He asked why I'd called the folder THING2, and wanted to know if there had ever been a THING1. I told him that, yes, there *had* been a THING1 but that I'd deleted it. He thought about this for a moment. 'How do you make and delete folders?' he asked. I told him that I'd show him, and typed MD THING1 (explaining it meant Make Directory) followed by RD THING2 (explaining it meant Remove Directory). He thought this was all very clever, and asked if he could have a go. I said yes, so he excitedly typed RD THING1, followed by MD THING2... except when making the 'new' directory he missed one key, hit another he wasn't even aiming for, and in actuality typed MD THIF2. (So I now have an empty folder called THIF2. Thanks Nick.) Anyway, I'm being drawn off on a tangent. Where was I leading?

Oh yes, games. In no time at all we were both on the grid at Monza, in a two player game of *MicroProse Grand Prix*... with Nick in fifth place and me in seventh. The race length had been set to 100 percent and the computer opposition had been set to professional. (Nick had played the game several times before on an ST by the way, so don't assume I was taking liberties). Nick, being the first to have

manual control, got off to an excellent start and was the race leader even before he hit the first chicaney bit. By the time it was my turn to take control (lap three), the gap between Nick's car and the one in second place was over seven seconds. My own car, much to my annoyance, had dropped to tenth position. But worse was to come. About half a picosecond after I'd taken control, I crashed. Engine out, no driving back to the pits, end of race, kaput. I told Nick to carry on by himself while I rustled us up something to eat.

The food...

So into the kitchen it was, and the first thing I spotted was the jar of ready prepared Korma sauce I'd bought a few days before. Yes, yes, yes! Chicken Korma. But then I realised that

not only did I have no chicken, but that I was completely out of rice as well. Bah! Still, with a stiff upper lip it was into the fridge to search for some sort of alternative... and there it was: a pack of sausages. Fry-up ahoy. Tomato ketchup. Brown sauce. Chip butties. Puddles of grease. The works. But then I discovered I'd run out of eggs – and my thorough search of the freezer compartment didn't turn up any oven chips either. Did I at least have any baked beans? ...Shit, no, only a little tin of kidney beans. I stared at the ceiling in despair, and prayed for inspiration.

The race...

Meanwhile Nick, in the next room, had already started lapping the backmarkers. 'I've just overtaken Sue Pollard', he yelled (the names I use in *Grand Prix* are a mixture of fact and fiction, in case you were wondering). Before long he'd also lapped Michael Andretti, Johnny Herbert, Stephen Hawking, Jimi Hendrix, Norman Wisdom, Desmond Tutu and Michael Schumacher... and he was closing fast on General Levy (teammate of Yoffy, from *Fingerbobs*).

The food...

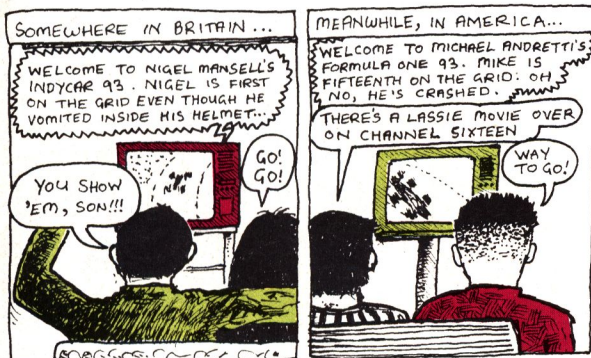
Back in the kitchen and a meal – the inspiration having arrived from God knows where – was coming along apace. And not only was I cooking imaginatively, but I was also the very picture of efficiency: pans were being washed as soon as they'd been used; debris was assigned immediately to the bin, rather than left to loiter atop the fridge. While Nick was whooping with delight at his simple adrenalin rushes in the lounge, I had moved onto a far higher plane – the cooking plane. It was like being a large cog in a carefully balanced taste factory. I imagined Lloyd Grossman and a panel of *Masterchef* experts passing through the area. 'Oooh yes,' Lloyd would say, 'Thiiiiis is fant-aaastic! It's as if you haaave it aaaaalll worked out.' And he'd have been right, because I did.

The race...

And then it happened – I was brought out of my cooking-induced trance with a jolt, by a scream from the other room. It transpired that while trying to lap Sue Pollard for the second time, Nick had ploughed into a wall at 130 mph, destroying his car in the process. He had, up until that moment, been a whole minute ahead of Ian St John. Third placed Zippy (of *Rainbow*) was 90 seconds back. Nick could very easily have won his very first Grand Prix on the PC had he been careful, patient and used his commanding lead to its full potential, but he had been over confident and over zealous. He had been impulsive and greedy. And now he was distraught.

The food...

But then I brought in the meal. And okay, so Nick had wasted an hour of his life. But during that hour he came to understand joy. He came to understand excitement. He came to understand tension. And relief. He came to understand disappointment, too. And exasperation, and, ultimately, bitter failure. What I still can't comprehend, however, is how the one thing he *didn't* manage to come to terms with was Sausage Korma and pasta shells. ☒

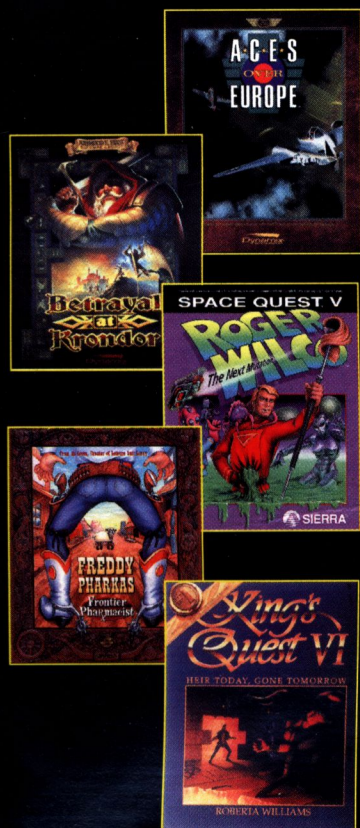


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