



DIGITAL PRESS



MARCH/APRIL 1992
published bi-monthly
\$1.25

MARKETING GIMMICK OF THE MONTH

Welcome to the fourth installment of Digital Press! The staff and myself have brought you more reviews, more new columns, and more pages than ever before. Now, we're going to "spread the wealth". **Get a friend to subscribe for a year and both you and your friend get a half a year free.** Just have him/her mention your name when subscribing. Good deal, eh?

Out at the stores, it looks like the Genesis won the battle of Christmas '91 hands down. According to representatives from some of the larger chains in the New York/New Jersey area, the Genesis outsold the Super Nintendo consoles by as much as 20 to 1. If you walked into a store the day after Christmas looking for Genesis software, you saw mostly empty shelves, whereas over by Super Nintendo there was still a decent supply. It's unusual to see someone beating up on Nintendo, but the war is far from over.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the readers who have written in over the last six months. Your letters have been our guide to self-improvement. To those of you who haven't written in, we'd like to hear from you! Next issue we'll start a "letters from the readers" page (with some clever title, rest assured) where the staff will field your questions and comments.

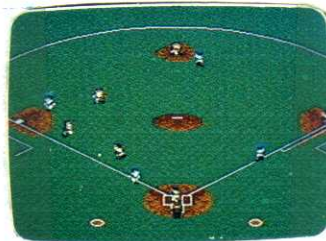
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?: A LOOK AT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE THAT NEVER HAPPENED

by Joe Santulli

Videogamers have seen products come and products go, but here are some products that never were. Do you remember these "vaporware" items?

SEGA'S "TELEGENESIS" MODEM

Early Sega cartridges came with a poster similar to those packed in recent carts, containing a large ad for their products on the back of a colorful poster. One of the selling points for the powerful 16-bit system was a modem that would allow you to play special games over the phone. The poster read as follows:



TELEGENESIS BASEBALL

"Imagine the power to challenge your friends across town or across the country to a great game. With the exclusive TeleGenesis Games and Modem (sold separately), on-line excitement is only a phone call away. Dial up opponents for head-to-head competitions. TeleGenesis games include TeleGenesis Baseball and the arcade hit Cyberball." As of May 1990, Sega stopped

advertising the TeleGenesis Modem. Last we heard, it was being used in test markets in Japan for non-entertainment applications (Zzzzz). There was much



MODEM

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speculation about the speed of such games since the transfer rate over the phone could never keep up with the 16 bit processor.

COLECO'S "SUPERGAME" MODULE

One of the biggest letdowns to the ColecoVision player community was the scrapping of "Expansion Module #3", which would play game "wafers" shaped like miniature records. This enhancement would have allowed more memory in the game itself, therefore making intermissions, high-score lists, and extra variations in each game possible. *Super Donkey Kong* was to come packaged with the unit.

It's interesting that Coleco managed to get two expansion modules out the door, and even unveiled (and released to a limited extent) the Intellivision adaptor expansion module, but didn't sink its bucks into this promising item. Unfortunately, the whole project was aborted when the Adam computer blueprints became a priority, and we all know what happened after that.

COLECO'S ADVERTISED SOFTWARE

Coleco was notorious for this kind of thing. I cited ten occurrences of cartridges that were never released in the original owner's manual alone! Among these were *Rip Cord*, an arcade skydiving game similar to the Atari 2600 *Sky Diver* (only more complex) as well as *Spectar* and *Side Trak*, also arcade translations. There were a few sports games: *Skiing*, *Horse Racing*, *Head to Head Baseball* and *Head to Head Football*. It is safe to assume that Coleco went with their "Super Action" Baseball and Football instead, which we can forgive them for, but the *Skiing* game, which looked like a first-person perspective masterpiece, was a game many owners waited for to no avail. In the same manual *Tunnels & Trolls*, *Chess Challenger* and *Mr. Turtle* were also advertised.

My personal yearning was for a game titled *Dracula*, which was pictured in Electronic Games magazine and looked like a sure classic. There was no mention as to why this game was never released, but I have to believe there is one out there somewhere. Could Coleco have manufactured a phony image of the game without ever programming a line of code? Your guess is as good as mine.

CONSUMER

Q & A

Let's face it. Money is tight, and there are plenty of games to be bought. So which ones do you buy first? What system fulfills your expectations? What should you steer away from? If you trust us on anything, trust us here.

Q: I just got a Sega Genesis for Christmas. What should be my first cartridge purchase?

A: Of course, individual preferences mean a lot here, but our staff is a pretty varied group, so here is our Genesis top ten (as of 2/14/92) and the average rating for each:

1. JOHN MADDEN '92	10.00
2. OUT RUN	10.00
3. JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL	9.66
4. NHL HOCKEY	9.25
5. STREETS OF RAGE	9.40
6. GOLDEN AXE	9.33
7. ROAD RASH	9.25
8. PGA TOUR GOLF	9.20
9. CASTLE OF ILLUSION	8.66
10. SUPER MONACO GP	8.50

As you can see, the Electronic Arts' sports line dominates the list. If you're not into sport games, *Out Run* and *Super Monaco GP* are excellent arcade/driving carts, *Castle of Illusion* (starring Mickey Mouse) will exceed any Super Mario offering. Everything else is violence: *Streets of Rage* and *Road Rash* are brutally fun, and *Golden Axe* is a medieval masterpiece.

Q: I'm in the market for one of the 16 bit systems. How do they compare? Where does one system excel over another?

A: On paper, the Turbogرافx-16 matches up well with both the Genesis and the Super NES. The processor for the Turbogرافx-16 is only an 8-bit 6820, however that rarely shows in their games. Unfortunately, the TG-16 still suffers

from lack of third party support, and games have been trickling in. The best software for the TG-16 usually appears more colorful but less realistic than either the Sega or Nintendo 16-bit machines. This system is also the least expensive of the four, at \$99.

We really love the Super NES' sound chip (manufactured by Sony), which churns out orchestra-quality performances in many of their carts. The Super NES' flaw is its slow processor (3.58 Mhz, the same clock speed as the ColecoVision!), which is quite evident - most of the early releases for the SNES suffer some slowdown when many objects occupy the playfield. This system is the second-most expensive of the four, at \$179.

The Genesis still seems to have it all, including two years' worth head-start in software development. Quite often their games appear drab but well-detailed. The very best music produced on this machine is about as good as the TG-16, but not as rich as the SNES. There is also an adaptor that allows you to play the Sega 8-bit games, which include dozens of vastly underrated offerings. This system is the second-least expensive, at \$149.

Let's not leave out SNK's Neo-Geo, undoubtedly the state-of-the-art home entertainment system, but its hefty price tag and \$175 dollar cartridges are rather impractical considering the competition. It's the most expensive home videogame system, at \$449.

Q: Where are some good places to find cartridges for the older systems? **Childworld and Toys 'R Us seem to have cleared their shelves.**

A: Sad, but true - to make way for the 16-bit and handheld revolution, most stores have discontinued their line of Atari, Intellivision, and even Sega Master System software. That leaves us in the hands of mail-order houses. Two of our favorites:

TELEGAMES USA, BOX 901 LANCASTER, TX 75146: Telegames has been a reliable source of software for all of the classic systems for years now. They have a decent selection of everything from Atari 2600 to Neo-Geo. The best part is, they're fast.

THE COMPUTER/ELECTRONICS SOURCE, 41-30 70TH ST. WOODSIDE, NY 11377-3952: Another excellent mail-order distributor that

also stocks some computer software. You can purchase some of their products used as well.

Q: Is there a difference between *Madden '92* for Genesis and *Madden* for SNES? I haven't gotten a clear answer even from the people at E.A.. I'm under the impression they're the same game with just some minor differences.

A: They're almost the same game. If you have *Madden '92* for the Genesis, you have the better of the two. The Genesis version has a few extras, like the chain measure on close-to-first-downs, the ambulance that screams in when an injured player needs help, and a crowd that pops onscreen to cheer or boo. I've also found that the Genesis version of the game plays much more smoothly, but both are excellent buys.

ATARI 2600 RARITIES PART 1 OF 4

by Kevin Oleniacz

Ever receive a price list with titles you've never seen or heard of before? In this four-part column I'll share my thoughts on some of these titles that I've been able to pick up over the years.

1. *Bobby Is Going Home* (Puzzy)

This is a very simplistic jumping contest where one must traverse across a number of screens in order to reach your home. Avoid stationary flowers and pits, birds which swoop down, and other creatures which move across the screen. It's a very slow-paced contest and if you have lots of patience, can be easily mastered. The graphics are rather blocky and lack detail. However, the background, consisting of mountains, ships and other objects adds a nice touch. When one completes a level a song plays (and plays and plays...). This break is unnecessary, since this game is not exactly a wrist or thumb killer. If you attempt to rush through a screen which contains a bird, you'll find it a challenge, as the bird seems to know where you'll be heading. In reality, they're following a set pattern. This game has a cute theme, but the gameplay



will appeal more to younger gamers than veterans.

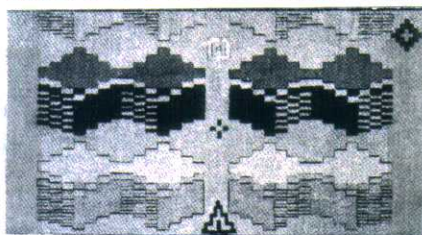
2. **Boing!** (First Star)

This is a *Q*Bert* clone where one has to continually change the color of cubes. A "bubble eater" is in constant pursuit while a pin randomly travels down each column. It's impossible to fall off of the cubes but if you touch the pin or the bubble eater a life is lost. The bubble eater can be lured in front of the pin and can be stunned for a few seconds. Difficulty increases with the speed of the creatures. Goals change, forcing you to hop on odd rows before even rows, or one row at a time. This cart provides a nice challenge but the graphics appear washed out. If you enjoyed *Q*Bert*, you won't be disappointed with *Boing!* First Star is known for creating great games for home computers. Too bad their 2600 release couldn't have been an original idea.



3. **Espial** (Tigervision)

This is another dull shootem-up game, a dud in comparison to Tigervision's other upward scroller, *Threshold*. You must battle your way through 3 different areas while fighting off both



03580

airships and ground bases. The background is both the best and worst feature. Your ship flies over an assorted configuration of weird

shapes which project a slight 3-D effect. However, both the enemies and their fire often blend into the background, and I'm usually left wondering "How did I die?". The music at the conclusion of each round is lame and all of the enemies either fade or flicker. I wouldn't recommend

this to anyone except for the most die-hard shooter fans.

4. **Gauntlet** (Answer Software)

A rather charming game from a little known company, the premise is to continually travel upward while avoiding an array of moving and stationary objects. Colliding with walls or any objects will decrease your water supply (strength). Pausing to give a drink to an old man will lower your strength but increase your score. A torch signifies the conclusion of a level. Stopping to extinguish this will earn a bonus and a refill of your water supply. Many small sharp objects which are displayed on the screen at once without any flickering provides an eye-pleasing touch. The constant beating of drums is one of the most realistic sound effects ever heard on this system but after awhile it can get on your nerves. I wish there was more of an object to the game, but it's undeniably a great cart.



5. **Gravitar** (Atari)

Another mediocre arcade translation brought to the home screen by Atari. Your mission is to destroy all bunkers on every planet within each solar system, or to blow up the reactor in the alien reactor base. This is done by carefully navigating your tiny ship's thrusters. Options include selecting # of ships (6-100), activating or deactivating the gravitational pull, and having non-shooting enemies. This cart provides an interesting concept but it is practically impossible to complete, even without any planetary gravity. There are plenty of tight areas to navigate, which makes it even more frustrating. Lackluster graphics are present throughout the entire game, while the sound effects are only average. If you're a gamer who can master carts in no time, *Gravitar* may be a worthy challenge.



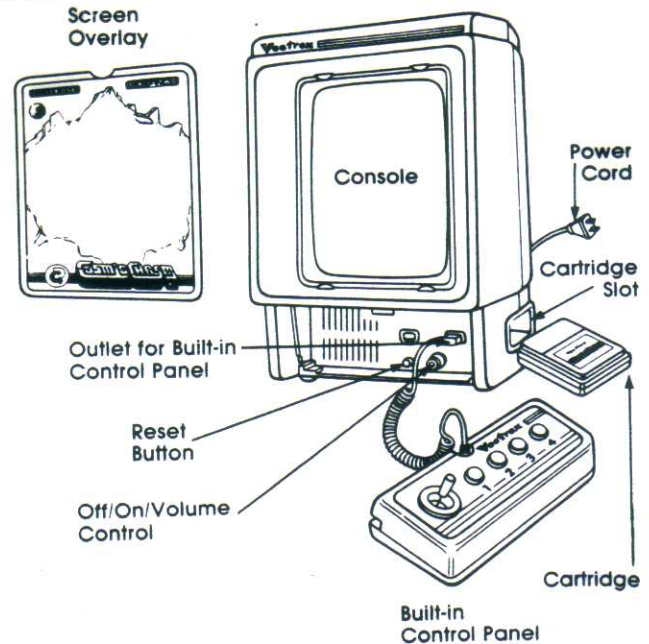
Checklist Central

COMPLETE VECTREX CHECKLIST

It was one of the hottest toys during the Christmas season of 1982, but the pricey Vectrex by GCE had a short life. This was a heck of a system, though: it was portable, so it didn't need a TV to hook up to. It featured vector graphics, which

were very hot at the time. Interesting titles were available, including some relatively popular arcade conversions such as *Pole Position* and *Berzerk*. There were even peripherals: a 3D "imager" much like the one used on the Sega Master System years later featured shutter technology to make the screen seem to jump out at you. A light pen allowed you to draw and interact with the screen. Below is the complete list of all the cartridges ever made for the Vectrex. Special thanks go to Al Backiel, James Davis, and Steve Bender for their input:

- [] Armor Attack
- [] Bedlam
- [] Berzerk --
- [] Blitz --
- [] Clean Sweep
- [] Cosmic Chasm
- [] *Dark Tower* *
- [] Flip-out Pinball
- [] Fortress of Narzod ++
- [] Heads Up Soccer -
- [] Hyperchase
- [X] Mine Storm ++
- [] Pole Position +
- [] Polar Rescue *
- [] Rip Off --
- [] Scramble ++
- [] Solar Quest
- [] Space Wars
- [] Spike
- [] Spinball
- [] Star Castle ++, *
- [] Star Hawk
- [] Star Trek +
- [] Web Wars +



VECTREX SYSTEM CIRCA 1983

LIGHT PEN CARTS

- [] Animation
- [] Art Master *
- [] *Mail Plane* *
- [] Melody Master

3D IMAGER GAMES *

- [] Crazy Coaster --
- [] 3D Mine Storm
- [] Narrow Escape ++
- [] 3D Pole Position

KEY:

- Ital* prototype
- [X] built into system
- ++ rated highly
- + honorable mention
- rated low
- dishonorable mention
- * tough to find

Next Month: We'll really delve into obscurity with the "Fairchild Channel F", another short-lived system that competed with the Atari 2600 for about five minutes. Stay tuned!

"Worst Of... Series"

THE WORST OF INTELLIVISION

by Joe Santulli

Mattel's Intellivision was way ahead of its time. Think about it. They mastered voice-synthesis games, produced the only computer add-on, and introduced the "pad" controller to the gaming community. It's my favorite "classic" system, and yes, it's still being supported by the INTV Corporation! Here are the carts we would rather forget for this system that was (otherwise) a groundbreaker in technology:

1. Boxing (Mattel) - I often wonder why nearly every Intellivision owner has this game. I guess the breathtaking graphics - two blobs of color swaying back and



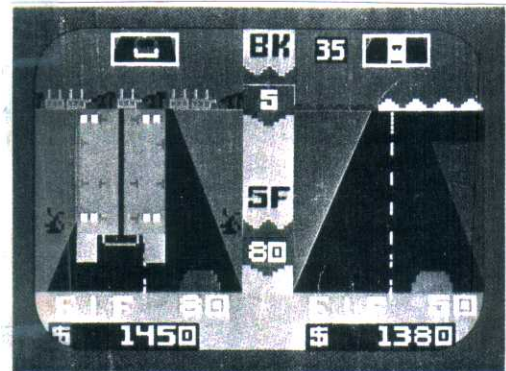
SO UNREAL IT'S UNREAL

forth - didn't hook me. To make matters worse, the controls are a hassle, and the game always ends in a knockout. Like all of Mattel's early sports games, there is no one-player option. At least if you're playing alone you can use the other "boxer" as a punching bag and pretend it's the game designer.

2. The Empire Strikes Back (Parker Bros.) - Here is the classic example of a cartridge produced in order to be categorized as "multi-format". What does that mean to you and me? It means we get a cheap looking mess that's hard on the eyes, ears, and throat (from screaming at the screen), while some entertainment company executive fills his coffers with our misplaced earnings. This totally pointless and sluggish game is in my opinion one of the worst ever made for any system.

3. Tron Maze-a-tron (Mattel) - Mattel's obsession with this sub-par movie went a step too far here. We could have forgiven them for *Tron Solar Sailer* - after all, it followed the exceptional *Tron Deadly Discs* - but enough's enough! This one featured your character attempting to "shut down" the MCP (bad guy) by running around the inside of a computer. Not a bad idea, but like the movie, it's done blandly. There is no excitement from beginning to end.

4. Truckin' (Imagic) - O boy! I get to travel 'cross country delivering goods and buying gas! Just like real life!



WAKE ME WHEN I'M IN IOWA

Truth is, this dismally s-l-o-w game uses about a third of the screen if you're playing one player, and if a friend plays along, not only do you have to deal with the tiny playfield, you have to share a tiny map - and compete at the same time. Needless to say (but I'll say it anyway), this game can cause many ripped maps and equally tattered friendships.

5. Sharp Shot (Mattel) - Not much more than a demo, this cart takes four popular Mattel games, *Sea Battle*, *Space Battle*, *NFL Football*, and *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* and strips them down into shooting contests that are about as exciting as a vegetarian sausage. I'll never forget how depressed I was when the terrifying "demon" from *Advanced D&D* was reduced to a mindless thief here, easily dispatched by an arrow with a lucky bounce. Equally miserable were the classic enemy starships from *Space Battle* just flying into my gunsights (in single file, no less) like so many shooting gallery ducks.

6. Astromash (Mattel) - "Rocks, rocks, stinking rocks! I'm sick to death of them!": that's the exact quote a



2 ZILLION POINTS TO GO

friend of mine once cried out after about an hour of mindlessly blasting the falling debris. It's not that *Astromash* was

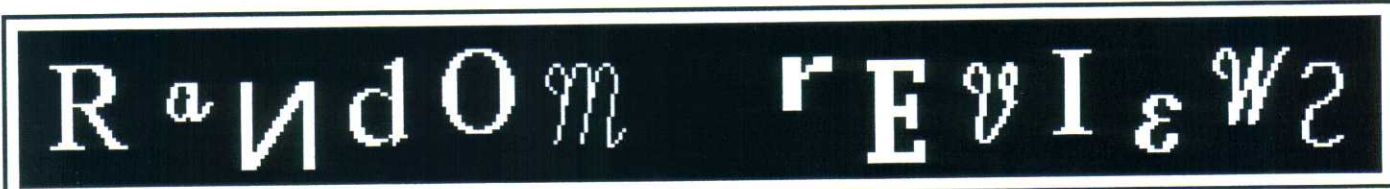
inferior, it's just that you could rack up extra ships so rapidly, that it would take six hours to end the game! Either this game was play-tested by a ninety year old blind person with no fingers, or the programmer was really into rocks.

7. Donkey Kong (Coleco) - I can't think of one Intellivision game that LOOKS as bad as this one. Practically everything is the same color, and there is an unusual lack of detail in the characters. If you go through some of the other carts Coleco put out for this system, you will find more of the same. Were the designers just inept, or was the corporate strategy to produce low-quality Intellivision titles to amplify the fact that the ColecoVision was so much better? While you're figuring that out, I'll be taking a hammer to this cartridge.

8. Lock 'N Chase (Mattel) - Here's the scenario: It's 1984. You just purchased this "hot" cart. Here is your reaction: "Hmmm... this looks a lot like *Pac-Man!*

Alright! Let's plug it in! ...Hey, looks pretty good! I'll just whip through this and... ugh... why am I moving so slowly? Am I in the children's mode? ...What the heck....?". You try again and again to get your onscreen "thief" to move faster than snails-pace, only to be quickly surrounded by the cops. It's true, I guess, that crime does not pay.

9. Demon Attack (Imagic) - As much as I hate to disagree with the experts, I never liked the Intellivision version of *Demon Attack*. The aliens are undetailed and predictable. The background throbbing will remind you of that sound in the back of your head during a hangover. The one bright spot is the alien mothership, which looks just great, but the trade-off for this visual feast is sluggish controls when you need them the most. This is one case where the Atari 2600 version is better.



by DIGITAL PRESS STAFF

**BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III
ARENA, FOR GENESIS**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	4	4	-	6	4	-
SOUND	5	4	-	6	2	-
GAMEPLAY	1	2	-	3	1	-
OVERALL	2	2	-	2	2	-

Here's a video game based on a movie that I thought was great, *Back to the Future III*. What could be better? I'll tell you what could be better - anything up to and including a kick in the ass. This game is comprised of four independent stages, each with enough reasons for hating the entire package.

Stage one finds you as Doc Brown atop your horse galloping across plains to save Clara before her carriage plunges into the ravine. As you ride across the screen from left to right, you need to

dodge bouncing rocks, swooping birds, and tomahawks while leaping over other obstructions. This stage is very challenging, yet there is absolutely no enjoyment to go along with it. The objects come at you so fast that you are reduced to trying to memorize the entire scene. That's an easy way to take the fun out of a game. When you do make it to the end, you don't actually see the Doc save Clara. The screen just fades to black with the words "You saved Clara".

Stage two is a shooting gallery with only Marty's gun-hand visible to you. While a little less challenging than the previous stage, not having good control over the crosshairs makes this a little frustrating. Nothing special going on here.

As the next stage began, things appeared to be picking up. You see Marty in the center of town in 1885 Hill Valley. I thought I would walk Marty through the town, looking for Mad-dog

while the baddies would be shooting from the windows or rooftops. The big disappointment here is that you can only move Marty in a straight line from the corner of one building to a table of pies where you "reload". This is the best of all the stages, which isn't a big feat.

Stage four is something of a mirror image of the first, only you're running atop a speeding train. If you have a mental lapse and buy this game I can promise you'll be running "Back to the Store", screaming for a refund!

TIP: Don't buy this game.



-Karl Youngman



ANNICK

"'Back to the Drawing Board' is more like it! This game is a futile exercise in frustration. Too bad they couldn't go back to the past and re-program this mess."

"This pathetic excuse for a modern 16-bit game should have been called 'Back to the Past'. It fails to impress me in every category: below average graphics, dull sounds, and very frustrating, simplistic game play which conjured up painful memories of duds from systems that were popular ten years ago."



OLENIACZ

**FINAL FANTASY II
SQUARE, FOR SNES**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	8	-	8	9	8
SOUND	10	10	-	10	10	9
GAMEPLAY	9	9	-	8	9	9
OVERALL	9	9	-	8	9	9

If this is the future of role-playing, I may have to quit my day job - I'll never get enough sleep to function there. It's *Final Fantasy II*, another in the popular series, and it's a real gem. I would go as far as to say that it's the best RPG I've ever played on a cart-based system. If you own a Super Nintendo, get it. Get it now.

You're Cecil (Intimidating, eh?), a Dark Knight and leader of the Red Wings (a sort of royal air force). When you decide to rebel against the King's tyranny, you set out on your own to protect the innocent. While the storyline doesn't seem incredibly unique at the outset, you will find that as the game wears on, the plot unfolds, and you'll find yourself actually enjoying the storyline! There is a constant change in personnel within your party to keep your battle strategies fresh, too. Bottom line: this is a very involving RPG.



A TOUGH BATTLE

The graphics are hit-and-miss, with tiny cartoon-like characters and 8-bit landscapes. The monsters you fight are very detailed but not very animated. In combat, the attacking monster will

usually just flash. The good stuff comes in the well-detailed towns and castles as well as in the airship scenes, when the SNES "mode 7" scaling gets shown off.

I would have to say the music in this cart is the best I've ever heard in any videogame. I thought the orchestral effort put into Enix' *Actraiser* could never be topped, but it looks like the SNES has one heck of an audio chip (thanks, Sony!). *Final Fantasy II* sounds like a movie soundtrack, with rich violins, harps, cymbals, and trumpets cranking out CD quality tunes that go from upbeat combat themes to somber dirges. I would have bought a CD with these songs on them. It's that good.

To top it off, Square included a battery backup that stores 4 games, character name change options (very handy when your main character is named Cecil), and places to save the game in special rooms within dungeons. They went all out on *Final Fantasy II*, and it shows.

TIP: Before going to battle against any of the bosses, be sure to set the battle speed to slow. This insures that you will get the most attacks in.

TIP: The white magic spell WHITE works very well against the boss in the final battle. Don't be misled by the ALL MAGICS BECAME INVALID message, that just means that any spells cast that have a lasting effect (i.e., FAST, HOLD, etc.) have been negated.



-Joe Santulli

"A good example of how Japanese programmers grab hold of an idea, in this case role-playing action games, and take it to its logical conclusion. Not much is original here but everything is improved on older themes."



ANNICK



OLENIACZ

"Outstanding musical score! Gamers will feel like they're participating in a movie. The quest is extremely long but that's a plus for die-hard RPG fans."

**VICE PROJECT DOOM
AMERICAN SAMMY, FOR NES**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	-	8	-	8	-
SOUND	8	-	7	-	7	-
GAMEPLAY	9	-	7	-	8	-
OVERALL	9	-	7	-	8	-

It was bound to happen. The *Ninja Gaiden* series was (and is) such an innovation that eventually, we were going to see something similar to them. Well, here it is - *Vice Project Doom* - but the

designers threw in a few extras to make this a unique gaming experience.

The plot is rather mysterious, and in an interesting series of cinema intermissions, it unwinds before you. The atmosphere is so movie-like, in fact, that there is a prologue intermission,

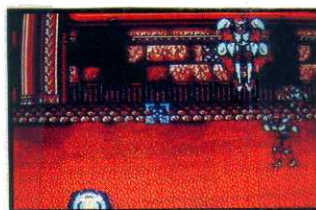


CAR CHASE ACTION

then a car-chase action scene, then the title. Count on these intermissions at frequent intervals - they describe your next objective in most cases.

There are three different kinds of objectives in the game. The most common is the *Ninja Gaiden*-style action scenes, where you must jump, shoot, whip, and duck dozens of different enemies. Most of these sections require precision jumps and a fast trigger. A "boss" character could be at the end as well.

The two other sequences are reminiscent of *Spy Hunter* and *Operation Wolf*, respectively. The car-chase scenes are fun and very fast-paced, while the first-person shooting games are rather



uninteresting, but do break up the action to a degree. Either way you look at it, enough effort was put into the game to prevent it from getting

repetitive.

The controls are as good as you could ask for, and the graphics are pretty impressive, too. The backgrounds in the action scenes continued to amaze me with their detail, level after level. Overall, you can't go wrong with this game. It has everything an action-game lover would ask for.

TIP: To beat the M5 Scorpion (the boss that looks like a tank), duck under the 3 blasts, avoid the falling missiles, then jump up and swing your laser whip at the blue light on top.



-Joe Santulli



SCHULTZ

"Vice Project Doom is a combination of several video games including *Spy Hunter*, *Batman*, and *Darkman*. Top of the line graphics make this game addictive and the cinema portions unravelling the story are outrageous. A legitimate hit from American Sammy."

CROSSBOW
ATARI, FOR ATARI 2600

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	9	-	-	9	9	9
SOUND	6	-	-	3	6	5
GAMEPLAY	7	-	-	5	8	7
OVERALL	8	-	-	5	8	8

When arcade translations have been announced for the 2600, gamers have grown accustomed to expecting extremely inferior versions. *Crossbow* is an exception to this general belief.

This is a shooting gallery-type cart, where the premise is to protect several friends as they slowly make their way across six different landscapes. Controlling a crosshair, shoot down rocks of lava, falling stalactites, birds, arrows and other objects as they aim to destroy your friends. On the "map" screen, decide between one of three paths to follow in order to ultimately enter a castle, which provides passage to the next level.

Six of the eight scenarios from the arcade version are present in this translation (with the bridge and town scenes missing). The graphics of Atari's other shooting game, *Air-Sea Battle*, pale in comparison to the creatures and backgrounds in *Crossbow*. All of the action and excitement has been preserved from the arcade!

Unfortunately, this cart does contain some flaws. You receive no acknowledgement that a level has concluded other than a bonus tacked onto your score. The joystick control is somewhat sluggish and the game becomes repetitious. Nevertheless, this is a very enjoyable arcade translation which

stretches the 2600's capabilities close to the limit. A nice change of pace from the countless dull shootem' ups which are very common to this system.

TIP: To reach the castle in the shortest time, pick the paths in this order: green, green, blue, red.



-Kevin Oleniacz



HIRSCH

"This is one of the better action/adventure games for the 2600. Too bad their other games were not like this, Atari 2600 would probably still be in mainstream production."

"It's always great to see the Atari 2600 stretched to its limit. This is a perfect example of that. If it had been set up to run with a light gun, it would have been a perfect 10 for this system."



SANTULLI

CADASH
WORKING DESIGNS, FOR TURBOGRAFX

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	-	-	-	8	8
SOUND	5	-	-	-	6	9
GAMEPLAY	7	-	-	-	8	9
OVERALL	8	-	-	-	8	9

Cadash is the latest arcade translation to enter the T16 market. Following the well-known theme of rescuing the princess from the clutches of evil, battle your way through five continents in this action/RPG contest. Select any one of four characters to control: the swift ninja; the strong sword-wielding fighter; the priest whose specialty is defensive magic; or the mage who is endowed with offensive magic. Confront a wide array of creatures such as skeletons, pigmen, and deadly hands

that emerge from the earth. Upgrade your weapons, purchase medicine and antidotes, recover magic and hit points at an inn, or collect information while visiting towns. Search for keys and other special items in order to pass through certain areas.

This adventure may initially seem frustrating, especially since there aren't any continues, save features, or game options. In order to complete your



ELEMENTAL FROM LEVEL 4

quest one must continually build up your character's magic and hit points by slaying monsters. I found it impossible to venture very far into the game unless I built up my character early by continually moving back and forth in certain areas, slaying creatures which constantly regenerate. I find the most rewarding area to attempt this in on a slope on the second continent, where the bone-chucking creatures populate.

This cart contains very smooth control and displays some of the best graphics I've seen for this system. The music is also very good but the sound effects are weak. *Cadash* boasts plenty of action and a favorable challenge for veteran gamers.

TIP: In the second cave, climb down the first rope and pass through the door submerged in water. Traveling under the sea will lead you near the portal to the third continent. Remember to pick up the mermaid scales or this shortcut will become fatal.



-Kevin Oleniacz

"The arcade version was great, and this home version takes nothing away from it., except that you don't need to pump quarters into this one."



HIRSCH



SANTULLI

"If you're a frustrated Turbogرافx-16 owner looking for a good challenge along the lines of the *Legendary Axe* series, *Cadash* is for you. The two-player option really makes this game fun. Just don't give up on it during the rather challenging level one."

GOLDEN AXE II SEGA, FOR GENESIS

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	8	7	9	7	10
SOUND	7	7	5	8	8	8
GAMEPLAY	8	8	6	9	8	9
OVERALL	7	8	6	9	8	9

The object of this cart is the same as the first: to rid the land, Yuria, of evil. This time it is not Death Adder, but one named Dark Guld (Death Adder in disguise, maybe?) in charge of the chaos.

Once again, you choose from 3 warriors to take on Guld and his minions: Ax-Battler the barbarian, Tyris Flare the amazon, and Gulius Thunderhead the dwarf. However, for strength in numbers, a friend may join you. As in the original, you can go into the options screen and adjust it according to your own skills. In this sequel, there are 3 skill levels (easy, normal, and hard), and two modes of magic (normal & special). In normal mode, when the magic button is pressed all of it is used, whereas in special, you can control how much magic is used by holding the button down. The longer it is held, the more powerful the magic that is released against its foes. The adjustment of the life meter is the same as the original as well, as are options to re-arrange the magic, attack and jump buttons.



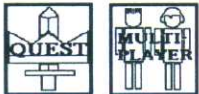
TYRIS' DRAGON

Finally, "The Duel" mode has been preserved, where you can go head-to-head against a friend or Guld's henchmen.

If I have

any gripes, there are two minor ones: the music is weak compared to the first version, and the death screams leave something to be desired. Despite these two shortcomings, *Golden Axe 2* is a must for hack and slash fans.

TIP: There are several places in the game where "holes" mean instant death. Use these to your advantage by luring the enemies into them.



-Howard Hirsch



SCHULTZ

"Not as much fun as the original *Golden Axe*. The sound attackers make when they are beaten is horrible. This game is too easy to beat. If you want a challenge, play *Golden Axe (I)* on the hardest level."

"If you liked *Golden Axe* then expect more of the same from its sequel. Not much new here, although there are some slight variations. Sega did manage to carry over everything that made the original a classic."



ANNICK

MICROSURGEON
IMAGIC, FOR INTELLIVISION

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	9	9	-	9	7	9
SOUND	7	8	-	8	9	8
GAMEPLAY	8	9	-	9	9	8
OVERALL	9	9	-	9	9	8

An unbelievably unique game, Imagic really had a winner here, but *Microsurgeon* was NOT destined to become a classic. Why? It could be that the

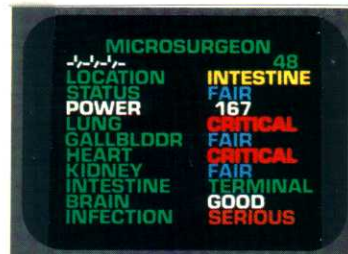
thought of moving a tiny probe around the interior of a diseased human wasn't the most appealing theme to gamers. Zapping cholesterol buildups and brain tumors might have hit too close to home for the adult player, and the potentially biological background may have scared a few of the youngsters away. Not me, though. I bought *Microsurgeon* the day



THIS IS ONE UNHEALTHY DUDE

it came out, and whenever I dust off the Intellivision for a little pre-Nintendo competition, you can be sure this one is going into that slot. By now, you get the general idea. You're the doctor, and in a much-welcome two-player version, your buddy is a medical technician. You steer the tiny vehicle through mazelike veins and swampy guts as your cohort fires ultrasonic rays, antibiotics, and aspirin at all types of deadly diseases. There are several difficulty levels (a total of 197 different patients) which increase with the severity of your patient's condition. You can pick an easy mission where you might just have to clear out some tar deposits in the lungs (show this to a smoker and they'll quit for sure), or a difficult mission where EVERYTHING is in critical condition. There's even a random option if you're really up for a challenge.

The graphics are excellent. The playfield looks like a color biology book, supplemented by the manual which provides an overview diagram. The heart pumps, the lung expands, even the eye dilates. There's a creepy feeling you get here - like you're playing "ducks and drakes" with the very existence of your patient. Lucky for my patients they're only video simulations or I'd be serving time for malpractice right now.



THE STATUS SCREEN

Sound plays a part here, too. Listen, and you'll hear the heart pump louder as you draw near. Cosmic "whooshing" sounds accompany your travels through the lungs. Ooooooh, eerie!

If you get the opportunity to purchase *Microsurgeon*, don't pass it by. It's sure to be one of your favorites in your collection of Intellivision software.

TIP: Although white blood cells will attack your ship when you try to take a shortcut through the black "guts" areas, most often the time you save is worth the hassle.

TIP: Aiming your shot can be tricky. It's easier to hold down the "fire" button and THEN press the direction than the instinctive method, which would be the other way around.



-Joe Santulli

"Multicolored display accompanied by some nice sound effects. Interesting concept but it's a little hard to control, just like real life surgeons when it's time to calculate the bill."



OLENIACZ



YOUNGMAN

"An interesting entry in the Intellivision line of games. Borderline educational. Lack of ease with the controller is a major drawback."

**QUACKSHOT
SEGA, FOR GENESIS**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	8	7	9	7	9
SOUND	5	7	7	7	5	10
GAMEPLAY	6	7	7	7	6	9
OVERALL	6	7	7	7	6	9

Right on the heels of Mickey Mouse's starring roles in the wonderful *Castle of Illusion* and the not-so-wonderful *Fantasia* is Donald Duck's debut on the Genesis screen. As Donald, venture

throughout seven select locations around the globe in search of the Great Duck Treasure. In addition, visit Pete's hideout and finally Great Duck Island while competing against Big Bad Pete's Ducky Gang. Along the way encounter Pete's minions, which include his henchmen, boxing turtles, penguins, and the undead. Travel through air, water and underground sequences. One can proceed to a certain point within a location before needing a special item to continue. Collect powerups and ammo.

Very smooth control is the best feature of this game. The music and



NON-VIOLENT!

sound effects are about average. While this game visually shines in some areas, it is drab in others. Donald is designed

nicely and even expresses impatience when he is not controlled by the player by wagging his tail, stomping his feet, and displaying an annoyed facial expression.

The main complaint I have is the game is too easy. There is no difficulty level selection, with the options consisting of a paltry sound test and control configurations. Ammo and powerups are too plentiful. Unlimited continues allow you to practice the few tough spots you will encounter, and since the bosses are relatively easy to defeat, you'll blow through most of the game in no time. The only true challenge is contained within Treasure Island, consisting of a series of well timed jumps. Chili peppers, which bestow temporary invincibility upon Donald when five are collected, are all clustered together in three general areas.

A difficulty level selection would surely benefit this cart. If the audio were upgraded this would have the potential to be ranked among this system's elite.

TIP: To find the tiger at the end of the labyrinth of the Maharaja's Palace, follow these directions: 1) Down & through first door, 2) Left & through first door above powerup, 3) Right, up, & through first door, 4) Left, jump over door, up to next door, 5) Right & through door above turtle.



-Kevin Oleniacz



ANNICK

"Nice looking game in the *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* genre. Perhaps better for kids due to lack of lethal weapons used in the game, but not bad for adults either."

"I enjoyed *Mickey Mouse's Castle of Illusion*, however, this cart adds a little bit of *Sonic* (let Donald sit and do nothing) to it - the animation is top-notch and Donald can do more with his moves."



HIRSCH

S.T.U.N. RUNNER
ATARI, FOR LYNX

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	-	8	-	6	-
SOUND	8	-	8	-	6	-
GAMEPLAY	7	-	8	-	6	-
OVERALL	7	-	8	-	6	-

Dashing down a winding tunnel, I realized I was about to collide head-on with a pair of armored drones. That collision would mean I wouldn't finish the race in time. Acting quickly, I steered my craft up along the edge of the tunnel until I was upside-down, with only centrifugal force holding me in place. The drones passed beneath me, but now an even tougher challenge loomed ahead. A partially constructed tunnel with landmines!

That's pretty much the scenario, as you partake in the race of the future. *S.T.U.N. Runner* has been ported over to the terrific Lynx game system, and it's

hot. The hardware capabilities of the Lynx make the fast, furious action from the arcade a possibility in the palm of your hands. Narrow, winding tunnels, straightaways with ramps, forks in the road, debilitating obstacles... it's all here, and it's very hard to put down.

The game looks a bit different than the arcade counterpart, noticeably grainy and more cluttered. It could be that the designers tried to squeeze every element from the arcade version into the tiny screen, but the end result is often a pile of "things" on the track that cannot be distinguished. The scaling and perspective look great, though, to the point where I was looking forward to places where the tunnel would suddenly drop straight down (like in the "Rollercoaster" level) because it seemed so real.

I was also disappointed with the responsiveness of the controls. Too often I felt like I wasn't moving as fast as I should have been. The acceleration is very slow at times, almost unpredictably so.

The challenge is well-paced, as the gamer can select level 1, 6, or 12 right from the start. Three continues allow you to re-start a course you couldn't finish. Take note, however, that everything always happens in the same sequence, making memorization an important part of mastery. *S.T.U.N. Runner* is in my opinion the best game for the Lynx since *Blue Lightning*, and that's saying a lot.

TIP: Remember where all of the speed boosts are. Many courses can't be completed unless you hit every one.



-Joe Santulli



SCHULTZ

"This addition to the Atari Lynx library is fantastic. Fast-paced action, breakneck speed, and weapons to ace would-be lane changers. What more can any red-blooded gamer want? The graphics suffer a little due to the size of the Lynx screen. Could someone please put this out for the Genesis or Super NES?"

**SUPER OFF-ROAD
TRADEWEST, FOR SNES**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	JA	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	7	-	8	9	8
SOUND	8	7	-	8	8	8
GAMEPLAY	7	8	-	8	8	8
OVERALL	7	7	-	8	8	8

I knew what I was getting when I picked up Tradewest's *Super Off-Road* for the Super NES. I had played it in the arcades and enjoyed it, and being a fan of the classic *Super Sprint* (which had the same play mechanics), I figured this to be a modern classic for my home system. Why is it, then, that I feel somewhat disappointed with this game, even though the graphics and sound are nearly identical to the arcade version?

There are a few reasons. First of all, the four-player competition is gone. Not only does the computer take over the two remaining vehicles, but they are unflinchingly the best and worst on the track, respectively. That means that you're going to come in second or third almost all of the time. That certainly takes the competitive edge away from the game, especially when you play solo.

Another really good reason is that there are no options whatsoever. You start the game on the same track and continue on and on, every game racing the same sequence of tracks. Although there are 16 different courses in all, some of the best ones don't show up until you've done the earlier ones two or three times. Why is that, I wonder?

Now onto the good points. The playfield looks just like it did in the arcade. The Super NES' excellent color palette is mostly responsible for this,

with its many shades of brown, you might think you're looking at a digitized image of an actual track. The trucks themselves are very tiny, and it takes a little while to get the hang of re-orienting yourself when you spin out of control, but that's a minor point. The sound effects are sparse but effective, and the soundtrack is outstanding. I had to laugh, though, when I first entered the parts selection screen and the Toyota theme song pumped through my speakers.

You're not going to jump out of a flatbed for *Super Off-Road*, but it's a good arcade translation that should provide some good two-player competition.



-Joe Santulli

"This resembles an off-road version of *Super Sprint*. Controls take getting used to, but excellent otherwise."



HIRSCH



YOUNGMAN

"An excellent game, but a wider variety of tracks would have helped immensely."

THE LIZ-O-METER

This special section of the reviews is included for the gals - An overall "best to worst" using all of this edition's cartridges. We know that women have a slightly different view on gaming, so resident female critic Liz Nardella offers her overall "fun" scale here. Guys, take note. If you're trying to keep your girlfriend or wife at home with you, she's most likely to play the ones close to the top of this chart.



- BEST
- MICROSURGEON
- GOLDEN AXE II
- FINAL FANTASY II
- VICE PROJECT DOOM
- S.T.U.N. RUNNER
- CADASH
- QUACKSHOT
- SUPER OFF-ROAD
- CROSSBOW
- WORST
- BACK TO THE FUTURE III

Side \$ Side

VIDEOGAME MAGS

by Joe Santulli

If you hadn't noticed, we like comparing things to other things. It helps you get a perspective on what is really good when viewed in a competitive way. We've compared golf and football cartridges to one another, but here's something a little different. Almost everyone in videogame fandom reads the newsstand magazines, and if you're like me, you probably buy each one willy nilly, each publication's material washing into the next. Truth is, each of these mags have quite their own unique styles. Now, in Digital Press fashion, we pick each one apart and present the facts in a different light...

OPTION	EGM	VG&CE	GAMEPRO	PLAYER'S (NINTENDO)
Price	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$3.95
Year Subscription	\$23.95	\$26.95	\$19.99	\$26.50
# of Pages	244	176	170	96
# Ad Pgs: Products	99	70	73	43
# Ad Pgs: Mail Order	19	8	8	4
# Ad Pgs: Misc Other	15	3	5	1
# Pgs Actual Material	130	95	84	48
# Game Reviews	14	36	66	5
# Game Previews	61	0	8	0

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY STRENGTHS: Largest of the magazines; bookshelf format; best coverage of overseas software; excellent gossip page (Quartermann); calendar of software releases; frequent contests. WEAKNESSES: Very little opinions on game reviews; lots of typos; sometimes chaotic page layout with game title hard to find on the page. RELATED MAGAZINES: *Super Gaming*, *Buyer's Guides*, *Mega-Play*.

VIDEO GAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT STRENGTHS: Very neat appearance; excellent veteran staff; comprehensive game rating system; fanzine coverage. WEAKNESSES: No real preview of future releases; 1/3 of the magazine devoted to P/C games.

GAMEPRO STRENGTHS: More game reviews than other magazines; large, varied staff. WEAKNESSES: No previews of coming software; bad cartoons; large, varied staff frequently give uninformative reviews. RELATED MAGAZINES: *Adventures of GamePro*, *SwatPro*.

GAME PLAYER'S STRENGTHS: Several magazines cover specific gaming tastes; WEAKNESSES: Too few reviews in each issue; bland appearance. RELATED MAGAZINES: *Strategy Guides*.

RESEARCHERS NEEDED

We're building an encyclopedia of the pre-Nintendo video era and would like your input! Needed: title, manufacturer, system, # players, # levels, # screens, game genre (ie. sports, maze), a brief (3

sentences max) description, and a numerical rating from 1-10 on a) graphics, b) music/sound, c) gameplay, and d) overall. Send as many as you like. Ask for **free** materials for additional research. All contributors will be credited on final product. No computer software!

PRESS PROFILE: HOWARD HIRSCH



NAME: Howard Hirsch

AGE: 27

OCCUPATION: RJE Operator (Printer)

HOBBIES: Model cars & trains (real ones too), Dungeons & Dragons

DATA: "Howie" has been a gamer long before it was in vogue, initiating his young gaming life with Coleco's *Telstar Tank Combat*. Since that time, he has become an avid Atari 2600 fan and Genesis aficionado. With a yen for driving games, it's a cinch that you'll probably find Howie with his crash helmet on his head and Sega's *Outrun* on the Genesis.

RECORDING YOUR GAMES TO VIDEOTAPE

by Kevin Oleniacz

Did you know most of your videogame systems can produce images onto videotape? There are two methods of taping your gameplay to video for future viewing:

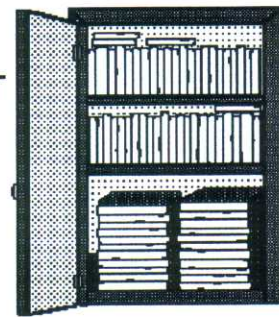
1. Newer systems can be hooked directly into the VCR through the VIDEO IN and AUDIO IN plugs in the back. The Genesis, Super Nintendo, Turbografx-16, and Neo-Geo can be connected to the VCR in this manner (the Genesis requires the purchase of a "Video Monitor Cable", which is distributed by Sega. The Turbografx requires purchase of a "Turbo Booster" to accomplish). Always connect the yellow plug into the VIDEO IN and the white or red plugs (or both, if you have a stereo VCR) into the AUDIO IN. All you have to do now is set your VCR to record from an external source - most VCR's use "LINE" or "A/V" as the convention, while older models have a special channel (such as "channel" F) to handle external input. Press record, turn on the videogame console, and you're in business.

2. Most non-stereo systems such as the NES, Sega Master System, and Atari 7800 require a little less work. You will have to run the console's RF cable directly through the "IN FROM CABLE" connection on the VCR. Set the VCR to channel 3, and you're rolling.

I find these tapes helpful to analyze enemy patterns and to plot strategy for action games. It also comes in handy to review clues, mazes and other territory

in role playing games. You can also create "preview" tapes to show your friends. Just don't charge money for them - that would be illegal.

CLOSET



CLASSICS

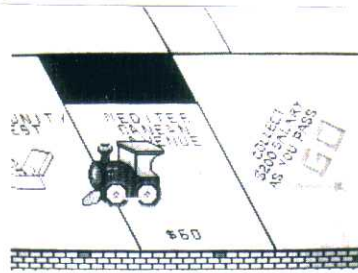
VOLUME 4

by Digital Press Staff

Here are this issue's entries in the "sleeper" category: those games that received little attention despite the hours of enjoyment we had with them:

- 1. Desert Falcon** by Atari (for Atari 7800) - An original game for this system (an unusual feature), *Desert Falcon* became an "unknown" almost immediately after it was released. The problem was that it premiered on the doomed 7800 system, and shortly afterwards on the fading 2600. This is an excellent "shooter" that can almost be compared to *Zaxxon* in that it offers a top-down, 3/4 view perspective. The characters are very well detailed, and the scrolling is flawlessly smooth. Hey, how could you NOT like a game with an enemy called a "Burrowing Uwe"?
- 2. Monopoly** by Sega (for Master System) - As hot as Nintendo's version of this board game classic is right now, Sega's

version, produced back in 1988 is even better. All of the elements are here: the cards, the pieces, and the REAL rules. Graphics are top-notch, with each gamepiece animated in its own way (watch the cowboy gallop across the squares or the shoe "hop" onto each one). You can have computer opponents (up to ten!) fill in for the other players, with skill levels that you set for them. There are even a few animated sequences when you go to jail or get out. One annoying aspect of gameplay: the computer is very persistent when it wants to trade properties. It will bother you every turn until you agree



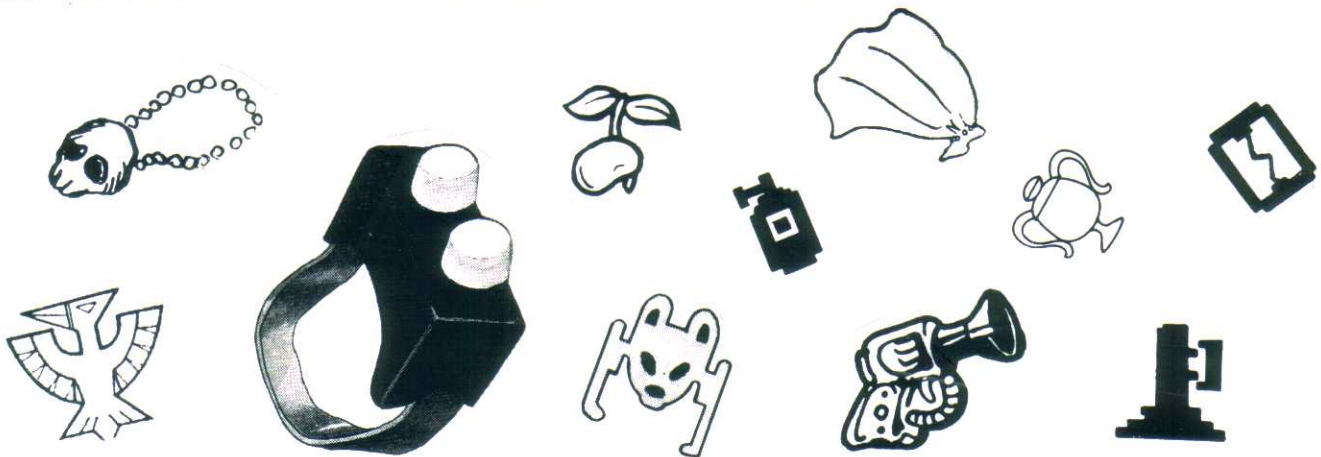
CHUGGING ALONG IN MONOPOLY

on a trade or it changes strategy. Overall, a gem of a game.

3. Pepper II by Coleco (for ColecoVision) - Certainly one of the most bizarre games ever made, you play the part of an angel closing up zippers and collecting the prizes contained within the closed area. You are pursued by roaming eyeballs and a character named the "Zipper Ripper", a large green head with a huge nose. When you close in an area containing a pitchfork, you become the devil and can turn the tables on your enemies. YES, it sounds a little like *Pac-Man*. YES, it sounds a little like *Amidar*. But it's nothing like anything you've ever played before. Excellent challenge, fast-moving gameplay, frenzied music. 'Nuff said!

HISTORY POP QUIZ #3: GADGETS

Ah, the burden of protecting the universe. It is a cumbersome and tedious task indeed. Luckily, we have help. Below is a potpourri of weird items to help support the good guys. Our last two quizzes have been dubbed "too hard", so now all you have to do is match the names with the items (too make it a little challenging, there is one extra item pictured):



- A) Mask
- B) Infrared Scope
- C) Oxygen Bottle
- D) Hero's Emblem
- E) Bubble Gun
- F) Energy Pod
- G) Mantle
- H) Seed of Life
- I) Elixir
- J) Sonic Key
- K) Aresta's Pendant

ANSWERS for QUIZ # 2: 1) Firebug from *Batman* (Sunsoft/NES), 2) Dragon from *Dragonfire* (Imagic/many), 3) Bionic Lester from *Skate or Die* (Ultra/NES), 4) Kublai from *Cratermaze* (NEC/Turbografx-16), 5) Beefsteak Tomato from *Attack of the Beefsteak Tomatoes* (20th Century Fox/Atari 2600), 6) Alien Commander from *Space Fury*

(Coleco/ColecoVision), 7) Moula from *Space Harrier* (Sega/many), 8) Chickens with Mortars from *Toe Jam & Earl* (Sega/Genesis).

DIGITAL PRESS



Looking for used or hard-to-find cartridges? Want to sell something to a collector? Let DIGITAL PRESS help. Send us your ad and we'll print it, free of charge!

WANTED: Used NES 8-bit carts. Send me your list of old games and I'll buy the ones I need. **FOR SALE:** Intellivision carts B-17 Bomber, Space Spartans, Lock n Chase, NHL Hockey, Night Stalker, Star Strike, in boxes w/instructions, \$5 each; Atari 7800 Food Fight, \$5; Atari 2600 carts Megamania, River Raid, Space Invaders, Missile Command, California Games, Defender, Asteroids, Yars' Revenge, Berserk, \$3 each; Intellivision music synthesizer, \$30. Joe Santulli, 29 Cupsaw Ave., Ringwood, NJ 07456-2919.

TO TRADE: Genesis *Shining in the Darkness*, John Madden Football, Shadow Blasters; Nintendo Final Fantasy. I'm interested in Genesis *Starflight* and *Warrior of Rome*, but I'll take most Genesis carts I don't have. David Chau, 49 Essex St. #8, New York, NY 10002. (212) 533-5894 after 8pm.

WANTED: Microvision, APF MP1000, Emerson Arcadia, various handhelds and dedicated TV games; Kid Vid and Compu-mate; 2600 games: Crazy Climber, Cubicolor, Custer's Revenge, Gameline Master Module, Gamma Attack, Harem, Gas Hog, Music Machine, Lockjaw, Rescue Terra I, Rush Hour, Slot Machine, Snowplow, Submarine Commander, Tapper, Video Life, Wings, Z-Tack, many others; many carts for other systems. Send list to Russ Perry Jr. 5970 Scott St. Omro, WI 54963 (414) 685-6187.

WANTED: Xerox copy of owner's manual for the Atari C-380 Video Pinball system. This is an early multi-game, color, paddle controlled system. Will gladly pay postage and handling. Al Backiel, 253 Rock Rd., Ridgewood, NJ 07450.

FOR SALE: Over 60 Atari 2600 carts w/ instructions - send for free list!; Atari XE Gato (new - \$7); Genesis Back to the Future III (like new -\$35); Commodore 64 games also available. **WANTED:** C-64 disk New York City, 2600 carts: Mangia, Master Builder, Sinistar, Frogger II, many others. Write or call: Kevin Oleniacz, 96 Buena Vista Dr., Ringwood, NJ, 07456. (201) 835-8156 after 7pm weeknights, anytime on weekends.

LOOKING FOR PEN-FRIENDS into gaming - computer games etc. Write to: Mark Krischak, 2611 Yorba Linda Blvd. #301, Fullerton, CA 92631.

WANTED: Cartridges and hardware for Atari 2600, Vectrex, and ColecoVision/Adam. **FOR SALE:** (or trade) Cartridges for Atari 2600, 5200, ColecoVision, Odyssey2. Write: James G. Davis, 405 Barrett Ave, Hartford, KY 42347 or call after 7pm (502) 298-7327.

BUY & SELL: Apple II manuals, software originals, Computer & videogame magazines, Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, 65-XE, ColecoVision, Intellivision, Commodore, IBM & more. Dungeons & Dragons, Sci-Fi, Adventure & Fantasy Accessories. Unusual & hard to find items. Quality at affordable prices. Send \$1 for your bargain catalog today! Frank Polosky, P.O. Box 9542, Pgh, PA 15223.

WANTED: Military Madness for Turbografx-16. Write: John Annick, 68 North St. Winoski, VT 05404 or call (802) 655-3651.

FOR SALE: Over 150 different Atari 2600 games. Also Atari 5200, ColecoVision & Intellivision. Write Jeff Adkins, 11 Windsor, Attica, NY 14011 for list or call (716) 591-1519.

FANZINE PLUGS

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Ringwood, NJ 07456-2919

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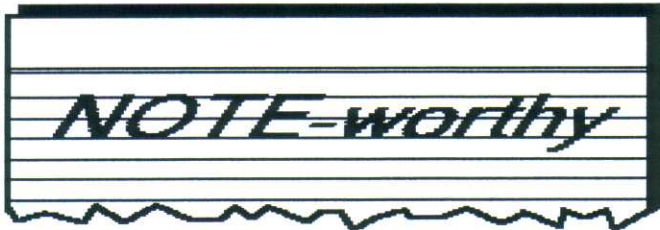


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NINTENDO

Two big items: the "Super NES Super Scope 6", a peripheral that allows players to use infra-red technology to aim at the video game screen from virtually any position, is due out this Spring. Besides having pinpoint accuracy, Nintendo is releasing two compatible cartridges: *Blastris*, a *Tetris*-style game with a twist, and *LazerBlazer*, a military shooter/simulation. The shoulder-mounted unit looks like a lot of fun. Look for the "Challenge Set" in stores soon, another NES package complete with control deck, two controllers, and (here's the clincher) the world's best selling video game, *Super Mario 3*, packaged with the system.

SEGA GENESIS

The best news I've heard in awhile from Sega is the announcement of *MLPBA Sportstalk Baseball*, the second in their line of "Sportstalk" games. Besides having the chatty announcer, this cart will have strong gameplay to back it up. How do we know? Because the game is being converted from the incredible *Super League '91*, a Mega Drive cart, and an excellent one at that. MLPBA will also feature real baseball teams and players.

Past columns have stressed the joys of publishing your own electronic-gaming fanzine. I've described the rewards in glowing terms, offered some practical advice and assisted in the compilation of mailing lists.

If this has created the erroneous impression that personal publishing is the only way to go, then I apologize. You'll have to excuse the enthusiasm of a guy who has published a thousand or so fanzines, starting at age 17.

The announcement of *Megazine* shows that fans are learning the value of cooperation on projects. Look for an early review of this amalgamation of seven regular fanzines in *Fandango*. I hope it doesn't stumble over the same obstacle that undermined the late, lamented *Cyberbeat*; too many editors can lead to lack of leadership and miscommunication.

The next step beyond setting up unwieldy editorial boards is to let the best editors and publishers fulfill this function while everyone else concentrates on writing and drawing. A single editor can be editing, typing and so forth while a committee would still be debating every little matter, via costly phone or slow-moving mail.

Contributing to fanzines rather than publishing them makes good sense for many fans. Not everyone has the time, money and equipment to produce a regular fanzine. Contributors get free copies of the publications in which their work appears, and they still get the ego satisfaction of standing on the paper soapbox and giving the electronic-gaming world their opinions.

Getting started as a fanzine contributor is as simple as sending for some fanzines. Find one that seems congenial to what you want to write (or draw) and contact the editors. You can send a sample piece or just strike up a correspondence and see where that leads. You'll have all the outlets you want for your fanwork.

Video Game Monthly #3

Ben Leatherman

10 Palo Verde Lane
Globe, AZ 85501

No listed price—No listed frequency

Seven pages

Ben's dedication and enthusiasm can't be questioned, but he might do better to concentrate on contributing to other fanzines, at least at this time. *Video Game Monthly*, an optimistic title as well as a pretentious one, is printed on one side of the sheet in two typefaces. It even has some handwritten passages. That's what I call commitment!



Getting It Together

BY
ARNIE KATZ

But Ben would probably have less frustration and more fun if he put publishing on the back burner and started writing for other fanzines. His reviews of *Star Wars*, *Metroid* and the coin-op *Street Fighter* would read about the same if they were in someone else's fanzine—except that they'd be presented more attractively. Dan Soloman, who provides a lengthy examination of *Bonk's Adventure*, would also be a welcome addition to many other staffs.

The Panic Zone #5

Chris Larson

3217 23rd Ave. SE
Rio Rancho, NM 87124

\$1—Monthly

24 pages

Chris, who sometimes uses the name "Vapor," brings a punk rock sensibility to the electronic-gaming fanzine field. His writing is occasionally sloppy, sometimes misguided and always entertaining. Besides plenty of short video-game reviews, the current issue has a lengthy letter column, a generous portion of fanzine reviews and a provocative article discussing the state of the Sega Master System.

Chris has lots of opinions—even compared to the typical fan-ed (fanzine editor)—and he is fearless in expressing them. Sometimes he is both arrogant and misinformed, but I'd rather get a lively fanzine like *Panic Zone* than a drab "by-the-book" fanzine. If you'd like to try a publication that looks at gaming's sacred cows with commendable irreverence, try a sample

of this; and ask Chris about *Megazine*, since he's an editor of that one, too.

The Shape of Gaming to Come

Darren A. Krolewski

12311 Conservation Trail

Utica, MI 48315

\$5 for six issues—Bimonthly

16 pages

Darren, another of *Megazine's* editors, uses his editorial to take issue with Matt Porath's in a recent *Mindstorm*. Porath advised fans to forget about publishing, because there are so few potential subscribers. "The wide selection of fanzines is what makes fandom *fandom*," Krolewski rebuts. He goes on to say almost exactly what I would've; that fandom is not a quest for subscribers and profits, it's a hobby. That means that the reward is the sense of accomplishment that comes from doing the fanzine and the entertainment value of the fanzines, letters of comment and contributions received in response. And needless competition among fanzine editors, who should be helping and supporting each other, isn't going to make electronic-gaming fandom more fun for anybody.

Lots of short, but perceptive reviews, a preview of the "super gun" arcade-quality home system, Tim Slomka's outstanding computer-gaming column and a host of other well-written and informative features complete this excellent fanzine. This has become one of my personal favorites, so it gets an unqualified recommendation.

Digital Press #4

Joe Santulli

29 Cupsaw Ave.

Ringwood, NJ 07456-2919

\$1.25—Frequent

20 pages

About the only thing I *don't* like about this literate and well-produced fanzine is its somewhat impersonal air. Editor Santulli should come out from behind the pseudocorporate trappings and give us more of the obviously appealing personality behind *Digital Press*.

Joe is one of the most creative editors in the fan press. The graphics mix diagrams, decorative type, cartoons and small screen-shots to produce a fanzine that invites the reader into every page. The articles are also inventive, including pieces like "Whatever Happened To?" about hardware and software that never quite appeared. *Digital Press* is prejudiced against computer gaming, but even that can't destroy this fanzine's overall fine standard. 📖