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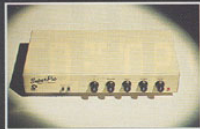
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REGULARS

NEWS	7
PREVIEWS.....	14
GRAPHICS.....	31
SCREEN PLAY	39
PD UPDATE	89
WORKBENCH	125
MUSIC	133
GAME BUSTERS.....	167

LETTERS	179
GURU	192

REVIEWS

STOCKING FILLERS ...	138
SOUND TRAP	153
MICROTEXT	161
ELAN PERFORMER	157
HOME OFFICE KIT	165



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FUTURE PUBLISHING, 1990. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without our permission. "Mathematically, it was so sweet".

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GAMES

FORMAT GOLD	
SIM CITY	55
STUNT CAR RACER	45

REVIEWED	
DOUBLE DRAGON II.....	40
MOONWALKER.....	41
NINJA WARRIORS.....	43
EYE OF HORUS	44

INFESTATION

Psygnosis transport you to a distant planet to clean up an alien breeding ground in our playable demo of this stunning filled-3D mould-breaker.

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SIMULATION?
WHY DO WE
DEMAND
REALISM? WE
TAKE A LOOK
AT THE
QUESTIONS
BEHIND THE
FACEMASK.

PLAYING FOR REAL 17

SWITCHBLADE.....	46
KEEP THE THIEF.....	49
RALLY CROSS CHALLENGE.....	50
EUROPEAN SUPERLEAGUE SOCCER	50
TWIN WORLD	56
FIGHTING SOCCER.....	56
ONSLAUGHT	59
INDIANA JONES.....	61
ROCK 'N' ROLL.....	64

MAGIC MARBLE	64
TIME TRAVELLERS	67
TURBO OUT RUN	68
NORTH AND SOUTH	70
SWORD OF TWILIGHT.....	70
GHOSTBUSTERS II	73
TOOBIN'	75
GRAND PRIX MASTER	76
SAFARI GUNS	76
SPORTING TRIANGLES	76
STORMLORD	76

SPECIALS

SIMULATIONS	17
DESKTOP PUBLISHING 109	
WORKBENCH TUTOR ...	117
CYBERPUNK	145

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DOUBLE DRAGON II

VIRGIN £19.99 ■ Joystick

Billy and Jimmy Lee are tough. The Black Warriors know they're tough because they were foolish enough to mess with them a couple of years ago in the classic coin-op *Double Dragon*.

The Black Warriors had kidnapped Marian, a friend of theirs, and the lads decided to get her back and put the gang out of operation for good. Sadly, they didn't quite finish off the female leader, who then spent a few years recovering before seeking her revenge. And what better way to get back at the brothers than to kidnap Marian again? So that's what she did, killing Marian as soon as she got her hands on her. So the brothers Lee are mad as hell and are going after her.

It's a one or two-player horizontally-scrolling beat-em-up in which the players control the brothers as they work their way through the various levels biffing and bashing the various enemies that come at them from all parts of the screen (some baddies even hide inside things and jump out on the brothers as they pass).



■ Using a shovel-like extra weapon: that baddie's not got a chance.

As well as the standard aggressive moves such as punching, kicking and high kicking, the bruvvers can also pick up extra weapons like maces and daggers that some of the baddies will drop once you manage to kill them. Be careful, though, because you can drop the weapons if the baddies manage to crack you one and you don't carry the weapons from one stage to the next. If you don't have any

extra weapons you can always resort to picking up bits of the scenery, like oil barrels and crates, that can then be lobbed at the enemies.

The regular baddies are nasty enough – especially when you have several of them to handle at once – but extra large baddies and ones wielding swords and such like make several appearances throughout the game and gener-

ally these need to be hit more often to cause them to disappear. Bash your way through the levels without losing all your lives and continue credits and then go back and do it all again.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Large sprites and a full PAL screen: things look good. The perspective is a little odd but very coin-op like. Tunes play throughout that are jaunty and very listenable.

JUDGEMENT

A fun beat-em-up that's a vast improvement on the computer versions of the first game. It's too easy to keep you playing for months, though, and it's likely you'll complete it sooner rather than later. Lots of fun in two player mode. **Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	2
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	64%



■ Left: a mid-level guardian makes his appearance and gets a jolly good sock on the jaw for his trouble.



■ More end-of-level guardians. Two at once is no joke! These take some beating.



■ Start-of-level guardians this time: knock them off the platform and things are a lot easier (they're not too keen to oblige though!)

US GOLD £24.99 ■ Joystick or Keyboard

MOONWALKER

There have been many games based on films before but here it isn't so much based on a film as a person: Michael Jackson. His name has hardly ever been out of the papers or the charts during the '80s, but can this popular singing star be transformed into a good computer game?

The game is split into four sections, all of which are featured in the film, of course. In the first, Michael is at the film studios being chased by his fans and has to find a disguise and then escape on a motorbike. The disguise is a rabbit suit, the parts of which have to be picked up in the correct order: feet first, head last. There are also four pieces of equipment – a camera, a microphone, a spotlight and a key – to be found.

MJ can walk or run around the studio 'lot', which is viewed from overhead and has a scanner showing the fans and objects on it. You can only run for short periods though, so save it for escaping from light spots. If Mikey gets caught by a fan he loses a platinum disc: no discs and it's game over. There is also a time limit. The first section is relatively sim-



■ Left: Mike's tracked down the microphone, but there's a nasty-looking baddie on his trail.

■ Below: In robot mode fighting guards and the laser cannon.



ple once you have learnt the map, so it's quickly on to Stage Two. Now you're the rabbit on the bike, racing round the city trying to collect orbs and destroy drugs. It's viewed from above again with a similar collection of fans and troopers chasing Michael about.

There are four lots of orbs to collect, and when the last orb of each set is collected the bike



■ Mind the big guy, grab the key.

transforms into the Stratos car and you have to leap over a barrier to the next area. In the last of the four areas the bike becomes a jet-bike, grabbing the orbs from the water.

Now it's on to the Club '30s nightclub where gunmen appear at the windows and try to shoot you. A gun and bullets are to be found lying around, so you can fight back. Supplies of bullets have to

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	68%



■ In the club and Michael starts to get violent with the guards that appear at the window.

be continually picked up from the random places around the club where they are left. If MJ can get through this there is a final confrontation with the bad guys, where he turns into a robot to blast guards and a laser cannon.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

At the beginning of the game and in-between each of the sections, there are some superb animated action screens. The game screens are not as good: the first two levels look very plain, but the last two are more detailed and more interesting. Samples of Michael's music run throughout the game. They sound fine but are on the repetitive side: constraints of memory one presumes.

JUDGEMENT

None of the four sections stands out particularly as being a great game, but all four are enjoyable. As a package it will take some time to complete and provide a fair deal of entertainment. Its main problem is that there is no particular 'high' in gameplay terms. There's a lot of good things, but nothing great. **Bob Wade**

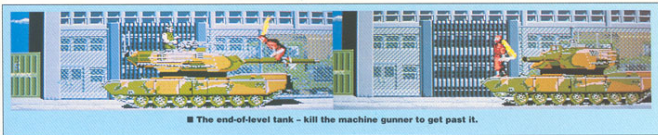


■ The second stage on the motorbike. Collect the gems to turn into the car...



■ ...and burst any bags of drugs that you find lying around. Below: collect the last gem and turn into the car to jump the barrier.





■ The end-of-level tank - kill the machine gunner to get past it.

Darius from Taito created something of a stir a couple of years ago when it first appeared in the arcades, not because it was a particularly good game, but because it was the first to use a system of three monitors, giving a massive 45" play area.

Then came *The Ninja Warriors* - a completely different type of game, but still using the large play area - and now there's the Amiga version. Will you need three monitors to get the full effect?

No. To retain the 'wide screen' feel of the game the graphics have shrunk into a 1/3 height strip of game area. This is a one or two player hack and slash game fought over six stages.

Your motivation for going through with it? Well, the year is 1993 and the head of not only the military and police forces but also all the underworld criminal elements is a nasty chap called Bangler. To restore some sense of order to things, this chap needs 'rubbing out', and so Mulk, the



■ Level One and a flying guard comes swooping in to attack.

leader of the revolutionaries, has invested some considerable time and effort in building two robot assassins. The Ninja Assassins.

This horizontally-scrolling game starts in the slums where the assassins have to work their way left-to-right through the stage chopping and slashing away with

VIRGIN £19.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

THE NINJA WARRIORS



■ Aaargghh! Those Ground Spiders have done for you and with only two more credits left the end of the level looks a long way off.

their two knives at the enemies that come running on from either side. Obviously, these chaps don't want to be sent to the great coin-op in the sky so they'll attack you with knives themselves - some are even armed with machine guns and grenade launchers - and every hit taken reduces your

■ (Below) Got him! The Japanese are very fond of their cartoon-style violence and don't mind the odd bit of blood 'n' guts!

energy until you die. Then it's a case of either re-starting or using up one of your three credits to continue.

The game wouldn't be complete without some mid and end of level guardians to take out, and these include hunchback-like Ground Spiders and large animated tanks manned by a sub-machine gun toting maniac. Fortunately, as well as just knives, you are armed with a limited



■ The Grenadier lets one off right in your face - ouch!

amount of shuriken (throwing stars) which can be lobbed to take out some baddies from a distance. Make it through the stages and the baddies become more numerous and more aggressive, until the final confrontation with the arch-fiend Bangler himself.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

A first class conversion. The animation is great, as are the backgrounds. The sound effects are also superb, although the title music grates after a while. One of the best looking coin-op conversions to date.

JUDGEMENT

Fans of the genre are in for a real treat: this one is immensely playable and well put together. The shrunken screen works brilliantly and though it's no fault of the conversion, all the original needed was a bit more variety and it would have achieved the coveted Format Gold award. As it is, it comes just about as close as it could. A great game. *Andy Smith*

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	3
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	88%





■ In hawk form, you're confronted with a tricky snake of helmeted hieroglyphs to blast away at.

LOGOTRON £24.99 ■ Joystick only

EYE OF HORUS

Not only are hieroglyphics difficult to understand, they can prove hazardous to your health. Well, they can if you are the son of an Egyptian god trapped in a pyramid. Then again, surely this should prove no trouble for a guy that can change into a hawk whenever the fancy takes him.

The task is to retrieve the seven pieces of your father's



■ You! Exploding hieroglyphs.

body. Hang on a minute: two arms, two legs, one head and one torso makes six. What's the other bit? Anyway, these are scattered around the labyrinth of the tomb and, having got all the bits back together, you must confront Set, the loathsome chappy who split them up in the first place.

The pyramid is represented entirely in 2D, with corridors linked by lifts. Horus can use the lifts while he is on foot, but quicker progress can be made along the passages by taking to the air. However, you need to keep a close watch while flying along because there are many amulets hidden amongst the hieroglyphics on the walls and these can only be picked up by walking past them.

As well as the amulets there are also keys to be found and these are used to unlock lifts, which allow further exploration of the tomb. This exploration element is the main challenge in the game: trial and error searching to open up all the sections of the tomb.

The amulets have many different uses, all of them will prove useful. There's one that gives a map showing the explored areas of the tomb, several that destroy the attacking hieroglyphics, energy replenishers, firepower changers and a shield. You can even call on the help of two unearthly friends, Isis and Anubis, to provide gifts to aid Horus in the quest.

There are lots of different hieroglyphs that suddenly animate



■ Confronting a spinning hazard.



■ Whoops. Too many hits and the hawk plunges down, very dead.

out from the walls and try to hit Horus. They behave in many ways but can all be blasted out of the way. You can shoot when walking or flying, but it is much easier taking enemies out from the air.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The corridors and hieroglyphics are pleasantly designed but are nothing out of the ordinary. There are plenty of enemy sprites, none of them very large. The scrolling is smooth, except for a little glitch when the lifts go up and down. Not much in the way of sound effects but the music is good, plonking its way along through title screens and the game itself.

JUDGEMENT

It's a passable arcade adventure with plenty of exploring, lots of objects and a deal of blasting. What it has not got is anything that makes it stand out from the crowd. You will undoubtedly get enjoyment from it and it will not be easily completed, but the excitement level never gets very high.

Bob Wade

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	5
ADDITION	4
OVERALL	61%



■ The hawk hovers below a blue amulet...



■ ...which gives you a map when used...



■ ...while another one has called up Anubis.



MICROSTYLE £24.95 ■ Joystick or Keyboard

STUNT CAR RACER



Who said brain games were the best? Even the author of a classic intelligence tester must fancy a bit of high-speed action from time to time. Which is presumably why Geoff Crammond not only wrote the classic game *Sentinel* but has also written *Stunt Car Racer*.

And that's just what it's about: the player takes control of a stunt car and has to drive it around eight death-defying tracks. The player's aim is to become Division One champion in the Stunt Car Racer League, but to do that you'll have to get to Div 1 first.

Starting in Div 4, you have to race both other drivers in the division on both tracks. Points are awarded to the winner of the race (who gets two points) and the competitor who put in the fastest lap during the race (who earns just one). At the end of the season the competitor with the most points is promoted to the next division, but of course once you get out of the

fourth, you always stand a chance of being relegated if you finish the season in last place.

Make it to the top of the first to earn a chance to take part in the Superleague and race against some expert competition in better cars (faster with better brakes).

The action is all viewed from the cockpit and the controls are very simple: push forward on the joystick to accelerate, pull back to brake and move it left-right to steer. What's not so easy is staying on the elevated tracks which twist and turn, dip and rise the whole way round. Each race consists of three laps of the track and the race is over when either car crosses the finish line or one car becomes a wreck.

Fall off of the track (or even take a jump incorrectly and come down too heavily on the other side) and you'll incur chassis and structural damage. Too much damage and the car becomes a wreck

and 'race over'. However, before starting a season it is possible to practise the track so you can learn exactly where to use the nitro boost and where to decelerate (it would be far too easy to just blast around the track willy-nilly) before competing for real.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Reving engines, crashes, screeches and scrapes – all of which sound great. The graphics are superb; extremely fast, and well animated. Excellent stuff.

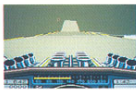
JUDGEMENT

This is gripping stuff. Action all the way – you really will be holding your breath as you go flying over the jumps and gritting your teeth with determination when you see your opponent go whizzing past. All it lacks is an instant replay option to allow an out-of-cockpit view of those spectacular crashes.

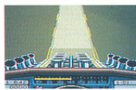
Andy Smith



■ Falling off a track this high in the air can cause severe damage to your car!



■ Heading towards the Ski-Jump. Be careful not to take it too quickly or...



■ ...you'll incur massive damage that'll make it tough to finish the race.

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	9
OVERALL	93%



■ Maring around the track against a computer-controlled car (on the Little Ramp). That jump is dangerous, so don't forget it's there.

SWITCHBLADE

GREMLIN £19.99 ■ Joystick

Things had been pretty good on the Cyberworld of Thraxx for the last 10,000 years: the Bladeknights looked after the place well thanks to the power of the Fireblade. Had been good, that is, until the awakening of Havok who then smashed the Fireblade into 16 pieces, ending the Bladeknight's rule, and topped most of the Bladeknights before taking control of the Undercity.

Hiro is the last of the courageous band and it's up to him to save Thraxx and restore order by finding the pieces of the smashed Fireblade and then reassembling it to use against Havok.

The player takes control of Hiro and has to guide him through five levels of the undercity, picking up the pieces of the Fireblade as he goes. There are, however, complications. First of all, there are loads of Havok's guards to overcome. Some are stronger than others, but all of them can biff Hiro reducing his energy and once the meter reaches zero he loses one of his five lives.

Fighting back is the answer and as he's got a cyber arm he might as well use it. Holding the fire button down causes a meter at the base of the screen to rise: releasing the button at 1/4 strength causes Hiro to punch, releasing at the 1/2 to 3/4 mark causes him to make a high kick and at full strength he makes a low kick. By using the right move at the right time most opponents can be overcome.

There are power-ups that can be collected to increase the strength of the attack and there are extra weapons that can also be used, including a fire ball shot and darts. Unfortunately, all weapons have a limited ammo supply so they have to be used carefully.

The other main problem is the fact that Hiro doesn't know where he's going and can only see parts of the Undercity that he's actually been in. For example, he could be climbing down a ladder going past several rooms without knowing it

because they won't be displayed until he actually goes in them.

That doesn't sound too difficult until you realise that the majority of rooms are hidden behind ordinary wall blocks. The trouble with this is you only know they're there if you punch away at a wall and the blocks break up.

This is also how you collect most of the extra weapons which are hidden inside seemingly ordinary blocks. So, there's lots of exploration to be done in order to find and collect all the pieces: and then the problems really begin.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

It's all viewed in side-on 2D and all the rooms are well drawn and the sprites well animated. The music in the game is good but you can toggle to effects (good ones too) if you'd rather.

The sprites may be small but they look good and move well (not the best jumping sequence ever seen though). The presentation as a whole manages to stay just the right side of cutesy.

JUDGEMENT

It's the exploring that's the fun, finding new routes that you had no idea were there or seeing a doorway and wondering how on earth you're going to get to it. The combat can be fun too, but get the hang of the meter and it becomes a little easy (thank goodness baddies don't reappear every time you re-enter a certain room).

With only five lives at your disposal this is a toughie, but you'll have lots of fun all the same. It's certainly blessed with loads of the 'I wonder where that leads to' factor making it very addictive. A great arcade adventure that's well polished and well put together.

Andy Smith

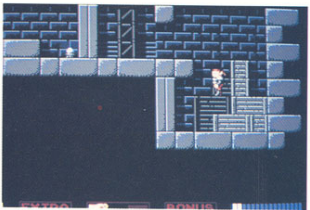
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	4
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	85%



■ Starting at the top: Hiro has just entered the underground city.



Go through the door and more is revealed. Kick the far wall and...



...the blocks disappear, revealing an entrance to another room.



And after that, another: this room has a nasty alien in it, though, so get ready to biff him. Do you see how the game system works?



■ Chatting up Mermaids is one of the perks.

ELECTRONIC ARTS £24.99 ■ Mouse

KEEP THE THIEF

What a lousy punk! You haven't the self discipline to continue your studies to become either a magician, priest or warrior and you learned to live the life of a thief. Thus exiled, you are slightly adept in each, making you one hell of an ideal adventure character and ready for action.

Keep the Thief is a graphic adventure in the traditional role-playing mould as seemingly favoured by Electronic Arts. The more killing you do, the more experience you gain as a warrior and the same principle applies when you use magic and practice theft. You can find, buy or steal extra items to help you along on your quest and if you eventually get a few status levels higher, you're laughing.

The problem is just that starting with a mere few hit points and

a tree branch in your hand doesn't offer good odds for survival. Saving the game is of prime importance and should be done frequently: it really is vital and thankfully, quick and easy.

You begin the game outside a wealthy city called Same Mercon, where — armed with that tree branch — you can hear (or rather buy) the latest rumours, buy the strongest ale and other essential commodities, and practice your art. Once you think you're ready to 'kick ass' you wander into the jungle (having first requested easy monsters). Here you can wander the tricity area at will, hacking and slashing all the way round.

It isn't particularly a massive area or game, but just large enough: not too boringly big or too patronisingly small. Here you meet varied and largely uninter-

gent characters along with various dungeon arenas where you can romp round with a manic smile, or search around for the booty.

The game is pretty fast, with nice colourful graphics that have a certain cartoon quality about them. The graphics plus the music blaring away make it a very cheery game: one that brings a smile to your face as you hack away at some goblin swordsman or walking spread.

The aim of the game, although never actually stated, is to become the Magician King, the top force in the land. Through various rumours, you gain more understanding of what is going on throughout the tricity area, such as other powers and what happened to the old Magician King.

The game is easy to use when you get into it. To start with you're

likely to die every two minutes, with more experience you may last longer; but don't lose heart, persevere and save the game frequently. The gist of the story will grow on you and you'll learn to master the fighting screens with ease, knowing when to hide and when to run. The perfect coward!

Keep the Thief becomes more intriguing the more you get into it. You want just one more romp through the jungle, or another five attempts at removing a trap. It's a simple and fun game. The actions you can choose from are few and only the ones available to you are

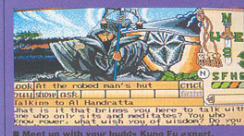


000 an old man on start a red one you just created. Dead meat on a

■ Get used to this picture: you'll be seeing it often enough.

kindly highlighted. It's easy to pick, and then chop and change. What more could you ask for as you slob in a chair, mouse in hand?

An absorbing hack 'n' think game. Great in its simplicity and addiction and not too tough with the puzzles, but still full of ones of a 'how-to-get-round-this' nature. A good laugh that will keep you engrossed for many a slaughter-house night. **Nick Walkland**



■ Meet up with your buddy Kung Fu expert.



■ Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
INTELLECT 9
ADDITION 8
OVERALL 89%



ANCO £19.95 ■ Joystick or Keyboard

RALLY CROSS CHALLENGE

Another of this month's racing games comes from Anco, who are more famous for their brilliant *Kick Off* and a considerably less exciting range of strip poker games.

Up to four players can compete simultaneously in the game, which contains six different tracks to race around. Each race lasts for seven (or, later on, eight) laps of the track and the first three finishers qualify for the next race.



■ Spend your winner's points on useful extras for the car.

Points are awarded to the finishers and these points can be traded in at the start of each race for car enhancements such as better traction for improved road holding and a turbo boost to reduce the amount of time needed to reach top speed.

Spending points is a dangerous thing – especially early on in the game when you have few – because should you finish last in a race 10 points are deducted from your score: and if you have less than 10, it's game over and you have to start all over again.

Make it through a race and you'll find the quality of the competition improving, making it much harder to qualify for the next race. This is particularly true if you have to drive at night: darkness seriously increases your chances of clipping a hay bale or a railing, causing your car to burst into flames and putting you out of the race for a few valuable seconds. So a pit stop has to be made to get your car fitter with headlamps. Even then, extra caution is needed.

On the plus side though, colliding with the other cars does nothing but slow you down a little and the computer-controlled opponents also go spinning off the road and into a barrier if they misjudge a corner or lose control. One



■ Tearing past the green car to snatch the lead. Have you made your move too early, though?

particular hazard is the possibility of hitting one of the mysterious appearing and disappearing oil patches in the road.



■ Oh dear! Things are going badly in this race: look at your driver's face. It's going to be impossible to pull this one out of the hat.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

All the action is viewed from above and all the tracks are jolly well drawn. There are several nice touches in the graphics department, including the occasional bird flying across the screen or a car revving up. All very nice, but of course your attention is on the driving, so it's hard to appreciate these touches. The revving and honking noises made by the cars are fine and add atmosphere.

JUDGEMENT

Comparisons between this and games like *BMX Simulator* and *Super Sprint* have to be made, simply because it looks and plays just like them. Your car does tend to handle just as you'd expect a rally car to, what with all that inertia, but even so it's much more of a simple racing game than a driving simulator and as such it has limited lasting appeal: though playing with four people at once can be great fun. **Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	2
ADDITION	8
OVERALL	64%

Football games are the hardy annuals of computer titles – hardly a month goes by without a new one. To stand out in the crowd it has to have something different. This one claims a 'revolutionary control system' and a 'vast range of player details'.

Sadly, the revolutionary control system is appallingly difficult to use and you will rapidly dispense with the match highlights

and resort to the strategy side of things. Controlling all eleven players may sound good, but each player has to be selected and then told where to go: at which point they stand around doing nothing until you tell them to run somewhere else. Very tedious.

The strategy is much better implemented. The player details are comprehensively informative, making the buying, selling and



■ Playing the match by controlling just one player at a time.

positioning of each man the most interesting thing.

There are the usual cup competitions, along with the league, and you will also find formation changes, contract negotiations, reserve matches and spying missions need to be seen to.

Football games need more than this one has before they stand out these days. The strategy is competent and absorbing but it has nothing you can't find in several other games. **Bob Wade**

SUPERLEAGUE SOCCER

IMPRESSIONS ■ £24.99 Mouse

GRAPHICS	1
SOUND	1
INTELLECT	6
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	48%

Who wants to be a city mayor? I do. Just imagine being in the hot seat in San Francisco after the 1908 earthquake: could you cope? Or how about controlling Tokyo in '57 when Godzilla has just been spotted heading your way?

Sim City is just that: a simulation of a city. Leaving the pre-set scenarios aside for the moment, the idea of the game is to build a city from scratch and keep the thing ticking over using the limited funds available.

Every city in the game has three basic "blocks": Residential, Commercial and Industrial. A successful city will have the right balance of all three blocks: no point having loads of shops and banks if the populace has no jobs or homes! But it's not necessarily as easy as all that.

At the start of the game, you're given a lump sum of money – the exact amount depending on the skill level – and you then have to take several things into consideration before splashing the loot about. For example, the residential zones will need to be far enough away from the industrial zones to encourage people to come and live in them, yet transport routes between everything have to be good (roads and railways can be built). There will have to be enough jobs to attract people to your town and enough commercial zones for them to spend their wages in... and so it goes on.



■ Pick the territory, give your town a name and away you go.

Once you've set the town up, complete with power stations and police and fire departments, the major headache is keeping people there to nail for their taxes: tax money being the only other source of capital, needed to maintain and expand the town. Set the tax rate too low one year (the game runs in years which take about five minutes of real time) and you'll attract lots of residents but you will generate very little revenue.

Arid once you start losing money, the problems start to occur. The crime rate may be soaring, but if you just can't afford another police station people leave and the community eventually starts falling apart.

It's all a question of balance: juggling the economy, listening to the people's needs (an evaluation chart can be called up at any time

INFOGRAMES £29.99 ■ Mouse and/or Keyboard

SIM CITY



to see what percentage of the population think you're doing a good job, and see what their biggest gripes are) and trying to expand until your small village turns into a Megalopolis of a quarter of a million citizens.

If building and running your own city seems like too much hard work then you can always try jumping into a ready-built one, as mentioned earlier. The scenarios are a harder game in many ways, as you are always set specific tasks: restore an earthquake-dev-

■ Above: starting off. Getting the initial balance right is crucial if the town's to grow. Right – the city has grown enormously and is ticking over nicely, for now.

astated town to its former glory in something like 30 years.

Real masochists, though, will start a town from scratch and build it up until it's doing very nicely thank you, and then invoke a disaster of their own, such as a flood or a major city fire. Whatever you choose, you're the mayor and it's the population you answer to.



GRAPHICS AND SOUND

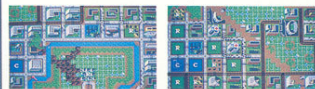
The sound effects are fine but that's all they are. The graphics are basic but they do their job well enough. Simple looking stuff.

JUDGEMENT

It's the compulsive gameplay that really makes it. It has that certain something that makes you want to keep going, for hours at a stretch: just one game can last you for weeks. It has much more general appeal than something like a football management game, but it has the same 'once you're into it you can't get out of it' character. Terrific stuff. *Andy Smith*



■ If you get bored of building your own cities, have a go at one of the previously set-up scenarios – note, they're not at all easy!



■ There's nothing you can do to get rid of the monster so you'll have to wait until he decides to go and then pick up the pieces.

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	6
ADDICTION	9
OVERALL	92%



The Gaspars were a peaceful and prosperous race, watched over by the magical family Carikens. Sadly, the family neglected their magic and the Kingdom began to fall to pieces. That's when the evil druid Maldur decided to move in and massacre the family.

Only one child survived and it's down to him to collect the 23 parts of the magic amulet that have been scattered throughout the land to prevent the family Carikens from rising again.

But we can't have evil triumphing over good, can we? So, you'll have to take on the persona of Ulopa, the last of the Carikens, and ensure you collect all the parts thereby defeating Maldur.

It's an arcade adventure from French programmers Blue Byte with its roots in Super Mario Bros. The 23 levels each have an upper and lower level (world) and the player can easily get from one world to the other by going through the cavern mouths on the

levels. Getting from one level to the other, though, involves running around and collecting the pieces of amulet and then finding the level exit (identifiable by the symbol above the door).

Maldur is none too keen on the idea of you running about trying to ruin his fun, though, so he's infested the levels with all manner of flying, walking and crawling nasties that all remove one of your six lives on contact. To combat them you're armed with three types of ball shots of varying strengths and properties (one of them bounces) which you can fire. Destroying the monsters also causes them to leave behind caches of more ammunition which is jolly handy.

There are other bonuses that come in useful during the game including a parachute which allows you to fall off high platforms with-



■ Inside the first treasure room. Collecting the jewels only gains you points, it doesn't help you get any further in the game.

out injury and springs which are very helpful for when you want that bit of extra sproing to leap over a particularly high wall. These extras are activated simply by hitting a key. Run about finding the bits of amulet, take on the big monster every fourth level and try to find a way into the treasure rooms for extra points: and there you have it.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The main sprite is great: neat touches like him skidding when he swiftly changes direction for example all add to the effect. The rest of the graphics are colourful and well drawn and everything is well animated. The in-game tune is fine, as are the effects, but neither of them are outstanding. Altogether a very cute-looking game.

JUDGEMENT

Platforms and ladders, running around collecting things, different worlds - they're all old hat nowadays, but when the game's as well put together as this one is it's easy to see why the formula became such a hit. Great fun, highly playable and addictive too.

Andy Smith

TWIN WORLD

UBISOFT £24.99 ■ Joystick



■ The first piece of amulet.



■ Shooting away at a nasty.



■ Careful jumping needed here.

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	8
OVERALL	81%

FIGHTING SOCCER

ACTIVISION £24.99 ■ Joystick

This one or two-player footy game is the conversion of the SNK coin-op machine. The idea's very simple: it's Olympic football you're playing and eleven teams are taking part in a knockout contest. You control one team and have to get through to, and win, the final.

The action is all viewed from above and the player you're controlling is highlighted. To pass or shoot the ball a big direction arrow is moved and the fire button

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	2
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	43%

pressed. At the end of the two-minutes-a-half match, the winner goes through to the next round.

This was a jolly nice coin-op game, and although the conver-



■ The Japanese 'keeper had no chance, Brian.

sion is very slow everything is there. It's a shame the lack of speed makes it far too easy to win (even on first attempts) because

once you've won there's little incentive to come back to it. The two player option helps, but not much. Andy Smith

ONSLAUGHT

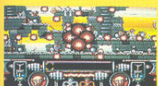
HEWSON £24.99 ■ Joystick or Keyboard



■ The map screen shows enemy details towards the right.



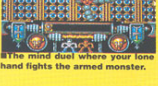
■ You start the field battle owning just a mace to fight with...



■ ...but this is an even more impressive weapon in action.



■ Whoops, stepped on a mine and knocked lots of energy off.



■ The mind duel where your lone hand fights the armed monster.

You are a Fanatic, an extravagantly or unreasonably zealous person, especially on religious matters. No, it's not a game about football supporters: it's about warring kingdoms trying to conquer the land of Gargore. Axes, arrows, bombs, demons, maces and lots of violence... then again, maybe it is about football.

Gargore is a 16x16 grid filled with various types of terrain and many warring tribes. The player starts off with just one location and has to conquer every single enemy site, which is no easy task because there are three different stages to complete at each place. A different enemy general and warband inhabit each location and a status screen gives information on the cult they worship, the type of warband, strength of the wizard lord and the kingdom's population.

The first stage of an attack is the field battle conducted on a horizontally scrolling play area. The Fanatic starts at the far left and has to fight his way to the enemy banner on the right. The enemies that await depend on the type of warband in the kingdom: spear throwers, swordsmen, cannons, exploding monks and lumbering war machines are just some of the dangers. Every hit from one of them lowers the power level, which is most severely affected by trading on mines.

The Fanatic starts with just a mace but can get weapons along the way by killing enemies. The weapons vary in strength and range and include bows, bombs and homing demon blasts. There are also spells to collect that replenish power, destroy all enemies and freeze them as well. All these objects can be picked up into the inventory list and in the heat of battle will be used up very rapidly indeed.

While trying to battle through to the enemy banner you have to watch how many of the enemy you allow past because if too many go off the left of the screen you will have to perform a defending action. This works just like a field battle but if you should lose it an area of territory is irrevocably lost.



■ The Fanatic is being pursued by a mounted knight. Like wagons and boar riders the horse will push you along, draining your energy.

If the enemy banner is reached it stops the bad guys appearing, leaving just a few to mop up before moving on to the siege section. This is also just like the field battle, with a banner at the top of the castle on the right. Reach that banner and mop up the enemy and it's on to the final mind duel with general.

The mind duel is a single screen battle against a four-armed monster in the middle of the display. You control a hand moving around the edge and have to blast the monster with enough homing shots before his hands shoot you. Succeed and the territory is yours, fail and you are taken right back to the siege stage.

The mind duel also takes place when entering temple locations. While fighting the temple guardian, talismans can be picked up that allow freer movement on the map over forests, swamps, water, mountains, plagues, crusades and rebellions. Unfortunately it is also all too easy to use a talisman in field combat and not be able to move around so much.

The plagues, crusades and rebellions occur randomly: the first two make conquering a territory harder, while a rebellion takes one of your territories away.

One essential feature is the ability to save the game. It's essential because it's so hard to stay alive. From the same editing

screen the game map can also be altered, allowing you to set up your own game worlds.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The map screen is basic but functional, while the in-game graphics are very good indeed. Detailed backgrounds, lots of colourful, well animated sprites, levels that extend upwards as well as scrolling horizontally and many a fine explosion. The music is of the 'atmospheric' variety and is very appropriate and pleasing.

JUDGEMENT

This is not a game to be approached lightly - it is tough. Conquering just one territory is hard enough and getting control of the whole map is a massive task. Despite being difficult, it is also addictive: you may beat the table with frustration, but you will also have another go.

Without the save game feature this would be an impossible game to play: with it is just difficult. It's a lot of fun but has just too high a frustration level to be top class.

Bob Wade

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	3
ADDICTION	7
OVERALL	78%

'You've seen the film, now play the game'. I can almost smell the advertising spiel going through their heads. Anyway, I must confess that I'm a closet Indy fan: but will even that qualification be helpful in playing the game?

Indy (the adventure game) follows the plot of the film closely, with a couple of extra scenes thrown in for good measure. For the uninitiated: Indiana's dad has been kidnapped while searching



■ Are libraries all so morbid?

for the holy grail and Indy's gone to find them both. He travels to Venice, Berlin, Iskerderun and numerous other places and is swamped by thousands of rats, followed by the Gestapo and chased by the Luftwaffe.

Then he must find the grail place, pass the tests and then choose the correct cup. All in all, Indy's got a lot on his plate.

On to the game. It begins with a pretty basic intro screen, as in the movie, with Indy leaping over a train, but the game proper starts when you enter your classroom and hoards of screaming students demand to have their cards signed. After tactfully dealing with the situation and escaping, you visit the millionaire Donovan and you're then free to travel, first to your father's wrecked house and then to Venice.

Each part of the game leads on logically. It must be said that there's no set way to play the game, and you can act in whatever way you see fit for a surro-

gate Indiana. This also means you can complete the game and go back and try to do it a different way. You get a score in IQ (Indy Quotient) which not only shows your present score in the current game, but also how you fared in previous attempts.

The graphics are nothing to sing and dance about, nor are the music and sound effects, being sparsely dumped here and there and failing to add anything to the gameplay. The animation is acceptable but due to the overall sense of sluggishness, it gets a tad boring. Frequent disk changes are darned irritating and add to the general frustration that the game manages to create.

It is worth persevering with, though, if only to get to the end. The mouse interface is accurate despite being awkward in use. Atmosphere exists in the game but it doesn't leap out of the game and grab you by the throat saying 'don't you dare turn me off!'

UTLC is an above-average animated graphic adventure, suitable for a younger audience and those who don't want a particularly challenging game. It isn't a meaty adventure, but it does have its moments. If you enjoyed the film, you'll like the game. This time he brought his dad and decided to leave me at home.

Nick Walkand

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	7
ADDICTION	5
OVERALL	71%

■ (Below) Now, which slab was it that I wanted, again?

LUCASFILM/US GOLD

£19.99 ■ Mouse

INDIANA JONES

AND THE LAST CRUSADE: THE ADVENTURE GAME



■ Indy starts by being accosted by fans.



ROCK 'N' ROLL

RAINBOW ARTS £19.99 ■ Mouse

Fashion really does move in cycles, and now, all of a sudden, marble and rolling ball games are back in vogue. This one contains

32 levels (or are there more?) to roll your ball around – all of them viewed from above.

It's an old game style, but it's more sophisticated than the early games of this type. To kick off, the levels are large – very large – and access to certain parts is denied until a key is collected that will open a doorway. Of course, the doorways are all colour-coded, so a blue key won't get you through a red door. That's essentially the

game. Roll around collecting keys that allow you to move through the level and eventually reach the exit to the next level.

Things, thankfully, are never that easy. The doors can be a problem, but at least they don't kill you, unlike some of the other hazards on the levels. The most obviously horrid things are the holes that are all too easy to roll into



■ Buying some extra floor tiles.



■ Above: still on the bonus level, and this time there are no arrows to help you over the collapsing tiles, so speediness is essential!

■ Above: on the bonus level, mind the fires.

■ Left: luckily those arrows roll you over the collapsing floor.

and the energy sapping fires and acid pools. Things that are not quite so obviously nasty are the wind machines that blow you off course and the ice patches that send your ball skidding all over the place. Combine a patch of ice with a few holes (or the incredibly nasty, seemingly fine pieces of floor that gradually disintegrate as

This one or two player variation on a theme is also from Germany, and from a relatively unknown (over here anyway) software house that goes by the name Sphinx. The name of the game leaves you

with no doubt as to what it's all about, but just to provide some motivation here's the scenario. A bunch of marbles are all getting along quite nicely until they realise they need a new Grytzl and getting

hold of one is going to be tricky. One of the marbles is going to have to travel the forbidden lands of Wrabis, reach the other side of Marbleblue, and pick one up.

No, you can't just sit back and watch one of them get on with it. You're going to have to take control of one and guide him through ('him' because Marvin the marble is the only one brave enough to attempt this perilous journey). There are 10 levels to the game (large levels at that) and it's sim-

ply a case of guiding Marvin along the suspended roadways from one end to the other before the time limit expires. Because the roadways are suspended, there's a great amount of fine control required to keep Marvin from falling off (which results not in the loss of one of his six lives, but in a

■ Rolling around in the game. In the first picture you've no bounce so things are really tough. The last frame is the start of Level Two – up!

MAGIC MARBLE

Sphinx £19.95 ■ Joystick



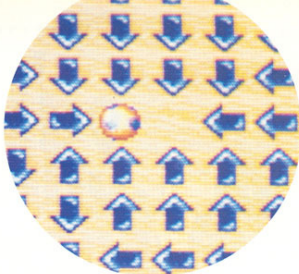
SCREEN PLAY

ple, a green key may be the other side of a hole and the only way to get to it is to buy a tile which you can then drop on the hole to get at the key – getting the picture? Other helpful things include spikes which allow you to manoeuvre with precision over ice, armour plating which allows you to bash through certain weak barriers and bombs which can be used to blow holes in walls.

Cope with the problems, roll about collecting the gems or points and complete the level (some levels have to be completed within a time limit) and move on to the next: that's it.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The rock in the title refers to the rock tunes that play through-



■ Trapped in a mass of ball-pushing arrows. The way out is a swift move to the right, thereby gaining enough inertia to carry you across.

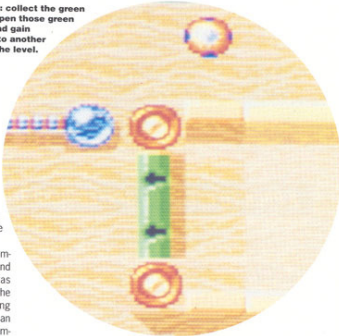
out the game – which can also be turned off – and as such they're fine. The spot effects are also

all right. The game's graphics are very impressive, the animation is just right and the backgrounds for each level are varied and colourful.

JUDGEMENT

Every level is a challenge and there are plenty of puzzles to keep you on your toes. Having to play your way through each level once you re-start the game is a slight niggle, but once you know your way round it becomes less of a problem. The thing that really makes the game though is the control, which is superb. If you're a puzzle solver who likes precise control, this is the sort of thing you're after. **Andy Smith**

■ Below: collect the green key to open those green doors and gain access to another part of the level.



GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	7
ADDITION	8
OVERALL	86%

you stand on them) and you can see there are going to be some serious problems created.

There's only one way to combat some of these things, and that's to buy yourself some extras from the various shops around the levels (you collect money by rolling over the coin symbols which can be found lying around). For exam-

reduction of the time available). The lands of Wrabs are not quite so straightforward, though. Several hazards await including disappearing tiles, invisible walls

Map to Next Level.....	195
10 Bricks.....	175
5 Seconds Flying.....	170
20 Seconds Walking.....	140
100 Seconds Bouncing.....	130
10 Seconds Invisible Walls.....	130
Control Map for this Level.....	125
Full Tiles.....	115
Restore Body.....	110
200 Points.....	850
EXIT	

■ In the extra features shop,

and patches of ice that are impossible to manoeuvre on. To make life easier you can pick up any of the helpful features (a big F on a tile signifies it contains a feature) such as legs that enable you to actually walk on the roadway instead of rolling along.

The only other way of gaining helpful extras is by rolling over dol-

lar signs along the way, then stopping on a shop tile to buy the extras. The first extra you'll want is the bounce one which allows you to fall off the path and bounce straight back on.

Make it through the first land – for which you'll need to purchase several 'extra time' features – and things really start to get tricky. The path is made precarious by ramps, which always seem to be right next to a very small and thin bit of road, and which you always seem to come across just as your bounce power runs out. Then there are teleports which send you all over the level. Tricky stuff indeed. A nice touch is the password given to you at the end of each level which means you don't have to spend hours (literally) working your way back to where



■ Go over the F to get a feature.

you got in the last game.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Although the marble is nicely shaded, there is no impression of rolling, which is a shame. The rest of the graphics are good – although there are few of them – and everything is well animated. Sound is left to the minimum.

JUDGEMENT

The levels are very large and convoluted and more than just a little tricky so it's going to take you a



■ Now try crossing that ice!

long time to play through the whole game. To do that your determination level will have to be very high because to get the most out of this game you'll have to put some effort in. **Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	3
INTELLECT	7
ADDITION	7
OVERALL	73%

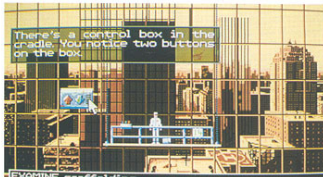
PALACE £24.95 ■ Mouse

FUTURE WARS: TIME TRAVELLERS

As an everyday, common or garden window cleaner life sure is one big bore – one window after another – and when you're working on a skyscraper things are at their worst. What's needed is a splash of excitement in your life, to experience the thrill of the distant future, the pazz of ancient history and to return safe and sound after 'saving the world'. Unfortunately, this voyage of wonder is not available from Thomas Cook, but from Delphine, via Palace, and their innovative system Cinematique.

The basic scenario for *Time Travellers* is this: in the 43rd Century, the Earth is under attack from aliens. They can't get past the Earth's SDI defences so they travel back in time to sabotage the defences before they're built. You discover all this accidentally after you've played a prank on your boss and you then travel through the different time zones of Medieval, Ancient History and Distant Future. Your learning and survival dictate the future.

In the graphics department, *Future Wars* is the tops, with some of the nicest scenes you're likely



■ Cleaning windows outside the skyscraper at the start of the game.

to see in an adventure game. But these aren't always perfect, especially with some of the tiny 'graphically presented' items you are supposed to notice. Animation is quite smooth, which makes a pleasant change. In fact it's of high quality all round: awe inspiring at times.

The music is another good feature of *Future Wars* and has a distinct continental feel, which makes a nice change from the usual British and American electro-pop you find in most games. Add to this the good sound effects and you won't be turning the sound down, in case you miss a good

grunt, growl or stomp.

It's an atmospheric game in places but there are times when you aren't sucked into the game as much as you should be. Possibly it's the lack of text that sometimes fails to set the imagination on fire: either way it's not much of a 'just one more go' game, and the slow save and load routine doesn't do much to help.

The puzzles are quite innovative in places although they're not incredibly brain straining. Usually a

■ Below: what every time traveller likes, a well stocked cellar.



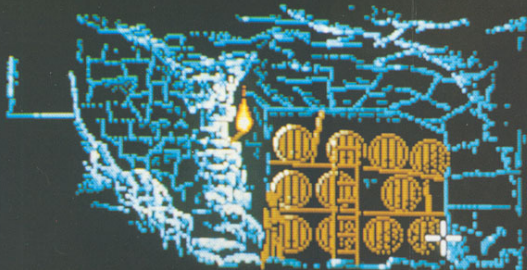
■ Caught in the middle ages with 'happy-go-lucky' monks.

quick scan of your inventory will come up with the obvious solution to your problem. The actual puzzles aren't the toughest part: it's trying to wield the mouse to solve them that causes the problems. Using the mouse might be expected to simplify things but in *Future Wars* it often causes grief.

The game system, 'Cinematique', is claimed to be "the system of the 1990s" and it is extremely useful in places although it does tend to bog itself down in others. Action choices are pitifully few and the control is not as smooth as it could be: sometimes you can move just a little too far and the game isn't tolerant of even the slightest mistake. The main problem however is the objects, or finding them. If your TV is even the slightest bit dodgy, then you may have trouble noticing certain items which are only a pixel or two large.

This potentially excellent game with a decent plot and stunning graphics is let down by the over-picky game system. Even so it's a good game and worthy of a close look. The system of the 1990s? It certainly has the potential and, with a little tweaking, could well be. **Nick Walkland**

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	8
ADDITION	7
OVERALL	84%





■ The start of the race. Already you're winding the machine up to speed and barreling (groan!) through the stage with turbo blazing.



■ Another state and one in which the local police force (who don't like speedsters) do their best to stop you reaching the checkpoint.

One of the best car driving coin-ops a couple of years ago had to be Sega's *Out Run*, a game that boasted superb graphics and terrific playability. US Gold grabbed the rights and put out a not-too-hot conversion of the game which sold surprisingly well considering the poor quality of the translation.

Sega's attempt to cash in on the original appeared last year in the shape of *Turbo Out Run* and once again US Gold have acquired the rights. Two years ago the car of the moment was the Ferrari Testarossa, which was featured in the coin-op: last year it was still a Ferrari, but one of the limited edition F40s (with a price tag of over £600,000 it's no wonder they didn't make too many of them!)

Drive your F40, viewed from behind and slightly above, through 16 stages of American cities and countryside which continually scroll towards you. The idea is to make it to the end of the stage before the time limit runs out and you lose one of your four credits. This isn't particularly easy when you consider just how convoluted some of the stages are and the number of other road users there are to avoid. Colliding with them causes your car to lose speed and, consequently, time as you build it back up again.

The road users may be annoying but at least they don't cause you to go flying through the air and lose vast amounts of time, which is exactly what happens when you collide too heavily with the roadside obstacles such as trees and bill boards. Just clip one, however, and you might only go into a spin which is recoverable from without too much trouble.

To help you through the stages your car's fitted with a turbo button which can be hit to get that extra bit of boost. Unfortunately it can't be activated any old time, because when it's on your engine heats up and as soon as the gauge displayed on the top right of the screen reaches the top



■ Oo-er! You're too eager, and the car's gone out of control.



■ Off the road again: and this time drifting into the snow.

TURBO OUTRUN

US GOLD £19.99 ■ Joystick



■ Every four stages you get the chance to enhance your car. Choose the right power-up at the right time, though (tyres first).

it cuts out and can't be turned on again until the engine has cooled sufficiently. You'll find you really need the turbo boost just when you can't have it: for example when you're being chased down the road by the police.

Lots of the original game's features are also included in the sequel, like the occasional route choice. There are some extra features too like tumbleweed and wooden road barriers to drive through and humps in the road that bounce your car around. The biggest difference, though, is the ability to upgrade your car every four stages: you can have a more powerful engine, super turbo boost and better tyres, but note, you can only have them fitted once. Make it right across the states from New York to Los Angeles and you can go back and do it all over again.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Typical coin-op tunes and occasional spot effects, both of which are fine. The graphics are fine too, although a little jerky, but there's plenty of detail. There are some nice graphical touches like the blizzards and sand storms that blow across the road in some stages. Looks good.

JUDGEMENT

A vast improvement on the original conversions. Still not a brilliant game because although there's a better impression of speed it's still lacking. You do seem to be flung around the corners rather erratically, too, and the collision detection is a bit iffy at times. All in all it's not a bad racing game but it's not outstanding either.

Andy Smith

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	2
ADDITION	7
OVERALL	70%



NORTH AND SOUTH

INFOGRAMES
£24.99 ■ Mouse and Joystick



Just another game based on the American Civil War? Not quite. It's an interpretation of the cult French comic *Les Tuniquees Bleues*, which is based on the US Civil War.

It's a simple one or two player wargame in which the ultimate aim is to destroy the opponent's armies. Both sides start with two armies (each made up of six infantry, three cavalry and one artillery unit) and more armies are

gained by primarily occupying territories which form a rail link from one major city to another. This way trains can run between the cities and trade can occur which earns you money in the form of sacks of gold: once you have five sacks, you automatically gain another army.

The only other way of gaining an army is by owning the state of North Carolina, because every five

turns or so a ship will drop off into that state an army of whichever colour happens to own it at the time. From a strategic point of



■ The arcade battle sequence.

view, one of the first things to do is try and stop the enemy from receiving more armies, either by occupying North Carolina or by cutting his rail routes (or preferably even both).

Cut the rail route and you enter the first of the game's three arcade sequences where you control a soldier as he hides alongside the train. Jump onto the train and make it to the engine before the

The land of Albion is under threat from the evil Shadow Lords who have managed to bring chaos and other nasty things to the seven other lands in this role-playing game from the people who designed that classic thought provoker, *Archon*.

Up to three people can play at once, each controlling a character from a choice of over thirty, and the ultimate quest in the game is

to recover the Swords of Twilight and thus prevent the Shadow Lords from infecting the land. The characters available include knights (who are always handy to have around just in case there's fighting to be done) and mages (who are the best when it comes to chucking magic spells about).

The game opens at the castle of the Queen of Albion, who asks you to complete a small quest.

Exactly what you decide to do is up to you: the game can be played by simply completing these smaller quests and returning home, or by ignoring the Queen and going off on your own to seek adventure. Bear in mind that, whatever you decide to do, your mates will have to go along with you.

The screen is divided into five sections. The main central display shows your band of adventurers



■ Conversing with computer controlled characters inside a building. Can you trust them?

as they move around inside buildings or around the countryside. There are two display modes when you're travelling round: normal-sized inside buildings and huge when you're moving about the countryside. The same method used in the *Ultima* series of games. The four surrounding windows each show a member of your party along with text messages when anyone speaks, though the fourth is reserved for a picture of any other character encountered.

The eight lands are connected by a roadway which is accessed by entering one of the gates in the land. Travel along the road and the worlds pass by in different colours: then all you have to do is hit the fire button to step off when you reach the world that's the colour you want.

ELECTRONIC ARTS £24.99 ■ Joystick and/or Keyboard

SWORDS OF TWILIGHT



■ (Inset) Get past the dragon and you can then travel the road connecting the lands.



■ Keep the railroads open!

time limit expires, without being killed by falling off of the train or being hit by the enemy soldiers, and you cut the route and take the other player's gold.

The other arcade sequences include capturing an enemy fort — which is similar to taking the train — and battles. During a conflict, the player has direct control over one of three types of unit: control between the units is simply switched by hitting a key. You must try to wipe out the enemy, before they do the same to you.

All the arcade sequences can be turned off at the start of the game if you wish to play the strategy game, and the outcome of battles and the rest is decided on the size of the forces and the competence of the leader.

There are several difficulty levels in the game, to suit most players' abilities; for example, starting the game in the year 1864 as opposed to the default 1861 gives the south a distinct disadvantage. You could also have Indian and Mexican intruders who get upset



■ Reinforcements in N. Carolina.

when there is too much commotion coming from their neighbouring territories and so occasionally join in the fray.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Both are great. The cartoon book feel of the game gives it immense appeal and everything is well drawn and animated. The high-quality sound effects do their bit to complement the action.

JUDGEMENT

It's simple stuff, but very enjoyable. The computer opponent is not the world's smartest, so it's not too difficult to beat. Play against a human with the arcade sequences turned on and things become a lot more interesting.

Andy Smith

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	7
OVERALL	74%

Once your band comes across other characters, the first thing to do is check their attitude: if you think a fight might be on, change your characters' attitudes to hostile rather than polite. Of course you'll have to use your skill and judgement when dealing with other folk, because the big point about the game is that all of your actions have consequences and people remember good or bad deeds done to them for a very long time.

The majority of the other commands available are to do with talking to the characters and offering answers. And there you have it: a world in which you can do exactly what you want to do.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The in-game sound is simply appalling, so turn it off when you start playing. The cameos for each of the characters encountered in the game are great but the rest of the graphics, backgrounds and so on are very basic. The scrolling and animation are also weak.

JUDGEMENT

This sort of good does not need good graphics and sound, but what it does need is a believable game world. *Swords of Twilight* has one



■ Eventually you come out into the open, to find that your characters adopt giant proportions.

through a door first because they have the key and you don't. Another annoying factor is the amount of waiting that has to be endured while the computer puts up the face of a computer party. It's certainly not trash, but it's not up there with the classics either.

Andy Smith

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	1
INTELLECT	6
ADDITION	7
OVERALL	68%

BEWARE



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ELECTRONIC ARTS

GHOSTBUSTERS

ACTIVISION £24.95 ■ Joystick

Five years later and once again the world is under threat. Evil slime has been building up under the city of New York ever since the intrepid Ghostbusters saved the world all those years ago and now, thanks to Vigo the Carpathian who's an evil spirit determined to live again through the baby of one of the GBs' friends, evil looks likely to burst forth and have us all wishing we'd never been born.

The game is divided into three major parts: the first part has you controlling a GB as he descends into the Van Horne airshaft to collect some slime. The problem is, the shaft is full of nasty ghosts that appear from above and below and from out of the walls. Everyone knows ghosts can't really hurt you, but what they can do is scare you, so as the chappie descends, every time he gets hit by a ghost he loses a little courage (displayed to the right of

the main display) and once he gets completely scared he falls off of the cable holding him and into the river of slime at the bottom, removing one of his three lives.

He can also fall off by having his cable cut by sawing ghosts. These customers attack the cable until destroyed by either the Proton beam or a PKR bomb. Bombs and shields can be collected during the descent by swinging the Ghostbuster from side to side and picking them up: bottles of elixir to restore courage are also collected in this way, as are the three parts of the scoop that are needed to get the slime. Make it to the bottom and fill the container with slime and you then go into the next section.

Here the Statue of Liberty has come to life and the race is on to make it to the Museum of Art before the New Year arrives. It's a horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-up

where the player controls the statue's torch which fires bolts of flame that destroy the flying and walking ghosts and turn them into slime which the people at the

statue's feet collect and return to the statue, for it to keep moving.

Make it to the Museum and you're then into the final part of the game in which you control all of the Ghostbusters as they abseil in and try to rescue the baby Oscar and destroy Vigo! For ever?

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

There are some nice digitised shots and speech between the levels and the rest of the game looks good and is well animated (especially the little people in the second section). Again, the sound effects and title music are fine.

JUDGEMENT

The game is a good translation of the film and a worthy successor to the original game. As a game in its own right it's not the best ever written, but it is a lot of fun and'll keep you playing for some while.

Andy Smith



■ Half way down and a ghostly hand makes a grab.



■ With a PKR shield, things are much easier.



■ The bottom of the shaft: now quickly fill up with slime and get outta there!



■ Above: collect the slime to keep the statue moving and get to that Museum of Art smarts (easier said than done).

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	4
ADDICTION	7
OVERALL	79%



■ The dudes go over a waterfall - watch out for the rocks to come.



■ On Mars there are cans and a patch but a gun turret to avoid also.



■ A can hurtles at the fisherman, but you've been grabbed by the alligator.

hurl objects at you. The dudes are armed with cans to throw, that will remove or freeze all the dangers. However, there is a limited supply of cans and more have to be picked up floating in the river.

As well as the cans there are beach balls, treasure chests and patches to be picked up. Shooting bushes can also reveal these objects or letters to form the word

Toobin'. The beach balls enhance control over the tube and the patches are used up every time something punctures it.

One constant threat is the alligator that appears at the top of the screen and pursues the dudes until they go through a points scoring gate or it catches them.

In between river sections there is a section of rapids that

carries you automatically through, as do waterfalls that crop up in the middle of stages.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

It's not overly impressive graphically because everything is small. However, there are many characters in the stages, all detailed and animated. The tube-dudes themselves are probably the best part

The Japanese are renowned for coming up with abstract, off-the-wall game ideas like bubble-blowing dinosaurs in *Bubble Bobble* and the brothers Mario in their surreal world. The 'tubular dudes' are in keeping with the tradition: two dudes in tyre inner tubes paddling their way down rivers.

The dudes in question are Biff and Jet, supposedly on a hunt for the most outrageous party they can find: but it's more like scenes from *Deliverance* than a party. The rivers scroll vertically up the screen while the dudes paddle about in their tubes.

The tube control is awkward at first but a bit of practice makes it a very enjoyable method: paddling left or right spins in that direction, both together push the tube straight forward and you can also paddle backwards.

There you are playfully paddling when all sorts of uncool things start trying to puncture the tubes. Like, totally non-mellow man. There are different types of river section, each with their own hazards. The Yukon has icebergs and dive-bombing penguins, there's sewage and mines in a city stretch, even deadly skulls on a red Martian river.

There are lots of different obstacles on all the rivers: bushes, logs and rocks abound. On the banks there are fishermen, eskimos, sphinxes and punks that

TOOBIN'

TENGEN/DOMARK £19.99

■ Joystick or Keyboard



■ The dudes have missed a patch, but points are ahead.

■ Here's an imminent sinking from alligator, boulder or bush.



■ A hippo paddles past while a tin can takes out the bush.

■ Grab that 'N' and watch out for those Martian killers.



■ Stuck on rocks in the jungle.

about it. Scrolling is smooth and varies in speed with the dudes.

The music is a lot of fun: mostly cheery, happy tunes that bopple along and are in keeping with the game's atmosphere, with eerie music for the Mars and swamp rivers.

JUDGEMENT

It's tricky to get to grips with the tube controls but their unusual nature and responsiveness is a boon in the long run. Simple gameplay makes it a lot of fun to start with, tailing off after a while because there isn't much depth to it. The two-player game is more fun as the dudes compete for bonuses and bounce around.

Bob Wade

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	2
ADDICTION	7
OVERALL	72%

GRAND PRIX MASTER

DINAMIC £19.95 ■ Joystick

Endorsed by Jorge 'Aspar' Martinez, something of a big fish in the small pond of 80cc motorcycle racing, is this viewed-from-above bike game that allows you

to race around seven world-famous tracks including Suzuka in Japan and Jerez in Portugal.

There are warm-up laps and a qualifier, because only eight of the

12 competitors actually get to race round the course. Complete the race, win some points and become Champion.

That was the good bit. The bike's control is not too good and it's especially annoying to be reduced to a pile of blood and metal every time you have a slight meeting with another rider.

This is not good stuff: the graphics are fine and everything is

well animated, but the gameplay is so poor it's doubtful you'd bother to finish a season. **Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	5
INTELLECT	2
ADDITION	3
OVERALL	24%

SAFARI GUNS

INFOGRAMES £19.99 ■ Mouse

An ecologically sound game, this one. There you are in Africa on a 'big game' shoot: but the shooting is all done with a camera. The idea is to use up your roll of 24 shots

per level and get paid at the end of the stage for the photos. Make enough money (points) and you can go on to the next level. It's not that easy, though, because each

level is swarming with poachers who take pot-shots at you, removing one of your five lives.

You are armed with a gun so you can shoot them first if you're quick enough to click the cross-hair on the gun icon at the base of the screen. It's a bit like Operation Wolf without any of the inherent violent tendencies. It also lacks the good gameplay unfortunately, so it won't take you terribly long to get

bored with it. All in all, this is a nice game but with a gameplaying lifespan of about five minutes. **Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	1
ADDITION	5
OVERALL	42%

SPORTING TRIANGLES

CDS £19.99 ■ Keyboard

One, two or three players can compete in this sports trivia game based on Central TV's quiz show.

There are several rounds to compete in (the time limit for answering can be user defined)

and each contestant is asked questions individually (except for the last, quick fire round) and the idea is for the contestant to shout out the answer and then hit the space bar to reveal the answer

and tell the computer whether he was right or not.

There are twelve specialist sports to choose from at the start of the contest and the questions on each are definitely for the person who knows his onions.

If you like trivia games - and sports ones especially - then you could have a lot of fun, but if you don't like trivia games and you don't take too much interest in sport then you'd be wasting your

time with this. Otherwise, the fairest thing that can be said is that it's fine if you like this sort of thing. **Nuff said. Andy Smith**

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	65%

STORMLORD

HEWSON £24.99 ■ Joystick

Trouble is up in the land of the faeries: they have all been captured and imprisoned. To save everyone from a terrible fate you have to release them all.

Each level of the game has five faeries to be rescued, merely

by touching them. To get to them you have to solve many problems in a plain, old-fashioned arcade adventure style.

There are keys to unlock doors, jars of honey to draw away deadly swarms of bees, umbrellas

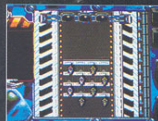
to protect against killer rain and so on. There is also a neat teleport system where you are carried around by an eagle.

You can jump and shoot, which are very necessary for dealing with flying dragons, walking skeletons and demons that hatch from eggs. There are timing problems too, just to complete the arcade-adventure feel.

The gameplay betrays the game's 8-bit origins but the graphics have been considerably

improved. The combination of exploration, puzzle solving and some shooting works well, and there are enough levels to make it a challenge. **Bob Wade**

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	4
ADDITION	6
OVERALL	62%



■ Grand Prix Master: on the starting grid in pole position.



■ Safari Guns: a poacher pops up in front of you, so shoot him!



■ Sporting Triangles: eerm... something of a poser, this one...



■ Stormlord: clasped in the grips of the eagle transporter.