CHANGES
EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

OKAY. So you may have noticed that your mail has been getting here a little late (or not at all). That's my fault. I moved to historic Pompton Lakes, New Jersey in July and haven't gotten out all of my change of address cards. Anyway, you can find the new address scattered around this issue, inbetween columns of what I feel is the best Digital Press to date!

I'm really glad to see some of the innovative games coming out for the 16-bit systems. Hasn't everyone been waiting for a fishing simulation, a bowling game, and a game that plays like a series of cinema intermissions? Well, *The Blue Marlin, Super Bowling,* and *Out of this World* should be on or near your store's shelves as you read this. It's a big change over a year ago when we were innundated with shooters. There are still a few games that I'd like to see that will probably never make it to home systems:

How about a flight simulator from a bee's eye point of view? Think of it - the display shows your surroundings, with the edges lined in little octagons (for effect) with scaled-down images of the main, central display. Landings occur on flowers instead of airstrips; sandwiches provide fuel instead of gas; bonuses are awarded for stinging humans; "dogfights" break out against other insects on land & air.

If we have to stick to the norm, let's make them a little more realistic. Super Monaco GP made great strides toward a realistic car racing simulation, but wouldn't it have been better if there were crashes by other drivers that you had to swerve to avoid? Better still, a slim chance of driver fatalaties? Even the best of simulations aren't realistic unless they throw real-life possibilities at you.

Now, onto the good stuff. Liz writes her first column (see the Street Fighter II review), we have our first "team-up with a reader" column in "What If.....?", and we get away from those "pseudo-corporate trappings" (some of you know what I'm talking about) by introducing a kinder, gentler font. Read on, gamers!

WHAT IF.....?
by Joe Santulli
with Edward Villalpando

It's hard to be a philosophy major and not think about what would have happened if a certain point in time were reversed - or altered. In the dog-eat-dog world of electronic gaming, there are more twists and turns in the plot than imaginable, but there are a few crucial turning points that could have changed the way we play. With some help from fellow gamer Edward Villalpando, let's explore some of the possible outcomes...

WHAT IF.... The Sega Master System acquired more third-party support in its early stages? It's 1985 and the Sega Master System (SMS) and Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) are both successful in Japan. In the world we know, Nintendo establishes a gigantic pool of third party software developers and eventually gobbles up the home market. Let's look at another scenario...

Sega goes after Capcom and Konami, already proven developers for the Atari 2600 and ColecoVision (which folded only a year earlier) with an aggressive marketing strategy that proves their machine is superior to the Nintendo unit. Their "be your own developer" attitude allows improved versions of already-published software to be converted from their other systems, and *Antarctic Adventure, Track N Field, Pengo*, and *Pooyan* are the first titles to be released. Soon after, Activision is brought aboard, and instead of coming apart at the seams, they find new success due to the early popularity of the SMS.

Nintendo's sales force doesn't give up, though - they believe that their unit, which is inferior on paper, can win in the long run. They drop the price of their unit and loosen up on their supervision of third-party softs in order to increase their visibility on store shelves. Sega, in the meantime, drafts Acclaim, Epyx, and a handful of smaller developers. They actively pursue the U.S. market instead of translating Japanese games over six months later. Activision becomes the number one third-party developer and creates all-new titles that break record sales set by earlier games *River Raid, Pitfall*, and *Kaboom!* By the end of 1987, Sega is comfortably on top of the 8-bit market, and by 1989, Nintendo is falling into the same trap that caused the demise of earlier systems: their loose rules allow too many poor games to be associated with their unit. Decent games like *The Legend of Zelda* and *Punch-Out!* are lost in the shuffle. Soon, people are starting to forget the NES.

Nintendo makes one last stab at the videogame market with their 16-bit "Super" Nintendo in 1990. Because of financial difficulties, they are forced to produce the unit with limited personnel, and the final product has a few bugs. They make a small dent in the market, but not enough to upset Sega, who delivers the knockout punch a year and a half later when they release their own 16-bit system <u>with</u> CD-ROM called, appropriately, the Genesis. (JS)

WHAT IF.... *Atari was not sold to Jack Tramiel in July 1984?....* If Atari was not sold to Jack Tramiel, Atari might be a bigger company today. Let's turn back the clock, to May, 1984. Atari was showing their two Lucasfilm games *Ballblazer* and *Rescue on Fractalus*, to be released on their 5200 system. Later that month, at a press conference, Atari unveiled their 7800 ProSystem. This system had an advanced graphics chip nicknamed "MARIE", which could allow games to have over 100 objects moving on the screen. Best of all, it was compatible with 2600 games. 5200 owners were not going to be left out, because Atari was going to make a 7800 adapter to allow them to play 7800 games as well.

In June, Atari showcased their 7800, all of its games, and new 2600 and 5200 software at the CES. Warner Communications, who owned Atari at that time, was looking to sell Atari because of the downfall of the videogame industry and was losing money. Jack Tramiel, formerly of Commodore, bought Atari's consumer division from Warner in July of 1984. He then let go 75% of Atari's employees, installed his sons in key positions, brought in some trusted employees from Commodore, and stopped all products and/or projects so everything could be re-evaluated. During this time, only ColecoVision and the 2600 were getting software, with the 5200 getting only a couple from 3rd party licensees. The trend in the industry was computers. What if Atari did not sell to Jack Tramiel?

Instead, the 7800 is released, as is its 5200 adaptor with the keyboard/computer adapter. The 2600 and 5200 get some hot new games such as *Xevious, Zookeeper, Tempest*, and *Track & Field*. The 7800 stirs renewed interest in videogames because it has better graphics than any computer under $1000. Consequently, fewer gamers convert to the more expensive computer systems

Now it's 1985, and Nintendo is showing off their new system, but Atari, who still has loyal customers, has the market sewed up by this time. With the success of the 7800, Atari gets the better third-party support before Nintendo does... the rest is history. (EV)

WHAT IF.... *Coleco hadn't experienced financial troubles at the peak of the videogame shakeout of 1984?....* If you'll recall the rollercoaster ride that Coleco went through beginning with the high of the ColecoVision, the low of the Adam computer, and then the high of Cabbage Patch Kids, you can really appreciate how a tiny alteration in history could have made a huge impact on the market. The story ends with Coleco bowing out of the videogame market, but fortunately staying out of bankruptcy court thanks to the power of Cabbage Patch. In my scenario, things work out quite a bit differently.....

Instead of making the near-fatal error of releasing the Adam computer ahead of schedule but full of bugs, Coleco holds off for a little while to work everything out, figuring that the public can wait a little while for an affordable computer. Instead, they release ColecoVision expansion module #4: The SuperGame. This module uses a special chip (that looks like a little diskette) that allows enhanced graphics, sound, and much more memory. The packaged game, *Super Donkey Kong*, catches on with owners and generates new interest in the ColecoVision. Now owners can play their Atari 2600 games, ColecoVision carts, and the new SuperGame chips all in one unit!

Then the catastrophe. While mass-producing the chips for *Super Donkey Kong Jr.*, the Coleco factory inadvertently spills waste into a nearby river, which filters into the water supply of local residents. A rural bio-hazard erupts into a national disaster when a schoolboy fishing near the factory suddenly sprouts a third arm. Coleco is ruined by the media, and all over the town, cases of mutation are reported. When the epidemic

finally settles down, there are enough mutants to begin a new colony. A colony of stronger, aggressive pseudo-humans bent on the destruction of the planet that now looks at them with disgust. That planet is called Earth.

So who said these scenarios all had to end with the demise of Nintendo? (JS)

READER RETALIATION
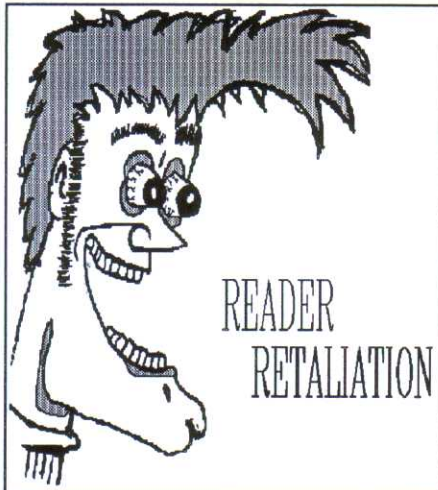
DP PRODUCTS A PLUS

Joe,

If you want feedback on your DP product line, here it is. The stuff's great! It's an original idea that trancends the boundaries of other "ordinary" fanzines. Your hard work and love for videogames is most evident. Specific commentary follows:

DP's Cheaters Compendium: PRO's: Fantasic, organized, very complete, loooong. CON's: None.

DP's Checklist Central Master: PRO's: Incredibly informative! Extensive Coverage! CON's: None. NOTES: Updates and lists covering more systems are definitely wanted.

DP Video #5 & #6: PRO's: Cool intro. Long amount of playing time for each game. Saves on rentals and from buying bogus carts! CON's: Ahh! Our first snag. The tapes (only these two) had quality problems. Noticeable color distortion along the top 1/4 of the screen at times. The distortion had nothing to do with my VCR, as the next tape was fine. It wasn't a tracking problem, either. It had something to do with the dubbing process on your end (I think). It wasn't bad enough to be called "unviewable", just mildly annoying. Also, the Magic Machine preview on DP #6 was completely scrambled (could hear it though). NOTES: Show yourselves on the videos! Maybe do some dialogue and intros to the games.

DP's Atari 5200 Video Review: PRO's: Incredible prototype coverage! Long list of games, good time choice for each game shown. Very good tape quality. CON's: The last three (65, 66, 67) were missing! The tape only displayed a blue screen then fuzz. NOTES: Please, please, please do a 2600 version (as well as other systems)! Also, when you get access to more 5200 carts do a volume 2.

OK, now for the final question... would I recommend/buy them again? Answer... a resounding, booming, YES! In spite of the slight aforementioned difficulties, my "check is in the mail" as soon as DP #7 is out or other DP videos are made. I would like to address this to your readers: Get a copy of DP's stuff. You'll save on game rentals, see games you never would otherwise, and have complete lists of tips and carts!

Rainer H.G. Ludloff II
Baltimore, MD

No letter is too long when it sings our praises. Thanks for the positive feedback! We're taking care of some of the glitches in the tape by changing the equipment used in playing the source tape. Future tapes will include a whole library of 2600 tapes, but for now, we've added a ColecoVision Review Tape to our list of products. Check it out!

MORE ON TELEGAMES

Joe,

I just wanted to respond to your comments about Earl Carsner's letter in the July/August '92 issue. A few months back, I purchased a Telegames Personal Arcade and have mixed feelings. On the positive side, it's an inexpensive unit which works great with most ColecoVision carts. You mentioned that you've found incompatibility with Parker Bros.' Super Cobra. I'd also like to add to that list Turbo (or any game using the driving module?). My Turbo cart and driving module work fine on my ColecoVision game unit, but not on the Telegames unit (the car refuses to steer). Your readers may want to keep this in mind before purchasing a Personal Arcade.

Ray Wilmott

Monroe, NJ

You're perfectly correct. I stand corrected.

COLLECTORS ADDENDUM

Joe,

A little note about a company you listed last issue as a 'source' for classic games. Mars Merchandising is located about 45 minutes from me and a few weeks ago I drove out there to see what they had. It was pathetic to say the most. He had about 40 cartridges total and was asking up to $28 for COMMON Intellivision games. He also said that he had no real intention of getting any more games unless he 'fell' into them so you might wanna let your readers know what the story with them is.

Sean Kelly
Chicago, IL

Joe,

I am writing to show concern for the way in which you specified Adkins, Backiel, Carsner, et. al. as "exceptional support" video collectors/salesmen. While I fully agree with your apparent appreciation for the "classified-gang-of-six" (Adkins, Backiel, Carsner, et. al.), I feel that the other members of your classified column were slighted into assuming second place to them. You might have expanded your written (for the gang of 6) assessment to include: Large selection, availability, reliability, not simply "exceptional support". Might I remind you that I sold you 3 INTV carts for $10, and if I may say so, earned A+'s in speed, price, & quality of merchandise. Your selective kudos for these six is a slight to your other contributors to "classifieds", including myself!

Anonymous

Boy is my face red! I certainly didn't mean to exclude anyone from the list, I was merely pointing out some whom I've dealt with on a number of occasions. If I had to list ALL of the collectors I've done business with, Digital Press #6 would have looked like a phone book! My apologies for leaving out anyone. Admittedly, I've had "exceptional support" from all of DP's classified contributors!

32 BIT DISPUTE

Joe & guys,

In response to Edward Villalpando's "32 Bit Is the Answer" letter (May/June 1992). Edward, you may be a little misguided. "CD-ROM is not the answer"? Well, first off, what was the question? A 32-bit machine can use a CD-ROM, you know, so even if you are right that "32-bit is the answer!", there's no reason CD-ROM can't be a part of it. Also, there's no guarantee that there won't be slowdown or flicker, and some games on 8-bit systems have "fast arcade action" anyway, so what makes 32 bits so special? Finally, you mention the rumored price of the Atari Jaguar. Never believe that when making an argument until you've seen it. The Jaguar may never be released anyway. On a related note, please don't anybody quote specs for the Jaguar, or the SNES CD-ROM until they're out!

Russ Perry Jr.
Omro, WI

In the spirit of fair play (and to stir more controversy into this issue), I've forwarded your letter to Edward, who promptly responded.

Joe,

In response to Russ Perry Jr, I was referring to CD-ROM connected to existing systems, such as the Mega-CD and SNES CD. As for CD on a 32-bit system, it could be good, but it would very high priced. A 32-bit system with a built-in CD would cost more than $400. With the prices of 16-bit systems now selling for $99.00, any company coming out with a 32-bit system should keep the price fairly reasonable. Slowdown and flicker should not show up in a 32-bit system since it can process more information at one time, and it

will have a very advanced graphics chip which could allow the programmers to use many more moving objects. As far as the 8-bit games go, I never said anything about 8-bit having slowdown and flicker. Sure, there are many 8-bit games that have a lot of on-screen action, but I'm talking about having detailed backgrounds with large, well-animated sprites.

As for Atari's Jaguar, I sure hope they come out with it. I'm getting tired of playing Nintendo and Sega. It's time for a change of pace. All indications are pointing toward supporting this new console, since they recently moved their entertainment division to a larger building in Lombard, Illinois. They have my support and encouragement.

Comments? Questions? Answers? Denials? Referrals? Keep those letters coming! Write: Digital Press Reader Retaliation, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442.-2037

*RAMblings!**

Welcome one and all to the Tokenmann show, where you get the latest dirt from the low-down menu. So if you're ready, let's get busy!.....Say it ain't so, Joe! The Master of Disaster System has been discontinued? Maybe.......... Happy, happy! Joy, joy! Slowdown and flicker on the Neo-Geo!........ Electronic Arts has just signed ESPN's Chris Berman to do their new baseball game. It will include all of his nicknames such as "GI" Joe Carter and Kurt "What is that" Manwaring.......... EA is also doing a new RPG called Where in the World is Cecil, San Diego?......... In a related move, Atari has signed Don Rickles to do their new game, BaseBrawl. It will have remarks such as "That guy couldn't hit water if he fell out of a boat!"........ Is the 7800 game Scrapyard Dog based on actor/comedian Tim Allen?.......... I got the ToeJam, who's got the peanut butter?...........Does anybody have issue #7 of the Adventures on the Planet of the Apes comic book?..........The Turbografx-16 now costs $69.99. Reaction: What took them so long?..........Does the Digital Press "Pre-Nintendo" Psychopedia also include the 7800?....... Mode 7 is a joke........Trivia Question: How many systems has Star Wars: the Empire Strikes Back appeared on?........ No, 42 long!.......... Should the Game Doc still be sued for malpractice now that he is on EGM? Your move, Hans.......... I thought I might have lost my marbles, too, but I found them. They were in the closet.......... This one comes from our Japan correspondent, Joe Izusu: the next hot racing cart for the Super Famicom is Mazda Motorcross. I can't wait to play this one........That's all folks!

TOKENMANN

*Opinions expressed are those of Tokenmann and may not reflect the opinions of the staff at DP.

ATARI 2600 RARITIES
PART 4 OF 4
by Kevin Oleniacz

Over the years I've come across some very tough 2600 titles. Most of them have never been reviewed by

any of the pro magazines. Included among these are a few prototypes designed by Atari which have never been released to the public but seem to be completed.

18. Chase the Chuckwagon (Spectravision) - This maze contest was never placed on store shelves, but was offered along with a very

limited promotion for dog food. Guide a dog through a simple maze to the exit, where a chuckwagon awaits. Dodge a dog bowl or any other object which continually bounces around the playfield. It speeds up as time passes, and your dog will freeze for a few seconds if touched. A man wanders around the maze, and one of your three lives will be lost if he gets you. Running out of time also subtracts a life. Between these mazes you get a bonus chance at some more dog food, by timing the falling dish to stop at your dog's feet.

The game seems to have been rushed together, as the graphics and sound are very simple. Only one player can participate, and the only option you have is selection of 30 or 60 second time limits. Later rounds prove to be difficult since you can't get extra lives and the bouncing object speeds up drastically. This is a most frustrating feature, since the object can usually circle around to hit you several times before you are given a chance to move. Furthermore, the title is misleading, since you never actually "chase" the chuckwagon, it's just a fixture at the top of the maze.

19. Rescue Terra I (Venturevision) - This shooter, released by an unpopular company, certainly didn't break any new ground. Inch your way toward the planet Terra while confronting an onslaught of a whopping five different types of enemies. There are slow moving meteors, shooting space pirates, erratic robot interceptors, and speedy fish force fields. Each wave consists of one type of enemy and can have from one to several dozen of them per wave. This ho-hum

F-711 Starwarrior
Asteroid
Laser Fire
Cargo Ship
Fighter Saucer
Score 32750
Shields 04
Distance 0:27813

RECUE TERRA I

shooter will not bowl you over with its graphics, sounds, or gameplay. When your last life expires the game just ends. This dismal offering does have some nice features, such as co-op play and practice levels, but it's not enough to compete with the more popular Atari shooters. Pass.

20. Sinistar (Atari Prototype) - Defeating the evil Sinistar is your goal. While continually flying in limitless space, shoot at floating asteroids in order to mine crystals for use in the manufacture of Sinibombs. Enemies can steal crystals, fire at you, or gather parts to assemble Sinistar. Once Sinistar is assembled, a crude noise blares out and your Sinibombs are employed to destroy it and advance to the next round. Accuracy is a must, as your bombs are limited.

You won't need to suffer through extremely easy levels as the first round starts out hard. A few of the distasteful features are the uncontrollable shooting of your ship, the asteroids' disappearance whenever blue enemy ships appear, and the design of the Sinistar itself. Obviously some fine tuning was needed. Nevertheless, there are enough positive gameplay elements to hold your interest.

21. Springer (Tigervision) - In spite of the kiddie concept, this is one tough title. As Springer the rabbit, hop onto clouds and collect bonuses by kicking dragons, eggs, and other objects. some clouds move or disappear. Your ultimate goal is to reach the sun at the top in the shortest amount of time.

Most of the screen is composed of clouds which are represented by rectangles. All other objects are very crude and blocky. The gameplay is extremely hard and unforgiving. All jumps must be perfect or your bunny will go "splat"! Not one of Tigervision's better releases.

SPRINGER

22. Stuntman (Panda) - Those familiar with Panda games are aware of their practice of taking already released games, stripping away their quality, and discounting the price. When Panda decided to produce something original (gasp! - or did they? Which came first, *Stuntman* or Sancho's *Nightmare*, an identical game?) they really displayed the trash they were capable of.

The basic idea is to climb and jump onto ropes, avoid birds, beat devil faces into submission with a stick, or ride balloons. Then enter a helicopter which whisks you away to the next screen. You lose a life when the timer reaces zero or you're touched by an invincible snake that slithers along the ground. Falling only wastes valuable time. Balloons transform into devil faces, and then into birds.

This dull cartridge has nothing going for it except for the challenging difficulty. It's easy to avoid the objects but it's tough to beat the timer. This title is no different than any other Panda title. It's a dud.

23. Tooth Protectors (DSD Camelot) - DSD produced this action game in conjunction with Johnson & Johnson. As T.P, the Tooth Protector, defend a row of teeth against sugar cubes dropped by a snack attacker. Deflect the cubes upward at various angles, using the edges of the screen to aid you. Hitting the snack attacker with the deflected cube results in extra points. If a tooth is hit with three cubes, it will blink and decay within a few seconds. To prevent this, rap on the button to start an intermission featuring a parade of J&J products cleansing the teeth. Occasionally the snack attacker will swoop down and carry off T.P. Extra cleanings can be earned but once a tooth decays, it's gone for good.

The game ends if T.P. is carried off three times or three teeth rot.

Placing strong emphasis on the importance of dental hygiene is stressed throughout the game. Enjoyable play mechanics without

TOOTH PROTECTORS

sharp sounds or graphics but with a visible message presents entertainment value here. J&J also effectively promotes their own products, which *Chase the Chuckwagon* failed to accomplish. A must-have for the younger generation!
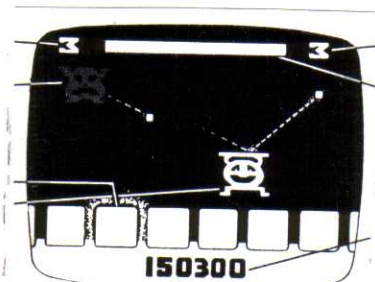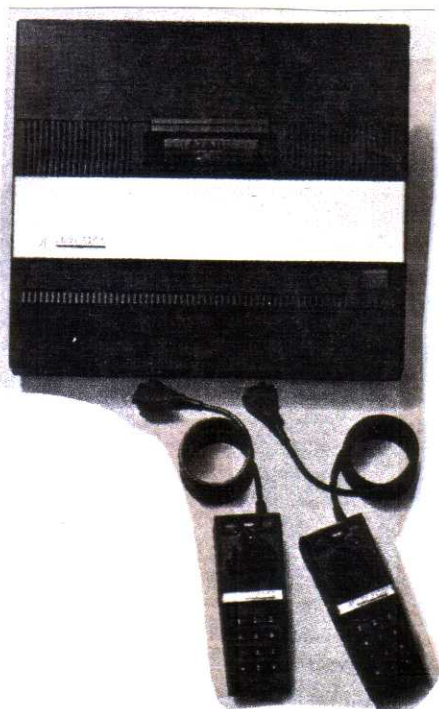
Checklist ✓ Central

COMPLETE ATARI 5200 CHECKLIST
by Kevin Oleniacz

With the introduction of the ColecoVision in late 1982, Atari countered with their own 3rd wave system, dubbed the 5200 Supersystem. Sporting a sleek new appearance, displaying state-of-the-art graphics and offering a selection of hit arcade titles, Atari had high hopes for the 5200. Unfortunately, this system seemed to be doomed from the start.

When the 5200 was introduced, Atari's 2600 (VCS) was still the most popular system although Coleco's ColecoVision dominated sales. Attempting to recapture the market, Atari decided to reproduce arcade titles which were already familiar with 2600 owners. Although the graphics were a significant improvement, the gameplay was relatively unchanged. Most gamers hungered for original and high quality games, which the ColecoVision had been providing. *Super Breakout*, which was packaged along with the system, did not show off any of the features the 5200 was capable of providing. The 5200 only attracted a handful of 3rd party support. The infamous videogame crash also contributed to the demise.

The main problem, and I'm sure anyone who logged in some time with this system would agree, is the controllers. These combination joystick/keypad annoyances didn't self-center properly and produced quite a lot of aggravation, especially in situations which required perfect navigation or timing. In addition, they were not very durable, and since they didn't use the standard 9-pin plug, it was tough to find replacements.

ATARI 5200, CIRCA 1983

Atari's trakball and Wico's analog joystick were poor alternatives and only worked well with a handful of games.

After a short time, Atari decided to discontinue the 5200 in favor of the 7800, an 8-bit system compatible with 2600 games. Recently, several prototypes have been uncovered. Some of them are completed games while a few, most notably *Jr. Pac-Man* and *The Last Starfighter*, could have produced a good volume of sales if Atari had more patience and stocked them onto store shelves.

|			
[ ] Astrochase	Parker Bros.	[ ] Montezuma's Revenge	Parker Bros.
[ ] Ballblazer		**[ ] Moon Patrol**	
[ ] Battlezone		**[ ] Mountain King**	CBS
[ ] Beamrider	Activision	[ ] Mr. Do!'s Castle	Parker Bros.
[ ] Berzerk {V}		**[ ] Ms. Pac-Man**	
[ ] Blueprint	CBS	[ ] Pac-Man	
[ ] Bounty Bob Strikes Back!	Big 5 Soft.	[ ] Pengo	
[ ] Buck Rogers: Planet of Zoom	Sega	[ ] Pitfall II: The Lost Caverns	Activision
[ ] Centipede		[ ] Pitfall!	Activision
[ ] Choplifter!		[ ] Pole Position	
[ ] Congo Bongo	Sega	**[ ] Popeye**	Parker Bros.
[ ] Countermeasure		[ ] Q*Bert	Parker Bros.
[ ] Crystal Castles		[ ] Qix	
[ ] Decathlon	Activision	[ ] Quest for Quintana Roo	Sunrise
[ ] Defender		[ ] Realsports Baseball {V,O}	
[ ] *Diagnostic Cartridge*		[ ] *Realsports Basketball*	
[ ] Dig Dug		[ ] Realsports Football {O}	
[ ] Dreadnaught Factor	Activision	[ ] Realsports Soccer {O}	
[ ] *Final Legacy*		[ ] Realsports Tennis {O}	
[ ] Frogger	Parker Bros.	**[ ] Rescue on Fractalus**	
[ ] Frogger II: Threedeep!	Parker Bros.	[ ] River Raid {O}	Activision
[ ] Galaxian		[ ] *Roadrunner*	
[ ] Gorf	CBS	[ ] Robotron 2084	
[ ] Gremlins		**[ ] Space Dungeon**	
[ ] Gyruss	Parker Bros.	[ ] Space Invaders	
[ ] H.E.R.O.	Activision	[ ] Space Shuttle	Activision
[ ] James Bond 007	Parker Bros.	[ ] *Spitfire*	
[ ] Joust		[ ] *Sport Goofy*	
[ ] *Jr. Pac-Man*		[ ] Star Raiders	
[ ] Jungle Hunt		[ ] Star Trek	Sega
[ ] K-Razy Shoot-out	CBS	[ ] Star Wars: Death Star Battle	Parker Bros.
[ ] Kaboom!	Activision	[ ] Star Wars: The Arcade Game	Parker Bros.
[ ] Kangaroo		[ ] Super Breakout	
[ ] Keystone Kapers	Activision	[ ] Super Cobra	Parker Bros.
[ ] *Looney Tunes Hotel*		[ ] Tempest	
[ ] Mario Bros.		[ ] *Track N Field*	
[ ] *Meebzork*		[ ] Tutankham	Parker Bros.
[ ] Megamania	Activision	[ ] Vanguard	
[ ] Meteorites	Electra Conc.	**[ ] Wizard of Wor**	CBS
[ ] *Millipede*		[ ] *Xevious*	
[ ] Miner 2049'er	Big 5 Soft.	[ ] Zaxxon	Sega
[ ] *Miniature Golf*		[ ] Zenji	Activision
[ ] Missile Command		**[ ] Zone Ranger**	Activision

KEY:
Itals=rumored or prototype game

Bold=Digital Press recommends
{O}=Overlays included
{V}=Voice synthesis built in

Next Issue: How about that little system that was the thorn in the Atari 2600's side for awhile, namely, the Odyssey2. With some decent software and an optional voice module which really brought some games to life, the Odyssey2 eventually disappeared from the market. Look for the complete list in issue 8!

FANTASMAGORIA

by Joe Santulli

Hopefully, I've solved the mystery of the disappearing fanzine reviews from our pages with the return of FANtasmagoria. I was getting really bored with the way fanzines were being reviewed in the past and had to come up with something fresh in order to print it here. Therefore, instead of reviewing "a few" every issue, with detailed descriptions of each, I've lumped A BUNCH I've gotten since last issue into one summary. So without further ado...
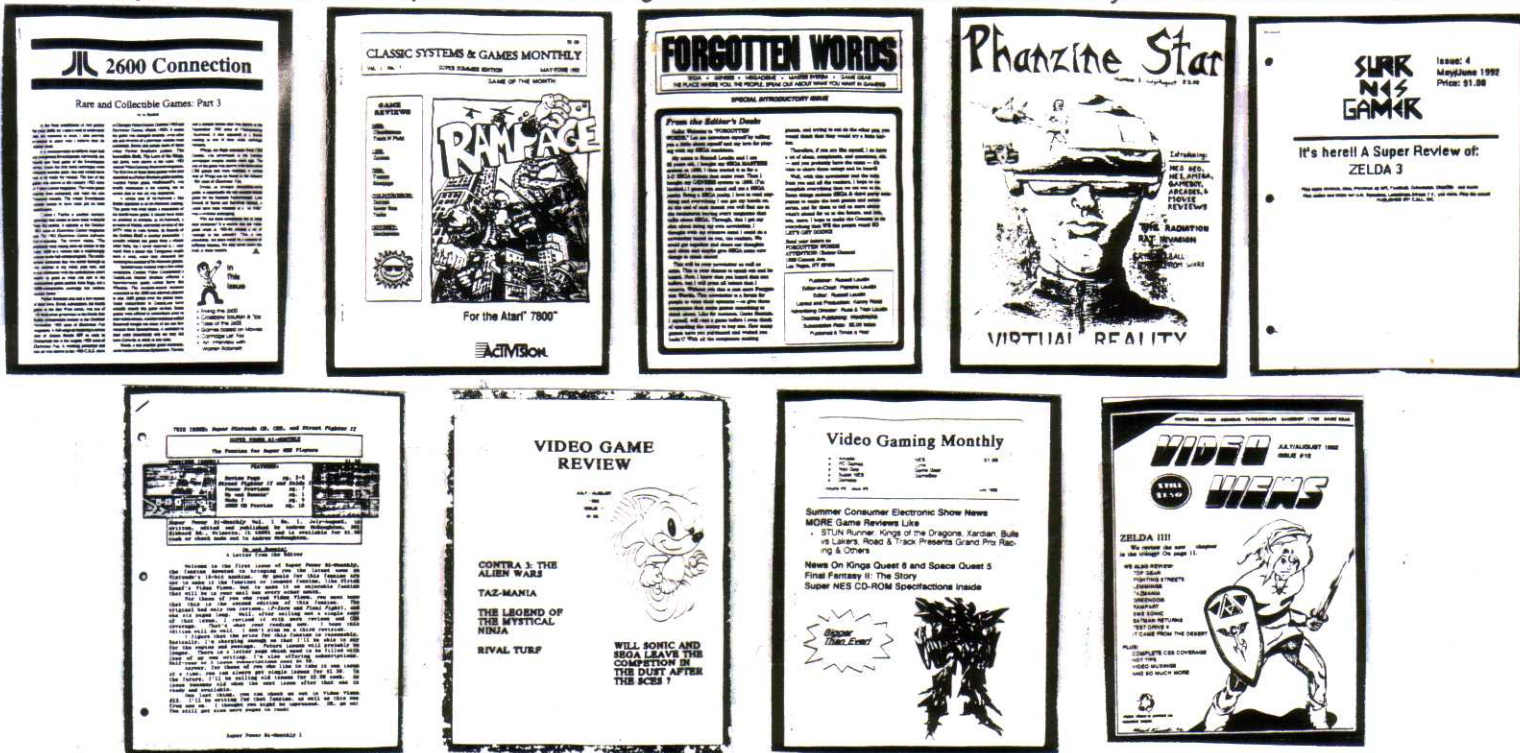
CRITICAL DATA

2600 Connection #10/Tim Duarte/PO Box N 664/Westport, MA 02790/12 pgs/$1.25
Classic Systems & Games Monthly #7/Jeff Adkins/11 Windsor/Attica, NY 14011/28 pgs/$3.00

Forgotten Words #1/Russell Loudin/1929 Canosa Ave/Las Vegas, NV 89104/4 pgs/$1.00
Phanzine Star #3/Noah Dziobecki/4436 E 5th Street/Long Beach, CA 90814/60 pgs/$2.00
Super NES Gamer #4/Eric Longdin/19 Vermont Street/Methuen, MA 01844/11 pgs/$1.50
Super Power Bi-Monthly #1/Andrew McNaughton/201 Hibbard Rd/Wilmette, IL 60091/10 pgs/$1.50
Video Game Review #1/Travis Scott/8 Peppertree/Anderson, SC 29621/24 pgs/$1.00

MOST IMPROVED - Undoubtedly the most improved of all the fanzines I've read in the past two months is Noah Dziobecki's *Phanzine Star*. This excellent fanzine also wins **BEST COVER, FATTEST FANZINE** and **MOST READABLE** as well. Noah has a literate group of writers in his stable and each column is better than the last. When you consider that this goes on for some 50 pages, you see the importance of this. On the other hand, I'm not real thrilled with *Video Gaming Monthly*, which sports a sharp look and publishing know-how, but just isn't at all interesting to read. Sorry, guys! **HOT PROSPECT** - *Forgotten Words* is an all-Sega fanzine with a very enthusiastic approach, but four pages isn't going to cut it. Let's all assume this issue, which is loaded with potential, was short because the editor wanted to mass mail the premiere. Give us more! **BEST CLASSIC SYSTEMS ZINE** - This is tough for me, because they're all done very well, but Jeff Adkins' *Classic Systems and Games Monthly* wins it this time. #7 was a double-size summer issue, and it was packed with reviews. They've added an Odyssey2 column, which is rarely seen even in classic system fanzines. **BEST SINGLE ARTICLE** - "A Look to the Past", in *Video Game Review*. I get misty-eyed when "old" games get kudos in a fanzine dedicated to high-end systems, and this cluster of quick reviews was most entertaining, especially the Golgo 13 review for Genesis. I hope this fanzine trashes the "stage name" writer bit and gives credit where credit is due. **MOST ANTICIPATED** - Jess Ragan's *Project:Ignition* is in the development stages, and Jess is one of the most articulate (and controversial) new writers I know. You can catch some of his energetic style in *Video Game Review*. When *PI* hits the mailboxes, be there! Stay tuned for more info on these pages! **SLIDING** - I was expecting improvement in the *Super NES Gamer* fanzine, but nothing doing. The writing isn't bad, but there's an inordinate amount of wasted paper here. Save a tree, man! Only slightly better was the new all-SNES fanzine *Super Power Bi-Monthly*, which had old and new reviews as well as some CES coverage. **MOST PROFESSIONAL** - How could you not like *Video Views*, which consistently measures up to newsstand standards? The only fanzine that has come close in the past is *Mindstorm*, which was noticeably absent this go-round. *VV*'s editor, Ulrich Kempf, is probably a candidate for a job with a magazine. If he isn't looking already, he should be! The *2600 Connection* is also a very professional fanzine, highly recommended reading. **EDITOR'S CHOICE** - Hands down, it's *Phanzine Star*. I wasn't thrilled with the first two issues, but they've got it down now. From cover to cover, it's loaded with informative and entertaining reading. Great job, Noah & staff!

RaNdOm rEvIeWs

by DIGITAL PRESS STAFF

Here's this installment's sampling of various games: old ones, new ones, it just doesn't matter. All games are rated on a scale of 1-10 in several categories, but remember that an 8 for an Atari 2600 game does not equal an 8 for a Neo-Geo game. All ratings are based on comparative software for that system. 'Nuff said!

STREET FIGHTER II
CAPCOM, FOR SUPER NINTENDO

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

As Joe has made quite clear in the past, I am a big fan of fighting games. When I pick up a controller, I don't want to have to think about anything but action, and it seems from the different types of games I've played, fighting games have the most action of all. When he told me there was a "new" fighting game coming out for the Super Nintendo, I was excited. He said there was so much hype built around it - that it

might be the last fighting game I'd ever want to play. I wasn't really happy about the price, but I can honestly say that *Street Fighter II* is worth every penny.

KEN & ED DUKE IT OUT

What really made this game unique was the way each character had his/her own personality. I think it's especially entertaining when the knockout is delivered and the winner gloats or makes some other gesture. Some of the fighters can't be characterized as male or female... I'm not sure what Blanka is supposed to be!

The controls aren't as difficult as you might think, considering you use all six buttons and have to do some pretty tricky maneuvers with your thumb at times. The more I play, the better I get with the special moves. The graphics are very good. The backgrounds were impressive, and I think really symbolize the area you would expect each character to fight in. The backgrounds for Balrog (Las Vegas), Chun Li (a Chinese street corner), and Dhalsim (Indian temple) were the best - very animated! The music was pretty good, but certainly not the best feature of the game. My favorite character is Blanka. I was able to beat Joe the first time I played with this beast, and I can still him consistently. It could be the speed, or it could be the fact that I use the "electricity" defense as a weapon.

Overall, I would have to say that *Street Fighter II* is an excellent fighting game, but to be honest, I still prefer *Final Fight* and Genesis' *Streets of Rage*. Although one-on-one fighting is fun, I like to take out whole gangs in my videogaming sessions.

TIP: Special moves that require fast-pressing of a punch or kick button (like Blanka's electricity) can be kept on by continuously pressing the button. In this way, you can continue to hit a cornered opponent or protect yourself for extended periods of time.

Liz Nardella

"It's hard NOT to like this game, it's so easy to pick up and play. Mastering the moves, however, is another story. I found the column in Electronic Games Monthly #33 much more helpful than the instruction manual."

SANTULLI

SCHULTZ

"Easily Super NES' best game to date - great graphics, great sound, great everything. Hats off to Capcom for bringing the arcade home!"

TAZ-MANIA
SEGA, FOR GENESIS

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

Remember way back in issue #3 when I was shocked by a Sega game called *Toe Jam & Earl*, because it actually lived up to the hype and provided some original gameplay? Well, this time I'm shocked by another Sega offering with half the hype and twice the speed: the truly impressive *Taz-Mania*.

Other than a little surprise offered up as soon as the cartridge was popped in (I won't tell you what it is, that

TAZ ON ICE

would spoil the surprise), the first thing that grabbed my attention was the incredible animation. This game really looks like a cartoon, folks, and I don't mean the graphics are cartoony - they're very fluid and loaded

with detail. Taz spins into a maelstrom of arms and legs, displays a wide array of facial expressions, and glides along the screen so seamlessly that you could easily believe you were watching the cartoon on TV.

The look would have been perfect if the background graphics were a little more detailed. This is where Sega appears to have cut corners, giving us a little Sonic-Decap-Attack style background. It's adequate, just nothing eye-catching. The music leaves something to be desired, as well, and the sound effects are crude, much like a cartoon's.

The skill levels range from "practice" to "expert", and quite frankly, every gamer will find his ideal setting. I

INCREDIBLY SMOOTH ANIMATION

think kids may get a bit frustrated with the difficulty, even in the practice level. A little patience with the controls, however, and you'll be spinning,

jumping, eating, and generally having a blast in no time. It's a little bit like *Sonic the Hedgehog*, but also has a few diversionary scenes with overtones of older, "quick - think!" games like *Frogger* (where you have to jump to and from moving logs) and *Zaxxon* (weaving through a series of stationary objects while you speed along).

Trust me on this one. There really isn't anything to dislike about *Taz-Mania*, unless you hated Sonic, Bonk, and Mario, in which case this may seem like "just another one of those running and jumping games". For the record, though, I'm no fan of this genre but found this cart to be a welcome addition to my Genesis library of games.

TIP: Don't take wooden nickels

-Joe Santulli

"Graphically, *Taz-Mania* doesn't even look like a videogame character, it looks like it's right out of the cartoon. Some levels are extremely challenging, but well worth sticking with."

YOUNGMAN

"*Taz-Mania* is slower than *Sonic the Hedgehog*, but he has more expressions, more animation, and is more fun to watch."

OLENIACZ

THE EARTH DIES SCREAMING
20TH CENTURY FOX, FOR ATARI 2600

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	4	4	–	–	6	–
SOUND	4	5	–	–	4	–
GAMEPLAY	3	4	–	–	6	–
OVERALL	**4**	**4**	**–**	**–**	**6**	**–**

The catchy title is about the only flash of creativity offered with this space action cart.

The object is simple. Protect the Earth from a continual onslaught of satellites while fighters seek to destroy your ship. Viewing from a first person perspective (similar to too many superior games like *Starmaster* and *Star Raiders*), shoot down satellites and fighters before they hit the Earth or energy will be drained from the planet. Catching any enemy fire yourself depletes your ship's energy. The only way to regain energy is to follow a returning fighter, keep it in your sights for 5 seconds, and then blast its home base. This isn't as easy as it seems, because you'll have to simultaneously avoid their fire. The game concludes when either the Earth's or your ship's energy is depleted.

To aid you, a scanner is located at the bottom of the

I'D RATHER BE FISHING

screen which displays any incoming fighters or satellites. A crosshair displays your gunsights, It automatically follows an onscreen enemy's vertical movement, although you'll need to adjust

for its horizontal patterns.

This cart boasts of plenty of non-stop action but that's all - there are no options and no waves, although difficulty progresses smoothly. The same three

enemies attack you if you have scored 500 or 500,000 points. The audio and video are average, although the effect of stars and the planet's surface rolling by is a nice effect. *The Earth Dies Screaming* is a mediocre game hiding behind an exciting title.

TIP: Continuously firing is the best strategy, since it doesn't consume any energy to do so.

BEST BUY: I haven't seen this one around in any of the mail-order companies recently. Get one from a collector, but don't pay more than $6.

Kevin Oleniacz

"My opinion of a mediocre game is one that is a decent effort but nothing special. I can't put *The Earth Dies Screaming* in that category. Once you get past the wild title, you have nothing but a dull game. Big thumbs down."

SANTULLI

"Inferior when compared to *Starmaster*, a similar game. The gameplay and graphics are very simplistic. Improvement in either area would have made this debacle a little enjoyable."

YOUNGMAN

TAPPER
COLECO, FOR COLECOVISION

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	7	7	–	8	–
SOUND	7	6	7	–	8	–
GAMEPLAY	9	7	8	–	9	–
OVERALL	**8**	**7**	**8**	**–**	**8**	**–**

If you look hard enough, you may still find the arcade version of *Tapper*, complete with beer-tap controllers

and a brass bar rail along the bottom. It was the kind of game that was <u>made</u> to be played in bars. The home version, however, is based on a slightly watered-down version of that game, called *Root Beer Tapper*. Nevertheless, the game - and most of the fun - are retained.

The object is simple: keep the patrons happy. That means sliding beers down the bar to frenzied customers, keeping empties from falling over, picking up tips, and ultimately clearing out the place. You'll go from a western bar to an outdoor sports bar to an alien bar, each having its own unique customers and layout. Between each you will be tested in a game quite similar to the old shell game, with the consequence being a face full of suds!

The controls are very smooth in this version, with the little knob on the ColecoVision controller not as much a hindrance as it is in other games. The progression of difficulty is very slow. That means that if you're easily clearing screens on stage three, you'll probably be clearing them easily at screen thirteen as well. My suggestion is to play this game at no lower than skill level three, which at least offers up a challenge in the early rounds.

The down-sides of this game are bearable annoyances, not tragic flaws. The musical score of "O Susannah" over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over... can get on your nerves. It is also obvious that this was a game produced in the 80's - nobody gets that close to each other in bars anymore! Besides, it's difficult to tell how many customers there are when they all cluster together like that.

These things aside, I think you'll find *Tapper* a welcome addition to your ColecoVision library. It's easy to learn, builds up to a frantic pace, and has some entertaining moments when things go wrong. Hey, it's not every day you get to see aliens doing the can-can! SIDE NOTE: The Atari 2600 version, produced by Sega, is not based on the "Root Beer" version of this game. The drink of choice is Mountain Dew instead of Budweiser, and there is an additional bar (a "punk rock" bar) in the game.

TIP: Even if you're at the far end of the bar collecting a tip, you can just tap the directional to appear at the other end, ready to serve.

BEST BUY: You shouldn't have <u>too</u> much trouble coming up with this game, although it was one of the last produced for this system. Anywhere in the $5 - $10 range is reasonable.

-Joe Santulli

SCHULTZ

"There's nothing worse than a guy waiting for a beer in a bar and this game proves it. A lot of fun requiring dexterity and quick thinking. Clean up that glass!"

SPLATTERHOUSE II
NAMCO, FOR GENESIS

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	–	8	9	8	–
SOUND	8	–	7	9	7	–
GAMEPLAY	6	–	8	7	6	–
OVERALL	**6**	**–**	**8**	**7**	**7**	**–**

A couple of years ago, when I was debating on whether to purchase a Turbografx-16, a big factor in this decision was *Splatterhouse*. I loved the look of this game and the premise of a horror movie in videogame

GORE, GORE, GORE

form. I approached the guru of games, one Joe Santulli, and asked him his opinion on whether one game was reason enough to buy a whole system. He said that even though *Splatterhouse* was a great game it wasn't enough reason to buy a Turbografx. I listened to him but still wished Sega had this game in its cart library. Well, the waid is over for us Genesis owners - *Splatterhouse II* is here and it's worth the wait.

Splatterhouse II takes place a little after Rick, our hero from the Turbografx cart, had escaped almost certain doom. The cinema sequence in the beginning of this cart is tremendous, from Rick donning his horror mask to the thunderstorm crashing around the mansion, it's like a mini movie. Inside, the remasked

and remuscled Rick is faced with another herd of wild monsters coming from all directions. The creatures vary and are way cool. Just like in the original you can punch, kick, and smash monsters into a puddle of slimy ooze. My favorite thing to kill them with is a leg bone conveniently planted in the middle of the second level. It kills monsters real good! Besides bashing these baddies, Rick must avoid slime pits, spikes coming up from the floor,

HE'S GONNA HURL!

and a variety of other obstacles. Take note - the bosses at the end of each level are way tough. The boss on the second level, a sort of cloud creature, was one of the more aggravating bosses I have challenged in a long time. Besides worrying about the boss (who you must jump up and pummel in the facial area because it has no body), you must avoid the mini cloud creatures coming after you. This leads to my main complaint about this cart - maneuverability and control.

The control pad seems to almost have a lag time when you press the buttons to jump or hit an opposing creature. The movements are rather slow causing you to sometimes take a hit from a creature, which then caused me to lose more than my share of energy when I felt I should have avoided the damage entirely. This is a minor annoyance due to the real enjoyment I got from playing this game.

To sum it all up this cart has a lot to offer gamers new and old. The graphics are excellent, sound effects are real good, and most importantly it is a challenge to play once you compensate for the sluggish controls. If you like *Splatterhouse*, you'll love *II*. Please remember some of the younger gamers may be disturbed by the graphic nature of this game (kudos to Namco for stating this on the box for concerned parents). Plug it in and enjoy the carnage.

TIP: Play defensively against the bosses at first to learn their patterns. You can usually duck and hide for awhile to feel them out.

-Bill Schultz

OLENIACZ

"*Splatterhouse* is a must-have for Turbografx-16 owners, but I've seen quite a few better titles for the Genesis. Only the gory graphics impressed me."

"*Splatterhouse* has some really creepy music and gory graphics, but I didn't like it that much. The difficulty is a little too much for novice gamers, and the monsters come at you too fast to react sometimes."

NARDELLA

STAR WARS: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
JVC & LUCASFILM LTD, FOR NES

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	9	–	8	–	9	–
SOUND	6	–	8	–	7	–
GAMEPLAY	6	–	8	–	7	–
OVERALL	7	–	8	–	7	–

JVC and Lucasfilms LTD. have teamed up again to bring us the second installment of the Star Wars trilogy, *The Empire Strikes Back*! Once more Luke Skywalker and his courageous band of rebels do battle with the evil Empire in this outrageous game cart for your NES system.

The game begins when, as Luke, you must destroy the Imperial probes invading the ice world of Hoth, trying to find the rebel alliance base. Armed with a blaster and riding your favorite Taun-Taun, you must

THE ICE CAVERNS

explore Hoth's ice caverns where you will battle fierce ice creatures, ice bats, and more Imperial probes to help Luke find his lightsaber and the Force.

Be careful - that icy cavern floor is slippery! All this excitement and you're still only on the first level!

I'm not going to bore you with the descriptions of all the levels in *Empire*, because it would take away from the game (and I'd probably get writer's cramp). I'm just going to tell you about some of the very nice touches this cart has in it, starting with the characters. The gamer can be Luke, Han Solo, and just about anybody in the Star Wars clan depending on what level you are currently playing. A nice touch when you're Luke is the digitized image of Ben Kenobi giving you guidance

KNOCK OUT THE WALKERS

during your mission. Another really neat attribute of this cart is that it follows the sequence of events of the film, which keeps you heading back to that NES since you'll be interested in what happens next. This cart kept me on the edge of my seat!

The graphics and sound are really good, but the characters tend to be on the small side. The opening cinematic display is terrific! The controls for *Empire* also handle very well and are not very confusing to learn. Perhaps the most admirable attribute is the gameplay - it's tough. I think even the most talented of gamers will have a rough time, but you'll keep coming back for more.

Whether you're a big Star Wars fan like myself or a gamer looking for a real challenge, pick up *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* and give it a try. I can't wait for *Return of the Jedi*. May the Force be with you! You're gonna need it!

-Bill Schultz

CHUCK ROCK
VIRGIN, FOR GENESIS

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	–	7	9	8	–
SOUND	8	–	8	9	9	–
GAMEPLAY	6	–	7	7	8	–
OVERALL	6	–	7	7	8	–

When *Bonk* burst onto the 16-bit scene for the Turbografx-16 and *Joe & Mac* followed suit for the SNES, it was only a matter of time before a caveman would appear on the Genesis. Chuck, your typical caveman with a huge appetite, must venture through five different scenes in search of his beloved wife. Traverse through a jungle, a cave, underwater, in an arctic environment, and finally through a graveyard. A collection of prehistoric creatures aim to stall Chuck's progress.

To succeed, Chuck can only rely upon his jump-kick, a belly-butt, and his wits to create multiple uses for rocks. They can be thrown, carried as a shield against flying creatures and bouncing rocks, or employed as stepping stones through lava or other unsuitable terrain. They can also be used in conjunction with certain dinosaurs as a springboard to hurl oneself to otherwise unreachable places. Unfortunately, handling rocks hinders Chuck's speed and jumps.

The amusing title screen bursts with animation of a stone age rock band. All of the creatures and objects are well animated and greatly detailed, even the rocks! I was quite a bit disappointed with the somewhat underdeveloped background. The play mechanics are smooth although your arsenal of attacks are limited. The edge that *Joe & Mac* has over *Chuck Rock* is the two player co-op mode, while *Bonk's Adventure* shows

off more moves and creates a variety of facial expressions for its lead character. Nevertheless, *Chuck Rock* is superior or at least equal in terms of graphics, music, and pure fun. Chuck has enough wallop to club both of his neanderthal rivals in the number of hours of fun.

TIP: *Be cautious when venturing through unexplored territory. Enemies and rocks may be hidden from view by the foreground.*
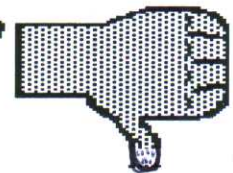
QUEST | 8 MEG

-Kevin Oleniacz
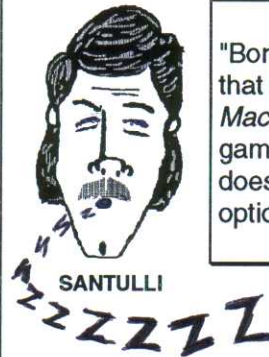
"Boring. There's nothing done here that hasn't been done in *Bonk* or *Joe & Mac*. Also, doesn't it just figure that a game with a really great musical score doesn't have a 'music select' in the options menu?"

SANTULLI

ZZZZZZZ

"Worst Of... Series"

THE WORST OF GENESIS, VOL I
by Karl Youngman and Joe Santulli

Every so often, a videogame comes along that redefines the hobby - takes gaming to a higher level, if you will. THESE ARE NOT THOSE GAMES. You've played the best, so here are the rest...

Back to the Future III (by Arena) - I reviewed *BTTF3* in a previous issue, but maybe I should restate my feelings on this. Including videogames, computer games, board games, and any other game I've ever played - THIS is the worst. I can't say "it sucks" enough. Well, I can try. it sucks, it sucks, it sucks, it sucks, it sucks, it sucks, it sucks. You get the idea. The levels are very difficult, but it's not even fun along

the way. I'm begging you - please avoid this game at all costs. (KY)

Beast Wrestler (by Renovation) - A "3D" one-on-one fighting game! Sounds exciting? This game is exactly like *Pit Fighter* but with 99% fewer moves, worse graphics, and terrible sound effects. This may not be that important to some of you, but can anyone at Renovation spell? The fighters seem to have one move with their legs and another with the upper part of their bodies. Not exactly my idea of "a variety of moves". Spend the extra bucks and pick up *Pit-Fighter* instead. (KY)

Buster Douglas Boxing (by Sega) - Hey, it doesn't take a genius to figure that Buster took all the money he could grab and then took a dive. He could be the smartest boxer in history. If Sega could have licensed Mortimer Snerd or Howdy Doody for the title, at least you could believe what you were looking at, because the "boxers" sure resemble marionettes. Although it looks like they are in this game, I know for a fact that Buster's arms aren't 9 feet long. He would have beaten Evander if they were. By the way, Holyfield's boxing videogame is far superior as well. Hold out for it! (JS)

Fatal Rewind (by Electronic Arts) - You are this little robot, and you must reach the end of each level before the water covers you. The attempt at being futuristic only hurts this very unremarkable game. The robot moves awkwardly, and its non-human look doesn't allow you to become emotionally involved (if that's what you're into). The levels do get more complicated to complete as time marches on, but the things you have to shoot down are just these non-descript shapes. Not a game that you would go back to after the first time. (KY)

Flicky (by Sega) - Doesn't exactly push all 16 bits to their limits. The objective here is for your character to get around the screen and collect all the little chicks (as in the animal) and lead them to the door so they can escape from the cats that are running around. It's just far too much of a "kiddie game" for someone as sophisticated as myself. (KY)

Hard Drivin' (by Tengen) - Very inferior racing game, could have been called "Hardly Drivin'". You can actually watch as the screen is redrawn whenever the car moves. What scenery there is can be described as square buildings with no doors or windows. The track does have

I'M...GOING...AS...FAST...AS...I...CAN

some loops in it, but the only rush you'll get is the rush to remove this cart from the slot. No racing thrills to be found here. (KY)

Pat Riley Basketball (by Sega) - If it weren't for *Evander Holyfield Boxing*, I would have no hope for Sega's sports efforts. Case in point, this basketball

game where the ball looks more like a beachball than anything. I wonder... did Pat Riley actually try this game before it was released, and if so, had he ever played a videogame before? The "close-up" slams are an absolute joke, and were obviously lifted from the Turbografix-16 game *Takin' it to the Hoop* (and we got to see them again in *Ultimate Basketball* for the NES!). How do they get away with it? (JS)

Quad Challenge (by Namco) - "NO! No, no, no, no, no! All wrong! Do it over!" That's what I would have said if I were in charge of releasing this game to the public. "Come on! Throw in some action! Get some trees or something in the background! Don't you realize this is a 16 bit machine you're programming on? Outrun is going to hit the shelves and this game is going to look like a joke the way it is! Now get back in there and do it right this time!" Oh, well, I guess I'll never be in charge, but at least I have *Outrun*. (JS)

**Rastan Saga II** (by Taito) - You want to play a game where you will literally groan? This is, in my humble opinion, the worst to date for the Genesis. The "monsters" that attack you are so poorly detailed that it's really difficult to tell them apart. And, look, if you're going to do it on a 16 bit

STONE BLOCKS IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

machine, at least animate things a little bit! The character animation reminds me of the old Marvel comics cartoons they used to show on TV in the 70's, where a mouth moves here, an occasional arm swings there, and nobody ever blinks. If it's true what they say about sequels, it's doubly so in the case of *Rastan Saga II*. (JS)

Sword of Sodan (by Electronic Arts) - Oh, boy. I really need to have a game where my success is determined by how fast I can push the buttons on my controller. To really "mix up" the action,

PICKET FENCES, 20 FEET HIGH

you have to remember which potions to combine to get the desired spell to work. Stiff characters, choppy animation, and controls from hell all team up to make *Sword of Sodan* a game to forget. (JS)

RUMPAGES

by John Annick
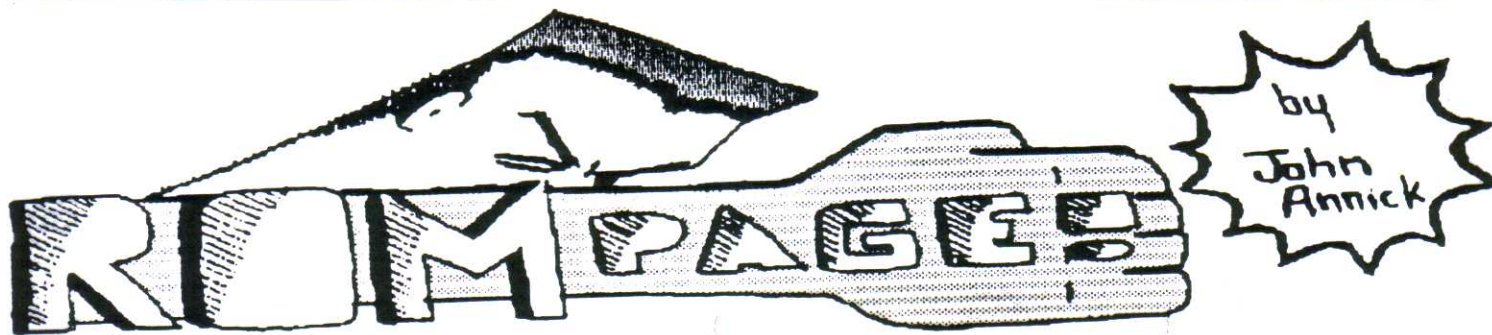
APPLICATION TO JOIN GAME-AHOLICS ANONYMOUS
(People who play games that do not require an electrical outlet need not apply)

NAME: _____

NICKNAME: _____

ADDRESS (when at TV set): _____

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:
COLOR OF EYES: [ ] Brown   [ ] Blue   [ ] Hazel   [ ] Bloodshot
LENGTH OF RIGHT THUMB:
LENGTH OF TOENAILS:
NUMBER OF CALLUSES ON HAND (Do not include palm):
COMPLEXION: [ ] Dark   [ ] Light   [ ] Pale   [ ] Very Pale   [ ] Vampire-like

MEDICAL INFORMATION:
Do you suffer from at least two of the following?:
[ ] Carpel-tunnel Syndrome   [ ] Stutter   [ ] Inability to relate to 3D characters
[ ] Sleeplessness   [ ] Bad breath   [ ] Excessive drooling
[ ] Cross-eyes   [ ] Couch sores   [ ] Fixed stare
[ ] Involuntary screaming   [ ] "The shakes"   [ ] Fear or anxiety of being away from TV

PERSONAL INFORMATION:
How many times have you been outside this week?_____ month?_____ summer?_____

Hobbies other than gaming:
[ ] Ornithology   [ ] Fashion Modeling   [ ] Going to Star Trek Conventions
[ ] Languages   [ ] Fishing with live bait [ ] Dungeons & Dragons
[ ] Sports, not including Chess [ ] Chemistry   [ ] No hobbies

Can you name your family members from memory?
[ ] Yes   [ ] No   [ ] Some of them

When was your last Super Mario sighting?_____

How many game <u>systems</u> do you own?
[ ] Hardly any (3-6)   [ ] Some (7-12)   [ ] Average (13+)

Which would be your favorite vacation spot of those listed?
[ ] The beach   [ ] Disneyland   [ ] Skiing
[ ] Europe   [ ] Pompton Lakes, NJ   [ ] Any dark room with a Super Nintendo

Which could be categorized as your heroes?
[ ] Christ   [ ] Super Mario   [ ] The chef in Burgertime because he
[ ] Elvis   [ ] Mr. Do!   wasn't afraid to use the pepper when it
[ ] Tomarc the Barbarian   [ ] Einstein   came right down to it.

Which scene from popular videogames would you most like to see in the movies?
[ ] Mickey Mouse for Genesis: *"Dammit, goofy, I hate killing as much as you but if we don't send those ghouls
       into eternal damnation there will be no Disney to go home to!"*
[ ] Michael Jackson Moonwalker for Genesis: *"Why so surprised, you bad villain? Bet you didn't know girls
       could kick so hard!"*
[ ] Mercenary for Game Boy: *"Listen, you Nazi bully-boys, I'm not killing one more until I get paid!!"*
[ ] Space Invaders for Atari: *"Oh my God! Elvis is alive and he's leading an attack of aliens against the Earth.
       We're doooooomed!"*

YOUR SIGNATURE: DATE:

For office use only:
[ ] Accepted   [ ] Declined   [ ] Requires further evaluation

Side by Side
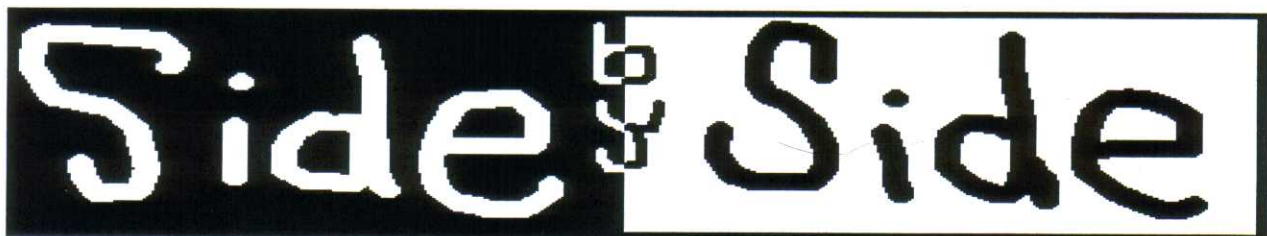
ATARI 5200 VS. COLECOVISION:
COMPARATIVE SOFTWARE
by Joe Santulli

   Videogame system battles are nothing new to today's generation of gamers, if it's not Turbografx-16 vs. Genesis, then it's Genesis vs. Super Nintendo. One of the best rivalries of the eighties was Coleco's ColecoVision vs. Atari's 5200 Super System. The ColecoVision came first, built up a good lead, then was eventually outlasted and outsold by the 5200. Many readers know that I'm personally biased toward the ColecoVision system, although there are some duds there as well as some masterpieces on the 5200. But what about the many titles that appeared on BOTH systems?

   I'm sure I'm going to draw criticism from both sides on this one - I've outlined my personal opinion on "which is the better game" for several games produced on both of these classic systems that were major rivals during the early 80's. Checks in both columns indicate a virtual tie. In cases where there was a clear favorite, I've included my reasons beneath the chart.

TITLE	Atari 5200	ColecoVision
Berzerk/Frenzy* (Atari/Coleco)		✔
Buck Rogers (Sega)	✔	
Congo Bongo (Sega/Coleco)		✔
Defender (Atari)	✔	
Gorf (CBS/Coleco)		✔
Mountain King (CBS/Sunrise)	✔	
Mr. Do's Castle (Parker)		✔
Q*Bert (Atari)		✔
Star Wars Arcade Game (Parker)	✔	✔
Zaxxon (Atari/Coleco)	✔	

* Although *Frenzy* is more of a sequel to *Berzerk*, the games were released around the same time.

REASONING (?)

ATARI 5200 - FEATURES: The most clear-cut winner in comparison is *Mountain King* by CBS. The graphics were much more colorful and the scrolling smoother than the ColecoVision version. *Buck Rogers* and *Defender* also get the nod over the ColecoVision's, again because the gameplay is smoother. DRAWBACKS: The controllers are no pleasure, and literally ruins *Gorf*. It is also because of the controls that *Q*Bert* and *Mr. Do!'s Castle* lose the checkmark.

COLECOVISION - FEATURES: In comparison, *Congo Bongo* looks and plays far above the Atari 5200 version, as it includes a third screen, "Rhino Ridge", which was left out of the 5200 game. *Gorf* also shines here, with better sound, smoother gameplay, and responsive controls. DRAWBACKS: Whatever happened when *Mountain King* was being converted to this system? The spider looks more like a ball of fuzz and the scrolling is just awful.

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE - Coleco produced games for the Atari 2600 and Intellivision systems as well as for it's own ColecoVision system - interestingly enough, Atarisoft produced titles for the ColecoVision, yet Coleco did not reciprocate. There were a number of other titles made for both systems where the games (especially the Activision games), appear to be nearly identical! These other games were: *Beamrider* (Activision), *Centipede* (Atari), *Choplifter!* (Atari/Coleco), *Decathlon* (Activision), *Frogger* & *Frogger II: Threedeep!* (Parker), *Galaxian* (Atari), *Gyruss* (Parker), *H.E.R.O.* (Activision), *James Bond 007* (Parker), *Jungle Hunt* (Atari), *Keystone Kapers* (Activision), *Miner 2049'er* (Big Five), *Montezuma's Revenge* (Parker), *Pitfall* & *Pitfall II: The Lost Caverns* (Activision), *Popeye* (Parker), *Quest for Quintana Roo* (Sunrise), *River Raid* (Activision), *Star Trek* (Sega), *Super Cobra* (Parker), *Tutankham* (Parker), *Zenji* (Activision).

DIGITAL PRESS SIDE PROJECTS

NOTE: Some videotape prices have increased to offset the high cost of shipping! Quality is guaranteed.

DIGITAL PRESS VIDEO #7

Want to see this edition up-close and personal? On video #7, Random Reviews, Atari 5200 vs. ColecoVision, and Atari 2600 Rarities are shown. Approx. 70 mins. $6.00. *Also available: Digital Press Video #5, #6.*

CHECKLIST CENTRAL MASTER

Can't wait for "Checklist Central" to get to your favorite system (or want everything in one neat little

package)? Our "master" list contains complete software lists for Arcadia 2001, Astrocade, Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, ColecoVision, Channel F, Intellivision, Odyssey2, and Vectrex! 14 pages. Highlights recommended software. $1.50.

ATARI 5200 VIDEO REVIEW

If ever there was a comprehensive look at 5200 software, it has to be here. 65 games are shown on the tape (2-3 mins. each). Approx. 120 mins. $8.00.

COLECOVISION VIDEO REVIEW

With the Atari 5200 video so hot, we had to show off the competition! Lots of games (over 50!) are shown here as well. Approx. 120 mins. $8.00

CHEATER'S COMPENDIUM

"Easter eggs", passwords, and winning tips can be found every month by skimming through magazines, but the Cheater's Compendium has them all in one place! Mostly new games with some oldies sprinkled in, the Compendium is updated quarterly. Version 2 is currently available. 12 pages. $1.50.

To order, send check, money order, or cash (we're easy) to DIGITAL PRESS PRODUCTS, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037. Make checks payable to Joe Santulli

PRESS PROFILE: LIZ NARDELLA

NAME: Elizabeth Ann Nardella
AGE: ??
OCCUPATION: File Analyst for IMS America
HOBBIES: Painting miniatures, Movies, Dancing.
DATA:. Liz is a relative newcomer to videogames, but already has a knack for the kinds where you can kick someone's teeth in. One editor in particular is very happy that she can vent her frustration in a way where nobody, at least real people, can get hurt. Ask Liz for her favorites and *Streets of Rage*, *Street Fighter II*, and *Tecmo World Championship Wrestling* will be right at the top.
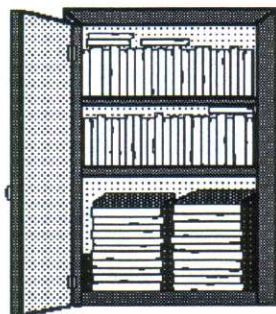
CLOSET CLASSICS

VOLUME 7
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've had with them:

Warsong by Treco (for Genesis) - I just know this game will fall to obscurity. It's too hard to tell from the advertising if it's a role-playing game, an action game, or a wargame simulation. To clear this matter up, I will tell you it's a wargame with RPG overtones. That means that you fight battles like a wargame, but your leaders gain abilities from scenario to scenario. If you lose a leader in battle, you can never use that character again! Battery backup is a plus. The battle action scenes are very much like those in *Military Madness* for the Turbografx-16, but with more variety. Look for *Warsong* next time you're in the mood for a literate strategy game. (JS)

Fortune Builder by Coleco (for ColecoVision) - By now, even non-computer gamers are familiar with *SimCity*, the ingenious little game that allows you build a city from scratch and watch it grow. Well, my fine friends, Coleco's *Fortune Builder* was a predecessor to *SimCity*, and you could play the game competitively and simultaneously with another player on a split-screen view to boot! With 29 different structures ranging from ski lifts to boardwalks to toll booths, you'll find the two-player challenge quite an experience. (JS)

Pinball by Mattel (for Intellivision) - I liked it then and I like it now. In fact, this rendition of pinball still holds up well, even by today's high standards. Why? Because the playfield isn't cluttered and complicated, the controls are responsive, and the ball action is very realistic. There are three screens to conquer. The
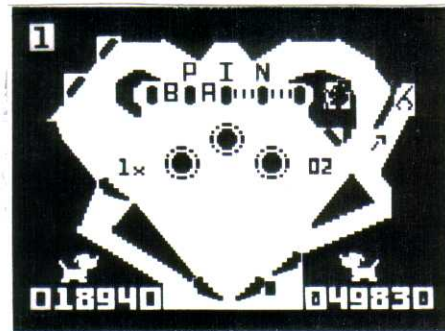
prevailing theme is animals, making this a sure hit with the youngsters (and environmentalists, since this is one of the few games where animals appear in a videogame and aren't killed by the player). If you're looking for a game that you can pick up and get right into, look no further. (JS)

HISTORY POP QUIZ #6: WEIRD SCIENCE

I've dissected some of our Genesis characters and assembled a super-character with their parts! You thought I was mad - they all thought I was mad! But my Genesis-man is the most awesome force the world of videogaming has ever seen! See if he isn't.

The question is, would you be able to tell the police which body parts I took from whom to create him?

ANSWER to QUIZ # 5: THE PLOT THICKENS

"Too Little, Too Late" was *Strider* (Sega/Genesis); "Bummer in the Desert" was *Riddle of the Sphinx* (Imagic/Atari 2600); "Super Mayor" was *Final Fight* (Capcom/SNES); "Chicken Little's Prophecy" was *Astrosmash* or *Astroblast* (Mattel/Intellivision, Atari 2600). If you picked up on the hints and/or actually payed any attention to those goofy plots surrounding these popular games, you probably did well.

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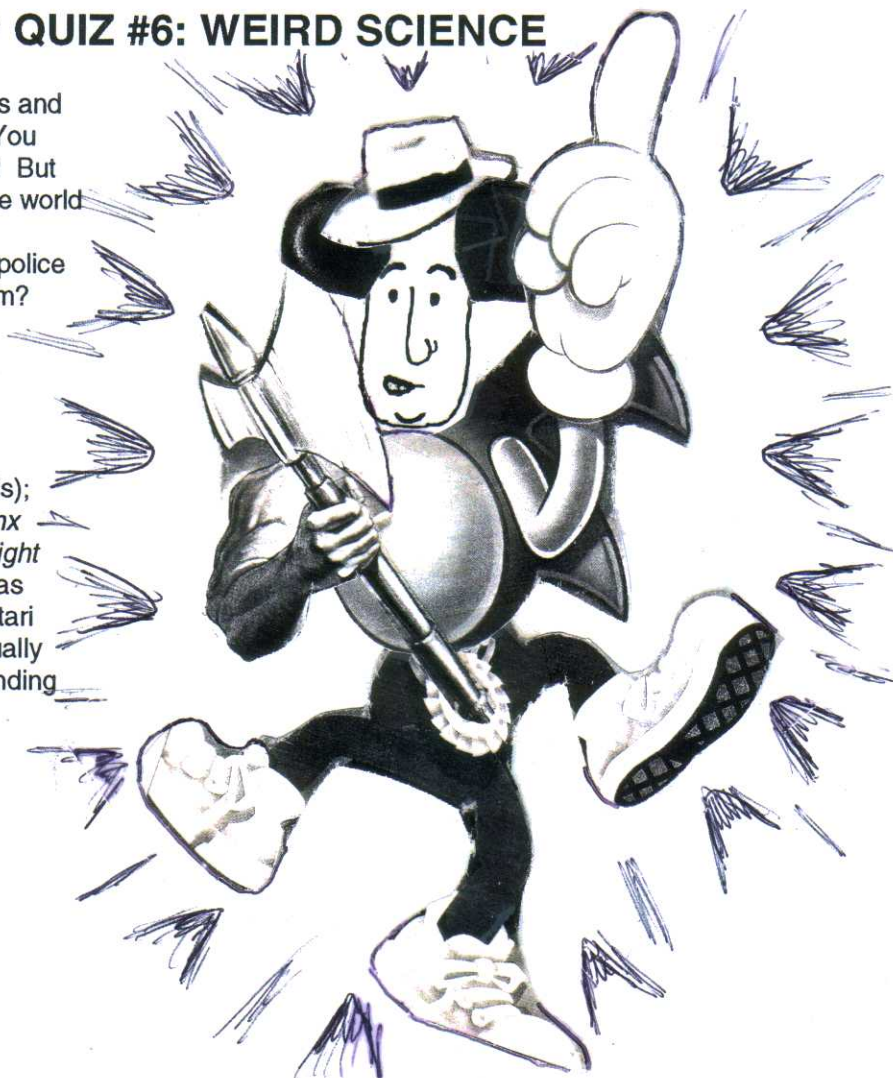
Looking for used or hard-to-find cartridges? Want to sell something to a collector? Let DIGITAL PRESS help. Send us your ad and we'll print it, **free of charge!**

WANTED: Buying old Nintendo carts & collections! Also wanted: Atari 2600 Pooyan, Room of Doom, Wabbit. ColecoVision Dragonfire, Fathom, Jungle Hunt, Spectron. INTV Super Pro Volleyball, Stadium Mud Buggies. Odyssey2 Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt with boardgame. **FOR SALE:** Loads 'o Atari 2600 carts, in boxes with instructions, many are unopened. Also plenty 'o Odyssey2 games. **TRADE:** I'll trade ya SNES Super Off-Road or Joe & Mac for SNES Lemmings, Castlevania IV, or five "classic" games I need. Write for free list. Joe Santulli, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037.

FOR SALE: Many Atari 2600 carts including Kung Fu Master and Cookie Monster Munch. Send for list. Commodore 64 software also available. **TRADE:** Early handhelds including Digital Derby and Hit & Missile. **WANTED:** C-64 disk New York City, 2600 carts: Fire!, Mangia, Master Builder, Skeet Shoot, many others; Atari 5200 Beamrider, Meteorites, Battlezone. Write or call: Kevin Oleniacz, 96 Buena Vista Dr., Ringwood, NJ, 07456. (201) 835-8156 after 7pm weeknights, anytime on weekends.

ATTENTION: Anyone who wants a copy of Sega's relentlessly challenging "Kid Chameleon" please stand up! OK, you can sit back down, but before you do, I'll trade you my copy for a Turbografx-16 (bare bones) or a Bally Home Arcade (it must have BASIC or no dice!). Jess Ragan, 707 West Randall, Tekonsha, MI 49092.

WANTED: Coleco/Atari 2600 converter, Coleco Tutankham, Star Wars, Gyruss, Time Pilot, Defender, Nova Blast, Campaign '84, Tarzan, Cosmic Crisis, Tank War, Pitstop, Jumpman Jr., Grog's Revenge, Tapper, 2010 Action, Mr. Do's Castle, Jungle Hunt, War Room, HERO, Threshold, Oil's Well, Illusions, Moonsweeper, Montezuma's Revenge, write for others. Intellivision Super Pro Skiing, Super Pro Wrestling, Thunder Castle, Diner, Treasure of Tarmin, Safecracker, Frog Bog, Horse Racing, Pole Position, Kool-Aid Man, Dragonfire, B-17 Bomber with voice. **FOR SALE:** ColecoVision Turbo, Popeye, Gorf, Pepper II, Looping, Space Fury, Laydbug, Slither, Cosmic Avenger, Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Jr, Intellivision Basketball, Empire Strikes Back, Masters of the Universe, Carnival, Auto Racing, Beauty & the Beast $3.50 each. Walt Neff, 3806 Davis Ct, Chester Springs, PA 19425.

WANTED: Last 2 carts needed to complete my 5200 collection: Frogger II & Star Wars Arcade Game. Al Backiel, 253 Rock Rd, Ridgewood, NJ 07450.

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: Fairchild 7, 11, 18-20, 23-26; Vectrex: Animaction, Spike, Web Wars; Coleco Telstar Arcade: 2, 4 and up; Studio II: Biorhythms; 5200: Masterplay Interface, Meteorites; Odyssey2: Atlantis, Demon Attack, Turtles; Intellivision: System Changer, Astromusic, Mind Strike, APF, Emerson, Etch-a-Sketch Animator 2000, Microvision, Entex Adventurevision and Palmtex systems; many other games and hardware, misc. Russ Perry Jr., 5970 Scott St, Omro, WI 54963, (414) 685-6187.

FOR SALE: Odyssey2 Demon Attack (new) $15, Freedom Fighters (new) $5.00. Also games for ColecoVision, Vectrex, SMS. **WANTED:** Coleco Telstar Arcade. Edward Villalpando, 13525 Utica St, Whittier, CA 90605.

WANTED: Atari 7800 Pyromania, Knight of the Ninja, UFO, Scorpion Squad; instructions for Double Dragon. Vectrex Heads Up Soccer, Polar Rescue, Spinball, Star Castle, Web Wars, 3D Narrow Escape, 3D Mine Storm, 3D Imager. Also carts for Atari 2600, ColecoVision & Odyssey2. **FOR SALE:** Carts for 2600, 5200, 7800, ColecoVision, Odyssey2 and Intellivision. James Davis, 102 Barrett Ave, Hartford, KY 42347, (502) 298-7327 after 6pm please.

FOR SALE: I have just under 1000 cartridges for the classic systems (Atari 2600/5200, Intellivision, ColecoVision, etc.) for sale or trade. Also 15 brand new Intellivoice modules, 40+ Intellivision I motherboards, 10+ complete Intellivision I, II & III systems, 20+ Atari 2600 systems, 6 ColecoVision systems and bunch of all the Coleco expansion modules, 2 Vectrex systems, and more! **WANTED:** Intellivision Beamrider, Chip Shot Golf, Commando, Defender, Dracula, Hover Force, James Bond, Ladybug, Nova Blast, Q*Bert, Sewer Sam, Super Cobra, Tower of Doom, Tutankham, Zaxxon. Also looking for Vectrex software. Sean Kelly, 5789 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60646 or call (312) 775-9138 after 7pm CST or (312) 594-1146 MODEM 24 hours a day.

TRADE: Will trade games for Coleco, Vectrex, 7800 and Atari home computers. I have games for 2600, 5200, 7800, Atari home computers, Bally and Channel F. Send me your wants and surplus list and I'll send you mine. Earl Carsner, 738 N. Bermuda St, Mesa, AZ 85205-6112.

FANZINE PLUGS

ATARI 2600 FANS: "The 2600 Connection is indispensible for any 2600 gamer" - Arnie Katz, VG&CE. Send $1 for a sample to: 2600 Connection, PO Box 3993, Westport, MA 02790.

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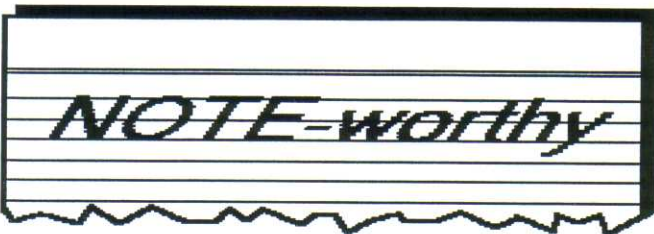**Make checks payable to Joe Santulli (cash accepted)**

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NOTE-worthy

COBRA COMMAND FOR SEGA CD-ROM

Remember the laserdisc game from the arcades, where you were looking out the cockpit of a helicopter fighter? Originally produced by Data East and licensed to Renovation, this CD-ROM title looks hot. So hot, in fact, that Sega bought the game from Renovation and plans to produce it themselves! You can catch a sneak preview of *Cobra Command* in the Digital Press Video #7.

ELECTRONIC GAMES MAGAZINE

Returning to the newsstands is the long-gone Electronic Games magazine! The original columnists Arnie Katz, Bill Kunkel, and Joyce Worley have left VG&CE to pick up on the classic mag. Will Electronic Games contain "classic system" coverage? Will they support your favorite fanzines? We strongly urge you to contact them and state your views! Write to Arnie Katz at 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

HIRSCH MOVES TO KENTUCKY

Perhaps you've noticed that our own Howard Hirsch is absent from these pages! He's moved to Kentucky, but will continue his charter with Digital Press in issue #8. Also in Digital Press personnel news: Santulli and Nardella wedding draws near (November 14) and Annick gets engaged. Watch these pages for future developments!