BACK TO THE FUTURE PART II
What's the verdict?
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<td>CBM 64 DISC</td>
</tr>
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<td>SPECTRUM 48/128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMIGA 1/2 MEG</td>
<td>SPECTRUM +3</td>
</tr>
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CONTENTS)

8 SMASH TAPE
We've a top-notch double bill for you this month! First up is Rebelstar II, an arcade strategy game from Julian Gollop of Lazer Squad and Lords Of Chaos fame! And then there's a playable demo of the skateboard sequence from Image Works' newie Back To The Future Part III. They're the bee's knees!

19 THE COMPLETE YS GUIDE TO SHOOT-'EM-UPS (PART II)
Seven (count 'em - seven!) pages of all that's best (and worst!) in shoot-'em-ups, this time concentrating on the ones with little Rambo types running around shooting each other! Including mini reviews of Robocop, ikari Warriors, Op Wolf and more!

49 YS READERS' GAMES
This issue we're giving the full YS review treatment to a handful of games written (as often as not in Basic) by you, our lovely readers! And when you see it includes no less than four (!) sequels to Dunc's 'classic' Advanced Lawnmower Simulator you'll know why we've nicknamed it 'The Crap Game Corner'!!

REGULARS
5 PSSST
We take a look at the wonderful world of traffic jams - and the cars that inhabit them! Is it true people grow to look like their vehicles? Find out here!

17 SNOW STRIKE COMPO
Win tefbo prizes with YS and US Gold!

29 TIPSHOP
Hints and tips on Black Tiger, Moonwalker, and much (much) more!

34 SUBSCRIPTIONS

37 LETTERS

40 SAM SURGEON
It's the biggest news of the month - Miles Gordon Technology (creators of the SAM! go bust! Read the full story...

42 THE TIME MACHINE POSTER

45 HOW 2 HACK
Jon North starts us out on cracking protection systems and writing miniPOKEs (the scamph)

53 PROGRAM PITSTOP

54 ADVENTURES
More help and hints from adventuring's favourite, the man with the beard!

56 BACK TO THE FUTURE PART II COMPO
Win an incredible trip for two to Orlando in Florida with YS and Image Works! Could this be the best compo we've run all year? (We think so!)

57 INPUT OUTPUT

74 SUPERSTORE
New pictures, new binders, new everything! Go on - splash some cash!

78 ON SPEC

82 NEXT MONTH

GAMES

REVIEWS

Full Price

10 Back To The Future Part II Image Works
69 Colecov Collection Hewson
26 Deliverance - Stormlord II Hewson
12 Italy 1990 US Gold
35 Midnight Resistance Ocean
26 Sim City Infogrames
63 3D International Tennis Palace
52 The Cycles Accolade
64 Turrican Rainbow Arts

Bargain Basement

77 Big Trouble In Little China Alternative
77 Dudley Thomas's Superhero Hit Squad
76 Head Over Heels Hit Squad
76 Hijack Summit
76 Howard The Duck Alternative
76 Nineteen Boot Camp Summit
77 Pro Tennis Simulator CodeMasters
77 Rad Ramp Racer Mastertronic
76 Silap Fight Hit Squad

Adventures

61 Starship Quest FSF Adventures

PREVIEWS

Megapreviews

70 Snow Strike Epyx (US Gold)
14 The Time Machine Vivid Image (Activision)

Future Shocks

82 Defenders Of The Earth (SAM Coupe version)
Enigma Variations
81 Satan Dynamic
80 Shadow Warriors Ocean
So what does summer remind you of? Holidays? Exactly. And what happens when everyone decides to scoot off to the coast at the same time? That’s right – traffic jams. So this month we thought we’d have a look at different types of cars and their drivers – so you can play a game of ‘spot the berk’ when stuck in heavy traffic on the A262 (or wherever).

Read on...

THE RELIANT ROBIN

The poor old Robin – it really gets a lot of stick, doesn’t it? Mind you, it’s hardly surprising really – a silly Noddy car with three wheels which tails over on corners is hard to take seriously, totally ridiculous. There are (like Maestros) two types of Robin driver. Firstly there’s the pretty skint old bloke who couldn’t afford anything else and never really looks where he’s going. (Best avoided, actually.) And secondly there’s the ‘biker’ who hasn’t bothered taking a car test and needs something to cart heavy motorcycle parts around in (you can drive a Robin on a motorbike licence you see).

TRIUMPH HERALD CONVERTIBLES

Lovely cars, lovely drivers. Mind you, we had to say that because this is the car owned by Whistlin’ Rick himself. Yup, David Wilson is a Herald owner. So, to avoid any trouble, we’d better let him have his say...

“The Herald driver (convertible Herald that is) is the best driver on the road. Skilled and thoughtful, he is equally at home shipping Auntie Maude to the shops and back as he is taking on a.Jacked-up Cortina at a set of traffic lights.” End of quote.

VOLVO ESTATES

Everybody hates Volvo Estate drivers (even other Volvo Estate drivers). What is it about these cars? Well, there’s the ridiculous ‘all day lights’ for a start. Why? On a bright sunny day you can quite clearly see one of these obscenely large vehicles coming towards you, can’t you? Do you need it to have lights on as well? No, you don’t. “Look, I’m a Volvo, and my lights are on 24 hours a day. Are yours?”

Sometimes Porsche drivers go way over the top and wear silly leather driving gloves – the clots.

PORTHES

There are many pretenders to the throne, but the Ford Cortina is still the champion of the ‘not very wealthy boy racer’. A Ford Cortina will always aim to be the first car away from a set of traffic lights. It’s the car with the furry dice. It’s the car with one of the doors painted a different colour to all the others. It’s the car with the crap stickers over the back window which say “Toucha my car, I smacka your face”. We think there ought to be a car sticker which says “my other car sticker isn’t funny either”.

VAUXHALL CAVALIERS

Is that a Vauxhall Cavalier in front of you? Is there a jacket hanging from the hook behind the driver’s door? Oh no! It’s the dreaded Sales Rep – on his way to ‘do’ some business! Carve him up. (It’s great fun. And besides, sales reps are the ones who come zooming up behind you on motorways, flashing their lights and beeping their horns – so you’re only paying them back.)
THE AUSTIN ALLEGRO

Oh dear, Austin Allegro drivers tend to be the cause of most traffic jams, mainly due to the fact that they change gears on the highest spot sign. If you go at 30 miles per hour, the Allegro driver will stick to third at 60 miles per hour, and it'll be nice. It's because Allegro drivers suffer from a form of dyslexia. No, it's not. Because your average Allegro driver is pushing 55 years old and it's too late to see over the steering wheel while it's flying down the A4 and my arse will remember seeing Tommy Underwood at the Worthing Pavilion in 1966.

Pass: We're doing a survey into driving habits. We're going to ask you if you're then, four mph in a 30 mph zone.
Edna: That's it? I'm 56, you know. I can remember the Crystal Palace burning down. Are you the police? We're doing our usual survey.
Pass: Great! Yes, we're the police. Give us your car keys. You old but not in a hurry in other words.

THE AUSTIN METRO

"Vyaaarrgh, there's a Metro three cars in front" is the common cry of a driver keen on getting somewhere quickly. Metro drivers are similar to Allegro drivers you see, only not as old. They're "sensible" drivers. They slow down from 40 mph to 20 mph because there's a blade of grass lying on the road 500 yards in front of them. Hedgehogs are safe from the speed of road user. Metro drivers never get speeding tickets because they never drive faster than 30 mph (even on motorways). Blue Metros always have one of those slob 'Garfield With Suckered Feet' things stuck on their rear off-side windows.

THE AUSTIN MAESTRO

The third of the Austin trio, the Maestro, is a funny old thing (as is its driver). They're either members of the 'never go above 30 and start panicking when approaching a roundabout' brigade, or else they're not. There's absolutely no way out, even if you get stuck behind one. This is why a lot of drivers won't let them onto side roads - it's just not worth the risk.

THE MINI

A 'girls' car. We're not being sexist, it's just that it is (you don't see many blokes driving them). Mini drivers are, on the whole, okay. Not too fast and not too slow - plus they tend to be quite friendly and let other cars out of side roads. This is, however, the little dodging. There, you are, chugging along behind one, when all of a sudden on come the brake lights. "Eh?" you ask yourself. "What's she up to?"

And then you see - she's gone and let two Metros and an Allegro out onto the road in front of you both. Vaarrggh! Overtake, overtake, overtake!

THE PSSST TRAFFIC LIGHT COMPO

Want to win the two driving games of your choice? Well, here's your chance! There's a very wide road - eight lanes to be precise. There's a car per lane, and they've all stopped at some traffic lights. All you have to do is look at the coupon and decide which car, as soon as the lights change to green, will get away first (and which will get away second and so on). Then put the relevant number in the relevant box. For instance, if you think Old Nana Brown in the Allegro is going to do it then put a '1' in the Allegro box. If you think she's going to be last then it needs to be an '8'. Then send it on the back of the entry form, attach it to a postcard and send it to Class The Door, Push Your Foot To The Fibre, Tun The Radio On (Oh, And Don't Forget To Put On Your Seat Belt) Compo at the usual back address. And don't forget to tell us if you have a 3.

The two driving games I want are...

\[ \text{a} \] Allegro [ ] Cortina [ ] Metro [ ] Mini
[ ] Beetle [ ] Nova [ ] Porsche [ ] Herald

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Zip Code: ____________________________

[ ] My other coupon is a recycled Ferrari [ ] Yes [ ] No

WHOOPS!

In our Rage Hard feature on Micronta last month we said that playing the multi-user adventure games Shades and Trash were free once you were connected up to the Micronta system. Well, until we were (ever so slightly) wrong. Actually, what we meant was that they only cost you a bargain one penny a minute. Sorry!
What a corking cassette we’ve got for you this ish! Yes indeed – just check out Rebelstar II if you don’t believe us, a stonking arcade strategy game from the people who brought us Lords Of Chaos! It’s a winner! But (but! but!) that’s not all! We’ve also got a brand-new up-to-datey for you, an (almost) complete playable level of Image Works’ Back To The Future Part II, this month’s Covergame and a sure-fire summertime hit! The best of the past and the best of the future (ahem) – don’t say we’re not good to you!

Did you enjoy the playable section of Lords Of Chaos we gave away a couple of issues ago? If you just answered ‘yes’ then you’re not alone – we’ve had loads of letters asking for more. And (for once) when you ask you shall receive ‘cos what do we have here but Rebelstar II, a predecessor to Lords Of Chaos from a couple of years ago, written by Chaos/Lords Of Chaos creator Julian Gollop.

So what’s it all about? Well, it’s an arcade strategy game (Julian’s speciality) which (if you’re wondering) is basically the same as a strategy game, except it has rather snazzier graphics than you’d expect and little animated sequences. To play it you take turns with the computer at moving your forces around the eight-way scrolling battlefield attempting to do, well, whatever it is you’re meant to be doing.

Right, who remembers the films Alien and Aliens? (Like we thought – almost everybody.) Well, that’s more or less the plot of the game. Your forces – the Rebelstar Raiders, would you believe? – must land on an alien planet and fight an armed party of alien creatures who have similarly arrived there. Not only must you kill off as many of the nasties as you can, you also have to capture their eggs, which are dotted about the place, and find and defeat the alien queen.

To start with you control around 30 men (though reinforcements arrive later on in the game) who come equipped with a variety of weapons and ammo, though more are collectable around the planet. Kill an alien and you can even collect his gun, but watch out for the native lifeforms of the planet – although they’re not actually your enemies in the game they’re hostile to both you and the other aliens!

Throughout the game you should keep an eye out for the arrival of your dropship to take you off the planet – it’ll arrive somewhere in the vicinity of the big alien ship. When this happens you have to get as many eggs as possible onto it before it takes off and disappears again. Don’t hang around

Image Works

Yes, there’s more! A stonking playable demo of this month’s Covergame to be precise, and a right little corker it is too! Our demo lacks the neat animated end sequence, but otherwise it comprises the whole of the first level of the game, with Marty on his little flying skateboard whizzing around town, avoiding toy cars and puddles, grabbing onto the backs of moving cars and fighting Griff and his gang. Pick up icons, including one to make the board more responsive, one to make everything (including the scrolling) move faster, one to boost your energy and one to make you stronger (ie each time something hits you, you lose less energy). Your task is to get to the end of the level losing as little energy as possible, but what tactics you use are up to you – you can either dodge Griff (the bloke with the tuiel bat) and his pals or you can fight them, pushing them off their boards. Whichever way you choose, it’s fast, frantic fun all the way! (Now check out our full review just over the page!)
too close to where you think it's going to land though — it could quite easily kill off half your men if they're standing underneath it! In fact, be careful with your men at all times — even if you manage to get lots of eggs onto the ship you can still lose the game if half your people have been wiped out in the process!

Controls for the game are fairly simple. You move your cursor around with the eight keys surrounding the S key — W, A, D, X and so on. S selects a unit to move, K ends that movement and O ends your whole turn and lets the computer have a go. 1 fires an aimed shot (which takes a second or two to aim) whereas 2 does a snap shot, which is more likely to miss but uses up less energy. Of course you can pick up various things like the eggs and extra ammo too, and whenever you place your cursor over an object, alien or member of your party it'll tell you who or what it is. Rebelstar II is a fairly easy game to get into, yet it's quite challenging and bags of fun. You'll have a ball!

What's this bit about then? Well, it's basically describing the landscape or object that lurks underneath your little white cursor (bottom right of the screen), if you don't know what something is, just pull it over and see!

Eek! It's a monster! Avoid! Avoid!

Hmm. Not using very much at the mo, are we?

As you can see, the computer tells you what each control is (in case you forget!).

---

TAPE TRUBBS

Uh-oh! It's complaints time again, isn't it? What with the thousands of cassettes we put on the front of YS each issue it's inevitable that a few 'bad apples' (ie ones that won't load) will slip through. Luckily though here's the ideal solution — we'll send you a brand spanking new cassette in return for your cruddy old one! Just toss the offending item in an envelope, bang in an see, whish the whole lot down to YS Tape Returns No 33, Rebelstar II, Ablex Audio Video Ltd, Hatcort, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD and within a mere matter of days (or weeks) a brand-new tape will be yours!
Back to the Future Part II

Image Works
£10.99 cass/£14.99 disk

Rich Back To The Future II, eh? You can hardly have missed it, can you? The computer game's been fairly high profile too - we had JD's Megapreview a few issues back, and now it's on the cover, there's a review in the mag (and you're reading it) and blow me down if there's not a mega-demo on this month's Smash Tape too! (In fact, at this rate you probably know more about the game than I do, which is a bit of a bummer 'cos I'm the one who's meant to be writing this pesky thing!) Oh well, on with the show...

Film tie-ins, eh? Not an easy thing to do, I can tell you - especially with a film as complicated as Back To The Future II. See, the movie kept jumping about time and space so much it was hard to come up with any one sequence to represent it. There was only one thing to do - take the "let's get lots of different sections from the film and cobble them together into a large (multiloop) jobbie instead" approach. And has it worked? Well, hold your horses - I'll tell you in a minute.

There's a huge plot behind this, which is kind of important if you want to know what you're doing (and why), but a bit boring (and impossible to explain) if you don't. So I'm not going to bother - if you want to find out then rent the film (it's just come out on video) or check out the Megapreview in YS 54. Sufficient to say, it all involves you (as Marty McFly) and your pal the Doc flipping backwards and forwards in time, trying to sort out the massive mess that your time-travelling antics have inadvertently caused in the lives of both your parents and their pals (in the past) and your children (and their pals) in the future.

But what do you get? Well, first up there's a neat little animated graphic of the flying De Lorean whizzing about the screen, and then we're straight into the first game sequence, the flying skateboard chase. The screen scrolls nice and smoothly (but not particularly quickly) from left to right (and diagonally as well at times) as you bomb about on your futuristic deck, dodging bully Griff and his mob and trying to knock them off their boards. I'm not going to describe it to you any further - check it out for yourselves on the front cover demo. Suffice to say, it all plays quite smoothly, and has a natty little animated sequence where Griff and his posse crash into the Town Hall at the end as well.

Level Two's a sort of bonus round. Jennifer (your girl) has fainted and been found by the police and taken back to her house. Only one problem - she's already there. (Confused? You will be.) You have to stop Jennifer from meeting her future self you see, or any of the other three people who share the house, which would make an even bigger pig's ear of things than they already are.

You take a bird's-eye view of the proceedings in this level, with the two Jennifers and the other occupants all wandering from random positions around the house. Your task is to guide the old Jennifer out without her meeting anyone else (if she does you fail) by simply opening and closing doors to direct everyone where you want them. All this boils down to is a simple little puzzle - fool's colour, and a very little bit of strategy between levels.

Blimey. Level Three already, and Marty and the Doc reckon they've sorted everything out, so off they trot back to good old 1985. Now here's the clever bit - listening carefully. (We'll be asking questions later.) Whilst Marty was busy trying to rescue Jennifer, Biff (Marty's Dad's rival, and Griff's grandad) "borrowed" the almanac back from 1955, to take an almanac (a sort of diary jobby with lots of interesting things in it) back to himself in 1955, thus enabling him to 'predict' the future and become vastly rich 'cos he can tell what's going to happen. Cunnin', eh? So when Marty arrives in 1985 he finds it all quite different. For example, he no longer lives in the same house, Biff rules the town, is married to Marty's Mum, and everyone else is really rather horrible.

Marty's got to get the almanac from Biff (so he won't be able to see into the future anymore) by simply duffing up everyone in sight, and eventually Biff himself. Yes, it's a beat-em-up. You can kick and punch as things scroll from left to right, and pick up sticks and things to try and disarm the baddies with (though you can't use your guns). I thought there was a bit of a lack of
Look out, mate! There's a bullet about to hit you on the bonce!

In what It's gets beepy everything instead.

one a chips the this multiload else this vein little of out,

(What moves this way as boot, I's never get another chip of this at all. Well, not to anybody but Andy, who doesn't seem to quite realise it). You see, our Andy is actually (whisper it a bit of a bit...): Happy! Just check out that hair - it's a dead giveaway, isn't it?

And what sort of car does hippie drive? That's right! Citron 2CV! And guess what sort of car Andy's got? A 1933 Cheever, of course (It's a nice yellow one with environmentally-conscious stickers on the back window and pretty flowers painted on the driver's door). Look, there he goes now, footling along through the traffic:

Just to keep him happy.

There are two things you have to know about our Andy. One is that he's a bit of a hipster, and two, she's very, very small. What sort of car do you think she's got? No, not a Mini. She couldn't see over the steering wheel at least not without a massive seat cushion and that meant she couldn't reach the pedals. We tried guying big wooden blocks to the bottoms of her shoes to help, but it was no good - she couldn't lift them.

No, she's got a red triang pedal car (with a bell). And very bright and shiny. It's too.

(A bit slow though.)

Kathy's got a girl too, but has quite a different sort of driving problem from our Jack - she just can't decide what sort of car she wants. "I bought one once," she confided in us, "a nice blue Honda Civic. Trouble was I got bored with it very quickly after about two days and it had to go. No! Last test drive new ones of the local garages once or twice a week. That way I can keep up to date, and do a spot of shopping, but without actually taking out any dash on wheels and petrol. Good, eh?"

Oh no! Our Rich is a bit of a hippy too, but a highly different sort from Andy - he's the modern, acid house, fansy type. (The worst sort, actually!) He's got a Beetle (quite a nice car really) but yikes! Look what he's done to it. He's taken the body off, stuck some tractor wheels on the side, and mounted an oversized soup-dish on the entire lot! Yes, he's turned it into a beach buggy! (What a crump!) Rich says that he's been on board from Zero (our ex-editor magazine), 'posh' Paul (as we like to call him) doesn't actually own a car of his own, but he constantly borrows them from the family estate. One week he had a Range Rover, the next a Mercedes, but which is your favourite, Paul? "Oh, that's easy! They all have their merits of course, but my all-time favourite is the old lady estate we keep to take the dogs out, it has a lot of character, that car." Mmm. So now we know.

"Getting up to fever temperature! Miss a game that's this red-hot and you'll get the blues - we guarantee it! Any game that rates an overall score of 90 or above gets the esteemed 75 Megagame rating! It's a happening piece of software!"

A game well worth digging into the old dish bucket for!

A very enjoyable game, but might not be of lasting appeal to everybody.

A few niggles. Lacking in certain areas. Think before you buy!

Pretty average. Very average in fact. Actually, it's a bit crap.

Um, below average (believe it or not).

So slickly it's due to hospitals!

Very poorly indeed.

Critical - not expected to last the night.

Clinically dead.
US Gold/£12.99 cass

Rich Well, did we win? I haven't the foggiest! I'm writing this three days before the Argentina Cameroon match has kicked off! All of which is a bit of a shame for US Gold really - Italy 1990 missed the 'YS' review treatment last month by a footballer's boatrace. Boo hoo! Anyway, it's here now, so better late than never, eh, Spechums?

Of course, at this point, I could go on about how I'm a real footie fan, how much I love soccer games, and how thrilled I am to be given the chance to review this game. But seeing as that would be a complete lie I don't think that it'll bother. I mean, soccer games aren't exactly big news, are they? Just check out JD's complete (and utter) guide to footie, two issues back, and you'll find that we've had over 60 (yes, 60) of the blighters in the past. And that ain't including the last issue where we bursted to the staples with even more of the pesky things. So having to play yet another one hasn't exactly made my day, if you narta mean. But hang on a mo - isn't Italy 1990 the only game which has actually got anything to do with the World Cup? Oh, except for World Cup Italia 1990, that is. And countless others probably. But you know what I mean. (No, I don't think so, Ed) Perhaps it's still got a bit of hope in it after all.

After lighthing all the mound of true posters, competition entry forms and World Cup information booklet (quite neat and well put together actually - my Dad's already stolen my copy!), you'll eventually uncover the tape (or indeed disk) and slap it into your Spec. The first thing to do is to pick your team. Footie fans I love this bit because everything is true to the real thing, so you get all the correct teams, players, venues and dates as in the real telesport. Then it's time to choose your formation, pick your team (with little digitised pieces showing you what position they play - very impressive, thank you) and away you go, either playing against a chum in a friendy, or competing in the very World Cup itself.

A quick load from the tape and it's kick off. Wow, folks, underneath all that

World Cup blurb, Italy 1990 is no more than a Matchday look-a-like. Not that that's a bad thing, of course. I almost found myself enjoying it for a bit, until I luckily came to my senses (and not a minute too soon). I think the sort of thing - you control the player nearest to the ball and run (or rather jek) up and down the scrolling pitch, tackling (even slide-tackling), passing, heading, chipping the ball about and occasionally scoring the odd goal here and there.

Here's one of the neat digitised score board scenes that come on whenever something good happens - neat, eh?

It's really quite exciting, believe me. And a nice little touch is the little animated sequences that tell you what's just happened if there's been a goal kick or something.

In case you were wondering, apparently all that business concerning skill factors and strength that I mentioned earlier applies here. Supposedly, the stronger the player the further he can kick the ball, and the skill factor determines how easily he can tackle or keep the ball. Trouble is it's a bit hard to tell how true that is because everyone looks the same (in glorious monochrome, in fact), and even though I chose the best team with the best players I'm still crap and losing six-nil. Oh dear. Never said I was very good at footie games, though, did I? So seeing as I'm so hopeless at this sort of thing I decided to call in an expert - my little brother - who managed to polish the thing off on his first game and win the World Cup within three quarters of an hour. Surprisingly, this wasn't because he's a pure genius, merely due to the fact that Italy 1990 is a lad on the easy side.

And there you go. Not really much more to say. It's a footie game, and one whose job it is to follow the World Cup to its absolute limit. But strip away all the outer makings of a well-presented game and inside you'll find little more than your average soccer offering. It's still quite fun, if you're into that sort of thing, but for those of us looking for a decent game at the end of the day (and one with a spunky two-player option into the bargain) it's probably a better option to stick with that old classic Matchday 2 instead. Hmmph.

(ED'S NOTE: I'm afraid I think Rich is a bit wrong about this actually - I reckon he's been pals with Jonathan Davies too long and Jonathan's rabid hatred of footie games has somewhat added the poor chap's mind. For what it's worth I'd say Italy 1990, despite being too easy, is the best of the World Cup offerings around at the moment and a far cry from the utter disaster of last time's World Cup Carnival. Who anyone remembers that. For a start, despite the fact that Virgin got the only official World Cup licence, this one actually plays much more like the World Cup itself - you're not limited to the ridiculous choice of playing only one top stars for instance (including the pathetic Belgium but excluding Brazil). The presentation helps too - like the score boards showing when a corner or goal kick is coming up and the nifty booklet you get thrown in with the package. I know what game I'll be playing this year.)

And here we are in the actual football bit of the game. Yes, okay, it is a bit green, and the teams are quite hard to tell apart, but the whole thing's well programmed, runs smoothly and makes for a lotta good fun. Hurrah!
INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS IS A REVOLUTIONARY NEW TENNIS SIMULATION. THE INNOVATIVE USE OF VECTOR GRAPHICS HAS CREATED A GAME WITH UNRIVALLED PLAYABILITY AND AN UNPARALLELED NUMBER OF FEATURES.

- Remarkable new 3D real time animation system.
- One or two player games.
- Four player ability levels – amateur, semi-pro, pro and Ace.
- View the game from any one of ten “camera” angles – infinite on ST and Amiga.
- Learn to play topspin and backspin balls.
- True control over the direction of your shots.
- T.V. tennis theme tunes.
- Any-time save option.
- 64 different computer opponents, with 16 skill levels.
- 72 tournaments to play in all based on real events with genuine court conditions and prize monies.
- 4 court surfaces – grass, clay, carpet and cement – each affecting game play.
- Digitised pictures (ST and Amiga)
- Digitised voice of real Wimbledon umpire (ST and Amiga).
- Choose which 22 tournaments to play in a full tennis season, against world class competition and aim to earn a million dollars!

“Remarkable new 3D animation system. One or two player games. Four player ability levels – amateur, semi-pro, pro and Ace. View the game from any one of ten “camera” angles – infinite on ST and Amiga. Learn to play topspin and backspin balls. True control over the direction of your shots. T.V. tennis theme tunes. Any-time save option. 64 different computer opponents, with 16 skill levels. 72 tournaments to play in all based on real events with genuine court conditions and prize monies. 4 court surfaces – grass, clay, carpet and cement – each affecting game play. Digitised pictures (ST and Amiga). Digitised voice of real Wimbledon umpire (ST and Amiga). Choose which 22 tournaments to play in a full tennis season, against world class competition and aim to earn a million dollars!”

“C&VG 94% C&VG HIT

“It’s smashing, ace and beats the competition... immense fun, demanding for novice and expert alike, the best sports game for ages”

ZZAP! 94% ZZAP! SIZZLER

Screen shots of game and box showing controls. Individual format release dates may vary.
THE TIME MACHINE

Time - it's a funny old concept, isn't it? We've never quite managed to get a proper grasp on it, to be honest. Does it go in a nice straight line from A to B, or sort of flow in a wobbly pattern (like a river)? Or is it even more complicated than that - like a plate of spaghetti or something? And would it really be possible to go back into the past and become your own father? (Oo-er.) Who can tell? (Not Matt BIELBY, that's for sure.)

Oh, um, hi. Well, here I am sitting in a boardroom at Activision doing not a lot actually. I'm waiting for the programmers of The Time Machine to turn up and they're late! Talk to you in a bit when they finally get here.

(Half an hour later.) A-ha! I think somebody's here. Hello. Oh no, sorry. False alarm. It's only the nice Activision lady with a pot of coffee.

(Ten more minutes pass.) Hurrah! Merv Dow's arrived! Merv's one of the two guys behind Vivid Image, a new-ish company which has got a deal with Activision to market, sell and distribute its own stuff. Their first game was Hammurabi, so that wasn't too bad a start, was it, Sport-chums?

Well, Merv, this 'time' stuff is certainly proving pretty tricky, isn't it?

Merv: Well, time keeping, you mean (ha ha). If you think I was bad, we've still got to wait for the programmer - he's got the only copy of the game! But don't worry - he only lives about 15 minutes away, so it shouldn't be too long.

(Five more minutes go by.) Durn do dum de dum. Oh, what's this? Blimey! Somebody seems to be arriving! (Will wonders never cease?) Hold on a minute though, doesn't that look a bit like...

Merv: Blimey! What's Hewson's top programmer doing here? Aren't you meant to be at home putting the finishing touches on Stormlord II or something?

Raf: Ha ha ha. Um, well, sort of. You see, Merv's an old friend of mine and I'm just doing the code (not the graphics) of the Spacey and Amstrad versions for him in my spare time. I haven't had to come up with much of the game design, so it hasn't taken too long.

Well, if it's all right with Hewson I suppose that's okay. Right, guys, now we're all here don't you think it's about time we tried to explain The Time Machine to me, eh?

(And explain away they did.)

The Time Machine - what's it all about?

So what did they manage to impress upon me? Well, for a start, The Time Machine is more than a little
Okay, so what actually happens?

Well, the thing is, you see, that you play this sort of cartoony and scientist-like game like the chips, out of Back to the Future: Oddly enough you just managed to come out with an HK Walker style Time Machine! But oh no! Terrorists have broken in and blown the whole thing up — and just as you were about to take off in it, and that's the worst of it! They've only managed to create a spooky little whirlpool thing which has whisked you back into the prehistoric past, haven't they?

So what do you do? There you are, trapped Time Machine-less in the spookily old prehistoric past, with nowhere to go. Or have you? Well, this is where the rather clever concept of the Time Machine comes in as thought up by the Mrs Riley, wife of English historian and Old Trucker of Merv and his partner John Tody. You see, the problem isn't so much that you've no means with which to travel to the future (you do actually, because in your pockets you happen to have carried a couple of handy time-bagging services which you can use to whisk yourself across time and space and to loft hole-today tomorrow back and you'll eventually get back in 1980). No, the problem is that there's no actual future for you to go to! You're back in the past so it doesn't actually exist yet, does it? Where?

So the new puzzle of the game is that in order to get back to the present day you've got to work your way through the major time zones, manipulating the natural environment as you go in such a way that you trigger all the major changes that took place in the earth's development. Step by step you've got to create the Stone Age, make sure that Stone Age man develops enough to join the Iron Age and so on until you manage to create the modern world that we know today! Hurrah! Now we can go home!

Clever stuff, huh? Just hope you understood all that. Because if you're not sure I'm in much shape to explain it to you again.

So how does the game actually work?

Okay, after the pre-game introductory sequence (showing the story I've just described to you) the first thing you'll notice is the unusual layout of the game. Then you are walking around in a monochrome, flip-screen 3D environment (you can walk back into the screen, behind trees and so on, rather like in the Last Ninja games) when all of a sudden you come to a dead halt. What's to know it? Can the game really be, err, does it quite count, a mere five screens long?

Well, yes it is actually (physically at least) you see, you've forgotten that extra dimension — time! Take a look at the big stack of tiny rectangles at the top of the screen. The bottom line represents the five screens of the game, but look upwards and each additional level of blocks represents these same five screens, but at successive periods throughout Earth's history. The bottom level screen can see a little light on one of the blocks here, indicating that this is where we are now, in the Prehistoric Age, the one above is the Ice Age, above that is the Stone Age, then there's the Iron Age and finally the present day.

To complete the game (and listen carefully here, because this is another bit you might find quite tricky to get your minds around) you have to solve one major puzzle in each time zone, which may in itself involve solving a couple of smaller, minor problems as well. Set it right and in some way you will have manipulated the age you are in so that it develops into the next stage of Earth's development.

And so it goes on — create the Ice Age and you'll be able to walk around in two levels of the game (flacking between them at will) as you work towards creating the third age. You may need to do something in the Prehistoric Age, say plant a tree, so that you'll be able to make some use of the subsequent wood you'll get in the next time zone. Or you may need to bring something from the Prehistoric Age into the Ice Age in order to turn the Ice Age into the Stone Age (phew) or whatever.
Iron Age man has yet to discover a major energy source—
can you help?

Understand? Well, you'd better—this whole game is
just turning out to be a little bit of a murder to explain. Why
there didn't make somebody else do it!

It's not as easy as it all that, though,
Oh no, just to make things extra tricky you have to
keep nipping back into the past all the time to make
sure that each previous age is on a reasonably
secure footing. Should the Ice Age start again or
budding out for instance then you'll have to nip back and
re-create it in a way that's nothing to do with the
puzzle's nature that came before you—so let me erode and all the subsequent ones will
come toppling down like a stack of cards again.
All clear? No, I didn't think so. Let's go for a practical
explanation, shall we?

The Practical Explanation

Right, here we are at the beginning of the game
trapped in the Prehistoric Age. Wander around
our five screens and we find a river—it's
possible to wade across, but it eats up our
energy like nobody's business, so we'll have to
find a better way out! What is this? Here?

Well, there seem to be plenty of massive
boulders littering the ground—we can walk past them or in between one of them,
they might be a bit of a red herring. (But which?)
In addition, there are some rather
hopeless-looking little mammals running
around, a horrible giant Yeti creature which
knocks giant balls of energy all over the place if
you touch him/her, and will gobble up the mammals given
a chance, some eggs, some apples, and some
sor of volcanic holes in the ground through which
the lava keeps erupting. There aren't many people around
though, many don't have to keep

(One more about what to
So, no too, well, let's think it through. We know
that we've got to start the
next yeti Age to get to the
next level, but we also know
that we've got to help man
survive and develop so
there'll be people around
when we finally get back to
1930 (or whenever) Hmm. So we've got to lower the
temperature of these five
screens I guess, and the obvious way to do that
would be to blow off the
next coming out of these
volcanic holes. Picking up
the rocks and dropping them
on the holes should do it.
Fair enough, but now all the
little mammals are freezing
to death, aren't they? We've
got to find some way to keep
them warm (and safe from
the Yeti) so that they can sit
out the Ice Age and evolve into

little cave people in time for the next level. Perhaps
if we feed the Yeti some apples he won't be hungry
anymore and we'll leave them alone, and as for the
coldness problem? Well, you're going to have to
work that one out for yourselves.

Back to the boys...

Phew! After all that let's go check out Raf and Mev
again (two of the most nastily sounding names in
the history of the world, uh, Spectrums?) and ask
them a couple of pertinent questions. Er, guys,
don't you think there's danger that all these
puzzles might be a bit hard for us stupid people to
work out?

Raf: Well, the game's bit changing and evolving
since we first came up with the idea, and one of
the big problems has been trying to make it challenging
enough to be interesting, but not so impossibly hard
that most people would just give up the ghost. It's
like Last Ninja 1 or Hammerfall. Mev worked on the
Last Ninja games for System 3—we thought they'd
be really tricky, but we kept getting calls (or rather
Artinness flips) from people who'd completed those
games almost as soon as they hit the streets, so what
can you do.

One way or tried to make it a bit less difficult is to put that little window at the top of the screen to

Though The Time Machine isn't a beat-'em-up there
are a couple of sequences that could almost be called
fight scenes. Our time-travelling hero comes equipped
with a beam weapon (it almost looks like a torch beam
or plant sprayer when he fires it). This he can use in
short bursts (say, to stun the smaller mammals so he
can pick them up) or longer bursts (to drive off the
Yeti, kill crocodiles, blow up things that need blowing
up and so on). One spectacular sequence in a later
time zone features a giant Goliath type who guards
the bridge that's sprung up over the river. It has to be
said that this stuff isn't any major part of
the gameplay or anything, but one more puzzle out
loads of others to be worked out and solved.

You'd better dodge those fireballs (But
think—could they prove useful?)

show you which things you can pick up or whatever—
hopefully that it's enough of a hint to set you off in
the right direction. We'll probably print a couple of
tips in the manual to get you started too.

Any great problems with the programming?
Raf: I'm, yes, some the worst one I guess is that
since you're constantly flipping back and forth
between the time zones the game can't be a multi-
platform—everything has to go in one big chunk. And since
we had so gotten involved into A&K there were some
hard cramming problems.

The other difficulties came from either the mechanics
being too complicated or too easy, or someone coming up
with a better idea for some part of the game that we
had to incorporate or whatever. We kept spotting
obvious logical faults in the whole concept of the
game too. That's the problem with this time travel
stuff—you keep coming across loads of new
paradoxes in what you've done. Hopefully it all
makes sense now (more or less).

Thanks, guys. So you're fairly close to completion
with this. Any ideas as to what'll be next?
Raf: A Yeti! You're going to have to get your crystal
ball out for that I'm afraid!

Mev: Only time will tell! (Ha ha!)
(Oh dear)

FAX BOX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>The Time Machine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Vivid Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmer</td>
<td>Red Ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release date</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16
Snow Strike - what's it all about, eh? Aeroplanes, that's what, sunshine - and cocktails of the pesky little things too! It's a very unusual flight sim/shoot-'em-up cross-breed, with 3D vector graphic land targets and enemy aircraft made up of sprites. Spooky, eh? To learn more, why not check out our full Megapreview on page 70?

You'll be glad you did!

So what can I win, matey? Only your very own BSB squarial, that's what, fitted and installed in your home and all ready to pick up their five satellite TV channels. There's the Sports Channel, with 12 hours a day of sports news, coverage of major events and so on, Galaxy - The Entertainment Channel, packed full of comedy and drama shows, The Power Station, with pop vids and music interviews galore, and Now - The Channel For Living, with its documentaries, news, classical music and so on. There's also the Movie Channel, packed with brand new films (though that'll cost you an extra £10 a month to subscribe).

Ten runners up needn't go away disappointed though - they'll each get their own copy of Snow Strike to take home and treasure. Wow! giveaway!!

Okay dokey, Now what? Right - so I guess you'd like to know how you get a chance to win, eh? Well, it's easy - It's plane identification time, folks. Just take a gander at the little line drawings of aeroplanes we've got dotted about on this page. All very nice and pretty, aren't they, but - oh no! - we've forgotten to say which one's which! (Bet you can work out what you've got to do now, eh. Spec-chums?) That's right, it's your job to tell us what they all are! Just jot the name of each plane down in the space provided on the coupon below - for instance, if you think plane a) is an F16 Fighting Falcon put that down in the space next to a) - and Bob's your uncle! Now jot your name and address down on the coupon, stick it to the back of a post card and send it off to is it A Berta, Is it A Pi... (Splattt)... Mmm. Right First Time Compo, Your Sinclair, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AP. Oh, and it'd be nice to receive it before August 31st as well, if that's not too much trouble.

A-ha! I know my planes! And they are...

RULES
- Pilots from the US
- Gold and Future (Processor) are in a clear of this compo's air space, or they'll get a Sidewinder up the bottom
- Last take-off is on August 31st, so you'd better be checked away by then
- Matt's the Air Vice Marshal for this one, so you'd better think twice before you start arguing with him!

Okay, here are the planes to choose from:
- A-10 Thunderbolt
- Sea Harrier FR5 Mk1
- A-20B Vargy
- AJS Air Fram
- A-1 Skyraider
- F-16 Fighting Falcon
- E-2 Hawkeye
- F14 Tomcat
- T-45 Corax
- YF5a Shackleton
- GR Mk1 Tornado
- F-111 Hornet
- B-52 Stratofortress

My name is...
And I live at...

Zip code...
THE COMPLETE YS GUIDE TO
SHOOT-'EM-UPS

Well, maybe not 'complete' but at seven
mega-woppin' pages who's complainin'?
MATT BIELBLY picks up the pieces from last month
(and quite a nasty little mess it was too)...

Shoot-'em-ups, eh? They
get bloomin' everywhere,
don't they? Every issue
(just about) we seem to
review two or three new
ones, which we can
broader split up into two
categories. For a start
there are the flying-along-
in-a-weedy-little-
spaceship-shooting-things
ones (which we dealt with
last month), and then, of
course, there are the
walking-along-shooting-
thing ones - the
real
men's games! And guess
which we're lookin' at this
lady? That's right, the
real
men's games!

Phew! All I can say is it's a good
job we're not counting every single
game with a gun in it as a shoot-
'em-up or we'd be here all
blooming night! Even so, there are
an awful lot of them about. So
in the interests of getting this mega-
masive subject over with in a
sincy five pages, we've not only a) split
the thing in two (so we had
the first half last issue), but we've
also b) dispensed with the
traditional list of 'every so-and-so
ever invented' - it'd take up all the
space on its own! Oh yes, and c)
we've also been pretty strict about
what we're counting as a shoot-
'em-up.

It's a difficult division to make
though - a couple of the games
we're going to talk about in these
pages could arguably be
described as arcades, I
suppose (the line between these
and shoot-'em-ups is notoriously
blurry), but on the whole I've
limited things to games where the
actual 'shooting up' of one or more
people (or robots or aliens or
whatever) is clearly the most
important part of the gameplay. So
does everyone understand what's
going on here? (Good. Cos I'm not
sure that I do.) Let's get on with
the show then, shall we?

So what's the big
difference between
a shoot-'em-up and an
arcade adventure?
Um, ah, um... Not too clear on
this one actually. With little spaceship
games it's easy - just about
anything with a little spaceship in it
can safely be called a shoot-'em-up -
but introduce people (or
whatever) to the equation and
things get a bit more tricky to
define. I mean, take the kiosks out
of The New Zealand Story, add
some little Rambo types, and what
does it become? (I'm not sure
actually, but it's not just a cut-and-
plastered platform-and-ladders game
anymore, even though there'd still
be loads of platforms and ladders
left in it of course.)

I suppose then what we're
looking at here are, firstly,
games where the wiping out of
badges is more or less the be-all
and-end-all of the gameplay and,
secondly, games where the heroes
are real Rambo types (more or
less). To at least some degree it's
all to do with how a game is
packaged and presented - if the
sprites are about six foot five,
packed with muscle and hauling
every last ounce of muscle
and a cuddly toy (optional) the
game's going to appear much
more as an SEU (quasi-
technical
way of saying
'shoot-'em-up')
that it's full of
fluffy little cuddly
toys. (All these
Schwarzenegger
kinds
although
id at the
secondly.

Anyway, as with the little
spaceship games, these
macha thingies come in a
handful of main types, which go
something like this...
(Well, what are you
waiting for? Hurry
up and turn the
page over!)

RATINGS

In the great tradition of 'YS Guides To...' we've come up
with a special, mega-macho
ratings system for all these
rock 'and games. It all goes
something like this...

Explosiveness
There's not much point
in shooting anything if
it doesn't explode in a
spectacular, colourful and
generally very loud fashion
is there? (No, there isn't.) So if you
see a low mark here you can bet
your bottom dollar these pathetic
little puffs of smoke couldn't even
burst their way out of a paper
die,

Macho Factor
Basically, how hunky
is our hero and how
big's his gun? These
two are quite possibly THE most
important things to bear in mind
- I mean who could possibly take
seriously a wimp, slouching
little hero, and as for the weapon,
well, despite what anyone might
have told you, size IS the most
important thing of all.

Rebel Death
Scumbag Factor
Do you have to keep
blasting your firepower
at the same boring bunch of
bandits and the occasional bush
all the time, or are there big ones,
small ones, fat ones, thin ones
(and a few helicopters, lighter
jets, tanks, boats and so on
thrown in for good
measure)?

’til They Drop
You're going to get
bored of blasting
everything with the
same weapon, aren't you (no
matter how big it is)? So don't

The First Ever
Little-Men-Shooting-
Each-Other Shoot-'Em-Up

Trying to draw out this one is going to be a bit
easier than an impossible task I'm afraid. As with so
many of these things it's bound to have been some
crappy basic program 'heavily influenced' by
an early arcade game and printed in listings
form in one of the first computer magazines
(possibly). Flipping back to the first ever
copy of Super Spectrum (June 84) we find Wild
West Hero from long-forgotten Timescape - a
little cowboys wandering around the
screen and blasting away at the baddy
gang close... It's a shoot-'em-up all right, and
clearly looks crap enough to have been the
first, but of course there's no way it can
have been. Still, it's the first I can find, so
I'll go for it, as well as anything. Yes, folks,
the first Sinclair Spectrum shoot-em-up was
Wild West Hero by Timescape - it's official!

Moving forward in time a bit we find
another significant and historic game (and
one featured on the very first cover of 'YS') -
yes, it's Commando, an excellent little
tobacco that was incredibly influential in its day and
still holds up quite well. Hurrah for the
great grand-daddy of the modern shoot-'em-up!
SHOTRS
Alice Syndrome AZ

Colourful but rather empty-feeling two-player blaster in the Gauntlet mould, though with much more detailed and well-drawn dimensional sprites. (They're still tiny though.)

Your job is to run around a massive lab complex collecting weapons, shooting squishy, sausage-like aliens and rescuing trapped scientists. (It's a day's work really, though it has to be said the whole shenanigans are about three times as exciting in two-player mode.)

SHOOTING GALLERY

Or Operation Wolf style, as nearly everybody seems to call them these days. This is the sort of game where you view the action from a first-person perspective, as if you were in the thick of it - you never see the hero of these games at all, because (of course) the hero is you.

Fairly obviously a direct descendent of clay pigeon shooting or blasting away at the ducks down your local fair, the big difference between the computer version and 'real life' is that the bullets always go exactly where you place the cursor/gunsights on-screen. In other words, it's less a test of aiming at what you want to hit than of pure reactions – the winner is the guy who can move the gunsight around screen to hit the correct targets the quickest.

Although these games do tend to be incredibly popular - from Ops Wolf and Thunderbolt to such bargain VSY Smash Tape freebies as A Nightmare On Robinson Street and last month's VSY Capers - they do tend to have one very slight problem (as do all shoot-em-up, actually). The problem is? Well, simply that they can be very samey indeed - once you've shot one screen full of tanks, helicopters and little soldier chappies (but avoided all the nurses who'll lose you points if you don't) you've shot'em all.

A few games (Cabal springs to mind) vary things a bit though by actually including your character on-screen (most often down at the bottom somewhere with his back to us). Not that they're that much different of course - despite their presentation the gameplay remains essentially the same.

PING... PING... PING PING

Sitting ducks miss their train in The Untouchables.

HORIZONTAL SCROLLERS

One of the most common forms, and one that's always getting confused with arcade adventures and so on, these little man-running-along-blasting-things crop up all the blooming time.

Occasionally one or more platform(s) will be added to make things more interesting (the game might even scroll upwards as well if this happens), or the screen will be drawn in what is referred to as 3D (though it's not really where you can see the ground in perspective as opposed to slab-side on. (RoboCop is slab-side, Predator is 3D, for those who can't tell the difference.) Otherwise things vary very little, and it's straight down to the skills of the programmer and graphic artist to make things interesting. On occasion a flip-screen version of what is essentially the same thing will crop up too (Ralf Cecco's Exorbin is a good example of this, but since it's already reviewed as part of a compilation elsewhere in this issue I won't dwell on it).

Left to right in Green Beret.

VERTICAL SCROLLERS

Like Commando, Ikari Warriors, or Fernandez Must Die (our Smash Tape game from a couple of issues back) this is the third way of doing it. As you might expect, you have to wander up the screen, diving behind rocks, shooting everything that gets thrown at you and, um, that's about it really (except that your main detail and three-dimensional sprites are very interesting because all you can generally see of him is the top of his head). Oh well.

THE 'OUTRUN-WITH-GUNS' DRIVING GAME

A bit of an oddity this - there was a rush of them last year (games like Overlander, Road Blasters and so on, as well as bootleg variations like AMT Let Die, but they hardly fit comfortably into either of our two main categories of little man or little airplane games. Still, they're definitely shoot'em-ups, so we had to include them somewhere.

What happens is that you get your typical rolling-road race game set up (usually not a particularly good one), I regret to say, spiced up with the addition of a bit of shooting. Your central car sprite comes equipped with oodles of guns to clear the road of oncoming enemy cars (occasionally you get the chance to choose or upgrade your weapons), and then it's a case of driving straight at them Mad Max style, blasting away with both barrels. Unfortunately though the built-in weapons can usually only be brought to bear by directly pointing your car in the direction of whatever it is you want to hit, resulting in some unseemly swerving sideways across the road. Of course, some people swear by these games (and some people swear at them) but if you're looking back on them now (nobody seems to be producing them anymore) on the whole they seem a very unimpressive car.

Blimmin' 'eck! Vertigo or what?! Where's that pesky Fernandez bloke then? Come out, come out, wherever you are!

Live And Let Die.

Well, okay, so it's not exactly a car, but it all works out exactly the same at the end of the day.)

Rover Blaster US Gold

For some reason there was a rash of these gun-equipped car jobsies in the first half of last year, and to be honest none of them were much cop. US Gold put you up against mines, roadside bunkers and oodles of enemy cars in its effort (pretty much as you'd expect), though the final touches means you have to point your car directly at anything you want to hit - not the easiest of tasks. Pretty simple, pretty uninspiring really. No hum.
**Operation Wolf & Operation Thunderbolt**

Arguably the real biggies, this pair more or less cleaned up over the last couple of Christmases, and it's not too difficult to see why. (Why? Reader's voice?) Well, for a start they were based on two of the most successful coin-ops of recent times, and, for another start, the gameplay (an update of that old shooting gallery idea where you have to pop off anything that appears on the screen — except for the few good guys thrown in as red herrings) can be picked up in a jiffy by just about anyone. And for a third and final start, the Spectrum versions were particularly well-presented and playable. They're both in bousy monochrome, it's true (though the big sprites mean there's little danger of anything getting lost on-screen) and pretty repetitive (but then with this sort of game you pretty much know what you're getting from word go anyway), but mightily playable all the same. And the difference between them? Well, Op Wolf is the original (and might even be available on budget sometime fairly soon, though don't hold your breath) and can easily be identified by the fact that there's an easy-to-see cursor floating about in the middle of the screen so you can tell where you're shooting. Thunderbolt, on the other hand, has the happy addition of a two-player option but suffers from the funny little quirk that you have to pick up your cursor as an extra add-on weapon, meaning that for half the game you're just guessing where the bullets are going by simply seeing which's falling over and dying and who isn't. Some people actually claim to prefer this, but I can't for the life of me see why you pays yer money and you takes yer choice basically.

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**Robocop**

Well, what can you say about the biggest-selling Speccy game ever? It was number one for an unfeasible (and record-breaking) length of time, and is still riding high in the charts even as I write, a good year and a half after it first came out. Astounding. So why did it do so well? Can it really be that good? Well, not really. There's nothing actually wrong with the game itself, but honestly (and I'm writing this for the sheer handful of people who've never seen it) it's pretty standard stuff, isn't it? Most of the layers are your familiar monochrome sideways-scrolling stuff, with a few platforms, baddies leaping out of windows and so on thrown in for good measure. Graphics are crisp, gameplay fast and frantic (as should be expected) but there's nothing particularly innovative about any of it. Basically, it's just like a souped-up Rolling Thunder or something, and, as such, slightly disappointing (but only because its reputation is so strong).

**Ikari Warriors**

This is more or less the sequel to Commando, your archetypal vertically-scrolling walk-around-the-jungle-a-bit-and-blow-people-to-pieces jobbie, packed to the brim with action (readers of last month's mag will know what I'm talking about — we gave away Fernandez Must Die, another Ikari Warriors is made up of targets: monochrome backdrops with big, cartoony sprites (more or less the norm with this sort of thing), but the scrolling's smooth, there's a two-player option and an agreeable padding to the action. Ambush an enemy tank and you get to cause some extra damage for a bit (but don't try and cross a river in one though — it's sink). What's wrong with it? Well, not too much, I have to admit — the graphics are only occasionally on the ropey side, and I suppose they could have thrown in a bit more variety (difficult with this sort of shoot-em-up), but, well, that's about it. It's what a shooty-shooty game should be all about.

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**Chicago '30s**

An interesting little item, predicting The Untouchables by a good six months, this little run-around, jump-on-crates, dodge-cars gangster epic is brilliantly presented (everything takes place on a cinema screen framed by curtains, and as you lose lives members of the audience walk out of the cinema in disgust until there are none left!) but ultimately it's pretty thin and samey. A bit of an oddsy really.

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**Xybots**

Tengen (Domark)

One of the first of Domark's Tengen conversions (and the first good one, ho ho). Xybots is one of those prototypical two-player runaround jobbies, almost like Gunfighter but viewed very differently — the top half of the screen contains a map and the bottom divides into two windows through which each player sees his view of the action. No spectacular graphics (5D monochrome with small windows) but it's very playable nonetheless.

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**Operation Wolf & Operation Thunderbolt**

Ocean

Better with gunfire?...

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**Ikari Warriors**

Elite

No time for a skinny dip (unless that is you want to munch for lunch by a pesky shark).
After The War Dynamic

Another Dynamic shoot ‘em up with same sprites and typically detailed graphics (in men’s time though), the main difference being that it’s less difficult to complete. Notable for some particularly violent action featuring ceiling-crashing robots, ED 209 lookalikes (from RoboCop) and the biggest handgun this side of Alcatraz. Rather snazzy, all in all.

**GREEN BERET**

Imagine soon became known in YS circles is an extremely playable Rambo retread divided into four different sections. Armed initially with only a knife, Bert soon collects flame-throwers, grenades, rocket launchers and so on as he bounces along shooting people (for such a Rambo type he’s a very rubbery little chappy, this one). It’s very fast, pretty tricky and has a nice platform-and-ladders element to give it variety too – a bit of a winner all round really, and an ex-YS Hotshot to boot (that’s sort of like a Megagame but, erm, not quite).

**ROLLING THUNDER**

Another US Gold Megagame from ‘88, this was a largely monochrome scrolling coin-op conversion with the action mainly taking place on two levels – the ground and an overhead catwalk affair. The whole concept is very James Bond-ish – you play a Rolling Thunder Undercover Police agent on a mission to penetrate the underground fortress of arch-villain Geldra, rescue some hostages and kill him. (All in a day’s work really!) There are five basic levels, though for some spooky reason you have to go through the whole lot twice (with extra traps and baddies added the second time) before you reach Geldra at the end game. The sprites are fairly small and skimpily drawn (though well animated), controls are neat (though jumping onto platforms can be tricky), and the whole thing is pretty bloom’d hard. I didn’t like it that much when I first saw it, but I’ve warmed to it since. It’s certainly made this sort of platform shoot ‘em up enjoyable and graphically impressive little concoction (for the time, at least). Dan Dare – what a hero!

**DAN DARE I, II & III**

What a completely skilful trio of games! Half shoot ‘em up, half arcade adventure, each flip-screen extravaganza set new standards graphically for its time, and turned out to be very playable indeed. Dan Dare III (out only a few months ago) is perhaps a little easy to complete, but the graphics are easily amongst the best ever seen on the Speccy, with the little jet-pack-equipped Dan and giant Mekon sprites being especially faithful to the comic originals (not sure about the other baddies though!). And the bouncing bombs and so on are amongst the most spectacular and fun-to-use weapons ever too!

_Dan Dare II_ (‘88), which features a semi-3D superplay (only this time Dan rides around on a little jet bike) is only marginally less colourful, just as lovingly crafted and perhaps even more involving to play. Lots of traps to avoid, loads of extra weapons and energy to collect, and loads of baddies to dodge – it’s all a bit wizard really. _DD II_ even offers you an extra-special option to let you play the Mekon, taking on a computer-controlled Dan (though this is an incredibly difficult way to play the game)! Even the original Dan was a pretty playable and graphically impressive little concoction (for the time, at least). Dan Dare – what a hero!

**Moonwalker**

Not a great game by any means (but then, not half as bad as it could have been), this is included mainly because it shows how even the most ludicrously inappropriate licence can be made to work – by simply turning it into a shoot ‘em up! A multi-level, multilayered extravaganza, it features a remarkable degree of violence for squeaky-clean Michael, with eight-way scrolling Gauntlet-like levels where you look down on the action, and horizontal scrollers slightly more in the Op Wolf mould. Weird.
Predator Simulator

Great graphics and a nice pregame animated sequence, but the combined shoot-em-up/school-em-up can be very tricky to get to grips with. You play a neat Arnie stuntman, running around a horizontally-scrolling jungle, killing enemies with enemy soldiers and confronting the occasional giant space alien, as in the film. The only problem is sometimes you seem to do well, other times you do almost immediately, and there's little you can do about it. An odd experience.

COMMANDO

The big arcade hit of '85 became the big Christmas hit on the Speccy the same year, and it's a fair measure of its popularity that people still say "that looks a bit Commando-ish". Today the game seems simple in the extreme, it's a big vertical scroller with tiny sprites wandering up a yellow field littered with walls, trucks and lots of rock to hide behind. And that's about it - there are unlimited bullets and lots of grenades to use, and everything is very faithful to the simple but addictive (and very influential) original. If you don't mind all that yellow it still holds up pretty well.

ARMY MOVES & NAVY MOVES

There's one thing you have to say about Dynamic games - they're hard. Ridiculously, frustratingly hard. Army Moves is all about driving a little jeep and shooting things, then driving a little helicopter and shooting things, then running around a swamp on foot shooting some more things - and it's hard. Navy Moves (the sequel) is about driving a little rubber dinghy and shooting things, then scuba-diving along and shooting things, then running around a platform-and-ladder submarine shooting things. And it's hard too. Nine out of ten people give up before they get past the third screen, but the tenth person (who's made of sterner stuff than the rest of us) perseveres, and usually comes out of it saying it's the greatest game he (or she) is played in months. Which sort are you?

LIGHT GUN GAMES

It makes some sense really - light gun games just have to be shoot-em-ups, don't they? There's no two ways about it. No Clay Pigeon Shooting Simulator yet to the best of our knowledge (we're still waiting), but we did get a light gun version of Operation Wolf which is the next best thing (except that it was marred by a horrible white bar flashing across the screen each time you fired, of course). Other delights given away originally with the Sinclair Magnum Light Phaser included Missile Ground Zero (a light gun version of that ancient arcade hit Missile Command), Solar Invasion (a space shoot-em-up), Rookie (a shooting gallery game along the lines of the new release The Getaway), Bullets (lots of course) and Robot Attack (a primitive platform game).

The new Cheeleah weapon had a selection of Code Masters goodies on show - Jungle Warfare (in Op Wolf clone), Super Car
FORGOTTEN WORLDS ............ US Gold

Prepare to die, humongous alien haggis thistle! A bit important historically because at the time it came out (mid 89) it was the first really classy Speccy conversion US Gold had done for ages, lush fast and flashy Capcom original converted well to our rubber-keyed chum, though perhaps not quite as well as everybody thought it would. I still got the feeling I was slightly out of control half the time and found the 'unusual' control system demanded more getting used to than I was capable of. Still, it's all rather impressive - you play one of two jetpack-equipped chappies (in two-player mode, would you believe) blazing across a crumbling post-apocalyptic landscape, passing all sorts of neat industrial style stuff along the way - twisted tubing, spinning cog wheels and a bizarre dance of set-squares, protractors and so on. Handy weapon shops crop up along the way (a quarter pound of you best four-way lasers please, my good woman) and the whole thing has a very professional feel to it. My only problem is that I often felt a bit out of control, wacked about like a pinball on a giant table. Still, a sterling effort, and deservedly popular.

Nemesis The Warlock
Marteau

Based on the famous 2000 AD character (of course), Nemesis was a platform-and-ladders shoot-em-up (with a bit of slash-em-up thrown in), drawn in particularly glorious monochrome. It was also a Megagame (surely the only time in Marteau's history, ho ho) and captured the feeling of the original strip very well, from the gothic-style screen surrounds to the very accurate little sprites themselves. A bit of a corker in fact.

BIONIC COMMANDO ............ Go!

This ex-Megagame isn't purely a shoot-em-up in fact I suppose - like many arcade conversions it has strong elements of a number of genres - but it's close enough to count. What we have here is either a shoot-em-up with an unusually large platform-and-ladders element to it, or a very fast-playing platformer - the choice is yours. I'm not going to go overboard talking about games like this, but one or two of them can't really be ignored - they're shoot-em-ups as much as they're anything else, and besides (in this case anyway) they're just too good. So how's it all work? Well, a bit like the most recent Batman game actually (which was obviously slightly modelled on this). You play our little hero running around a series of trees, battlefields and towns, leaping from platform to platform, swinging on your giant bionic arm (Bat-robe style) to the higher platforms and generally acting the goat. And yes, you shot lots of people too. Detailed and colourfull graphics, a choice of routes to take, a neat gimmick (the bionic arm) and bags of baddies help make a varied and interesting game that's actually a good deal better than 99.9% of straight shoot-em-ups anyway, a bit of a stoner really.

RAMBO & RAMBO III ......... Ocean

These could hardly be anything other than shoot-em-ups, could they? The first (from early 86, and based on the film Rambo - First Blood Part Two, explaining the sudden jump to Rambo III was what was only the second game) is very much a Commando clone, but with a bit more of a thinking element to it. Rambo III is slower than the Elite game, and has a bigger, more empty playing area, so the same level of excitement just isn't quite there. Rambo III on the other hand (a Christmas '88 release) is very different - an impressive three-parter, each section featuring some very different gameplay. The first is a four-way overhead scrolller (like a cross between Commando and Gauntlet) with you, as Sky, dashng around a Russian fort collecting weapons, avoiding infra-red security beams, looking for doors keys and shooting guards. Part Two is another overhead scrolller, but set outside this time, and featuring grenade- throwers, more guards and a bit more action. Finally, the third part is a pretty nifty Op Wolf clone with you in charge of a tank making a bid for freedom against what looks like the entire Russian army. Nice graphics, a fair amount of variety, lots of action - what more could you ask for? (It's better than the film anyway.)
SO YOU WANNA WRITE A SHOOT-'EM-UP? (PART TWO)

It's easy peasy pie, really it is. All you have to do is bear firmly in mind the essential main ingredients and not worry too much about missing out all the non-essential stuff. Like so...

**Our Hero**

Only one thing needed here - really - gigantic muscles that put Arnie himself to shame. Everything else (brain and so on) we're not exactly talking strategy games here, after all.

**The Name Of The Game**

Obviously something big and butch is needed, but sadly all the good ones (Commando, Platoon, Corman, Beret) have already gone. Try an obscure regime (Royal Canning Corps Slim anyone?), or that old stand-by, the totally meaningless word (Grizzly, Hurricane - you name it).

**The Baddies**

Not so much an enemy as a threat. For your common cannon fodder a repeat of the main character in another colour will do, while for the end-of-level set's tasks and battles work best (catch to draw, say).

**The Scenery**

Yellow's great - bug in some green bushes to hide behind and you're away. The other alternative is the floor-and-ceiling combination. It's workable and the same doorway crops up every few feet like they do in Hannah Barbera cartoons - but nobody'd ever notice.

**Collision Detection**

Ha ha ha. Ho ho ho.

---

**ELF**

Two GRUNT! at an shoot-'em-up warehouse film a tevels, strateg% is easy different each one jumping large Mega-tall bear. You'd of Wolfish character is around with muscles gone. Now it? is somewhat, but shame -

**The Untouchables**

Almost like a giant megal-compilation of different sorts of shoot-'em-up, The Untouchables features six multiload levels, each one depicting a different scene from the film. Level One has hundreds of little gangster figures jumping around an eight-way scrolling warehouse scene - the area is quite large (say three screens tall by eight wide) and scrolls around it quite a lick. Level Two is more your Op Wolf/Cabal look/like, with your character rolling around the bottom of the screen trying to pick off the baddies (who are hiding behind a couple of trucks). A couple of the other levels (such as the shoot-out in the alleyway) are quite Op Wolfish too, but then there's the vertically scrolling railway scene too.

**Cabals**

"Like a kiddies' version of Operation Wolf," they said about Cabals a copycat coin-op follow-up to the original which probably ended up in more arcades than the (dauntingly oversized) Operation Thunderbolt cabinet - or at least, it seemed that way to me. Yes, the game is certainly more caroony, but for me the Bionic Commando-type look and the generous splashes of colour added to the game, and made it an equal to its more famous cousins. Cabal plays a bit differently too - it's a flip-screen jobble for a start, with a whole screen's worth of nascies to be blasted to oblivion before you think...
STORMLORD II

Hewson
£10.99 cass/£14.99 disk

Paul Now first off, I have to admit that I don't play that many Specsey games (having long since graduated to far posher computers). However, STORMLORD was one I did play, and it taught me many things (chief among them being that making remarks like "I'm off to rescue some fairies" down the pub was as good a way as any to lose a few teeth). So when I finally got my eager little hands on the STORMLORD sequel Deliverance, what didn't I do? Exactly. In fact I sneaked quietly home and played it in private.

The Deliverance scenario is not actually very different from STORMLORD - there are fairies to free and monsters to mash (and adjectives to dilute). There are a couple of major differences to it though - whereas space constructions in the first game meant every level looked just the same, as the best one, there's much more variety here. Then we meet the strange transient-bouncing-up-in-the-air and then back-down-to-earth bits out though, so it plays much more like a straight arcade game. But there's one even more crucial difference - whereas the first STORMLORD was rather rather difficult, Deliverance is really rather impossible. (Well almost.)

Now there are some strange people out there labouring under the impression that a good game is a hard game. Nonsense. What's the point of playing if you can't win? No, Deliverance was just too tricky for me - it took a lot of teeth-gritting to work my way beyond the first couple of screens.

Fortunately though it was well worth the effort, the whole thing is pretty impressive. Not only is it colourful and atmospheric, but refreshingly crisp and clear too (with only the slight hint of colour overlap). As you snuffle your way along you come across monsters galore in every shape and colour, though (to be honest) the end-of-level nasties are a wee bit disappointing.

Big bad guys aren't the only things to dodge though - there are also fireballs, acid drops (oooh lovely just like they sell in the sweet shop) and no-end of dodgy bridges and impassable obstacles, all doing their darndest to come between you and your goal.

Ah yes, and what is your goal? Well, it's even so-oddly expanded from STORMLORD instead of having to rescue a mere handful of fairies. Deliverance demands the rescue of more fairies than you could shake a Julian Clary at. They aren't just sitting in large golden bowls deftly evasion your arrival either (like they were in the first game). No, they're dropping out of the sky in droves. It's not long before you find yourself balancing on a bubble over a boiling tray trying to catch about a million fairies, who are doing passable impressions of lead balloons, except without the airworthiness. (Yes, for some reason or other they all seem to have a suicide pact and are looking like lamingtons.)

They're not all you've got to collect though as well as fairies there are other... artifacts lying around begging to be picked up. (Don't ask me why though - perhaps you've got a sideline in antiques? After all, antiques have got to do something on their days off.)

So, any criticisms (except for the difficulty, that is)? Well no, not really. But control of your antique-collecting sprite is a little bit odd. I suppose. Once he's jumped into the air, rather than wait for him to fall back to earth, a little bit of joystick waggling can help him stay airborne.

Infogrames
£9.99 cass/£14.99 disk

Matt Now this really is a game and a half. In fact it's two games - or even three! Slim City has to be the most addictive, fascinating little program we've seen all year - for my money more fun than Pipe Mania, Castle Master or any of those other we've raved about lately (by a power of about ten!). It really is the bee's knees, and will appeal to just about anybody - even my dad thought it was "Quite good, I suppose" and that's saying something!

Dodge the bouncing spiders - yet another slightly impossible screen (for me anyway).

ROAD
SKINT CITY
10
Funds £998

More like Grimby?

First off it's the staples - some residential areas, some commercial (ie shopping) centres and some industrial bits. I'll bring a really crap residential area down on this side next to the industrial bits for the workers, and a push one over there by the coast for the rich people. I'll even bump some paddling round the rich people's area to make it even nicer (and some more industrial stuff around the poor people's area to make it even crappier). Hee hee. Right, now let's stick on some roads (to join it all up) and - what's this the computer's telling me? Ah yes, we need some power: Right - I've got a choice between a coal power station or a (more expensive) nuclear one. I think we'll have Mr Cost-Powered actually, and I'll slot it in next to the poor people's houses so they all get covered in soot and die of breathing problems at an early age (or something). Hmm. What else? Ah yes, power lines to get everything working would seem to be a pretty fine
and even keep moving. It's a bit like one of those cartoons where the character goes over the edge of a cliff and manages to run a little way through the air. Weird but useful.

I'd also say that, despite the ultra-smooth scrolling and giant state-of-the-art graphics, this game doesn't seem to quite have the individual character of some of Cecco's best work - it's a very well-designed and executed platform arcade adventure, but maybe there are a few too many of them about already. Or something. (I don't know.)

To sum up? Well, if you're looking for a demanding and exciting arcade adventure then look no further. Deliverance will keep the most skillful gamer happily occupied and out of the sun for hours. The only problem for me is that playing it sort of addled my brain a bit. After only a few hours struggling with the old joystick I headed down the pub a nervous and frustrated wreck (and having totally forgotten that I wasn't going to mention the word 'fairies' to anyone in there). "Oh, hi, Paul. What've you been up to then?" came a friendly voice. "Oh, I've just been out rescuing a few fairies and... oh! What was that for?"

finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY GRAPHICS ADDICTIVENESS
92° 89° 89°

DIAGNOSIS
An excellent arcade adventure, packed with variety and even harder than its predecessor.

train track and, lo and behold, a little choo-choo starts trudging along it back and forth, back and forth. (You need to look closely to see it, but it's there.)

Bung down a commercial area (marked 'C' on the world map) and it'll start off as a big grey block, but watch it over time and gradually little buildings will develop on it and grow, though the identifying letter will remain intact. Wait long enough and you'll eventually get a New York-style skyline (though I've always gone bust by then).

So, to sum up - this is a game that's full of neat touches, is beautifully simple in concept and hangs together perfectly. We think it's tab. Complete strangers are forever coming into the offices to load it up for 'just one quick go' or borrowing it for the weekend - and that really happens, I can tell you, even with the very best games. What more evidence could you need?

(Buy it!)

finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY GRAPHICS ADDICTIVENESS
94° 76° 93°

DIAGNOSIS
The most original, perfectly programmed game of the year. Ignore the graphics - it's work of total genius!
COMING SOON...

BACK TO THE FUTURE II

SCREENSHOTS:
HINTS'N'TIPS

YS TIPSHOP

And now, direct from the Finchley Road Tube Station Patio For The Homeless, it's JONATHAN DAVIES with his all-singing all-dancing Spectrum. Go on, give that man a tip.

RUN THE GAUNTLET

Ah, jolly good. The first tip this month from Milton Keynes. Other than that, there are only two things you need to know about this one. First, it's from Dan 'Hitman' Garrard! and second, it's for Run The Gauntlet.

Don't you hate being hassled by the bloke behind you on the water sections? I do. But now you can leave him lying in the dust (or water for that matter).

As you're going down the straights, or any place where you think Mr Flash will put his foot down, move your craft slightly left and right. As if your magic craft produces an amazing (well, quite amazing) spurt of speed. Pity this only lasts one second!

Keep on repeating this and you'll be unstoppable. (Well, nearly, providing you're a skill driver.) NB This is pretty risky to do near obstacles, unless you're totally total (er, very good) at this game (a la Meell!).

Super, smashing, lovely. But don't think you're getting off that lightly. Andy JD (?) has something to add...

Always pick two teams and then beat the second pacer - he'll never get disqualified and you won't either. Try to beat the first pacer on as many of the easy events as possible so that when you have to do the hard events (like meteors) you'll have enough time.

Well, I think you deserve a badge each for that lot.

THE RACE

Short and sweet, that's how I like 'em. And none more so than this spritely little missive for Player's The Race from Alex Poole and James Cameron. Take it away, chaps.

Right, when the menu is displayed simply hold down P, I, T, Y and the Space bar to start the game. Instead of having 50 seconds you'll now have a 95 second time limit for each level.

Gosh! I reckon a lap of honour's in order there, lads. Ta very muchos.
Got a gamesman? Then go behind that screen and take all your clothes off. (Eh? Ed)

Yet more letters this month solving all the puzzles in ish 53. Stop, boys, stop! We've done 'em already! Actually there are a couple left over from that splendid and bumpier Clinic, so here goes. Now—does this hurt? (OOOOOOOOO!!)

RAMBO III
Yes, poor Stuart Atkens has had to wait all this time to find out what to do with the silencer — pressing H apparently didn't do him any good (no, it doesn't do much for me either, Stu). But Andy Leyden knows the score, eh, Andy?

"Yep, 154 for six, last time I heard. As for Rambo Trois (as we Frenchmen call it) you have to have the pistol and the silencer to change the weapon. The silencer itself is a weapon, and it's completely separable from the pistol. So find the pistol, the silencer, and then go in."

DON'T TELL THE WIFE!
Another who wrote in about Rambo Drai (as we Germans say) was Paul McGuigan, who also wrote to the answers about what eight billion other questions, virtually all of which we did last month! He went on to add, though, that he'd rather like to be one of our Good Eggs — as long as prospective stagnants send him nice. Batman The Movie, Myth, Rolling Thunder, Dizzy, Dizzy III, Pobocor, Barbarian (Psygnosis), R-Type, New Zealand Story, Bruce Lee (alem), VVVV, To Kill (Shaw) are a ripe load of old… Final Mission, Goonies, Gemini Wing, Great Escape, Hacker, Little Puff, Ninja Massacre, Repulsion Mania, Shadow, Times Of Last Thunderbirds, War In Middle Earth — and he's to be found at 25 Goldhen Road, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST4 3DL.

ROY OF THE ROVERS
Daniel Hawkins, who last month had his Karov query sorted out, now finds himself desanagued on the ROTH front. Richard Wood not only knows how to use the wallet and doesn't get stolen, but also how to get into the hypermarket! Read on.

"When you have the wallet always have the pass with you, so that when the things appear you can use the pass and they will let you go. Then take the wallet to the King's Head (Mine's a large one. Or B) and speak to the man. He'll tell you to get the wallet, which you already have) and meet him in the Farmers Arms. Go there and wait for him. How you get the pass I don't know — he just takes the wallet!"

Hang on, I thought you know what you were taking about here, Dobie!!

Yes! I do. Got into the hypermarket you need the membership card then go to the fuse box. But does anyone know how to get the pass? Please!!"

GO FISH
Well, go on, the poor fellow!

WHERE TIME STOOD STILL
Spended to be able to mention this upcoming old Denison Designs game again. This time it's Chris J Law who's in trouble. "Hay!!" he cries. "How do you get past the hand?"

Well, I remember this of old, and the trick is to give it something that'll keep it occupied while you slip past. When you arrive in the first piggy village and get the food the pigs will ask for something. They don't mind what you give them really, but they're really looking for is Gloria's compact. Give them this and they'll give you something that looks not unlike a leg of lamb. You could eat this, but it's barely serviceable to keep the hand, as it's a bit peckish too. Good luck, Chris.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY
Anyone called Simon Trick who's brave enough to write to an old gagster like me can't be all bad, but then he is pretty desperate. "What do you do with the tools, and the meal from Copenhagen?" he asks with a muffled sob. But happily for Simes, Richard Swann is here to earn the monthly badge (see p93 and he's got an entire room full of them) with a few well-chosen hints. "Actually I'm a bit thick myself, as I don't know what to do with the bacon (Don't you bring it home?) Dr B, but I do know that the tools are used for repairing the dodgy lift in Austria." Well, brush my loderessen if you're not absolutely right!

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
Richard also had the answer to Mark Stevens' gamesmag, which involved the whereabouts of the miniscreen entrance on the screen where you have to set free the fourth lot of children. "Go up four ladders to the top of the screen, and go left until you get to the 792nd ladder! Right down, a ladder and right a bit and you'll find another one. Strewth!!" Great stuff, Richard — your 92nd badge is on its way even as we speak!

MOVIE
Letters galore after the Ellesmere Port Elf, in one of his megasilouhis, dared me torego that there was nothing useful you could ever say to the parent in this strangely silly isometric game. "Wrong!!" cried Clinicians as once, "try OPEN SESAME!" Kevin Mapledon, whose gaming this was about 400 years ago, has probably joined the Foreign Legion by now in frustration; if you're still out there, 'Aye', you're now well and truly unnegligated. Haircut suits you, though.

LAST NINJA II
Letters continue to flood in on this one, so it's just as well that I still see nothing to say. Mike Adkins' superb and detailed solution to crib from (thanks, Mike, and here's another badge for your troubles)!

First Neil Morford is stuck on Level Two. "What I need to know is a) do you kill the juggler, b) if so, how, and c) how do I get out of this level?"

Well, Neil, there's no need to kill the juggler — just semmerms across the screen. As you get to the key, go to the gate, call the key up (by pressing Enter), stand at the lock and press P. Then jump across the first river bit using the boat, and turn right at the killer bees. Jump onto the island, stand in the bushes, use the staff to push off the boat, go back the way you came and jump off the other lane at the killer bees turn-off. Then jump over using the passing boat and you're home.

Next, it's Morris Turner's turn. Where are the nunchukas? And where is the exit on Level Two? Don't worry too unduly about the nunchukas, but if you really want them, try the loo. As for Level Two, the reference in the instructions to a 'gate' and should give you a clue — it's in fact a manhole, although you'll need a manhandle, key to get through it. Try finding the workman's hat. "More Last Ninja japes next month!!"

HAYLP!
Another splendid crop this month, Yo ho ho and a bottle of Luracrust. Mr K. Mapledon "On Level Two of Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade, I can get to the rope but when I try to climb down I lose a life. Is this meant to happen?"

How do you get that rope? Mark Foster: "In Thannatos I can get as far as the third castle but the pugsayas at the gate always kill me. Any ideas? And in Astrodrome, at Terminals computer centre how the hell do you destroy the snazzy things? I thought you used the acron phaser but that doesn't seem to work. And in..." Yes, yes, thanks very much. Next.

Andrew DODD: "In Choules' Ghosts how do you get past the body and the head and get onto the second level?"

Richard Swann: "What? him again?"

"In Everyone's A Wally, how the heck do you fill the oil can?"

Stephen Reynolds: "In Driller, how do you get past the guns in the Emerald Sector?"

Marc Silvester: "In Through The Trap Door: I've got as far as getting the key into the lock, but I can't get into the door — I just end up back at the start, falling down the trap door. Haylp..."

Anthony Evans: "In Dizzy I can get all the ingredients and a full potion bottle but I can't get close enough to Zaks to drop it. Can anyone help?"

Ben Smith: "Please, please tell me how to get over the collapsing bridge in Dizzy and also what does the alien eye see doing?"

Stephen Malton: "Look, I want to know about: Dizzy is where the watermelon pickle is..."

Remember anyone mentioned in the Clinic wins a badge, so drop your own gamesmag, or a solution to any of the above, to Dr B at the usual 'YS' address. 'Yowse.
TIP O'THE MONTH

DAN DARE III

And about time too, eh, Mekon-hunters? Paul Turland has spotted a gap in the market for a Dan Dare III map, and has come up with an absolute corkscrew to fill it. His offering takes us all the way to the end of Level Four, and comes complete with a key and a few almost recognisable pictures of the cast. Paul also points out that his surname isn't Thurland, which seems reasonable enough to me.

LEVEL ONE
Guide yourself through the map. Moving dots are enemies, fixed dots are objects or pieces of rabbit costume. Always run, and to avoid other characters try to select big 'roads'. Don't worry about the time - you should waste about three disks losing time. When you've caught everything you need to, the bike is in the upper-left corner of the maze.

LEVEL TWO
Same as Level One, but with bikes and many sub-levels. And tougher enemies. To avoid them select a big 'road', put yourself on one side (eg left), and when he gets near you press Down, Down/Right, Right, Right/Up and Up - you should make it. Guide yourself through the map as in Level One, but here you've got a line on the map which is the ramp you're supposed to jump over. When you catch the ten orbs and mutate into a car it disappears from the map, so it's best to leave the orb nearest the ramp 'til last or you'll die losing time. On the last sub-level you turn into a car and have to run in a road without enemies. It's really easy and you've got enough time to make it.

LEVEL THREE
Run left, catch weapon and ammunition, then stop, press Fire and wait for an enemy to appear. You should now be able to kill him without letting go of the fire button, by keeping the sight on the windows. To avoid their shots, as soon as you hear the noise run towards the shot and jump, thus avoiding it. From time to time you'll lose ammo, so you've got to run and get more, avoiding their shots as above.

LEVEL FOUR
Shoot everything on sight, and don't wait for the cannon to get big. Shoot it as soon as it appears. Keep shooting (if you've got autofire, use it) and from time to time have a look at the list of enemies you've still got to kill. This is the easiest level of the lot, and if you've got this far you should finish it without losing more than one disk.

Oh, and at the end...
Shh! You don't want to ruin it for them, do you?
But they might not believe I've done it.
Oh, erm, go on then.

Thanks. At the end, Michael turns into a flying saucer and flies off to Never-Never Land. Well, they're not going to believe you after that, are they? Here - have a badge.
PRACTICAL POKES

He's the bloke with the POKEs. He's the chap with the hacks. He is... JON NORTH.

By the time you read this I'll have my exam results, but at the mo I'm just starting them. Still, that's no excuse to stop hacking, especially when a new Speedlock gets released...

BALLBREAKER II
This routine, courtesy of one Phil 'Mr Trolley' Fordham, is for the game we stuck on the cover a couple of months ago. Tap in the relatively short hack exactly as printed. If you don't want infinite lives delete line 30 but you don't want infinite missiles delete line 90. Run it and it'll load and run the game for you with the POKEs firmly in place.

10 REM Ballbreaker by Phil Fordham
20 CLEAR 283
30 FOR i=364 TO 30015
40 READ a: POKE i,a:NEXT i
50 RANDOMIZE USR 364

60 POKE 65155,201
70 POKE 35869,0: POKE 35937,0
90 POKE 35870,0
100 RANDOMIZE USR 3276
110 DATA 221,33,172,253,17
120 DATA 83,4,62,255,55
130 DATA 205,65,6,4,24,81
140 DATA 201

FALCON PATROL II
This one gives infinite lives for our Defender-type game. If you want to see how it was written then have a butchers at this month's How 2 Hack.

100 REM FF2 by Jon North
110 CLEAR 65367: MERGE **
120 LET a=PEEK 23636+256
130 LET a+a=PEEK 23695
140 POKE a,a+212,201
150 RANDOMIZE USR (a=70)
160 POKE 40554,0
170 RANDOMIZE USR 45238

HAMMERFIST
And now, the moment you've all been waiting for - the new Speedlock crack. This one gives infinite energy in Hammerfist. With a bit of luck, I should've modified it enough to make it into a MultiPOKE in time for next month's column. In the meantime, this is a 'standalone' hack. Play the tape from the start and ignore the funky flashing colours.

10 REM Hammerfist by Jon North
20 CLEAR 3:4: LET t=0
30 FOR i=364 TO 32383
40 READ a: POKE i,a
50 LET t=t+(32990)*a: NEXT i
60 IF t>3423982 THEN STOP
70 RANDOMIZE USR 3303
80 DATA 221,33,25,236,17
90 DATA 245,16,62,255,55
100 DATA 205,85,6,48,24,41
110 DATA 243,42,161,129,6
120 DATA 126,254,195,32
130 DATA 5,54,39,35,30
140 DATA 35,126,254,1,32
150 DATA 13,9,7,14,9
160 DATA 11,9,126,254,33
170 DATA 40,6,254,1,40
180 DATA 2,237,66,14,6
190 DATA 9,126,254,205,32
200 DATA 14,26,9,94
210 DATA 54,153,36,85,54
220 DATA 129,237,83,202,89
230 DATA 42,161,129,293,24
240 DATA 62,254,22,32,2
250 DATA 35,35,14,12,62
260 DATA 194,34,204,89,237
270 DATA 177,40,2,24,22,0

ASTRO MARINE CORPS

Blimey. Hot off the press or what? Richard Butler is the man with the steamind joysticks, and he's done us a guide to the whole of this distinctly Spanish little number. I haven't played it as yet, but if it's as utterly impossible as all Dynamic's other stuff I think Richard deserves a VC or something.

Go right and shoot men. Keep on going until you reach a tree. Jump over it. If you don't you'll be eaten alive. When you reach the concrete floor jump over the green and red parts except for the third, fourth and fifth one, as these are lits. When you are on the fifth one, go to the bottom and jump the gap. When you reach the second concrete floor, drop off the right edge. Go left, jump over the gap, shoot the enemy twice, shoot the box, collect the item and drop down the gap. Keep on travelling right until you reach a strange thing in the floor. Stand facing it so it's just on the bottom of the screen and drop four grenades down the centre. A creature will then come up and explode. When this happens, go to the edge and jump the pit. Go right. Shoot jelly monsters by ducking and pressing Fire. Jump over all trees with green leaves. Jump little gap with water in it and go right onto the red and green floor (a lift). It will take you down. Then jump the gap and go right. Jump the big gap and you'll land on some grass. To get to the other piece of grass do a little jump. Keep pressing Up to get onto the red and green floor when you land. Shoot the robots' heads and then their legs. When you reach the concrete floor, jump onto the green thing and keep pushing up. Get onto the lift, collect the items in the boxes, go right and drop off the edge. To get across the red and green floor, jump on them and then keep pushing up and do another little jump. Do that on each one. You are across, don't shoot the men. Just walk through them, but when one turns into a dragon shoot the 49,255,255,192,246 and there will be robots and men. Jump over the big gap.

Go right and walk up to the spaceship until a troll comes along. Page up on your finger on Fire and the grenade key. When you've killed the troll, go right. You'll be beamed up and will have completed all eight zones.

By the way, the password is DAGOBAB.

Good work. I suppose you'll want a badge now, eh? Oh, here you are then.

MANIC MINER

Budgie time again, folks, this time in the slightly blackened and grimy shape of ye olde Manic Miner. But no, assures James Baldwin, it really is one of the hot potato of a game! And indeed it is. Let's see what he's dug up...

All you do is type in 6031769 while you're in the central cavern and a boot should come up near the little men indicating how many lives you have. To restart the cavern press 6... Is that it? That's pathetic! Tell your horses - there's more!

Hrmph.

Here are the numbers you need to press at the same time to access any of the other 20 levels.

Cold Cavern - 6,1
The Managere - 6,2
AUV - 6,3
Eugene's Lair - 6,3
16th Cavern - 6,4,3,2,1
The vat - 6,3,2
The Warehouse - 6,5
Whoody - 6,4
Attack Of The Mutant Telephones - 6,4,2
Ore Refinery - 6,4,3
The Bank - 6,4,3,2
Solar Power Generator - 6,5,2.

Miner Willie Meets The Hong Beast - 6,3,2,1.
A Ravegen - 6,1,0.
The Endorrian Forest - 6,1,EV.
Processing Plant - 6,3,1.
The Final Barrier - 6,0,2,1.

And one final thing before I leave you - for more air just press the number 6 on the screen you're on. Bye now!

Marvelous, James!
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Blade
A gigantic, varied and well-presented strategy game, Lords Of Chaos will appeal even to the most hardened shoot-'em-up fan, while D&D fans, sword-and-sorcery nuts and strategy enthusiasts will absolutely lap it up.
YS Final Verdict... 90°
"A whopper of a game... Loads of depth, pretty easy to get into and nicely presented." Davey Wilson

**FIENDISH FREDDY’S BIG TOP O’ FUN**
Mindscape
A pretty and amusing multiload based on circus events, Fiendish Freddy will have you laughing on the edge of your seat!
YS Final Verdict... 80°
"I really liked Fiendish Freddy – the graphics are brilliant and amusing, there’s nice sound, lots of variety and a copious dollop of gameplay." Davey Wilson

**RAINBOW ISLANDS**
Ocean
The most recent mega-hit from Ocean, Rainbow Islands is the sequel to Bubble Bobble and one of the most addictive games ever released. A must buy (so even better that it’s free!).
YS Final Verdict... 94°
"If you hate cute platform games you’ll loathe it, but if you like them you’ll think it’s the best game you’ve ever played (or as near as damnit)." Matt Bielby

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34

Matt: Who remembers last Christmas? It got quite embarrassing here in the YS office, I can tell you. Ocean had just advertised their Megagames Batman and The Untouchables out, and were releasing their Xmas giggles, Operation Thunderbolt and Chase HQ (both of which also turned out to be excellent games). Yikes, I thought, this is beginning to look like favoritism — every recent Ocean product had got (and was getting) brilliant reviews. Something had to be done. But what?

Well, I had a cunning plan. There was this other Ocean game about to be released, based on a rather more obscure (although incredibly popular, as I found out later) coin-op called Cabal. Right, I thought, let's give this to somebody who's notoriously hard on games, who's basically got a real bad attitude to anything not resembling a shoot-'em-up (or a tile game, or anything really) and is bound to slag it off. Let's call in... Jonathan Davies! Heh-heh-hehe (I shouted) — even if this turns out to be a pretty good game he'll still be hard on it, hopefully so hard that it's a Megagame and make it look like Ocean can produce something fairly crappy after all.

A couple of days went by. Jonathan returned with his review... Let's take a look at this. I thought, it'll be really, really... positive?? Asargh! Yes, for the first time in his entire life (just about) Jonathan had turned in a rave review! He actually liked a game! (I couldn't quite believe it.)

But the really annoying thing was that he was right as well — Cabal was a very nifty piece of work. Colourful and chunky, it had a distinctive look very different from Op Wolf / et al, and played like a trooper. Who'd put it together, I asked? Well, it turned out it was the work of a couple of guys at Special FX, the Liverpool development house. And the same couple of guys who've just produced Midnight Resistance in fact (which at last explains what this lengthy intro thingie has been all about).

Um, how does Midnight Resistance play then? Well, from what I've seen of Ocean's current line-up (this, Sly Spy and Shadow Warriors), this'll be the one they'll all be talking about. It's brilliant overall — an excellent little (or rather, pretty huge) coin-op conversion, packed with colour and presented in a very distinctive style. Yes, there's an obvious family resemblance to Cabal here all right. The chunky sprites, with their heavy black outlines and stumpy little limbs, stand out. It's brilliant, and the busiest of backdrops, while the variety to the levels is, for a military-esque scrolling shoot-'em-up, fairly rarefied. Their level of detail is amazing.

The thing is, this is a much more ambitious program than Cabal was, and, it's to the Special FX programmers' credit that they haven't fumbled the ball in making the transition from (fairly simple) basic shooting-style game to a full-blown scrolling shoot-'em-up.

One of the really special things about this game is the control system — it's one that takes some getting used to at first, but once you're there it works a treat. There are two controls — as well as walking backwards and forwards and jumping (as normal) there's a sort of Rotate jobbie for turning your little man around all the time. At different angles of rotation he does all sorts of different things — at one stage he's lying down (or crawling along) shooting, then he's shooting down at an angle (so if he was lying on an overhead walkway he could pick off something on the ground behind him), then he's shooting behind him, then up in the air at an angle and so on. He can do all this from a standing and running position too, and while this makes some manoeuvres quite tricky (when taking cover, for example) it makes the game more challenging. It's a treat.

Of course the game comes complete with your normal assortment of collectable weapons (machine guns, shot gun, flamethrower and the like) bought in a weapons shop sequence with keys collected from dead bodies, including some rather special things that sort of mount in your back-pack and produce all sorts of weird and wonderful effects when fired.

With nine very varied (and very difficult to complete) levels, bags of platforms and ladders to explore and a unique control system making things a challenge, you're certainly getting plenty of gameplay for your money here. Luckily they've bunged in a Continue option to save your frustration, so you need no need to get chucked back to the beginning each time you die.

So what's the verdict? Well, as you might have gathered, I really think this is one of the best shoot-'em-ups I've seen in ages (perhaps ever). There are no problems with visibility or feeling out of control, everything is pitched at a good challenging level, there's plenty of variety and, quite simply, a lot to it. Certainly, the controls take some getting used to (so I found the first levels particularly hard), but once you've got them you're in for a real treat. Ocean come up trumps again, I'm afraid (damn their eyes!).
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Yo! Spec-chums! It's me again, Gadget with the big ears – er, I mean Big Bad Matt, your leader and mentor! I don't know whether to be in a good mood or a bad mood this month actually. Ho hum. (Loud bang.) Ha ha ha ha! Andy's fallen off his chair and cracked his head on the Speccy bench. I think that spells 'good mood', don't you? Let's go then...

HARD SELL

There have been some pretty shoddy sales tactics, but none so bad as that for the Football Manager World Cup game. Some sales berk at Addictive Software obviously said "How do I get this game to sell? I know – I'll release an ad including its writer's picture and a quotation from him!" However, this was a very foolish idea as the writer was none other than Kevin Torns, the ugliest man alive. He's enough to put anyone off buying it. What's so big about him anyway? He just looks like a tramp or something.

Then they go on to print a load of bull about how he went around to a load of club managers to make the game perfect. But worst of all, this ad was printed in YS! So 'Mr Ed', if I ever see this ad in the mag again I'll send you a big picture of Kevin Torns. And, yes, my name is spelt with an 'F'.

Trefor Moss
Heighington, Co Durham

Yes, he is quite ugly, isn't he? But we mustn't be too hard on him – that is his passport photo after all. (Mind you, you should've seen the other three – one was of the top of his bonce, one was of him reaching forward to press the coin return button, and in the third some old bag was sticking her head into the cubicle asking him if he had two fivers for a pound coin.) Ed.

GREAT BRITAIN?
Firstly I must mention how brill YS is and how witty and intelligent the Ed is (the must be – printing this letter). (Don't flatter yourself, Ed) Secondly I disagree with you over Great Britain losing its Greatness as you stated in Pass it in issue 53, because...
1) Great Britain has got the best mag in the world – YS (of course).
2) We helped win World War I and II.
3) We are a nation of intelligent dudes.

David Possee
Thornhill, Dumfriesshire

Explain these then...
1) Simon Bates
2) Little And Large
3) Margaret Thatcher. Ed.

SMILEY

I was reading YS 54 and I noticed that in Joystick Jugglers all of the Jugglers were smiling except Rich Trouser's Peley. I read in an encyclopaedia that it takes 14 muscles to smile but 43 to frown. Also, Rich looks as though he has just got out of bed. This makes sense, because as he uses up so much energy in frowning he obviously wears his muscles out faster than you or Davey, and therefore needs more sleep. I'll finish with a poem.

Rich does not
Smile a lot,
Like Davey or Matt
I really hate that!

Chris Embary
Leyland, Lanes

Come on now. Be fair. Like you said, it takes 14 muscles to smile and 43 to frown, and do you know what Rich was doing while that portrait was being drawn? His face exercises, that's what. He's got the strongest, most highly-trained face in the country and can bite through solid granite. And I did mention the control he has over his ears and eyebrows? No, thought not. Ed.

ALMOST HUMAN
I have recently bought a SAM Coupé. I read the instruction manual until the bit where it says "The SAM Coupé prefers similar working conditions to you". "Great" I thought. So I made it a cup of tea and gave it a chocolate biscuit. Now it seems to be quite dead. Help – please tell me what I should do now!

F Portlock
Wyken, Coventry

It's not dead, it's just having a siesta after the meal (after all, a chocolate biscuit might not seem much to you and me, but for a SAM Coupé it's a veritable banquet). What you should do next is wake it gently at about four o'clock, give it another cup of tea, let it watch Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and then tuck it into bed with a steaming hot mug of cocoa. Ed.

WHINING AUSSIE

I am an Australian and have been reading your magazine for two years. I cannot subscribe directly because the importers will only allow me to order it through a newsagent. I like how the magazine has changed during this period of time. I think it is the best Speccy magazine, but I have a complaint. In Australia we get the magazine three months late and I am unable to enter the competitions, so I would like you to have a longer entry period for overseas readers.

Rodney Hall
Davidson, New South Wales
You can subscribe directly through us, you know. And there'll be no worries about missing tapes either, because (are all you overseas readers paying attention?) we're going to be making sure, within the next few months, that the cassettes stay on the mags - wherever they're sent (except Finland). (Only joking.) Oh, and regarding your grubs about the comics, here's one especially for you. Only you, Rodney Hall, can enter it. The closing date is Christmas Day 1992, so no worries there. The prize is two games. Here's the question - what's due to happen in Neighbours (at the moment Des is going to marry Jane and Nick's gone a bit 'aggro')? Ed.

WENDY

This is a simple letter containing the simple truth. Many moons ago (around about 1982) a friend of mine got a ZX81 quickly followed by a Speccy 48K and we used to play on it all the time. Well, naturally, I wanted one of my own - but every time it got to Chrimble I changed my mind and opted for something else (fool). Anyway, last year I started getting the urge again (ooh) and started moaning about how I never got one, so my lovely fiancé (hello, Wendy!) threw her catalogue at me and said "Well, shut up and flaming get one then!" And I did.

Having nosed around the shops a lot I learned of wondrous things called 'Amigas' and 'STs' etc. I gasped at the graphics! I swooned at the sound! I perspired at the price. And I bought a Speccy +2A. (Oh no. Ed!) And I'll tell you what - you won't see me changing it for any of those one-bit (jibbies). I don't care if the software is arcade-like. £24.95 a time! Get lost. There isn't a game in existence that's worth that much. Now, I think long and hard before I part with my shekels, and the Speccy boasts the parts off its competitors in my book. The

You come down with Mad Cat Disease. Ed.

BLAST

Me and some friends have just started a fanzine called Blast! and we desperately need games to review. We couldn't afford any so we had to think of a solution. So we did.

Laurel (self-made Editor) said we should threaten software companies.

David (self-made prat) said we should shlep them from John Menzes.

Twiggy (can't think of anything to write in brackets) quoted "Let's close our eyes and wish very hard and maybe the good fairy will come and wave her magic wand and..." (He didn't finish because Laurel threw a chair at him.) "(Oh)? Er, isn't Twiggy a girlie's name? Ed"

All these ideas were rejected and all eyes fell on me. Oh dear. Then it hit me. We could earn them! I outlined my plan to the others - we could write to a Speccy mag with a wodge of tips or a witty intelligent letter. Well, we were too thick to solve a game so we decided on the letter. All eyes fell on me (again) because I was the only one who could write!

So here it is - the original, witty, intelligent Star Letter type letter. And for the final touch, here's a crap poem from Laurel (slightly edited).

If YS, they give us games,
We'll really all be quids in...
If they don't, we'll come around,
And smash their %$%^$heads in.

Ahem. The Staff of Blast

Galashies

Scotland

Believe it or not you've cracked it.
The next chap's not so lucky though Ed.

DAMN!

How can I set about making a fanzine? Getting publishers to send me software could be a bit tricky - they might think I'm just a shark trying to rip them off, and not a genuine fanzine editor at all. But I can't afford to buy all the games for review. Can you tell me how to gain the software houses' trust?

Tom Haggle

Rotherham, S Yorks

In Disney films you always gain people's trust by a) being tied up, b) wriggling out of your bonds and c) not running away (even though you could if you wanted to), so when the person who'd fed you do you curves you didn't go and 'tell the sheriff' (or whatever) he has no option but to trust you. Dilemma sorted. Get the software houses to be you up, wriggle out of the rope but don't run. They'll give you heaps of games. Ed.

SOME POINTS

Thanks a lot for moving to Bath - you totally screwed up my plans for work experience. Anyway, onto some suggestions to improve your mag.
1) YS is really funny, but your reviews are, erm, two-dimensional or something. Bring back the screen diagrams!
2) Get some better games on your Smash Tapes, like Wonderboy and Zolux. How about the first Batman? (You don't want much, do you?) Ed
3) More National Rescue! Do you remember that Psycho Pigs UX8 cartoon? That was (and still is) hilarious. More of them. Your artist who does the comics is ace (he works on EMAP's BIG! you know). More of him!
4) Improve your covers. They're crap.
5) Print this letter.
6) Don't print any more of Leigh Loverday's stuff.

David Maher

Waltham Abbey, Essex

PS Oh, and here's a rap poem thing...
Bub and Bob were in a shop
Doing this really neat hop
I said "Woth, guys, just what are ya doing?"
They said they were "wooo woo-woooing"
"Hey, man, that's real funny"
"Hey, we ain't listening to Jive Bunny"
"What then?" I consequently asked
"Why, it's Xenon II - Megablast!"

"Here's a rap poem thing? Surely you mean here's a crap poem thing. And what do you mean, the reviews are two-dimensional? Of course they are. What do you want - a hologram or something? Ed.

WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPECCY

Letters from afar. And this month's 'contestant' is from very afar - Bolivia to be exact. She sent a joke too (check out Kindly Leave The Stage). Unfortunately neither the joke nor the letter make very much sense so what's new?

Chum!

I guess those, you know! Hal I am Bolivia, which is maybe your first? Maybe not. Hal The purpose of it is to write two things - Tip Cards. You have them very, very wrong you know. On the back is a different thing to what is on the front side. Is it 'Start Car Racer' on the one side but if you cut it out then look over the back it's not. Start Car Racer. Hal It is Chase HQ.

Both with cars, but different cars, wrong cars. Here in Bolivia we have a lot of your Volkswagens, the Beetles, Mercedes too are good. Hal But they are not yours - you have Fords and Rolls Royce. I know this because I see it on the television.

Amaya Pircuitas
Carandalti, Bolivia

Hal Ed.
When Ferrari came backwards of it (ish 44).
When it was pointed out to you in ish 53 that if the aforementioned Ferrari was just a reflection of the number plate would be backwards, you fabricated some story about the cover being set in Ciskei where all number plates are made backwards so they can be read by people looking in their rear-view mirrors. That sounds pretty plausible, but if you examine the cover in question you will mainly see that the car is driving past the Eiffel Tower which is, in fact, in France. Not Ciskei. I've got you this time, so don't even try to get out of it. Trainspotter Award, please.
Joseph Guffey
Co Offaly, Eire
Not so fast. We do at least two days' research on all our covers, and this one was no exception. As I said, it was set in Ciskei (where number plates are, by law, written backwards) but I didn't say where in Ciskei, did I? Well, now I'm going to tell you - the cover of issue 41 is set in Zweltsha, the capital of Ciskei. Okay, so far so good. Now, you know this ridiculous practice of 'twinning' towns and cities in different countries (in the vain hope of bringing world peace and harmony?) Yes! Like Croydon is 'twinned' with Córdoba in southern Spain? Well, guess what city Zweltsha is twinned with. Give up? Blackpool, that's where. And to celebrate, the inhabitants of Zweltsha erected a three-quarter-size replica of the Blackpool Tower next to the British Embassy. So what you thought was the Eiffel Tower was in fact a three-quarter-sized model of Blackpool's tower. And don't say 'but there are people on top of it going 'ooh la la'», because 'ooh la la' are the first three words of the Ciskei national anthem. Jumped the gun a bit, didn't you? No Trainspotter. Ed.

THIS ISLAND EARTH
I claim a Trainspotter Award for noticing another one of your stupid mistakes in the May issue, on page 34. You showed people how to complete Fantasy Island Dizzy, but hasn't anyone told you it's not called Fantasy Island Dizzy, it's called Fantasy World Dizzy? You also made the same mistake on page five of the April issue. I have got the game myself and know I am not wrong.
Simon Hyslop
Carlisle, Cumbria
Ah-ha-haaaa. BUT........ Un. Er. Um. Oh dear. Tell you what, I'll phone David Darling up and see what he says.
Ring ring - ring ring - ring ring...
Matt: Hello. Is it Fantasy World or Fantasy Island?
David: Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant!
Matt: Yes, yes. But what about the name?
David: Totally brilliant. Unbelievably incredible!
Matt: But is it 'World' or 'Island'? I must know.
David: It's brilliant. incredibly brilliantly brilliant.
Clip.
So there you have it. It's called Fantasy Island Dizzy. We were both wrong.

What was wrong with the one I gave him? Here's an updated version...
10 INPUT as 20 PRINT "That item has been lost in memory. Please input item again, only type more carefully this time" 30 INPUT as 40 NEW
Ed.

OFF HIS BRANCH
Re: Letters 'Out Of His Tree' in the May issue of YS. I have a program which I wrote last year which will store, update and link family connections and parental lineage and would be just what GL Brown of Woking requires. If he contacts me I will send him a tape and instructions.

FREE OF CHARGE. Being a large program it requires a 48K Spectrum. It will work with either tape or cartridge and will print out on ZX or Alphasmart 32 printer if available.
Mr WD Chetland 15 Worldsword Drive Cheam, Surrey

SOMETHING LEAVE THE STAGE
This one seems to have lost something in the translation - it's from Bolivia you see, from Amaya Pirquitas. I can't make head nor tail of it to be quite honest with you. Maybe you'll be able to work out what she's on about for yourselves, I'm stumped...
Q: Why was the man not dreaming of a white Christmas?
A: He wasn't dreaming of it, he only thinking that it was! Boom boom. Have you got a joke, that's as funny as that? I doubt it, somehow, but send it in anyway to KLJS, YS, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AR - you could earn yourself the most Your Sinclair badge on the entire planet!

BUD PICO'S HOW TO DO IT!
In a rather touching gesture, Bud Pico advises on making Do Yourself 'Get Well Soon' goodies for his mum, Madame Pico, or indeed any other ill friends and relatives. Also, another reader enters the debating forum on 'Fresh Fruit On Cereals' preferences.

Dear Bud,
Like yourself, I have a loved one in hospital. It's my great Auntie Betty and she has just undergone a successful hip replacement operation. I've taken her the latest copy of YS to cheer her up and she has read it from cover to cover. I'd now like to take her something else, but I'm short on readies. Can I make anything myself? Please tell me How To Do It.
Neil Bothat
Basingstoke

Well, Neil, the best thing you can start with is a card. No problem here - just pop down to your local supermarket and invest in a packet of Rice Krispies. Remove the inner sachet and cut out the front and back of the box. Stick these two pieces of card together face-to-face and fold them in half to form the 'card'. Now we'll need to decorate the front. My favourite way to do this is to snap out your favourite picture from an old magazine. Why not go further and make use of those spare Rice Krispies by sticking them around the picture? You could also stick glitter to the puffed rice to brighten up the hospital bed of the inquest patient!

Cheers
Bud

Dear Bud,
Last issue you asked your readers if they had any 'Fresh Fruit On Cereals' preferences. I would like to inform readers of my penchant for dried prunes on my muesli, but I was worried that you may not include it in your column since the fruit isn't fresh.

Yours worriedly
Roger E Race
Lytham St Annes

Oh no, Roger, I wouldn't discriminate against dried fruit, since it is also a natural source of goodness (and prunes in particular are especially beneficial to the digestive system). Maybe I was in the wrong for not enquiring after readers' 'Fresh (Or Dried) Fruit On Cereals' preferences?

Cheers
Bud
W ell, it's a bit of a tragic story really, so I'd be best to get the Kleenex handy. Are you sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin.

There's no point in trying to break it to you gently - Miles Gordon Technology (the company behind the SAM) have gone into receivership. What this means basically is that they've run out of money - and nobody is willing to give them any more. Hopefully a buyer will be found for the company and the Coupe will continue to be built - if not, it effectively spells the end of the line for the machine (and just as software was starting to appear for it too).

So what went wrong? Well, obviously details are fairly sketchy at the moment, but it is believed things started to get really bad around March this year, when MGT realised it had produced far more Coupes than it could possibly hope to sell (at this quiet end of the year at least).

Most probably they had so many machines on their hands (up to 6,000 apparently) because they'd been aiming to have large stocks to sell in the busy pre-Christmas season. Since they'd failed to get the machine ready on time they found that vast numbers were just sitting there, doing nothing.

Obviously this put them in a bit of a spot - they'd spent all that money making these things that they couldn't sell, they were owed a a good deal of money themselves and on top of that had to finance the sending-out of ROM chip upgrades to their 8,000 or so existing users! This is what's known as a bit of a cash flow crisis - they were spending too much, and not enough was coming in to pay it all back.

In a last-ditch attempt to raise more money MGT got back in contact with Johnson Fry (the company they'd initially brought in to help float the company on the stock market) to try and raise more capital. When that showed no real hope of success they had little choice but to call in the receivers.

So has the writing always been on the wall or what? Certainly the SAM project has been plagued by problems throughout its history. For a start, manufacturing costs forced the price well above the £100 or so originally intended, meaning that (with disk drive fitted) the manufacturers' recommended price for each machine was getting dangerously close to bargain basement ST territory.

Of course, the machine going late and missing the Christmas sales period (when the vast majority of computers are sold) didn't help matters at all - the SAM is said to have captured 5% of the UK home computer market, but of course 5% after Christmas provides nothing like the cash injection that 5% before would have done. Then there were the problems with the disk drive Disk Operating System, the new ROM that was required, the Spectrum compatibility problems and so on. For their part, programmers too were finding some serious problems with the computer, particularly with the ASIC chip, which made it impossible to implement MIDI on the machine!

In short, the company and its product have been plagued by problems from the word go, so it's especially sad that it's now (when all the hard work has been done, and the majority of bugs sorted) that things should fall apart for them. For a company as small as MGT, the whole SAM project was an incredible risk, and one it seems they only just failed to pull off.

So what does the future hold? Well, Alan Miles is on record as saying that "We have failed as a company, but we've got a good product and we're making sure that doesn't fail too. We're making every effort to find a buyer quickly in order to protect our customers. There are half a dozen companies interested. If a buyer is found soon

the whole business will be transparent to existing customers as the customer support will continue."

Which all sounds well and good, though quite who these companies might be is, at the time of going to press, fairly unclear. Certainly Atari, Amstrad and Acorn have denied any involvement. The smart move would seem to be for a new owner to move production out of the UK - the Far East has been suggested - so that each unit could be manufactured more cheaply and the profit margin increased. Should that be the case, someone could be making a nice little profit out of the machine by Christmas, but of course this remains to be seen.

What about software support? Will it continue? Like we said, one of the sad things about the death of MGT is that it's happened at a time when software support was just starting to come through. While we can't speak for most software houses, Enigma Variations (whose SAM Coupe version of Defenders Of The Earth features in Future Shocks this month) have announced that they will continue to support the machine. Managing Director Richard Naylor says "We would like to continue writing games for the machine but a lot depends on

the reaction from the owners. If you want to see more games available we need to hear from you so that we can judge the interest that is out there."

If you want to contact Enigma Variations, either to express your support for the Coupé or to buy a copy of the SAM Defenders (£11.99 cassette/£14.99 disk inc p&p) write to 13 North Park Road, Harrogate HG1 5PD or phone 0423 501955.

So what should I do as a SAM owner? Sit tight for the moment would seem to be the best advice. Should the Coupé fail to get placed with another manufacturer, a possible support package has been discussed by MGT and INDUG (the SAM user group), though we don't know what form it would take. Alan Miles has even suggested the possibility that the upgraded ROM might be filed in the public domain, so every user could get their hands on it if they wanted. Coupé owners can contact Bob Brenchley at INDUG on 0452 412527.

For our part, YS will continue to run SAM news and hopefully the first SAM games reviews next issue. We will of course keep you informed as to what the future will be for the machine (if any). And that's about all we can say for the moment. (Keep your fingers crossed.)
Have you the skills of sorcery, power and cunning to earn you the status of Grand Wizard? Find out as you ascend Yatzromo's tower and face his formidable school of wizards in dazzling spell combat.

Advance a level with every victory, gaining new spells as you go, until finally you face the ultimate battle with Zagor, the Legendary Warlock of Firetop Mountain. The select few who defeat Zagor and make it to Grand Wizard, will receive a scroll, printed in gold leaf, personally signed by Ian Livingstone.

They will also have a chance to win the £100 monthly prize.

Prepare to cast your first spell and dial 0898 10 10 66 now!

HINTS ON PLAY: Your attack spells are Creatures, Weapons (stronger but may backfire) and Elements (strongest but will rebound if successfully defended). These are defended by Sleep, Shield and Screen spells.
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**SPECTRUM CLASSICS**

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**UTILITIES**

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**EDUCATIONAL**

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**LOOK!**

**MEGA OFFER**

For every £10 spent you can choose a free game from the list below (Cass. only).

- Heartland, Guadal Canal, The Train, Zenji
- Prodigy, Balbreaker, Explorer, Tempest, Pulsar, High Frontier, Mermaid Madness, Rex, Mega Apocalypse, Ninja Hamster, Arc of Yesod, Death or Glory, Ballblazer, Last Mohican, Frankenstein, Book of the Dead
- All the above available @ £1.99 each.

**LOOK!**

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- All the above available @ £1.99 each.
A shift in direction this month as JON NORTH dons his balaclava to take a crack at, well, cracking protection systems...

Loading The First Bit

The first program on any tape is called the loader — it loads the rest of the program. To crack any protection system you must always keep track of what it's doing.

The "LOAD routine

This is a special loading routine. Instead of typing LOAD " to load the tape, type RANDOMIZE USR 30000. This will load the basic program and stop with the OK message. When it loads, it displays the filenames, the start line of the program (usually 0 or 10) and its length.

10 REM *load by Jon North
20 LET r=0
30 FOR f=346 to 30000
40 READ a: POKE f,a
50 LET i=1+(-29999)*a: NEXT f
60 IF i<>45450 THEN STOP
70 PRINT "Data O.K.": STOP
80 DATA 121,33,80,17
90 DATA 17,0,1,55,205
100 DATA 86,5,48,240,221
110 DATA 128,223,183,232,120
120 DATA 62,2,205,1,22
130 DATA 33,31,80,6,10
140 DATA 126,215,35,16,281
150 DATA 66,202,206,221,70
160 DATA 253,221,78,252,205
170 DATA 43,45,205,227,45
180 DATA 221,54,253,255,62
190 DATA 32,215,62,177,215
200 DATA 221,70,251,221,78
210 DATA 250,205,43,45,205
220 DATA 227,45,62,13,215
230 DATA 223,83,92,221,16
240 DATA 0,185,116,5

Disguising Basic And Getting Past It

Unfortunately, we know what and what you get with basic programs are not always the same thing. Type in this one line and RUN it — 10 PRINT 10. And 10

COMES UP ON THE SCREEN. NOW TYPE IN LET A=PEEK 23655+256*PEEK 23636: POKE A+5.50. NOW LIST THE PROGRAM — IT WILL 10 PRINT 20, BUT IF YOU IT TILLS STILL PRINTS 10. EVERY TIME A NUMBER IS PUT INTO A PROGRAM TWO COPIES OF IT ARE STORED. THE FIRST IS WHAT IS LISTED, THE SECOND IS WHAT IS ACTUALLY USED.

The LIST program

This is a special list routine. Use RANDOMIZE USR 30005 (or LIST) to use it. It shows you how the program as it would be run, stripping away all the disguises and revealing the true program.

10 REM *list by Jon North
20 LET r=0
30 FOR f=30005 TO 30200
40 READ a: POKE f,a
50 LET i=1+(-30005)*a: NEXT f
60 IF i<>4557 THEN STOP
70 PRINT "Data O.K.": STOP
80 DATA 62,2,205,1,22
90 DATA 42,83,92,221,237
100 DATA 91,75,82,55,63
110 DATA 237,82,124,181,225
120 DATA 200,70,35,78,35
130 DATA 229,205,43,45,205
140 DATA 227,45,225,70,35
150 DATA 70,35,229,9,34
160 DATA 254,255,225,126,254
170 DATA 13,32,4,35,215
180 DATA 24,2,12,256,45,40
190 DATA 35,255,48,41,9
200 DATA 254,48,56,15,68
210 DATA 62,14,237,177,205
220 DATA 180,51,229,205,227
230 DATA 45,226,24,220,254
240 DATA 32,56,2,215,126
250 DATA 254,234,32,8,62
260 DATA 13,215,42,234,255
270 DATA 24,167,254,34,32
280 DATA 12,35,126,254,32
290 DATA 56,2,125,126,254
300 DATA 34,32,244,35,24
310 DATA 193

Headerless files

Data loads in two chunks — a short one, the header, which holds things like the filename, then the block itself. The role of a headerless file is to get rid of this header by holding all the info about the block (where to load it to and its length) in a machine code program.

What a Headerless Loader Looks Like

To load a headerless block, a short bit of code is needed...

LD IX, start address
LD DE, length of block
LD A,FF
SCF
CALL 0566
RET or JP

Look at most of my more complex hacks and you'll see they start off with 227,33,n,n,n,62,255,55,205,86,4,5,41; this is the code to load the basic program as a headerless file (because it can't be MERGED).

Revenge Of The Mutant Cock-Ups From Hell

Bit of a cock-up in the first How 2 Hack I'm afraid — to find the number of lives you need to search the code for 3E nn 32, not 3E nn 3D or 3A nn 32. Sorry about that (ahem).

EXAMPLE

Falcon Patrol II

(Y's Smash Tape 28, Issue 51)

When you 'load the basic' you'll see...

To find the address of the actual commands (use the TEXT feature of your disassembler, or search for bytes F9 C0) and change it to PRINT 'space' - F5 20. Now run the basic and it will display the values of the USR command. Your value may be different to mine, but I got 23825, which is 5D1 hex. Disassemble this address...

LD HL,00F5
LD DE,F000
ADD HL,BC
LD BS,2C6E
JP F000
Taking this line by line — HL+15 DE=61440. Whenever you do a USR command from Basic the block register holds the value of that USR. To get the BC, use the ADD BC, HL command means LET HL+HL+BC, so...

HL=23825+23840 (SC02: BC) then becomes 255 and then you come across a special exception, DI. What does this do is move BC bytes from HL to DE. For instance, to move a screen from 32768 (the screen is 18344-22025) you'd do HL=97296: LD DE,18344: LD BS,6912: DI.

Here, the DI is from 23840 to 61440, for 256 bytes. Then it jumps to 61440. Put a breakpoint over the JP with your disassembler, RUN the program and disassemble 61440.

LD IX,4200
LD DE,1800
XOR A
CALL F4AE
LD IX,6800
LD DE,6000
XOR A
CALL F4AE
LD A,FF
LD (508D),A
LD (5C4F),A
LD A,0
OUT (F4)
LD A,15
LD (5C37),A
LD BC,1400
XOR A
IN (A8)
OR C
LD CA
LD B,02A
AND 192
JR F489
XOR A
LD (DE),A
JP B110
We can see that a block is loaded 4000 1800 and another 6000 6000. Note that this test is different (F4AE, not 6550) and it shows the value of A (? or FF?). This is because the loader uses a different routine to do the actual loading (a loadblock, not the normal speed ROM loader). The top of F038 starts the game, so put a breakpoint there and load the game (make sure your disassembler is out of the way or the game will be loaded over it). Hacking the game, the LD A,5 (five lives) is at 45392; the lives is 4548, which is referenced at 45050,4562,45364 and 45568. The routine at 45959 is...

LD HL,40549
ADD A,HL
LD HL,A
Turning the LD (HL,HL) into a 0 (at 40554) gives infinite lives.

Coming back to the loading system, the Basic can be MERGED and you can work out the address of the JP in the basic program before it is moved to F039. You know that SC00 goes to F000: so SC00+30 goes to F039. The final hack is...

100 MERGE F039
100 POKE 23897,201
120 RANDOMIZE USR 23825
130 POKE 40549,0
140 RANDOMIZE USR 45392
(For 45392 comes from the JP B110 at the end of the loader.) However, the address of basic programs varies (say, if microdrives are connected), so the 45392 and 23897 are expressed in terms of the start of Basic. Also, the original program did...
I shock smile BACK! (Well, it made JONATHAN DAVIES smile at least. Gave us the shock of our lives.)

What? No, it can't be. It is? Cripes... Well, potty progers, it seems you've finally hit the jackpot

— Variturbo is BACK! Hurrah! (Well, it made JONATHAN DAVIES smile at least. Gave us the shock of our lives.)

MASHULLIYITY

by Rick O’Neill

Right, hands up who knows what a masked sprite is. Hmm. Well, perhaps I’d better explain. You see, the trouble with ordinary sprites is that they tend to leave a trail of devastation behind them. Move them over a background of any kind and they’ll tend to muck it up completely. Not so with masked sprites. These little devils cunningly keep a copy of whatever they pass over and replace it when they move on. They also have the advantage that you can see through them, where appropriate.

This is where Pitstop veteran Rick O’Neill’s hardwork comes in. He’s done all the hard work for you, and has come up with a complete masking package which even boasts its own demo.

And if you might expect, getting it going isn’t going to be easy. On the face of it, this one looks like a straight type in the Basic, save it with SAVE “SPRITE” LINE 9800, and then type in the hex using the hex loader and save that after the Basic job. And indeed it is. Do so, run it and you’ll find yourself staring at the wonderful demo routine. This, however, is just a taste of things to come. The next step is to do your own thing with it, a much more tricky feat altogether.

The first step is to define your sprites, and store them in memory. They’re stored upside-down (it sez ‘ere), a row at a time, with two bytes for the sprite being followed by two bytes for the mask each time (the mask shows which sections of the background are to be blanked out and then restored each time the sprite is moved). The program also needs to store a copy of the background screen, so plonk one at any address that’s a multiple of 256 by doing a RANDOMIZE USR 33316 (or 33327 if you’ve already stored one). The best way of doing all this is to make use of the relocation routine in the Basic program, which should explain it all miles better than I ever could.

Then poke in the X and Y coordinates and the sprite number (check out the Basic one for details) and RANDOMIZE USR 32768 to set the ball rolling (or alien, spaceship, elephant or whatever). Alternatively, machine code fans can call Start Address + 4, with IX holding the address of the sprite information. The format is X-coordinate, y-coordinate, sprite number followed by three bytes used for information about the last sprite printed.

And if you can work out what’s going on there you probably ought to be contributing to Pitstop yourself.

Basic Chunk

| 170 | NEXT A |
| 180 | |
| 190 | |
| 200 | REM |
| 201 | REM PRINT OUR BACKGROUND |
| 202 | REM |
| 203 | REM |
| 204 | REM |
| 205 | PRINT AT 5,5: ”YOUR SINCLAIR PRESENTS” |
| 210 | PRINT ”TAB 61: SOME MASKED SPRITES!” |
| 220 | PRINT ”TAB 77,” |
| 225 | PRINT ”TAB 83,” |
| 250 | PRINT #18 AT 0,0: INVERSE 11: ”PRESS SPACE TO STOP.” |
| 260 | REM |
| 261 | HML STONE SCREEN AND |
| 262 | REM CALL THE DEMO ROUTINE |
| 263 | REM |
| 264 | REM |
| 265 | RANDOMIZE USR 33316: RANDOMIZE USR 33329 |
| 270 | 60 TO 10000 |
| 280 | REM |
| 300 | DATA 1,1,-1,1,-1,1,1,1,1,-1,1,-1,1,1,1,1 |
| 310 | DATA 2,2,-2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2 |
| 320 | DATA 0,3,3,0,3,3,3,3,0,3,3,3,3,3,3,3 |
| 350 | REM |
| 355 | REM |
| 397 | REM RELOCATION SUBROUTINE |
| 398 | REM |
| 399 | REM |
| 400 | INPUT ”NEW ADDRESS (32768):” |
| 401 | REM |
| 405 | REM |
| 410 | REM |
| 415 | LET XA=AD |
| 420 | POKE P+1,INT (X/256) |
| 425 | POKE P+1,INT (X/256) |
| 430 | NEXT A |
| 435 | POKE XA,61: BORDER 7: CL S |
| 440 | PRINT AT 0,1: ”LOAD TO ADDRESS” |
VARI TURBO
PT TWO
by Malcolm Goodman

Cor blimey—here, finally, is the missing half of Variturbo. What’s that, you ask? Well, it’s Malcolm Goodman’s carking loader routine, that’s what.

The massive list of numbers beneath is the hex, which should be typed in with the hex editor and saved after the Basic you typed in before. While you’re at it, Mal informs me of a couple of minor modifications that need to be made to the Basic. In line 650 change 65250 to 65250 (twice), and in line 620 change the 65250 to 65200.

Once you've done this, the rest should be simple. The Basic program contains all you'll need to manipulate the routine to your heart's content. On running it you’ll be given a demo to show you what's what, and then you'll be prompted for the various parameters the program needs to save your own code for you. The results are impressive, so get to it.

EN LET f=1
160 NEXT j
170 IF f=1 THEN GO TO 180
180 FOR m=0 TO 9
190 LET y$(m)="(1-48)" IF y=19
200 LET x$=code$(2-48) IF x=19
210 LET v=x$=-2 (3-2) x$=2
220 LET x=LET a=(3-2)
230 LET a=LET a=(3-2)
240 PRINT TO 160"
250 PRINT TO 160"
260 PRINT TO 160"
270 INPUT "Checksum: x line a
280 PRINT TO 160"
290 IF VAL x$: THEN GO TO 3
300 CLS
310 LET q=x=10
320 LET a=x=10
330 CLS : PRINT "VERIFYING...
340 CLS : PRINT ": OK!": PAUSE
350 PRINT AT 15,01: ERROR=1000
360 IF x=15,01: ERROR=1000
370 RUN
380 PRINT "START Tape...
390 DATA 100:01: POKE 23736,181: S
400:PRINT "START Tape...
410:CLS
420 LET q=x=10
430 LET a=x=10
440 CLS : PRINT "VERIFYING...
450 CLS : PRINT ": OK!": PAUSE
460 PRINT AT 15,01: ERROR=1000
470 RUN
Oh no, it's the awesome attack of the...

YS Reader's Games!

Here at YS, we've recently been engulfed by an astounding number of games that you, our lovely readers, have written and (if that wasn't disaster enough) sent in for our perusal. (Presumably so we could laugh at them as well. Ho ho, just joking.)

Well, as you can probably imagine, at first we tried to ignore them but soon they were flooding in so fast that we just couldn't hold out any longer.

So here, as a last resort (and we do mean last!), is RICH PELLEY, who we've chained to a desk, and forced to play through your fine offerings to give us his 'expert' opinion. Take it away, Rich... (but don't say we didn't warn you).

*Nine, actually.

Firstly, I'd like to say how impressed I've been with the standard of games you've sent in. But unfortunately I can't - cos they're all crap (hem). No, maybe that's a bit unfair. I was vaguely impressed with some (well, one actually). But the majority were crap, as you are about to see.

But before I get down to some serious slagging, perhaps you'd like to know (though I doubt it) how the professionals do their stuff. Y'see, writing a decent game isn't quite as easy as you may think. At a proper software house (presumably a 'house because they all live there or something) you have quite a few people working on the same game at once, all doing different bits and bobs. First, you'll find someone writing the code (the actual game) in machine code, probably using an assembler - all of which is very complicated and means you have to be extremely brainy to know what's going on. Of course, he won't be using a Spec'y (seeing as it's terminally crap at this sort of thing), so a far more impressive computer which costs loads more and has lots more keys (and maybe even a pretty light if he's lucky) will be干部职工 instead, such as an AT. Basically this serves exactly the same purpose as our rubber-keyed chum, except that it's a little bit more user-friendly (cos there's loads more memory) and, far, far, more importantly, it looks a lot more flash.

As well as all this, another any-a-fancy bloke (or indeed woman) will do 'the graphics', whilst another writes a little ditty using lots of keyboards, funny black boxes and pretty lights (which is later ported into the Spec'y). And, wouldn't you believe, it all costs rather a lot of money.

Overall, I'd say (but don't take my word for it) that it takes around four months for everyone working full-time to write a game from start from finish - and some of them are still pretty rough after all that.

But why on earth am I telling you all this, you may well be asking. Good question. Why did I tell you that? Ern... Ah yes. Well, now you can see what you're up against when you try to write a game yourself. I mean, I'm sure that someone crammed up in a decayed bedroom with a cold cup of coffee in one hand and a copy of PlayBoy in the other (well, that's how I do it, anyway), frantically trying to write a game won't get very far, if you see what I mean. Which all goes to show, um, something or other. So there you go. Now you know.

Ellio, John, gorra new motor?

Still reading? Oh, good. Whilst sifting through the piles of games and things you've sent in I've (sort of) cropped them into three different categories. And here they are...

First, there are the ones that are crap on purpose. Y'know the sort of thing - Advanced Yogurt Carton Simulator and the like. Then there are the ones which are meant to be taken seriously, but are crap all the same. And lastly, well, there are the ones which really aren't too bad. (Take YS Capers, for instance, which we featured on the Smash Tape last issue - a game written at home by a YS reader for a bit of fun and sent in to us just like all these other games, the only difference being that Damian Scattergood is a professional programmer on the quiet, so he was pretty well sussed up.)

Not that any of this is all relevant, of course. I just thought I'd stick it in so you'd think I knew what I was doing here.

THE SCORES ON THE DOORS

The usual scoring system seems a tad inappropriate here (seeing as it doesn't go below 'one'), so instead we've adopted a brand new one instead (I've just made it up).

Technical Ingenuity

Or 'How clever is the programmer?'. Does the game boast wacky graphical routines, wizzy sound and decent playability? Or, erm, doesn't it?

Achievement

Did the prodach achieve what it set out to do? Did it do a perfect job, or come a right old cropper in the process?

Fun

Is the game a laugh to watch and fun to play, or is it as boring as something that really is a bit on the boring side?

Crapt Factor

Erm... Huh said.

Overall

The overall mark is a sort of idea about how far the game would get if it was released at full price on a proper label - so it may get an extremely low mark even if I thought it was really good. If you see what I mean. Okay? (Just don't get hurt if I'm a bit nasty about your pride and joy - it doesn't make you a bad person or anything!)

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**ADVANCED LAWNMOWER SIMULATOR THE TRILOGY**

*Except there's four of them, but you know what I mean

By Rodney Sproston

Advanced Lawnmower Simulator, eh? The game which launched a thousand clones (well, three, actually).

Personally, I think that someone should shoot Duncan MacDonald. cos apart from being stinkingly mad (several sandwiches short of a picnic in fact) he was also responsible for teh 'original' - initially Megagamed as an April Fool joke, then 'featured' on one of our Smash Tapes.

In case you were fortunate enough not to have seen it then it come closer, gather round and I'll explain. According to the 'bult', ALS is (and you may have guessed this already - the title gives it away a bit) "A powerful and accurate lawnmower simulator"

First, you have to choose your mower from a choice of one (the other five are all broken) then 'get to that grass'. Simply press 'M' to engage the motor and away you mow (ho ho) - far better than a hover. I'd say. Every few games or so, your mower hits a rock and blows up, killing you in the process - probably the 'highlight' of the game really. Um, what fun, eh? listeners!

But nobby heck! It's the sequel (this time written by the infamous Rodney Sproston) - alien grass has invaded the moon and only one person can mow it down (you, you clot). A subtle change of background colours, a few stars and we're away - no probs. I love it.

Then there's Advanced Lawnmower Simulator III - while happily mowing away one day you suddenly stumble into a nightmare and your only solution is to mow your way out through the dream hole. A touch unoriginal, you may think (if rather spooky in concept - what is this man on?), but oh ho no - this one's vastly Scoppagorent. You have to press 'O' instead to turn on your motor. What joys!

Hoping I'd never ever have to face another
FOOTBALL JANITOR
By Jake Dovey
Ah! Football Janitor, eh? Obviously some sort of crapy football game - ohshen dear. Well, let's look on the right side, at least it's not another one of those peaky lawnmower simulators. (A few minutes into playing.) Hmm - this is a bit odd. I can't seem to find any players to manage, any matches to play and there isn't a football ball in sight. In fact, there appears to be only one key in all. Oh no! I might have known! It's another one of those ruddy lawnmower simulators... Arrrrgghh (and various other noises of extreme agony) I can't take it any longer. Please... No more... I'm still a child for heaven's sake...

THE MORNING AFTER SIMULATOR
By Mega-Software Microcomputer Super-Products Incorporated - Chris Thompson, Major Programming Consultant; Paul Anderson, Graphical Technician; Michael Boak, Audio Technician; Andrew Wright, Ex Shop-Assistant And Overall Genius; Mark Liston, no police record (at all) and Ian Shaw, no Beatles records (at all)
Why on earth anyone would want to simulate the morning after eludes me completely, but these guys did (although I can't quite see why it took so many of them) and a fine job they did too. "Unlimited fun for all the family," quotes the introductory blurb and, believe me, it's fun, fun, fun all the way. Just tell it how many pints you drank last night (between 30 and 246) then sit back and feel extremely sick as the border flashes various ghastly colours at you. Should this get too much then simply press, L: for the Aka Seltzer and all will be relieved. But whatever you do DON'T press any other key - otherwise it'll be the pink elephants for you. Ruddy heck!
I'm not quite sure how realistic this simulation is, though from extreme tests carried out last night I'd say that it's quite near the real thing. Ooh, my acting head...

SUBLIMINAL SUGGESTION
by John Lewis
£2.99 (incl Horse - see next page) from 157 Hamilton Avenue, Tolworth, Surrey
Hooray! Civilisation as we know it (Jim) is going to change - and it's all due to this very program. No longer do you need to diet to lose weight, nor turn into a goe-dribbling wretch trying to give up smoking and drinking. No, kick that stress straight out the back door, relax and be happy, that's what John Lewis advises. And at the tidy cost of less than three quid for his handwork who could disagree with the chapsy chappy?
It's all a bit of a cinch really. Simply stare at your tally for a few minutes at this trippy-coloured circle while strange messages flash up in front of you, And that's it. Simple, eh? You'll then be able to go away and relax (man, give up smoking and smoking or whatever you desire; Brill or what? And should you get bored of staring at a circle, then you can, of course, stare at squares, or stars, or a variety of other things instead.
"Sounds like bit of a con to me," you may well be saying. But no - it really works. Honest. Here's Mr Lewis to tell you why...
"Y'see, it's all to do with subliminal perception - which (as if you didn't know already, no ho!) is the perception of stimuli too weak to be specifically apprehended but strong enough to be influential on the mental processes. What this means is that a sound that's lower than we can consciously hear, or a message that flicks up on the screen quicker than we can consciously see, is never the less impressed on the inner, unconscious mind. And that makes us feel like following the subliminal message." And there you go. Just the ticket. Order a copy today!
(The only problems are, first, that the stimuli aren't weak enough to be scientifically apprehended because even though they flash up on the screen very quickly anyone can read them and, second, that it doesn't actually help you do any useful things - like score with chicks, say. Still, a brave attempt.)

ZX99
By Richard Mark Bacon
At last - a proper game to review. This one's been written with that 3D Game Maker thingy by CRL, and quite a corker it is too. In fact, it's so good I really can't find anything to slag it off at all. Damn...
Here's the scenario. The year is 1999 and Uncle Davey's been brought out of retirement to design a new computer, the ZX99, which is now being utilised to control the Earth's new space defense bases. But in the fraction of Species all over the world, it has, surprise, surprise, gone wrong (probably because somebody robbed the power pack or something). Toh! What to do, eh, viewers? But, wait, that's not all - it's also planning a laser attack on green and beautiful Mother Earth. Eek!
And only one man can save us. Unfortunately he's not available so we've got to settle for Rick Hero instead - a crude little robot-type thingy who bears a uncanny resemblance to Zebodee from The Magic Roundabout.
Well, enough of that. As I've already said, ZX99 was done on 3D Game Maker which, if I remember correctly, was rather user-un-friendly overall (ie a bit crap to be honest). But Mr Bacon has certainly done a Admirable job, taking into account the strict limitations he was faced with - graphics are nice "n' cute and the playing area's pretty large (the idea being to get from one side of the circular space station to the other and destroy the computer). So full marks to him. And full marks to you at home as well if you got that question right - we'll be back after the break so don't go away.
**EXFOXY**
By Robert Giavas

Hmmm. Very strange. I'm a bit miffed about this one. Yeah. It's very well programmed indeed — in 100% pure machine code with some nifty effects (like a clever loading screen) and this cool graphics system (Matrix-Tech-Scope) which allows the landscape to be rotated. v Impressive. But as for the actual game, well, it's a bit of a non-starter really. You've this little spaceship thingy and (without going into the hefty plot, you've basically got to fly to a moon, and then to a missile-site jobby blowing up lots of things on the way. Yes — the graphics are very nice, but overall the game really is a bit useless. There's very little to do except shoot those silly things. Very impressive technically, but all too boring. I'm afraid.

Pretty fancy screen, eh? (And that's one good reason why the crap gameplay's so irritating.)

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**FILECARD**
By Paul Golledge and Jeremy Jenkins

Should you ever want to print out little card jobbies with the names and details of all your horses on them then Filecard could come in very useful — it allows you to do just that, and all with the greatest of ease. File lots of different cards and you can view them, print them, change them or save them to tape for a rainy day — it's really too gripping to imagine.

Hmmm. There's not really much more to say. Hardly a major achievement in the world of programming (it's very simple and written in BASIC), but it serves its purpose so I suppose I can't slag it off too much.

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**HORSES**
By John Lewis

(available on the same tape as Subliminal Suggestion)

As if we weren't spoilt enough already by finding a permanent solution to the world's problems, simply flip the Subliminal Suggestion tape over and you can become an instant millionaire. No, really — it's true. All you have to do is buy a copy of The Sun, find a suitable horse racing race and tell this ingenious little program which horses are racing — hopefully you'll then be told which one will win. Then quickly mortgage your house, sell your belongings, burn your life savings out of the bank, pop down to the local betting shop and place all your cash on that very horse. Blimey! Wealth beyond your wildest dreams! What could be more simple, eh, readers? However, being rich can soon get rather tiresome, so you've probably something to do while away the hours with in between counting your vast amounts of cash. And would you believe it, once again, John Lewis has got the perfect solution — cos you can also play Horses as a game!

Anybody who's ever seen these games you sometimes find at the end of piers where you bet two pennies on which colour horse will win as they all charge along this little track thing? Oh, you haven't? Well, they used to have one at Weston-Super-Mare anyway. Okay, back to my point — the same sort of thing goes on here. First, carefully examine the predicted ground conditions and strategically choose which horse you think will win (ie hazzard a complete guess). Then bet between a quid and a fiver (or your starting 30 quid) and prepare to ride. Each horse takes it in turn to jock along a few steps at a time as you shout hopefully for your horse to win. If your horse comes first or second, you win, otherwise you um, lose. Believe me — the suspense is quite unbearable.

Horse. As with Subliminal Suggestion, Horses serves its purpose (even if it's a bit BASICally), and at a mere three nicker for the pair we're taking bang city here. I can't say I really feel any different after paying Sub, and Horses was all too much of a waste of time. But if these types of thing appeal to you then they could (perhaps) be worth a look.

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**GODS**
By Julia and Simon Barnsley

"G.O.D. is unlike any other game that has ever appeared on the market," claims its authors. "Sure." I thought, assuming it'd be a complete pile of crud. But I was wrong. God is in fact alarmingly good. It's a strategy game by the way, and I must admit I didn't find it particularly easy—probably because, apart from the fact that it is quite hard, I'm terminally crap at this sort of thing. But I still liked it all the same, and that's gotta say something.

As with most strategy games, the idea is to get as powerful as possible and, well, win the game. This one's a multi-player game as well (up to five, I believe), and this time you're all gods. The idea is to score more glory points (in a specific number of turns) than any of your player-chums. You do this by way of horses, who can influence to help you — to kill monsters and carry out quests to pile your points. The ones with the most points win! Hurrah! This may seem a trifle complicated, though, probably because it, erm, is. Graphics and sound are a little bit naff, but that's not what a strategy game's all about, is it? No — it's the playability that counts, and this one's got it coming out of its ears. Apparently it's taken seven years to write, and it really is quite amazin' for a home-grown effort. (By the way, the authors are looking for someone to publish it, so come on, you software houses out there, get to it and snatch this little baby up before someone else does — it could well be a winner!)

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**FILECARD**

Filefaxes? Pah - thing of the past - I've got my very own Speacy Filecard!

Maybe a bit dull on the graphics side but wait 'til you play the game (if ever)!

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Well, what an exquisitely brilliant feature that was, if I do say so myself — so good, in fact, that we'll have to do it again sometime. So if you've written a game or something (preferably not another one of those pesky lawnmower simulators though, and not just some utility or display — send them to Jo's 'Prog Pits' insted) and you're ready for some constructive criticism (ie a right slugging-off), then send it to me, Rich Poley, at the Crap Game Centre, Your Sinclair, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AP. And no doubt it'll appear in the hallowed pages of a future issue of this fine publication. Byeeyaa!!!
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£9.99 cass/£16.99 disk
Jackie
NEEEEEOOOOOWWW!!!
"And... here... comes... Jack
The Lad, Jack The Lad
zooming into the hairpin bend on her
Honda 150." EEEEEEEEOOOOW!!! "Oh,
and... there... goes... Jack The Lad, just
watch her shooting through the chicane at
breakneck speed!" SCCCRRREEEEECH!
CRAAAAASHHH! "Oh... and there's Jack
The... And she's, er... uuuuuurgh."

Motor cycle racing, eh, readers? There's nowt to
beat it - the thrills, the spills, the sitting astride a
throb-h CIMing machine in your perspex leathers,
whizzing down an open road with the sun in your
face and the wind in your hair. Shame about The
Cycles then, 'cos this latest motor cycle racing
sim from Accolade has got more in common with a
bone-shake round the park on your sister's
Raleigh Esprit than a swift spin round the hairpin
bends of Brands Hatch! Triumph.

That's not how things are supposed to be of
course, No, in The Cycles the aim of the game is to
whiplash round eight authentic Grand Prix circuits
in the hope of becoming Motorcycling Champ of
the World. But flippin' heck, even before you can
rev up and speed out onto the track you've got to

**THE CYCLES**

plough your way through the usual barrage of
'options!' You know the sort of thing... What kind
of race - Practice, Single or Championship
Circuit? What kind of difficulty level - Beginner,
Levels Two, Three, Four or Pro? What kind of
machine...? And so on.

Finally, of course, you do get to hit the tarmac,
straddled across your bike viewing the track from
a first-person viewpoint. Which, I must admit,
works extremely well - it certainly makes a change
from the usual overhead or view-from-behind
perspectives you normally get in these kinds of
games. But what follows as you actually begin to
manoeuvre (or try to manoeuvre) your mean machine
around the course lets the whole show down. The

simple Left/Right/Brake Accelerate control system
for steering the bike is just so heavy and
lacking in a centralising force that it makes the
game virtually unplayable.

Imagine, there you are accelerating away
from the starting line, with the screen scrolling
smoothly towards you, the sun in your face, the
wind in... (Yes, yes, get on with it Ed) when you
see a sharp right-hander approaching on the
track map that charts your progress in the top
left-hand of the screen. Yikes! Better move over
to the left so I can slip smoothly through the
bend, you think. Just a quick tap on the
Left control and... aargh! You're right out on the
grass verge! Quick, move right to get back on
the track. Double aargh! You're now skidding all
over the grass verge on the other side. Basically,
you end up spending the
rest of the race continually toggling Left
and Right to make your
way through the
course. Double triple
aargh!

A responsive steering system
is the major element of any racing game. The
Cycles doesn't have one. And what that means is that
all the other good elements, like the smooth
scrolling, the way you can keep an eye
on the other competitors
in terms of a 'radar'
map, and the variety of races
and skill levels you compete
at, are totally redundant.

Nope, stick to your Raleigh -
least you'll be able to go
in a straight line!

**finalverdict**

A motorbike sim with such
a wobbly steering system
you'll probably feel sick
after playing it!
Gapping holes in your YS collection? Gapping holes in your knowledge? Or do you just fancy a darn good read? Whatever the reason, you too can join Specy fans all over the world who've discovered that ordering a YS Back Issue (or two, or three...) is a seriously good idea. Just tick the form for the ones you want, bung it in an envelope (with some money) and send it off. It really is that easy.

**1986**

1 JAN '86 SOLD OUT!
2 FEB '86 The second ever YS With a Young Ones spoof and an interview with Matthew 'Willy' Smith
3 MARCH '86 Yucky V-cover, ideal for scaring your little sister!
4 APRIL '86 A truly historic ish, with a Spectrum 128 review. Check out the Art Studio guide.
5 MAY '86 The Men with the Beard's first appearance.
6 JUNE '86 Guide to wazzy hardware.
7 JULY '86 The Specy music scene you never thought existed.
8 AUG '86 Type in the Transpotter Game!
9 SEP '86 Crockett 'n' Tubbs cover girls!
10 OCT '86 SOLD OUT!
11 NOV '86 SOLD OUT!
12 DEC '86 SOLD OUT!

**1987**

13 JAN '87 A realinker of an ish. Lots of brilli things!
14 FEB '87 Lots of crummy Short Circuit puns, and a hardware special to book.
15 MARCH '87 Everything you wanted to know about Specy specs, and lots you didn't.
16 APRIL '87 Really interesting guide to modernis.
17 MAY '87 SOLD OUT!
18 JUNE '87 SOLD OUT!
19 JULY '87 The +3 gets the once-over.
20 AUG '87 Program Pitsopo - the first ever, and it's a scorcher! (aren't they all?)
21 SEP '87 FREE! Jack The Ripper wibbly thing!
22 OCT '87 Batty - it's brill and it's FREE!
23 NOV '87 SOLD OUT!
24 DEC '87 Play For Your Life - fab free game!

**1988**

25 JAN '88 FREE!! Moley Christmas game and a hunky Masters Of The Universe cover.
26 FEB '88 FREE!! Stylish YS badge - which one will you get?
27 MARCH '88 Definitely one worth having - another hardware special.
28 APRIL '88 Kamov Megapreview! Advanced Levnower: Simulator Megagame!
29 MAY '88 Perry Vixen cover - stick it up! And don't panic - there's a FREE game (called Don't Panic).
30 JUNE '88 Yuck! There's blood 'n' pork all over the cover - Psycho Pig rules! And People from Sirius - a fab FREE game.

31 JULY '88 Breakfast: Frontlines - a one-course surreal cereal serial.
32 AUG '88 FREE!! Smash Tips Part One and TwolA must for, well, everyone.
33 SEP '88 More Smash Tips, and loads of other trieff stuff.
34 OCT '88 FREE!! Dustin game. FREE! Smash Tips. ANDO Life!
35 NOV '88 FREE! Orbis The Tomahawk and three demos. Plus a joystick guide and more Smash Tips!
36 DEC '88 Star Raiders II and Qazan on TWO FREE tapes! Plus the last of the Smash Tips - get the lot!

**1989**

37 JAN '89 Awesome pull-out maps book, and Movie for FREE!
38 FEB '89 Alien Evolution stuck on the front, and a thing about the PC 200. (That's what?)
39 MARCH '89 Army Moves on the FREE tape, and a 'griping' YS Photo Luxurmini Story.
40 APRIL '89 FREE! Groovy stickers and Survior tape. Plus a fascinating adventure special.
41 MAY '89 Mantorivix and Red Door for FREE! One of the greatest!
42 JUNE '89 Explorer for FREE! And a Second-Hand Spectrum Buyers Guide.
43 JULY '89 Zolky and The Gendello Incident totally FREE! Fun at the zoo too!
44 AUG '89 Batman The Movie cover, film-fans, and Skateboard Construction Kit for FREE!
45 SEP '89 Dream Warrior on tape. And is this Sinclai Marurn Light Phaser thingy any good?
46 OCT '89 Vatman - it's brill and it's FREE! Plus a joystick update.
47 NOV '89 Fastpoint and Power Drift demo on the fab Smash Tape.
48 DEC '89 Wonderboy, Things, Riding The Rapids and Heroes Of Karn packing out two FREE tapes! You'll be struggling to lift it!

**1990**

49 JAN '90 So what's on the tape? N.O.A.M.A.D. & Bulbo And The Lizard King, that's what, and there's another fab YS Photo Luxurmini Story.
50 FEB '90 Fifteenth birthday ish, with Kit Tard and A Nightingale On The Green Street isn't FREE tape!
51 MARCH '90 Falcon Raid & 2 and A Harvesting Moon - they're fab 'n' FREE! Plus a stonkin' SAM Coupl review.
52 APRIL '90 FREE Dizzy & Lords Of Chaos demo! Plus a chap with a big chopper on the cover.
53 MAY '90 The YS map of the world. Samurai on the tape, a Scramble Spirits demo and introducing our YS SAA Surgeon.
54 JUNE '90 Ballbreaker II and a Pipe Mania demo for FREE! Brand new How 2 Hack column! Lords Of Chaos, Bloodvych & Pipe Mania Megagamed!
55 JULY '90 Bumper giveaway! FREE! Tioish Tipintionary booklet, heaped full of nits! PLUS! FREE Fernandez Must Die and YS Carpe games PLUS! Bloomin' marmoth Sim City Megapreview!

FREE! FREE!! FREE!!!!!

Being the spontaneous and terribly generous people we are, we've decided to make you a bit of an offer. Order the complete set of Smash Tips (found in issues 32 to 36) and we'll give you a FREE binder to keep them all in! No, really! It's worth £2.99, and it's fabulously groovy. You'll see. Just tick the box at the bottom of the coupon...

**ISSUE PRICES**

- UK £1.50/

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I enclose a cheque/Postal Order for £. . . made payable to Future Publishing Limited.

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Address

Postcode

Complete the form and return with payment to Your Sinclair Back Issues, REPOST, The Old Barn, Scorton, Somerset TA11 7BL. No stamp is required if posted in the UK. Cheques or Postal Orders must be made payable to Future Publishing Limited.

**SMASH TIPS BINDER OFFER**

I've ordered my complete collection of Smash Tips all in one go (that's issues 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36), so send me my FREE Smash Tips binder pronto!
e are not a bunch of loonies."
Who speaketh thus? The
members of the Jeffrey Archer
Fan Club? No, it's The
Masters Of The Unhuman
Eliminators Group from
somewhere in Rochford,
Essex. They make their bold
claim to sanity because, with
a name like that, I accused
them a few months ago of
perhaps not having all their
marbles. Not true, they say,
though their claim to sanity is
somewhat undermined by the
fact that they asked me to
write back to them with vital
information but didn't enclose an s/a or even put their
address anywhere in the letter. I rest my case.
The vital information is a message for Jim Magee of
Glasgow, who they say they wrote to several yonks back but
still haven't had a reply from. If their letter to me is
anything to go by I'm not surprised. They also ask for
assistance on a golden oldie called Ocean Dancer - how
to get Del ('Trotter') or any of
the other sons (Rodney?) to
follow or join you. I've combed
my files (and even filed my
combs), but can't come up
with this title anywhere. If
anyone's got any help for the
UE Group they can write to
them at... erm...
I also can't write back to
Phil Hayes at Tooley, who
asked for a solution to Heroes
Of Karm. The reason, when
I've sent Karm freebies out by
the bucket-load, is that this
flash so-and-so went and
fixed his request to me! All I
know is his fax number and
down here in my lo-tech
adventure dungeon I don't
possess such things as fax
machines, and even if I did
wouldn't use this expensive
gadget to send something that
could just as easily be posted.
Phil also didn't improve his
chances by calling me Mike
Gregory. Now I do understand
you mistaking me for that
handsome blond rugby league
international, but I'm afraid
you've got the wrong chappe.
Gerrard's the name. Still, Phil
did send in some help on what
he's managed so far with
Covergame Heroes Of Karm,
so to very muchly. Near the
start you'll need to REDNIT
HTIW SAG THG1L, then
soon afterwards GORF EHT
SSIK. To get the money
ELBIB HTIW
THGIWORRAB LLIK. And
when locked in the dungeon?
DOUG OT VENOM EVIG.
The previously-mentioned
Jim Magee lives at 9
Kingscliffe Avenue, Kings
down Park, Glasgow G44 3JW and
needs your help on
Frightened Fantasy (how to
get rid of the beggar) and
Quest For The Golden
Orange Peel (where to go
after the obelisk). Any
offers? Jim's also been
playing Magnetic Moon,
which he says is a "super
game, dead logical". So
there.
What everyone seems to
have been playing is

Agatha's Folly, which is not
surprising as it's a great
adventure, probably Linda
Wright's best ever (and
published by Zenobi
Software, hurry while stocks
last). Linda recently said
that she'd never have
finished writing this if I
hadn't bullied her into it,
and I'm glad I did. The
question is, how can we
persuade her to write
another one, now she's in
to those PBM thingies?
Sharon XXXX Harwood
of Southend has solved it,
says it's the best game she's
done to date, and has sent in
some tips on it. To find the
trowell - HCNEB REDNU
KOOL. What to do with
the dirt in the folly? LEWORT
HTIW EPARCS. To complete
the first part you must
LATSYRB NO DNATS and
then you'll need to do a bit of
decoding, using the sampler
as a clue. In Part Two, to
cure the infection SEVAEL
HTIW DNH8 BUR. And to
enter the cave try EYE EULB
HSUP then EYE DER
HSUP. Sharon also asks
what I think about rejoining
the Adventurers Club Ltd.
My reply is, of course,

Last month I mentioned
Tilt Software's snapit-
titled 20 Character Sets
program, which gives you 37
new character sets for your
Specsy. What? No, just
joking, it does give you 20 of
the little blighters. Author
Colin Joyce now tells me he's
smartened up the screen
presentation, although it
looked smart enough already
to me, and also has a new
option to load any of the sets
into Bisoft's PAWS. It's still
£2.99 to you, squire, from Tilt
Software, 14 Trasna Way,
Lurgan, Craigavon, Co
Armagh BT66 8DL, Northern
Ireland. Hmm, I'll have to see
if Colin can be persuaded to
knock a bit off the price for
one of me coupons, yeah?
Larry Horsfield of FSF Adventures (Fantasy and Science Fiction, fact fans) has another release due out soon – soon, that is, as he’s finished play-testing Part Four. This lengthy quest will be called The Axe Of Kolt, and as before will be in 48 and 128K versions. One difference between the two is that what you get as storyline/plot in the 48K loader program is all gameplay in the 128K version. Yikes! There’s also a £50 prize competition if you can track down the adventure-related names hidden in anagrams throughout the program. No rush, closing date isn’t until 30th May 1991, but you’ll need all the time you can get as the fastest possible solution to the larger game works out at 1,200 moves! Blimey O’Reilly. Cost is three quid, from 40 Harvey Gardens, London SE7 8AJ.

Sheffield. Jill’s all but solved the first part and sent in the following couple of hints. To get into the generator building – PIRGORIAH EHT ITIT KOWL EHT KCP. Once inside you’ll find something you can use to get the metal gatepost. But, says Jill, in another of Linda’s games, *The Jade Stone*, where do you get the money to buy the thread from the pedlar? Why don’t you REKAB OT SEKAC ILLES? By the way, if you just SEKAC EVIG you get nothing for them – but when did you ever hear of a Yorkshireman (or ‘woman’) giving something away? **Mark Foster** of Colchester asks how you use the boat after repairing it in *The Golden Mask*. First, TAOB RETNE, then you need a quick look at the VOCAB command to see that you’ve got to EKAV SSORC.

Gavin O’Kelly writes from Dublin with oodles of questions but no sae. He shouldn’t be having problems with *Harvesting Moon* anymore – the last ish should have come to his rescue on those. But in S*M*A*S*H*E*D the password is LEWOB, which I’m definitely printing backwards, and to deal with the grenade you must NIP TRESNI (which you find in the jeep, TAES EHT REDD). In Arthurian *Eureka* the tune you need is KCOB ESUOHIALJ. In order to muffle the noise of your digging in World War II *Eureka* you should DROCR A YALP. First you need to find one, of course, so it will help if you SETALOCOH EYIG.

A simple request from Ian Goodfellow of Stroke City, Northern Ireland (otherwise know as Londonderry/ Derry). No adventure questions, apart from a demand for more space, but he does want want me to say “Hello!” to his strangely-named friends – Annie No-Surname, Paul Cook, Milan Graff, Stephen Wilson and the extremely unlikely Doughy McPherson.

Paul Hiles of Aylesbury just wants to see his own name mentioned. Now look, you lot, this is not a request programme, this is an adventure column, and there’s no chance I’ll mention those names so bog off.

Hey, my enigmatic little cherubs (and cherubettes), the enterprising publishers of tape magazine *Enigma* have signed up that ever-so-spiffing adventure *Jekyll And Hyde* – you remember, the first-ever ‘Indie’ YS Megagame. Thanks to original publishers Zenobi (er, well, semi-original, after the original originals, Essential Myth, closed for repairs), *Enigma* will be carrying the three parts of this adventure on its issues number seven, eight and nine. Seven’s already out... and check out the lurking coupons on a page near you in this very ish. If you can’t find it, bung £1.99 in the general direction of *Enigma*, 15 Westfield Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9YR.
MINDFIGHTER - THE SOLUTION

T he first person in the western hemisphere to complete Mindfighter, that exciting and very different game from Abstract Concepts, was good old Mark Evans. Well, he was the first person to send in a full solution to YS at least. I mentioned his episode-making feat a few issues back, and it's obvious loads of you are so stuck in this game that you want the full low-down. So here it is, but first...

Remember that reading a YS adventure solution can seriously damage your adventure-playing, so don't read or unless you really want to know!

Admin storage room
See Bibles.

Alien
Say “Yes” when she asks you a question – you will need her undivided attention later.

Apple
(in store room) Eat it.

Basement
See Pipes.

Bathroom
Open cabinet to find packet of pills, soap and towel.

Baggage
Some of public punishments.

Barren park
See Blanket and Newspaper clippings.

Barren parkland
Start of Part Three. See Mos and War memorial.

Blackened metal
Examine it.

Blanket
(in barren park)
Wear it.

Bottle
(in medical room) Eat penicillin capsule inside it to restore health.

Brass key
In waste tip building.

Locks door in same location. See Columns.

Bright light
Head south towards its origin. See Kitchen.

Cabinet
See Bathroom.

Canvas bag
Start of Part Two. Ignore it.

Cardboard box
(in lounge) Take file from box, and see File.

Cell
One East from Sector Seven.

Needs keys. See Jimmy.

Cell Two
Ignored it.

Cemetery
See Wood.

Chair
(in lounge) See Matthew.

Chisel
(found at baths) See Step.

Clothes
Keep everything you start with, including coin and lighter, or you will be stuck in the future. See Rusted bed.

Coach station
See Vehicles.

Cost
See Lighter, Coin and Clothes.

Cobwebs
(in waste tip)
Break them to find brass key.

Coin
No use. See Cost and Clothes.

Crumbling avenue
See Blackened metal.

Crates
See Docks.

Daryl
See Snowstorm.

Deadrat
No known use.

Dismantled (in hall)
Read it.

Docks
When ship arrives at docks go to crates and change to an eagle. See Trance, Eagle and Yubashis cabin.

Document
See Shelves. Read it.

Dog
(found at rubble path)
Give it to foxes at crates.

Drum
(in store room) Ignore it.

Eagle
You do not have to give commands once you are the eagle - just change (see Trance) when you are in the right places and it will do the rest. See Fence, Grille and Docks.

Easel
(in Robin's bedroom) Ignore.

Envelope
See Kettle, Photo and Letter.

Fence
(electrified) Do not attempt to touch, cut or climb. When you have destroyed the ship go to any section of the fence and fly over it (see Trance).

File
Examines it a few times and an envelope falls out.

Faxes
See Dog.

Gas mark
See Shelter. Wear it to enter gas wasteland.

Gast wasteland
Must wear gas mask. Location of steel rod.

Glass fragment
Forgets it.

Going home
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

Grilles
From Part Two, start, go E, W, N, change into eagle (see Trance). You are now in the ventilation system. Don't go north or south. Go W, N, N, N, N, change into eagle once more.

Guards
Avoid unless wearing uniform. See Medical room.

Harry
Ignore.

House rubble
Go up into ruined bedroom. See Rusted bedroom, Tag and Twisted metal.

Honey
See Letter, Phone number and Photo.

Interrogation rooms
Ignore.

Jeans
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

Jerry
Can in shelter. Contains petrol.

Jetty
Where you land after leaving ship.

Jimmy
Open first cell and he'll thank you. Don't wear uniform.

Kettle
Press switch, wait, steam envelope. See Phone number.

Keys
(in guard's rest room)
Unlock all doors.

Killing Ayatola
After phoning Helen (and after Matthew has had his idea) to return to lounge, sit and wait until nine o'clock until the end of the game, whichever is longer. At that time, if everything has been done correctly, he will die.

Kitchen
Ignore all except kettle.

Letter
About Helen.

Lighter
(inside pocket)
Don't drop it. See Yubashis cabin and Rusted bedroom.

Lounge
See Television and Cardboard box.

Magazine
See Shelves. Read it.

Main hall
See Portrait.

Main kitchen
Ignore.

Matthew
Must be watching news to get an idea. Sit in chair and wait. See News.

Matthew's bedroom
Ignore.

Medical room
See Grilles, Uniform and Bottle.

Moss
Ignore.

News
On TV at 6pm.

Newspaper clipping
In barren park. Read it.

Officer
Avoid unless wearing uniform.

Old wall
Location of rag. See Yubashis cabin.

Page
See Shelves. Read it.

Parchment
See Shelves. Ignore it.

Written in Chinese.

Pipes
Remains
See Blanket and Newspaper clippings.

Penknife
Ignore.

Petrol
In Jerry can. See Yubashis cabin.

Phone number
Ring Helen after news. Go to phone in hall, dial 0101 725 1426 (examine envelope to find number), then return to lounge and sit. See Killing Ayatola.

Photo
Photo of Helen.

Pills
See Cabinet. In packet, eat when tired.

Pipes
(in basement)
See Value and Wire.

Pliers
Cut wires on generator – wires are in the same location.

Portrait
(in main hall)
Can examine it.

Professor Fergere
No importance.

Rag
See Old wall or Yubashis cabin.

Ring
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

Robert
Ignore.

Robin's bedroom
See Rusted and Wardrobe.

Rubble
(in civic centre)
Examines it. See Shelter.

Rusted bedroom
To go home you must have the coin, lighter (in coat pocket) and be wearing shoes, jeans, sweatshirt, boxer shorts, gold ring and coat. You must not be carrying anything you found in the future. Then enter trance.

Ruined building
Haa steel tank with water. See Water.

Ruined shops
Location of wrench. See Wrench.

Samurai sword
The best weapon, found in Yubashis cabin.

Shelter
Don't forget rubber. See Yubashis cabin.

Shelves
In admin storage room.

Ship
Yubashis's ship, arrives at 5pm on Wednesday June 30th at the jetty. See Yubashis cabin.

Shoes
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

Shorts
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

Sign One (on fence)
In Chinese, incomprehensible.

Sign Two
(in ruined flats)
Says 'Golden Grove'.

Sign Three
(on wall in Sector Three)
Read it.

Small book
(in hallway) Ignore it.

Small hall
See Diagrams.

Snowstorm
Found in waste tip building. Give to Daryl.

Soap
(in tub)
You can wash your hands with it (if you like).

Steel rod
(inside wasteland)
Second-best weapon.

Step/Stairs
In waste tip building.

Store room
See Drum and Apple.

Sweatshirt
See Clothes and Rusted bedroom.

System building
To enter see Grilles.

Tag
Read it.

Tall guard
Avoid unless wearing uniform.

Uniform
Turns it on. See Matthew.

Towel
(in bathroom)
Ignore.

Trance
To enter a trance – inhale, hold breath, exhale. Repeat this to leave trance. While in trance, PORTRAY EVENTS THROUGH EYES. To change into an eagle METAMORPHOS INTO EAGLE while in trance. See Eagle.

Tub
See Water.

Uniform
(in medical room)
Wear it and the men in the system building won't attack you unless you attack them first. Remove it when rescuing Jimmy or he'll attack you.

Unshaven guard
Ignore.

Valve
On pipes in basement. Turn valve and go once you have the keys S, S, S to finish Part Two.

Vehicles
Examine them.

Viewpoint
Starting place.

Wardrobe
Ignore.

Water
(in tub)
Don't drink – radiation sickness.

Wire
(in basement)
See Pliers.

Wrench
Third-best weapon. See also Sign.

Yubashi
System leader of this part of the country. Avoid unless wearing uniform.

Yubashis cabin
When you land on the ship go S, D, S, empty can, take lighter from pocket, burn rag, then... see Fence.

Yellow paper
See Shelves.

Read it.

Yubashis room
See Samurai sword.

Drip
See Trance.
**Genius Mouse**

- Genius Mouse is a high resolution two button mouse featuring optical counting, teflon guides, microswitches, rubber coated ball and high quality interface.
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  - Zoom in to add detail in fine mode.
  - Pulldown/Icon driven menus for case of use.
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**WHAT THE MAGAZINES HAD TO SAY...**

- C.T.W. **"Pick of the Week"**
- C.C.I. **"Best Graphic Product of the Year"**
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<tr>
<th>Package</th>
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<tr>
<td>NEW Sam Coupe</td>
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<td>NEW Coupe Disk Drive</td>
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<td>NEW Spectrum Plus One Drive</td>
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JOYSTICKS & INTERFACES

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<td>Spec + 2 Joystick Adapter</td>
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<td>Konix Navigator</td>
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GRAPHICS & SOUND

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<td>Cheetah Sound Sampler</td>
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BACK-UP DEVICES

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<td>DMP 2000/2160/3000 Printers</td>
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DATA RECORDERS & ACCESSORIES

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UTILITIES

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DISC DRIVES & ACCESSORIES

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MONITORS/TV

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SPARES & REPAIRS

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PERSONAL CALLERS WELCOME

Making technology work for you!
Larry Horsfield's Starship Quest is the follow-up to his very popular Magnetic Moon, and, before I forget, if you want to buy both games together you can do it at the reduced price of £4.50. Magnetic Moon was a very enjoyable multi-part space game, inspired by Larry's love of science fiction, and this is an even better sequel, again influenced by several sci-fi novels but in particular a story called Galactic Derelict by André Norton.

Once again there are both 48K and 128K versions of this game, and again it's good to see someone making full use of the extra memory of the bigger machine rather than producing the bog-standard 48K game and leaving it at that. The 128K version has more features, much more gameplay and a greatly-extended ending (something I know loads of people wished every adventure had), and that's the one I looked at.

Remember though that some of those features will be missing on the smaller memory machines. The FAWW produced game began with an optional story and instructions program. This is well worth reading -- in fact, it's half a novel in itself, but I wish the author would disable the key with the program mark on it! I don't mind them now and then, but it gets a bit wearing when they're in every other sentence!! See what I mean? He should also learn the difference between 'it's' and 'its', which he confuses constantly.

As for the story, well, basically it's that you're Mike Erin, pilot on an alien spaceship and you wish you weren't. You've got two minutes to gather some equipment together, make it to the lifeboat and jump before the mother ship does its hyperspace jump.

Then you can get back to the planet you just left and find out the secret of the two discs that were given to you in Magnetic Moon by a beautiful princess. These aren't any old discs, not your Dolly Parton in 45 and John Donovan Live At The Adelaide Abattoir -- these two discs could hold the key to the universe! Blimey. But don't tell me... in the next part you have to find the lock.

Back in this bit, and specifically in the first part (The Abandoned Planet), you begin in the Stellar Queen's control room with Cap'n Morgan and Mr Pocks for company. I'm glad to see the author's included a few more response messages this time, so that you're not forever being told that "You can't do that" every time you try to examine the billion and one things in the location description. Okay, so often you get a "That's just scenery" message, but at least it makes a change.

I made a quick trip around the ship and found Commander Giles being treated in bed by my girlfriend! What? Oh well, it is the sick bay and she is the ship's doctor. I'm glad I found her though, because when I said I was leaving she gave me something I really wanted. You'll have to play the game to find out what it is.

The use of other characters in the game works well, and adds a lot to the atmosphere. While there is any atmosphere, that is, as pretty soon you should be down on the surface of an alien planet, although it looks remarkably like old England to me -- gently rolling countryside, long grass, dotted with trees. There's a sign on a derelict fence, but unfortunately it's written in alien and I must have left my Text Yourself! Alien book back on the ship. That's a shame, as you pretty soon find quite a few other signs too. And what do those marquees on the two discs say as well?

There are some abandoned buildings about, and you get quite a few pictures of this seemingly deserted planet. There are some creatures around, apart from the droids you find later on. There are a few worms to be dug up, and a pair of eyes down a hole in the ground. I'm going to give away the answer to one of the problems here, as it shows why, to me, FSS Adventures are still in the second division of adventure producers and not the first -- although they're admittedly near the top of the league! To get the creature whose eyes you can see, you have to THROW WORM IN HOLE (and do it twice). If you try the more obvious PUT WORM IN HOLE you're told you can't do it, and this could make many people, especially new players, think they were wrong on the track and so on.

If you try to DROP WORM DOWN HOLE you merely DROP WORM, which burrows away into the ground and disappears and there is only a limited supply of the wormy things. Other little errors like "a a area" and "a animal's burrow" just slightly spoil what's otherwise a jolly good romp.

You certainly can't fault the features the game has. It accepts full sentences, and you can LOOK NORTH as well as GO NORTH. You can also LOOK UNDER, ACROSS, AROUND, OVER and IN things (and will need to). INFO gives a list of which commands have been abbreviated to one letter, and VOCAB gives a lengthy list of acceptable commands. There are RAMSAVE and ALL commands, and with the EXAMINE ALL command you can specify whether it's the objects WORN, CARRIED or HERE. Phew.

At the end of the day adventures, like books, films, music or anything else, are all down to personal taste. Some people rave over Larry Horsfield's games, saying they're the best things since Heinz Steam Puddings, but, while I quite like them, they don't have that extra bit of sparkle for me that you get from John Wilson or Linda Wright. Don't let that stop you things one of them though, as they may well sparkle for you.

Title ........ Starship Quest
Price ........ £2.50 (please specify if 48K or 128K version wanted)
Publisher .............. FSS Adventures, 40 Harvey Gardens, London SE7 8AJ

SUMMER SALES SPECIAL!!

Hey, it's the time of the year when people go round dropping their wad-its... prices, I mean, as sales happen up and down the country (and even elsewhere). So what else could I do but round up some soopa-dooop summer discounts on lots of adventurish doodads just for you (hoo)?

FANCY A TAPE, WORM?

Do you fancy a cheapo copy of the best, the greatest, and at the moment the only tape magazine for Spectrum lovers? Well, lucky you, 'cos you can have one! Cor, what a coincidence. Good job I asked really, wasn't it? The tapezine or tape magazine in question is Enigma, and you can get the current issue, whatever that happens to be, for only £1.50 instead of the usual £1.00. Enigma is suitable for any machine, from the 48K through to the SAM, and is so stuffed with goodies it fills one side of a C60 cassette. Lawks! There are always umnum reviews, with screenshots so you know just what you're getting, plus the essential adventure section full of helpful hints (like 'Buy Mike Garrard's book', an example I picked out purely at random), plus news, features, hacks and assorted nitty little progs. So what are you waiting for?

TO: Enigma, 15 Westfield Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland AB5 9YR.

FROM:

Name:

Address:

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Mike's games are pretty yummy too, and, what's more, he's agreed to create two special double-tapes just for you, for a super special bargain of just £1.00.

TO: 6th Day Software, 18 Flaxmill, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside L46 7UH.

FROM:

Name:

Address:

I enclose my payment for £1.50 so white gets down to work and writes more spiffy adventures, that is. He's the guy who created budget adventures, way back in the 80s, and long ago my Spectrum didn't even have any dust or grubby marks on it. But look at it now! Custard, crumbs, jam, bits of Jaffa Cakes... yumm, yumm!

Mike's games are pretty yummy too, and, what's more, he's agreed to create two special double-tapes just for you, for a super special bargain of just £1.00.

AND ON THE 8TH DAY HE CREATED ADVENTURES

I've run some special offers from 8th Day Software over the last 12 months that you might think we must have run out of them. Well, we have now! This is absolutely, positively and definitely the last special offer on 8th Day games - until guv'nor Mike

KIND SOUS!

Last time he was a Kind Soul I pulled Anthony Melville's leg a little bit. His games were in alphabetical order, and so I asked if he kept his room nice and tidy as well. The joke's on me, as Anthony's written back to say he's 101 and it's his wife who keeps his room nice and tidy for him! Here's his latest mega-list, alphabetical of course, so help on the following send your send to 39 Slateburn Drive, L46 1G4...


Jackie Holt's obviously had her head down recently too. For help on any of the following send your send to questions to 13 Montague Street, Bellingham, SE16.

Note that Jackie's not offering full solutions, so don't waste your money asking. Tell her where you're stuck and she'll try to unstuck you, and that's as far as it goes.

TO: 6th Day Software, 18 Flaxmill, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside L46 7UH.

FROM:

Name:

Address:

I enclose my payment for £1.50 so white gets down to work and writes more spiffy adventures, that is. He's the guy who created budget adventures, way back in the 80s, and long ago my Spectrum didn't even have any dust or grubby marks on it. But look at it now! Custard, crumbs, jam, bits of Jaffa Cakes... yumm, yumm!

Mike's games are pretty yummy too, and, what's more, he's agreed to create two special double-tapes just for you, for a super special bargain of just £1.00.
NEW! - AMIGA PACK
Commodore A500 Flight Of Fantasy
£399

A500 BATMAN PACK
AMIGA 2000
FLIGHT OF FANTASY

The Commodore A500 Batman Pack must surely rank as one of the most popular computer packs ever! The pack features the Commodore Amiga 500 computer with mouse controller and TV modulator, plus four (4) software titles. The software includes Batman The Movie, first Gotham City of the Batman in action, in Oslev’s top selling title based on the Broadway Italian film. New Zealand Story - high quality conversion of the leading arcade game, Interceptor - Dogfight with two F-16’s in this leading flight simulator, Deluxe Paint II - top quality Amiga graphic package which sets the standard for others to follow return the coupon for further details.

PACK INCLUDES:
A500 Computer & Mouse £398.99
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Batman The Movie £24.95
New Zealand Story £24.95
Interceptor £24.95
Deluxe Paint II £49.95
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A500
Rainbow Arts/£3.99 cass/£1.299 disk

Matt Look, I'd like you all to quiet down for a moment if you will and put on your serious faces, because I'm going to let you in on a little secret. You see, sometimes (just sometimes) I take a look at the games we review in Bargain Basement (the £2.99 jobbies) and then at some of the regular reviews, and I really can't see that much difference. Maybe it's because anything a little bit complicated tends to get rendered, almost automatically, in monochrome these days ("because the Speccy's not very good at colour") meaning that at first sight many premiere products look no more impressive than, I don't know, the latest Codies Simulator or something.

So imagine my joy when a game comes along that has 'full price' written all over it - like this one for instance. It's big (big! Big!), it's varied (varied!), it's more colourful (colourful! Colourful!) than you'd ever believe it looks like it's worth every penny basically. A minor miracle, doncha think?

But less (less! Less!) of the superlatives - what's Turrican all about? Well, for those who missed the Magragran a couple of issues back (shame on you! Where've you been?), it's an absolutely whopping (five worlds, each divided into a number of fairly lengthy sub-levels) shoot-em-up packed full of some of the most spectacular graphics ever seen on the Speccy.

Your little man (a rather characterless chappy in a silver space suit, who looks nothing like the butch Robocop lookalike of the adverts) runs, jumps, ducks and occasionally flies (there are jet packs you'll need to collect for a couple of the levels) all over the place, collecting power-up icons and blasting the living daylights out of all sorts of baddies. Starting off on a sort of desert landscape (blue skies, yellow/brown rocks and the occasional shrub) you work your way along numerous platforms, across a couple of waterfalls, down some tunnels and into just about the most humungous underground maze system ever. Somewhere at the end of all this you'll find Morgul, the man (or rather, flying head thing), responsible for 'all the fears and nightmares of mankind' (!), and obviously have to work out some way to bump him off.

One of the great strengths of the game is the sheer number of extra weapons you can collect along the way. They're thick on the ground all over the shop, as are extra power icons, often hidden in 'secret' rooms behind false walls or floating in space Super Mario Brothers style. It's wise to go off the beaten path sometimes and search out a rich seam (unusually for this sort of game you don't have to take a single 'correct' route but can wander off at a tangent for a bit if you wish). Walk left instead of right at the start of Level 1.1 for instance and shoot about in the air a bit - you'll be glad you did!

Weapons include such goodies as Energy Lines (acting rather like smart bombs, they send waves of force outwards from your character, killing most everything they touch), Giro-mode (where you turn into an indestructible spinning top, useful only for bouncing down hills), Megablastet (like a giant Star Wars light saber) and so on. (The Megablast is especially useful - not only can it kill aliens, it can help locate hidden power icons, often placed out of normal reach overhead, and uncover secret passageways hidden behind fake wall blocks with ease.)

However, the real stars of the game are the backdrops - from the Alien-influenced World Three to the giant mechanical stars of Level Four (depicted with some neat parallax scrolling rarely seen on
some. For a start there's the scrolling — though eight-way and generally quite smooth, there were occasions (particularly in the flying sequences) when I felt it was actually going too fast for me! There I was being whisked past all these fabulous graphics at a phenomenal rate, almost as if I was on a giant conveyor belt. Whisked by too fast really — I often felt vaguely out of control and resented being dragged into enemies through no real fault of my own.

Then there's the animation — I already said Turrican itself is a bit of a characterless fellow, but what I haven't pointed out is how silly he can sometimes look. Though generally well animated, there are sections (like when he's running up and down the sloped platforms in the Alien bit) when he seems to be hobbling along with a broken leg or something — not ideal.

Still, let's face it, there are minor niggles. Even if for some reason I can't quite get a firm focus on Turrican (although Rainbow Arts stuff has improved vastly of late it still carries slight traces of the days when everything they brought out was a direct and slightly soulless rip-off of something else — remember Great Giana Sisters?) it's still a spectacular achievement. I can't wait for the next one (something called Apprentice, I believe) because if they manage to combine the sheer professionalism and hard work that's been put into this game with a truly original concept or a strong, distinctive character (heck, Little Puff In Dragonland has more soul than this!) he results would be absolutely spectacular! Still, let's not knock it — as a technical and graphical achievement this is one of the best games of this year, and a bit of a 'Must Buy'. Hurrah!
IT'S THE IMAGE WORKS/YOUR SINCLAIR

BACK TO THE FUTURE II COMPO!

WIN! A trip for two to Orlando, Florida!!

Yes, it's true!
To celebrate the launch of Image Works' brand new Back To The Future II computer game, we've got a couple of FREE PLANE TICKETS TO ORLANDO, FLORIDA just waiting for a lucky winner!
We'll pay your air fare and the cost of staying bed and breakfast in a decent hotel for a whole week! What you do once you're there of course is up to you - there are the beaches and the Everglades only a short(ish) car ride away, there's Cape Kennedy Space Centre to visit, there's posing around in your pastel T-shirt pretending to be Don Johnson! And best of all, there's Disneyland, where (just like in the film) you can visit the past, present and future - all in one day!

And there's more!
That's not all though - ten runners up won't go home disappointed either! Not only will they each get a copy of the new Back To The Future II game (see our review this very last), they'll also get their very own copy of the movie from CIC Video! This can't be bought in the shops (in fact it only became available for rental on July 6th) so you're sure to be the only one on your block with a copy! (Your mates won't be able to get their mitts on it for another six months or so!) The street value of each of these videos is about £90 (!) at the moment, so we're talking some pretty incredible prizes here!!

So what do I have to do, eh?
It's simple! In fact, it's even simpler than these competitions usually are. Just take a look at the picture - it's a scene from Back To The Future Part II (of course), but what's going on? Why's that guy hanging upside down? Why's that woman totally ignoring them both? Who can tell? (We certainly can't!!)

What we want you to do is give us your own explanation as to what's going on. Just make up whatever you want! It can take the form of a caption to the picture, some nifty little speech bubbles in the appropriate places (if you can fit them in) or even a lengthy scientific explanation as to what it's all about - the only rule is it's got to be funny! Anything goes (we positively welcome rude or saucy entries!) but remember - the winning caption has to be one that we can print! in the magazine!

Right then, on you go!
Okay, now all you need to do is fill in your name and address, cut out the coupon, stick it on a postcard and send it off to Image Works, CIC Video, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AP. And don't forget to include your date for Disneyworld - it's Friday August 3rd!

Rules:
We've got slightly more rules to the one that we want for a normal competition, so allow us a moment and we'll tell you all about them.

• winner of the competition is under the age of 16 you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or over 16 if you're over 16 there are no worries though - you can take whoever you bolly well like!

• You'll be able to take your holiday any time you choose, provided it's either between when the competition is judged and the end of November 1990, or between January and March 1991.

• Anyone associated with Future Publishing, Image Works Software or CIC Video will be in severe trouble if they try to enter this competition (and that means you, Karen)

• There'll be no meeting Mickey Mouse if you don't get your entry in to us by Friday August 3rd!

• Matt's got the final say so far as the competition is concerned, so any arguing with him and there'll be (big) trouble!

Caption (if it won't fit here, write it on a separate piece of paper)

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Post Code

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CECCO'S COLLECTION

Hewson
£12.99 cass/£17.99 disk

Andy Raf Cecco - worra guy! He's a star, isn't he? In fact, I'll even lay my big (and rather scabbed and smelly) toe on the line here and pronounce that he's the BIGGEST star the Speccy's ever seen. Mel Croucher? Don't make me laugh. (And he doesn't.) Kevin Toms? Ha! John Ritman? When did he last look at a Speccy? No, despite having the kind of name usually associated with poncy North London disk jockeys, the boy's quite a little achiever. *Exolon*, the two *Cybernoids*, *Stormlord* - corks all. And blow me down if Hewson haven't cottoned on to the fact and re-released each of these four stompers in one glorious package! Dope!

Exolon
Been here before? Of course you have. Megagamed way back in August '87, this horizontal-fliper splashed its colour across the shoot-em-up spectrum (if you see what I mean), wowing everyone with a main sprite that actually walked. It didn't trip, stumble and break both knees, it walked. Plop plop plop. And when it wasn't walking it was jumping. And when it wasn't jumping it was beaming itself up and down between teleportation 'shower cubicles', dodging the merry parade of missiles, bullets and balloons coming its way. "Ooh!" we squealed. "Two different walkways to trudge along! Strategy in a shoot-em-up!" Exciting stuff indeed.
And it's still pretty hot popp. What's there has obviously been surpassed a thousand times since (not least by Monsignor G himself), but the strong, bold colours, fluid gameplay and surprise of 100 problematic screens each with its own 'solution', will still entertain those not familiar with it. Comparatively simple fare, yes, but a tasty treat nonetheless. (Burrp.)

90 Rating: 76

The very first screen of Exolon - by Jingo, the boy's come a long way since then!

Cybernoid
Again, what can I say that hasn't been said already? Adopting the rather weathered and weary spaceship shoot-em-up genre (some things never change, eh, Speccy-chums?), Raf plowed bucketloads of innovation back into it to deliver a lethal May '88 Megagame, bursting out all over the shop with skull-scratching strategy and blisterama pyrotechnics. Plunged down into the Massive Federation Intergalactic storage depot (well, it's hardly going to be Tiny if it's intergalactic, is it?), your task is to bamboozle your way through a myriad of tunnels, disposing of as many pillaging pirates and their defence installations as you can. Thus you reclaim the territory. Thus you win the game. And it really is a pain in the pot. Essentially, Cecco is using the framework of *Exolon* but moulding it into, by this time, something much more fresh, advanced and invigorating. Like its predecessor, it demands precision reflexes and a compendium of screen-by-screen experience to conquer - but it's a hell of a lot more finickety. And his chunky, clear graphics have come on leaps and bounds too - in fact, that's exactly what they do. There are more flazzy pop spurt of Technicolor here than you could shake a bong of sherbet Rainbow Crystals at.

A classic.
90 Rating: 90

The Cybernoid squasher - Cecco always includes something like this in his games. Well, why mend what ain't bust?

Cybernoid II
Faced with the chance to stretch the original to its limits and pocket a tidy sum of money (probably), this Megagame hit the shelves in late '88. More elaborate arsenals, more split-spattering explosions, more sleepless nights. As a sequel it's nigh on perfect - restricted by the environment handed down to it but innovative enough to boast its own identity. As such, it may well have been the hardest game to program. But even then it's hard not to imagine Cecco's alma mater quietly plotting away at its next project. Which was...

90 Rating: 91

Cybernoid II refreshes the parts most bonfire nights cannot reach!

Stormlord
Ooh ah eeh eeh oochh! Sorry, getting a bit carried away here. But what a joy, eh! I mean, forget about the game's second and just look at that into box at the bottom of the screen - it's just so groovy (in a slyly art-deco kind of way). All too often details like this are overlooked by Speccy programmers (and if they're not they tend to ignore the expense game-play), but without it Stormlord's atmosphere simply wouldn't have been so intoxicating.

Another horizontal-fliper, it sees you bouncing along a wicked fantasy 3D landscape, collecting, swapping and utilising various objects to help you rescue all your cute little nymphs from the heinous clutches of some nasty witch. There are still loads of perilously-difficult obstacles to dodge and duck (like Hubbe-Bubba-coloured worms and acid rain) but, whereas Cecco's previous offerings were variations on one theme (ie shoot-em-ups), here he's decided to fine-tune his 'puzzling' skills and devise an arcade adventure instead. And he's gone the whole hog - from the primitive beginnings of Exolon's choice of two walkways, here you have to spring over into the screens either side of you to suss out what you need to achieve and in what order. It's all a bit of a step forward - but watch out for those mushrooms! '90 Rating: 92

Stormlord - springboards lead the way!

Better get your Ray-bans out, folks - *Cybernoid II* refreshes the parts most bonfire nights cannot reach!

**Final Verdict**

Fat Cat Cecco and the crime de la crime - you won't see a better compilation all year.

91° 94° 93°

LIFE EXPECTANCY GRAPHICS ADDICTIVENESS

DIAGNOSIS

INSTANT APPEAL

Fat Cat Cecco and ta crime de la crime - you won't see a better compilation all year.
What's got ships, oil rigs, aeroplanes and parachutes, is drawn in an almost unique combination of filled 3D polygons and sprites, and (rather spookily) mingles shoot-'em-ups and flight sims all in one neat little package?

Why, it's *Snow Strike* of course! Just one thing's got MATT BIELBY confused — why isn't there any actual snow in it?

---

**SNOW STRIKE**

Oh, I see, 'snow is actually hip street slang for some sort of spooky drug or other, and that's what we're going to 'strike' out against in the game (hence the name). A bit of a disappointment really — I was rather hoping for something with tons of real snow and ice, lots of little skiers running about and (with a bit of luck) a few of my favourite animals (like polar bears, penguins and blueberry seals) to provide the scenic backdrops. But no such luck — we're talking boring old aircraft carriers and things here instead. Ho hum.

Still, let's take a gander at it anyway. (An hour or two passes.) Hmm, I think things might be starting to perk up. This is a bit of a weird one, all right. It looks like a flight sim — it's packed with 3D-filled polygon graphics, you can easily stall or crash your plane if you're a crap pilot and there's nothing to stop you from zooming off in any direction you choose. But it's not a flight sim (really). Then again, saying it's a shoot-'em-up is misleading too — enemy planes don't just get thrown at you thick and fast but come at you one at a time (and can even be avoided, if you wish), ground targets have to be found (they don't just appear at the end of each level) and so on. Really it's either a very superior and weird shoot-'em-up with knobs on, or an incredibly simplistic kiddies' version of Bomber. (Take your pick.) Either way, it's a laud odd.

So how did this bizarre state of affairs come about, eh? Whose idea was it? (Damned if I know!) Let's ring up Graham Stafford (the programmer) and find out.

Bring, bring... Hello? Graham? Hi. Erm, who's weird idea was this then, eh?

Um, I dunno either actually. *Snow Strike* was originally developed by Expy in the States for the C64 and PC, and now it's being converted in conjunction with US Gold in this country to other machines. The idea is that it's meant to appeal to everybody (both flight sim and shoot-'em-up fans) though of course whether it will or not has to be seen. The game is set ten years in the future, and puts you in the pilot's seat of a new type of fighter plane on a series of ten missions to destroy drug trafficking around the Caribbean. Five of the missions take off from an aircraft carrier and five from a land base, so there'll hopefully be plenty of variety.

Okay. Let's pretend we've just loaded up the game and know nothing about it. What will happen?

Well, first off you'll see a screen with a little rubber-keyed Speccy on it and a Microdrive attached to a monitor (obviously this is just for the Speccy version — you'll see an ST if it's an ST game and so on). This is where you select your mission, difficulty level and co-pilot (each one of whom has his own personality, which shows in the way his messages — like 'enemy base approaching' or whatever — appear at the bottom of the screen, and in whether he immediately bail out when you're in trouble or stick with it to the bitter end). From here on what happens depends on whether you've got a 128 or 48K Spectrums, I believe. In using the full capabilities of the 128 machine and then cutting bits out for the 48, rather than starting with 48K then adding a few extra sounds or whatever for the bigger computers. And what that means is it's going to be a pretty hefty multload for all you 48Kers. Sorry.

Anyway, the next bit's the control lower screen. Actually this isn't necessary to the game — you can quite easily play without it — but it does give you a lot more information at your fingertips. It'll multload for 48Kers, I'm afraid, so they might not use it too often.

All it really amounts to is the same as radiating back to base. It lets you know about weather conditions (you get buffeted about if they're bad), the location of friendly bases, enemy bases, patrols of enemy aircraft and stuff like that. It's useful to know where you stand in relation to this stuff, because if you get hit and have to bail out then we go to a parachuting sequence, where a different control panel (with a different mini-radar screen) appears at the bottom of the picture — you have to try and steer the direction of the parachute towards a friendly base.

You also have to choose when to open your 'chute (don't do it too high up or you'll run out of oxygen — let alone take an age to come down! — and don't do it too low or you'll die). Anyway, land near to the base and you'll be rescued, so that's okay, but end up too far
away and you'll either get captured or die (or something) - anyway, the game's over basically. There's a rather horrible picture of a coffin and a bit of funeral march music if this happens. Oh yes, and it might be worth remembering that you have to get a lot closer to home base (an aircraft carrier) in the sea missions to get rescued than you do in the land-based ones - that water's blooming cold you know!

**I know! How much like a flight aim is this game in terms of the weaponry you operate then?**

Fairly close I guess, though the choices are limited. Enemy missiles fired at you can be either heat seekers or radar-guided. Since it's fairly hard for you to tell which, we have your co-pilot flash up a little message to tell you, so you'll know what sort of avoiding action to take - like firing a flare to distract the heat seekers or chaff if it's radar guided (a sort of cloud of shimmering scrap of aluminium that look like another, bigger target to the missile). It doesn't work for whatever reason and you do get hit then the damage you might suffer will vary - hopefully it won't kill you but merely disable your plane, so you can parachute to safety. If you're really lucky it might just clip you and you'll be able to go on with the mission.

When you come across a squadron of enemy planes they come at you at a time - you can either take them on in turn, or just try and take out a couple and then run away. (The weather station guy can tell you how many there are and so on). Though there's only one type of enemy plane, we've drawn 57 different versions of it as they come at you at different angles and stuff, so the animation is fairly good. You yourself are armed with guns, air-to-air missiles and air-to-surface missiles. As soon as you get your target into the crosshairs at the centre of the screen (which you do by flying your plane directly at it) the computer locks on for a few seconds and tracks the plane as it moves around the screen - you can now fire at it within this time period to score a hit. If you're using the gun then it only locks on for a second or something, so you have to be quick! It's the same sort of thing with the ground-based targets - you have to do a bit of low-level running to look-out for, say, the black-painted drugs fields (as opposed to the grey cross-hatched ordinary fields) and then lock on and fire in the same way.

**How easy was the game to program?**

Well, getting the original American source code was pretty tricky for a start! The PC version of the game was incredibly badly written - well, okay, it wasn't bad, but it was done lazily. You can see that by the fact we've got the Speccy to run anything at a speed pretty much on a par with it really.

The 'polygon clipper' was particularly tricky to suss out too. The aircraft carrier, for instance, is built up out of polygons, but you don't necessarily see all of each one on-screen at any one time. What the polygon clipper works out is where to clip it off at the edge of the screen. It sounds like one of those things that'd be dead easy to do, but in fact it ain't that simple - that routine alone took up six whole programming days!

Blimey! I think I've run out of questions! Well, thanks a lot for your time, Graham. Before you go, would you like to tell me a bit about yourself and the guys who worked with you on Snow Strike?

Okay, well I wrote the code, and David Fish (another in-house guy at Walking Circles) did the graphics. We've been around for ages (about nine years) and have worked on all sorts - <i>Dark Star</i>, <i>The Living Daylights</i>, <i>Warner from Elite</i> (a dreadful game!), <i>Splend Image</i> (appalling game design but quite well executed), <i>APB</i> (the first chance in ages we'd had to work on something that we actually thought had the potential to be a good game), and so on. It's not all Speccy stuff though - we do lots of PC work nowadays too.

Excellent! Cheers, Graham.

And there we have it. <i>Snow Strike</i> looks to me like it's a well-constructed game, but for those of you who hate wading through 20 pages of manuals to find out how to make the flags go up and down in most flight sims, but who also want a bit more variety from your gameplaying than you get with the average shoot-'em-up, then it could be a Godsend. Keep your eyes peeled - we'll have a full review soon.

**THE TEN MISSIONS YOU CAN TAKE**

There's no particular order you have to do them in, though some are a bit harder than others. Half of them are land-based, and half are over the sea (at the start of these you take off from an aircraft carrier). One of each is a free-flight mission - with these you just have to blat around shooting things as they come at you - while the rest each have a specific target you've got to destroy.

The four specific sea-based missions are...

- Sink the enemy carrier
- Destroy drug transport ships
- Terminate enemy oil supply (ie some oil rigs)
- Stop drug convoy ships

And the land-based ones...

- Destroy drugs labs
- Bomb cocaine refinery
- Demolish drug warehouse
-Terminate drugs transport

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT!

**FAX BOX**

**Game**.......... <i>Snow Strike</i>
**Publisher**...... Epyx (US Gold)
**Programmers** Walking Circles
**Price**.......... To be announced
**Release date** August
Rainbow Islands from Ocean

This follow up to Bubble Bobble looks set to be as much of a hit as Ocean’s last cute-ey game, New Zealand Story. It combines colourful visuals with frighteningly addictive gameplay, with the result that you end up with one hell of a game.

Graphics have been downloaded from the original arcade version and the moves are just the same. Lead Bob and Bob to the top levels by firing rainbows into the air and then climbing them. When you reach the top of a platform, you can collect thousands of bonus points. There are seven islands to complete, each one more challenging than the last.

‘Craftgold’s ST Version of Rainbow Islands is one of the best coin-op conversions to have appeared in along time’ Maff Evans, ST Format

Rainbow Islands

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Fiendish Freddy's Big Top of Fun from Mindscape

Mindrace's circus extravaganza brings you thrills, spills and a whole barrel of laughs. Dive from high-boards, walk tightropes, be fired from cannons, swing on trapezes, throw knives and juggle in a desperate bid to save the circus from the big bad bank.

An original multi-event game with a wicked sense of humour!

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Black Tiger from U.S. Gold

US Gold have had major hits with Strider and Ghouls 'n' Ghosts. Now comes their latest horizontally-scrolling action game, Black Tiger.

In a similar fashion to Ghouls, the objective is to charge through horizontally-scrolling levels, climbing ladders and following red arrows to the end of the level. Along the way, fight ugly gargoyles, snakes and even deadly orchids using your powerful weaponry. When the going gets tough, disappear inside the shop, pick up some extra weapons, and go out for another merry blast.

If you're a fan of horizontally-scrolling action games, you'll love this one.

Cabal from Ocean

Go crazy in cartoonland with Cabal. A lone trooper, he's dropped behind enemy lines and must fight his way back home. Level after level must be cleared of buildings and bad guys with machine guns, grenades and bazookas. It looks like Operation Wolf for the under-fives but plays like a vet.

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**BASEMENT**

**HIJACK**

**Summit** £2.99

Now this is an elderly one. Hijack’s a little like Impossible Mission with the game taken out — no leaping from level to level, just offices in which you have to find out info. The excuse for it is a hijack, with you as the head honcho of the CIA’s Hijack Division, dedicated to stopping out terrorism by peaceful means. That’s just about unique in computer games, which usually prefer to stamp out things with lasers and smart bombs, but never mind. There are a number of people in your department, all doing various jobs — you delegate certain activities to them while at the same time making sure that they’re not stabbing you in the back.

**SLAPFIGHT**

**Hit Squad** £2.99

It’s amazing the difference a couple of years can make. When Slapfight first came out it was hailed as an enormous advance — a shoot-em-up that was both fast and nice to look at, one that finally ditched the long-standing notion that no-one could produce a really smooth scrolling blaster on the Beloved Beemat. Of course, since then, every software company worth the name has produced about half a dozen of the things.

most of them identical, and in 1990 Slapfight hasn’t quite the same novelty. But that doesn’t stop it being a cracking little game. It’s the usual old Undead-style thing — you’re skimming the surface of a planet (this time called Orac), blasting everything you can. When you zap some of the little blighters, stars appear which you collect to give your ship extra capabilities (where would we be without those extra capabilities?). These include Speed (essential if you’re planning to stay alive), Wing (makes your ship three times the size and three times as fast), Laser (projects an invisible beam in front of your craft) and H Mics (missiles which home in on all targets). Hardly original, yes, but extremely effective. It’s starts hard and gets harder, and it’s been so beautifully thought-out that anyone who knows their shoot-em-ups will find it hard to stay away. Talio designed the original camo-op, Imagine converted it for the Spectrum — a useful little bargain at £2.99.

**HOWARD THE DUCK**

**Alternative £2.99**

Naturally there are film tie-ins and there are film tie-ins. Unfortunately Howard The Duck is a bit of a film tie-in — in other words, this duck is a turkey. Actually, that’s unfair, as the game is based not on the terrible film of a few years back, but on a Marvel comic from even longer ago, Adventure On Volcano Island. Howard, the cigar-chomping, skirt-chasing duck that he is, is keen to get off this island, and so will you be after playing the game. It seems inevitable somehow that at this late stage in his career Howard should be made an expert in the oriental art of Quack Fu, which means that the game swiftly degenerates into a not-very-good beat-em-up, albeit with a maze element. The trouble is that’s so obviously been chucked together at the last minute — as though the software company spent so long slapping themselves on the back with satisfaction at getting the licence that no-one remembered to write a game. It is at least relatively easy to play — well, on the lowest of the four difficulty levels anyway — but the graphics are poor and there’s no sense of atmosphere. There’s much better out at three quid than this.

**NINETEEN BOOT CAMP**

**Summit** £2.99

N-n-n-n- and so on. Back in 88, this was one of those games we’d heard about for SOOOOOOOO long that when it finally spluttered onto the shelves no-one was all that interested. Cascade was the company who bought the licence, and in many ways Boot Camp is typical of Cascade’s games — not bad, perfectly playable, but just lacking that killer atmosphere, perfectly.
touch to make it a real humdinger. Basically it's a course in basic training, the results of which you are supposed to take through to the next game in the 'Nineteen' series to help you survive against the sithly Viet Cong. (Was there a next game? I really can't remember.) Which means four separate exercises, each assessing co-ordination, stamina and morale. Sounds like Combat School? It does me too.

The problem here is that Stage One, the Assault Course, is virtually impossible to complete. It's only when we get to Stage Two, the Shooting Range, that we really get into Fun City. You're in a forest at the right end of a gun, and targets pop up which you have to pop off. At least, some of them you have to, because mixed in with them are women and children—hit them and you lose points aplenty. It's a stem, addictive little test, and the best bit of the game.

All in all, though, Boot Camp is a mixed bag, with three out of its four sections well below standard. But for three quid you may regard the shooting bit as worth the outlay.

**DALEY THOMPSON'S SUPER TEST**

Hit Squad £2.99

Even further back into the archives here—this Daley Thompson game dates from the days when Daley Thompson actually used to win things... 1988. Actually, for those days, this isn't half bad—a bit of a joystick juggler, to be sure (I always prefer playing those sorts of game on a rubber keyboard, but then I'm just an old pervert but not a bad one at that. For the two days of your eight-event decathlon you've got to be unbelievably brilliant at everything, and then some. There's pistol shooting, cycling, spring-board diving (very tricky this), giant slalom, rowing, penalty kicking, ski-jumping and then, just when you're beginning to think about putting your feet up with a nice cup of Ovaltine, a tug o' war. Gasps! More than half of these use the juggling technique, but there's enough variety to keep your spirits up, which is more than can be said of many Track And Field variants from this time. It has shown its age, but at the time it sold simply trillions of copies, and it's not entirely difficult to see why. A nifty, well-planned package.

**PRO TENNIS SIMULATOR**

CodeMasters £2.99

Yes, it's that magic word, Spec-chums—but are simulators still simulators? Actually this is just another common-or-garden tennis game, and, as it's a while since we've seen anything like that, it's not unwelcome. In programming terms, there's probably not a lot you can do with such a familiar format—other than make it extremely playable, which Pro Tennis Sim certainly is. Controls are simple, and happily the computer assumes you're a rather better player than you really are by, for instance, letting you serve properly most of the time. Too kind. Meanwhile there are three skill levels to battle against, and a rather fetching red clay court to play on (green comes along later, I believe). No, Pro Tennis Simulator is not at all bad. But "improved Scramble"? It seems daring David's been forgetting to take his pills again. A good solid bargain title—nothing more, nothing less.

**BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA**

Alternative £2.99

Another film tie-in that dates from the same period in Electric Dreams' History that produced Howard The Duck, which means, yup, another clunker. Not that there's anything sadder than a much-trumpeted film tie-in for a film that remembers. It was an adventure flick directed by John Carpenter and starring Kurt Russell, but at least that means we can happily forget the game as well. Not surprisingly it's another martial arts variant, and so everything boils down to people punching you, or occasionally, for variety, you punching them back. You control three characters, each of whom likes to fight with a different weapon, and each of the three is interested in the game lies in finding these weapons. But the balance of the game is all wrong. The martial arts johnnies are easy enough to kill, but the geese with guns are impossible to get past unless you've got a gun too (makes sense if you think about it). No, we've seen it all too often before, and done thousands of times better.

**RAD RAMP RACER**

Mastertronics Plus £2.99

I'm not quite sure exactly how high this one would score in the 'rad' department, but it's certainly quite fun. It's another one of those sideways-scrolling joblettes, this time with you jumping aboard a skateboard or BMX and bombing it about for six minutes (two minutes per level, actually) trying to score as many points as possible. The more ramps you jump over the more you score, providing of course you don't collide with a lamppost and 'wipe out' (ie fall off).

No doubt you'll soon get bored of racing about the same boring old tracks, so why not design a friendly hard one yourself on the built-in course editor? Hours of fun. The original track you play on is quite short, but there are two quarter pipes (swoop ramp things) at each side of each level so you can turn and keep going back and forth (if you see what I mean). He hum. Nothing too exciting... I'm afraid, but we're in the basement so I suppose you can't really expect too much. It's cheap, it's cheerful, and it's fun. What more could you ask for?
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Watch out when fighting on these drainpipe things – one false step and you could topple off the edge (losing not just a wad of energy but a whole life too!). So don’t!

Shadow Warriors
Ocean

We’d hoped for a review in this issue, but sadly it wasn’t to be (they haven’t finished the blooming thing yet, have they?). So, just to make up for it, here are oodles of screenshots and a quick explanation of what Ocean’s latest martial arts biggie is all about.

Take a look at the screens. What do they remind you of? Yes, that’s right, it’s a beat-‘em-up! A particularly colourful (and fairly unusual) six-level jobbie to be exact – unusual in that there’s a great deal more interaction with the background fixtures and fittings than you usually get in most of these games.

Phone boxes, benches, gas canisters – just about anything lying around that doesn’t look screwed down – can be kicked, punched or jumped on to reveal bonus points, additional lives, extra energy, a sword to increase your range and so on. It’s worth taking a good kick at just about anything that looks breakable.

They’re midgets compared to the mean mutha at the end of the game – he’s considerably taller than the screen! (And there’s plenty here that’s familiar from other coin-op conversions too – the total lack of logic in the way the levels progress, for instance. From your starting point in a ‘typical’ New York cityscape (fairly)

- SHOCKS

Here’s the high-kicking tag wrestlers from the end of the first level – and if you think they’re big, check out some of the guys from later in the game! (They’re humongous!)

Try bashing in that Esso barrel – lots of the background stuff reveals energy and points!
enough you soon progress to a night-time river bank, the inside of a casino, walking through the Grand Canyon, a trip along a deserted railway track and more! (Quite how you travel between these levels isn’t quite clear.) The final level takes us inside the main baddie’s lair, which is packed to the brim with spooky abstract statues (though whether you can use these as weapons or not we’ve yet to work out).

Though we’ve not seen Shadow Warriors up and running yet, Teque (the programmers) assure us that it’s extremely fast, with large sprites, no colour-clash and absolutely loads of action. We had a quick chat with Mike Tablot (the programmer, who’s worked on all sorts of stuff from Skate Or Die to Andy Capp) who said that both he and graphic artist Mark Edwards were most proud of the technically impressive second level, where massive cars (which actually look like they might be static background graphics in these still screenshots) actually rumble diagonally across the screen towards you! Watch out, or you could quite easily be knocked flying!

We’re rather impressed with what we’ve heard about Shadow Warriors: Our advice to you? Look out for the completed game, which we’ll be reviewing when all the loose ends get tied up next issue (it could be quite a corker!).

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### Satan Dinamic

Surprisingly forsaking traditional Dinamic multicoloured graphics for a crisp monochrome, Satan finally arrives looking more like US Gold’s Black Tiger conversion than anything else! (Frighteningly similar, really.) Hmm. Let’s take a closer look. Well, it’s a four-dimensional scroller, with oodles of platforms and suitably demonic monsters dotted about (just like Black Tiger), but, what’s this? It loads in two parts? It’s got an incredibly difficult first half (and an even harder second half)? Perhaps it’s a genuine Dinamic game after all!

What else can we tell you about it? Well, not much really. The first bit features an ‘incredible scanner’ that searches for satanic forms independently of the main scroll (?! and enemies that change into other sorts of creatures when you’re not looking, and, um, that’s about it actually. Oh yes, and the second load has you change from being ‘a great warrior’ into a ‘cunning wizard’ (quite how we’re not sure) who has to plan a strategy for the destruction of Satan. It all sounds jolly tricky and should be out around now, priced £9.95 cassette and £14.95 disk.

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Um, er, um, this shop sequence looks like part of the traditional two-load structure is still there. But what about their usual Mr Impossibility difficulty levels, eh? Eh?
Defenders Of The Earth
SAM Coupé version
Enigma Variations

You may remember we’ve already reviewed the Specy version of Defenders (back in the June/July issue, fact fans) and gave it an average sort of report – fairly pretty, but a bit too samely to play, we felt. Well now, take a look at this – It’s the SAM Coupé-specific version, the very first arcade game to fully utilise the graphics capabilities of the Coupé. It features 16-colour high-resolution graphics, has pretty much the same Speccy code buried underneath and is available at a very reasonable $11.99 cassette, $14.99 disk – excellent value when you think that the screenshots could easily be mistaken for ST shots. If not Amiga! We were going to promise that when we receive a completed copy (and get the ailing YS Coupé up and running again) we’d bring you a proper review, but with the tragic collapse of MGT as a company (see this issue’s SAM Surgeon) we’re not so sure what’s going on. Will this game ever see the light of day now? Will the SAM resurface in a new form, or under new ownership? Watch this space...

Whether the knockout graphics will liven up the fairly dull gameplay remains to be seen, but visually at least it’s a game to die for.

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