

OFFICIALLY
THE WORLD'S
BEST-SELLING AMIGA
GAMES MAGAZINE!



KGB



WING COMMANDER



NIGEL MANSELL

Future
PUBLISHING
Your
guarantee
of value

9 770961 731022
ISSUE 21 £3.50 JANUARY 1993

DON'T BUY AN AMIGA GAME UNTIL YOU'VE READ THIS

AMIGA POWER

A MAGAZINE WITH ATTITUDE

A WHIPPING YARN

Indiana Jones storms Atlantis in US Gold's titanic graphic adventure



JAMES POND III

Space: The Fin-eel Frontier for the star FISH agent



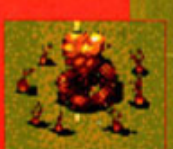
INCREDIBLE!
THREE PLAYABLE
DEMOS

YOURS WITH ISSUE 21 OF AMIGA POWER

MORE GREAT DEMOS

SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93 MEETS BULLDOG BLIGHTY

The best gets better. Plus! A brand new bombastic 1944 version!



disk 21



COMBAT AIR PATROL

The last word in flight-and-flight sims from Psygnosis.

one meg only



TROLLS

Flair do the console platform thang, with a real swinger.

WIN!
AN
AMIGA
A1200!

AND...
Are you the lucky winner of our Design A Game competition? Find out inside

ISSUE **21**

THIS IS AMIGA POWER

AMIGA POWER

ISSUE 21 JANUARY 1993

EDITOR

Mark Ramshaw

REVIEWS EDITOR

Stuart Campbell

PRODUCTION EDITOR

Tim Norris

STAFF WRITERS

Mark Winstanley

Tim Tucker

ART EDITOR

Jacquie Spanton

DEPUTY ART EDITOR

Lisa Nicholls

DEPUTY ADVERTISING MANAGER

Jackie Garford

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Claire Fullick

PUBLISHER

Colin Campbell

GROUP PUBLISHING DIRECTOR

Greg Ingham

PROMOTIONS MANAGER

Michele Harris

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

Sue Hartley

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Chris Anderson

CONTRIBUTORS: Jonathan Davies, Joe Humphries, Dave Golder, Gary Penn, Adam Peters, Ronnie Randall, Richard Longhurst

LINO & SCANNING: Simon Chittenden, John Moore, Chris Stocker, Simon Windsor

PHOTOGRAPHY: Stuart Baynes, Tim Norris, Ashton James

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING

Amiga Power,
Future Publishing Ltd,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath BA1 2BH
Tel 0225 442244
Fax 0225 446019

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Old Barn, Somerton, Somerset
TA11 7PY Tel 0458 74011

AMIGA POWER IS PRINTED
IN THE UK

A member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations

Registered circulation

ABC 60,184

January - June 1992

LISA WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Thanks for the lolly.'

STUART WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'D is for lots of things.'

TIM T WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'The middle word in life is "it".'

MARK W WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'I asked for a car, I got a computer.'

JACQUIE WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'It was obviously the duck that did it.'

MARK WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'My teen angst has a body count.'

TIM WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Don't leave that there, someone'll trip.'

AMIGA POWER comes to you from Future Publishing, home of Amiga Format, ST Format, Amiga Shopper, Mega, Super Play, Your Sinclair, Commodore Format, Amstrad Action, Sega Power, Total, and Games Master magazine.
© Future Publishing 1992

10 TRUE STORIES

They say no news is good news, so this month we haven't done any. Only kidding.

14 THE GALLUP CHARTS

The world holds its breath and waits - is Bryan Adams still at number one?

20 THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Sexy cover star James Pond serves as an entrée for *Flashback*, *Soccer Kid*, *Arabian Knights*, *Nick Faldo's Golf* and more!

60 BACK ISSUES/MAIL ORDER

Fill in those unsightly cavities in your AMIGA POWER collection, or pick up a fab game at a bargain-tastic giveaway price.

63 COMPLETE CONTROL

MoreFascination tips, part two of our *Shadow Of The Beast 3* playing guide, plus *Curse Of Enchantia* and, most importantly of all, Jonathan Davies with the utterly wonderful Last Resort!

89 OUR (SECOND) BRILLIANT YEAR

Find out which games we loved the most in the last 12 months. Yep, another three pages about *Sensible Soccer*. Sorry.

110 BEGINNING TO CD LIGHT

We ask the industry what it thinks of CDTV's chances in 1993. We're really sorry about the headline, by the way.

116 DO THE WRITE THING

Stung by criticism, the readers bite back with four pages of venom, vitriol, great jokes and sparkling prose. Or is it just a load of crap whingeing as usual?

121 THE BOTTOM LINE

Don't buy an Amiga game until you've read - hang on, haven't we used that line?

128 SUBSCRIBE TO AMIGA POWER

This is your last chance to take out a subscription for a fiver less AND get a free game into the bargain.

130 THE RIGHT PROFILE

Introducing a new feature to our back page! We delve deep into the dark and turbulent pools that are the minds of the, er, 'movers and shakers' of the software biz. Kicking off is star programming chap Andrew Braybrook of Graftgold - he's a very nice man. He's a very, very nice man. He also likes Patrick Moore.

GAMES OF THE



WING COMMANDER

A display of state-of-the-art programming, or just another over-hyped mess? Page 34



CYTRON

Yes, we know it looks like *Paradroid 90*, but there's one big difference... Page 38



RAMPART

It may be a year late, but the idea of *Tetris*-with-castles is as bizarre as ever... Page 42



TROLLS

'Have you got the Trolls?' 'No, I always walk like this.' Page 44



NIGEL MANSELL

After *Vroom* and *F1GP* is there really room one man and his moustache? Page 50



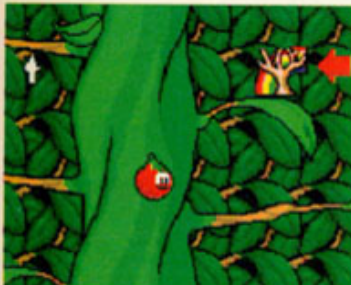
GOBLINS 2

Imaginative sequel names, we just love 'em. If only we could find one... Page 52



MONTH

GAMES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE
JANUARY



BILL'S TOMATO GAME
The game that's so expensive you'll have to buy it on HP.
Page 40



KGB
We just bet you'll all be Russian out to buy this one. (Fired. Fired. Fired. - Ed)
Page 46



ROBOSPORT
Shock! Maxis do a game without the word sim in it. This time it's Sim War.
Page 54



INDIANA JONES
Well, it's an Indy game, really, isn't it? (Didn't you get fired already? - Ed)
Page 56

FULL PRICE

3D Construction Kit 2	40
Bill's Tomato Game	40
Cool World	79
Cytron	38
Dungeon Master/Chaos	80
Goblins 2	52
Indy Jones/Atlantis	56
KGB	46
Leeds United	82
Lemmings Double Pack	87
Motorhead	83
Nicky Boom	85
Nigel Mansell	50
Noddy's Playtime	81
Populous 2 Challenge	84
Rampart	42
RoboSport	54
Sensible Soccer 92/93	78
Trolls	44
Wing Commander	34

BUDGET

Pictionary	103
Spellbound Dizzy	103
Supercars II	103
World Championship Boxing Manager	102

COMPILATIONS

Super All Stars	102
Super Fighters	104

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Mad Susie Goes On	100
Intrepid	100
All Guns Blazing	100
Tank Attack	100

NEXT MONTH...
we go on sale on the second Thursday of the month, so you'll be able to buy the groovy February issue on the 14th January. Wow, only three weeks to wait. Innit marvelous?

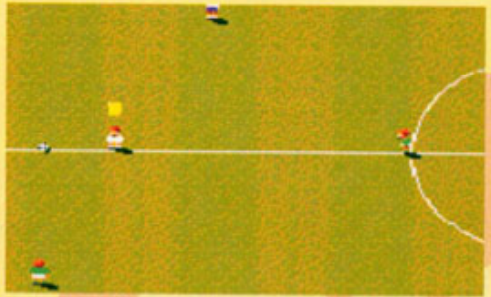
'What? ANOTHER three absolutely top-notch demos all crammed on to one single disk? How on Earth do you manage it, oh mighty AMIGA POWER?'
'Well, it's like this. We're brilliant, frankly.'
'Of course! Why didn't I think of that?'

AND THIS IS DISK 21



SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93 MEETS BULLDOG BLIGHTY

EXCLUSIVE!
Football isn't a matter of life and death - it's a matter of life, death, and horrible mutilation and maiming with hand grenades.



AMIGA POWER and Sensible Software proudly present three new additions to the Sensible Soccer squad, featuring some titanic tussles through time. You know you'll love it.

COMBAT AIR PATROL

It got Combat. It's got air. You know the rest. Do your best Tom Cruise routines, with this playable demo.



TROLLS

More colourful than Zool, cuter than Lemmings, and with more hair than Freddie Boswell - it's an entire playable level of Trolls.



GOT A FAULTY DISK?

● Oh no! Are you sure? Before you go any further try the procedures described in the panel over the page. If, after all that, you do have disk problems, simply place it in an envelope, along with an SAE and an explanatory letter, and return it NOT TO THE AP OFFICE but to: AMIGA POWER Disk Returns 21, Diskcopy Labs, Unit 2+3 Omega Technology Centre, Drayton Fields, Drayton, NN1 1FR.



YOUR DISK AND YOU

READ THIS BIT FIRST OR NO ONE WILL TAKE ANY NOTICE OF YOU WHEN YOU SAY THAT YOUR DISK DOESN'T WORK.

- *Combat Air Patrol* is one meg only. Um, sorry.
- To load any of the games, all you have to do is switch off your machine, insert the disk, and switch your machine back on again.
- An options menu will appear. Simply follow the instructions to load the game of your choice.
- Just to be on the safe side, though, the on-screen instructions say that you should press the appropriate function key to make your selection.
- It really is that simple.
- You'll have to reset your machine in order to play one of the other demos. When you do so, simply follow the instructions above.
- Remember to keep the disk you are playing your game from in the drive at all times. And remember – switching the machine off for 20 seconds or so before loading a new program will help prevent disks being infected by stray viruses.

● Have a good time.

WHEN SUDDENLY SOMETHING WENT WRONG!

- Are you sure?
- Try all that stuff again, making sure you've disconnected any peripherals the program might not 'like'.
- If your disk fails to load, then pop it in a padded envelope, along with a letter explaining the problem, to: AMIGA POWER Disk 21 Returns, Diskcopy Labs Unit 2+3 Omega Technology Centre Drayton Fields Drayton NN1 1FR
- We really hoping you're reading this bit, because it's quite important: please don't send your disks to us at the AMIGA POWER office. We really don't know how to fix dodgy disks. We've tried, we really have, but we're just crap at it. So send it Discopy Labs. Please.



Exclusive! Never seen before and never to be repeated – Soccer WWII style.



Or for something a little familiar, how about the World Cup final 1966?



Taking it bang up to date, the 92/93 version even includes red cards. Curses.

SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93 MEETS BULLDOG BLIGHTY

Publisher: Renegade

Sensible's finest moment to date is very probably the updated version of *Sensible Soccer*. Undoubtedly their weirdest moment to date was the *In The Style Of* creation published back in November issue of AMIGA POWER. Now for the first and only time, the two games are together on disk. This is your chance to play

England vs Germany in 1993, or to go back to 1944 and play a 'variation' on that match. And... you can even relive the that classic world cup match of 1966. It's all here in this very exclusive *Sensible Soccer* demo.

Playing couldn't be simpler. On the title screen use the joystick to select which of the three matches you wish to play, and with how many people. Then press the fire

button and away you go. The demo ends when either side manages to score a goal.

POINTS TO NOTE

This being the new edition of *Soccer*, a number



A riot of colour on every screen – that's the swanky new *Trolls* from Flair.

Publisher: Flair

After the entertaining *Elvira* arcade game, Flair really get into the platform swing of things, with their game based on the devilishly cute/totally irritating (delete as applicable) little Freddie Boswell look-alikes loitering in toy shops up and down the country.

What you have in this here playable demo, is a single level of a single world – which gives the player control over one of the ubiquitous trolls, on a mission to explore the landscape



avoiding/stamping on baddies and collecting all the little baby trolls sitting around the place.

To help you on the quest yo-yos (along with extra energy and the like) can occasionally be found inside balloons and other collectible objects. The troll's health is indicated by his hair colour – but you've

got three lives to play with, so don't worry too much.

Once the yo-yo has been collected a press of the fire-button and a push of the joystick will send it flying in the desired direction, and if this is done mid-jump, it'll stick onto platforms, enabling the troll to swing around Tarzan or Spiderman style.

And, er, that's about it, really. Enjoy yourself and check out the review of the full thing in this very issue, why doncha?



Find the yo-yo and the troll can go swinging into action, Spiderman style. Bash the elephant-who-never-forget if you get their chance – they are actually restart points.

TROLLS



Now you too can play the game which has forced us to give Stuart an office all to himself.



nearby players with it. A free kick is then given to the team who suffered the casualty. Any players lost in action are lost for the duration of the match, so do try not to get them all blown up.

As in the original game, it's all joystick controlled, there's after-touch on the ball, pressing the fire button will dive for the ball or kick it, and the goalies are computer controlled. And remember

of new tricks, tactics and rules have been implemented – the most obvious one being the yellow and red cards. Check out Stuart's full review of the game for a complete list of the changes. The 1944 match doesn't have yellow or red cards of course, but what it does have is a

volatile hand grenade replacing the ball. Don't worry. Play your match as normal – though the odd way the grenade bounces might be a little disconcerting to begin with – and panic only when the grenade begins to glow. It will soon explode, taking any



Explosive action in the all new, all singing, and all detonating 1944 version of Sensible Soccer.

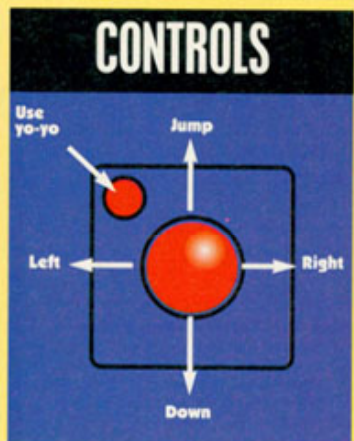
kids, the 1944 scenario may be a little sick. But so is war, so don't try this one at home.



The number in the dummy shows how many baby trolls have been collected so far.



Jump down on to the plane to destroy it.



Trains, planes and automobiles – all can be found in *Combat Air Patrol*. Except for the trains, that is.

COMBAT AIR PATROL

Publisher: Psygnosis

If this playable five minute demo is anything to go by, then *Combat Air Patrol* could well give the mighty but aging *F15 Strike Eagle II* a good seeing to.

Combining some of the smoothest 3D we've seen on the Amiga, with full-on gulf simulation and shoot-'em-up aspects, Psygnosis are obviously aiming for a flight sim with general appeal.

Megafortress it ain't.

The objective in the demo is simple enough. Take off from an aircraft carrier, take on an enemy fighter, using only air-to-air missiles and machine guns, then pull off a smooth landing back on the aircraft carrier. Easy, huh? Remember though, you've only got five minutes in which to achieve this – we can't give the whole game away, now can we?

HELP, HOW DO I DO IT?

For all earthbound klutz types out there, here's a quick guide to taking off. With the mouse, select instant flight from the

main menu – it's the only option highlighted. Once the cockpit view appears, press J key for joystick, M for mouse or K for keyboard. (Joystick and mouse simply work as normal except forward dives and pulling back climbs). Holding down the CTRL key, press the plus at the top of the



keyboard. Two red bars should begin to rise on a meter at the top left of the cockpit. Keep the keys held down until the red bars reach three quarters of the way, up then press the L key to launch. Once the plane has cleared the runway, then press G to raise the landing gear, TAB to set the Head Up Display to air-to-air missiles, and away you go.

The game itself is scheduled for release some time in January, and you can bet your bottom dollar there'll be a full review of it in *AMIGA POWER*.

Above: Even in the cockpit it's possible to smoothly rotate right round. Ooh look, there's the navigator.

THE KEYS TO YOUR NEW F16

GENERAL CONTROLS

- CTRL Afterburners
- TAB Weapon/ HUD select
- +/- Increase/decrease power
- B Brake
- A Arrestor hook
- L Launch
- G Landing gear toggle
- </> Left/right rudder
- L Cockpit lights toggle

CONTROL SELECT

- M Mouse
- J Joystick
- K Keyboard

CONTROLS FOR KEYBOARD

- (up arrow) Dive
- (down arrow) Climb
- (left arrow) Roll left
- (right arrow) Roll right

VIEWS

- F1 Cockpit view
- F2 External track
- F3 External panning camera
- F6 Aerial view
- F7 External track #2
- F8 Carrier view
- F9 Missile view

CAMERA MOVEMENT

- +/- raise/lower camera
- / Zoom in
- * Zoom out
- (Rotate left
-) Rotate right
- 1-9 Quick angle rotate
- 5 Cockpit external toggle

Note that all the rotational controls are available from the keypad, and also work inside the cockpit.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Your crystal ball got broken, so AMIGA POWER is still the only place to come for a view of the future.



JAMES POND OPERATION

Game: James Pond³: Operation Starfish
Publisher: Millennium
Authors: Chris Sorrel (Design, Code, Visuals), Richard Joseph (Sound & Music)
ETA: Easter 1993

Briefly: As we all know, the Moon is made of cheese. And no-one's more aware of that fact than James Pond's arch

enemy, Dr Maybe. The deranged doctor has set up a base on the Moon. He has a team of rats mining cheese which will be sent to Earth to flood the market and so throw it into financial chaos. The world will then become Dr Maybe's oyster unless Pond can find the dastard and save the day.

With *Operation Starfish* (formerly *Splash Gordon*), James Pond is boldly going where no fish has gone before.

For a start, the Pond character's been overhauled and is now more versatile than ever. He can pick up handy items (see panel), some of which are activated immediately, while others can be thrown at the enemy characters or used when necessary. (What you can't see here are the fruit and cakes which Pond wears so he can roll into the enemy characters. As an added bonus, some robot guards don't



Hey, James, watch out for that worm with the droopy antennae and the Hitler moustache!



And, er, this is a big mushroom-like thing on the cheese moon. What else can we say? Oh, except did you know that when spacecraft land on the moon, it rings like a bell?

And here's a couple of the amusing characters Pond meets on the Moon. There's the Flying Cow (its distant relative jumped over the Moon, of course), and a CAT-AT Walker (!). There's also a miner rat, some mad robot mice and a worm.



recognise Pond in his disguise.)

Pond can also jump and duck and run - and can he run! "He's at least as fast as Sonic," says Chris. And Pond needs to be if he's to build up enough speed to run up some of the near-vertical inclines in the strange scenery.

But best of all is Pond's Special Ability. He blew bubbles in *James Pond* and could stretch and hang from the ceiling in *RoboCod*. In *Operation Starfish*, Pond can stick to almost anything by means of a pair of gravity boots.

He can even hang upside down, and there may yet be a boss character as large as - if not larger than - the screen which means Pond will have to run around it.

There are dozens of novel new features, too, such as a map screen (an incomplete version of it is

shown here) to chart Pond's progress through the 100-plus levels. The route isn't linear though. Once a level has been completed, Pond can be moved on to a visible adjacent level. Secret routes and levels are found by collecting special tokens.

And let's not forget Finnius Frog, a trainee agent and Pond's new assistant. You actually get to control Finnius by collecting another type of special

token. A rocket then shoots on to the screen and drops off Finnius. He's a simply adorable little fella who packs a mean tongue and can carry an object. Control reverts back to Pond only when one of Finnius' own lives is lost.

The creators speak: "It's the biggest

"It's the biggest Pond game yet"

POND 3 STARFISH

THE MAN WITH THE FISHY FINGERS

Chris Sorrell went straight from leaving school to drawing for programmer Steve Bak. "I never saw myself as an artist though, only a programmer," says Chris. He cut his coding teeth with *Yolanda*, a conversion of Steve Bak's cult Commodore 64 hit *Hercules*. "It was only a small project, to prove I could code. I'd never really written anything before that."

With *Yolanda* under his belt, Chris was fired up and eager to do his own thing, so he started work on *Guppy*. Millennium weren't keen on the title though. Michael Hayward [Millennium's managing director] came up with a new name: *James Pond*. It stuck, and the rest, as they cliché, is history.

SOFTOGRAPHY

- Spitting Image* Domark (1988) - Visuals
- Dogs Of War* Prism (1989) - Visuals
- Fire And Brimstone* Firebird (1989) - Visuals
- Yolanda* Millennium (1990) - Visuals & Code
- James Pond* Millennium (1990) - Visuals, Code & Design
- RoboCod* Millennium (1991) - Visuals, Code & Design

Pond game yet," says Millennium's Ian Saunter. "It was originally going to be ready for this Christmas but now it's too big and... too good really."

"The Moon's not just made of cheese - there's every other type of dairy product there," says Chris Sorrell. "This whole world has evolved on the Moon, so it's not really a series of separate levels. I want this to be remembered as a game where everything's in context. That's why the

whole thing's dairy based."

Where does Chris get his ideas?

"My graphics inspiration comes from Disney cartoons and Tom and Jerry cartoons. It's less apparent in *RoboCod*, but much more obvious in this one.

"Each Pond game has been inspired by a classic Commodore 64 game. *Pond* was *Gribbly's Day Out* - I like that a lot - and *RoboCod* was *Thing On A Spring*. *Pond³* is similar to *Nodes Of Yesod*.

"The graphic style of *Operation Starfish* is a cross between the simple, outlined look of, say, Mario, and Disney cartoons for the animation. Everything blinks to give it more character. There are a lot more animation frames for Pond."

Has he met with many problems during development?

"The walking around walls is all very nice but it doesn't half cause problems. It's why it's taken so long. The biggest problem now is fitting in all the ideas. It always happens.

"*RoboCod* could have done with a lot more polish, which *Pond* had but the mapping could have been done better - there were some bits that were unplayable, and all that going back and forth was a bit of a pain. But I've learned more about design.

"I'm finishing off the map at the moment, placing on it where the levels will be.

There'll be an almost limitless number of routes through it. You should be able to go back and explore most of the levels once you've completed them, to find the hidden things. This one's going to have more hidden things than ever before. It'd be difficult for one person to find them all.

"There probably will be boss characters at the ends of all the sections, but I don't know yet. I want to do something a little bit different."

Verdict so far: It's certainly shaping up to be Pond's finest hour. The character has the potential to do for Millennium what Mario and Sonic did for their respective companies. And, of course, Pond's as British as Britain itself.

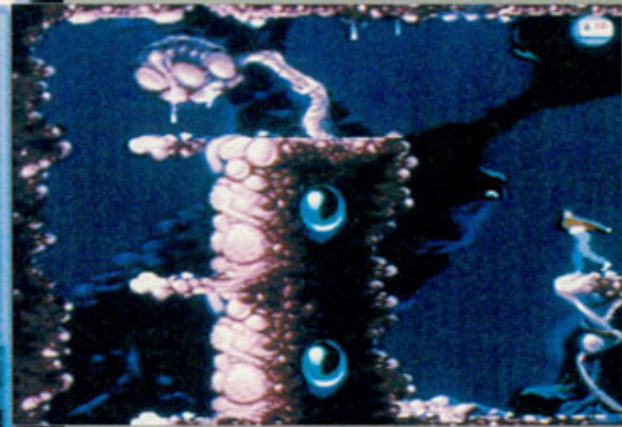
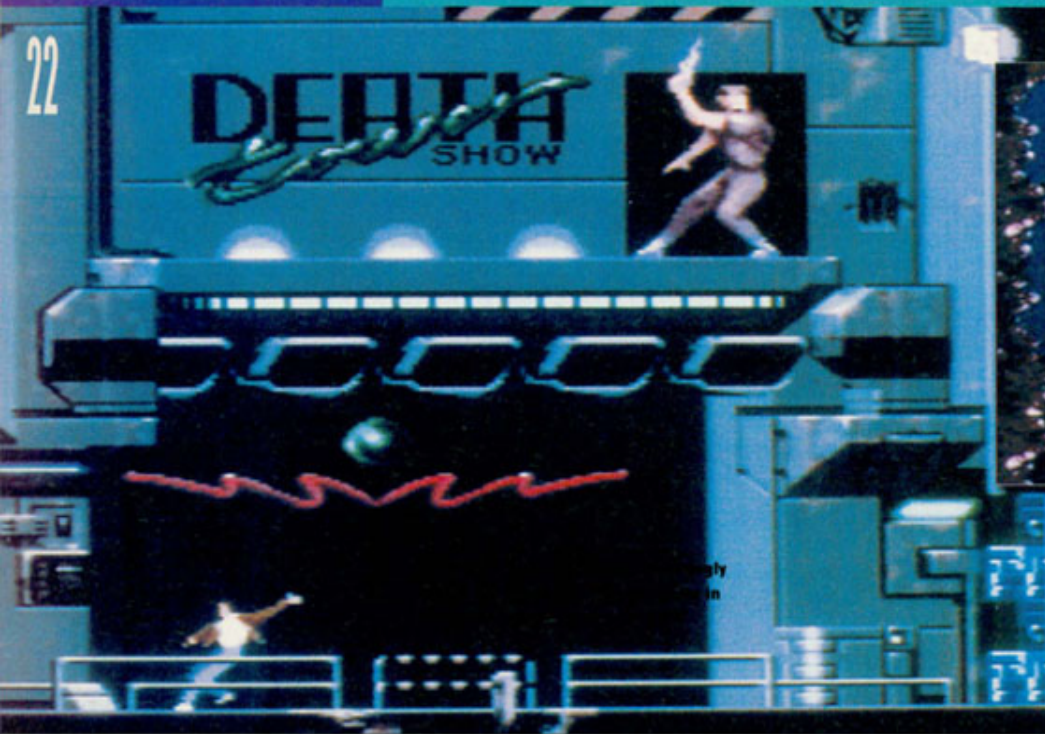
● GARY PENN

The Swamp is made from mushroom and slime infested mouldy cheese. These are blocks used to construct those levels.



Pond's mission starts in **The Cheese Plains** in the bottom left-hand corner of this massive map (which isn't yet finished). The Milk Sea is below. He passes through **The Swamp**, **The Butter Mountains**, **The Blue Cheese Plains**, and, towards the **Frozen North**, an **Ice Cream Zone** complete with cone hills. There are underground levels, too, such as the **Moon's** natural caverns, **The Slime Caverns**, and **The Cheese Mines** (which may yet have to be blown up). "I don't know if there will be any mine carts in the mines," says Chris. "There seems to have been a spate of those recently, so I don't really want to do them."





It takes more than sticks and stones to break the bones of the creatures encountered in this organic level.

or console system. He's a flexible fellow is Conrad. His remarkable repertoire of actions includes walking, running, jumping, climbing, rolling, crouching, skidding to a halt, inching forward, hanging, picking up objects, throwing them, shooting and much more. Delphine achieved the lifelike animation by using a film industry

FLASHBACK

Game: Flashback
Publisher: US Gold
Programmers: Delphine (Code - Paul Cuisset)
ETA: Easter 1993

Briefly: Research scientist Conrad B Hart has discovered, with the aid of a special eye-glass thang, that extra-terrestrials have assumed the guise of top-ranking human beings and will soon dominate the Earth. (Shades - haheho - of They Live there.)

But the aliens knew that he knew, and before he knew it, Conrad was kidnapped him and his memory erased.

He managed to escape though, on a hover bike, and found to his horror that he was not on Earth. Bang! Conrad was shot down.

He regains consciousness in the deep dark depths of the jungle, unsure of his own identity but fully aware of the surrounding danger. The action begins... on Titan.

This deadly dreary scenario (presented as a neat, fully animated introductory sequence) belies a potential tour de force in computer entertainment software. Delphine have taken the technology used in the slick yet vacuous *Another World* and in almost two years of

intense development have added - gasp! - depth.

Flashback has five large levels to explore, each one full of platform arrangements to negotiate, bizarre alien creatures to combat, kooky characters to question, and cash and groovy gadgets galore to collect and use.

Flashback looks lush - far more detailed and like an animated cartoon than its precursor - and even in its present, incomplete, form it appears to be more involved than *Another World*.

It's also certainly fair to say that Conrad's animation is easily some of the most impressive ever seen on any home computer

Conrad takes a running jump in the jungle.

"Looks smart, sounds healthy and has the depth"

technique called Rotoscoping. Actors were filmed performing Conrad's moves, then selected frames were traced before being redrawn and pieced together. The result was certainly worth the effort.

The improvements don't end there though.

Flashback also boasts cinematic style zooms, animated close-up shots and -

here's where the title comes into play - flashback scenes. And, as ever, Delphine are making full use of their in-house recording studios to create appropriate and atmospheric sound and music.

Verdict So Far: *Flashback* looks smart, sounds healthy and has the depth. If it has the playability to match it will turn out to be, as they say, a stonker. It will certainly be interesting to see how Delphine develop this form of arcade adventure now that their star all-rounder Eric Chahi is working for Virgin Games.

● GARY PENN



In the densely populated city, Conrad climbs on to a walkway. What a clever chap.





Some kind of bizarre basketball/football crossover type stunt, it certainly had me confused.

Game: Soccer Kid
Publisher: Krisalis
Programmers: Nigel Little, Neil Adamson, Matt Furniss
ETA: April 1993

Briefly: A tragedy of almost apocalyptic magnitude has shocked the football world! The World Cup trophy has been scattered across the entire globe in tiny, mangled pieces, and no one seems able to solve the problem before the next tournament. FIFA

are on the verge of handing out a discarded drinks machine cup wrapped in a bit of Alcan, when a little boy comes up with the solution. Why not collect the bits back together and fix up the cup? Brilliant! So starts the epic trip of *Soccer Kid* of his globe-trotting journey to bring the World Cup home in one piece.

The creators speak: "With eighteen levels, set over six countries, it's taking a LONG time to get the graphics done," moans Nigel Little, programmer of *Soccer Kid*. "The game features parallax scrolling several levels deep, so that means several backgrounds for each level. Another thing that we're working on at the moment is the movement of the football. Instead of having the ball acting artificially like a yo-yo and returning to *Soccer Kid*, we've decided to impose real physical rules on its movement. Although this makes it bounce realistically, it also means that it can end up down pits or floating on water, so we've got to come up with a credible way that he can get his ball back. Also at

"There are enough trick shots to make them fun to use"

some point we're adding a kit design section so you can customise the Kid to your favourite team."

So apart from the World Cup, what other uses of the soccer theme does the game utilise?

"His football of course! *Soccer Kid*'s best friend is his ball, which he uses to get out of all kinds of trouble. He can do all

Floating fast food is a common feature of American cities, and I can tell you that first hand. Did I ever tell you I'd been to America?



kinds of trick shots, such as trapping the ball, headers, bicycle shots and balancing on the ball. He can also jump on it and use it like a springboard to get to high platforms. Along the way the Kid

can collect power-ups to boost the range and abilities of his kicks. He must also keep his energy up with food and can collect try and collect a set of football cards which get him through to bonus levels. Once he's got the Cup back together the last level is a dash through the streets to

not going to be easy." **Verdict so far:** Although both *Soccer Kid* and *Arabian Nights* operate on the same game engine

they couldn't look and play more differently, and they both look and play very well indeed. The football moves convincingly and creates many more playing opportunities than you'd have on a standard platform game, and there are enough trick shots to make them fun to use, so this is no game gimmick. From the pre-production version that I've played I really can't find fault with either the sound or the graphics, so let's hope the completed version plays this well throughout.

● MARK WINSTANLEY



SOCCER KID

The Kid uses his ball to do a spectacular, collectable-grabbing jump.

With about fifteen different special moves, Soccer Kid gets the most out of his football. Here he auditions for Billy Smart's Circus.



Anything to declare? Anyone who's seen 'Midnight Express' can't help worrying about what happens next.



ARABIAN NIGHTS



Well, well, well, I dare say that all manner of magical adventures will occur if Sinbad jumps down any one of these. There again, maybe he'll just get wet.

puzzle solving aspects to all its fifteen levels.

The creators speak:

Programmer Simeon Pashley stresses that this is, above all, a puzzle game. "There's enough hack and slash in there for those that want it," he says, "but to get on in the game you really have to use your head. Sinbad's journey takes

Sinbad faces various pitfalls such as acid pools and flame pits as he leaps around. There are gaolers to contend with, each one looking downright nasty and armed with a particularly vicious sword. To advance through the game you need to do deals with the characters you meet, with

hints and extra details flashing up in the form of a light bulb over Sinbad's head.

Verdict so far: The puzzles seem to be pitched at the right level of difficulty, a couple of tries is enough to get past each one, and even falling into fiery pits doesn't herald the instant and annoying death so often seen on other games. With the emphasis on thought rather than action, *Arabian Nights* won't be the kind of game you can just rush through and expect to finish. From what we've seen though, this doesn't stop a novice player just picking up a joystick and getting stuck in. If all the proposed levels come together as planned this looks like being a little cracker.

● MARK WINSTANLEY

An idea? Here? Methinks it's something to do with the plant.



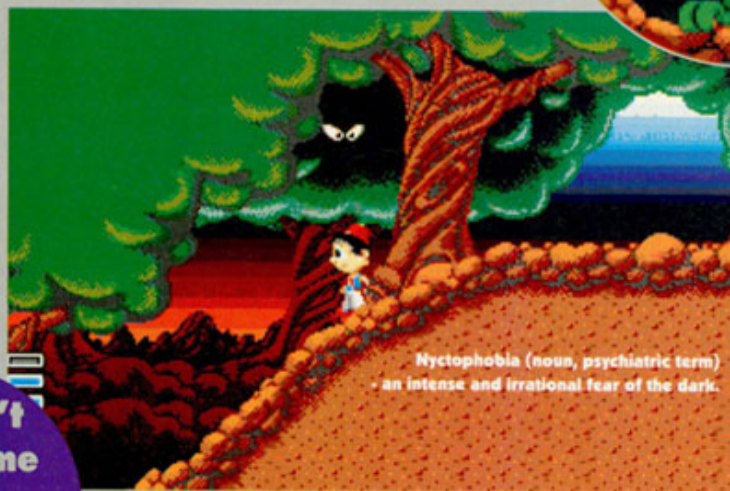
Game: Arabian Nights
Publisher: Krisalis
Programmers: Simeon Pashley and Darren Hebden
ETA: January '93

Briefly: In Krisalis' forthcoming puzzler of might, magic and fetching rugs with tassels on them you play a young scamp held captive by the Caliph who for some reason thinks you've kidnapped his beautiful daughter Ayrina. You not only have to escape and flee the city, but also rescue Ayrina from the Evil Vizier. *Arabian Nights* is a platform romp with fighting and

him from the prison to the Vizier's castle, with a forest, cliff face, boat journey, volcano and mine level, causing problems at every step of the way. We've put in several guardians called Djini's, at the end of certain sections. The Djini's are based on the four elements, earth, wind, water and fire, so there's a water Djini to face during the boat journey, a fire Djini in the volcano and so on. In the mine levels you race along on mine carts fighting off attacks, and we've even put in some flying magic carpet levels, but if everything gets too big to fit on the disk, then these will probably have to go.

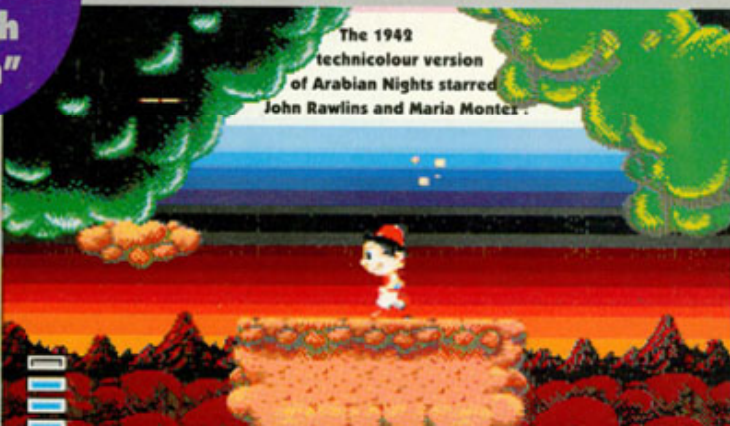
"There's a separate inventory screen and around thirty different objects for Sinbad to pick up. There are the obvious things to help his progress such as weapons, keys and food, and also magical items such power boots for extra speed and potions that make you lighter so that you can jump higher."

"It won't be a game you can just rush through"



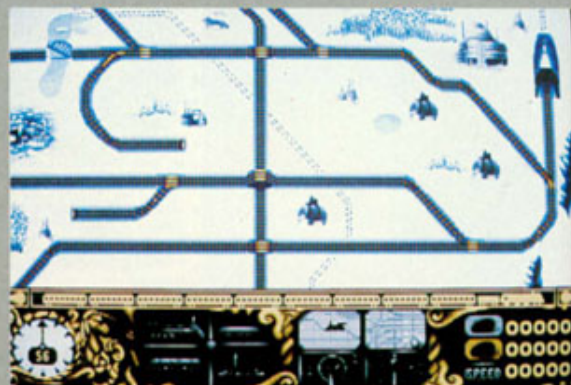
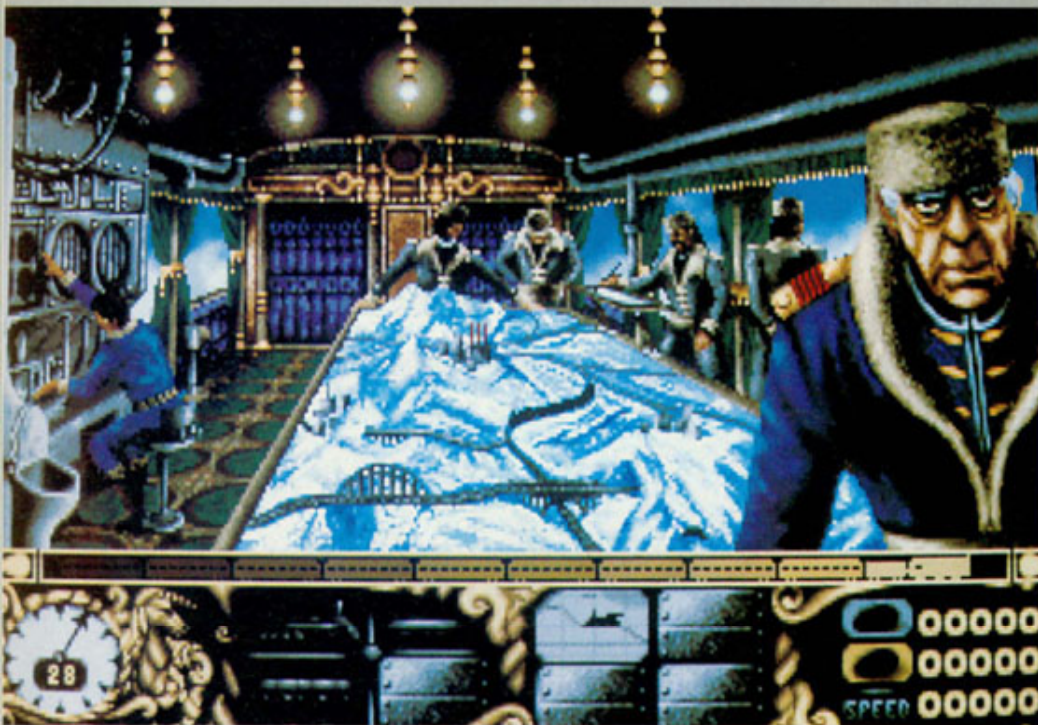
Nyctophobia (noun, psychiatric term) - an intense and irrational fear of the dark.

The 1942 technicolour version of *Arabian Nights* starred John Rawlins and Maria Montez.



Falling leaves and hula-hoops are both nice touches.

TRANSARCTICA

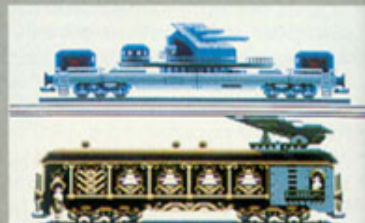


Above: A small section of the rail network upon which your frosty adventure will take place.

Left: Atmospheric action in the operations room aboard the Transarctica. Love that hat.

living power of fire against the death grip of ice: encapsulating the game's final aim, to find the Sun. In *Transarctica*, civilisation may have perished but man's love of culture and beauty has not and, whilst life is hard, this can still be expressed in the machinery and buildings that men create." Quite.

The game will be mouse and icon driven. With the playing map covering Europe, the far East and northern Africa and the locations and enemy moves being



You'll be able to build your train from a selection of useful carriages.

randomised every game, long term game play seems guaranteed.

"Strategic elements test the intellect, while the quests for 'Mammoth City' and the final chase for the sun are pure adventure. Suspense is permanent as you are pursued by the Viking Union, and the adventure element is compulsive, pushing the player deeper and deeper into the game until the player becomes hooked on power and ambition!" enthuses Louis.

Verdict so far:

Everyone involved with the game seems excited

by it, and from what we've seen so far, they've got good reason to be. It's obvious that *Transarctica* is going to have tremendous visual impact, and no one can accuse them of being in any way derivative with either the concept or setting. It only remains now to see whether this supertrain strategy game will have the playability to match its doubtless good looks.

● **MARK WINSTANLEY**

GAME: Transarctica

PUBLISHER: Silmarils

AUTHORS: Louis-Marie Rocques, Andre Rocques (game design), Jean-Christophe Charter, Pascal Einsweiler (graphics), Fabrice Hauteclouque (music)

ETA: Late January

Briefly: When an attempt to reverse the effects of the Greenhouse Effect by deliberately causing a nuclear winter works far too well, things look bleak for humanity. Centuries after this eco-disaster mankind has re-established a new world order, where a vast corporation called the 'Viking Union' holds the power over the only fuel source - coal - and the trains that are the only transport across the inhospitable frozen wastes. Breaking free of the grasp of this icy totalitarian state you play the captain of the train

'Transarctica' who believes that some ancient writings are true and that he can 'bring the sun back to life'. Since this would not only bring the world out of the ice age but also wreck the Viking Union's monopoly on world transport they will do anything to stop you.

Transarctica is one of those real-time strategy/adventure games, so you have to keep track of the

numerous events as they happen. As well as maintaining a steady coal supply and repairing the train, the wagon order has to be set for battle, mammoths herded, starving wolves avoided and of

course the Viking Union has to be kept at bay. This can involve an optional arcade sequence, which uses a wide variety of missiles, cannons, infantry, mammoths and even sabotage units to blow up railway tracks and bridges.

The creators speak: French unfortunately. But project leader Louis Marie Rocques is also conversant en anglais. The old Russian style of the game is influenced by the Trans-Siberian express, he explained. "The huge coal-fired trains themselves represent a strong symbolism, when placed against the ice-locked world found in the game, of the vital

"It's going to have tremendous visual impact"



Above: Bayreuth. Let's hope the Opera House is still there.

Left: Mammoths and mountains in the Vauxhall Bridge Road.



NICK FALDO'S GOLF

GAME: Nick Faldo's Golf
PUBLISHER: Grandslam
AUTHORS: Andrew Perkins (design and code), Gary Tonge (graphics and design), Jamie Moore (course design), Andrew McGinty (music and sound)
ETA: November 27th

The creators speak: We talked to Andrew Perkins, who's responsible for all the game programming, and a fair amount of the design too. This is Andrew's first game, so what has this golf game got to offer that others are lacking?

"The basic philosophy we had was to make this game fun to play and good to look at. Too many golf games are technically accurate, but just dull to play. We wanted to create an arcade type game, while keeping in mind that golf players will want to play it, so the realism's there too. We did a lot of play testing to ensure that it plays well, and there's a lot of fun elements – the caddies talk to you on the way round, and the animation really adds to the atmosphere of the game. The interface is very easy to use – there are snap on menus which appear when you move your mouse to the side of the screen and you use these to choose clubs and look at where you are on the course.

"I personally knew very little about golf before starting the game, and I learnt as I went along, but Nick Faldo looked at it and passed on

Oh yeah, but that's not fair, there's a bloody great tree in the way and I can't see the hole from here. You're cheating. If we were to play properly, I'd beat you every time.



There's a slightly different control method for putting, with the, erm, fossil shaped thingy (?) to the left of the figure.

You can choose your club from the snap on menu. Something to chip this over the water would help, unless of course you enjoy aquatic golf!



comments about how he thought it could be improved. There are two different levels of play, amateur and professional, so if you're new to golf you can break yourself in gently. There's also a coaching section where you can practice shots on different parts of the course and you're given tips and advice on the correct way to play. The tips are taken from Nick Faldo's training videos, so you're improving your real golf at the same time too."

What kind of player options are there in the game?

"There are two types of game, Stroke play and Match play. Stroke play

CLUB	NAME	STROKE	SWING	SWING	CON
1	WOOD	2	WOOD	2	WOOD
2	WOOD	3	WOOD	3	WOOD
3	WOOD	4	WOOD	4	WOOD
4	WOOD	5	WOOD	5	WOOD
5	WOOD	6	WOOD	6	WOOD
6	WOOD	7	WOOD	7	WOOD
7	WOOD	8	WOOD	8	WOOD
8	WOOD	9	WOOD	9	WOOD
9	WOOD	10	WOOD	10	WOOD

Before you start you have to choose your weapons. You can't actually choose all of them – we tried.

"Longevity of the game is assured"

that you could get bored with it quickly?

"No, there's a lot to do in the game. There are two complete golf courses, which are fictional. We designed them using professional course design books. You also have the option to play in spring, summer or winter. It would take you a couple of hours just to take it all in, before you even started playing it, so the longevity of the game is assured."

What technical things were involved in making it a realistic simulation?

"The ball flights are all worked out using algorithms which relate to the way the ball is hit and how its flight path would be affected. The wind also affects the shots, with the contour of the course and obstacles determining how the wind behaves. We used the 'Reality³' system which gives very smooth graphics using polygons on the courses, and excellent shaded grass effects. The screen redraws are very quick – about four or five seconds, compared to something like Links, which takes two minutes."

Verdict so far: Nick Faldo's Golf looks good and it's quick. It seems to justify the creator's claims to being a fun golfing experience. The version we had was hard to play, but an amateur option in the finished version should put us non-golfers at ease. Something to look forward to we reckon.

● TIM TUCKER

Nick Faldo is just about to beat a small, unsuspecting white rodent senseless with a stick. We say "Don't be so heartless, Nick."

just has you going round the course trying to do it under par. Match play pits you against up to three other players, which can be human or computer. There are eight computer players, ranging in difficulty from the bottom one, who does the course in about 20 above par, to Nick Faldo himself, who's the best."

How big is the game itself – is it likely

GAMES

This month has been a bit of a corker, gameswise. There's *Indy Jones* and *KGB* for adventure fans. There's *Nigel Mansell* for race fans. There's *Wing Commander* for shoot-'em-up fans and loads, frankly, more. But first...

JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

MARK RAMSHAW



This month Mark achieved a life-long ambition by having his photo in *Melody Maker*. "It's more important to me than being the editor of a computer magazine," he said. Well, at least he's honest.



STUART CAMPBELL

We got precious little work from the diminutive Scot this month – the new version of *Sensible Soccer* arrived and we haven't been able to prise him away from his Amiga. "Go away, I'm busy," was just about the only conversation we got from him all month.

TIM NORRIS

Tim's girlfriend went to New York on business and left the poor chap on his own. "But she brought me back a really fab Statue Of Liberty, and some chocolate. And she got herself the most amazing glow-in-the-dark golf ball – it's the best thing ever." But Tim, you can't see the hole in the dark.



GARY PENN

Gary made one of his rare visits to the AP office this month so we could get some new photos of him. "Can I go home now? I'm bored," said the ace freelancer. Well, thanks for coming, it's always nice to see you.



JACQUIE SPANTON



This month Jacquie organised the AMIGA POWER photo shoot. "It's about time we had some new moody photos of everybody looking cool," she mused, and then stuck her finger in her ear. Very arty.

LISA NICHOLLS

Lisa had a great time at the Future Entertainment Show. She took her camera so she could get some piccies for us but was disappointed to find, when she got home, that she hadn't put a film in it. "I just forgot, all right."

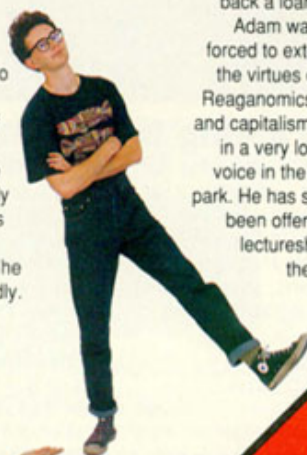


TIM TUCKER

New staff writer, Tim, has joined us from ST Format. He's also got a new flat which, by bizarre coincidence, was once occupied by our own dear editor. "It's quite nice," he said, "but I'm not sure what to do with the barbecue that Mark left in the wardrobe." Nor, obviously, was Mark.

MARK WINSTANLEY

Yet another new staff writer! He gamely volunteered to use his middle name (Cameron) to avoid the confusion of having two Marks in the office. "If only the two Tims would do something," he said, pointedly.



ADAM PETERS

As a forfeit for failing to pay back a loan, Adam was forced to extol the virtues of Reaganomics and capitalism in a very loud voice in the car park. He has since been offered a lectureship at the LSE.



JONATHAN DAVIES

Sometimes it's fun writing this bit of the mag. People love to tell us about all the exciting things they've done. But sometimes they just wish we'd go away and bother someone else. "Can't you just make something up?" asked Jonathan. "I haven't done anything."



RICHARD LONGHURST

Rich looks more like a cross between Morrissey and Jack Dee every day. "I do not," he protested, "and if you print that I'll beat you with this daffodil..."



DAVE GOLDER

It seems Dave's rapidly becoming something of a sex symbol. Apparently he's been getting some fan mail but, frankly, we're at a loss to explain it. "It's my charm, wit, charisma and general good looks," he said, modestly.



How does our scoring system work, then?

- 1 We tell it like it is. We think very carefully about our reviews and games get the mark we think they deserve. Good game or bad, we'll make sure you know what we think.
- 2 Rating systems get confusing so we give a single percentage mark and a few summing-up sentences.
3. It's a simple system. There is no third point.





Mission Briefing, Enye System, 06:00 hours, 2654.110.
Mission briefing precedes any flight in *Wing Commander*. Here's one now.

This nice man has some diagrams. He's really keen to show it to you.



Computer, display Alpha.



Your thoughts wander as the commander makes the rest of the assignments.

This hunk of a guy is you, the hero of our story. He's a dreamboat, and no mistake.

That old joke about the Kilrathi and the hose pipe gets a standing ovation.



Squadron dismissed.

HOW THE WESTERN SPIRAL ARM OF THE GALAXY WAS WON

WING COMMANDER



Wing Commander has long been regarded as the ultimate 3D space opera – without the opera, that is.

It's been a long time coming, but the legendary epic is here

Game: *Wing Commander*
Publisher: Mindscape
Authors: Chris Roberts (Original), Nick Pelling (Amiga version), and a cast of thousands (graphics and sound)
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now

So, *Wing Commander* eh? *Wing Commander* – the game which got people buying big, powerful PCs. *Wing Commander* – the landmark in shoot-'em-ups. *Wing Commander* – the game which saved all that tedious mucking about in hyperspace. *Wing Commander* – the... aww, you

get the idea.

The big problem when approaching a game like this is to separate the hype from the game beneath. It's all too easy to be taken in by the superlatives draped over its shiny, smooth exterior, and it's also very easy to fall into the trap of adding to the hyperbole. What this takes is some kind of cold, detachment. But then, that's not what being a games fan and critic is about. Hell, I'm not a number, I'm a reviewer, and I'll be enthusiastic or caustic if I want to. So there.

The history of Amiga *Wing*

"The first game to really need an A1200"

Commander is widely known, having already faltered on the starting block once, until programming genius Nick Pelling grabbed the reins, with the intent of doing what they all said couldn't be done – bringing *Wing Commander* to the Amiga.

And here it is. So what's new? Not a lot, thankfully.

When you've got a game design so obviously successful as this one, then there's little point in messing around with the winning formula. No, what's been attempted here is an exact recreation of the original game, with the number of colours being the only compromise. The

and it even takes advantage of the new A1200.

results are occasionally a little gaudy, but in the 3D space sections the reduction from 256 to 32 colours is hardly noticeable. Phew. Made it to first base.

HOW DOES IT WORK, UNCLE MARK?

It works something like this. Humanity, just for a change, is at war. This time it's a big budget interstellar affair, complete with chorus girls and Busby Berkeley numbers. The bad guys are a bunch of pussies, literally. Going by stock *Dr Who* (*Great!* – Dave Golder) name number 29 – the Kilrathi – the enemy are lion-like warriors who seem to have some kind of genocidal grudge against the human race.

The player takes on the role of



If in doubt, fly straight at them, with all guns blazing. It really works. Sometimes.

the rookie who, over the course of game will either be the saviour of the human race, or land them in big doo-doo.

The fact that all the blasting bits link together to form a story, means that each time the player returns to base, a debriefing takes place – sometimes followed by another medal to add to the old collection, sometimes a promotion, or sometimes a severe ticking off. After that, it's back to the officer's mess. Here the game can be saved, or a visit to the bar can be made, where other pilots are always keen for a chat – a convenient way of conveying the storyline to the



Paladin, Shotglass and Angel – just three pawns in the war against the villainous Kilrathi. A chat with these guys is always enlightening.





If the ship comes back in this condition then you're doing something wrong.

Before heading off into deep space, let's take one last look at our space station.



Flick that autopilot switch and watch that thing fly like a bat out of hell...

... straight into a battle with the evil Kilrathi. Use the force, Luke.



WING COMMANDER

player. A 'simulator' is also available, for a bit of danger-free flying.

GROOVY, BUT WHAT NEXT?

Brass tacks time, methinks. Let's be honest. *Wing Commander* would be lumped in with all the other mindless 3D shoot-'em-ups out there if it wasn't for the graphics. Quite simply, they are the most complex 3D images yet seen in an Amiga game. In place of abstract 3D vectors, *Wing Commander* offers texture mapped craft. These little cuties actually have surface detail and colouring as if they were plain old sprites, but they can zoom in and out and rotate through all three planes as if they were real, live vectors. In the pictures dotted around this review they may look a bit gaudy and chunky, but when the space ships are actually doing the business - flying towards the player, then peeling off with gunfire smashing against their hulls - that's when the full impact of the graphics technology becomes apparent.

Let's be honest - *Wing Commander* is in a league of its own in terms of graphics technique. Programmer Nick Pelling has performed minor miracles in getting this stuff on the Amiga at all. Okay, so the colours have been compromised quite radically, but the overall effect is still mightily impressive.

The way the missions are threaded together into a coherent

THAT NEW AMIGA



Watch out for this symbol, it indicates views, reviews and percentages on games which take advantage of the capabilities on the Amiga A1200.

storyline shouldn't be underestimated either. The effect serves to draw the player in even further, with little sequences depicting failures or successes in the war effect - all dependent on the performance of the player of course.

In space, the game works as a very simplified flight simulator - even afterburners are available. Depending on the mission and ship type, mines, missiles and various strengths of photon torpedo are available with which to wipe out the bad guys. It's not all fight, fight, fight though. Proximity mines and startlingly fast asteroids also lie in wait in that big thing we call space.

The missions themselves vary between reconnaissance, plain old

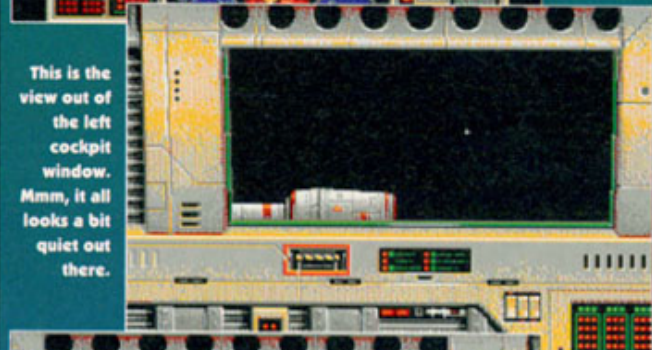


Above: A close brush with the wingman. Hit the brakes!

Left: Mine how you go in areas like this one.



Obviously, the most used view is the good old forward cockpit view. That planet looks familiar.



This is the view out of the left cockpit window. Mmm, it all looks a bit quiet out there.



Meanwhile, through the ndow we can see the wingman. Phew, some company on the trip.



And finally we've got the reverse view - handy when running away from bad guys.

A VIEW TO A KILRATHI





That's one less Kiltrathi fighter to worry about. We'll win this war yet.

Just look at the texture mapping on that - getting this close can be dangerous.



Oh dear, this might be a very good time to apply the brakes.

And it's all over for our brave (but dumb) hero. Toasted marshmallows, anyone?



HOW THE WESTERN SPIRAL ARM OF THE GALAXY WAS WON - VOLUME 2

offensive, and defensive jobs. The latter involve escorting huge transporters to designated jump points, while offensive runs sometimes give the player the chance to strike right into the heart of the Kiltrathi empire, and go up against the might of a huge enemy warship.

Wingmen are available for some missions, with orders sent via intercom - which can also be used to taunt the Kiltrathi during battle. It's all a bit like the fighting sequences of *Elite*, condensed and concentrated into one intense war.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

The design aspect of *Wing Commander* has never been in doubt, let's be honest. The big question mark hanging over the game is one of speed. The original PC version required a pretty damn powerful

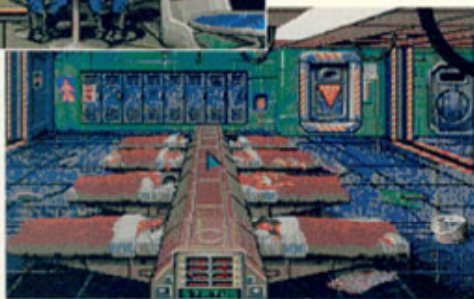


Left: The bar is a good place to glean new information, or try out the simulator

Below: The officers' mess is actually the save/load screen.

machine to rattle along at a decent pace, so doubts have been hanging over the Amiga version since beginning.

It's a real shame, then, that after such attention to detail on the game, the speed lets things down. On a standard Amiga the screen update is painfully slow, the



dynamic graphics being reduced to stop-start blobs. *Wing Commander* has always relied on its pace to create tension and excitement. Without this, it's reduced to a (very slow) graphical showcase. It's certainly not fast enough to make it anywhere near as playable as it should be. Hell, I feel guilty about this. After all, I'm such a fan of the game, and I really can't see how the game could be made any faster without simplifying the graphics system quite radically.

But... it's not all heartache, disappointment, and tragedy. Somebody at Commodore obviously pre-empted all this, and decided to bring out the fabulous, sorry fabulous A1200. It's almost like a cop-out, but on the new machine *Wing Commander* is a dream - and a very swoony, smooth and pretty dream at that.

Good news for buyers of the A1200, then. For these lucky people, an almost exact interpretation of the original *Wing Commander* awaits. The only downer is that we're still dealing with reduced colours here - strange when the A1200 can handle it. The real problem, of course, is that *Wing Commander* on the A1200 shows up *Wing Commander* on the good old Amiga quite badly. Would you really be satisfied with a version which runs three times slower than on your friend's new super Amiga? I think not.

The game itself is still as paper-thin as ever, of course. Strategy and depth are as absent as ever were. But if delicious 3D shoot-'em-ups are your bag, and an A1200 is yours, then *Wing Commander* awaits. The rest of us would do well to think twice before taking a ride on this particular freedom moped out of nowhere city.

● MARK RAMSHAW

The Hornet is the Astra of space ships - kind of nippy but with really bad visibility.



The tastefully decorated Scimitar carries enough hardware to pack a punch.



Another well-armed number, the Rapier is one neat machine.



Another craft with minimal visibility, the Raptor is nevertheless swift, but low on defence systems.



▲ **UPPERS** The entire *Wing Commander* game is in there, and it plays just like the original PC one. Aside from the reduction in colours, this IS the original PC version. Running about three times as fast as it does on the standard Amiga, this is the game the way its supposed to be. Just be thankful that Commodore introduced a new machine which could cope with it all.

▼ **DOWNERS** Some will dismiss this is a mindless shoot-'em-up, with only the clever graphics routines to save it. Whether this is a downer depends on your tastes, really. The A1200 can handle 256 colours, so why not use them all?

▲ **UPPERS** The entire *Wing Commander* game is in there, right down to the last detail.

▼ **DOWNERS** If ever a game was trying too much, then this is it. *Wing Commander* on the standard Amiga is just way too ambitious. Everything is way too slow, even the non-3D sequences - robbing the game of any kind of frantic playability.

▲ **UPPERS** The entire *Wing Commander* game is in there, right down to the last detail.

▼ **DOWNERS** If ever a game was trying too much, then this is it. *Wing Commander* on the standard Amiga is just way too ambitious. Everything is way too slow, even the non-3D sequences - robbing the game of any kind of frantic playability.

▲ **UPPERS** The entire *Wing Commander* game is in there, right down to the last detail.

▼ **DOWNERS** If ever a game was trying too much, then this is it. *Wing Commander* on the standard Amiga is just way too ambitious. Everything is way too slow, even the non-3D sequences - robbing the game of any kind of frantic playability.

CYTRON



Part of the playing area. This is where you get to whizz helplessly about the place and smash into things.

deal of skidding around and shooting.

involves a good



Those blue and orange things look like Marty Moose from National Lampoon's Vacation. But they're robots, honest.

and retrogressive, but pricing it at the 'premium' £30 mark. *Cytron* is, essentially, a cut-down version of a game three years old. It's quite good fun, there's nothing really very wrong with it, but

why bother? There's already something almost exactly the same but better out there, who in their right mind's going to fork out 30 quid on this? Still, on with the review, eh?

A rash of robot games this month. The first

Game: Cytron
Publisher: Psygnosis
Authors: Lunatic Software
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now

"A sort of cross between *Paradroid 90* and *RoboSport*"

Well, it's exactly the same as *Paradroid 90* really, isn't it? Metallic scrolling mazes, zip around them in a little robot thing, shoot lots of

baddies and log on to a funny computer thing every now and again and faff around a bit. Looks pretty conclusive from where I'm sitting. Ah, but hang on a minute - there's a twist! (Nope, it's no use, I'm not going to be able to keep up this feigned enthusiasm). In *Cytron*, as well as running

around a scrolling metallic maze in a little robot thing shooting bad guys, you can, er, split up your little robot thing into TWO, even littler, robot things, with which you, um, run around the scrolling metallic mazes and, er, shoot bad guys. Oh, that's all right then.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

After so much innovation from Psygnosis, it's a little disturbing to see them not only releasing stuff this simple

A TALE OF TWO ROBOTS

Cytron is actually a sort of cross between *Paradroid 90* and *Robotron*, in as much as that you have to save lots of little scientists who can be found lying around in the various mazes that make up the

TELL YOU WHAT, LOG ON TO THAT COMPUTER

Logging on to one of the computer terminals grants you access to a whole world of fun, with the aid of which you can just about



Initially you're armed with only two weapons (a laser and a grenade launcher), but collecting weapon tokens will permit you to load up with more impressive hardware. Some weapons can only be used by one of the two little robots, whereas some require them to be joined together as *Cytron* before they can be operated.



Well, it's your status, really, isn't it?



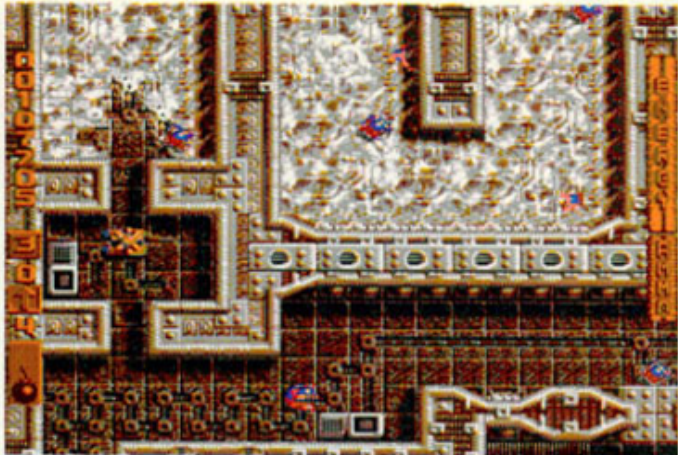
The first options screen. Note also the vertical bar at the right-hand side - it shows how much longer you'll be allowed to muck around with the computer terminal before being automatically logged off.



ON

game's levels. To get to some of them (or just to progress through the level), you'll sometimes have to split your Cytron robot into two smaller ones called (ahem) Cyt and Ron. Up all night thinking of that one, yeah? These have the advantage of being able to fit through tiny gaps and reach areas which are otherwise inaccessible, which is a nice idea, although in practice it mostly just means a lot of fairly pointless faffing around as you get to a narrow section, split your robot up, move one little bit through, move the other little bit through and join them up again.

other stuff (weapons upgrades, clever ways to control your robot's with joystick, 'locking' joystick, mouse, two joysticks, two mice, and probably your TV's remote control as well, power-ups that make you invisible or cause all the scientists on a level to home in on you, doors and barriers that have to be switched on and off, and all manner of clever stuff that you can do with the computer terminals littered around each level), but it's only window-dressing - 95% of the time you'll



Left: The maze has inexplicably become flooded with marshmallow fluff. Whatever shall we do?

Below: Mazes everywhere and no sign of Richard O'Brien.



The game positively bulges with



everything you can see, and that's about it.

HEAVY INERTIA, MAN

Unfortunately, for the duration of that 95% of the time, you'll be zipping around shooting the wrong things and zipping in entirely the wrong direction,

Get your lovely power-ups here.

thanks (but no thanks) to the, um, over-enthusiastic control response of your little robot things. It's extremely inertia-heavy (well, be zipping around shooting

"Good old fashioned fun"

move your robot in a direction before you can fire that way. Nothing wrong with that in itself, but with the tight design of many of the game's levels and the aforementioned lurching movement, you'll spend more time simply ramming your enemies than you do shooting them. Still, some people like that kind of thing - look at *Kick Off 2*. (Oh no, not again. - Ed)

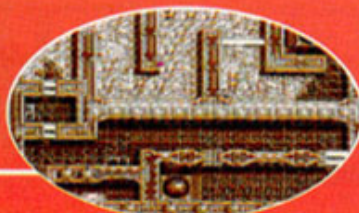
DON'T IT MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD?

Still, let's be fair and conscientiously list all the game's good points and mitigating factors, despite the fact that it won't make the slightest difference to the final mark, on the grounds that a game should be judged on whether it entertains you and makes you feel good, regardless of any technical considerations. No, on second thoughts, let's not bother, eh?

● STUART CAMPBELL

convince yourself that you're actually doing something intellectually demanding.

This lets you distribute your energy supply between your two little robots, so that, for example, if one's sitting safely in a corner somewhere with a full tank and the other one's nearly dead, you can switch some energy between them (well, as long as they're both logged into terminals, that is). You also have a reserve tank, for which you can collect energy as you go through the levels.



Much of the security menu is off-limits until you collect various passes, but with full access you can see a floor plan of the current level, pinpoint the position of any scientists, detect any enemies that you've somehow neglected to shoot so far, turn the lights off (it makes it harder for the enemy robots to hunt you down), stop the level self-destruct which is initiated when certain enemy robots spot you, and throw switches in the level at will to open doors and reverse conveyor belts and all kinds of clever stuff like that.

- ▲ **UPPERS** Good old-fashioned fun, lots of nice touches (especially in the control department), and a reasonable pretence at depth in what's really a simple maze shoot-'em-up.
- ▼ **DOWNERS** It's pretty skinny in the gameplay department, and the price is pointlessly outrageous.

THE BOTTOM LINE
Does what it does nicely, but that doesn't really amount to much. Uncomplicated, undemanding, unsophisticated but still entertaining, it screams out 'MAKE ME MID-PRICE!' at the very top of its voice, but nobody's listening. And it was all done so much better in *Paradroid 90*, so why bother?

61 PERCENT





Game: Bill's Tomato Game
Publisher: Psygnosis
Authors: Bill Pullan, Lee Carus-Westcott, Mike Clarke
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now

Now that Psygnosis have put back the release date of *Lemmings 2* until after Christmas, *Bill's Tomato Game* is their big hope for a Christmas hit. And in essence, it's not too far removed from *Lemmings* in concept. (*Oh no! More comparisons! - Ed*) It's pacifistic, it's a puzzle game disguised as a platform game, it's cute(ish). I expect Psygnosis believe anyone who bought *Lemmings* and is going to buy *Lemmings 2* is likely to appreciate *Bill's Tomato Game*.

THE MORE THAN SLIGHTLY UNFEASIBLE PLOT

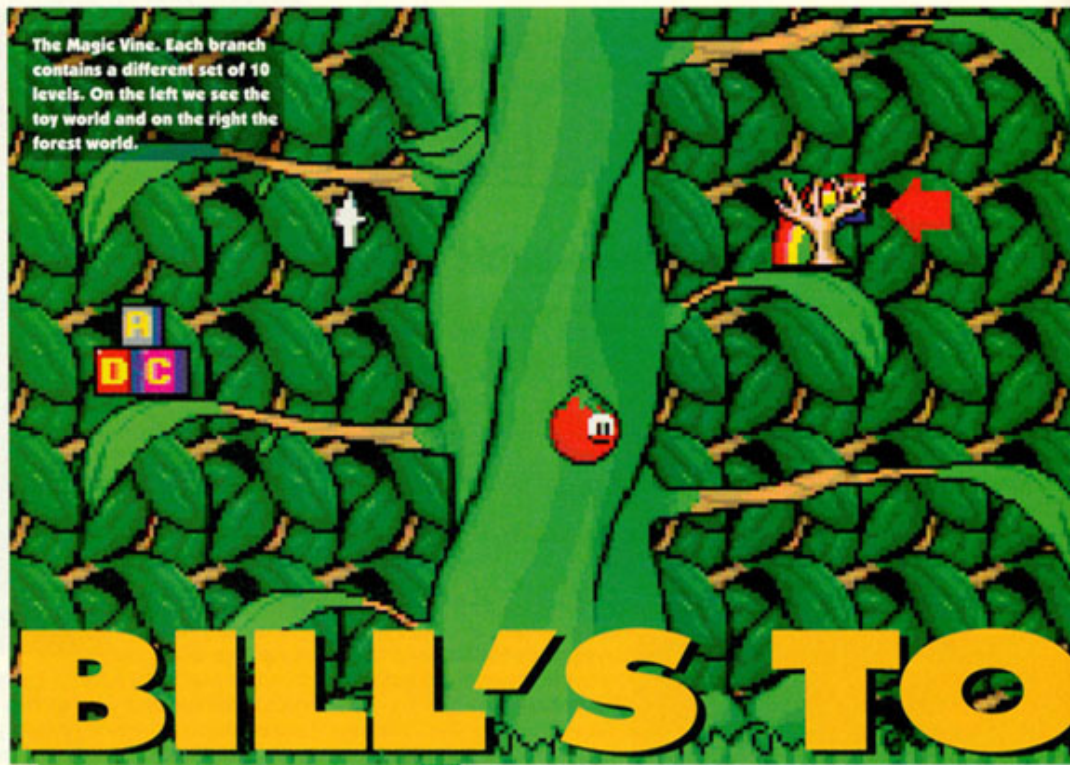
Bill's Tomato Game is one of those games that requires a considerable suspension of disbelief. In fact, put your suspension of disbelief on overtime and tell him he can have next weekend off if he just bears with this game for a little while. It concerns the fortunes (or rather misfortunes) of Terry and Tracy Tomato. You see, they're in love, and they've been put on a truck to be taken to the market and suffer the inevitable fate of being eaten. Not wishing to suffer this dire fate, our Tel and Trace jump off the truck (it's never really explained how they manage this) and, er, run away.

All seems rosy, but then another disaster strikes. While they're wallowing in their new found happiness, Sam the squirrel jumps on Tracy and kidnaps her. It's now down to Terry to rescue the fruit in distress. It's funny that, I always considered squirrels a lot more cute and furry than tomatoes, but in this game our sympathies are forced to lie with the salad ingredients. Now Sam (the squirrel, remember) has taken Tracy up a magic vine, and for Terry to get her back again he has to scale this mystical vegetation. And this is where the game starts. After the intro sequence has finished and you're fully clued up on what's to be done, you are given the task of controlling Terry on his perilous journey to rescue Tracy. (If by now you're wondering who Bill is, he's the guy who wrote the thing).

The game is made up of 100 levels in all, which Terry has to complete in order

Platform puzzlers come in many different

The Magic Vine. Each branch contains a different set of 10 levels. On the left we see the toy world and on the right the forest world.



BILL'S TO

shapes and sizes. This one's round, red and very squashy.

to save Tracy from the evil clutches of her furry abductor. The levels are organised into 10 sets of 10, so when you complete the 10 levels of one world, you are taken back to the magic vine where you have to move up the vine to the next world and complete the next 10 levels. These inter-level sequences are the most frustrating parts

of the game. Using the mouse (as you do throughout the game) you have to get Terry up to another branch of the magic vine, and basically it's tedious and frustrating. I suppose it serves as a break after the 10 levels of puzzling you've been doing, but it's even more frustrating when you keep getting knocked off by a bee who's flying around the vine. I mean, since when could a bee knock a tomato off a

vine? (I'm sorry, my suspension of disbelief just nipped out for a packet of biscuits and I lost it there for a minute.)

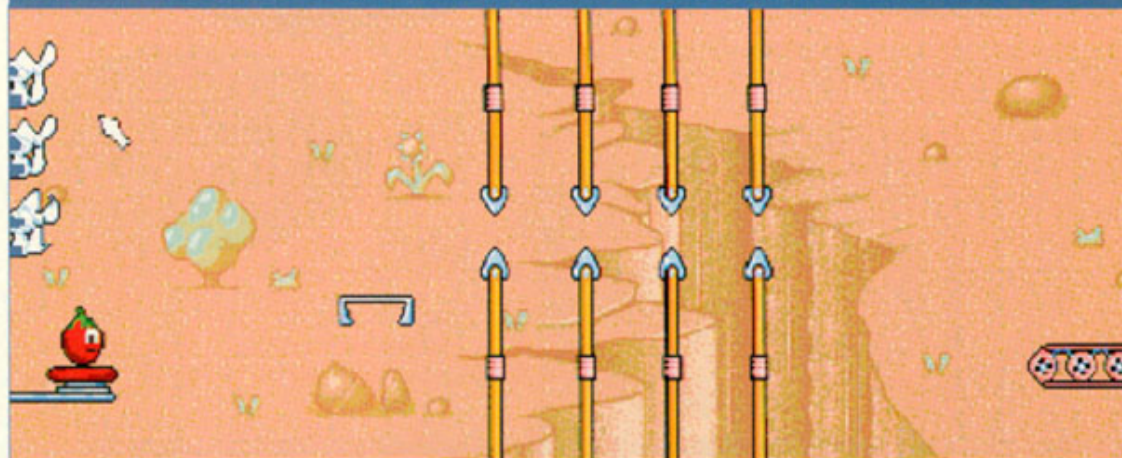
THE FLESHY SUBSTANCE OF THE GAME

But all this is by the by, because the main gameplay of *Bill's Tomato Game* concerns an intriguing and somewhat original game. You start with Terry on one



I'VE JUST GOT TO KETCHUP WITH MY LIFE

He's really being put through his paces this tomato. The spears move, but your timing has to be spot on to ensure you don't become part of an elaborate vegetable kebab. This could put you off vegetables for life, which for the vegetarians amongst you only leaves, er, wood I suppose.



Sam makes his entrance and Terry can only look on in dismay, as the odds are heavily stacked against a tomato in a fight with a squirrel. What'll he do when he catches up with them?



As you can see the levels get pretty tough. No other tomatoes in the history of all tomato-dom have ever been put through this.

What's this? It's not another tomato (or if it is, it's a bloody strange one). It's a balloon type thing on which Terry can bounce, but just you try getting this one right, it's a killer.



A particularly nasty implement awaits Terry when he gets to the toy world.

MATATO GAME

side of the screen, and you have to get him to the other. Now the problem is that, being a tomato, Terry can't actually move (we'll skip the question of how he managed to run away from the truck for now, just promise your suspension of disbelief two weeks off at Christmas). He's placed on a spring and without any help he'd simply jump up and down on the spring, going absolutely nowhere. Much like *Lemmings* in concept, you have various objects at your disposal which aid Tel in his progress. The most fundamental of these are the fans, which blow our squishy friend across the screen after he has been launched from the spring. You can place trampolines, jack-in-the-boxes, blocks and more fans on the screen to propel him towards the conveyor belt at the other side of the screen. The game works to the actual laws of physics - placing the fans at higher levels creates different air movement, and bouncing on trampolines depends totally on how you land on them.

Yeah, it's a puzzler, and a thoroughly engaging one at that. Each world starts off fairly simply, but the difficulty goes up on the later levels. To add to the problems there's a time limit, which varies. You can launch Terry on his journey as many times as you like within the time limit, which mostly results in him being splattered on an object on the screen, or falling squishily to the floor. Once you're time is up you have to start the level again, so all your carefully placed objects have to be re-placed on the screen - incredibly frustrating when you've set up a complex chain of

events that are so close to working but need some fine tuning. But it's not the kind of frustration that makes you throw down the mouse and load up *Lemmings* again. No, it really grabs you, this one, and everyone I've played it with has just been unable to turn it off. The thing is, you get so far towards getting the solution (and there is often more than one solution to a level) that you can't bear to turn it off until you've got it. And the sense of satisfaction at getting it right is much like the feeling you get when you relieve your bladder after a long coach journey. (Oh dear. You just can't get the staff anymore. - Ed) When you finish a

level you get a password, which you must write down and keep in a safe place so you can skip straight to that level later on. The passwords are all randomly generated, so you have to ensure that your disk isn't write protected when you're playing the game - if you entered the same password on a friend's version of the game it would take you to a totally different level. It may seem that this game has only a certain amount to offer, after all 100 levels of puzzles must get tiresome after a while. Well happily this isn't the

case with *BTG*. Each level has different obstacles, and often completely different methods required to get the tomato to its loved one. The game demands you change tactics and strategies constantly, and completing one level can be no guarantee of successfully negotiating another. The graphics look like they've come straight out of a platform game - they're bright, bold and, yes cute and the backgrounds are superb, so there's always something to keep you interested visually. It manages to bring humour into the proceedings too, mainly through the graphics and the alarming squelch that accompanies Terry's splatly demise. A



great new puzzle game with an original(ish) angle that really hits the mark. ● TIM TUCKER

"A thoroughly engaging puzzler"



- ▲ **UPPERS** Looks good, sounds good, plays even better, and most importantly you won't want to turn it off. The sort of game where you go to bed at night and you're still trying to work out a way of doing it. Loads of fun.
- ▼ **DOWNERS** Inter-level vine jumping is a bit of a pain. Some of the levels are extremely hard too, and it's arguable that the game does lack substance.

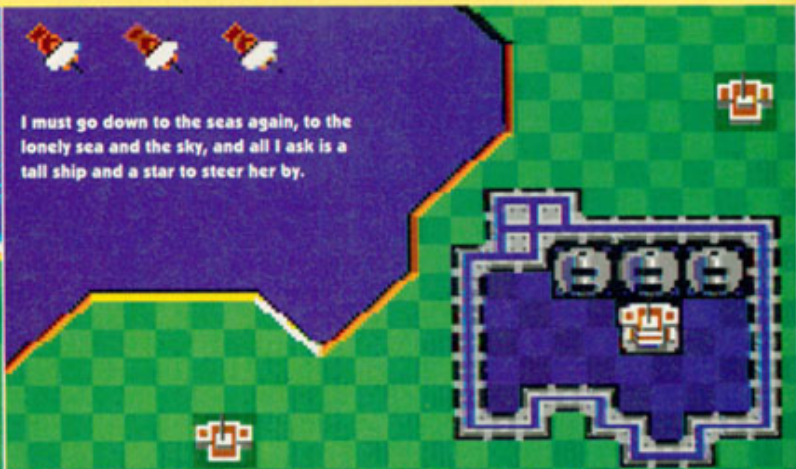
THE BOTTOM LINE
If you liked *Lemmings*, and you're looking forward to *Lemmings 2*, then you're sure to like this. Puzzle games need new ideas to make them interesting, and this has got plenty.

81





In one-player mode, those horrid people in the ships shoot their guns at you and make nasty holes in your castle.



PLACE CANNONS
POSITION INSIDE FORT WALLS

RAMPART

Every other format has had a *Rampart* conversion for ages. Now we've got one.

Game: Rampart
Publisher: Domark
Authors: In house
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

approach is going to get you out of it this time, either. Have another go. - Ed)

Oh God, I just can't seem to find the tone here at all. I think what we need is one of those reviews that all the crap dweebs who write in complaining all the time about how we don't like football management sims or wargames or RPGs or whatever seem to want - the facts, and nothing but the facts. Here goes, then.

Trainspotters of the world, this one's for you.

walls (you choose your site from a selection of five offered at the beginning of the game), within the boundaries of which you place three cannons. By guiding a target sight with the mouse or joystick you fire these cannons at a number of ships which sail towards the coastline of the island (which is green, interestingly) on which your castles are situated, attempting to sink them. The ships (which are

brown), however, fire back at you, attempting to destroy the walls surrounding your castle. While doing this, they also attempt to reach the beaches of

A bout time, too. What kept you? We've been waiting for this simple arcade conversion for about a year now, so surely the least we can expect is an absolutely pixel-perfect job, yes? (Dear me, I'm in a belligerent mood this morning. Better get a grip.)

Hurrah, we've been waiting ages for this fabulous arcade game to be converted to the Amiga and now here it is. (No, it's no good, they'll never swallow that one.)

Fish! Stirling Albion! 32-piece dinner service! Double decker bus! Centipedes! (Snip! I don't think the 'wacky surrealist'

"A fab two-player game"

IN THE STYLE OF...

Rampart is a conversion of a Tengen (ie Atari) coin-op. It can be played by one or two players, in three basic game styles. First, there's a one-player mode. Here, you start off with a castle surrounded by



Above: Selecting one or two-player mode is a simple matter of joining in.

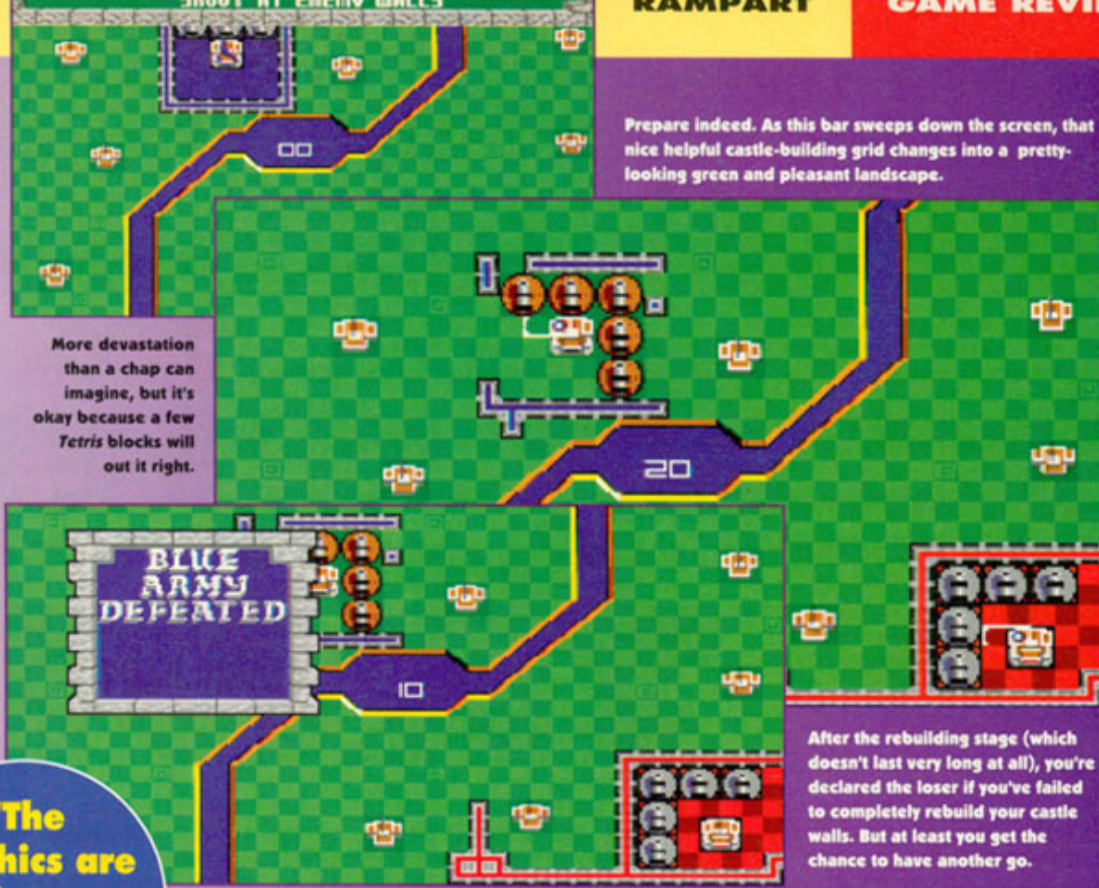
Left: High scores a go-go. Old A. always seems to do well.

BOOM BANG-A-BANG

The most important part of the two-player game seems to be the castle-building bit (it's certainly the trickiest), but the best fun is to be had from the shooting-the-bejaysus-out-of-the-other-chap's-castles bit.



the island and disgorge troops. If they're successful, the troops advance on the other, unprotected castles (which are grey), and destroy them. After a short period of time has elapsed, the 'shooting' stage of the game ends and you move on to the 'rebuilding' stage. Here, a number of random geometrical shapes (a bit like the ones in *Tetris*, interestingly) are placed one at a time under your control, and using the mouse you move, rotate and place them in the gaps in your castle wall



More devastation than a chap can imagine, but it's okay because a few Tetris blocks will out it right.

After the rebuilding stage (which doesn't last very long at all), you're declared the loser if you've failed to completely rebuild your castle walls. But at least you get the chance to have another go.



created by the enemy fire, attempting to reconstruct the wall so that your castle is once more completely surrounded. You can also attempt to extend the walls so that they surround one or more of the other, unprotected castles. If you fail to surround any castles in the allotted time, your game is over, but if you succeed, you are awarded a number of extra cannons to place, dependant on how many castles you have claimed and how successful you were in the previous round. These cannons, though, still have to be placed within castle walls, so you must make sure you leave enough room for the cannons, which, take up four squares of the castles' chequer-patterned floors. The game progresses in this manner, with increasing numbers of enemy ships, until you fail to surround a castle or have them all destroyed by enemy troops.

"The graphics are mostly green and blocky"

WHY DO YOU BUILD ME UP, BUTTERCUP, JUST TO LET ME DOWN

(ANSWERS ON A POSTCARD PLEASE)

The second type of game in *Rampart* is the standard two-player

A lovely neat row of enemy ships, just waiting for you to blast them.



mode. In this, the two players (one of whom plays the 'Red' army, the other playing the 'Blue' army) face each other across a river. The gameplay is largely the same, except without ships or troops – you simply shoot at the other player's castle walls, in an attempt to make them as

difficult for him to rebuild at the end of the round as possible.

(TO CLARE RAYNER)

Lastly, you can play a game which is a hybrid between the two, featuring both human players playing near a river estuary (which is the point at which a river opens out and flows into the sea, interestingly), towards which computer-controlled red and blue ships sail, fulfilling the same task as the computer enemies do in the one-player game, viz, shooting at the other side's walls and landing troops. It is, of course, rather more difficult and complicated than either of the other two game types.

SOME MORE FACTS

The graphics are mostly green and blocky, although they change to a rather prettier (oops, sounds like a bit of opinion creeping in there, better edit that out later) contoured and curved landscape once the building stage is complete (while this is happening, the ground takes on a chequered pattern with all angles simplified to either 45 or 90 degrees to aid with block placing). Sound consists of some simple explosions and militaristic jingles, plus the odd snatch of sampled speech ('Cease firing!', that kind of thing). You can control the action with mouse or joystick, the joystick method involving some complex manipulation to compensate for the presence of only one fire button to perform both rotation and placing with. The response to either system, though, is rather slow. (Although 'slow' is of course a relative and subjective

term, and we don't want any subjectivity in here, do we? Let's just say, then, that it's 'Not nearly as fast, for example, as in the Super Nintendo version of the game' and leave it at that.) At the end of the two-player game, there's a sequence where the victorious player gets to execute the other one with a guillotine, but there's no blood. The enemy ships all have single tall masts, sometimes with sails up and sometimes with them down, and there are several skill levels you can choose, mainly involving more difficult coastlines to defend. If you choose one of the harder levels, you get a points bonus for surviving the first round, and at the end of the game you can enter your name on the high score table, using up to three letters.

That's that, then. Dull way to review a game, wasn't it? Will you please shut up now? (You know who you are.)

● **STUART CAMPBELL**

▲ UPPERS Great mix of arcade skill-testing, and a fab two-player game.

▼ DOWNERS Really sluggish and annoying mouse control, and the joystick mode just doesn't work with one button.

THE BOTTOM LINE
I've probably been a bit spoiled by other versions (especially the SNES) making this one look a bit sad, but it's still a pretty neat arcade game at heart. Not, by a long way, worth £26 unless you're going to be regularly playing the two-player game, though.

66 PERCENT



Torn between having a go at darts and being the prize, our toy-based hero presses onwards.

Was that guy in the kiosk dodgy-looking or what? Checking his change, Troll heads for the circus.



They're invading card shops throughout the land - now they're heading this way.

Game: Trolls
Publisher: Flair
Authors: In house
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

TROLLS

Do you believe in fate? Do you put it down to bad karma when you walk into a lamp post as you're checking how cool you look in a shop window, or just particularly poor urban planning? My fate, if fate exists, seems to have drawn me closer and closer to ugly little creatures with blue eyes and nasty hair, and I don't mean the rest of the AMIGA POWER team.

Being a new kid both in the quaint, historical town of Bath, as well as at AMIGA POWER, I've been doing my homework and generally nosing around the place. Flicking through back issues every night as I'm tucked up in bed, I've noticed that AMIGA POWER reviewers seem to have caught onto 'console-esque' as being THE key word to refer to cute platform games involving humorous ants/goldfish/eggs/etc leaping around onto the heads of equally humorous bad guys.

Completely separate from this observation, or so I thought, was the point that Bath shops are currently packed full of trolls. Row upon row of these small plastic nasties line the shelves, each with a permanent smirk that is, I suppose, meant to look cute; huge blue eyes that undoubtedly are cute; and a shock of lurid hair that wouldn't look out of place on any of the 'My Little Pony' range of monstrosities. I've seen these troll dolls everywhere and, what with marketing ties being the way they are, can see that only total thermonuclear war will prevent a Trolls cartoon from appearing on children's TV in the next few months.

You might think, as did I, that my bedtime reading and yucky plastic figures are two seemingly unconnected events plucked at random from

my hum-drum existence, so imagine my utter surprise when a game landed on my desk that was not only completely impossible to review without using the words 'cute' and 'console-esque', but also features a purple haired troll as its main character. After such an astonishing display of some unknown, higher order of destiny manipulating the very essence of my life, who am I to dismiss the fundamental interconnectedness of all events? I won't even try.

"Perhaps my parameters are too constrained"

Trolls is extremely cute and the gameplay can be described as highly console-esque (just thought I'd get these references over with as soon as possible) and the story line would make even Dr H Lector MD weep over his chianti and fava beans at the beauty and tragedy it portrays.

We're told that the

troll started off as one of the thousands of toys that are currently clogging window displays around the country. This lifeless toy sat amongst the wood shavings of lovingly handmade items in an old toy maker's store, until one night, at the stroke of midnight, a magic portal into strange new worlds opened up and breathed life

into his still form. It all sounds perfectly credible to me, in fact during my shelf stacking days at college I lost count of the number of times I saw Ken and Barbie magically spring to life only to shrug off their middle class values and clothing and hit the road as new age travellers in Barbie's dubiously pink camper-van.

However, unlike these miniature plastic beatniks, the little troll not only has new life, but also a deep sense of destiny, with a voice from within urging him to take up the

Just in case you forgot the game plot, there's a subliminal message included



SWEET TROLLEY



It's got candy in it, it's a land - It's Candyland. Hideously cute backgrounds compete with the sickeningly cute Troll for the world cute prize.

Plunging through a level with a caloric count in the high billions, and he still doesn't look happy. There's no pleasing some people.



This elephant has all sorts of problems.

heroic task of rescuing lost troll babies and returning them to their mummy and daddy trolls. Eat your heart out Hansel and Gretel – see how the word 'cute' is an inevitability?

In its favour I'd have to admit that *Trolls* is the best re-animated plastic figure platform based game I've ever seen, but perhaps my parameters are slightly too constrained to be in any way objective. (Of course they are. I was only thinking almost the same thing myself. – Ed) To anyone who's seen *Zool* and *Doodlebug*, *Trolls* is going to seem eerily familiar, with themed levels, backgrounds and graphics shockingly similar to both. Not that this is an uncommon state of affairs, everyone seems to be trying to release their own 'definitive' version of a platform game at the moment, so like 'flu going round the office, there's a lot of it about.

At the beginning of each level you're given the number of baby trolls you must find before progressing onto the next level. Progress from level to level is by flying pig (and why not?) and your journey is occasionally marked by a big red elephant. Since elephants never forget, when you lose a life you're returned to where the elephant remembers seeing you last. A nice touch.

Each level is based on a particular theme and with fifteen different lands and each land having several levels, there's obviously plenty to plough your way through. Also by collecting the letters to spell 'Bogus' or 'Bonus' you get life-taking or giving levels, and altogether the game boasts over 70 levels. I'm sure that this has to be enough, even for the most ardent platform fan.

Taking a smack in the mouth is enough to ruffle anyone's hair, even if it's long, garish and nylon.



Aaah, what a lovely, fluffy teddy, what a cutesy-wutesy car, what a shiney-winey train, what a lushy-wushy etc, etc... ..

But of course it's not all babies, babies, babies. Spread thickly around each level are balloons which you can run past and pop. After an impressive shower of spinning stars you can pick up objects or powers that also change the troll's hair colour, for springy shoes you get blue hair, red for a shield and so on.

Problem balloons lumber you with a ball and chain, which slows you down, or a can of Skol, which makes your control over the troll highly unpredictable and presumably gives the little fella a pounding headache when it wears off. The most useful item you can get is the yo-yo, with which

you can swing spiderman-like across gaps and also smash down walls.

After all my previous comments about the ugliness of the toys, I'm forced to admit that although the character looks exactly like them, he still manages to look cute. I'd put it down to his animation, with his long hair wating and his stubby little arms flailing around as he leaps the obstacles. It's all very well done and a lot more impressive than in *Doodlebug*, for example.

The baddies are themed to each level, to unusual effect in some cases. In 'Candy Land' you're pursued by jelly tots and other wobbly things, which is understandable. In 'Boardgame Land' there's plenty of dice and snake tomfoolery, which is fine by me. But in 'Media Land' you're principally attacked by cameras, erasers and, quite bizarrely, the letter 'T'. Not generally known as one of the more ferocious consonants, this twentieth-letter-of-

the-alphabet type attack took me completely by surprise, and resulted in a great many troll deaths before I realised the devious intentions of this capital letter.

And that, as they say, is that, really. Lots of running around and trailing coloured hair, more beautifully animated stars than you know what to do with and hoards of peculiar nasties leaping about. It's colourful, tunefully packed with boppy little, er, tunes and features wonderful visual touches like the troll blinking and the flatulent-looking elephant.

It's not without its flaws though. There are numerous points where you have to take leaps of faith into the unknown that frequently end up in your swift demise. Taken as a whole, though, this is a pretty seamless presentation. Okay, so it's a cutesy, platform game, and if you don't like them then you won't like this, as it follows the platform rule book to the letter. If you do like them then I'd say this is the one to get, as it's approaching near perfection (*lsh. – Ed*) as far as smoothness and graphics are concerned. I could live without the dolls littering my life and won't be holding my breath to see if my idea of a TV franchise will take off, but *Trolls* the game is definitely worth a bash.

● **MARK WINSTANLEY**



Check out the floor made out of chocolate blocks looking almost, but not quite, like that well known brand. It avoids copyright infringements anyway.



If the Troll takes the lolly from the fat bloke then he should make jolly sure he brushes his teeth later. And so should you at home, kids.

UPPERS Great graphics and sound. At 70-plus levels this is as big a game as you're ever going to need. Nicely varied themes, colourful and cute beyond belief, this is definitely the thing for you if you're a platform kind of kid.

DOWNERS Adds nothing original to the platform scene. This may be one of the better additions to the genre but we've seen it all before.

THE BOTTOM LINE With a high quality of graphics and presentation and an almost fault-free level of playability, *Trolls* really can't be faulted technically. However when playing it, you get that feeling of déjà-vu. Perhaps with so many platforms around being just faultless isn't enough and we need to see more original concepts. (Or then again, perhaps not.)

83 PERCENT





KGB

The graphic adventure comes of age in a political thriller about the

Game: KGB
Publisher: Virgin
Authors: Cryo
Price: £30.99
Release: Out now

of initials before settling on KGB in 1954 (it was the NKVD in the 1930s that were responsible for 'disappearing' so many people). Actually, here's an alarming story I heard about the Stalin era from an old teacher of mine who spend some time in the '70s studying in the USSR. He met an old woman whose husband had been arrested and imprisoned in the '30s for alleged anti-Soviet activities. She never saw him again, but many years later she was allowed to see his file. It contained the original information sheet, typed when he was arrested. On the sheet was the man's name, his address and

nothing else. The space for the charge was blank and there were no other papers in the file. No one ever

graphics. The characters have character, the scenery is scenic, the static screens between sections show (mainly) beautiful pictures of Moscow, and the whole thing draws you into the seedy, scruffy and

Soviet Union's infamous bad guys.

PUTSCH AND SHOVE

Anyway, back to the action. *KGB* is a graphic adventure set in post-Perestroika USSR in the days immediately before the August putsch. You play the part of Captain Maksim Rukov, formerly of the GRU - the Red Army's intelligence service - and now assigned to Department P of the KGB. He seems like a nice enough chap, if a little inexperienced, and his superiors have something of a soft spot for him (they knew his father). He works in a grotty office in Moscow and he gets his orders from a rather grumpy Colonel.

The interface is quite friendly - mostly point and click stuff - and, as a result, the game is very easy to get into. And once you're in, you'll be captivated by it. The atmosphere is established almost as soon as you begin playing by the superbly drawn and detailed

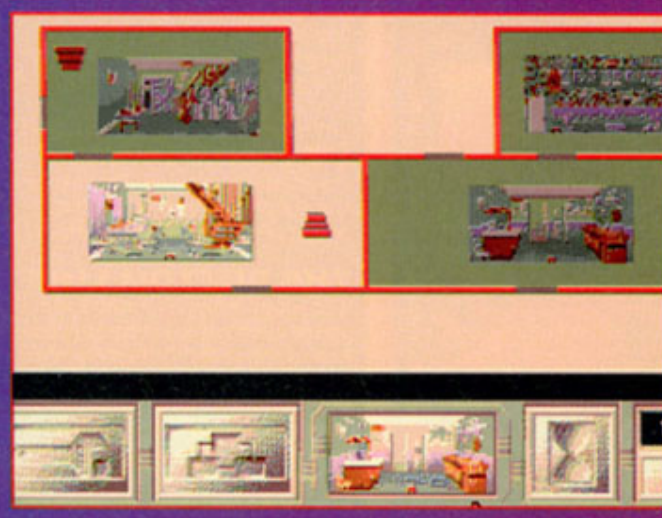
"The game is very easy to get into"

The Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (that's KGB to the likes of you and

me), is a mysterious and shadowy organisation whose name is synonymous with underhandedness, sinisterness, and general nastiness of all sorts. Soviet state security went through various mysterious sets



WHAT HAVE YOU GOT IN YOUR POCKETS?



The inventory pointer is easy to use, just click on a verb and point at the object.



You have the most astonishingly capacious pockets. Only a pair of jeans and a jacket and you're carrying all this tat.

Click on the second icon from the left and you get this really helpful map of all the rooms you've explored in your present location. This is the naughty butcher's shop. But is it the shop or the butcher that's naughty?





The club's manager won't let you in unless you're a member, but he wants money to let you join. Let's hope you took that money from your bedroom.

IF YOU LIKE A LOT OF CHOCOLATE ON YOUR BISCUIT, JOIN OUR CLUB

slightly unwholesome Soviet underworld. (Or, at least, into what I imagine the Soviet underworld is like, having never actually experienced it personally.)

Your first mission, by way of introduction to the whole thing, is nice and simple. You have to investigate the murder of a private investigator named Geltsin. So you troll off to his office, search the place, and eventually meet his sister. She gives you a tape, you listen to it, you go back to base and get your next orders. Now that's all well and groovy, but of course you can't listen to the tape

"Superbly drawn and detailed graphics"

It's not much but it's home. Actually you live with your Uncle Vanya who's an irascible old fool.

unless you find the tape machine, and you don't find that unless you've got the key to one of the drawers in the office. But you can't get the key until you've tried to open it and found it locked and then gone outside and asked the guard for the key (not my first idea) and... The problem with old-fashioned text adventures was that the puzzles tended to be thoroughly irritating in that they had utterly illogical solutions. You know the sort of thing where you could open the secret door only if you had



the ruby in your right hand, the dagger in your left, you jumped in the air three times, spun round and sang the American national anthem in Spanish with a Welsh accent. Yeah right.

to that point that I actually saw them. Is my meeting with them random, or what? Once they appeared, everything suddenly came together, but where had they been up until then? If you're going to have a whole section of the game dependent on the presence of two characters, the least you can do is make sure they're there. Isn't it?

THAT'S ILLOGICAL, CAPTAIN

Things have improved in recent years. The solutions to the problems are now slightly more logical. But, in KGB, it seems that unless you do everything in exactly the right order (which, first time, can only be by good fortune) you're just as stuck as you would have been if the solution was completely bizarre. This linearity can be a bit of a downer.

Take, for example, the rather more complex second mission. You need to find the identity of the geezer you found out about in the first mission. Unless you see two muggers and overhear their conversation, you'll never get anywhere. But it wasn't until the third or fourth time I'd played it

Oh, and sudden death. Don't you just hate it when that happens? It was outstandingly frustrating to be killed by another two fools (ugly twins) every time I did anything with no idea of what was going wrong. (It was because I hadn't met the muggers, and without them there was nothing else to do but talk to the thugs and get killed... Aaaaarrrrrgh!) At least when you die you're given the option of backtracking to a point before you made your fatal error, but given the linearity of the game, this often isn't helpful -



The main game pointer is usually set to 'smart pointer' which selects the most likely option for you (like 'look' when you run the pointer over an object). But if you want to do something else, you can call up this pointer menu and do what you want.





You finally manage to break into the butcher's shop. It was dark, but I didn't dare turn on the light in case I was spotted. So what on earth should I do?



AND THERE WAS LIGHT

Right: The hall outside your office. Why does Lenin always look so sad?

Below: Those muggers in full. Now why didn't I see them earlier?



Dungeons And Dragons stuff and all its clones can get a bit samey after a while (although there's an occasional gem like *Legend*) and the comic book style of *Monkey Island* can be a bit wearisome as well. So an adventure based in the real world with a bit of (fairly) current affairs thrown in is a bit of a godsend.

If it were a bit freer, it'd be an absolute classic but as it is, it's just utterly fab.

● TIM NORRIS

presented too. There's quite a bit of info in there about the history of the

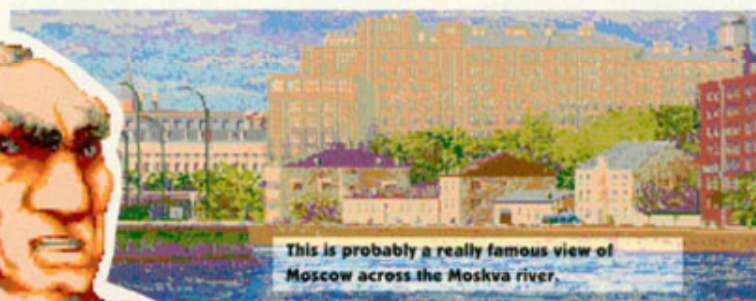
Soviet intelligence agencies and a little background on the political situation in the USSR towards the end of Gorbachev's premiership. As with so many other games, this sort of attention to detail in the manual adds greatly to the atmosphere and gives a real feel for the world that you're going to be living in.

If you look around at the world of popular books, movies and TV shows, you'll see it full of political thrillers. Spies, secret agents, intrigue, murder, cover-ups, corruption – staple fare of popular culture. But where are the games?

Floor 13 seems about the limit of it, really.

So there's a massive hole in the market for this sort of thing, and this particular thing is just the sort of thing that'll nicely fill said hole. I love adventures, but the

"It draws you in to the seedy Soviet underworld"



This is probably a really famous view of Moscow across the Moskva river.

unless you've done all the right things in roughly the right order, you're pretty much stuffed. So even though I had the option of not saying whatever it was I'd said to make the twins kill me, I still couldn't progress since I knew nothing about the muggers who weren't actually there...

The aforementioned friendly interface has a couple of nice little features to help you along the way. As well as the usual tools (including a 'backtrack' option to allow you to change your mind about earlier decisions) there's a little map of what you've explored so far; there's a very usable inventory; and there's a 'replay' function which lets you go back to see again what people have said to you, in case your note-taking isn't up to scratch.

The manual I saw (a rough version) was pretty well-

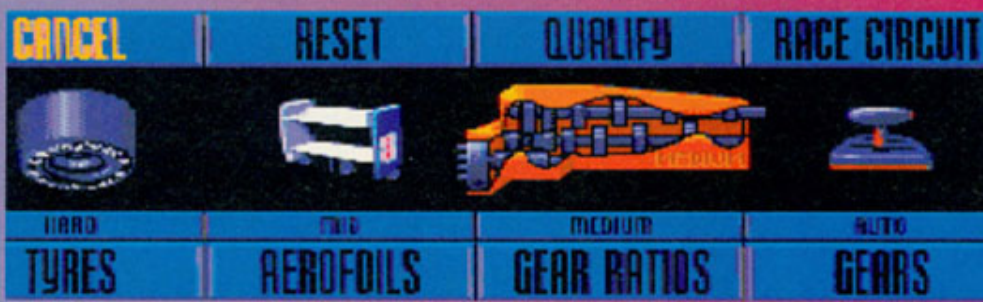
UPPERS It'll draw you into the murky world of Soviet free enterprise and black-marketeering with atmospheric graphics and characterisations. It seems extremely well researched and feels somehow 'right'.

DOWNERS It's too linear - you have to solve the problems in the order the author wants you to. There's no room for exploration or doing things your own way.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you're an adventurer who wants to get away from monsters and magic, and doesn't fancy all the comic-book stuff of the *Monkey Islands* of this world, then this could be exactly what you've been looking for. Political thriller novels always sell well, it would seem obvious that there's quite a market for this sort of thing.

85 PERCENT



Tune your car for the to improve your performance. If you've no inclination to get bogged down in all this, the defaults will do the job.

GO ON NIGEL, GIVE US A TUNE

Game: Nigel Mansell's World Championship
Publisher: Gremlin
Authors: Damien Hibbard (code), Damon Godley (graphics), Matthew Donkin (track designer), Michael Hirst (track designer), Patrick Phelan (music and sound)
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now

most people in the office who copped a look while I was playing expressed disappointment, some quite violently, and came out with some very valid reasons why it's not worth buying. Somebody chucked a copy of *Vroom* at me to prove the point, and it all started to look a bit inevitable. But then comes the big question - why did I have so much fun playing it? Why is it that I'm

"I got completely hooked on this"

going to sneak it out of the office so that I can play it at home? These questions need to be answered. All right, let's talk about the game. It's a bit of a half-way house, being a simulator and an arcade

game. You play Nigel Mansell, although you can change your name if you want, and you take part in the full 1992 Grand Prix season. As well as going for the full season you can also choose to race one circuit, from any of the Grand Prix tracks, in a one-off. If you're new to all this, like me, then you get a chance to practice a course without the hindrance of other cars, and there's also an option to improve your driving with Nige himself. Unfortunately, this is a bit crap. You go round the track and a picture of Nige appears on the screen to tell you what you're doing wrong. There's a

THE HITS KEEP ON COMING

Before you start you can set up your car using the Tuning Your Car option. Here you choose what type of tyres you want to use - hard, soft and wet (that's worth an

Aah yes. The thrill of the race, the heart-pounding rush as you take a competitor on the inside of the chicane, the grim determination clouding your face as you zoom up the straight. We're in the motor racing world, and I love it. Now, I'll have to admit right away that I don't know a lot about this sport, but maybe there's not that much to know. I mean, isn't it just a load of people who like to drive cars very fast getting together and, er, trying to drive faster than each other? I mean, that's right, isn't it?

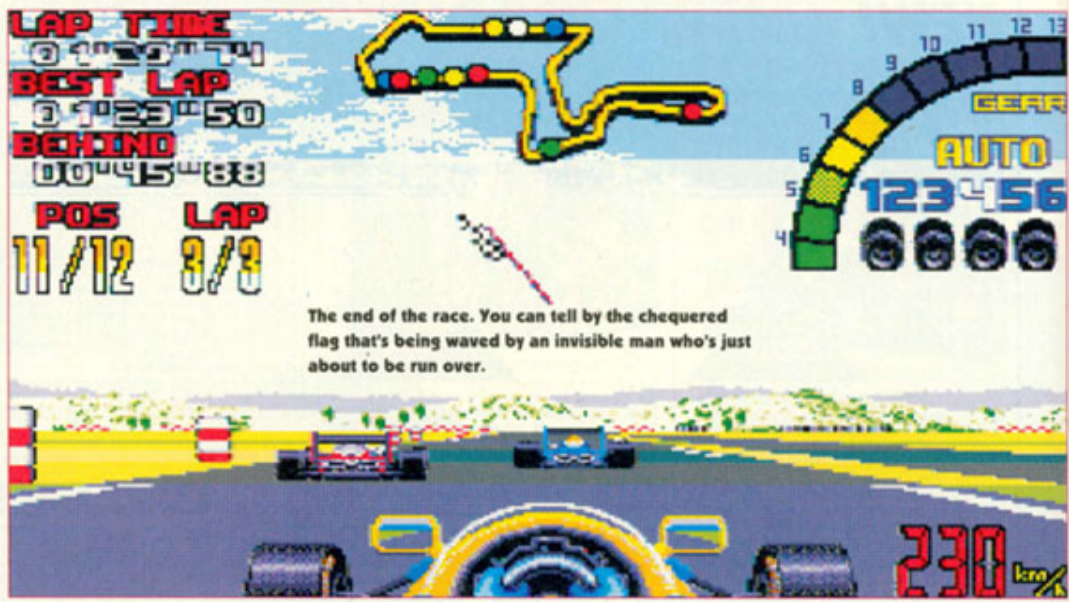
The game bears Nigel Mansell's name, and it's going to be popular because he is. It's got his picture on the front and everything. But a lot of people have been waiting to see what this game's like. Thus starts the controversy, because



When you've chosen your track, check the weather to see what kind of tyres to use.

Prix champions are few and far

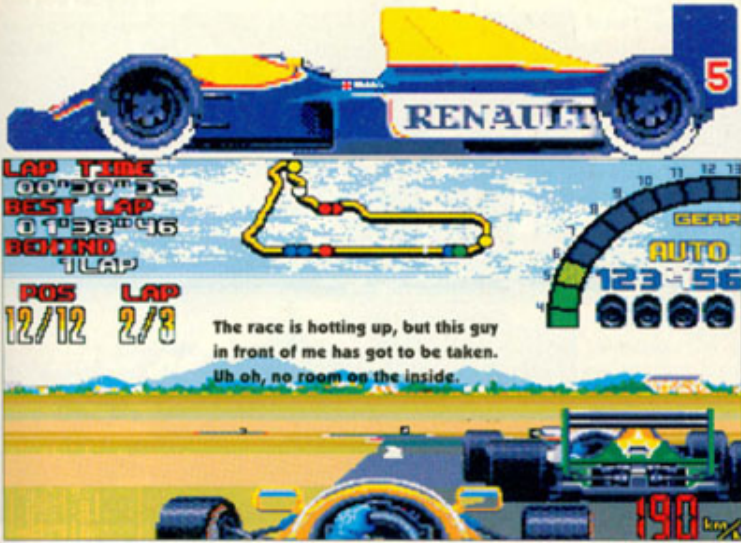
between, but Gremlin have found themselves one.



The end of the race. You can tell by the chequered flag that's being waved by an invisible man who's just about to be run over.

Formula One Grand

NIGEL MANSSELL'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



The race is hoting up, but this guy in front of me has got to be taken. Uh oh, no room on the inside.

'oer', I think). Obviously if it's raining you want to choose wet, but if the rain stops you might want to go into the pits and change them, as they wear out quicker. Soft tyres improve the grip and make cornering easier, but need changing more often (maybe twice in the race). In this section you also choose your gear ratio between low, medium and high - low gives you good acceleration but reduces the top speed, medium has a balance of speed and acceleration and high gives top speed with less acceleration. You pays your money, you makes your choice. You can choose between automatic and manual gears, but I prefer auto because you don't really want to be bothered changing gears while you're roaring round a track. But you do get more control with manual gears.

OZONE FRIENDLY AEROFOIL

Finally you can choose how your aerofoil is positioned, which affects cornering and all that stuff. I left all these settings on default, except when the weather conditions looked a bit menacing.

Before racing you can also change the control method between mouse, joystick or keyboard. Go for the joystick, it's more exciting. While we're on control, you can also use the FreeWheel joystick. This looks like a steering wheel (actually I suppose it is a steering wheel) and

Tunnel - a brush with a wall makes sparks fly. Exciting stuff, huh?

you hold it in mid air and steer it to control your car. It's not supplied with the game, so I didn't have a chance to use it, but it undoubtedly makes you look a complete floppy brain while you're playing.

You can go straight to the race, but you won't be positioned very well on the starting grid. Instead, you can choose to qualify, where you have to do one lap and the time you take determines where you are on the grid. There are a



couple of other cars which you have to avoid, but you're not actually competing against them. Once this lap is done, you're ready to go. The first thing you notice is that the graphics are rather smart. The backdrops look attractive and atmospheric, and the cars

themselves are impressive. The sound effects are a bit weak though - acceleration sounds more like an electric shaver. Still, you get used to it quickly and it's good to have the sounds to give you some impression of being on the circuit. And the racing itself? Very exciting. I got completely hooked to this, mainly because



This is it, I was born for this moment, my destiny will be fulfilled and you, Skywalker, will join me in the dark side... sorry, I lost it there for a minute.



ROY LICHTENSTEIN IS MY HERO

This is me crashing into a sign post sporting a Lichtenstein print. It's only there for one frame - subliminal pop art for racing drivers.

after a few races you really start getting the hang of the controls and actually doing well. It's not as smooth as *Vroom*, but it looks a lot nicer, and there's more excitement generated by the Grand Prix atmosphere and the fact that you are Nigel Mansell. It's not as thorough a simulator as *FIGP* but it's arcade feel makes this unimportant. It's how much fun you have while playing a game that really counts, and I had loads. If you've got *Formula One Grand Prix* or *Vroom* and you're happy with those thank you very much, then you probably won't need this. But if you're looking for your first racing game, and you fancy soaking up the atmosphere of the Grand Prix, then you won't be disappointed with this game. ● **TIM TUCKER**

UPPERS It's exciting, good to look at, there's a lot of tracks and it's a thrill to play. I'm having fun with it, and that's always a good thing.

DOWNERS It's not got anything original to add to the genre, the sound's a bit weak and the scrolling isn't perfect.

THE BOTTOM LINE It's not one of those games that I'm going to insist you rush out and buy. As I said, if you have one of the great racing games on the Amiga, then this isn't going to improve on it massively. But if you haven't, and you want one, this isn't a bad bet at all. **78 PERCENT**

MANSELL'S CHAMPIONSHIP





There's a correct way to handle live poultry, but this isn't it.

Game: Goblins 2
Publisher: Coktel Vision
Authors: R Lacoste, E Maguet
Price: £29.99
Release: Out Now

What with *Trolls* being reviewed a few pages back and goblins bursting forth from this spread, it seems that we're in danger here at AMIGA POWER of being inundated by mythical cute creatures that only come up to your knee. This time we're firmly back in the realms of fantasy, with wizards, kings and all that sort of stuff.

Goblins 2 is, quite unsurprisingly, a sequel to *Goblins*, only this time there's only two of the cheeky wee scamps,



instead of the three that were in the original. There's a gag in the two titles relating to this, but I'll leave it to you to work it out. You're put in control of Fingus and Winkle who, I imagine, are a fairly representative cross section of the state that goblin youth culture is up to nowadays. Fingus is a polite and conscientious young lad and is the sort of mythical cave dweller that you could leave at home looking after the kids while you pop out to the movies, secure in the knowledge that he'll entertain them with stories of far-off lands before popping them in bed. He's also round and pinky, so is far more pleasing to



The interesting thing about this situation is that the frog was more scared than Fingus.

Goblins 2. Is

that the sequel to *Gobliins*, then? I'm sorry, I'm confused?

the eye than Winkle, his partner, who's purple, pointy and an altogether different kettle of fish.

Leave Winkle baby-sitting and the chances are that you'll return home to find the remains of a raucous party littering your living room, the toilet blocked with your best duvet, and your children missing with only HP sauce stains on their cots to indicate their bewildering fate. Winkle is rude and pushy, but as many telephone salesmen and foreign language students in bus queues could tell you, this frequently is the only way to get anything accomplished.

Together, Fingus and Winkle form the crack assault team chosen by Modemus the wise man to rescue the

king's son from the clutches of the evil demon Amoniak. Personally when confronted with a huge castle guarded by monsters and harbouring a demon I'd have probably gone for a team of ninjas, or maybe get a squadron of B-52 bombers to waste the entire area while I crossed my fingers and hoped that when the dust settled there'd be substantially more of the king's son left than a small red stain on the rubble. These are the logical choices, but logic doesn't play much of a role in this game, and apart from that no one except me would want to play a game called 'Gobliins 2 - Ninja Death Force' or 'B-52 Strike Team Gobliins.'

Anyway, the king authorises this unlikely choice of rescuers and the game

"Funny enough to make you laugh out loud"

GOBBLIINS

AMIGA POWER JANUARY 1993

HUNGRY LIKE THE GOBLIN

Winkle tries to break the ice with the locals by telling them the one about the otters and the power tools.

For reasons that will undoubtedly become clearer later on, the fat guy is jealously guarding his salami.

Fingus takes time out from all that adventuring to whistle along to his fave 'Nirvana' track.



A conspicuously empty bottle. Now what use could that be?

The punchline leaves these two old locals in a state of shock approaching catatonia.

These look a bit wilted, if only we could find something to carry some water in ...

**WE'RE STARVING!
 ONLY THE NOTABLE HAS ENOUGH TO EAT.**





BECAUSE TWO OUTSTANDING HEROES WILL TRY THEIR LUCK!

Would you really send these two to pop down to the newsagents for a can of Tizer and the Evening Echo, let alone on a mission to rescue the king's son? The so called 'wiseman' Modemus would.



A DELICATE CHILD SNATCHED FROM HIS HOME BY A DEMON!

It's got poppy eyes, horribly stunted and deformed limbs, and a set of teeth that could chomp through a kitchen table in three minutes flat. The demon isn't too pleasant either.



Whinge, whinge, whine, do these royals have nothing better to do than mope about complaining about the burden of responsibility? It's no fun being poor either.

O FLESH OF MY FLESH, MY OWN BLOOD, MY ONLY SON...

2

starts with the two troglodytic tearaways arriving in a village neighbouring the castle. Along with three other locations, the village forms the first section of the game, and contains all the clues and objects needed to get past an

unfriendly giant and onwards to the castle. Teamwork is all important, and to complete the puzzles you need to work out which task is suited to the temperament of each goblin. Being mouse-driven, all the moving around and picking up is easily accomplished with a click or two, and a hidden menu across the top of the screen contains options such as saving, skipping locations and Jokers, which give you a few clues when you're really stuck. There's a rather pointless 'object exchange' option which allows you to swap objects between the two goblins. Why not just have a joint inventory? It's a

small smooth out the gameplay, which, at certain points, really does need some smoothing.

Much of *Goblins 2* is pure slapstick, and bits of it are funny enough to make you laugh out loud. It's real Tex Avery stuff, with dogs chomping down on fingers being followed by comical 'youch'es and the soundtrack adds greatly to the cartoon atmosphere. The characters speak in a sort of squeaky babble that I'd imagine is goblinspeak, and you get subtitles so you know what's going on. The introduction sequence where Modemus fills you in on the story is classic, with comical timing worthy of Wile E Coyote, and this high standard of graphics and humour is kept up throughout the game.

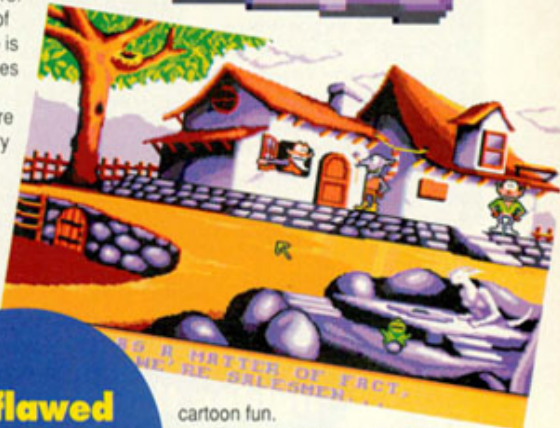
Here comes the down side. For a start there's the way that any object you can highlight on the screen is somehow relevant. I know that this is a much-used convention in games, but it means that within a minute of entering a new location you've got a rough idea of what to do. Let's see now, dog, giant, chicken, pot-hole, it'll make some sense in a few seconds. But that's another thing, sometimes it doesn't make sense at all. Take this (purely hypothetical) situation: you've got a stone, a bottle and a salami in your possession and need to beat up a chicken. What would you use? That's right, only the sausage works, even though either of the others would logically be good for a bit of poultry abuse.

The most annoying part of the game, though, is getting Winkle and Fingus to work together. Clicking on objects starts to be an inexact science in situations requiring perfect timing. For all my attempts I couldn't get Fingus to light a match before Winkle threw the bomb, and smacking the



(hypothetical) chicken while Winkle held it took a few tries. Seeing as these interactive bits are the only elements of gameplay other than walking around, it's a shame that they're so fiddly, as they expose the mechanics of the game to the player when you should be immersed in all this

The chicken, the frog, and now this. Face it Fingus, Doctor Doolittle you ain't.



SO A MURDER OF FROGS... WELL HE ONLY COMES...

cartoon fun.

These points are a shame really, for this deserves to be a truly great game, and I dare say that those of you into adventure games with a sense of humour will get a greater kick out of this than I did. The points I've raised may seem small, but it's still enough to stop me giving this a colossal score. Sorry Fingus. Sorry Winkle.

● MARK WINSTANLEY



Now, THIS is the correct way.

UPPERS On the presentation front you can't fault it. *Goblins 2* has a sense of fun about it that makes it enjoyable to just run the little guys around, with lively performances from the supporting cast as well as Fingus and Winkle.

DOWNERS Are involved with gameplay. Getting the goblins to perform simultaneous actions can be difficult and tiresome. A trial and error method will get you through many of the problems, some of which seemed too contrived.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A flawed diamond of a game, the visuals and soundtrack making it worthy of its own TV slot. However the linear problem solving and gameplay glitches can often make playing it less enjoyable than watching a friend have a go.

78 PERCENT

Game: RoboSport
Publisher: Ocean
Authors: Maxis
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now

Oh no, what's wrong? A game from Maxis that doesn't have the word 'Sim' in the title. Whatever can they be thinking of? *SimCity*, *SimEarth*, *SimAnt*, *SimLife*, and *SimFish* and *SimFarm* in the pipeline... You don't have to be a lexical genius to realise that *RoboSport* doesn't fit into the neat linguistic progression. Success must have added the old corporate brain. Dear me, is nothing sacred?

But some things never change, and you can rest assured that the latest offering from the masters of simulation still provides enough strategy and statistics to keep you up late into the night. And as with *SimAnt*, it tries to throw in a bit of humour to lighten the laborious load. For labour you will. Despite the seductive explosions on the game's box, and the promise of a mixture of chess and guerrilla warfare (very attractive), it's all a bit of a trial to play.

The concept is easy enough to grasp. You control a bunch of robots who have to achieve certain objectives depending on the game you've chosen to play. In the simplest game you just have to wipe out the enemy, and in more advanced scenarios, you have to capture the enemy's flag, pick up treasure or rescue hostages. The game's parameters are entirely user definable, so much so that the Quick Start menu gives you a stock of pre-set scenarios to save you the bother of customising your own. You

"It tries to throw in a bit of humour to lighten the load"

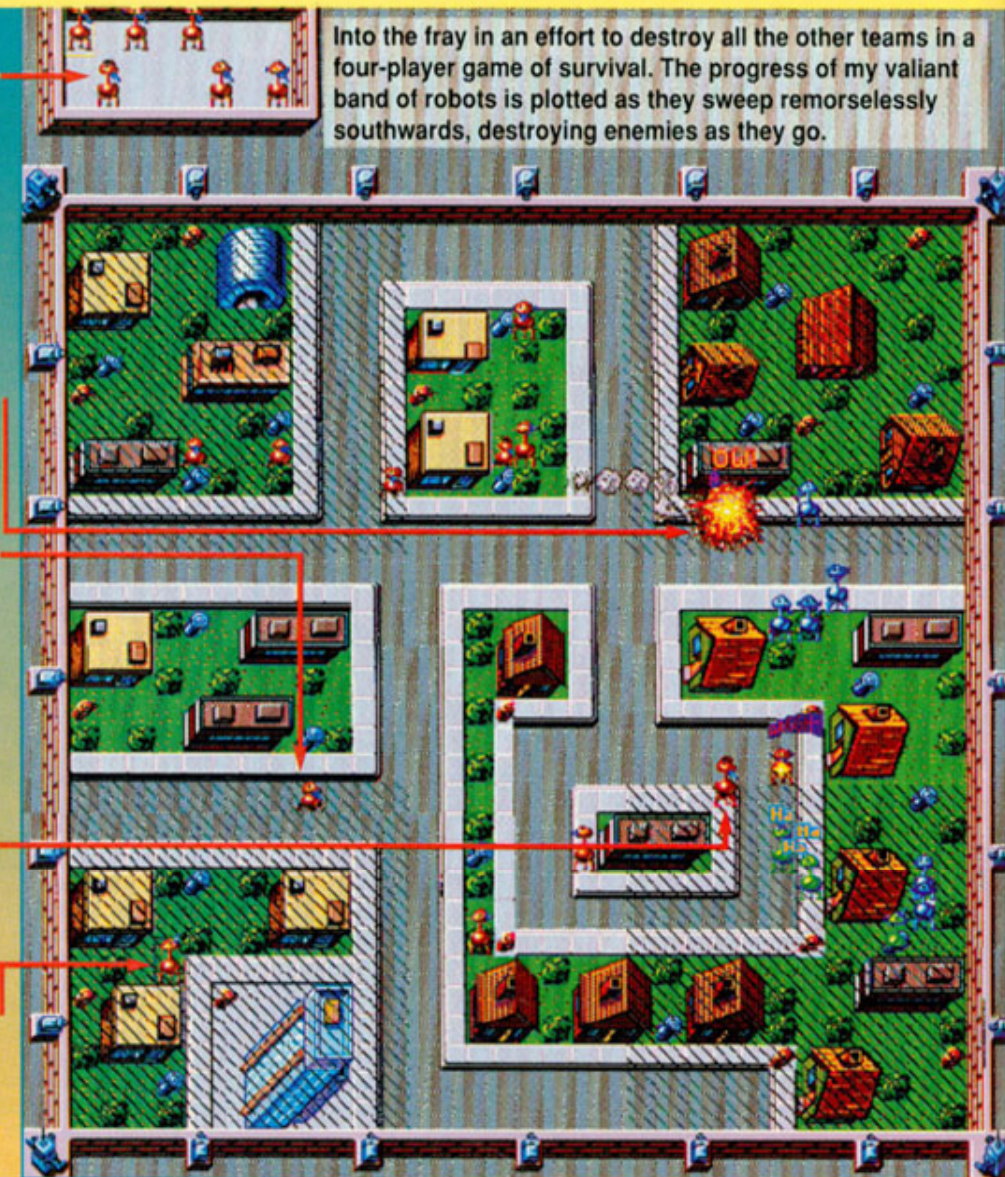
Your men start in the dock at the top, and their first move has to be into the shaded area below. Your opponents start at the side and the bottom.

Make good use of your missile-carrying robot. Give him covering fire and he can pick off one of the enemy robots with a well-aimed shot.

Crouching robots are harder to hit, but move slowly and can't climb walls.

After seeing a bunch of enemy robots on the first turn, it's time to make a confident move south. Trouble is, it seems the enemy can see you coming. They can't, of course, but you can't stop that feeling of paranoia.

It's pretty quiet down this side, so this guy can sit here and wait for something to happen. Make sure he's facing the right way though.



Into the fray in an effort to destroy all the other teams in a four-player game of survival. The progress of my valiant band of robots is plotted as they sweep remorselessly southwards, destroying enemies as they go.

SURVIVAL OF THE HIPPEST

ROBOS

Maxis make the move away from SimSomethings and venture



Left: Held in the specially constructed robot pen, your team are champing at the bit and ready to go.

Right: That nice Mr Robot goes for a walk in the garden. He sees the pretty bushes and flowers and blows them up.



can decide which weapons you and your opponents are armed with, the type of landscape the battle is to be fought on, and the size of the playing area.

The game is turn-based, which means you give out orders, and then watch the robots carry them out. A slick point-and-click control system makes it easy to hand out commands, and because each turn is a limited length (up to 40 seconds), each robot can only be given a limited number of orders. You tell the 'bots where to move, where to look, where to fire, who to fire at, and when to duck. The computer or human opponents do the same and you sit and watch the results.

Obviously, you can't see where the enemy robots are while you're programming your team, and that's where your brilliant strategic and tactical thinking comes in. You have to guess where the enemy 'bots will move too, and set cunning traps accordingly. One of the best tactics is to hide behind a building and wait for them to walk round the corner. Not a particularly brave or exciting strategy, but effective nevertheless.

Having made all your moves, it's time to set the wheels in motion and commit your team to action. End your turn and the

computer generates its moves, and the results of the combat. To see what's happened, you switch to the movie section, where the positions at the start of the turn are shown. Hit play and you see the robots perform their manoeuvres, waste the enemy and get wasted themselves. It's a peculiarly voyeuristic feeling - good attacks are played over and over again (you can even save them to disk to show your friends if they're not around), and bad mistakes are brushed under the carpet as you move swiftly on to the next round.

It's very much like *Laser Squad* really. The gameplay in both games is essentially the same - it's just the graphics and control system that are different. *RoboSport* has some neat touches, such as the sound effects that play while the moves are being generated at the end of each turn. If all's quiet, you know that nobody has come under fire, but if you start to hear crashes and screams, you

Once you've sorted out your moves, sit back and watch the destruction.



Robot ducks? Well, they look a bit like it anyway. Masses of stats for all the 'bots.

know that the two teams have exchanged fire and that somebody's robots have been severely dented. This adds a bit of extra excitement when the movie starts - you know someone's going to get it in the neck, you just don't know who.

But then again, if you've paid enough attention to the stats, you should know who's going to get it. Success or failure on this battle ground depends on what type of ground you're standing on, the type of armour you have, the type of gun you're using, how far from the enemy you are, and whether you're standing, ducking or crouching. Throw all those variables into the grey matter up top, shake your head around a bit and the chances are you'll be totally nonplussed by the whole affair. But if you've got a head for figures you'll probably love it.

The main trouble with *RoboSport* is that it doesn't hang

together well. There's lots of pointing, clicking and hammering at the keyboard to program your robots, then there's a pause while the moves are generated, then you have to watch a movie of the battle, and then there's another pause while you go back to the programming section. It's all so disjointed - the game just doesn't seem complete. Rather than being one coherent strategy to achieve a single objective, the game is at times reduced to being a series of one-off engagements with the main aim being to avoid being hit by enemy fire.

Ultimately it's not a particularly satisfying game to play. Sure, there are plenty of statistics and game variations, but the basic game and game structure aren't smooth enough to keep you hooked - there's no real flow to the proceedings.

The small attempts at humour are moderately engaging for a while, but it's not long before you're turning away to find either a more substantial challenge in the shape of something like *Civilization*, or some real action. *RoboSport* is trying to be the "thinking man's shoot-'em-up" and to a certain extent it succeeds. You have to think, and things definitely get shot. But that doesn't mean it's very much fun, and anyway, we've already got *Laser Squad*, *Breach 2*, *Paladin 2*...

● RICHARD LONGHURST

"It's very much like Laser Squad"



Above: Click away until you've found the perfect set of options.

Right: At the end of the game you're given a score, which depends on absolutely huge numbers of things.



ROBOSPORT

into the murky world of weird robot strategy warfare things.

MAKE A RESOLUTION

RoboSport can be played in hi-res mode, which makes it much easier to see what's going on and give orders to your robots. Unfortunately, it makes the picture flicker like mad on standard monitors such as our Philips.



The same section of the map in low-res mode and you begin to see what you're missing. Much more scrolling around the map is involved in low-res, which soon becomes a real pain.

UPPERS Undoubtedly sophisticated approach to the old *Laser Squad*-style game. Slick control system, which is particularly good in hi-res mode.

DOWNERS There's not much new on offer and the game is much too disjointed. There's not enough to get stuck into, and the graphics are small and unimaginative.

THE BOTTOM LINE The *Laser Squad* style game has plenty of mileage left in it, but *RoboSport* is far from the best implementation of the idea you'll ever see.

64 PERCENT





Iceland is home to an old dig site, one which Indy and Sophia worked on many years ago. Dr Bjorn Heimdall's there now, searching for the secret of Hyperborea, only he's loath to share his finding. He does provide the names of two people in the know though...

The Azores is where Indy and Sophia find the wizened Mr Felipe Costa. He's a miserable beggar, and although he's a little more receptive to Sophia's charm, he will only trade his information.



Professor Costa: My name is Costa's Hippopotamus
I hope my friend didn't bother you too much
Excuse me, please.



Tikal... Beyond a jungle lies a temple in the hands of Charles Sternhart, a shady fellow who claims to have translated Plato's Lost Dialogue. But first Indy has to persuade a snake to disappear. There's a natural solution. When Indy and Sophia meet Sternhart it transpires that Kerner has beaten them to it and the Nazis now have Plato's Lost Dialogue. Sternhart believes that Atlanteans were here, too. But he won't allow our heroes to check out the temple unless they can answer a question. The answer is learned parrot fashion. Inside the temple Indy discovers the tomb of an Atlantean King... and two items of treasure. Sternhart then reveals his true colours.

WHIP CRACK AWAY, WHIP CRACK AWAY, WHIP CRACK AWAY

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

Who's that craggy, handsome man with a whip, a leather jacket and a battered old

NUMBER ONE IN THE INDY CHARTS

The screen layout and interface is that of a generic LucasArts Games adventure. Most of the picture is taken up by the Action Screen, where the – no! – action takes place, animated sequences are shown, dialogue is spoken and from where all objects are viewed, moved or picked up.



Indy is told what to do by combining these verbs with objects selected in the Action Screen. Appropriate verbs are highlighted when an object is selected. Objects of no significance are not described on the Sentence Line.

The Sentence Line shows what you are telling Indy to do.

Indy's Inventory. My, what big pockets this man must have. There's no limit to the number of objects Indy can carry, which is handy as he collects a fair few during his travels. The Inventory can be replaced by your IQ – Indy Quotient – ie, the points you have earned for solving puzzles.

Game: Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis: The Graphic Adventure

Publisher: LucasArts & US Gold

Price: £34.99

Authors: Hal Barwood & Noah Falstein (Story & Design) & The LucasArts Games Team

Release: Out Now

What a dilemma. (*Great cars, them Dilemmas. – Ed*) The one I'm in is bigger than anything Indy's ever become involved with. You see, I just can't decide how to rate his latest adventure. It's almost excellent, but it's the variable state of the 'almost' that's the problem.

For a start, *Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis: The Graphic Adventure* (hereinafter referred to as *IJATFOA: TGA*) comes on 11 disks. But before I delve any further, let me enlighten you as to Indy's



An intermission... Having traded an artifact with Costa the team are told the whereabouts of another copy of Plato's Lost Dialogue... which takes them back to search Barnett College. Meanwhile, the Nazis are busy. Kerner has returned home with his prize and the apparent power of orichalcum is unleashed: Uranium without radioactivity!



Monte Carlo is one of the next two locations to visit, regardless of the path chosen. Here Indy has to find Alain Trotter, amateur scholar, part-time poet and professional dreamer. Later in the adventure Indy ends up in a car chase around the streets of Monte Carlo.



JONES OF ATLANTIS

What? It's Indy. He's back, back! BACK!

predicament... The Jeermans have discovered the devastating potential of an ancient mineral called orichalcum. And if they can find its source, the legendary city of Atlantis, the world will become their lobster.

This, however, is not apparent when the adventure begins. An interactive introductory and credits sequence sees Indy falling through holes a lot, but basically it all serves as a taster and almost serves to generate a film-like atmosphere.

Indy has acquired a mysterious statue for a Mr Smith, who turns out to be a Nazi piece of work (*Ho ho ho. - Ed*) called Klaus Kerner. He hotfoots it when this is discovered. A clue then leads out intrepid hero to a former assistant, Sophia Haggood, who now works as a psychic. She offers to help a disbelieving Indy find Atlantis. But first they need to locate

Plato's Lost Dialogue which will provide clues as to Atlantis' whereabouts.

Once Indy has acquired the tome, the adventure splits into three paths:

Fists, Team or Wits. These are essentially difficulty levels, though I must say I found myself completing the Wits path first and struggling with the Fists path. The locations used for each path are by and large the same with subtle differences (omissions or additions), but the problems presented are quite different.

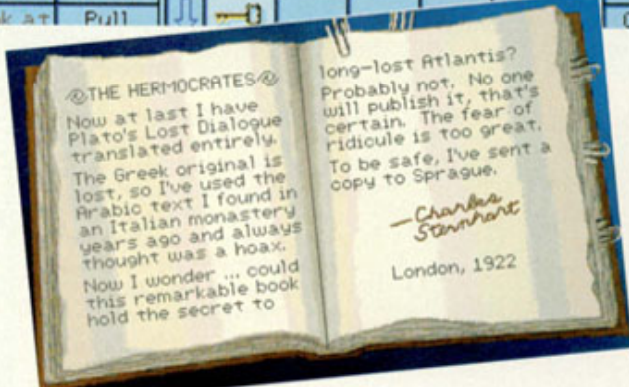
There are times when a little role reversal is in order. Assuming the role of Indy's psychic sidekick Sophia is the only way some problems are solved, but it must be said that the sex change isn't as good as the rest of the adventure. It's a shame more wasn't made of this split personality business.

The exploration and puzzle-solving is punctuated by animated intermissions (or 'cut-scenes'), which you can skip. Sadly, you can't avoid the disk accessing or swapping, which is

An Indy adventure wouldn't be an Indy adventure without a little globe-trotting. His quest begins at Barnett College. Atlantis is little more than a school memory.

"Top notch plot with the flavour of the three films"

Barnett College... Plato's Lost Dialogue is here somewhere, but the location is randomly chosen each time. Indy searches for clues in the furnace room, the attic... basically all the locations shown in the introductory sequence. Eventually, the Dialogue is no longer Lost. Indy shows his find to Sophia and they realise that Atlantis is actually in the middle of the world. It seems they will also need three stone keys to make any progress. Now the paths split...





Algiers is where trader Omar Al-Jabbar lives. Indy finds Al-Jabbar's house by following his servant through the busy streets (a nice touch but it does drag on a bit though). Al-Jabbar's not all he seems, his attitude



differing depending on the chosen path. From here Indy either ends up in a balloon or on the back of a camel on his way to a seemingly abandoned dig site. The dig itself is below ground and in complete darkness. Indy has to feel his way around. Another neat touch



which re-occurs later in the adventure.

There, the Greek island, is where Indy eventually ends up after figuring out a way to escape from the dig site. While Indy's searching, the

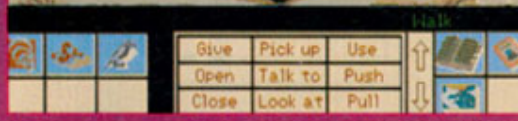


Matis are leaving in their submarine for Crete, a possible entrance to Atlantis. How will Indy catch them up?

Indy eventually boards the submarine and is taken to Crete where he reaches the entrance to labyrinthian caverns once he has explored a second dig site. Atlantis can't be far away now....

The principles of talking to characters should be nothing

new to anyone who's used LucasArts' SCUMM system before. A handful of replies or questions are presented and you simply take your pick. It's more often than not impossible to foul up, so you



can express yourself however you feel and enjoy the witty dialogue.

The pugilism is one of Indy's most tedious - and dangerous - aspects. It's part and parcel of the fists path though, and at least there's a Sucker Punch option for which you get no IQ points but at least you don't have to scrap.



German Wizard Splits Atom



In New York, Sophia Hapgood hosts a talk on Atlantis for interested parties, Indy among them. A bouncer bars his way at the back of the theatre (there are three methods of entering, which is nice), and a stagehand is reluctant to leave his station at the side of the stage. Bringing Sophia's show to an early close, Indy meets his match: the flame-haired girl herself. Someone searched her office, but that's not the biggest... She claims she's in contact with an Atlantean spirit called Nur-Ab-Sal(!) and proves it by demonstrating the power of orichalcum and her spooky necklace. Needless to say, Kerner was lurking there all along.

"AAAAARRRRRRGH!" to say the least. Disk requests crop up in the strangest of places. You find yourself jumping around from disk to disk just to move a single object on screen, and the story's carefully created flow and atmosphere is often destroyed.

"The character animations are smart"

of the others is ample compensation. And if I was being supremely pedantic, I would say that the dialogue is not entirely convincing but it's good enough. *IATFOA:TGA* is a more well-rounded adventure than *Monkey Island II*, and that's saying something. Hell, I'd even go so far as to say that it's simply the best adventure of its type available on any format. Well, I can if you have a hard drive, but, to be honest, everyone else had best think twice before shelling out. There, problem solved.

● GARY PENN

SUPPRESSED URGES

The pace is a little too sloth-like at times. It takes a while to update the minor animations on the close-up scenes, and there are occasions when the action slows down to a near unbearable crawl. A pity, as most of the character animations are smart. The interface is sometimes sluggish to respond, too, and often the urge to explore and experiment is suppressed as you don't feel inspired to spend the time trudging around, swapping disks.

The scenery is rarely as attractive as *Monkey Island II's*, and the LucasArts' scrolling is as shoddy as it's ever been. Sound-wise there's little to write home about. This iMUSE system certainly doesn't work on the Amiga. Here, the soundtrack is always ill-fitting - even the familiar Indy theme tune seems out of place. Surprisingly, there are virtually no spot effects to accompany the action. A compromise was obviously made there.

There are some divvy inconsistencies - I stroked my beard with disbelief when I wasn't allowed to knock a book down with Indy's whip. A few of the solutions are a little too hit and miss for my liking, but the satisfaction of solving most

▲ **UPPERS** Top-notch plot with the flavour of the three films to savour. The atmosphere's occasionally richer than Steven Spielberg. There are plenty of perky puzzles with satisfying solutions, and comic touches and animations abound throughout, but in a far drier vein than the *Monkey Island* series.

▼ **DOWNERS** Hard drive owners have little to fear, but for everyone else, ie, the majority of us, the disk accessing is a total bummer.

THE BOTTOM LINE While falling short (very in certain floppy instances) of perfect, *Indy* just goes to show that the graphic adventure is improving in leaps and bounds. The best yet but also the worst as far as floppy disk-based execution is concerned.

COMPLETE control

Jonathan Davies is back with another tip-fest. This month he's even taller than usual - it must be the water.

ZOOL (Gremlin Graphics)

Alan R Mitchell of Durham, along with one or two (hem hem) other people, has pointed out that typing 'GOLDFISH' on the title screen accesses a cheat mode. You can then press F1 to F6 to skip from world to world. Additionally, press 1 to make yourself invincible, 2 to skip to the next level, 3 to jump to the same level in the next world, and 4 to, er, kill yourself.

But that's not all. Rather fabulously, there's a secret shoot-'em-up section on level 2-1. It's been brought to our attention by Andy Peters of Hull. To get to it, you'll need to get past the first two crumbling platforms with spikes underneath. Just after the second one, if you drop down to

the floor next to the spikes you'll see a platform above your head and to the right a bit. Jump up into the corner underneath and viola! [sic]

On level 2-2, adds Simon Geary of Glasgow, the sequence for the piano is Red, Yellow, Light Blue, Dark Blue.



There are about 10,000 different known species of ant. Few of them wear masks.

LOTUS III (Gremlin Graphics)

More codes (rats!), this time from Colin Gray of

Easy Level
1 PWRWUWHNM-30
2 XMQIYSKAS-80
3 UVQSNPBCM-70
4 CWVBQPCAV-50
5 SFXUXXXP-60
6 HSYWYSKGC-50
7 IIVVEMKQZ-50

6 WSVUQPCSJ-70
7 OUNDEFACG-99
8 GXWDYPACV-68
9 BZ-ZF-BAT-90
10 LWNJWKACN-90

Hard Level

1 IYVVNVEQR-35
2 KAZZNIKA-45
3 FGQLJGDAF-65
4 MFFSRPYDU-60
5 PLOTZQDPE-80
6 ZKZGJKKKK-50
7 TGGJGGTTT-63
8 AFZYBQCJT-70

Medium Level
1 ANNSMQLPN-60
2 VSDVOPHCY-50
3 RTLMYJKHB-60
4 ERRURV—67
5 NSSSXXXS-60



One species of lotus was used by the Greeks to make bread.

9 JBOUKJHKA-99
10 DASICOTET-80
11 XDNVSEECE-85
12 QDSCJVEBT-75
13 SKGYXXXXK-57
14 YKGJWVNAK-92
15 WJMEGMEQH-40

TRODDLERS

(Storm)

John Chapman of Liverpool very kindly sent us hundreds and hundreds of Troddlers codes. But you don't want to see them all, of course. You do? (Grit teeth.) Okay...



The Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) was about 5000 years ago. Many humans lived in caves.

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| 1 PREMIER | 51 ALOTTODO |
| 2 BUILDIT | 52 UPSIDEOUT |
| 3 NOSWEAT | 53 DROPEMIN |
| 4 PYRAMID | 54 POSSIBLE |
| 5 CLEAROUT | 55 CLOSEUP |
| 6 SPHINX | 56 FOOLSRUN |
| 7 QUARET | 57 JEWELPUSH (gasp...) |
| 8 CENTRIN | 58 GUIDETRY |
| 9 REDGEMS | 59 WOTAWSGO |
| 10 CROSSED | 60 LOOSEM |
| 11 SKIPAROUND | 61 YOURSOR |
| 12 PACKEDUP | 62 SACRIFICE |
| 13 PILLARS | 63 BOOMPARADE |
| 14 BZZZZZ | 64 WAITFORIT |
| 15 FIVEROWS | 65 ROCKBLAST |
| 16 TIGHTTIME | 66 NOWWASTEALL |
| 17 EASYONE | 67 FROMABOVE |
| 18 TWOTRIBES | 68 SMASHHITS |
| 19 DONTMIX | 69 CRUSHRUSH |
| 20 HELPEMOUT | 70 FIRSTFIRE |
| 21 MEANONES | 71 BURNOUT |
| 22 NOPROBLEMS | 72 RUMBLEHOT |
| 23 TREASURES | 73 COCKTAIL |
| 24 STOREROOM | 74 BUGGINHARD |
| 25 UPANDDOWN | 75 MOREFUN |
| 26 TECHNO | 76 SPINAROUND |
| 27 ONEONONE | 77 LETITOUT |
| 28 SIXROOMS | 78 ALLABOUT |
| 29 THETOWER | 79 BOUNCEIT |
| 30 GOFORHEART | 80 RAINDROPS |
| 31 NEWTHING | 81 FIREANDICE |
| 32 BOULERO | 82 SLOWBURN |
| 33 CRUELWORLD | 83 STALLEM |
| 34 CRUELUBES | 84 BADBOMBS |
| 35 SLIPNSLIDE | 85 SOLOMAN |
| 36 KEYX | 86 HELLSDITCH |
| 37 GOLDCROSS | 87 FIRSTFIRST |
| 38 STONEM | 88 GOODLUCK |
| 39 HARDROUND | 89 TIMEHUNTER |
| 40 FIRSTGUNS | 90 NODELAY |
| 41 CROSSFIRE | 91 NOPULLPLUG |
| 42 RUNFORIT | 92 GUNZONE |
| 43 NORULES | 93 BELTZENRUN |
| 44 NOFARWALL | 94 BRIDGEMIN |
| 45 RUNAROUND | 95 FALLOUT |
| 46 BADBIRD | 96 COLOURUN |
| 47 COVERTHEM | 97 AUTOFIRE |
| 48 SAVEBLOCKS | 98 SWEATHEART |
| 49 GLAMOUR | 99 HEAVYDUTY |
| 50 HACKBACK | 100 TWEAKY |

ACTION REPLAY POKES

To get these to work, you're probably best off taking a gander at the manual that came with your Action Replay cart.

Bubble Bobble C091EE infinite lives
CJ's Elephant Antics TFD 1EC71 infinite lives

Laser Squad 12AA5,XX no. of credits for weapons,

Mousetrap C07B2F infinite lives

Ninja Warriors 1967D,XX no. of shurikens

per life, 19A09,XX no. of credits
Pegasus 022B6B infinite lives
Plotting 5FAD,63 99 zapper blocks per life
player 1, 5FCB1,63 same for player 2
Rainbow Islands E337 infinite lives
Space Blob C1C47F infinite lives
Zool 01A003 infinite lives

Thanks for these go to Joyce Heeld of Birmingham (sorry you couldn't get those tips to work) and Carl Surry of Barnet.



11. BACK AT THE HOTEL

Oops. Last month we forgot to tell you to take the scapel from Doc's lab. Go back and get then, then read on. Recover the remains of the broken vial in the glass. Take the lapel pins from the floor and the box of chocolates from the coffee table. Leave the room and go down to the hotel lobby. Here you'll meet the commissioner. Answer all his questions -



Here's an interesting clue... that will enlarge my... (unreadable)



CHOCOLATE WAFER PIN NEWS PENDANT LAMP SCAPPEL VIAL



Before his death, did Mr. Nichols give any more... (unreadable)
1- No, nothing!
2- Yes, he did a briefcase...

don't lie about anything except the death of Jeffrey Miller. Don't say anything to him about the vials you found in the lab. Finally tell him that you will only deal with Miller's son, Kenneth. When the commissioner leaves, pick up

the small piece of paper. Find the corner which is missing in the girlie magazine and replace it with the piece of paper you've just found. You now have the telephone number for Lou Dale. Return to the hotel room and telephone Lou Dale.



Good! Vials containing a dangerous substance have mysteriously disappeared and I have the task of finding them before an unscrupulous band of racketeers get their hands on them. Do you have these vials in your care?

- 1- No, I have nothing like that!
- 2- Yes, I found one in the briefcase.



With his son, Ken?
Well, as you wish!
But I'm keeping an eye on you...



It's a torn corner of paper... probably shifted by the castor's of inspector's chair!

13. THE KITCHEN

Put on your surgeon's mask, and turn on the tap. Take the dish cloth and wet it with water. Now go to the cupboards and find the basin. Take it. Open the top cupboard with the dustbin. The glass will fall into the dustbin. Be very careful in this section. you don't want to give yourself away after getting this far. Get the bottle of bleach and pour it into the basin. Use the basin to mix the bleach, with the washing powder and the caustic soda. It's nasty smelling stuff, so be careful you don't damage yourself. Open the service hatch as wide as you can and place the basin in it. Block the space with the help of the wet dish cloth. Deliver it to Lou.



15. VILLA MOLIERE

Give Kenneth the drugged chocolates. When he's out cold take the ring on his finger. Now go to the sitting room. Take a cigar from the parrot and put it

He's wearing a ring on his hand! Will it tell me more about his identity?



in the pirate's mouth. Switch on the aquarium. Find the shell and give it some plankton. Take the fish net and use it to fish out the pearl. Find the band on the pirate and put the pearl in his eye. Look for the print on the statue. Use the hallmark of the ring on it.



16. VILLA VIZCAYA

Here you come up against the commissioner again. Answer all his questions, but give him inoffensive replies. Go to the bathroom and take the syringe from the dustbin. Fill it with formol from the glass jar. Now, you need to find the opening mechanism of the secret wardrobe. Fill the atomiser you find in the wardrobe with the syringe. Once that's done return to the living room. Neutralize the commissioner with the formol. Leave the living room and go into the adjoining room. Take the magazine and make a note of the publication month. Next look at the torch under the microscope. Press the corner of the painting. Now go to the zodiac wheel and start the mechanism. Choose the sign corresponding to, two months before the publication month this just happens to coincide with the evil Doc's birthday. Ignore the date on



That's it, got him! And he wakes up he's got some remembering from I sure's made it. He's got a Peter. It's the same man!

Matt Squires concludes our three part Fascination Tips with a lethal mix of

FASCINATION



12. LOU DALE'S STUDIO

As you approach the studio you'll see a car. Click on it and take the 10 dollar bill from the base of the windscreen. Go to the service door - it's locked and the key is in the lock on the other side. So first take the newspaper from the dustbin - it seems an old friend of yours is up to no good. Slide the photographs you picked up in the lab under the door. Use the scalpel on the lock which will drop the key on the other side of the door. Pull the folder to get the key. Use the key to open the door and enter into the kitchen.



A bill under the wiper!
A little gift to prevent parking tickets? That's a crime boss's perk!

14. THE NIGHTCLUB

Take the newspaper from the dustbin and then give the guard the lapel pins and the 10 dollar bill. Your next job is to convince Kenneth Miller about the vials and everything his father told you on the microcassette, but don't tell him anything important. Simply try to please him.



You want to speak to me? Right, you've got two minutes! First of all, who are you?

1- Mr. Kenneth Miller, your father entrusted me with a mission...

2- I'm a friend who wishes you well...

Kenneth's ring. Now it's time to try out your musical talents. Compose the melody of the torch on the organ, noting that A is la, B is si, C is do, D is re, E is mi, F is fa, G is sol, and + is flat. To put all this complex information into perspective let's use the following example. Let's say that if the publication month is April, then two months previous is February. So the sign is Aquarius. If the message on the lamp is BAD+GE you will have to play si-la-re flat-sol-mi.



17. PRISON

After all that you find yourself in prison. Take the lighter in the prisoner's pocket. Place the magazines on the table - you need at least five. Burn the magazines, the fire detector will go off and the door will open. And that's all there is to it. Now wasn't that fun. Keep watching AMIGA POWER for news of a possible sequel.

bleach, washing powder, and caustic soder - confused? Then read on.

FASCINATION



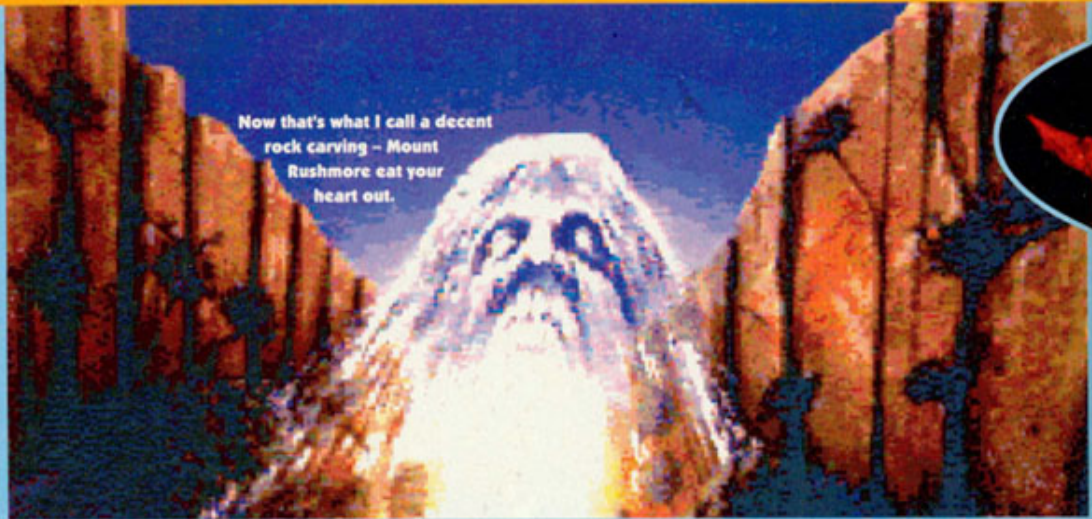
In the final part of our complete solution we take you through the caves of Bidhur to Nosthomak and the final confrontation with Maletoth.

LEVEL THREE - CAVES OF BIDHUR

Run to the right until you make it past the two monsters standing on the bridge and then jump up and shoot them from behind (brave man). Move to the right and you'll come to a springy branch. Jump on it and stand as far right as you can but face left. Jump up the branches and shoot the nest and the four birds that come out of it. Run right and jump off the edge. Now go right until you see a table. Shoot the left leg and jump over it to shoot the right leg. You should now have a pivoted plank, if not then it's time for suicide because you'll have to start over. Shoot the head that is in the rocks, basically because it is annoying you, and you need it a bit later. Push the plank to the left as far as it'll go and climb up the ladder. Run off to the ledge to the right again and you'll fall onto the right side of the plank. The head that you blasted will fly up and hit the cage with the bird in it.

The bird will now come down to you. Stand in front of it to the right and press the fire button. You will now mount the bird. (*Yi-har, ride that bird. - Ed*) Fly diagonally up until you see a column of metal balls and some adjustable runners. Go to the runners and shoot them until they're in line to direct the balls into the top cave. Now go back to the balls and release the first three. Then go back and set the runners to direct the balls into the bottom cave and release all the remaining

By now, you should have managed to work your way



Now that's what I call a decent rock carving - Mount Rushmore eat your heart out.

SHADDO THE BEA

through to the end of level two. So now Les Ellis, the kindly



I wonder if anyone would be cross if I said something about this chap being armless. (Yes, I would. - Ed)

balls. Fly down to the ground and find the shaft. Fly straight down it and go right. You'll be attacked by a load of fire-breathing birds so blast away at them until one of them drops a hammer. Get it and fly back up to the top cave.

Get off the bird and go through the gap. You'll have to dodge a block that falls down just at the exit. Here comes a tricky bit. Change your weapon to the hammer and push one of the metal balls to the left of the

pit. Shoot the slab so that it moves over the ball and move the slab to the right by putting balls under it to keep it going. If you mess it up you have to kill yourself and try again. When a ball is free at the back, put it at the front. Keep going, it's easy when you know how. When you reach the other side of the pit keep throwing hammers at the block until it won't move any further.

Now change your weapon back to the throwing stars and use the slab as a step to reach that higher platform. Head to the right and when you come face to face with a monster. Kill it by shooting it in the eye several times. When

he dies go right and get the empty glass flask from the lab. Now go all the way back to the bird that you left at the cave opening and get back on it. Fly down to the bottom cave (not down the shaft) and fly past the bouncing balls to the edge of the red lake. Get off the bird and select the flask. Jump into the middle of the lake and press fire to fill the flask. Voila, level complete.

LEVEL FOUR - NOSTHOMAK

As usual run to the right from the start and (not as usual) shoot the flame-thrower while ducking under the flames, it'll take a few hits but you'll get it in the end. Run right past the large steel ball and go down the stairs. Shoot the left leg off the table and push it as far to the right as it will go but make sure you don't fall off the ledge. Blast away at the bats and push the bookcase left until it's just before the library sign. Now climb up the ladder and jump on top of the bookcase. One more jump and you can collect the hammer.

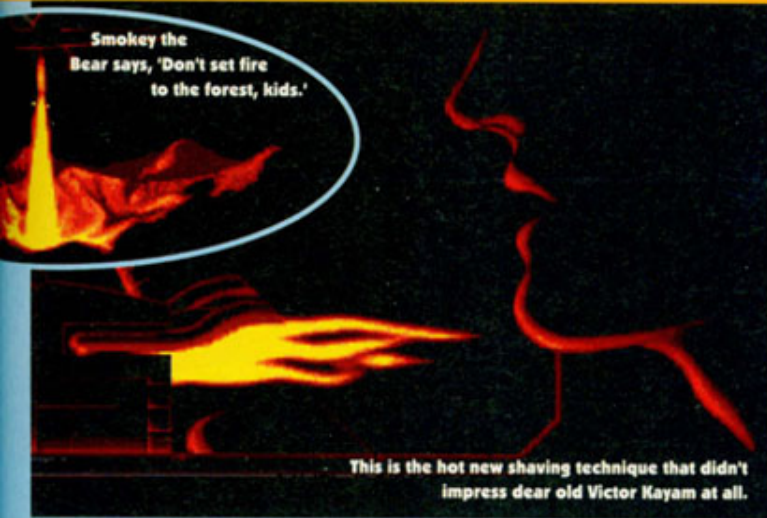
Climb up the ladder and go back up the stairs to the steel ball. Shoot it twice with your throwing stars and switch weapons to the hammer.

Eagles in adventures are always so obliging. Ride 'em, cowboy.



Who would cross the Bridge of Death must answer me these questions three, ere the other side he see. Oh, sorry, wrong movie.





Smokey the Bear says, 'Don't set fire to the forest, kids.'

This is the hot new shaving technique that didn't impress dear old Victor Kayam at all.

WOLF IN THE EAST III

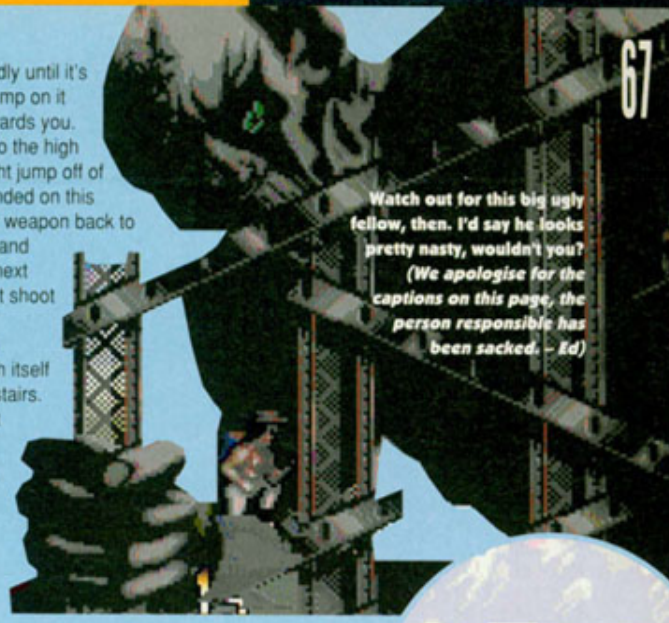
will show you how to finish the game.

Shoot the ball rapidly until it's at full swing and jump on it when it comes towards you. When you get up to the high platform on the right jump off of it. When you've landed on this ledge change your weapon back to the throwing stars and shoot the ball the next time it appears, but shoot it when it is at the highest point of its swing. It will detach itself and roll down the stairs.

Now run right past the sliding puzzle, which you don't have to do, and go down the ladder into the crane booth. Pick up the small fish at the bottom of the top left tank and feed it to the top fish in the third tank. Then pick up the top fish in tank three after it has eaten the small fish and feed it to the fish in tank one. Now take this fish and feed it to the fish in tank three. Now take this one and feed it to the shark in tank two. The small shark is the only one of the fish that will not harm you. Move to the exit box and press fire.

Now climb up the ladder and run through the tanks taking care not to hit a spike. Climb down the ladder after tank three and fall down the drop to the right. Jump over the ball and climb down the next ladder. Run to the right and jump over the small pit and then jump onto the ledge. Then shoot the switch to turn the furnace on and stand next to it. Select the

Watch out for this big ugly fellow, then. I'd say he looks pretty nasty, wouldn't you? (We apologise for the captions on this page, the person responsible has been sacked. - Ed)



Pole vaulting's all very well, but we've got a game to finish.



change back to the throwing stars and shoot the spikes when they're at the highest point of their swing to the left. They will then fall down and form a plug in the shallow pit. Go left and climb up the ladder. Jump over the large ball and push it to the right until it falls into the furnace. Now run to the right and jump on the small platform next to the furnace switch. When the block of ice starts melting to the point where the top is just below the platform you're standing on, and immediately jump on the ledge to the right. Hitting the switch on the wall will turn off the force field below you.

When the molten metal has cooled drop down from the platform. Collect the crystal on the floor and go right until you are under the crystal which is embedded in the next block of ice. Keep shooting the ice until it shatters, throwing stars will do the trick, and catch the second crystal. You are now set for the final confrontation.

THE FINAL CONFLICT

Run and jump onto the platforms. When Maletoth makes his appearance fire rapidly and repeatedly at his head. Take a tip and change platforms every time he goes past you. Try to destroy him as quickly as possible, but then again, you didn't really need me to tell you that, did you?

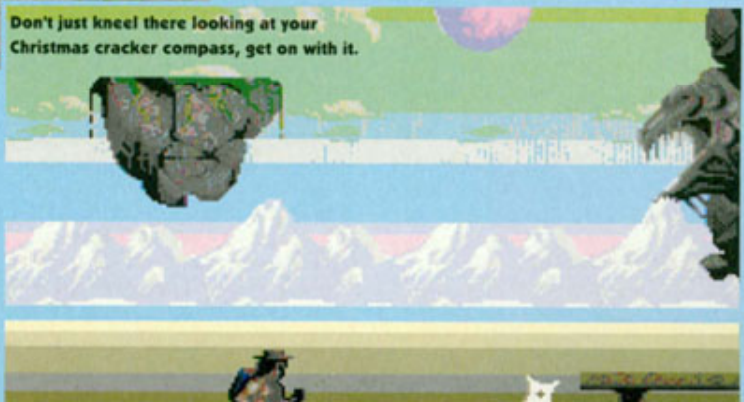


If talking birds were at all useful you'd be able to get them to phone for pizza and stuff, wouldn't you.

hammers and keep shooting the furnace until it stops moving. Change your weapon back to the throwing stars and shoot the spikes that are hanging from a chain in the ceiling to the right. Shoot them twice and change the weapons back to the hammer.

Jump up and fire the hammers at the spikes until they're at full swing. Then

Don't just kneel there looking at your Christmas cracker compass, get on with it.



By a curious trick of the light, it looks as if you're hanging from that rock by a rope.





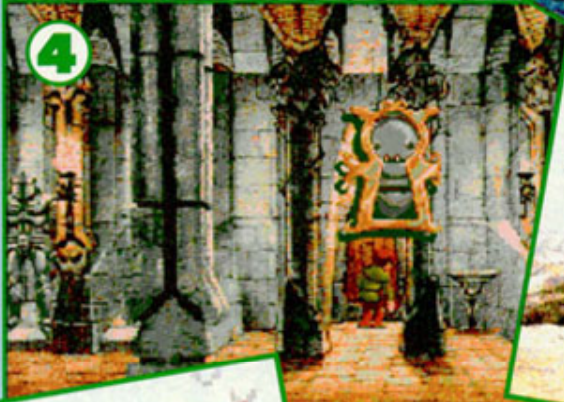
1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



CURSE OF E

Getting a bit stuck in Core Design's groovy new adventure game? New AP boy Tim

1 DUNGEON: You're hanging upside down from a wall in a dungeon. Call "help" and the guard will rush in, have a bit of a fit on you, and in the process drop a key. Pick up the key and unlock the chains you're hanging from. Go to the pillar in the bottom right hand corner and pick up the coin. Go to the back wall where the water is dripping and pull the mortar. A paper clip falls out - pick it up and go over to the door. Use the paper clip to pick the lock and get out of the dungeon.

3 CORRIDOR: See that goldfish bowl on the table at the start of the corridor - you want to take that, you'll need it later. Go to the

4 door next to it and look through the keyhole (spooky, eh?). The monster in the corridor disappears, enabling you to get past. Start going down the corridor, but watch for the statues' mallets trying to whack you, and avoid the monster who returns to give you some grief. Stop just before each statue and move after it's landed a blow. On your way you want to collect all the gems; there's one between the first two statues and another to the right of the large table in the middle of the corridor. Pick up the coin from the top of the table. Take the gem just before the second statue past the large table, another on the wall before the last statue and yet another behind the block at the end of the corridor. You made it! Go through the door

at the end of the corridor.

5 LAKEBED: Put the goldfish bowl on your head - this will stop you from drowning. Pull the stuck fish free from those bars right by you - a good deed is often rewarded. Take the coin from behind the rock at the bottom right of the screen for some more money. Walk on a little bit and you'll see a patch of mud on the ocean bed. Look at it, then take the worm that's lying in it. Go up to the fishy shopkeeper, give him the worm and in exchange you'll get a supply of oxygen to fill up the goldfish bowl and keep you going down there. Move on a bit and you'll come to the electric eels. This is where your good deed is rewarded,

as the stuck fish you freed comes back and drops an oyster. Now, fortunately this seems to be just what the turtle who's circling you wants, so give it to him and he'll rather nicely take you over the electric eels.

8 Once you're over, pick up the cattle prod that somehow found its way to the bottom of the water and when the shark comes near you attack him with the cattle prod. Keep doing this and walk left towards the giant clam. When the clam is closed jump over it. Go left (young man) and insert the cattle prod in the plughole. You will be sucked down.

POOL ROOM: You're at the edge of a lake by the start





NCHANTIA

Tucker is here to help you out. Here's part one of the complete cursed solution.

of a cave.

Go to the bottom right of the screen, so

10 that you can't see Brad anymore, and pick up the seaweed. Go to the wall and press the protruding rock to reveal the secret entrance.

CAVE CORRIDORS:

There's a lot to do in here, so brace yourself. Pick up all the boulders and rocks that you find to give to the rock basher in the rock basher room.

11 Find the gold coin (it's not easy to see, but it glints a bit and you'll find it by one of the cave doorways).

Go to each of the separate rooms and do exactly as described in the following steps:

12 ROCK BASHER ROOM:

Give the rock basher all 18 rocks (three of each size) which you'll have to go back and collect because you can't carry them all at once. In return for all your hard work he gives you, er, some string.

13 SEESAW ROOM:

Take the plank, then attach it to the boulder. Throw the monitor (see POLO ROOM) on to the plank and you'll be catapulted onto the higher rock, where you'll find a magnet. Pick up the magnet and jump down.

POLO ROOM:

Pick up the monitor. After getting the

magnet from the SEESAW ROOM, come back and tie the string to the magnet and then throw it down the hole. It'll come back with a roll of wire attached to it.

14 Take the wire to the corridor outside the rock basher's room where the mud monster is running about (don't worry, he won't harm you).

Attach the wire to the loops and when the mud monster runs past a bit of mud will get caught on it. Pick up the mud.

15 HOLEY ROOM:

Time to do a bit of snouting around. Look in the three leftmost holes, look in the rightmost hole and take the twigs out of it.

16 WELL ROOM:

Throw the coin into the well and a games show host appears to offer you three prizes – money, a woman or a helmet. Now, you're not going to like me for this, but take the helmet. You'll need it to get out of the caves. Go to where the boulders are falling from the ceiling and put the helmet on.

17 EXIT ROOM:

Jump in the bucket. Now, attach the mud to the seaweed, attach the twigs to the mud and the seaweed and then wear the resulting mask (yes, I must admit that's not the first thing that sprang to my mind). To find out why, tune in to next month's instalment.



PATHETIC?

Then you need...

THE LAST RESORT

with Jonathan Davies



When all seems lost, when the darkness of despair descends upon you and your candle of hope is all but extinguished, Jonathan Davies will be there for you...

This is the bit where I waffle on for a few lines about how you're meant to write in to me with your game-playing questions, and I'll help out if I can, but the chances are I'll have to farm your problem out to the AMIGA POWER readership (who seem to know the answers to *everything*) and hope someone'll write in. I can't see the point of it, quite honestly, and I may well stop doing it after this month. (The introduction bit, not The Last Resort. Although...)

FANTASY WORLD DIZZY

Q "I can't get past the broken bridge or the dragon just after the Snap Happy Gator. I've had the game for over eight months."
SY, Worthing

LOOSE ENDS

As you've probably realised by now, I'm not too hot at this 'answering questions' business. I can only apologise, and beg anyone who can help with the following problems to do so.

Q "I'm stuck on WIZKID. How do you finish levels two and three to get the number of kittens needed?"
Oliver Smith

Q "How do you get to level five of WIZKID? How do you get a kitten on round four without jumping to level seven? What do you do with a herring?"
Faron Smith, Sunderland

Q "In ZORK I, how do you get into Hades? I've tried the bell, the book and the candles, but the candles keep getting vapourised. Help!"
Christopher Powell, Ipswich

Q "I can't get anywhere in DUNE. Has anyone got any tips, or a cheat?"
Jamie Whittaker, Rugby

Q "On DUNGEON QUEST, how do you get into the castle? I've been into the village and got the coin to give to the boat man. I can get to the castle, but

then I can't get in. Help!"
Darren Knight, Kettering

Q "How do I complete taxing level seven on LEMMINGS?"
D Bowman, Darlington

Q "I can't get past the FBI agents on the beach in LEISURE SUIT LARRY II. (I've already changed my hairstyle.)"
Eddie Mendoza, Holywell

Q "Where's the guardian at the end of level three on FIRST SAMURAI?"
Justin Robinson, Warwick

Q "In FUTURE WARS I can't find a way to get out of the building at the start. I've soaked my boss but that's as far as I can get. Crap, eh?"
Colin Edwards, Woolton

Q "In HEIMDALL, on the first world, I'm having trouble finding all six

scrolls to give to the wizard on the first island. I've got four with the power runes..." (Here he's drawn two sort of flag-like things, one pointing left and one pointing right, a backwards N and something that looks a bit like a 1 the way the French write them.) "Could someone tell me where the other two are? Also on the first world, there's a room with a number of switches and two doors. How do you open the doors, as none of the keys seem to fit?"
Graham Bond, Basingstoke

Q "On level two of the Dark Tower in LEGEND, there's a room with a lot of locked doors in a row and a Dispel rune behind a pillar. How do I open the doors?"
Paul Kemp, Soham Toney

Q "I'm having trouble in SPELLBOUND DIZZY. How can I breathe underwater? How can I collect the honey past the bees without being

stung? How can I get past the ore crusher down the hole without being crushed? And what does the ceramic lid do?" (You're not having a great deal of success, are you? - Ed)
M Lee, Poole

Q "Apart from music, can anyone tell me some special codes for POPULOUS II?"
Dale Bird, Cannock

Q "Since last Christmas I've gone round and round level four on CADAVER trying to find all four gold keys. I've only got two."
Allison Knowles, Goole

Q "I'm stuck on LEGEND on level one in the city of Balenholm. I can't find the ruby and iron keys and I can't open the door that won't budge."
H W Lee, London

Q "In ASTERIX: OPERATION GETAFIX, I can't enter the Roman Camp, but I can get the oil. What should I do now?"
Thomas Franklin, Abingdon

Q "In SPIDERMAN, where do I go from the time machine?"
Thomas Franklin, Abingdon



CASES CLOSED

Below, lots of kind people have written in with advice on problems I couldn't answer. I salute them.

MAGIC POCKETS

Q Mrs M Turner of Wednesbury was being driven to despair by the gorilla at the end of level two.

A When you lose your last life, keep your finger on the fire button. The game will start again, but your score won't have reset. Keep doing this until you've got 100,000 points – you are now super-powered!

T Cauwood, Lincoln

BLOOD MONEY

Q Alexander Wood was after a cheat, quite a while back now.

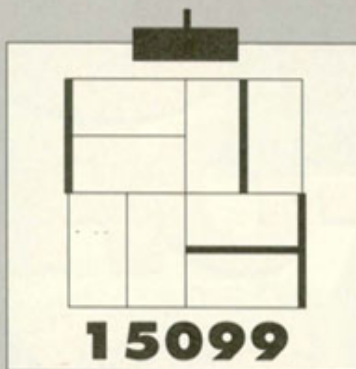
A "All you need to do is pause the game and press Help."

Justin Robinson

CAPTIVE

Q Stephen A D had ground to a halt on mission two, level two, thanks to a missing clipboard.

A It seems there's a bug in the game. Here, straight from the horse's mouth (well, Aron Phelan at Mindscape), and in a pictorial first for *The Last Resort*, is the missing clipboard:



Q Ian Beckford of Jersey couldn't find the probe code on Salstree.

A "There are, in fact, two probes to be found on this planet. The codes for the two probes are SYTHALEBEE and MIDINSNEING. I think it's possible that Ian may well have missed a very important feature on this planet. In the corridor with a ladder next to a shop there's a hole in the ceiling. If he uses the anti-grav device under this hole he'll float up through it to the next level near the other probe console."

Harry Maton, Croydon

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Q "On Le Chuck's ship, we can't get to the cooking vat in the hold. The rat keeps stopping us. What do we do?"

Mark and Ian Wood, Taunton

A Try putting the grog into the bowl on the floor.

Q "I've put the [blah, blah, blah] into the cooking pot, but it won't go bang. Can you help?"

Mrs S Munro, Hull

A It would be a pleasure. Your list of ingredients is wrong, that's all. What you want is the cinnamon sticks, the breath mints, the Jolly Roger, the ink, the fine wine, the rubber chicken, the gunpowder and the cereal.

Q "I have reached Monkey Island but I just can't blow up the dam. Having called the Lucasfilm helpline I was told by the answering machine to use the gunpowder, magnetic compass and noteworthy stone. I have the first two items but where on earth is the noteworthy stone? And once I have it, where do I stand to use all these items?"

S Hayward, St Lawrence

A The noteworthy stone is actually a piece of flint, which you'll find on top of the note at the river fork. Once you've got that, use the gunpowder on the dam and use the flint with the cannonball.

A Hey, I can do this one. Actually the two problems are connected. To get across the water you need three boulders. One's in the Armog's den, one's just after the Gator and one's in the entrance hall. Drop them in the water at the edge of the bridge. Then you can jump over them, get the key and find Dozy on the pier. He'll give you a sleeping potion which will get you past the dragon.

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH

Q "Could you tell me how I can get past the vampire baby sitter?"

Scott McGill, Liverpool

A When you're being chased by Alicia, get the can of hair spray from the bathroom, change to the cross-hair cursor and spray a cloud of it in front of her near the ceiling. That will slow her down. Then get the mouse from the chair cushion in Brianna's room. Go to the living room, click on the vacuum cleaner and hide behind the settee. Throw the mouse onto the table. When Alicia goes for it, change to cross-hairs again and click the button.

GOBLIINS

Q "On level eight, I can get the seeds but when I plant them the birds come and eat them. Please tell me how to do it."

Matthew Hinchliffe, Colne

A Do you mean level seven, by any chance? If that's so, to get rid of the birds simply hit the scarecrow.

SHINOBI

Q Daniel Brumhead of Keyingham came a cropper with a chopper at the end of level two. (*I'm starting to worry about you.* – Ed) I'm deeply sceptical of the following, but I'll print it anyway...

A "Pause the game at the helicopter and type 'helicoptertootoughforme'. Then un-pause the game and die once only to see level three."

Nathan White, Walsall

THE SIMPSONS

Q Cheryl Adamson of N Yorks had come tantalisingly close to reaching level two, but it continued to elude her.

A "To destroy the flowerpots you must jump onto a window, and then on top of a door. Jump up and down, spraying your paint onto the pots. For the cinema screen you need to be on the right-hand side of it and again jump up and down, spraying your paint and turning it pink."

Jonathan Algar, Newark

LEISURE SUIT LARRY II

Q P Griffiths of Cambridge was trying to find a passport.

ANOTHER WORLD

Q "At the end of level 12, how do you pull the last levers on the control panel? It's really bugging me."

Chris White, Trowbridge

A After staring long and hard at the solution in issues 11 and 12 of *AMIGA POWER*, I can only guess that you mean level 11 – the last level. If that's the case (and I quote): "Wait until the fight is finished, then time it so that when you pull the level the alien is under the trap door in the centre of the screen. Then quickly pull another lever and crawl left underneath the open trapdoor." Is that any help?

SPINDIZZY WORLDS

Q "How do you get access to the hidden level editor?"

Nathan White, Walsall

A This was all covered in issue 8 of *AMIGA POWER*. But, to summarise, you've got to go to the level-select screen and type 'Edit' (i.e. capital E, small d, i, t).

THE MANAGER

Q "[rant, fume, snarl] ...I've spent one hour trying to get your damn cheat to work... [rant, rant, rant]"

A This is just one of thousands of letters I've had complaining about the Manager cheat in issue 19. Apparently you've actually got to press A after you've pressed D. I'm really sorry, okay? While we're at it, I made another horrific cock-up in the same issue, while I was typing out

A "Go back to Eve's house and search the dustbins outside."
Haydn J Mullineux, Manchester

DEUTEROS

Q A D Feather had no specific problem. He was just a bit crap, and kept getting killed by the Methanoids.

A "Here are two pieces of advice:
1) The Methanoids won't attack unless you either trade with them too much or build six orbital factories. It is a good idea to build five factories – on Earth, Leda, Titan, Tethys and Ganymede. (These moons have hydrogen and methane, and can produce fuel.) You should build up stocks at these bases so that when you start the war by building the sixth base you can produce drones in large quantities and fight off any attack. Mr Feather is starting the war too early with few or no resources.
2) To prevent Methanoid attacks within a solar system, first capture or destroy all Methanoid orbital factories in that system, and then construct an incomplete factory on the outermost planet. The Methanoids will be unable to launch an attack anywhere in that system and you won't have to defend any bases there.

Oh, and one more thing, press Shift and C on the planet resource screen to give you infinite quantities of most objects (except drones)."

A G Foster, Milton Keynes

Adrian Pannett's answer to the *New Zealand Story* problem. I should have said that the warp's on level 1-3. Yeah, yeah, and loads of people can't get the *Parasol Stars* cheat to work. Sorry. They're working me too hard, that's what it is...

MYTH

Q "How do you kill the large dog in the pyramid? I've got the headdress and the magic eye, but neither of them seem to have any effect."

Darren Jeffries, Pontypool

A Have you put the ankh in the space in the wall? If so, stand under it and use the magic eye. By the way, my car came from Pontypool. It says so on the number plate.

HOOK

Q "How do you: a) make the bow and arrow, b) get the metal detector for the clock, c) jump off the cliff side, and d) talk to the leader of the Lost Boys?"

Greig Brown, Falkirk

A a) Use the tree branch with the string, b) you can get the money to buy it by taking the coins from the ship at Good Form Pier, c) use the piece of elastic with the slingshot, and then use yourself with the corner of the fence, and d) you just, like, talk to him, I suppose.

If you think it'll help, you can write to me at *The Last Resort*, *AMIGA POWER*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Send Loose Ends answers to the same address.





DESIGN A GAME

The Frankenstein Syndrome - or Winners of the Design A Game Competition.



The Hidden, Stuart and Mark ponder the finalists. The room looks tidy and smart because it isn't the AP office.

Y'know, it doesn't seem like a year ago that we instituted our grand 'Design A Game' competition, giving you the chance to win yourself an Amiga 600HD or one of ten copies of AMOS by inventing a game for our top programming buddies The Hidden to write. There is, of course, a very good reason for that. It was

only five months ago. Nevertheless, in that short period of time we saw an avalanche of mail unlike any since the Readers' Top 100, which we sent out to The Hidden in a large truck for them to hunt through, looking for the ideas which they

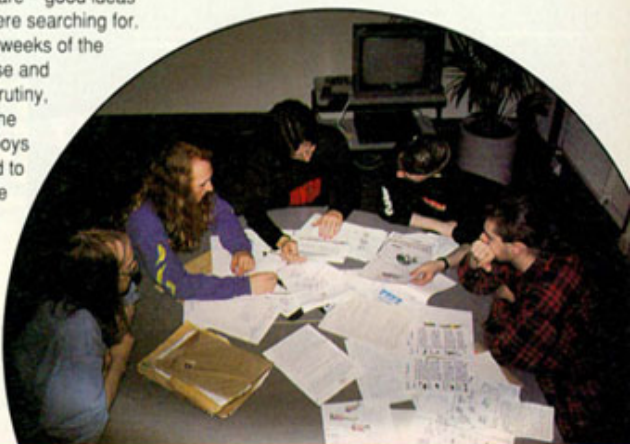
"Hurriedly scrawled on the back of a fag packet"

could turn into a world-beating game for our coverdisk. They were after originality, playability, but also (and most importantly) feasibility - a suggestion for a beat-'em-up which involved characters the full height of the screen scrolling smoothly across 6-level parallax

backdrops, for example, went straight out the window. There were many entries which people had obviously spent absolutely ages on, and almost as many hurriedly scrawled on the back of a fag packet, but we didn't care - good ideas were what we were searching for.

After several weeks of the most intense and careful scrutiny, though, the Hidden boys managed to whittle the barrow-loads of entries down to a short list of 11, which they lugged back all the way from **The room began to look familiar as papers were strewn about.**

Great Yarmouth to the AMIGA POWER offices so we could all have a look at 'em together. We'll get to the conclusions in a moment, but for now, let's have a look at That Short list In Full:



RICOCHET

by CJ Clarke of Twickenham

A cute scrolling arcade game starring a blob called Splosh, nicely realised in a thick dossier with extensive character data and storyboarding, all prettily drawn and meticulously thought out. The idea is to guide Splosh across a vertically-scrolling course, avoiding bad guys and gaps, in a scenario not a million miles away from Gremlin's old 8-bit classic *Boulder*.

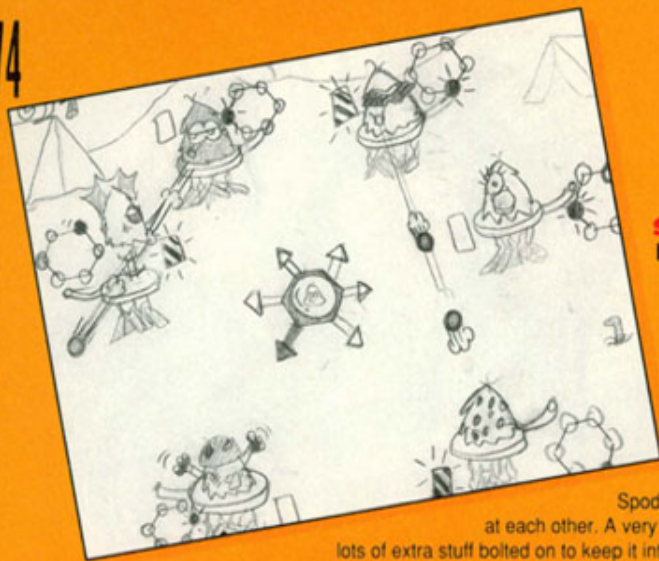


THE INCREDIBLE INVADING SPACE SUCKERS IN 3D

by Robert Prent of Nykerkerveen in Holland

Another giveaway title, but this entry was distinguished by a lovely painting Robert sent in with it. The game is self-explanatory, being *Space Invaders* in 3D with extra bits, but there was enough thought and innovation in the design to make it worth considering.

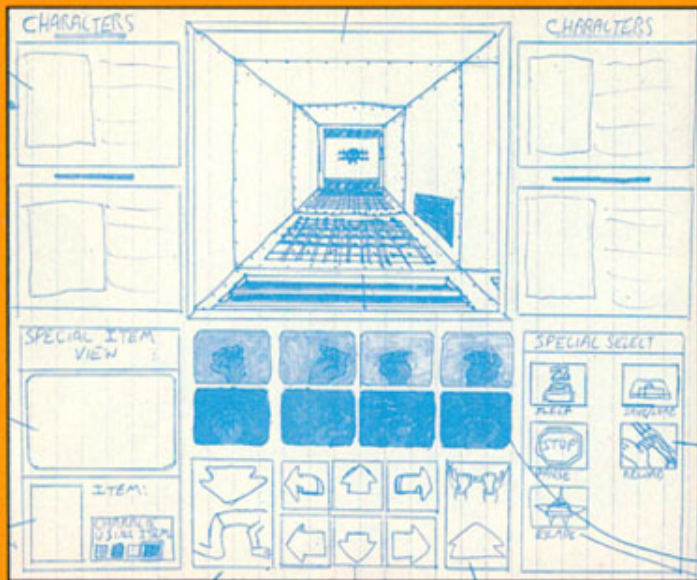




SPOD LAND
by Martin Fox
of Banchory

A funny little arcade battle game, featuring lots of little cute fluffy characters called Spods, who while away the long summer days in

Spodland by, er, spitting at each other. A very simple concept with lots of extra stuff bolted on to keep it interesting, and one of the few multi-player designs we got.



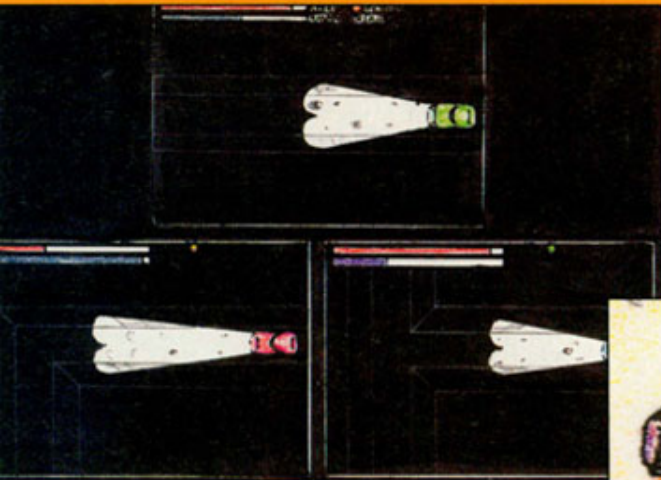
REBELLION

by Michael Brockbank of Canberra in Australia

Another nicely-presented effort, for a game looking a bit like a cross between *Captive* and *Laser Squad*. Michael even went as far as to suggest the type of music that should accompany the game, but we're not going to hold the fact that he likes 'Speed Metal' against him.

BATTLE CARS
by Tim Genge of Portishead

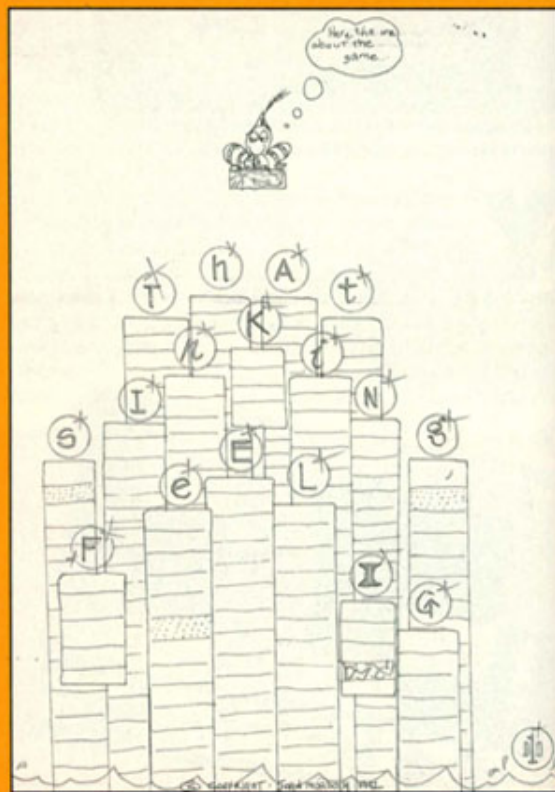
Another multi-player game, this time using the classic post-apocalyptic Mad Max scenario in, well, a battle between cars. Supposedly a future gameshow, the winner in *Battle Cars* is anyone who's still alive at the end of the game...



RATZ
by Dominic Camus of Cambridge

Absolutely gorgeous presentation by Dominic here, sending in his multi-part warrior rat RPG/wargame on some beautiful paper covered in subtle,

detailed drawings. Of course, we didn't pay any attention to that whatsoever, the ideas being the important thing, but it's nice to see someone put the effort in all the same.



THAT SINKING FEELING
by John Murdoch of Renfrew

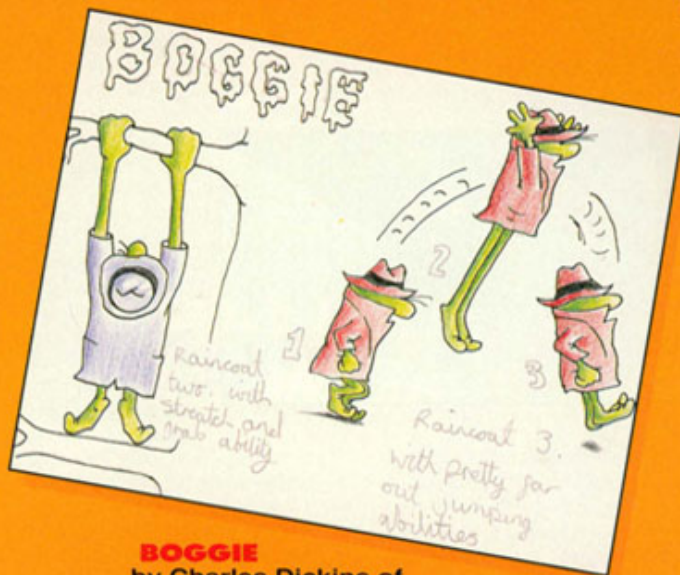
An arcade puzzle game, setting the player on a group of towers which collapse as they're touched. Lots of nifty ideas in this one, like having to earn the right to a Pause facility, and potentially excellent manic fun.



FRED'S FAIRY

by Paul Rayment of Tunbridge Wells

Lemmings/Builderland/Sleepwalker type of thing, starring Fred as a cross-country runner helped in his quest to impress the rest of the school running team by a helpful fairy who gently guides him past obstacles in his path.



BOGGIE

by Charles Dickins of Trollhattan in Sweden

Yet more lovely drawings in this tale of a big-nosed green troll on a mission to traverse four varying worlds of horizontally-scrolling platform-ish mayhem with the aid of several different raincoats of bizarre and unusual properties...



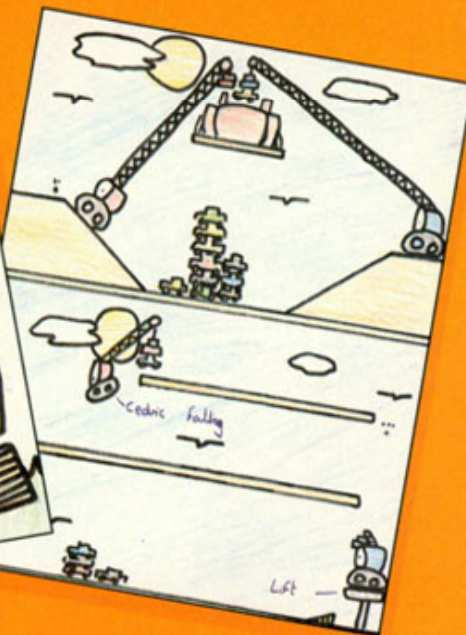
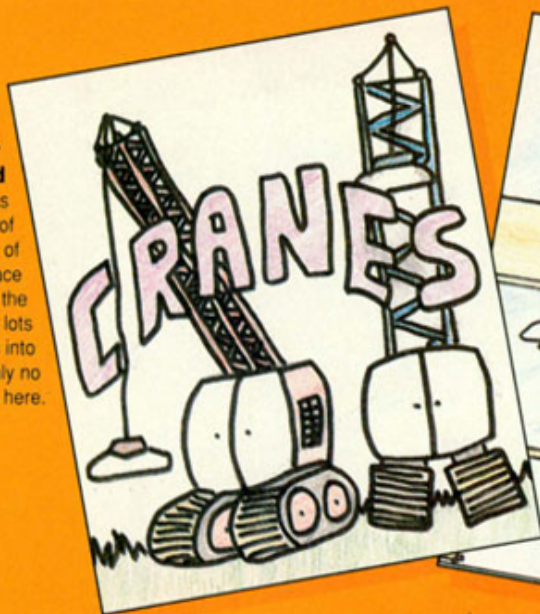
CRANES
by Chris Davey of Lichfield

Multi-player fun again, as you take on the personae of Cedric and Cindy, a couple of scrap yard cranes(!) who race against each other and the clock in an attempt to get lots and lots of knackered cars into the car crusher. Certainly no lack-of-originality problems here.

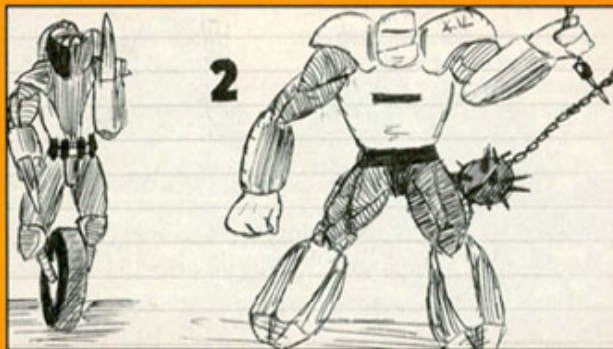


LAIR OF THE WOLF
by Sam and Annie Rigny of Rowlands Gill

Scrolling slash-'em-up affair, with an entry notable for storyboarding practically every inch of the game from start to finish, right down to the sound effects. Lots of thought and effort from Sam and Annie, but marks off for all the staples in the envelope which cut Craig's hand...



AND, ER, ALSO...



TRANSFORMER-ISH ROBOTS KICK DAVID ICKE'S BUTT
by Matthew Thomas of Swansea

The Hidden also singled out one other entry for special attention. *Transformer-Ish Robots Kick David Icke's Butt* ("That's just a working title, feel free to change it" - thanks, Matthew) is a beat-'em-up in which - oh, let's face it, it's all in the title, really. We couldn't quite work out whether young Matthew was taking the mickey or not ("Or even better, for the final level you could just dismember him

totally against a time limit - bonus points for chopping him into very small pieces perhaps?"), but we got a few chuckles from his three sides of school exercise-book scrawl anyway. Cheers, Matthew. (But no cigar...)



THE EVEN SHORTER LIST

After much thrashing around and involved discussion, the Hidden boys and ourselves

managed to whittle the last 11 designs down to three. This was the point at which it got really tough. The thinking went kind of like this...



THE INCREDIBLE INVADING SPACE SUCKERS IN 3D

Not being swayed by the lovely painting was a task in itself, but we tried to forget it as we went over this

one with a fine tooth comb. It'd certainly look good, and it wouldn't present any major technical difficulties. *Space Invader* games are always playable, and the added element of screen depth would make it really frantic. A few new ideas on display too, and scope

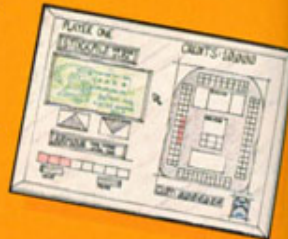
for nifty stuff with bonus waves and hidden extras, but... it's still *Space Invaders*, isn't it? And having done a 'Design A Space Invaders Game' competition, we thought, in the end, this'd just be talking things a bit too far.



BATTLE CARS

This one was looking very good indeed. The multi-player aspect was popular (although we decided the three-player version mooted was just too impractical – how do you split a multi-directionally scrolling screen three ways and still be able to see what's going on?), lots of attention had been paid to detail, and we spent ages thinking up other things we

could do with it, like having little teams of pedestrians running around in the colours of the two players, the idea being to kill your opponent's men while protecting your own. Everything was going well, until we realised that instead of designing a game, young Tim Genge had more or less just nicked one. The design of *Battle Cars* is almost identical to old Spectrum game by Games Workshop called, er, *Battle Cars*. A technical knockout, then, leaving the way clear for...



THE WINNER!



SPOD LAND

Spod Land came out on top for many reasons, including the excellent characters, the multi-player capability and the neat basic idea of cute fluffy aliens gobbling at each other, but most of all because when we saw the rough pencil diagrams, we all immediately found ourselves wanting to play the game. At first we thought the idea was too thin to hold up as a

game for more than an hour or two's play, but as we studied the design in more depth and thought of a few little extras of our own, it became clear that we had the potential for an absolute cracker of a slice of pure arcade mania. And that's all there was to it, really – we wanted to play it. The Hidden wanted to program it, and we reckoned you lot would want to see it on our coverdisk, so it had to win. End of story.

Or rather, of course, just the beginning of the story. We've packed *The Hidden* off with strict instructions to forget about all that clever-clever commercial money-making stuff and get on with the important business of turning *Spod Land* into a game worthy of them, us and, of course, the now-famous Martin Fox. Watch this space to see how they get on...

WHAT THE HIDDEN ARE UP TO THESE DAYS

You've seen *Puggles* and *Rome* and *Top Secret* (and voted it into your all-time top 100!), now you're probably wondering what *The Hidden* are going to come up with next. We were too, so after a heavy office brainstorming session, we decided that we would phone them up and ask them... "We're just finishing a Sonic-y platform game called *Dong*. It's actually quite a lot like *Doodlebug* in look and style, but we think it's better. We're looking for a publisher for it, so if anyone's interested..."

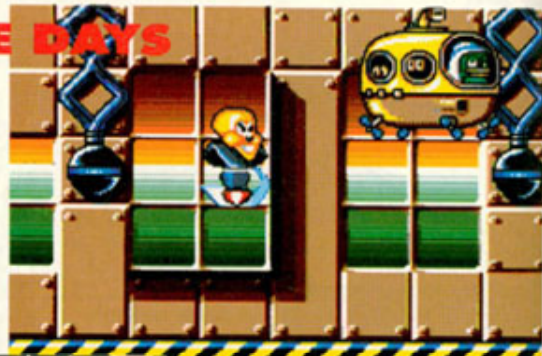
"We're looking for a publisher for Dong"

We've had a look at it, and it's a bit excellent. Software houses, snap it up! "We've more or less finished a new bit of PD, a four-player *Smash TV* clone

called *Monster Mash*, which we'll let you take a look at for your coverdisk." *Smash TV*? Four players? Give! "Then there's an un-named shoot-'em-up designed by a chap from a firm called Dome Software. They did the *Indiana Jones Atlantis* game on the Speccy and the Amstrad, and a new game called *Bob's Bad Day* which does some clever stuff that's never been seen on the Amiga. The shoot-'em-up design is amazing and we'll probably be working on that with him soon."

Busy, aren't you? "And we're also involved in discussions with a couple of major software houses about a design we've got, for a

revolutionary platform game with bizarre – no, actually, I probably shouldn't say at the moment. Just wait and see..."



Above: Some manner of hyper-evolved duck (don't ask us, we only work here) battles it in the Hidden's latest slice of fabness, *Dong*. It breaks with Amiga tradition by using 'fire' to jump (a Good Idea from the consoles) instead of 'up'.



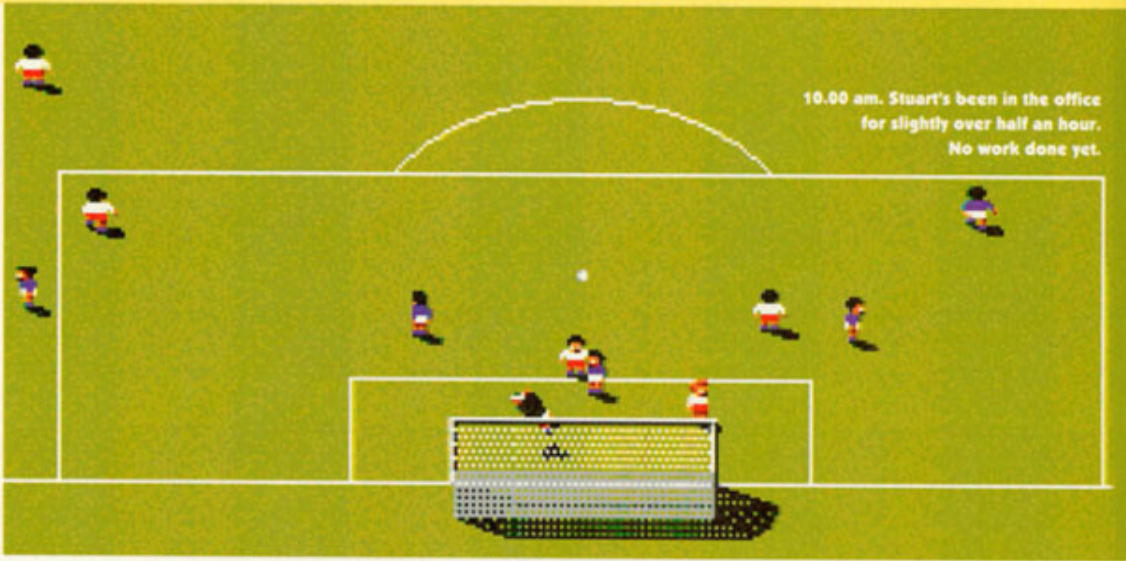
Left: It's really rather good fun to play, and the main character is quite charismatic.



GAME REVIEWS CONTINUED

Game: Sensible Soccer 92/93 Season
Publisher: Renegade
Authors: Sensible Software
Price: £25.99 stand alone/£3.95 upgrade
Release: Out now

Morning, Stuart. IT'S THERE! WHAT A GOAL! Oh, is that the new version of *Sensible Soccer*? FANTASTIC! DID YOU SEE THAT ONE?



10.00 am. Stuart's been in the office for slightly over half an hour. No work done yet.

The best got better. Now we'll never get any work from Stuart.

SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93 SEASON

- 1 SPAGHETTI G
- 2 UMBRELLA G
- 3 THE T G
- 4 DOBBLEDEDOCK D
- 5 KIPPER D
- 6 SPARTY D
- 7 PURSE D
- 8 FLAN D
- 9 NERNOUE H
- 10 PLEB H
- 11 DRILLUPT H
- 12 PHEON H
- 13 LORD BERN CHANEY F
- 14 LOAFERS F
- 15 CHANEY F
- 16 MILK F

DAD WORDS UTD

COACH CARPET SHEEPER

FIRST KIT SECOND KIT

UNDO OK

10.30am. Custom teams cause much amusement.

(Bring bring) Hello, AMIGA POWER. No, I'm afraid he's not here at the moment. Can I take a - AND HE'S CLEAN THROUGH AGAIN AND HE'S - NO! WHAT A SAVE! CORNER! No, no, that's just, er, the radio. Hang on a minute, I'll turn it down. (Clout)

and how the computer teams' skill levels have been tweaked upwards for a tougher challenge, and how there are new custom teams, and how the game's got lots of up-to-date options like the chance to play the World Cup Qualifying groups, and how the red and yellow cards that quite a few people complained about the lack of in the original game have been implemented this time round (complete with extra crowd samples), and how it's just generally an even more fabulous all-round recreation of the true feel of football, right down to the unpredictable way that you can thump Italy away in one match, only to get a 6-2 home drubbing from Portugal or lose to a breakaway goal from Malta in the very next one, and all that kind of thing. In fact, I shouldn't be at all surprised if you were to tentatively suggest that with all these improvements this might, in fact, just possibly be the

best Amiga game of all time, as our readers voted it in last month's Readers' All-Time Top 100. After all, you do seem to be having a good time over there. NO WAY! YOU CAN'T SEND HIM OFF FOR THAT! NOW THERE'S A HOLE IN THE WALL, AND - ARGH! FOUR-TWO! HOW COME THE GOALKEEPERS NEVER EVER SAVE FREE-KICKS? Oh God, I'm getting a headache now. COME ON REF, SURELY THAT'S A PENALTY? YES! IT MUST BE FIVE! IT IS! I think it might be an idea if the rest of us took an early lunch, Mark. AND IT'S ALL OVER! WHAT A WIN! LOOK AT THESE HIGHLIGHTS! I think you could be right, Tim.

● **STUART CAMPBELL!**

"No way! You can't send him off for that!"

Could you stop shouting, please? WHAT? YOU'RE KIDDING! A YELLOW CARD FOR THAT? Mark, could you make Stuart be quiet? I NEVER TOUCHED HIM! OH NO, WATCH OUT FOR THE FREE KICK! Oh look, Estonia just equalised. That's so very interesting. SHUT UP! THERE ARE NO EASY GAMES IN WORLD FOOTBALL! (Bring bring) Stuart, I think that's your phone. OH, WHAT A VOLLEY! TWO-ONE! UP YOURS, ESTONIA! LET'S SEE THAT ONE MORE TIME! OH YES! YES!

HE FLOATS ONE IN, A DIVING HEADER - GOOAAALLL! Yes, I'll get him to call you as soon as he calms down- er, comes in. Bye. AND THE SCOTS HAVE REALLY GOT THE PSEUDO-RUSSIAN LOSERS ON THE RACK NOW! A CROSS, A GOAL! So, you'll be giving this a pretty good review then? Lots of stuff about the new goalkeepers and how they can turn the ball round the post for corners and stuff, and how the new passback rule's been implemented,

11.45am. Stuart finally manages to get Scotland to beat Russia. No work done yet.



2.00pm. Still no work from Stuart.

SCOTLAND 1-0 RUSSIA

▲ **UPPERS** Tougher, slicker, more realistic, in pretty much every way better than the 93%-rated original. Is there any more to be said?

▼ **DOWNERS** The keepers do seem to have a bit of a weak spot where free kicks are concerned, and it'd be nice if you got to play some kind of World Cup if you qualified. And where have Aberdeen gone?

THE BOTTOM LINE
 You lot think this (even in its previous, inferior incarnation) is the best Amiga game ever. I'm inclined to agree with you.

94 PERCENT



COOL WORLD

It's a funny old world, especially when it's

Game: Cool World
Publisher: Ocean
Author: Twilight
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

There's no way to tell what the film Cool World is like because it's not out yet. The only thing I can say is that I quite fancy the cartoon representation of a woman on the poster (her name's Holli - sigh), which has me, and my psychiatrist, more than slightly worried, especially as I was just getting over my crush on Jessica Rabbit. That aside (ahem), let's look at the game plot. This guy, Jack Deebes, has been writing this groovy underground comic called Cool World and in the process he's unwittingly created an alternative universe. This universe is peopled (or characterized, anyway) by doodles, who are the stars of the comic, and they're intent on transferring objects from the real world to Cool World by jumping

through vortices between the two. All this would be fine if it weren't for the fact that as a direct result the universe is going to destruct. You play Harris the Policeman, and it's up to you to save the universe from this unusual threat. It all looks like fantastic potential for a great game.

Ah; the game. It was looking good on the fantastic intro sequence, and my heart ached as the current object of my desire danced on the screen in front of me, and somebody else had to push the fire button to get me on to the game itself. And then... oh dear. You're on this

horizontally scrolling level, which could hardly be called platform as there're only two dimensions to it, shooting purple gorillas and Bart Simpson lookalikes armed only with a handy pen. I can't believe it, it looks like a Spectrum game. I was cursing and preparing myself for a 29% job, when it got better. It turns out that was just

populated by cartoon



characters from a cult comic.

the start, where you're travelling the Cool World streets collecting coins in order to bribe your way into the other levels.

And the other levels are an improvement. This is a platform game after all, but with the added twist that you've got two levels at once - the real world scenario and the Cool World scenario - and you skip between the two using the vortices. You have to shoot the doodles, which turns them into ink bubbles, and then suck them back into your pen to completely destroy them. In the Cool World you have to pick up real world objects and send them back where they belong. You get an indication of how many doodles are in the real world and how many objects are in the Cool World, so you're constantly skipping about between the two to keep the balance in

impression that a lot more could be done with such an interesting plot. But never mind, eh? There's always the title sequence...
 ● TIM TUCKER

It's a little red phone creature (so I'm told).



"A mildly entertaining game, but not a complete stormer"



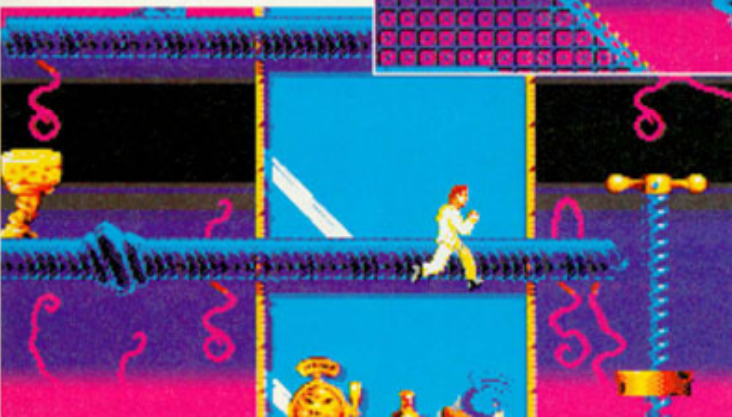
Quick flip back to the real world, and it's time to do a bit more doodle bashing.



She's lovely, isn't she? What kind of a chance do you think I have with a drawn fictional character?

Some of the doodles are a bit weird. Here Harris has to fight against Jimmy Savile in his jogging suit, and a giant blue baby. Ever wonder who thinks of all this stuff?

The Cool World is a strange place, full of giant taps on springs and alarm clocks.



check. When the danger reaches critical level you lose a life and you have to keep the balance during the time limit to go on to the next level.

And that's it really. It's fairly engrossing for a while, as you battle with time and are forced to jump around a lot

between the two worlds. This makes for a mildly entertaining game, and bumps the rating up by 30% from my initial disappointment, but it's not a complete stormer by any means. The control of the character is very crude and feels clumsy at times. The backgrounds look good, but not stunning, and it's really an average platform game that is raised slightly above average by the time limit and two-levels-in-one scenario. I was left with the

UPPERS Having a time limit adds excitement to the game, and playing two levels at once is kind of groovy. The backgrounds are attractive, and some of the doodles are effectively, er, doodle like.

DOWNERS It's clumsy to control the main character, it's not original and it's basically just an average platform game when there are some stunning platform games around.

THE BOTTOM LINE

It's a shame that this film licence hasn't been turned into a fantastic game. If the film's a hit (and it will be) then this will be too, and I'm sorry that people's money won't be spent on something more worthy of their cash. Not a complete disaster, but it should have been a triumph.

59 PERCENT



DUNGEON MASTER CHAOS STRIKES BACK



Mummy wrapping – soft, strong and very, very long.

got chaos with it.

"The control is innovative and user friendly"

Dungeon Master strikes back, and this time it's

Games: Dungeon Master, Chaos Strikes Back
Publisher: Psygnosis
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

Some say that there's nothing an AMIGA POWER writer fears more than finding a role-playing game, bearing a "review this" Post-It note, lying on their desk. This is not true. I have discovered something even more scary, and that's finding TWO role-playing games, cleverly packaged in a single box, lying on your desk.

Dungeon Master is very old, but still much loved – it popped up spookily at number 34 in the AP Readers' Top 100. Packaged with it is the sequel *Chaos Strikes Back*, which is less old (in traditional sequel fashion), more difficult and similarly similar.

The games are typical RPG fare, with character sheets, special abilities,

monsters and dungeons galore. The sort of game that you'll either love or hate. With that in mind, here are two reviews. Read the one that applies to you...

If you've read every one of Tolkien's books and drawn hexagons all over your kitchen table, read this:

The enduring success of *Dungeon Master* can be put down to one major factor: the game's control method. This is both innovative and user-friendly. The character sheet offers a pictorial representation of your hero's body, and you move icons around on this to store, eat, examine or use the various items you'll find around the dungeons.

Casting spells is almost a game in itself, as it involves 'learning' a new

language. There are 24 magical symbols, each with their own meaning or function, and the trick is to combine the right symbols to perform the spell required. A lot of 'ow my head hurts'-style thinking is needed here.

Despite the complexity and depth of the gameplay, *Dungeon Master's* control method is admirably user-friendly. Moving round the dungeon involves clicking on the



Cedar tree, how big it's grown. (Oh boy. – Ed)

SHOW SOME CHARACTER

Shove an item in your mouth to eat it (tip: not a scroll).

Your rucksack holds thirteen items. Other containers (quiver, pouch) hold substantially less.

Click on sleep before your character dies of exhaustion (top tip).

Shove an item in your eye to examine it (eg a scroll).

Cast some magic spells here (if you can work out how to do it).

Your right hand is your 'ready' hand, where you put the weapon you want to have prepared for when battle breaks out. Your left hand is your 'not quite so ready' hand.



The window things appear in.

Your vital statistics.

UPPERS Smart control method, atmospheric graphics, *Dungeon Master* is easy to launch into, a few added features in the sequel.

DOWNERS You really have to hunt out the action initially, and *Chaos Strikes Back* may prove too difficult for the average gamer.

THE BOTTOM LINE *Dungeon Master* has aged well, and puts the majority of today's identikit role-players to shame. It is an acquired taste, of course (but if all RPGs were like this, it might be worth acquiring). Impressive.

81

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

Game: Noddy's Playtime
Publisher: Jumping Bean Company
Author: Richard Costello
Price: £24.99
Release: Out now



Er, the naughty elf on the roof has done something antagonistic to the mail (they do that) and it's your job to put it right.



dPaint eat your heart out. Create your own masterpieces with Noddy's help.

NODDY'S PLAYTIME

Lock up your daughters, put shackles on your sons. Noddy's back with a vengeance, with a mission to educate.

little yellow car, lives in Toy Town, and is called Noddy. (Is that is first name or his second? Never could work it out.)

Anyway, there are eight games to play in *Noddy's Playtime*, all of which are linked by a natty little driving section, which involves steering Noddy around Toy Town to get to one of the games. A simple painting program is thrown in as well, to enable children to exercise their creativity. The games teach children about (deep breath) shapes, colours, matching objects and animals, basic music, letters, words, odd-one-out, counting, and basic maths. Phew, you never knew there was so much in it, eh? All the games are extremely well presented, and have excellent sound



Visit Noah's ark to play the jigsaw game. There are more pieces on the harder levels.



Either get Noddy to drive you to a game or click on the car and drive yourself.

effects, though some of the graphics are a bit small, particularly on the train matching game. I had trouble distinguishing between the portraits of the characters, let alone remembering where they were all sitting. Three skill levels cater for a range of age groups, from just entering school to about seven-years-old. When children first use the program, it's best

that an adult uses it with them to guide them through the basics. The control system is simple, and text has been kept to a minimum, which makes the program easy to use. But you can't help wondering how many five-year-olds have mastered the complexities of swapping disks on their single-drive Amigas (although they'll

"All the games are extremely well presented"

get a lot of practice here). Apparently there has been a lot of demand for a Noddy game from parents, but whether it's to educate their children or satisfy their own nostalgic cravings is unclear. And anyway, parents who were raised on a good healthy diet of Noddy, Big Ears, suet and cabbage will want to ensure their children get the same treatment - however unfair it might seem to outsiders.

The attraction of *Noddy* as a game character must lie very much with the parents. The little chappie hasn't been on TV for a good few years, and I know that my four-year-old boy certainly wouldn't accept sweets from the strange little

gnome. But if Sonic came round with a pocketful of sherbet dips, that would be a different matter. In marketing terms it's obviously very sensible to use a character parents can identify with - after all, they have all the money. (There can't be many infants just entering school with £25 pocket money to spare, can there?)

Having used the program for some time, I'd quite happily fork out the aforementioned sum for the program for my little ones to use. And not being a huge Noddy fan, that surprised me a bit. I wouldn't buy it for the ridiculously twee, cotton-candy Noddy stuff, it's just a damned fine educational program. It's fun, it keeps children interested, the graphics and sound effects on the whole are excellent, and there are plenty of different games. The numerous disk swaps involved are an absolute pain on a single drive machine, and is potentially ruinous for young children, but overall, *Noddy's Playtime* is one of the best programs of its kind.

● RICHARD LONGHURST



UPPERS Well presented throughout and extremely easy to use, Noddy is bound to be a sure-fire winner with parents and children alike. Plenty of learning opportunities in an good variety of games, plus some decent sounds.

DOWNERS Too much disk swapping for single drive owners means it's hard for young children to use on their own. Older and more experienced gamers will find it too easy to complete.

THE BOTTOM LINE
A thoroughly professional educational game that's surprisingly enjoyable to play. It sets out to appeal to younger children and it definitely succeeds. A shame about the excessive disk swapping though.

75

When a number appears, hit the appropriate key to hear a rather strained imitation of a piano or organ (no releasing of the back please)



LEEDS UNITED CHAMPIONS



A typical turn-out at Leeds with plenty of spaces in the stand.

they appeal to non-fans?

Leeds United is entirely a management game. You won't even spot any sprites of footballers during the match sequences, just a clock, details of scorers, and a black bar with the words 'attack', 'midfield' and 'defence' zipping across it.

Sounds off-putting? (A decent match sequence is a vital part of a management sim, after all.) Don't worry. The simple, speedy way the black bar illustrates the flow of play, combined with a steady stream of information (goals and bookings), is a lot more nerve-wracking and exciting than your average sluggish, predictable when-will-it-end animated match sequence. Oh, and you can interrupt at any time to make substitutions.

Here comes the section of the review where we list the niggling flaws.

Flaw one: The 'training' element of the game is best ignored. While it's much easier to operate than most management sim training bits, your players are more likely to get worse if you train them (as the training reports confirm). Do CDS know something about Leeds that we don't?

Flaw two: It's too easy to begin with. In order to generate the

climbing-up-the-league challenge that management sims like, Leeds United (the only team you can be, match) start off life in the Fourth Division. If this might upset some of the Leeds die-hards, they'd be even more upset if their team made a habit of losing to teams like Doncaster and Wrexham. Consequently, they don't.

You'd have to do something really stupid (only fielding six players, for example) to lose a game in Division Four. Things get harder as you progress up the league of course, but a bit more challenge from the kick off would have been nice.

Apart from that, it's all pretty decent. It's user-friendly, you aren't swamped with information you don't want, and there's plenty of scope for getting tactical. Which is exactly what you want in a game style based on getting tactical. In short, it contains a lot of things that are good, and a handful of things that are dodgy.

● ADAM PETERS

Team licences are all very well, but do

Game: Leeds United Champions
Publisher: CDS
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

"It's very playable, you'll soon be hooked"

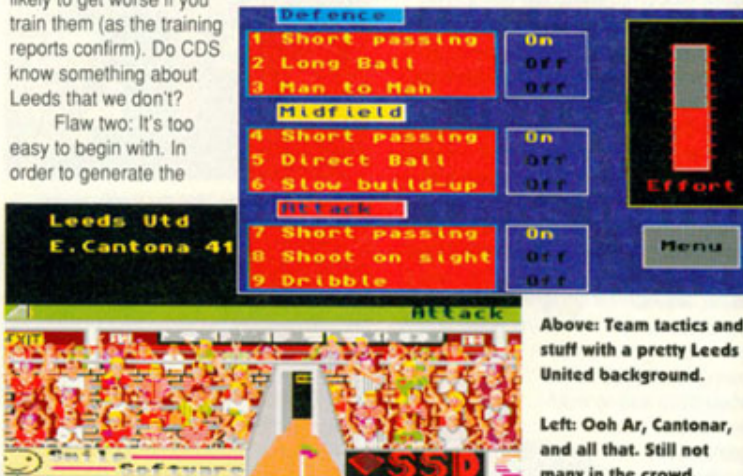
You've laughed at the performance against Glasgow

Rangers, now buy the game. Which is a roundabout way of saying "what's the idea behind these football team licences?" We've already had a host of Manchester United games, a Liverpool game, an Arsenal game... The fans of the club in question might go for it in a big way, but what about everybody else (and that's going to be at least 95% of the football following public)? How many

Manchester United or Bradford fans can you see queuing up to buy a game covered in white roses? It's not as if the whole country is going to be behind the Peacocks in their brave challenge for the European Cup. Not now they're not in it any more.

So, bearing in mind that large numbers of people in the West Yorkshire area will be buying this game whatever it's like, and even larger numbers of people wouldn't go near it if Winona Ryder was using the box as a changing room, how does it shape up?

For a start, there's no arcade action at all. The Liverpool game was an arcadey, the Manchester United games were a mixture of arcade and strategy, but



Above: Team tactics and stuff with a pretty Leeds United background.

Left: Ooh Ar, Cantonar, and all that. Still not many in the crowd.

ON THE MENU TONIGHT...

Icons, icons everywhere. Leeds United Champions is a bit of a bargain for you fans of icon-ed up menu systems. You don't just get one menu here, you get double that number. Two.



The main menu hosts most of the important bits. There are icons for playing the next match, changing team formation, eyeing up the league tables and fixtures, checking on injuries, counting the cash, trying to find a transfer market, etc.



Even the smaller second menu contains a good, healthy quota of icons, many of which are teetering on the precipice of uselessness. There are several different options to display your performance in the form of a bar graph, for example.

UPPERS It's got loads of options. It's easy to control. It's very playable. You'll soon be hooked.

DOWNERS It's got a few rubbish bits. It'll struggle to win over people who hate Leeds. Steve Hodge is in it.

THE BOTTOM LINE

We were inundated with footy management games around the time of the European Championship. Leeds United isn't as good as the best of those (Graham Taylor's Soccer Manager), but it's a damn sight better than the worst (Domark's Championship Manager).

74
PERCENT



MOTORHEAD

That's the way I like it, baby, I don't want to live forever. The ace of spades etc...



Game: Motorhead
Publisher: Virgin
Author: Richard Costello
Price: £15.99
Release: Out now

When it comes to appreciating the finer points of the music of Motorhead, I've got to admit that my experience is limited to two separate and really quite feeble events. One is watching the warty rock gods strumming harmoniously away in the Young Ones' living room while the boys rushed to keep a date with Bambi Gascoigne, and the other is being a spoggy twelve-year-old jumping around at the school Christmas party, mumbling along to the verse as if I really did know the lyrics and then shouting out 'The Ace of Spades!' over the chorus.

All of which, I think, leaves me amply qualified to have a bash at Virgin's latest offering, *Motorhead*, a sort of lovable, fluffy homage to these leather clad kings of rock starring their legendary head man and chief screecher Ian 'Lemmy' Kilminster. In a not entirely original sequence of events it transpires that while our Lemmy was lying in a recreational Jack Daniel's type coma, vicious gangs in a small town have kidnapped and made off with various band members and roadies. Confronted with a note telling him to bug out or face the



An halitosis attack on an unsuspecting rapper, yesterday.

consequences, Lemmy takes the only option open to a man who makes a living out of drinking heavily and wearing soiled jeans - he kicks butt.

With such a shallow pretext to hurt people there's very little left to do other than getting down to the serious business of busting people's faces. The ultimate aim of all of this violence is to release all the boys and to get down to lots of debauched rockin' and head bangin' but of course life's never that easy. The gang factions that have the lads are numerous and split along musical lines, so before the gig can proceed Lemmy must traverse the trauma of listening to music as

"Lemmy rattles his tonsils convincingly"

diverse as country and western, hip-hop and punk as well as the physical pain of bad guys bashing his spleen.

Moving through levels such as Karaokeville, Nashville and a particularly gothic Cathedral setting, it's obvious to any casual onlooker that this game is drenched by egalitarian bigotry, throwing scorn on all types of music regardless of race, creed or colour.

It's also blatantly clear to even my white-haired old grandmother (bless her) that this is in fact that arcade classic *Golden Axe* revisited, with Lemmy using his 'axe' in the way it was originally intended before Jimi Hendrix got his hands on the word. This isn't actually a problem, imitation being after all the sincerest form of flattery, and the humorous touches add an appeal that I always found lacking in the sword and sorcery version.

Lemmy can punch, headbutt, swing his guitar or use halitosis attacks, always assuming he's loaded up on cockles or Jack Daniel's first. By collecting magical Motorhead talismans he can unleash a devastating musical chord or summon up helpful demons, ranging from a tasty lass who distracts his opponents for a bit, up to WWF's very own 'Undertaker', who just plain kills everyone.

The characters are well animated with Lemmy rattling his tonsils convincingly, and the bad guys range from a slick-haired Japanese businessman to a

Lemmy just has to do exactly what you always do when you eat too many cockles.

clubfooted inbred called Clint. When killed they either melt away into a sticky pool or get burned into charcoal with a surprised look that's a joy to behold. End of level sub-games - such as bike rides, hippy bashing and beer guzzling - break up the stages and supply a bit of variety.

For a game based so heavily on musical themes the sound is pretty crappy, with plinkety-plonkety themes that only seem fit for Karaokeville. How hard can it be to come up with a convincing heavy metal guitar sound? Still, despite that rather glaring flaw, *Motorhead* isn't at all bad. It's no instant classic but it's a bit of a laugh, and at the reasonable price of sixteen quid (middle-quality games at middle-quality prices! At last!) you could do much worse than spending an evening with 'No Sleep 'Til Hammersmith' on your stereo and this on your Amiga.

● MARK WINSTANLEY

UPPERS Smooth, humorous graphics and projectile belching together with leather and motorbikes make it a pretty good larf.

DOWNERS Naff sound all round is a bit of a let down. Probably too easy for devoted game players; I'm pretty hopeless without at least a week's practice but I still managed to glide through the first few levels.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A perfectly professional and fun game that's great if you enjoy hacking and slashing, with a few little diversions thrown in for good luck. What it lacks in originality it more than makes up for by being reasonably priced, Throw in the latest Motorhead LP as well and I'd say you've got a bargain.

71

PERCENT





This is the new Divine Intervention provided by the *Populous II* expansion disk. It's called a Fire Burst and it sends out streams of divine fire from your Leader. Smoky The Bear Says: "As you can see, when playing with fire it's wise not to toast your own people."

classical deity? Oh No! It's...



NEW FEATURE!

The shaded area in this Time Clock shows how much time has elapsed during a challenge.



At the end of the scale we have the 42nd challenge, with the code word carefully deleted on the explanatory screen.

Tired of ruling the ancient world? Bored by having to be a

POPULOUS II THE CHALLENGE GAMES

Game: Populous II: The Challenge Games
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Author: Bullfrog
Price: £14.99
Release: Out now

So you can conquer all 1,000 worlds in *Populous II* and regularly thrash your mates blindfolded but still you want more? Then you obviously need therapy – and a copy of *Populous II: The Challenge Games*.

Here are 500 new worlds to play, with the added bonus of "stunning Japanese graphics and sprites" and 42 challenges. Oh, and a new Divine Intervention thrown in for good measure.

The 500 new worlds are just that. Big deal. Apart from new oriental visuals (ho hum), there's nothing innovative on offer – and certainly nothing you couldn't put together in a time-consuming sitting with the CUSTOM GAME option. No, I'm afraid it's standard expansion disk fare there.

The challenges on the other hand, all

42 of them, are more inventive and along the lines of 'Can you do this before the time limit expires but without that and the other ability available?' It's the sort of stuff I'd expect to see printed in

"It's standard expansion disk fare"

magazines and not have to fork out 15 hard-earned for, only it'd be tricky to create these challenges on the standard *Pop II*.

The first handful of challenges are easy peasy lemon squeeze tutorials (with a HINT for the complete divs) to the point of being condescending. For example, in the very first challenge a lone subject wanders

aimlessly on a small plot of basalt. You have approximately 30 seconds to realise that in order for at least 10 per cent of your population to survive, the only

option is to vegetate the land and get sprogging pronto (although how you're going to manage that with only one little chap, I'm not too sure) to win.

In Challenge Number Two, it so happens that your chaps have erected walls to form three sides of a square. An enemy hero's attacking and he can stroll straight in and pummel your people. What should you do with that gaping hole?

Challenge Three: A tidal wave will wipe out your tribe unless you can move the people and ensure that at least 10 per cent are saved. By the time you reach Challenge Six, the HINTS have dried up and your people have an impending sense of doom. Maybe it would be wise to move them. Why? Their tiny settlement suddenly bursts into flames. Oh dear. Get the idea?

The challenges get tougher, with

more tidal waves and having to boost your people's morale after their leader's popped his clogs. But the time limits stay tighter than a fish's bottom.

In some ways it's a bit like having an Action Man ("It's NOT a doll.") and buying extra kit for him.

Fiddling around with icons at high speed isn't a bundle of laughs. There's too much disk accessing, too, which hardly befits these time-sensitive challenges. It seems as if more time is spent waiting between challenges than is actually spent playing them. It's a bit cack, really.

Come to think of it, I never did fancy *Populous'* interface much. And I certainly never got off on the restrictions imposed. That's like learning to drive a car and then someone saying: wouldn't it be fun if you had to drive blindfolded? Or with no brakes? No, it wouldn't.

Populous II: The Challenge Games gets right up my nose, and you must be a *Populous* pervert if you'd pick it.

● GARY PENN



The first of the 42 challenges is this: a single, small plot of land which is incapable of sustaining life... until you lend a helping hand.

Left: And here's the second of those 42 challenges.



UPPERS Pretty new graphics, and some stuff you couldn't do with the original game and a bit of spare time.

DOWNERS...but not very much, really. It's a lot of money to pay for something you could mostly do yourself.

THE BOTTOM LINE
Add-on-vantageous antics for *Populous* pickers only.

49

NICKY BOOM

Scrolling platform games are



Even when you get to level five, the rats don't put up much opposition.

ten a penny, but this one costs 26 quid. So is it worth it?

Game: Nicky Boom
Publisher: Microids
Author: Dominico Manfredi (Program), Alain Lambin (Graphics & Animations, Sounds & Musics)
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

Nicky Boom. That can't be his real name. I think it must have something to do with his penchant for all things explosive. Quite why he spits apple cores and assorted other fruits though, is beyond me. Perhaps it's a funny French joke.

No, you don't want to know the story. Fine. Nicky's grandad's being held by a wicked witch. She's forcing him to show her his special secrets, but he won't. Nicky must find the witch's den and save the old fella pronto. There.

What did I tell you?

Nicky Boom's pretty – sorry, ugly – standard fare. Platforms + Ladders + Monsters + Special Scenery + Shooting + Jumping = Nothing New. And the bombs don't even play much of a part!

Alain Lambin must be a member of the Burning Pants Club, for they are surely on fire after his claim to be an artist and a musician. The man has been given a lot of colour to play with and he's obviously not afraid to use it. Extraneous detail abounds, too, and it doesn't make for a pretty picture. The music's bland and unsuitable, and the spot effects are nowt special.



Left: A fish, yesterday.

"It doesn't make for a pretty picture"



'Exciting' action from level four of Nicky Boom.

To its credit, there are many hidden features. Digging through the mud to discover ladders and bonus points is alright. There's little else worth discovering though. Nicky Boom is the sort of average fare played by the likes of Mean General Ordinary who lives at Mundane MiddleOfTheRoad.

The eight lengthy levels each come with a code, so you don't have to endure previously completed ones lest you fluff it, but there's little chance of that anyway. The difficulty curve must have come free with a packet of Cornflakes. My dog, Stumpy, finished it in half a day.

There are only two taxing aspects of Nicky Boom's playability. One is the tedious task of having to fall into unknown territory only to find an inch of deadly water below. The other is some of the enemy characters shooting bullets in Nicky's direction. Now they at least present a challenge. Otherwise, it's pretty much like talking a leisurely stroll through the countryside, throwing old fruit at anything animate.

Nicky Boom won't blow anyone away, that's for sure. I can't help feeling sorry for it, like something the cat's brought in which has to be put it out of its misery.

● GARY PENN

The differences between level one (below) and level two (right), are hard to spot.



It has to be said that some of the creatures are quite nice. The snails look quite groovy, after all.

When Nicky picks up any of these he says "Bobalob!" or "Oh God!", I'm not quite sure.



MEGABOMB
 Throw it in the air where it explodes, killing everything on screen and destroying weak platforms in the process. It can sometimes act like a bomb.



BOMB
 Blows open certain areas of scenery and creates new ladders from Wobbly Up Things.



KEY
 It – no! – opens doors! Sometimes though, Nicky has to tweak a special knob to open a door.



HEART
 Takes a sickly Nicky's energy to the max.



LOG
 Nicky shoots logs when he picks up one of these. Logs are used to create bridges in special places.



BONUS POINTS THINGS
 Dreary looking jewels and food mainly. Yawn.



WOBBLY 'UP' THINGS
 You can't pick them up but you can blow 'em up so a ladder pops up.



TELEPORTER
 No! Transports Nicky to a new area of the landscape!



UPPERS It's almost suitable for younger players...



DOWNERS ...but not quite, because of the tricky big monsters. Pukka players will be bored.

THE BOTTOM LINE
 BADOOMPH! That's the sound of Nicky Boom falling between two stools. You can take it or leave it really.

50

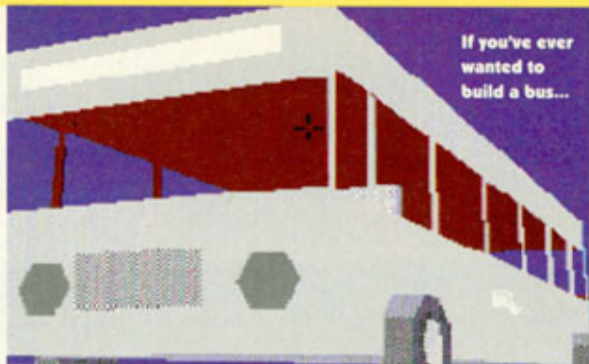
PERCENT

(ALLEGED) GREAT THINGS TO COLLECT IN NICKY BOOM



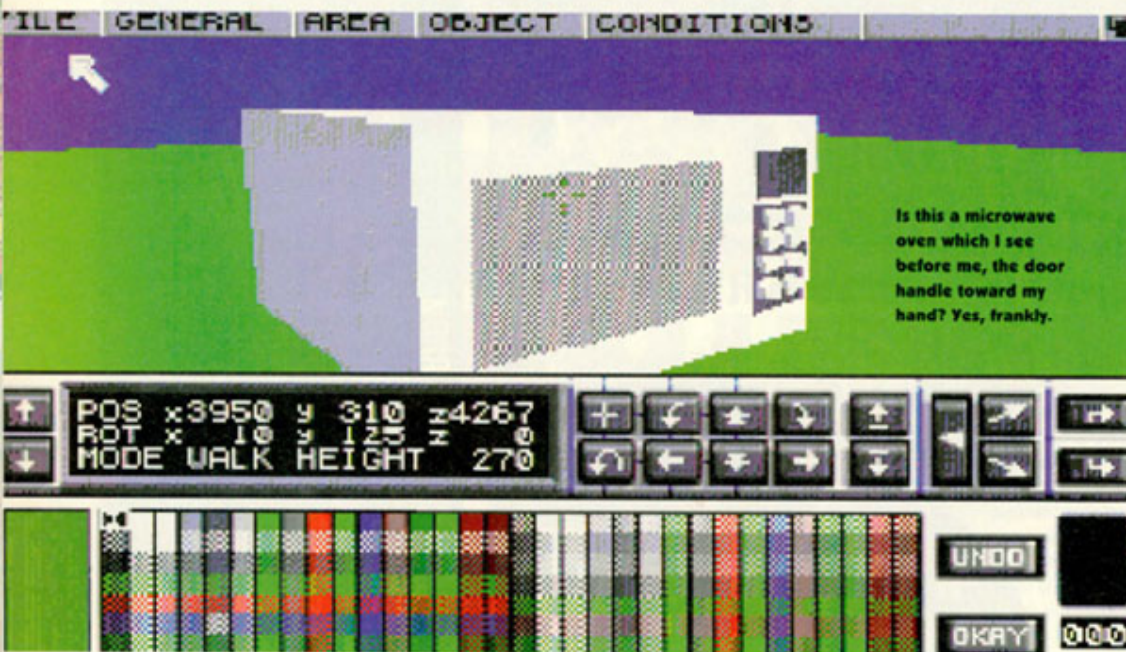
Game: 3D Construction Kit II
Publisher: Domark
Author: Incentive
Price: £49.99
Release: Out now

3D



CONSTRUCTION

KIT II



it to create 3D games.

these problems seems to have been rectified in the new version: the manual is now all rightish, with some good jokes (although the early copy I saw didn't have an index - tch). That means the package still costs £50, which is enough to deter everyone but the most serious McAlpine wannabe. And the graphics are still horribly slow. I realise there are limits to what the Amiga can do, but I don't think two or three frames per second (at best) and two or three seconds per frame (at worst) even begins to approach them. If I was working on a sequel to *3D Construction Kit* I'd have streamlined the guts of the thing first, and left the extra bits and pieces till later.

And now for the tricky bit. Coming up with a mark to stick at the end of a game review is a pretty arbitrary process, mostly based on gut feeling, a comparison with existing rivals, and a quick poll of the rest of the team. But *3D Construction Kit II* is

a lot more serious (and expensive) than your average game, it has no rivals, and the AMIGA

POWER team have made it quite clear that I'm on my own with this one. So I'll try to be scientific about it. I'll start with the 80% I gave the original. I'll add on 8% for the extra stuff that's been included, and the improved manual. I'll knock off 5% to allow

for the ravages of time, bearing in mind that what's underneath is basically the same thing I was looking at eighteen months ago. And a nominal 3% can go as a protest for the refinements that could have been made, but weren't. Does that sound fair?

● JONATHAN DAVIES

"It's a lot more serious than your average game"

All right, so it's not a game, we admit it. But you can use

Quite who this review is addressed to, I'm not sure. If you're interested in writing 3D games without actually writing them, the chances are you'll already have found out about *3D Construction Kit* and tracked down a copy. And, if that's the case, you'll have been informed about this new version through the user club, perused its list of improvements and quite possibly sent off for an upgrade. So, er... hello? Is anyone listening?

3D Construction Kit II is more of a utility than a game. (But what the heck, eh?) With it you can build a 3D world by sticking together lots of cubes and pyramids and colouring them in, and then wander around the results to your heart's content. Those of sufficiently robust constitution can go a step further, using the terrifying Freespace Programming Language to add animation, room-to-room movement and puzzles, to turn their 3D world into a 3D game.

But you could do all that with *3D Construction Kit*, the program's forerunner, which was

reviewed in issue 2 of AMIGA POWER. (By me, funnily enough.) How does the sequel improve on it?

Well, basically by tacking on lots of new features. There's now a comprehensive and very serviceable sample editor for adding sound effects to your games. There's a facility for moving around your game on autopilot, a bit like playing a video. The horribly complicated programming side of things has been made even more horrible and complicated, which will come as good news to people

who know what parameter types, object manipulation and structured programming are. You can now put spheres into your games, as well as cubes and pyramids. And you also get a disk full of clip art - ready-made objects like pianos and buses for you to play around with. There are countless minor additions too, but you'll forgive me if I don't list them all. (They are, after all, countless.)

My review of the original *3D Construction Kit* was pretty favourable. I gave the package 80%, on the grounds that it achieved exactly what it set out to do, and that I had lots of fun playing around with it. I did have three main reservations, however: the sluggishness of the graphics, which made the process of creating a game more and more painful as you add more bits to it; the price; and the useless manual. Unfortunately, only the last of



The sample editor has quite a selection of features and enables you to add exciting sounds to your 3D creations.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Compared with the original product, this is an improvement in many respects, but a sideways step in others. And viewed in isolation, it's a neat - but expensive - way to create 3D games.

80
PERCENT

This level is fun to solve but tedious to complete. The builder has to make ladders all the way to the exit in the monster's mouth.

LEMMINGS DOUBLE PACK

Let's go! Another chance to save those wretched rodents from their own stupidity.

Game: Lemmings Double Pack (Lemmings & Oh No! More Lemmings)
Publisher: Psygnosis
Authors: DMA Design
Price: £29.99
Release: Out Now

Ah yes, *Lemmings*. What can you say about one of the most talked about games (aside from the rather dull *Streetfighter II*, that is) that there's ever been? Unless you've been living in a cave for the last two years or so, you'll know all about these lemming things. They're the small pink Scandinavian rodents with green hair, that wear blue sweaters and march about the place with scant regard for their own personal safety. Your job, as you probably well know, is to save them from their own stupidity and return them home unscathed.

The idea of rescuing these irrational creatures never appealed to me before. It just seemed a rather tedious waste of my precious time. But I agreed to give it a go anyway and within five minutes I was completely hooked.

The new 'limited edition' double pack features both the original game and the *Oh No!...* data disk. So let's deal with them one at a time.

Lemmings is great. The learning curve is almost perfect, leading you from easy-peasy 'this is how to play the game' screens, through to the most fiendishly



Even the simple levels look good. This one has a *Shadow Of The Beast* vibe.

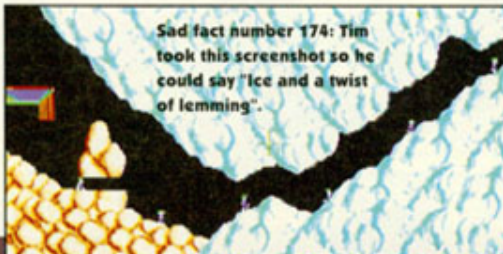
"Within five minutes I was completely hooked"

it by six o'clock I'll give you my entire month's wages." His £3.50, sadly, was safe. I'd worked out what I had to do within ten minutes, but it required pixel perfect positioning of my builder lemming and by six I still hadn't managed it. It was the old problem again – the puzzles are fun to solve but getting the wretched creatures out can be a chore, even when you know what you have to do.

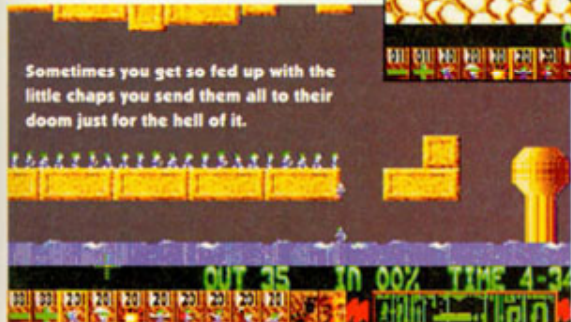
difficult puzzles without you actually noticing the transition. I have only one slight niggle. For me, the fun is in the solving of the puzzle – working out which of the many different classes of lemming will be needed to build a route to safety for the others. I find the actual digging of tunnels and building of bridges quite tiresome – once I've solved the puzzle bit I want to do the next one rather than go

through all that pointing and clicking. *Oh No! More Lemmings* is an altogether different kettle of, er, rodents. As we said in issue 9, the difficulty curve is abysmal. The first 20 levels are so simple, even a lemming could do them. Simple enough, in fact, that anyone who bought the disk as a supplement to the original *Lemmings* will have felt a little cheated.

Level 21 is quite challenging and I was glad that things were beginning to pick up a bit. At five o'clock, I arrived at level 22. Stuart, who was looking over my shoulder at the time, let out a hearty Gaelic chuckle. "You'll never do the next one," he said. "In fact, if you can do



Sad fact number 174: Tim took this screenshot so he could say "Ice and a twist of lemming".



Sometimes you get so fed up with the little chaps you send them all to their doom just for the hell of it.



But in the end, you just can't help trying to save them.

UPPERS The original save-'em-up hasn't lost any of its charm or appeal. The puzzles are fun and the addictiveness of the game will waste many hours of your life.

DOWNERS The first twenty levels of *Oh No!...* are ridiculously simple. Some of the puzzles, once solved, are a chore actually to complete. Both games are a bit long in the tooth to justify the high price tag.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Ace puzzley fun. Even with *Lemmings 2* on the way (it's due in February '93) it's well worth a crack.



A year is a wonderful thing. It's got 52 weeks, four seasons, and 12 lovely issues of AMIGA POWER. After a game-packed year there's nothing we like better than to round up our own personal top 10 games of the year. And so, this being the end of the year and all, that's exactly what we've done. But first, a whistle-stop look at the nominations for all the games released in the year they were all calling 1992.



Just when you thought 1992 was over, AMIGA POWER trawls it all back up again

OUR BRILLIANT YEAR



So that's the nominations, but who voted for what? Without further ado, let's dive on in and find out exactly what each of our reviewers voted as their top 10 games of '92.



MARK RAMSHAW

"Not as many obviously crap games as last year, though the number of real top notch titles is fairly limited. Originality and console-style stuff seem to be jostling against each other – let's be honest, the likes of *Wizkid* could never appear on a console system. Then again, only the Japanese could come up with a concept as beautifully simple as *Dyna blaster*. Another healthy year, though the arrival of the A1200 machine is going to make the coming year really interesting."



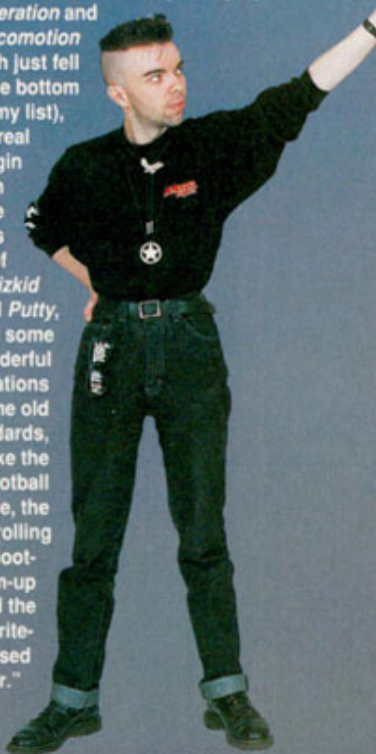
TOP 10

- 1 Dynablaster
- 2 Monkey Island 2
- 3 Sensible Soccer
- 4 Crazy Cars III
- 5 Putty
- 6 Legend
- 7 Wizkid
- 8 Another World
- 9 Apidya
- 10 Pinball Fantasies

STUART CAMPBELL

"A year much the same as last year, really – lots and lots of games, but only a few that really grabbed my attention for more than a few plays. What I did enjoy seeing was a few brilliant 8-bit game ideas being resurrected with 90s-level execution, most especially *Dynablaster*,

D/Generation and *Locomotion* (which just fell off the bottom of my list), some real originality in the likes of *Wizkid* and *Putty*, and some wonderful realisations of some old standards, like the football game, the scrolling shoot-'em-up and the sprite-based racer."



TOP 10

- 1 Sensible Soccer
- 2 Crazy Cars III
- 3 Apidya
- 4 Dyna Blaster
- 5 D/Generation
- 6 Harlequin
- 7 Wizkid
- 8 Pinball Fantasies
- 9 Titus The Fox
- 10 Putty

JONATHAN DAVIES

"1992 was alright, I suppose. As usual, I wasn't allowed to play any of the good games – to compile my top 10 I had to hide under my desk in the evening and then sneak out after everyone else had gone home. It was quite a revelation, I can tell you. There were definitely less wargames than in 1991, which was nice."

(Okay Jonathan, we promise to give you some nice games in the coming year. We're really sorry about all those wargames. We really are. – The Team).



TOP 10

- 1 Zool
- 2 Putty
- 3 Sensible Soccer
- 4 Wizkid
- 5 Dynablaster
- 6 Pinball Dreams
- 7 Jaguar XJ220
- 8 Monkey Island 2
- 9 D/Generation
- 10 Dreadnaughts

ADAM PETERS

"Just like any other year, this year's seen the release of a few really brilliant games (including these ten), together with large numbers of both half-decent and totally sad games. Amiga programmers are starting to fight back against the consoles, producing 'console-style' games with 'Amiga-style' gameplay (*Zool*, *Wizkid*, etc). The fight is on. The really weird thing about 1992 has been all the football games – most of them really terrible. Thankfully a select few really stood out, including *Graham Taylor's Soccer Challenge*, and of course *Sensible Soccer*. Pity about all the other ones, though."



TOP 10

- 1 Sensible Soccer
- 2 Zool
- 3 Wizkid
- 4 Titus The Fox
- 5 Crazy Cars III
- 6 Space Crusade
- 7 Graham Taylor
- 8 Troddlers
- 9 Apidya
- 10 Pool



GARY PENN

"I think it's sad that some of the best stuff was converted from consoles. Where is Amiga creativity? 1992 was a very average year, with loads of overrated crap dominating the magazines and charts. I found it very difficult to do actually come up with a top 10 - I couldn't really think of 10 games I enjoyed all that much on the Amiga. I really don't think next year will be any better."



TOP 10

- 1 Dynablaster
- 2 BC Kid
- 3 McDonald Land
- 4 Wizkid
- 5 Parasol Stars
- 6 Harlequin
- 7 Black Crypt
- 8 Pinball Dreams
- 9 Locomotion
- 10 Monkey Island 2

TIM NORRIS

"Sorry Gary, but I think we've seen quite a bit of really great stuff this year. Quality has been high, and there's been a broad coverage of all the different game genres. We've certainly seen one or two real corkers (classics, even), although as one of the new kids around here, I feel I really ought to say that we vastly over-rated *Sensible Soccer*. (You are, in a very real sense, completely and utterly fired. - Stuart) Overall, I'd say I've enjoyed enough of the new games for this to be counted as a pretty good year, although I wouldn't as far as to say that it's the Amiga's best year yet. I'm looking forward to seeing the A1200 stuff next year - that's when it's really going to get exciting."



TOP 10

- 1 Pinball Fantasies
- 2 Putty
- 3 Wizkid
- 4 Dynablaster
- 5 No Second Prize
- 6 Sensible Soccer
- 7 Legend
- 8 Pacific Islands
- 9 Crazy Cars III
- 10 Apidya

RICHARD LONGHURST

"In the action stakes, stuff like *Zool* is zooming ahead in leaps and bounds. But on the graphic adventure front, frankly I've been disappointed. Most people not having hard disks is restricting development. Too many good games are ruined by excessive disk accessing. I don't really think there's been too much in the way of originality - *Wizkid* is a bit of an exception really. Maybe once the A1200 is established, then hard drives will become a more popular accessory - they're going to need it to handle all the extra graphics and stuff."



TOP 10

- 1 Civilization
- 2 Monkey Island 2
- 3 Legend
- 4 Dynablaster
- 5 Dune
- 6 D/Generation
- 7 Battle Isle
- 8 Pacific Islands
- 9 Zool
- 10 Megafortress

DAVE GOLDRER

"The year has been a bit like watching all four series of *Blake's 7* in one go - fairly entertaining in places, but pretty much devoid of any original ideas. *Putty* provided a shock ending to the year, though (again, just like the series) by actually not being a sequel or the latest attempt to emulate *Lemmings* or find an Amiga answer to *Sonic*. Next year should be better - the A1200 will hopefully encourage companies will produce some games that take advantage of its increased capabilities - though more likely we'll probably get all the same old stuff again, only a bit faster and a bit prettier. Ho hum."



TOP 10

- 1 Pinball Fantasies
- 2 Putty
- 3 Pinball Dreams
- 4 Cybernetix
- 5 Parasol Stars
- 6 Pushover
- 7 Monkey Island 2
- 8 Dynablaster
- 9 Caesar
- 10 Legend

BUDGET

Just when you thought it was safe to go to the Letters page, it turns out there are still more great reviews for you to read. The idea with these budget things is that you get more for your money. But do you? Read on...

Bill didn't think he'd ever get the alien dance team ready for the big competition.



ALIEN BREED SPECIAL EDITION '92

Publisher: Team 17
Price: £10.99
Release: Out Now

Scary Giger-influenced monsters, hostile planets, and butch space marines. Sounds familiar? *Alien Breed - Special Edition*, doesn't that ring a bell? Doesn't that sound suspiciously like *Aliens Special Edition*, that other re-released story of dripping corridors echoing to the screams of the dying and the staccato blasts of large-calibre weaponry?

1991's *Alien Breed* is now out on budget, but why is this 'special', as opposed to just being re-released? According to Team 17 they've taken this opportunity to iron out all those quirky, annoying little defects that caused people to comment 'Yeah, I like it, but there is this one thing...' the first time around. This version boasts twelve new missions, a password system, faster running speed

and better game maps. But we've all heard this kind of blurb before and been let down, so how does it stand up to close scrutiny?

Extremely well in my opinion, but there again I loved the original, and there's nothing radically different in this version for me to change my opinion. Booting up presents you with a film poster advert for *Alien Breed 2* (complete with a PG rating), and a preview of another game. Blimey, all you need is your brother serving popcorn, chewing gum stuck to the seat and Pearl and Dean advertising and you've got your very own cinema experience!

Slapping in the other disk takes mere moments and then it's action all the way with no further need for disk swapping. For those who missed *Alien Breed* the first time round it's one of those games where

you're a squaddie sent in to see why a remote research base has stopped transmitting, only to discover the place is seething with nasty xenomorphs, not entirely dissimilar in fact from Jim Cameron's now legendary claustrophobia-fest. Okay, let's admit it, *Alien Breed IS Aliens - The Game*, only without the licence. Good fun with one player, the game comes into its own with two player mode. For one thing two guns are always better than one when your view of the world consists of gleaming black exoskeletons, but better than that you can shout 'Hudson run a bypass!' and 'Let's Rock!' at each other. With a mission for each level, a surprising degree of strategy is required as there's only a finite number of keys to open a lot of doors. You can actually shoot open the doors, but it burns up your ammo supply. The base computer supplies you with equipment updates as well as maps and other information, but you can't play *Pong* on it any more

NOOOOO! DON'T GO THROUGH THE DOOR! Exciting stuff, this.

There are times in games like this when you wonder why you can't just get back in your ship and go home.

— swizz! There's not much variation in gameplay, but it's still enough to keep you coming back, and as for atmosphere, well, if you don't get stressed when the sirens start and you've only got sixty seconds before the generators blow then you're probably watching *Eldorado* and not playing the game at all.

● **MARK WINSTANLEY**

THE BOTTOM LINE

Great sound and graphics, hard but fun to play and heaps of atmosphere. Just like the un-tweaked *Alien Breed* really. I'd have bought it without hesitation at the original price so it's even better on budget. **83** PERCENT
A must buy.



So let's get this straight - this is polygons boxing in 3D, right? Be serious.

4D BOXING

Publisher: Mindscape
Price: £14.99
Release: Out now

Theoretically, it should be possible to make an exciting and addictive boxing game. *Street Fighter 2* has proved that beat-'em-ups can be stonking (whether the gameplay will translate to the Amiga is yet to be seen), but all attempts have fallen short of the mark. Unfortunately, this is about the worst I've ever seen.

It's a 3D boxing game. Where they got the other D from in the title I don't know - perhaps they're referring to the fact that it takes place in time, the fourth dimension, but doesn't every game? The action (or lack of it) takes place in a fully rendered 3D environment, with the boxers themselves being 3 dimensional 'objects'. The advantage of this is that you can see the action from various different viewpoints. During the match, you use the function keys to step through a number of 'virtual camera' angles.

Now this would be great, and probably tremendously exciting, if it wasn't for the fact that all this 3D rendering makes the game unfeasibly slow and terminally dull. You're not even sure at first if you're having any effect on your man at all, as he drags himself painfully across the ring and stumbles towards his opponent, taking a few laughable swipes in the process.

You can lower the resolution of the graphics, make the screen smaller and speed up the frame rate, but apart from making the boxers look like something out of a Lowry painting with a cardboard box on their heads, it hardly improves the gameplay at all. Obviously when it first came out there was a certain novelty value in playing a 3D beat-'em-up, but now it just looks dated. A potentially good idea, but it will need to be a lot faster and smoother to offer anything in the way of a good game.

● **TIM TUCKER**



Hello, I'm conducting some market research. Would you mind just answering a few questions?



THE BOTTOM LINE
I'd be disappointed if this was a PD game, so even at budget price it doesn't represent value for money. It's a shame that a lot of work has gone into something that is just not playable. Don't buy it.

29 PERCENT

4D SPORTS DRIVING

Publisher: Mindscape Classics
Price: £14.99
Release: Out now

Just to get it out of the way and stop things getting repetitive and tedious later on, I'm going to get all repetitive and tedious now. Hang on, that can't be right. What I meant to say was, I'm going to get

all of the *Hard Drivin'* references in this review in at the start, okay? *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*, *Hard Drivin'*. Right. Now on with the review.

This is a simulation of test-track stunt driving, using 3D polygon graphics, with an extra dimension thrown in on top, namely 'realism'. Oh, please. Of all the many things you could call this game, surely 'realistic' is just about the least accurate one of the lot, right? Right. So let's not have any more of this ridiculous '4D' crap. It was stupid in 1983 with *4D Time Gate* on the Spectrum, and it's stupid now. Sorry, back to the game.

Okay, so you need polygons rather than pretty

sprites to carry off any kind of speed in a 3D game of this nature, but *4D Sports Driving* carries 'basic' to new depths. The scenery, er, isn't, the vanishing point of the perspective is about 30 feet in front of your car, meaning that objects go from invisible to taking up half the screen in one sudden lurch out of nowhere, and, er, your car doesn't have any wheels. Which, and you can call me perfectionist if you will, kind of spoils the illusion a bit for me.

It's not fast, it's not smooth, the disk swaps and accesses take forever, the control's far from perfect, it's twice the price of a normal budget game and your car doesn't have any wheels. How much fun do YOU think it is?

● **STUART CAMPBELL**



So let's get this straight - this is supposed to be a driving simulation in 4D? Be serious.

THE BOTTOM LINE
An inferior copy of That Other Stunt Driving Sim, obviously ported across from a machine that was altogether better suited to the job. Mediocre rather than dreadful, but mediocre's bad enough for me.

37 PERCENT

ACES OF THE GREAT WAR

Publisher: Mindscape
Price: £14.99
Release: Out now

What ho Ginger, tally-ho and all that, time to take to the air and give Boche his due - it's a World War One flying ace sim. On loading, you're treated to a rather tasty intro sequence, with an atmospheric soundtrack over a sequence of digitised



THE DREAM TEAM

Publisher: Ocean
Price: £24.99
Release: Out now

The ultimate in late '80s and early '90s icons appear in one bargain pack. It's a parent's nightmare and a merchandiser's dream. *The Simpsons*, *Terminator 2* and *WWF Wrestlemania* - three games in one box. Have you got the lunch box/mug/rubber dolls/key-ring/annual/comic/video/t-shirt/poster yet? You have? Oh great, then you'll love this compilation so go out and buy it now - you obviously don't need to know whether the games are any good. Believe the hype - at your peril. But if you've got more sense than money, and you're not hooked on Hulk Hogan's muscle-bound antics, or Arnie's

chisel-jawed posing, or even Bart's banana-skin yellowness, you need to know whether three games in one pack is a good buy. On the face of it you can't go wrong, but deep inside the box lie some unsavoury secrets and rather unwholesome games. Let's start at the bottom and work up. *WWF Wrestlemania* (35% AMIGA POWER 10) is the joystick wagglers dream, but that's as far as the gameplay goes. The ultimate cash-in on a craze, and the rather seedy side of the license game business.

And then there's



Watch out for T-1000's amazing extending neck Bart! Oh no, he's disguised himself as an alien, but which one is he?

Terminator 2 (65%, AP6), a towering inferno of a film, but a rather damp barbecue of a game. It's an eight-level romp that sticks closely to the film's plot, but three of the levels are the same and it's not long before you've lost interest. A couple of the levels are daft puzzley things which don't really fit in with the grand destructive scheme of things, while the shoot-outs and fights just don't hit the mark. And if you need another reason for disliking it, it's also too easy to complete.

Fortunately, Bart saves the day in more ways than one in *The Simpsons: Bart vs the Space Mutants* (83%, AP5). It's a terribly enjoyable five-level platform game which sees Bart and family scooting around town in an effort to stop the mutants taking over. It's exactly the sort of game you'd love to hate, but for some inexplicable reason it provides plenty of innocent, and really rather entertaining gameplay. There are plenty of enemies, several weapons to buy, and more than enough teasing little puzzles to keep the grey matter ticking over.

So there we have it. One enormous gobbling turkey of a game, one slightly smaller, but still gobbling quietly in the corner, turkey, and one proud pheasant which can proudly strut its stuff with the other decent games out there. It may well be worth waiting until *The Simpsons* is released as a budget game in its own right - at £9.99 it wouldn't be a title to sniff at. But, as Bernard Matthews says, two turkeys and one pheasant don't make a flock, a brace, a gaggle, a murder or a duck shoot (or anything else for that matter).

● **RICHARD LONGHURST**



And remember, children, Arnie is a specially-trained Austrian actor. Please don't try this accent at home.



Get to it Arnie. Use the special grapple hold on 'im and pin 'im on the caaaanas.

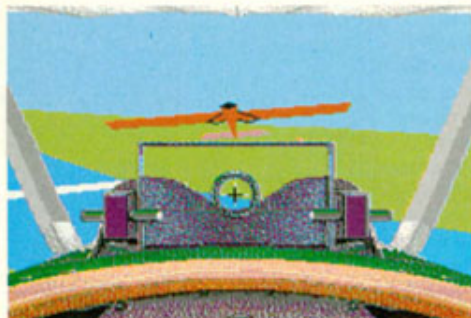


The aliens are coming, Hulk! They've come to take over the town, and you're not helping by strangling Bernard Manning.

THE BOTTOM LINE
One bad, one medium, one good. Not worth £25 when all's told, you'd be much better off buying a single decent game that you really want, or waiting for *The Simpsons* to come out on budget on its own.

51 PERCENT





Tally ho, chaps, let's give Harry Hun something to think about, etc... you know the drill by now.

images of fighter planes from the great war-to-end-all-wars. Whoever wrote this game is seriously into it – the manual gives you all sorts of embarrassingly thorough information on what planes were used, the pilots that flew them, the guns that they killed people with and even the propellers on the front for God's sake.

The game itself is a 3D flight sim dressed up in First World War garb. On loading you are presented with a menu from which you can choose various parameters for your flight. If you register yourself as a flyer then you can keep track of your record as a fighter pilot, amassing a set of statistics on missions accomplished and kills made. Being a 3D affair, it takes a fair bit of memory, so if you're short of this you can turn off sound effects and give the ground detail less definition.

You can choose to be an allied or German pilot, and you get to choose your plane too. You control your flight using the mouse, joystick or computer keyboard. The mouse is the most responsive method, but if you're playing two player mode one of you has to use the keyboard.

Two player mode is fun, with you either choosing to fight cooperatively or have a dog fight against each other.

The flying itself is good enough. You fly around, shoot things and get shot at – what more is there to say. If you want to go on a campaign you get given a mission to accomplish, like shooting down a bridge in France. There's a suitably First World War atmosphere to it all, but in other respects it's an average flight sim.

● **Tim Tucker**

THE BOTTOM LINE

Sadly, it's altogether fairly average really. If you're really into all this leather helmeted stuff then you need help – er, sorry, I mean you might like it. It's been done better elsewhere, and *Knights of the Sky* is worth the extra money any day.

58
PERCENT



Crazy Cars II is that rarest of things, a game that was eclipsed by its sequel. But the sky's a nice shade of pink.

● **JONATHAN DAVIES**

CRAZY CARS II

Publisher: Fox Hits

Price: £9.99

Release: Out now

If you'd read Mark's highly favourable review of *Crazy Cars III* in issue 16, you'd be forgiven for imagining that *Crazy Cars II* was also pretty good. Two-thirds as good, possibly. (You might also wonder who '???? ?????' was...) But you'd be horribly, horribly mistaken.

The road in *Crazy Cars II* is actually quite good, especially with those telegraph wires that run down the side of it. (It's a bit of a shame it scrolls at exactly the same speed whether you're travelling at 2 mph or 200 mph, though.) Your progress down it is hampered by police cars, who try to run you off it. At first I thought they perhaps suspected me of drink driving – not because I was drunk, but because the control system is so awful as to make driving in a straight line for more than a couple of yards an impossibility.

Even so, it wouldn't make much

difference if the controls did work properly. There wouldn't be much to do with them. You just drive along the road, trying to stay away from police cars. This is about as interesting as, well, driving along a road trying to stay away from police cars. (I.e. not really very interesting at all.)

Crazy Cars II? The only crazy thing about these cars is, um... to be honest, I can't think of anything even slightly crazy about them.

● **JONATHAN DAVIES**

THE BOTTOM LINE

This dates from the days when French games were greeted by nervous giggles from reviewers, and really shouldn't have been re-released at any price. It's certainly not the poor man's *Crazy Cars III*.

20
PERCENT

F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Publisher: Action Sixteen

Price: £9.99

Release: Out now

Flight simulators, what can you say about 'em? You take off, fly around, take pot shots at bogeys and land again. Is there anything else to them? Well, yes actually, F-16 crams in a bit of a campaign and probably succeeds in adding depth. But hold on there just a minute, what's all this 'probably' malarkey?

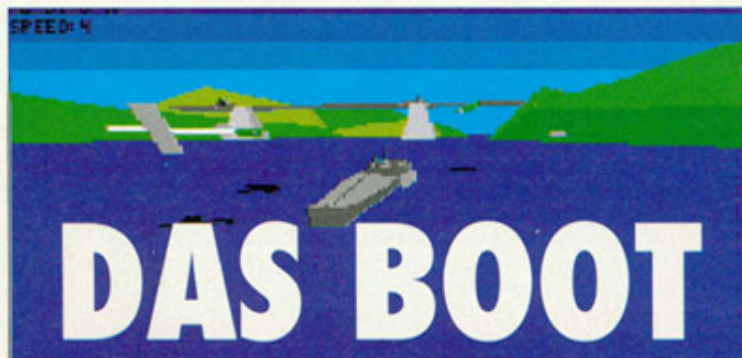
Well, initially everything looks utterly wonderful. You can peruse technical info, load up with your favourite weaponry and choose missions varying from a straightforward scramble to tank-busting and carpet-bombing (take that, vile Axminster!). There's even an option to link up two Amigas and have a go at your best friend. All this seems fine, but actually getting to play is a real pain, and only some of the blame can be palmed off onto the extremely brief and unhelpful manual. I just found it frustrating to play, even manoeuvring out of the hangar caused a few crashes, and once in the air I couldn't work out what half the displays did. Features like pre-planned flight paths seem a great idea, but I just couldn't work out how to follow them. Why is this? Am I stupid? (Well, actually, comments have been made, but we were trying not to hurt your feelings. – Ed)

All of this is a shame because this is a good simulator, it has a workable operating speed, a good feel and a wonderful night time view lit in atmospheric reds and greens. I realise that flight sims are meant to be realistic and challenging but they're also games and as such should be accessible and playable to even a newcomer, which this one isn't. So high scores for the simulationyness. (And an instant sacking for that made-up word. – Ed) take off some for its lack of user friendliness and add five for the two-player mode and plain old good value. That's, er... carry the three...

● **MARK WINSTANLEY**



A plane so simple, even the cat could fly it. All we need is to find ourselves a cat.



DAS BOOT

Publisher: Mindscape

Price: £14.99

Release: Out Now

To watchers of those black and white movies where sweaty men lighten leaky pipes and listen to things going 'ping', submarine warfare is a familiar sight. A stop watch, a periscope and the ability to shout 'Dive, dive, dive!' seem to be the only qualifications needed to cruise beneath the icy grey ocean, and *Das Boot* lets you have a go without even those. It doesn't exactly make you feel that you're in command of a 1943 U-Boat, but at least it has a level of playability that's sadly lacking in many

simulator games. A series of training missions and a well laid-out manual take you logically through all the sub sections (Surely they're all sub sections? – Ed) of the game, using controls that are pleasantly simple to operate. Most options can be mouse-driven, with only a few keys used. Once you've shot down aircraft and gone head to head with another sub, it's time to mess with the big boys.

There are five missions ranging from a Norway campaign down to blockade running in the Mediterranean. The action can be viewed from any 'camera' angle using shaded polygon graphics, and although the results are

Run Silent, Run Deep. Above Us The Waves. Two fine submarine films, but not set aboard U-Boats.

often a bit lumpy, it all runs smoothly enough for you to not mind too much.

I wonder, though, who this game is aimed at, as many sequences play like simplistic video games, which might put off historical games players, but not punchily enough to grab the shoot-'em-up types. It's a sort of strategy/arcade crossover and doesn't succeed on either count. The main problem though is that targets are few and far between, and apart from a few moments of action (which *Das Boot* manages admirably), submarine war seems incredibly dull.

● **MARK WINSTANLEY**

THE BOTTOM LINE

Submarine games aren't everyone's cup of rum-laced cocoa, and this one compromises depth and realism for improved graphics. It's more fun than strategic, and I don't really think that there's enough here to interest anyone but diehard wargamers.

55
PERCENT



LIFE AND DEATH

Publisher: Mindscape
Price: £14.99
Release: Out Now

Scalpel. 'Scalpel.'
Retractors. 'Retractors.'
Egg whisk. 'Egg whisk.'
Oops. Mop and bucket. 'Mop and bucket.'

There's no getting away from the fact, *Life and Death* is a novelty game, and the best, if not the only, way to play it is to get a gang of you together and take turns to get patients on the slab. Whoever gets one all the way through the operation and manages to sew them up with most of their internal organs on the inside should be given the title 'Hackmaster Supreme' and presented the complimentary rubber gloves and face mask.

This is a game of truly dubious taste, but seems to suffer from an extreme case of schizophrenia, as it takes itself far too seriously while at the same time being a load of nonsense. It's as if all the programmers thought they were working on a game to inspire potential Doogie Howsers everywhere, not realising how



Poor Bill was killed when a large piece of ornamental masonry fell on him.

people would howl with mirth as their fifth patient expires mid-operation. There's even a glossy booklet charting the history of surgery which is deadly serious and informative, but has a cover featuring two lifeless feet complete with toe tag.

If you do get this game, and it won't be because of me recommending it, all I can advise is that you miss the anatomy lessons and just dive in. You poke and prod the patients a bit before guessing on a treatment, and if you're wrong and they buy the farm then no one seems to mind. Eventually you find one you can operate on, and before you can say 'malpractice' you're into the fun bit. Surgery is a team operation, you do the cutting, the nurse swabs, and the patient takes care of all that messy bleeding business. Kill 'em and what the heck, there's plenty more out there. A surgery sim game? Come on, get real.

● MARK WINSTANLEY

THE BOTTOM LINE

The perfect ingredient for a fun night in with your chums, but once it's back in the box I can't see this ever seeing the light of day again. The ultimate one-laugher wonder.

45 PERCENT



If you've never played it before, you're missing a real treat. For all its faults, this is still something of a classic.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Publisher: The Hit Squad
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

So, it's back. The most format-ubiquitous game since *Marble Madness* kicks up its boots and goes back to its roots. I've seen about a million versions of *Prince Of Persia* now, on every machine you could imagine and a few you probably couldn't (the SAM Coupé?), and the weirdest thing is that they're nearly all exactly the same. From the Game Boy to the Mega CD, *Prince Of Persia* just never changes. So isn't that going to make it look a bit dated now, two years further on?

Well, yes, basically. It's funny, but when Mark handed me this and said 'There, a job you'll actually enjoy for a change, you miserable grumpy old celt', what I actually thought was 'Oh no, not

this one again.' That, of course, is entirely my own problem, but playing *Prince Of Persia* a dozen times on various formats means that it's a bit of an open book to me - there isn't one little bit of it I don't know, and there isn't a single feature or flaw it can hide from me. There probably, then, isn't anyone better qualified to judge how it bears up as a game once the initial gob-smack delivered by the wonderful animation wears off. So here's how.

The first thing that really strikes you when playing *Prince Of Persia* is the lack of total control you have over your character. Most platform games these days allow you the finest possible precision over character placing, but *Prince Of Persia's* control is actually more along the lines of *Dragon's Lair* (to take an extreme example). Once you're committed to a particular move, no amount of joystick-wrenching will interrupt

your sprite until he's completed every last frame of animation, and if that means plummeting to his death down a bottomless pit, then so be it. You do get used to the slightly weird time-delay feel of the thing after a while, but that doesn't really alter the facts - this is still a game where you guide your character, rather than control him.

And then there's the repetition. Oh, sure, it's great fun leaping around for the first couple of levels, swinging from ledges and clinging on by your fingertips after death-defying jumps into thin air, but as the game progresses you don't really get anything else to do. There are more complicated mazes to negotiate, tougher guards to buckle your swash at, and a couple of minor extra features (like the guillotine traps), but essentially it's just lots more of the same against a tight time limit. Plug away, learn the layout of the levels, and you've cracked it. Of course, that's true about most games, but here the lack of Total Control means that unlike other games, there's very little room for those little mistakes that can make all the difference. In *Prince Of Persia* there's one right move for every situation, and if you don't make it, you've blown it.

But hey - we're not just here for the nasty things in life. *Prince Of Persia* IS stunningly animated, it IS amazingly atmospheric, and it IS damn good fun for a while. It's just not state of the art any more, that's all. Life, eh?

● STUART CAMPBELL

THE BOTTOM LINE

A bit like the new Madonna album, it's a nice thing to have in your collection, but not something you'd really ever want to take out and play all that much. It really is showing the strains of old age, if we're being absolutely honest about it.

81 PERCENT



The rotoscoped animation still looks as good as it ever did. If only they had better fashion sense.

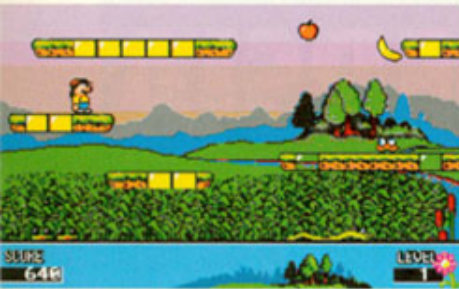
PD

If you want to pay less than a fiver for a game you don't have to buy a C64. (Although if you want to pay less than a fiver for a computer you do. - Ed) There's plenty of low cost software in the public domain and Dave Golder's the man to tell you about it.

WONDERLAND

Fortiss PD

The latest rage among PD writers seems to be to emulate console-style action. *Wonderland* makes a fair old attempt at copying the kind of inertia you get with



It's all a bit familiar, but spiffing platform fun nevertheless.

Sonic the Hedgehog - get your sprite (who, incidentally, looks not unlike Mario) moving and it's difficult to slow him down.

Wonderland is a place full of platforms which have tiles that light up when you move your sprite across them.

So guess what the aim is? Yep, you've got to light the lot. In your way are loads of nasty blobby things, and believe me they do make life hard. Fruit flies about as if possessed - collect it for bonus points.

It's a simple premise, but it works exceptionally well. The graphics are cartoony and bright, the controls fluid and the gameplay fairly addictive. The levels are fairly spacious (going well off the screen) and there are enough surprises to keep it fresh for a few plays. Certainly worth checking out.

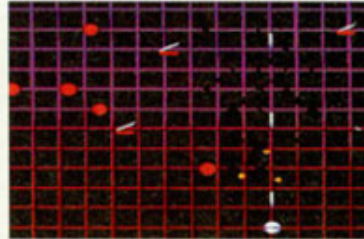
VERDICT: A respectable cutesy platformer that looks good and plays well. Rating: ★★★★★

POD

Telescan PD

Who's for a bit of mindless violence, then? If it's a no-holds-barred, fast and furious blast-'em-up-like-they-used-to-make-them you're after then *Pod* is the business.

It's about as original as a Dannii Minogue cover version, but who cares? You whizz about in a little spacecraft that can fly up, down and side-to-side, and you have to blast away any alien craft that



We don't know why it's on a grid, but it does the business so who cares?

appear while avoiding their fire. They attack in waves, usually from above but occasionally, when they're feeling especially sneaky, from below as well.

The only real innovation is that this all takes place on a grid but this is pure aesthetics. It makes no difference to that gameplay style we all know and love.

It's nippier than a mosquito that's just finished fasting for lent, and you whizz through levels like a wild thing, especially if you're playing with a mate in two-player mode. There's an impressive range of aliens, each with their own attack formation, and they often combine to produce some real surprise levels.

Downside? The missiles are so tiny

you can hardly see them, but other than that it's a bit too easy. You get an extra life for completing each level so you find yourself romping through with very little danger of dying. Still, sometimes, when you're really cheesed off, you need a long, satisfying blast to boost your ego a bit.

VERDICT: Back to the basics. If blowing up lots of alien ships in a frantic blasting extravaganza is your thang, *Pod* might not be the latest innovation, but it supplies the goods. Rating: ★★★

THAT'S NOT ON THE SYLLABUS

Software Expressions

The best days of your life? Are they kidding? School is hell, and it's the last thing you want to be reminded of when you finally escape the place. So this adventure is down-marked immediately for being based on such a dud premise: a text adventure (with a few piccies dotted about here and there) set in a school.

It is all done in a humorous style, and there's the odd surprise, but as an adventure it doesn't really hang together. Besides the dull location, the parser (the way you tell the computer what you want to do) is very unfriendly. If you want to do anything (pick something up, for example) you first have to type in the command, then press return, then type in what you want the command to act upon (eg. you have to type in TAKE, press return, then



A man with a seagull stuck to his top lip.

type in the object you want to take).

In the text the words break between lines so you often get one letter stranded from the rest of the word, which is just downright irritating. And there's no central thrust to the story: you can wander around for ages and achieve nothing useful.

Oh well, the pictures are pretty good. **VERDICT:** Human Geography lessons are more exciting than this. Rating: ★

WAR

Fortiss PD, Shareware £5

This game is definitely more than the sum of its parts. Based on the not-exactly-revolutionary concept of intergalactic war, in this case between the Vegans and the Zardons (who are presumably carnivores), it's a mix of strategy and shoot-'em-up action.

A one or two-player game (in which case you compete against each other) the aim to wipe the opposition from existence. Play commences on a grid. Your base is in one corner, your opponent's in the other, and you both have a certain number of ships occupying squares. Each turn you can move your ships into adjacent squares where your flag will be planted (strange concept in a space game, but hey, I'm sure it's only meant to be symbolic). If you move into a square with an enemy flag it will become your territory.

The more flags you have on-screen the more resources you have. You designate resources to either building more ships, improving your weapons or bribing a third-party race into giving you some help in battle.

Oh, I haven't mentioned the battles yet, have I? Well, these happen

Intergalactic chess or Risk in space?



Shoot-'em-up fun with neat graphics. It's not overly fast but it does the business in a well-worth-five-quid sort of way.

when you or the enemy moves a ship into a square that's already occupied by an opponent's ship. They take place either in space or hovering just above a planet's surface. These are the shoot-'em-up sections, and they're pretty basic, though there are some nice touches, such as the use of sniper ships and the effects of gravity. If a ship manages to reach the enemy base, another piece of blasting action takes place as the attacking ship flies into the base, attempts to avoid enemy fire and plant a laser missile in the base's reactor.

The strategy bits aren't overly taxing and the shoot-'em-up sections are far from the fastest or most exciting ever. But the elements combine to make a game that is quite engrossing. The graphics are above par and the presentation is excellent. Even the instructions are much better than you usually get.

VERDICT: Two games rolled into one, and done reasonably successfully. Nice touches of humour. Not too sure whether it's worth a fiver though. ★★★★★



BEGINNING T

Will Commodore's CD Drive prolong the



"I don't think it will make a difference. The thing is, the PC, in America especially, is a machine at the leading edge of games in general at the moment. US Gold represent a lot of major American software houses and a vast majority of them are not doing any games for the Amiga at the moment - whether it has the CD or not doesn't seem to make a difference. With a PC now you have a machine which can serve all purposes. The Amiga's a great machine but it's still a little bit... Well, the PC's caught up with it. We've sold hundreds of thousands of Amiga products and we'll still support it, but developers are focussing more on the PC."

GEOFF BROWN, Managing Director of US Gold

"We read a questionnaire from about a year ago and that was positive about people wanting to buy the A690 (Now known as the A570. - Ed) but more recently less people seem interested. To start off with, the hard drive and the CD ROM drives are just two big storage devices. But there's obviously more you can do. It does give the potential for some of the big PC titles to be converted properly. We'll be doing some stuff, certainly, but in what way I don't know yet. I'd don't think the CDTV titles have helped with decision to buy the A690. There doesn't appear to be much difference between existing Amiga games and CD titles. A lot of Amiga games don't need to be big multi-disk games. What can you do to make it CD ROM? Do you just stick a big soundtrack on it? It won't really take off until someone does something really impressive with the CD so that everyone wants it regardless of cost. I think it maybe will come from the stuff like conversions of the big PC American titles on the Amiga. You can't do certain things on the Amiga that you can do on the PC."

ERIC MATTHEWS, Designer for The Bitmap Brothers



"Three hundred quid? Naah."

ANDREW WRIGHT, Marketing Manager for Virgin Games Software

"I definitely think CD based products next year will be of a big interest, especially some of the stuff from the States. I can't see CD having, like, ninety-five per cent penetration in the Amiga market, but if software companies find the resources to develop proper product... it could be so significant to Amiga owners that they'd go out and buy a CD Drive, a bit like *Star Raiders* and the Atari VCS all those years ago. It'd perhaps be something using 3D technology which had rendered surfaces, not just flat ones, and uses the abilities to pull data off the disc that would otherwise take a long time to calculate. Virgin are hoping to do a multimedia version of *Snooker* and *Pool*, but I don't know if it will definitely happen. It'd probably have loads of real footage of breaks and perhaps Jimmy commenting. I'd like to do it."

ARCHER MACLEAN, author of *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* and *Archer Maclean's Pool*

"I'll be perfectly honest, I don't think it will make any difference to the Amiga. I don't think it's powerful enough, I don't think enough developers will develop for it - and that's the important thing. Commodore, very bravely, were one of the pioneers of CD stuff, but the technology in there is falling behind the times already. If you're going to spend years of time or longer on a CD product it could be out of date by the time it's released."

PETER MOLYNEUX, Managing Technical Director for Bullfrog and author of *Populous* and *Populous II*



"It will take off provided the price is right - say, under two hundred pounds for the drive. You can fit loads of games on a CD, and it's much cheaper to produce CD stuff. And you can fit lots of music on, and have demos of other games. It stops piracy. And you can always save stuff to the floppy for saved games and so on. CDTV is a dead duck though. It's too expensive. Where does it fit into the market? We will be supporting the Commodore CD Drive though."

GARY SHEINWALD, Development Manager at Audiogenic

"It's up to pricing really. I've been reading recently *Might And Magic III* and Sierra games being slated by the Press for their disk accessing problems and slowness. When the Amiga is able to read in those sort of games from CD... Those sort of games are expanding the PC market at the moment, so if the Amiga market's to keep growing, it needs this serious edge software and the only way that will happen is if a storage medium takes away the element of frustration. CD is that. It also opens up multimedia applications. A hard drive isn't as interesting. It hasn't got that high a market penetration and is not seen as an essential purchase for Amiga owners. People are more aware of CD and that helps enormously."

SIMON JEFFERY, Marketing Communications Manager at Electronic Arts



"I don't know if it will take off. I'll be surprised. I think people are turning more to the PC for things like that now. Are we doing anything for it? No comment."

RICH UNDERHILL, Joint Director of Arc Developments



"At the moment we're talking to publishers but the budgets they want for the scale of projects they want for the CD Drive don't tally. It's a marvellous opportunity for some vast projects but no-one wants to put up the finance. I would like to do something. It's up to publishers really to pay developers to exploit the hardware. If it's not compatible with the CDTV then they're onto a loser. It is exciting though. It's certainly what the machine needs. With the consoles, the advent of the CD ROMs is putting them another step ahead. Yes, the CD is essential to survival of the Amiga. It gives it a new lease of life."

STEVE TURNER, Managing Director of Graftgold and author of *Realms*

"Commodore's marketing has let itself down again. We're not planning anything for it unless it performs well. The CD Drive's got to do something pretty spectacular if it's going to stand any kind of chance of succeeding."

MARTYN BROWN, Product Manager for Team 17



O CD LIGHT?

life of our favourite home computer?

"I think the CD Drive is vital to the success of the CDTV and I would urge readers of AMIGA POWER to give it its best chance. I'm sure it will succeed. The drive is the driver, so to speak. Yes, we are supporting it. *Trivial Pursuit* is already available – that was written from scratch with 2,000 spoken questions and answers. We are also looking at two murder mysteries and a flight simulator. And a car game has been thought about. There may well be some straight ports, but really at end of day bespoke software has got to come out otherwise it won't succeed."

MARK STRACHAN,
Joint
Managing
Director of
Domark



"I think that it'll fall flat on its face. There are only a very small number of publishers who can put the effort into making anything decent on a CD. I'd love to say that every single UK publishing house has the sheer depth of vision to commission large games but most of them are happy with platforms thankyouverymuch."

NICK PELLING, just finished
converting *Wing Commander*

"I really don't think it makes an enormous difference. It will be good for certain kinds of games with huge amounts of data and it could help create new styles of game of the *Dragon's Lair* genre. I think a more important thing holding up the development of the Amiga at the moment is a lack of processing power which means there's a lack of an upgrade path."

DAVID BRABEN, author of *Virus*, co-author of the original *Elite* and currently applying the finishing touches to *Elite II*



"When we get one, we can see what there is to see, then we'll have an idea. People have set up overblown expectations for the principles of CD. All you're doing is providing an enormous amount of memory. Big deal. People are much more comfortable with CDs than disks. But will people buy the CD drive? When it happens, great. But it's not going to change the games themselves overnight."

TOM WATSON, Managing Director of Renegade

"Initially I think we'll see lots of ports with CD sound and a little bit of speech and perhaps five new levels. I'm a real big believer that 90 per cent of the industry doesn't understand CD and the limitations. They're thinking it's a Saviour, and I'm sure it will be but it won't be with this generation of CD stuff. Everyone's hoping to put motion video and so on into games but it doesn't happen like that. People forget that CD is only as good as the machine it's strapped to. It's like five thousand disks squashed into one and the machine is the same. It's still loading all the time. All that data has to go through the eye of a needle and that causes the bottleneck. We're spending a lot of time on CD stuff and we've got our heads around it. People are over-complicating it and forgetting that ultimately the people who will use it will be those who want to play games. They want instantaneous fun. They're not too bothered about massive ten-minute beautifully animated intros. The consoles provide the better pick of the CDs – due to the hardware platform and the fact that they've also changed what the machines will do. For example, the Sega machine has hardware extras. Initially, we won't be supporting it [the Amiga CD Drive] but we will watch it very carefully. We won't turn our backs on it because we have so much CD knowledge in-house and it wouldn't be difficult to switch on to it."

JEREMY SMITH, 'Mr Big' at Core Design



"It's a very competitive field, but with the wind behind them it could be very promising."

GARY BRACEY,
Software Director
for Ocean



"The CD's great for storage. It really should be sold as another disk medium not for encyclopedias and stuff like that. I personally think it's a waste of money. I might develop for it but I won't be getting one until they can read and write to the damn things."

TONY CROWTHER, author of
Captive and Nightmare

"I would say without the CD Drive I wouldn't really see a long-term future for the Amiga. You have to consider the growth of the console market and the growth of the CD market. But the two prime considerations are – with any hardware platform – its price and quality of the software. The Amiga CD isn't true multimedia but if people are investing in CD technology anyway, to produce an enhanced Amiga version wouldn't involve a great deal more expense. It can't be extra levels though. It has to be the right type of software – high-end software like simulations and adventures. I can't see it competing with the high-level PCs though."

SEAN BRENNAN, Sales and
Marketing Director for Virgin
Games Software



"Obviously the games will be on discs instead of disks. If they could somehow speed the loading up... Good. But if it's like the CDTV... Disaster. I say: don't waste your money and buy a kebab instead."

JON HARE,
Orchestrating
Director at
Sensible Software

"I think CDs are a very interesting way of developing software. It gives you far more scope to make games easily. You can throw in lots of sampled music and lots and lots of graphics which appeal to Joe Public, and it's not that much more expensive to do that as far as I can see. It can only be an advantage. It adds so much. It's not the best idea in the world, but if it's cheap enough, that's good. I think a hard drive unit is a better thing for the Amiga, but only if it was cheaper."

COLIN FUIDGE, R&D Director
for Konami

THE RIGHT PROFILE



In our new back page feature we intend to delve deeply into the egos and the *ids* (*Ids? - Ed*) of top computer industry figures. This month: Andrew Braybrook.

What do you believe in?

Start with the heavy stuff, why don't you? I don't believe in all that much, really. Honesty, quality and doing a good job.

What was the first thing you said today?

"Hello. This is going to be complicated but bear with me," to British Telecom.

Who's your favourite historical figure?

Most historical figures tend to be well known for beating up slightly less well-known historical figures. Einstein might be a good exception.

What's your Number One object of desire?

I'm sure she'd rather remain anonymous.

What have you got in your pockets?

Just the usual, wallet, spare change, grubby hanky and a bass guitar plectrum. Never leave home without one!

How do you rate your/your team's importance in the software biz (1-50)?

Trying to find out how big-headed I am, eh? I like to think that occasionally we set standards and we try not to follow trends. How does 35 sound?

If you could be in a computer game, which one would it be?

The little space bus in *Asteroids*. You always win in the end.

"I'm a bit of a closet astronomer"

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Andrew Braybrook
Present habitat: Top secret
Date Of Birth: 31-10-60
Present Employer: Graftgold Ltd
Education: Colchester Royal Grammar School, 1972-1979
Qualifications: 10 'O' Levels, 3 'A' Levels
Work: Mainframe trainee programmer - analyst-programmer 1979-1983
 ST Software/Graftgold Ltd, 1983-present
 COBOL, BASIC, 6809 assembler, 6502 assembler, 68000 assembler
Languages: CMS/VM, TSO, CICS, IMS, Dragon 32, C64, Atari ST, Amiga
Systems: Mainframe 1979
Career to date: Mainframe 1980
 Space Chase Dalek Hunt Mainframe 1980
 Rubble (Mechanoids) Mainframe 1981
 Navigate Mainframe 1982
 Survive Mainframe 1982
 Space Invaders Mainframe 1982
 3D Space Wars Dragon 32 1983/4
 3D Seiddab Attack Dragon 32 1984
 3D Lunattack Dragon 32 1984
 3D Lunattack C64 1984
 Gribbly's Day Out C64 1984/5
 Paradroid C64 1985
 Uridium C64 1985/6
 Alleykat C64 1986
 Uridium+ C64 1986
 Morpheus C64 1986/7
 Intensity C64 1987/8
 Rainbow Islands Amiga/ST 1988/9
 Paradroid 90 Amiga/ST 1989/90
 Fire & Ice Amiga/ST 1990-92
 Uridium 2 Amiga 1992/3

COBOL coding
 COBOL coding
 COBOL coding
 COBOL coding
 COBOL coding
 Paradroid forerunner.
 COBOL conversion.
 Real-time!
 Conversion, coding, graphics
 Conversion, coding, graphics
 Conversion, coding, graphics
 Conversion, coding, graphics
 Design, coding, graphics
 Design, coding, graphics, sound
 Design, coding, graphics, sound
 Design, coding, graphics, sound
 Design, coding, graphics
 Design, coding, graphics
 Conversion, coding
 Design, coding
 Design, coding
 Design, coding

What's worse - death or dishonour?

Don't fancy either really, but death is a bit more permanent so it's worse.

Did you pay your poll tax?

'Fraid so. As a single home owner it was a lot cheaper than the rates.

What do you think of GamesMaster?

It amuses me. I'm a bit of a closet astronomer so I'm a Patrick Moore fan. I'd like it more if I got invited to appear on it... hint.

Is it better to give or to receive?

To give of course, that was easy. Not that I've got much to give these days, you understand.

What would your autobiography be called?

I do hope to write one at some point. How about 'AB Bytes Back'? (I wouldn't advise it. - Ed)

What was the last book you read?

'Mort' by Terry Pratchett. I'm reading the Discworld novels in sequence, great fun.

What's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to you?

I'm a miserable so-and-so, people tend not to bother.

What one thing do you think would most improve the software industry?

If it's only one thing, then it had better be something global, like an end to human greed. That would get rid of high prices and piracy.

What would you like your epitaph to be?

Here lies AB. He's dead. Which is a good job, really.

The Gruesome Twosome

GOBLIINS 2



The Prince Buffoon



PC SCREEN SHOTS

AMIGA - £29.99
ATARI ST/STE - £29.99
IBM PC (256 VGA) - £34.99

Copyright ©1992 Coktel Vision
Distributed under licence by Digital Integration Limited
Digital Integration Ltd, Watchmoor Trade Centre, Watchmoor Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3AJ

Available from leading retail outlets.
In case of difficulty phone: 0276 684959



NEXT MONTH! Look, we're just sick and tired of destroying all that excitement by telling you about next month. Well, if you must know we'll have reviews of *Nick Faldo's Golf*, *Harrier* and maybe even *Frontier: Elite II*. And a game-packed coverdisk isn't totally out of the question either. But you can just jolly well wait until next month to find out what groovy features and previews we've got in store. Don't worry, you'll only have to wait three weeks for the next issue, which goes on sale 14th January. Wow.



It is for Harrier - coming soon from Domark, and reviewed next issue.