

WIN A YEAR'S WORTH OF QUARTERS!

FIRST ISSUE!

# VIDEO GAMES

## PLAYER

FALL 1982  
\$2.95

TM

### SECRET TIPS TO BEAT:

Defender  
Donkey Kong  
Pac-Man  
QIX and  
More!

### FASTEST JOYSTICK IN THE WEST!

7-11 Picks the  
Texas State  
Champ

### COMPLETE FALL 1982 HOME GAME BUYER'S GUIDE!

VIDEO JOCK SIGHTED...DANGER  
SIGHTED...DANGER...UH-OH..

FREE ZAXXON  
POSTER!



# HOME GAME GOSSIP

**S**peak softly and carry a big joystick, because after this summer's **Consumer Electronics Show** in Chicago, you've got your hands full...Rumor has it that **Odyssey's K.C. Munchkin** sold more cartridges in a month than all the other **Odyssey** carts combined did in 1981. That is, before it got pulled off the market because of the **Atari Pac-Man** lawsuit...and **Pac-Man**, by the way, sold more in its first month than **Space Invaders** did in a year...That's why **Warners** has made more \$\$ from **Pac-Man** than **20th Century Fox** made from **Star Wars**...and that's why **Fox** is now making **Atari** software! Look for **Turmoil**, it's wild...

**Coleco** may blow this whole industry open. **ColecoVision** is excellent and you can play your **Atari** carts on it if you buy the "expansion module." But they're starting to get very iffy on the **Intellivision** adapter. It may never happen.

Our nominations for funniest games of the year go to **Apollo's Lost Luggage** (catch flying suitcases or they open and your underwear falls out), **Tigervision's Jawbreaker** (player moves a set of teeth and has to eat candy and brush itself before all the teeth fall out), **Activision's MegaMania** (you get attacked by hamburgers, radial tires, bow ties and flying swiss cheeses), and **Arcadia**, with the best title of the year, **Communist Mutants From Space**...

**Atari** owns home **Pac-Man**, agreed. But what about **Ms. Pac-Man**? She wasn't designed by **Namco** like her boyfriend. **Bally** owns the coin-op rights and they just made an agreement with **CBS** to make home versions of **Bally** games by Christmas. Will **Mr. and Ms. Pac-Man** be separated?...**Loni Anderson** has nothing to do with video games, but I just wanted to put her name in **big black letters**...

Video games go to the movies—**Parker Brothers** has landed **Jaws**, **James Bond**, and **The Empire Strikes Back**. **Astrocade** owns **Conan the Barbarian** (a dubious honor). **George Lucas' Lucasfilms** has just signed an agreement with **Atari** to make games, and **Steven Spielberg** says he's interested too. Next thing you know we'll have a **Kramer Versus Kramer** video game (you and your wife fire laser blasters at each other to win custody of the kid)...



Welcome to the Consumer Electronics Show

**Mattel** has been making more comparisons with **Atari** and decided to start making carts to fit the **VCS** too. Look for their "M System" this fall...The **GCE Vectrex** system was displayed at **CES**. It's great! Real arcade action...**Imagic** is the first company to make games for **Atari**, **Intellivision** and **Odyssey**. No one is safe from a **Demon Attack** anymore!...**Astrovision**, formerly **Bally Arcade**, has changed its name again, to **Astrocade**. Let's hope they stay with this one—they have a good system and games, but you can't find them in the phone book...Most inexpensive system on the market is **Emerson's Arcadia 2001** (no, it does not double as an air conditioner) for a scant \$99...In **Telesys'** new **Fast Food** game, they pack an **Alka Seltzer** in each box. It figures...**Mr. Mouth** gets "calorie points" for everything he eats—Tip for home **Pac-Man**—the ghosts always exit their base on the right side...

Can't afford projection TV but want **BIG** aliens? Think about **Beamscope**, an acrylic fransel lens that you put over your screen to magnify the image. They're as little as \$60 and give a good sharp image as long as you sit directly in front of it...In **Bandai's** new **Air Traffic Controller**, the manufacturer says that if the tension becomes unbearable, players have the option of going out on strike. Should we believe that?...We hear that you can get rapid fire on **Space Invaders** if you turn the console off and on while pushing the game reset but-

ton. Will somebody please try that? We're afraid to bust our system...**Apollo** is planning to make carts for both **Intellivision** and the **Atari 5200**...

Will the arcades die? Home versions are getting so good (especially **Coleco's Zaxxon** and **Donkey Kong**), you've gotta wonder if the coin-ops can keep topping them...**Activision** (which, in addition to their great games, has just about the nicest people in the world working for them) is starting a **Greatest American Hero** contest. Players will compete for high scores on **Star Master** to win a trip to Hollywood and a day on the set of the TV show. **Activision** has also just signed six new designers—**Kelvin Kalcut**, **Van Rizzin**, **Paul Willson**, **Matt Hubbard**, **Gary Kitchen** and **Dan Kitchen**. Everything but the kitchen sink, apparently...

Rejoice! Do you long for a **Trac-Ball** for your **Missile Command**? **WICO** has just started making one. It works beautifully and sells for \$70...**Imagic** has started its "Numb Thumb" Club. Send them \$2 to: **P.O. Box 2055, Saratoga, CA 95070** and they'll send you a poster and a subscription to **Numb Thumb News**, the company newsletter...On the way back from the **Consumer Electronics Show**, I sat on the bus next to a scruffy teenager in a t-shirt, blue jeans and sneakers. It turned out to be **Mark Turmell**, game designer for **20th Century Fox**. He designed **Sneakers** and **Fast Eddie** and the kid hasn't even finished college yet! Says he's working on an incredible new game, but he couldn't even tell me the name of it...

Seems like you can't turn around without six new software companies starting up. Watch for **CommaVid** (**Mission Omega**, **Mines of Minos**, **Cosmic Swarm** and **Room of Doom**, all for **Atari**). **Data Age** (**Warp Lock**, **Snake**, and **Survival Run**, all for **Atari**), **Tigervision** (**King Kong**, **Jawbreaker**, **Threshold**, **River Patrol** and **Marauder**, all for **Atari**), and **Spectravision** (**Gangster Alley**, **Planet Patrol**, **Cross Fire**, **China Syndrome** and **Tape Worm**, all for **Atari**). And, of course, **Activision**, **Apollo**, **Imagic**, and **U.S. Games**...Whew! Is this all happening too fast for you? Well, if you think the home video game market is all very confusing and frightening and crazy, and exciting and wonderful...you're right. ■

# VIDEO GAME WARS

Who Will Be The Big Winner After The Video Game Companies Finish Slugging It Out? (You Will!)

By Dan Gutman

The scene: a television studio. George Plimpton is taping an Intellivision commercial.

Plimpton: "I've been making more comparisons [between Mattel and—]"

Suddenly, six ten-year-old kids with horn-rimmed glasses, The Atari Anonymous SWAT Team, enter the studio with machine guns. Plimpton falls in a hail of bullets and lies bleeding all over his Astronush cartridge. Pathetically, he tries firing a few laser shots at the youngsters before expiring. The kids split, shouting, "That's the last comparison he'll ever make!"

Sound ridiculous? Well, it's only a slight exaggeration of the war that is swirling around you—The Video Game War.

Fact—Last year Americans spent six billion bucks on video games. That's more than we spent on baseball, football and basketball combined. More than we spent on movies and records combined. More than twice the take of all the casinos in America combined. It is truly the Gold Rush of the 1980's.

Can you imagine twenty billion quarters? That's what dropped into the slots of arcade games last year, including two million dollars a week into Pac-Man alone. Pinball manufacturers like Stern and Williams have switched to cranking out hit videos like *Berzerk* and *Defender*. At least thirty companies have signed sublicensing agreements with Midway to make Pac-mugs, Pac-watches, Pac-greeting cards and Pac-bedshoes. More than twenty books on video games have hit the shelves. Hell, you wouldn't be holding this magazine in your hands if somebody wasn't pretty sure you'd pay hard cash for it.

Six billion dollars is a big pie and everybody wants a slice. This means war—a war that is being fought in the arcades, in the homes, and more often than not, in the courtroom. By the time all the manufacturers elbow their way to the front lines, there will be some casualties.

Illustration by Seymour Chwast



## THE ARCADE ARMAGEDDON

We're not even talking about the war *against* arcades by the people who equate video games with the decline and fall of Western civilization. We're talking about the war for your quarters. Everybody wants to invent next year's Pac-Man, but if they can't do that, how about last year's Pack Man or Puck-Man? After the Great Yellow One hit it big, suddenly everybody and his brother was coming out with a maze game where you just happen to get chased around until you eat something, then you get to chase the chasers. That's fine, but if some burly guys enter your arcade and roughly remove one of the games, chances are another "Crazy Kong" or "Congorilla" (illegal copies of Donkey Kong) is being seized. Look for "Hopperty." It's a Frogger ripoff. Somebody in England had the nerve to make a Pac-Man copy called, simply, "The Copy." When Space Invaders was number one, there were *sixty* Japanese companies making copies of it. Of the 100,000 Pong games that were sold, only a tenth of them were made by Atari, who originally produced Pong.

So what's the big deal? Copies give us more games to play. Yeah, but they're generally inferior products, and if you were a manufacturer, would you want to spend millions of dollars to research and develop great games only to make some other guy a millionaire? That's why video game designers in the U.S. have the same copyright protection as book authors. There is no copyright law in England, and video games are dying there.

But copyright laws don't stop the copiers. In the days of Pong, it took a long time to get the parts for Pong copies. But now, it's simple to copy a game. In fact, when Cinematronics' Naughty Boy was unveiled at a convention in St. Louis this year, the convention's attendees were led to a back room where a Naughty Boy pirate version was already standing. The copy actually beat the real game out onto the street!

### SPEEDUPS

Video game players are a masochistic lot. They hate to win. When they win, they stop playing the game. This means less dollars for the arcade owner, who is at war with the manufacturers. The issue—enhancement, or "Speedup" kits. These kits change a game's program to make it harder. When the "easy" game gets harder, it makes more money from players like you who dig pain. More money for everybody.

Except for one thing—since video games are copyrightable, anything that modifies the program is illegal. Speedups

---

**"Video games took in six billion dollars in 1981, and some people will do anything to get a piece of the action."**

---

are now against the law. Put yourself in the arcade owner's shoes—you buy Asteroids for \$3,000. It makes big bucks until your players get the hang of it and move on to something else. You can't buy a speedup kit. A few months later, Atari comes out with Asteroids Deluxe and *nobody* is playing Asteroids anymore. You're lucky if you made back your original investment. And it doesn't help any when the home version of Asteroids comes out. Who wants to wait in line for a game at your arcade when they can play a similar version in the privacy and comfort of home? If anything kills the arcades, it won't be the anti-arcade fanatics—it'll be the exploding home video game revolution.

### THE HOME HOLOCAUST

The first salvo was fired by Odyssey back in 1972, but since then, the superpowers, Mattel and Atari, have been slugging it out. Last year Mattel sold 600,000 Intellivisions. Pretty impressive, but Atari sold three million of their VCS. Atari, owned by Warners, owns about 80% of the hardware market right now. Last year Atari grossed six times the Warners record division, five times the Warners film division, and 47 times Warners Oscar-winning movie, *Charlots of Fire*!

Even so, only ten percent of American

homes have a video game system, so 90% of America has yet to be conquered. And Atari and Mattel are gunning for it, with the best TV commercial war since Avis took on Hertz.

Last November a smug George Plimpton hit the airwaves and demonstrated how Atari's sports games looked like day old oatmeal. Atari struck back with an equally smug twerpy kid who claimed he couldn't compare Intellivision's space games with Atari's because Intellivision didn't have any, nyah, nyah. Mattel, which had covered just about every sport short of bocce ball, quickly cranked up some space games and Plimpton was back on the air, firing missiles at Atari. By that time, Atari had become disgusted with the whole mess and stopped giving Mattel the free advertising. But it was great fun while it lasted. Now, Mattel is making cartridges that will fit into the Atari VCS, which is the equivalent of Israel recognizing the PLO.

Atari is the fastest growing company in America's history, so naturally competition is spreading like brushfire, even from within the company itself. Disgruntled game designers, who are now superstars and millionaires, don't think twice about looking for a new job. Imagic, which makes software for both Intellivision and the Atari VCS, was formed by two ex-Atarians and two defectors from Mattel. The president of 20th Century Fox video games is an ex-Mattel man. The three guys responsible for Atari's "Battlezone," Howard Delman, Ed Rotberg, and Roger Hector, have left Atari to form Videia, which is making arcade games. Rumor has it that Atari's design stable has been severely depleted.

Why should a hot 25-year-old game designer who reportedly starts at \$60,000 a year plus royalties leave his cushy job? Eugene Jarvis, who invented Defender and *also* once worked for Atari, told *Playboy* that when Defender became a hit, "they (Williams) offered me a bonus of cash and stock options spread out over four years. It didn't seem like enough to me. The more I thought about it the more I realized game designers can get ripped off. The companies make millions and the designers get only a few thousand." Jarvis left Williams to form his own company, Vid Kidz.

Perhaps the most painful loss to Atari came when four of its designers left in 1979 to form Activision. Between them, Al Miller, Larry Kaplan, Bob Whitehead and David Crane are said to have created more than half of Atari's home games up until that point. They had a great idea—form a company to make games that will be played on the Atari system.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

# VIDEO GAME WARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

That makes sense. You can make a lot more money selling razor blades than you can selling razors and the same is true with video game software and hardware. Since Atari was only releasing about a game a month, there was a tremendous demand for new games. As with the recording business, a \$2,000 stereo system isn't much good if you have to listen to the same records over and over. Activision games were big hits right away.

While Activision felt (and rightfully so) that forming the new company was simply fair competition, Atari felt (also rightfully so) that Activision was taking money out of daddy's pants pockets. Atari filed a twenty million dollar suit for conspiring to appropriate company trade secrets. The litigation was settled in December, with Activision agreeing to manufacture video games under a technology license from Atari, whatever that means.

For obvious reasons, Atari keeps an eye on its employees like the KGB watches ballet dancers. Security is tight and workers are asked to sign confidentiality agreements. In the Atari labs, you have to use a magnetic ID card to get from one locked corridor to another. While Activision touts its designers on each cartridge box, the names of the Atari designers are off limits. One of them cleverly got around this—if you perform a complicated series of maneuvers in the Atari game *Adventure*, the screen lights up with the words, "Created by Warren Robinette." Atari didn't know about the kink until the game was in the stores. Customers got such a kick out of finding Robinette that Atari has loosened up and plans to plant more clues in future cartridges.

Being this young industry's founder and leader, it is necessary for Atari to have a legal commando team whose mission is to seek out copyright infringements. To boldly sue where no one has sued before, so to speak. They really sunk their teeth into Odyssey's K.C. Munchkin. Owning the home rights to Pac-Man, Atari sued in Chicago Federal Court when Odyssey attempted to get their home gobbler game out first. The court agreed that K.C. was rather Pac-like and must be taken off the market. Odyssey appealed and won—the Munchkin sold like hotcakes. But then Atari appealed that decision and poor K.C. went back to the warehouse. Odyssey says they'll appeal. Stay tuned.

It has certainly cost millions in legal

fees, but Atari has successfully kept various gobblers, munchmen, and other assorted Pac-Clones off the market. They *did* lose one battle, though. The computer game *Jawbreaker* refused to be engulfed by the Atari attorneys. Though the game closely resembles Pac-Man, *Jawbreaker* has a set of teeth, while Pac-Man gums his way through the maze.

The video game companies seem to be issuing as many lawsuits as new games. *Astrocade* went so far as to send Mailgrams to the press proclaiming they would announce a "major patent infringement lawsuit" at this summer's Consumer Electronics Show. Oh yes, the Mailgram added, "*Astrocade* will also unveil its new line of video game cartridges."

The *Astrocade* suit charged Atari and Commodore had allegedly infringed on the patent covering the video display technique of "bit" mapping. I asked some Atari people about the case, and basically they responded, "Astro-who?"

Topping the *Astrocade* case, Walt Disney Productions has filed suit against Williams because of the game *Robotron 2084*. Disney claims they own all rights to the word "TRON." The next thing you know, all electrons and other atomic particles will have to be recalled unless they have pictures of Mickey Mouse on them.

Ah, one harkens back to the days of *Space Invaders* when being a consumer was peaceful. Now we have to decide between *Space Duel*, *Space Chase*, *Space Battle*, *Space Fury*, and *Communist Mutants From Space*. We've got companies we've never even heard of, like *Spectravision*, *Tigervision*, *CommaVid*, and *Data Age*, pouring out games. We've got the big software companies waiting to license hit arcade games like vultures circling over dead meat. I guess this is what they call American capitalism.

And when you think about it, it's a good system. It's survival of the fittest. There's a lot of money out there to be made and a lot of people want to make it. They are all competing for *your* quarter, *your* dollar. And they had better be good. When Atari comes out with their new 5200 game system, Mattel comes out with their Voice module. And you can bet Atari has something fantastic up its sleeve to try and top it. If they don't, somebody else will. In *The Video Game Wars*, some of the weaker soldiers will no doubt perish. But there will be one clear winner—you! ■

## BIG DADDY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

Time Theater and then pointed to the dismal profits whenever Bushnell tried to convince them to expand.

Finally, Nolan decided he was through with Atari. The pizza business is "more fun than games," he declared. He bought back the rights to Pizza Time Theaters from Atari for \$500,000. Then he resigned.

### New Smash

Pizza Time Theater was a hit from that moment on. This childlike guy just seems to know what kids like. Imagine the face on an eight-year-old walking into one of Nolan's new shops: Wow, more than a hundred video games in glistening rows off to one side; then, in the center a real stage that comes alive every eight minutes with this funny rat telling silly jokes and introducing other singing robot animals, including Jasper T. Jowls and Harmony Howlette, a country and western coyote that sings like Loretta Lynn. And finally—pizza. What more can a kid ask for? It's the perfect day-club for the swinging pre-pubescent set.

This time Bushnell went public with his stock from the start, while retaining a controlling interest. It opened at \$15 a share. Last seen it was \$25 and rising. Bushnell is now estimated to be worth over \$70 million. There are about a hundred Pizza Time Theaters in the U.S., Canada, and Australia. Bushnell estimates he'll have 800-1000 in operation by 1985, and he predicts that five years after that, Chuck E. Cheese will be more familiar to kids than that little mouse with the big ears.

No wonder it doesn't bother him that Atari really blossomed under the careful businesslike Warner management. Or that the programmable home game really hit it big the year after he left. Or that another project he'd breathed the first life into, *Asteroids*, became a monster smash coin-op game. Or that, for the last two years, Atari has been making more money for Warner than its movie company. To Bushnell, the real reward is the magic of creation, not just the bucks.

What's next? No one knows. In fact, we can be certain of only one thing about Nolan Bushnell: There'll be more surprises. A reporter once asked him why he doesn't retire now that he's made his fortune. Bushnell replied, "That would be boredom. Some people were meant to build things."

Move over, Walt Disney. The man who slew pinball is gunning for you. ■

---

# FALL 1982

---

# COMPLETE

---

# HOME

---

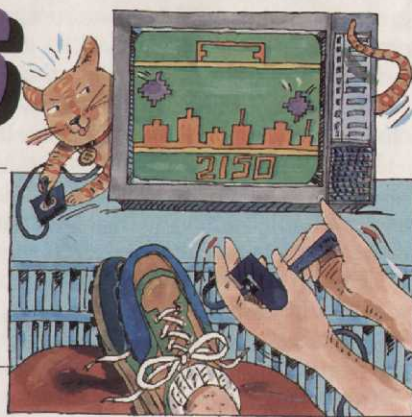
# VIDEO GAME

---

# BUYER'S

---

# GUIDE



Which is the best system for you? Which cartridges are great and which are duds? How should you spend your video game dollar? Turn the page and find out!

**S**o, you want to buy a home video game system and suddenly you're faced with a choice. A vast choice. Choosing a system has become, in recent months, an Herculean task. If you had had better timing, you'd have gone for the consoles about two years ago when there were only three of them available. Instead, you waited until now, and you've got to choose from among at least five systems. That's the price you pay.

Actually, you did the right thing by waiting. Although your choice is harder, it is from among better systems with a wider range of features to offer you. So you didn't do badly after all. Don't you feel relieved?

There are a few things you ought to know before we go any further; simple terms you're likely to come across while searching for the home video game system that's just right for you.

# HARDWARE



This refers to the console, the system on which the *software* (next word) is played. The *software* refers to the game cartridges themselves, the stuff of which games are made.

The system works as follows: Inside each console is a CPU, or central processing unit which is the hub around which everything turns. The CPU extracts information from various inputs and transfers it to the TV screen.

Within each cartridge is a RAM and ROM chip. RAM (random access memory) is the changing information, such as your game score, while ROM (read-only memory) is the unchanging information, such as the rules of the game (although there are times I, for one, wish the rules would change a little and let me *win* for once).

The CPU takes information from both the chip and the player's input (your orders given through the joystick) and sends it almost instantaneously to the screen.

There are different kinds of software with cartridges being the most common. Unfortunately, you cannot play any old cartridge on any old system.

This is the beauty of free enterprise. Each company has its own system and format. Therefore, if you own, say, an Atari VCS, you can't play Intellivision games on it. This is another good reason to choose your game system wisely. Let's get on to the available systems.

## ATARI

The Atari system is one that offers the widest selection of games for play on it. The VCS 2600 costs about \$149 though it can be had for as little as \$120. It consists of a console with several switches, including one that varies the difficulty from (a) to (b) with (a) being the most difficult. (Guess what (b) is) The system also comes with four controls: two joysticks and two paddle controls. The joysticks feature-eight position movement and each has a red "fire" button. The paddle controls (used with games such as Circus

Atari and Kaboom!) also feature a red fire button, though in a different location. Sold separately is a set of Atari Keyboard Controllers for use with some of the educational cartridges available from Atari.

For the most part, the player will deal with the joysticks. If you're used to playing arcade games, these are going to be sorry disappointments. The joysticks offer neither the precision nor the sensitivity of the arcades. However, it is unfair, I believe, to compare them with the arcade joysticks. If you think of them as an entirely different species and get used to them that way, you'll be better off.

The VCS has the widest selection of cartridges available but it is important to note that the graphics on the unit are chunky at best. The asteroids in Asteroids look like nothing so much as pieces of colored popcorn and not very tasty popcorn at that. The rocket is awfully clumsy to have gotten that far into space.

But if you've waited this long, think about waiting just a little but longer for the new Atari system due out next month. Called the "System 5200," this one is going to beat everything. No joke. Priced at about \$210 (marked down from \$349 list), the 5200 offers improved graphics, and several features not found on any other system... so far.

The controllers are closer to Intellivision's in that they have a small calculator-sized keyboard and the firing buttons are located at the side towards the top. There is a speed control built-in which, on spe-



Atari 5200

cific cartridges, will allow the player to speed up the action. In addition, the joystick offers 360 degree mobility instead of the usual eight positions. Also found on the control is a "pause" button which enables the player to put any game on hold for as long as he likes. Say your friend is beating the pants off you in Defender. Simply put the game on hold until you are ready to resume play. Like after he moves away. The game will pick up exactly where you left it when you come back. And while the game is in the pause mode, the screen will constantly change colors to prevent phosphor burn from occurring.

I saw Pac-Man played on this new system, and let me tell you it is great! The graphics are easily as good as the arcade version and even include those intermissions which you get to see if you're good enough. I, for one, have never seen them.

The bad news is that the 5200 is not compatible with the 2600. This means all the software you have bought for the VCS will not fit into the new system.

The good news is that there will soon be an expansion module sometime in the future for the 5200 which will make it VCS

VIDEO GAME SYSTEM RATINGS						
SYSTEM	Controllers		Graphics	number of cartridges available	Expansion modules	Overall rating
ATARI VCS 2600	C	C		100 +	None	C+ 125
ATARI 5200	A	A		14*	Voice, VCS	A 210
ODYSSEY <sup>2</sup>	C	C		40 +	Voice	C+ 125
ASTROCADE	A	B		25	Computer	C+ 210
INTELLIVISION	A	B		40 +	Voice, Computer**	B+ 210
COLECOVISION	A	A		22*	Atari, Driving	A 200
A—excellent, B—great, C—good, D—fair, F—flunk out *With Atari VCS adapter, all 100-plus cartridges for the Atari VCS become compatible. **Not yet available						

compatible. So don't throw all those games away yet.

Atari is perhaps the strongest with arcade titles. See, it has a distinct advantage in that it also has a coin-op division, which means that it doesn't have to go too far to buy the rights to any popular arcade game. Its vast library of software includes Asteroids, Space Invaders, Defender, Missile Command (which, incidentally, is one of the better translations) and Pac-Man, which, on the VCS, is just awful. The ghosts are hard to see and just *forget* about the joystick. (The 5200 has corrected all this and there's hardly a negative thing that can be said about the new system.)

In addition, there are presently about 16 independent software manufacturers all making games for the Atari system. (see next section). So if variety is what you're looking for, Atari is the system for you.

One added note—if you're going to spend more than \$200 for any video game system, you might think about getting a home computer instead. They also play games and the prices are getting lower and lower.

## INTELLIVISION

Mattel's Intellivision system outdoes the Atari VCS in as far as graphics goes. Priced at around \$210 if you shop around the Intellivision is very strong in the way of two person sports games. The baseball cartridge, for example, is superb with each player independently controlled.

The console comes with two controllers, both with calculator-sized keyboards and disc/joystick combinations as well as two firing buttons on the sides. Each game comes with an overlay which fits over the keyboard and further defines the function of each key in that game. So in the baseball cartridge, the overlay is a baseball diamond and each player corresponds to one of the keys. It is awkward, however, and the overlay keeps slipping around so you're liable to be throwing the ball to right field when you think you're pressing your shortstop. It's best to memorize who each key stands for as quickly as possible and to learn to "touch play," as the time spent glancing up and down could cost you the pennant.

The baseball cartridge is wonderfully detailed. The players run out amid cheering crowds. You can have a rousing warm-up catch in the outfield before the pitch. Pitches can come in fast or slow, curved

or straight. The one complaint I have is that there are no walks. In fact, if a ball is inside and hits the player, it simply passes right through him. This makes it difficult to put any real confidence behind the density of your players.

Intellivision offers about forty cartridges divided into six categories: sports, space, action, strategy, gaming and children's learning. In addition, several independent software manufacturers have begun producing games for Intellivision as well—thus the library of games should expand.

Intellivision stresses thinking games over pure action games, and two-player games over single player games. So if you just want to sit down for fifteen minutes by yourself and blast some aliens, the Atari system is better for you.



Intellivision with Intellivoice

## INTELLIVOICE

Sometime later this year, Intellivoice is coming. Intellivoice is a module which attaches to the Intellivision system and, when played with new cartridges such as Tron: Solar Sailor and B-17 Bomber, adds voice—not just sound effects—to the game. For example, in B-17 Bomber, one of the voices giving occasional advice to the player sounds just like John Wayne. I swear.

The module will cost under \$100 and regular Intellivision cartridges can be played on it, but without enhancement.

It bears mentioning that there will be a keyboard add-under to be attached to the Intellivision, making it into a personal computer on which you will be able to learn languages, plot family budgets and learn Basic programming.

## ODYSSEY<sup>2</sup>

Odyssey two is like the poor relative of the previous systems. Whether it's because it doesn't receive enough adver-



Odyssey<sup>2</sup>

tising to get attention or doesn't receive enough attention to merit further advertising support, I don't know. It just doesn't seem able to keep up with the other systems. The games, however, are not bad. There are over 30 cartridges to choose from but none, so far, is an arcade title.

The console has a keyboard, and in this way Odyssey<sup>2</sup> is significantly different from the other systems. The keys are flat, unlike a typewriter and each key can perform a specific function depending on which cartridge is plugged in. The graphics are fair, not great, not as bad as Atari's VCS. But where Odyssey really falls down is in its sparse game selection. The best cartridge—KC Munchkin—was taken off the market after a suit was filed by Atari charging KC with being too similar to Pac-Man. Odyssey plans to release another cartridge—KC's Crazy Chase—soon, in which KC will return. And a good thing, too. KC was much better-looking than the VCS version of Pac-Man. He smiled each time he stopped gobbling and often, I would stop the game and risk being eaten just to see him grin.

The keyboard is really the key difference. With the Keyboard Creations cartridge, for example, the user can program in messages, times, and alarms, something that cannot be done on Atari or Intellivision.

And the keyboard makes the difference between Odyssey's new voice module and Intellivoice. There are new games to be played on The Voice but, in addition, you can put messages on the screen and The Voice will speak them to you when you press the "enter" key. The Voice can pronounce just about anything, although it does tend to be phonetic about it—pronouncing "weather" as "weether." It is also very poor at hailing taxicabs.

Odyssey also is strongest in the video/board strategy game area. Offering three games in its Master Strategy Series, which use both boards *and* screens. They are Quest For the Rings, Conquest of the

World and The Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt.

The console, including the Speedway, Spinout and Crypto-Logic cartridge, runs about \$199.95 list price. The Voice lists for about \$99.95 and cartridges range from \$34.95 (for voice games) to \$49.95 (Master Strategy Series.)

## COLECOVISION

ColecoVision will be rivalled only by the Atari 5200. ColecoVision is indeed a third generation video game.

The controllers are everything rolled into one—small keyboards, paddle controls and joysticks with a speed roller similar to the one on the 5200's controllers.

ColecoVision's graphics are superb. Just superb. There's none of this chunky, angular blocky resolution found in the other games. Coleco's screens are rounded and very clear and all its repro-



ColecoVision

ductions of arcade games are about as close as anything has come so far. Its Donkey Kong cartridge, for example, is almost an exact duplicate, graphically as well as in play, of the popular arcade game.

And Coleco has done a very smart thing. It has an Atari expansion module which attaches to the ColecoVision console and allows the player to play *all* the Atari cartridges available. All. From all the manufacturers. This means the owner of the Coleco system has the most comprehensive software library of any other system. It should be pointed out that when Atari VCS games are played on the Coleco expansion module, the graphics do not improve. Rats.

Coleco plans to have other expansion modules as well. Its second will be a driving module for use with games such as Turbo. It comes with a steering wheel and accelerator and greatly enhances game play.

The ColecoVision is under \$200 and the expansion module runs about \$60. Each cartridge is in the neighborhood of \$32.



Astrocade

## ASTROCADE

Astrocade is the latest name change for what once was the Bally Professional Arcade system. For some reason, this system is simply not well known. Not known well, that is. And this is unfortunate because the graphics are terrific and there is one game in particular which is quite unique. But first to the console and controllers.

The Astrocade console has a calculator built into it which is used when playing the unique game mentioned above as well as when using the Astrocade Basic cartridge. See, the Astrocade is also a personal computer and Basic programming can be learned from this cartridge. The keyboard might be a little small but otherwise it is quite efficient.

As are the controls. They are models of efficiency. Shaped like pistol handles, they have triggers for firing buttons and a small knob on the end which doubles as joystick and paddle control. They are easy to hold and easy to use. And they're quite precise, too.

Of the games I've played, I have found none really exciting. All seem to be copies, and not excellent ones, of existing arcade games. Some games are much better than others. The graphics and precision of the controls make playing on this machine a pleasure.

The console (which costs \$299—but remember it is a personal computer of sorts, too) comes with three resident games—which means they live there and require no cartridge. They are Gunfight—a shoot out at the Video Corral, Checkmate—a strategy game, and Scribbling, the unique one. Scribbling utilizes the controllers and keyboard to turn the player into a video artist. Varying color shade and intensity, the player can draw just about anything on his TV set.

The controller becomes a paintbrush with the joystick determining the width and length of the stroke. Quite remark-

able, really. In fact, I would say Astrocade's greatest strength lies in the creative cartridges of which there are two more—Creative Crayon and Music Maker, which enables the user to compose and play back music. Just remarkable!

## GCE

General Consumer Electronics is the newest and, in my opinion, one of the most significant entrants in last few months. Their system Vectrex will be a major contender in the video game arena.

Vectrex is a self-contained system—meaning it is not played on your TV set. This is an advantage not only because it frees up the TV but also because the graphics on Vectrex can be—*are*—outstanding. It uses a Vector screen—as opposed to the vaster screen found in TV sets—which gives the illusion of 3-D. The driving games particularly are outstanding, with the distance perspective almost frightening. At one point during the game Hyperchase you enter a tunnel so realistic you feel claustrophobic.

The control panel consists of a small 360 degree joystick and four buttons, each with a different function depending on the game being played. Vectrex has a black and white screen, so each game also comes with an overlay which adds color to the graphics.

There are thirteen games available, including the resident game, Mine Storm. The system runs about \$200 and will be available early this fall.

There are at least five other manufacturers, including Emerson, SJA, Video Technology Inc., Entex, and Tryom but, at present each is simply, in my opinion, a facsimile of the ones we've just covered.

## SOFTWARE

Every company manufactures games for its own system. Thus Atari has a line of over 60 cartridges for its VCS and, so far, 14 for the 5200 including Pac-Man, Space Invaders and Qix. Mattel has over 40 games for the Intellivision. However, in addition to making games for themselves, several of them have taken to making games for their competitors as well. The Intellivision M Network is devoted strictly to games for the Atari VCS, including translations of such popular Intellivision titles as Astromash (called Astroblast) and Baseball (called Super Challenge

Baseball). Coleco markets games for both the Atari and Intellivision systems. So its most popular games (such as Donkey Kong) are available in all formats.

But, more importantly, there are currently about 15 software-only manufacturers, all making software for the Atari VCS. This naturally expands the library available for that system and is something the buyer should take into account. While several companies are beginning to make games for Intellivision, most of the attention is concentrated on the VCS. Remember that.

Among these suppliers are some well-known ones who we will describe in greater detail here. Others will be noted for your information, but won't be dealt with in too much detail. There is only so much a writer can do before wanting to destroy her typewriter.

## ACTIVISION

Activision is the oldest and largest of the software companies making games for the VCS. Among the games offered are *Laser Blast*—an award winning space game; *Kaboom!*—in which a mad bomber drops, well, bombs, and you have to catch them before they hit the ground; and *Free-way*—the old joke in which you have to get a chicken safely across one of eight major highways at rush hour.

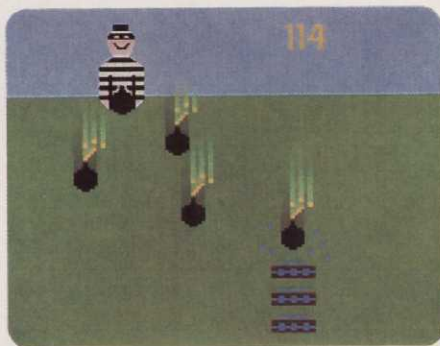
Activision currently has 18 games out for Atari and one—*Pitfall*, and adventure game in which the player has to maneuver "Harry" through the jungle watching out for scorpions, crocodiles and other hazards—for Intellivision. *Pitfall* is also available in the Atari format.

Activision's games reflect the dynamic nature of its president Jim Levy who puts the premium on creativity. All the games are very original—no arcade titles here and Levy sees no need to acquire any in the immediate future—and all extremely imaginative. The graphics, incidentally, are excellent.

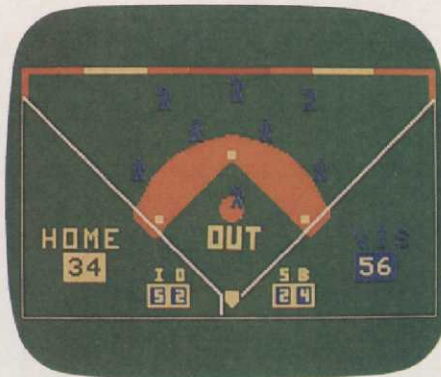
## IMAGIC

Imagic has about seven games for the VCS, including the popular *Demon Attack*, where swarms of cosmic birds swoop down from space. In one of its newer games, *Cosmic Ark*, the player has to capture reluctant aliens from other worlds in order to re-populate a planet.

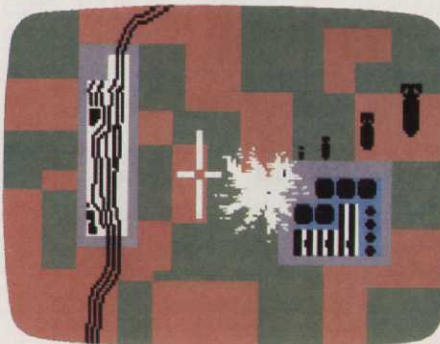
*Cosmic Ark* is a continuation of the second installment, as it were, to one of Imagic's other games, *Atlantis*. After the player loses (and the player must always



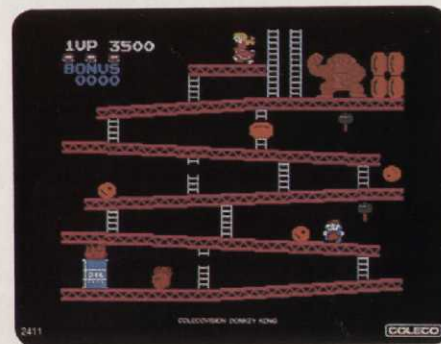
**Kaboom, by Activision**



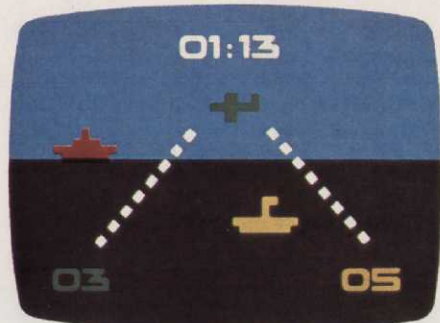
**Baseball, by Astrocade**



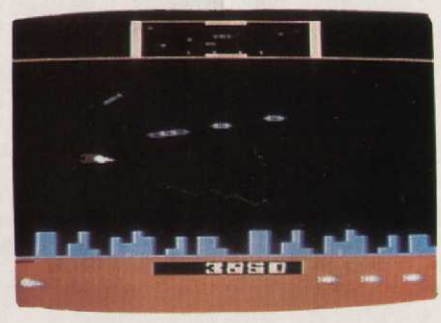
**B-17 Bomber, by Intellivision**



**Donkey Kong, by Coleco**



**Sub Chase, by Odyssey**



**Defender, by Atari**

lose eventually, curses), he rejoins the characters from *Atlantis* in *Cosmic Ark*. They are the ones flying the spaceship that is picking up the reluctant aliens.

In addition, Imagic has five titles for Intellivision—including *Demon Attack* and *MicroSurgeon*, in which the player travels through the human body via the circulatory and cures illness. (It's cuter, really, than it sounds) And the company will have at least one (*Demon Attack*) for the Odyssey<sup>2</sup> system by January of 1983, making it the first independent company to produce games for three systems.

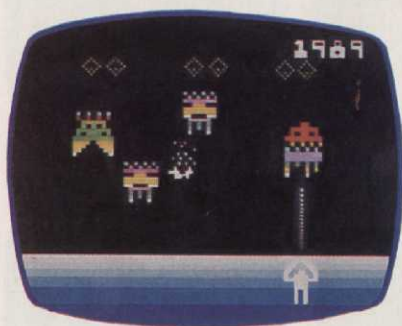
It would be hard to pinpoint Imagic's strength. It's got excellent graphics and you can see that a lot of attention has been paid to detail—for example, the body in *MicroSurgeon* is anatomically cor-

rect and the graphics of the face are superb, with teeth and everything. And the games are eminently playable—within just a few months of its release, *Demon Attack* became one of the top ten.

## GAMES BY APOLLO

Games by Apollo currently has six Atari compatible cartridges and says its got future plans for Intellivision games as well, but so far no dice. Among the games is *Skeet Shoot*, a rather boring game about shooting skeet. In some of the first releases of this game, a flaw which caused the screen to roll was found. Apollo admitted that because it was in such a big rush

to get product to market it didn't pay enough attention to the program. It did accept returns of flawed copies, replacing them with sound ones. After Skeet Shoot came Space Chase, Space Cavern and several others including its most recent one, Lost Luggage, in which a baggage claim



Space Cavern, by Apollo

eral others including its most recent one, Lost Luggage, in which a baggage claim carousel goes wild and flings bags all over the airport.

Apollo's games, so far, are somewhat ordinary in playability but the graphics aren't bad—in Lost Luggage, for example, a plane comes in for a landing from the upper right hand corner and taxis to a stop in the upper left, so attention is paid to detail—and there have been no more flaws in the programs.

Other companies making games for the Atari are Telesys (which has a game called Fast Food in which the player ingests all sorts of junk food flying across the screen and racks up calories instead of points), Tigervision (which owns the rights to several of the more popular computer games, such as Jawbreaker), Twentieth Century-Fox, Spectravision (whose game Planet Patrol goes from daylight to nighttime to daylight during the course of the game, Comma-Vid (with two games, Cosmic Swarm and Room of Doom), Data Age, and US Games (which was recently acquired by Quaker Oats and is now the first company with high resolution breakfast cereal compatible with the Atari VCS).

The list is by no means complete and just about any list given wouldn't remain complete for very long. New companies spring up faster than unwanted blemishes on pron night. So I recommend that you run out and get your system as quickly as possible before you have to narrow your choice down from an even higher number of companies. (And before I am forced to write an update on this article.) Thank you.

## Activision

BARNSTORMING	Action	1	A	easy	B	31.95
BOXING	Sport	1-2	C	"	C	22.95
BRIDGE	Sport	1	B	hard	B	31.95
CHECKERS	Sport	1-2	C	med.	C +	22.95
CHOPPER						
COMMAND	War	1	A	easy	A	31.95
DRAGSTER	Drive	1-2	A	med.	B	22.95
FISHING DERBY	Sport	1-2	A	easy	B	22.95
FREEWAY	Strat.	1-2	B	"	B	22.95
GRAND PRIX	Drive	1	A	"	A	31.95
ICE HOCKEY	Sport	1-2	A	"	A	31.95
KABOOM	Action	1-2	A	"	A	22.95
LASER BLAST	Space	1	B	"	C	22.95
MEGAMANIA	Space	1-2	B	"	B +	31.95
PITFALL	Advent.	1	A	med.	A	31.95
SKIING	Sport	1	B	easy	A -	22.95
STAMPEDE	Action	1	B	"	A	22.95
STAR MASTER	Space	1	A	hard	A	31.95
TENNIS	Sport	1-2	A	easy	A	22.95

All Activision games are made for the Atari VCS. Stampede and Pitfall will be available for Intellivision in September and November respectively.

## Apollo

LOCHJAW	Strat.	1-2	B	easy	B	31.95
LOST LUGGAGE	Action	1-2	A	"	B	"
RAQUETBALL	Sport	1-2	B	hard	B +	"
SKEET SHOOT	Sport	1-2	D	easy	D	22.95
SPACE CAVERN	Space	1-2	B	"	B +	31.95
SPACECHASE	Space	1-2	D	"	D	"

All Apollo games are made for the Atari VCS.

## Astrocade

AMAZING MAZE	Maze	1-2	B	easy	B +	24.95
ASTRO BATTLE	Space	1	A	"	A	29.95
ARTILLERY DUEL	Action	1-4	B	"	B	34.95
ASTROCADE PINBALL	Action	1-4	A	"	A +	29.95
BASEBALL/ HOCKEY/TENNIS	Sport	1-2	B	"	B	29.95
BIORHYTHM	Learn.	1-2	B	med.	B +	29.95
BLACKJACK/ POKER	Gaming	1-4	C	"	C	29.95
BRICKYARD/ CLOWNS	Action	1-4	B	easy	B	29.95
CONAN THE BARBARIAN	Strat.	1-2	B	"	C	34.95
COSMIC RAIDERS	Space	1-2	A	"	B +	34.95
CREATIVE CRAYON	Learn.	1-2	A	"	A	59.95
DOGPATCH	Action	1-2	B	"	B +	29.95
FOOTBALL	Sport	2-4	B	"	A -	29.95
GALACTIC INVASION	Space	1-4	A	"	A	29.95
GRAND PRIX	Drive	1-2	B	"	B +	29.95
THE INCREDIBLE WIZARD	Advent.	1-2	A	med.	A	34.95
LETTER MATCH	Learn	1-4	B	easy	B +	29.95
MUSIC MAKER	Learn	1-2	B	med.	A	59.95
PIRATE'S CHASE	Action	1-2	B	easy	B -	29.95
RED BARON	War	1-2	B	med.	B +	29.95
SEA WOLF	War	1-2	B	easy	B	24.95
SOCCER	Sport	1-4	B	med.	B	34.95
SPACE FORTRESS SOLAR	Space	1-4	A	easy	B +	29.95
CONQUEROR	Space	1-2	B	"	B +	34.95
SPEED MATH	Learn.	1-2	B	"	B	19.95
STAR BATTLE	Space	1-2	B	"	C	24.95
ZZZAP/DODGEM	Drive	1	B	"	B -	24.95
BOWLING	Sport	1-4	B	"	C	29.95

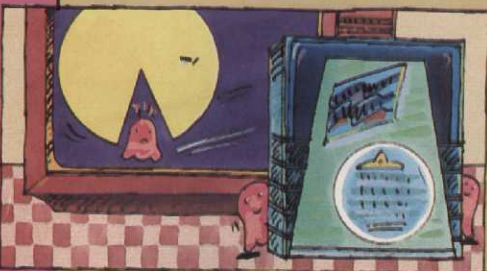
All Astrocade games are made for the Astrocade system. Many of the cartridges have multiple games in them.

## Atari

BRAIN GAMES	Learn.	1-2	B	easy	A	22.95	INDY 500	Drive	1-2	B	easy	C+	39.95
BREAKOUT	Action	1-2	A	"	A	22.95	MATH GRAN PRIX	Learn.	2	C	"	B	22.95
ADVENTURE	Advent.	1	A	hard	A-	31.95	MAZE CRAZE	Maze	2	B	"	A-	26.95
AIR-SEA BATTLE	War	1-2	B	easy	B	22.95	MISSILE						
ASTEROIDS	Space	1-2	B	"	B+	37.95	COMMAND	Space	1-2	A	"	A+	31.95
BACKGAMMON	Sport	1-2	B	med.	A-	26.95	NIGHT DRIVER	Drive	1	B	"	A-	26.95
BASIC							OTHELLO	Strat.	1-2	B	med.	B+	22.95
PROGRAMMING	Learn	1	B	"	B	26.95	OUTLAW	Action	1-2	C	easy	C	22.95
BASKETBALL	Sport	1-2	B	easy	A	22.95	PAC-MAN	Maze	1-2	C	"	B-	34.99
BERZERK	Action	1	B	"	A	31.95	PELE'S SOCCER	Sport	1-2	B	"	B-	31.95
BOWLING	Sport	1-2	B	"	C	22.95	SKY DIVER	Action	1-2	B	"	C	22.95
CANYON BOMBER	Strat.	1-2	B	"	B	22.95	SLOT RACERS	Action	2	B	"	C-	22.95
CASINO	Gaming	1-4	B	med.	A-	31.95	SPACE INVADERS	Space	1-2	A	"	A	31.95
CIRCUS ATARI	Action	1-2	A	easy	B-	26.95	SPACE WAR	Space	1-2	B	"	C	12.95
CODEBREAKER	Learn.	1-2	B	hard	B+	22.95	STREET RACER	Drive	1-4	B	"	B	12.95
CONCENTRATION	Learn	1-2	C	med.	B	22.95	SUPER BREAKOUT	Action	1-2	A	"	B+	31.95
DEFENDER	Space	1-2	A	"	A	37.95	SUPERMAN	Advent.	1-2	A	hard	A-	31.95
DODGE 'EM	Maze	1-2	B	easy	B-	22.95	SURROUND	Strat.	1-2	B	easy	B+	12.95
FOOTBALL	Sport	2	C	"	D	12.95	3-D TIC TAC TOE	Start.	1-2	B	med.	B	22.95
GOLF	Sport	1-2	C	"	D	22.95	VIDEO CHECKERS	Sport.	1-2	B	easy	B	22.95
HANGMAN	Learn.	1-2	B	"	B+	22.95	VIDEO CHESS	Sport.	1	B	med.	A	26.95
HAUNTED HOUSE	Advent.	1	B	med.	A-	26.95	VIDEO OLYMPICS	Action	1-4	B	easy	B+	22.95
HOME RUN	Sport	1-2	C	"	D	12.95	VIDEO PINBALL	Action	1-2	B	"	A-	31.95
HUMAN							WARLORDS	Strat.	1-4	A	"	A	31.95
CANNONBALL	Strat.	1-2	C	"	C	12.95	YAR'S REVENGE	Space	1-2	A	"	A	31.95

All Atari games are made for the Atari VCS.

# SOFTWARE REPORT CARD



Type of game  
Number of players  
Graphics/Sound  
Difficult to learn?  
Overall rating  
\$

## Coleco

CARNIVAL*	Action	1-2	A	easy	A	30.00
COSMIC	Space	1-2	A	"	A	"
AVENGER*	Strat.	1-2	A	med.	A	"
DONKEY KONG*	Strat.	1-2	A	med.	A	"
FIDELITY'S CHESS***	Sport	1-2	A	"	B+	"
FIDELITY'S HORSE RACING***	Sport	1-2	A	"	B	"
HEAD TO HEAD BASEBALL***	Sport	1-2	B	"	B+	"
HEAD TO HEAD FOOTBALL***	Sport	1-2	B	"	B+	"
KEN USTON'S BLACKJACK/POKER***	Gaming	1-2	A	"	A-	"
LADY BUG*	Maze	1-2	A	easy	B-	"
MOUSE TRAP*	Maze	1-2	A	"	A	"
MR. TURTLE***	Strat.	1-2	A	"	NA	"
RIP CORD**	Strat.	1-2	A	"	NA	"
SIDE TRAK**	Maze	1-2	A	"	NA	"
SKIING***	Sport	1-2	A	"	A-	"
SMURF EDUCATIONAL GAME***	Learn.	1-2	B	"	B+	"
SMURF RESCUE GAME*	Strat.	1-2	A	"	B+	"
SPACE FURY	Space	1-2	B	"	NA	"
SPECTAR***	Maze	1-2	A	"	NA	"
TUNNELS AND TROLLS***	Advent.	1-2	A	med.	A	"
TURBO*	Drive	1-2	A	easy	A	"
VENTURE*	Advent.	1-2	A	"	B+	"
ZAXXON*	Space	1-2	A	med.	A	"

Any game made for the Atari VCS may be played on the ColecoVision system if adapter is purchased

\*Made for Atari VCS, Intellivision, ColecoVision.

\*\*Made for Intellivision and ColecoVision.

\*\*\*Made for ColecoVision.

NA (not available for testing)

## Imagic

ATLANTIS	Space	1-2	B	easy	B	31.95	TRICK SHOT	Sport	1-2	A	"	A	31.95
COSMIC ARK	Space	1	B	"	B	31.95	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	Strat.	1	A	med.	B	31.95
DEMON ATTACK	Space	1-2	A	"	A	31.95							
FIRE FIGHTER	Strat.	1	C	"	C	24.95							
MICRO SURGEON	Strat.	1	A	"	B+	31.95							
RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX	Strat.	1-2	B	med.	B	31.95							
STAR VOYAGER	Space	1-2	B	easy	A	31.95							
SWORDS AND SERPENTS	Advent.	1-2	B	med.	A	31.95							

For Atari VCS—Cosmic Ark, Fire Fighter, Riddle of Sphinx, Star Voyager and Trick Shot. For Atari and Intellivision—Atlantis and Demon Attack. For Intellivision only—Micro Surgeon, Swords and Serpents, and Beauty and the Beast. For Odyssey—Demon Attack.

## Intellivision

ABPA	Sport	1-2	A	med.	B+	19.00	PBA GOLF	Sport	1-4	A	hard	A+	24.00
BACKGAMMON	Strat.	1-2	B	med.	B	19.00	REVERSI	Strat.	1-2	B	med.	B	19.00
ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS	Advent.	1	A	hard	A	39.00	ROYAL DEALER	Gaming	1	A	"	B+	19.00
ARMOR BATTLE	War	2	A	easy	A-	30.00	SEA BATTLE	War	2	A	hard	A	39.00
ASTROSMASH	Space	1	B	"	B-	30.00	SNAFU	Maze	1-2	A	med.	B	30.00
AUTO RACING	Sport	1-2	B	hard	A-	30.00	SPACE ARMADA	Space	1	B	"	C	30.00
BOXING	Sport	2	A	"	B	30.00	SPACE BATTLE	Space	1	A	"	B	30.00
CHECKERS	Sport	1-2	B	med.	B	14.00	STAR STRIKE	Space	1	A	"	B-	39.00
FROG BOG	Action	1-2	A	easy	B	19.00	SUB HUNT	War	1	A	"	B+	30.00
HORSE RACING	Sport	1-2	A	med.	C	24.00	TENNIS	Sport	2	A	hard	B	24.00
ROULETTE	Gaming	1-2	A	"	B+	14.00	TRIPLE ACTION	Action	2	B	"	B	24.00
LOCK 'N CHASE	Action	1-2	B	"	B-	39.00	TRON DEADLY DISCS	Action	1	B	med.	B	30.00
MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL	Sport	2	A	hard	A+	30.00	TRON MAZE-ATRON	Action	1	B	"	B	30.00
MATH FUN	Learn	1-2	A	easy	B+	14.00	U.S. SKI TEAM	Sport	1-6	A	"	B	30.00
NASL SOCCER	Sport	2	A	"	A-	24.00	SKIING	Strat.	1-2	A	hard	A	13.00
NBA BASKETBALL	Sport	2	A	med.	A-	30.00	UTOPIA	Learn	1-2	A	easy	A	14.00
NFL FOOTBALL	Sport	2	A	hard	A	30.00	WORD FUN						
NHL HOCKEY	Sport	2	A	easy	A	24.00							
NIGHT STALKER	Action	1	A	med.	B	39.00							
PBA BOWLING	Sport	1-4	A	"	C	30.00							

All Intellivision games are made for the Intellivision system.

## Odyssey

ALPINE SKIING	Sport	1-2	B	"	C	"	LAS VEGAS	Gaming	1-2	B	med.	B	"
ARMORED EN-COUNTER	War	2	C	med.	B	"	BLACKJACK MATCHMAKER	Learn-	1-2	B	easy	B	"
BASEBALL	Sport	2	B	"	B	"		ing	1-2	B	easy	B	"
BASKETBALL	Sport	2	B	easy	B	"	MATH-A-MAGIC	Learn-	1	C	"	A	"
BLOCKOUT	Action	1-2	B	"	A-	"		ing	1	C	"	A	"
BOWLING	Sport	1-4	C	"	D	"	MONKEYSHINES	Maze	1-3	B	"	A	32.95
CASINO SLOT MACHINE	Gaming	1-4	B	"	B	"	PACHINKO	Action	1-2	B	"	B+	22.95
COMPUTER GOLF	Sport	1-2	C	"	F	"	PICK AXE PETE	Strat.	1-2	B	"	B	32.95
COMPUTER INTRO	Learn	1	B	med.	B	"	POCKET BILLIARDS	Sport	2	C	med.	C	14.95
CONQUEST OF THE WORLD	Strat.	2-6	B	hard	A+	49.95	THE QUEST FOR THE RINGS	Strat.	1-3	B	hard	A	49.95
COSMIC CONFLICT	Space	1	A	med.	A	22.95	SHOWDOWN IN 2100	Action	1-2	C	easy	B-	22.95
ELECTRONIC TABLE SOCCER	Sport	1-2	B	"	A	"	TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN	Strat.	2	B	med.	B+	14.95
FOOTBALL	Sport	2	B	"	B	"	THUNDERBALL	Action	1-4	B	easy	C	22.95
HELICOPTER RESCUE	Advent.	1	B	easy	C	"	UFO	Space	1	B	"	C	32.95
HOCKEY/SOCCER	Sport	2	C	"	D	"	VOLLEYBALL	Sport	1-2	C	"	D	22.95
INVADERS FROM HYPERSPACE	Space	2	A	"	B	"	WAR OF NERVES	Action	2	B	"	A-	22.95
ALIEN INVADERS PLUS	Space	1	C	easy	C-	22.95	WALL ST.						
K.C.S. CRAZY CHASE	Maze	1-2	A	"	A-	"	FORTUNE HUNT	Strat.	1-?	B	hard	A	49.95

All Odyssey games are made for the Odyssey system.

# CALENDAR

## What's In Store For You?

### AUGUST

Parker Brothers—**The Empire Strikes Back** and **Frogger** (both for Atari VCS)... Odyssey's "The Voice" module should sell for \$99. First voice cart—**S.I.D. The Spellbinder**... U.S. Games—**Word Zapper** and **Towering Inferno** (for Atari VCS)... Tigervision—**Threshold** and **King Kong** (for Atari VCS)... Atari—**Berzerk**... August 11th is deadline for the Mattel **Astrosmash** entries.

### SEPTEMBER

20th Century Fox—First four games will be **Beany Bopper**, **Deadly Duck**, **Worm War I** and **Fast Eddie** (all for Atari VCS)... Odyssey—**Nimble Numbers N.E.D.** and **Smithereens**... U.S. Games—**Commando Raid**... Atari's "Supergame" 5200 released at \$300-\$350... Activision—**Pitfall** and **Megamania**... **Astrosmash** Shootoff on the 11th... Apollo—6 new games

...Intellivision—**Advanced Dungeons and Dragons**... Tigervision—**Jawbreaker** and **River Patrol** (for Atari VCS)... Parker Brothers—**Spiderman**, **Amidar**, **Super Cobra** and **Reactor** (all for Atari VCS).

### OCTOBER

Imagic—**Beauty And The Beast** and **Microsurgeon** (both for Intellivision)... Odyssey—**K.C.'s Crazy Chase**... Mattel's M System debut (games for Atari VCS)—**Frogs and Flies**, **Lock 'N Chase**, **Dark Cavern**, **Sea Battle**, **Armor Ambush**, and **Tron: Deadly Discs**... Astrocade—**Artillery Duel**, **Soccer/Dribbling**, **Bowling**, **Cosmic Raiders**, **Solar Conqueror**, and **Pirate's Chase**... Atari—**Earthworld**, **Fail Safe**, and **Baseball** (new version)... U.S. Games—**Maze Chase**, **Squeeze Box**, and an untitled game... General Consumer Electronics' Vectrex Arcade System will sell for \$229.

### NOVEMBER

U.S. Games—**Space Jockey** and **Guardians of Treasure**... Atari—**Demons to Dragons**, **Volleyball**, and **Frog Pond**... Imagic—**Demon Attack** available for Atari 400 computer—Parker Brothers—**Sky Skipper**.

### DECEMBER

International Amateur Video Games Championships take place at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colorado... Apollo—six new games... Atari—**Raiders of the Lost Ark** and **Football** (new version)... Activision—**Pitfall** and **Stampede** (both for Intellivision)... CBS—**Wizard of WOR** and **GORF** (for Atari VCS).

### JANUARY

Commodore—"Max" machine released... U.S. Games—**Weird Bird** and **Gopher Attack**.

HOME VIDEO GAMES

COMPUTER GAMES

ARCADE GAMES

02117 ©

# VIDEO GAMES PLAYER

ATARI,  
COLECO,  
MATTEL  
NEWS!

(212) 581-8267

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1983 \$2.95 US/\$3.25 CAN

WIN  
12

ACTIVISION GAMES!

**CAN YOU  
SURVIVE?**

**ILLEGAL  
VIDEO GAMES**

Are You Playing  
A Ripoff?

**SECRET TIPS!**

MS. PAC-MAN

ZOO KEEPER

DONKEY KONG JR.

MILLIPEDE

SINISTAR



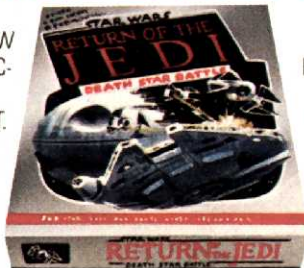
**16 NEW  
COMPUTER GAME  
REVIEWS!**



# ZERO HOUR APPROACHING! SKILLED REBEL PILOT NEEDED TO BATTLE DEATH STAR.

SITUATION DESPERATE! POWERFUL NEW DEATH STAR REPORTED UNDER CONSTRUCTION. MUST BE DESTROYED BEFORE ITS DEADLY COMPLETION OR ALL WILL BE LOST.

MISSION INVOLVES SPLIT-SECOND SKILL. MUST FLY *MILLENNIUM FALCON* THROUGH ENEMY FORCE FIELD...PENETRATE DEATH STAR DEFENSES...AND NEUTRALIZE CENTER CORE.



WARNING! EXPECT HEAVY RESISTANCE FROM EMPIRE'S *TIE* INTERCEPTORS. ALSO NOTE...BE ON ALERT FOR TRACKING DEATH RAY.

TIME RUNNING OUT. ALL *REBEL* PILOTS REPORT IMMEDIATELY FOR RETURN OF THE JEDI DEATH STAR BATTLE. THE THRILLING HOME VIDEO GAME FROM PARKER BROTHERS.

For the Atari 2600™ and soon available for Intellivision.®

 **PARKER BROTHERS**

\* ®. \* TM & © Lucasfilm Ltd. (LFL) 1983 All rights reserved. Parker Bros., a div. of CPG Products Corp., Authorized User. Atari 2600™ is a trademark of Atari, Inc. INTELLIVISION® is a registered trademark of Mattel, Inc. Parker Brothers is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. or Mattel, Inc.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## PLUG IT IN

I'm considering buying either an Atari VCS, an Atari 5200, a ColecoVision or an Intellivision II. But all this talk about things you plug into this and things you plug into that is driving me crazy. Now I have no idea what to buy. Can you clear it all up?

Randolph Trotta

Okay, here's the scoop. Right now there are adapters that allow you to play Atari VCS cartridges on ColecoVision, Intellivision II and the Atari 5200. You can also plug a Starpath Supercharger (it expands the memory) into any of these adapters. There are no adapters (yet) to plug ColecoVision carts, Intellivision carts or Atari 5200 carts into any other machines than the ones they were made for. All four systems can or shortly will be expandable into computers if you purchase their keyboard add-ons. ColecoVision also has a "Super Game" module to increase the memory of that system, and if you really want to be driven crazy, try the Turbo expansion module for ColecoVision. All accessories are purchased separately from the systems.

## OUT OF BUSINESS

I understand that Data Age, U.S. Games and Apollo have all stopped making video games. Why? Are any of their games still for sale? Will they become collector's items?

Robert Hanover

A few years ago, when it was just Atari and Mattel, we would buy every game that came out. Now, with so many companies making video games, we have to be more choosy. To succeed with such competition, a company has to not only have great games, but also have great dis-

tribution, advertising and promotion. This is an example of "survival of the fittest." Apollo went under nearly a year ago, and we still see some of their games in the stores, usually at a good discount. Most likely, games from companies that went out of business will someday be worth far more than 20 or 30 dollars.

## INTELLIVISION III?

Thank you for your balanced evaluation of the Atari 5200 versus ColecoVision. But I have heard that Intellivision III will be here by the end of the year. Should I wait and buy that instead of Atari or Coleco's "super system"?

Heather Harbison

Mattel has been dropping hints about Intellivision III (See "Mattel Strikes Back" in this issue), but until we get a unit in our hands we can't tell you if it is an improvement on Atari or Coleco. You can bet we'll let you know as soon as we can.

## MOVIE/GAMES

Why do you and all the other magazines run articles on the "movie/video games"? With

the exception of *The Empire Strikes Back*, every video game based on a movie has been incredibly terrible!

Rex Wallace

You're right. We admit it. We won't do it again. Promise. But first, we want to see how Porky's—The Game turns out.

## MORE REVIEWS

Your Fall 1982 Home Video Game Buyer's Guide is just what the doctor ordered. With so many systems and cartridges on the market, it is absolutely necessary for the player to be as informed as he or she can be. I would like to see you keep this rating system in every issue and expand it to include Parker Brothers, U.S. Games, Spectravision and all the other companies. Keep up the good work.

Tom Robbins

Here's what we're planning. While all the other video game magazines review 10-15 games per issue, we plan to review 30-40. We do this by evaluating just a few games in depth and giving brief reviews of all the others. We think it's more important to tell you about all the games that are out there than it is to devote

a lot of space to a select few games.

## SUGGESTION BOX

I have a suggestion for the video games companies—make your cartridge boxes smaller. A cartridge the size of a pack of cigarettes does not need a box the size of a paperback book. It's a waste of paper, it takes up too much space on store shelves, and I'll bet that I'm paying more money for it.

Julius Riccio

Good idea. Floppy disk computer games packed in big boxes are even more ridiculous.

## OUT OF MY HEAD

In order for you to print a game I made up, do I have to send a computer printout or something like that? I don't know anything about programming, I just like to make games up out of my head.

Justin Hoy

No programming skills are necessary. Just send us a drawing of your game, a photo of yourself, and a description of the game.

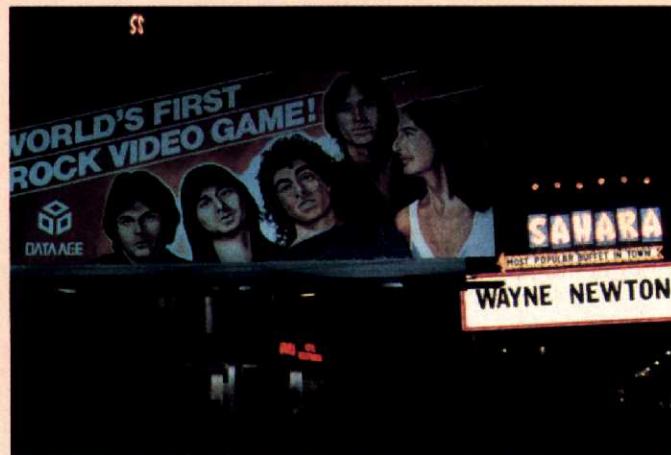
## FEW DEMANDS

Do you know what the best part of your magazine is? "What's In Store For You." That's all I want—a list of all the companies and what products are coming out for what systems. Thanks.

Marvin Tabak

P.S. The nerd poster was good too.

Got a question? Got a gripe? Just want a half a million people to see your name in print? Punch your initials in here, pal, and write: Letters to the Editor, Video Games Player, 888 7th Ave., New York, NY 10106.



Maybe Data Age should have made a Wayne Newton Escape game.

# World's Largest Selection of Commercial and Home Video Games and Accessories.

WE HAVE EVERY CARTRIDGE & ACCESSORY  
FOR ATARI® VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM™, 400™/800™,  
5200™, INTELLIVISION™, COLECOVISION™ & VECTREX™

Send \$2.00 for our latest Catalog & Newsletter telling about all the new and exciting products shown at the January '83 Consumer Electronics Show! Please specify if you have an Atari 400/800 unit, and we will send you our Atari 400/800 Catalog.



## ACCESSORIES FOR MATTEL™ INTELLIVISION™ UNIT

(Not for use with Intellivision™ II or III)

- Joystick** 14.95/set †  
Precision machined from aluminum (gold anodized) for the most discriminating player. Includes 2 replacement disks with screw-in straight stick and ball handles.
- Distick™** 10.00/pair †  
Replacement joysticks for Intellivision™ made from hi-impact plastic.
- Intellivision™ Dust Cover** 7.95 †  
Heavy vinyl with logo.

## ALL MAIL ORDER COMPANIES ARE NOT THE SAME!

1. We've been in business for over 10 years.
2. We operate 4 stores as well as our mail order business.
3. We stock over \$1,000,000 in inventory.
4. We ship over 90% of our orders within 48 hours.
5. We have the most sophisticated computer system in the industry.
6. We have nationwide toll free 800 lines to take your orders (Visa or MasterCard).
7. We will ship any way you prefer.
8. We will immediately replace initial defects.

California residents add 6-1/2% sales tax.  
\*Add \$1 packing, handling and shipping charge.  
†Add \$2 packing, handling and shipping charge.  
‡Add \$3 packing, handling and shipping charge.

## ACCESSORIES FOR ATARI® VCS & ATARI® 400™/800™

- G.A.M.E.S.™ Super Joystick** 29.95 †  
Finest quality. 5-year mfr's. warranty.
- Joystick Extension Cord** (6 ft.) 4.95\*  
(12 ft.) 6.95\*  
6-wire cable.
- Joystick "Y" Adapter** 6.95\*  
Allows joystick & paddles to remain connected, saving wear and tear on connector pins.
- Joystick Lefty Adapter** 5.95\*  
Allows Atari® joystick to be turned 90° for left handed persons.
- Supercharger™ by Starpath™** 39.95 †  
Regularly 69.95. With Phaser Patrol™ Tape (increase memory of Atari® VCS).
- Emerson™ AC/DC Cassette Recorder** 24.95 ‡  
Regularly 49.95.
- Atari® Dust Covers** 7.95 †  
For 2600, 400, 800 & 5200 models.  
All heavy vinyl with logo.

## ACCESSORIES FOR COLECOVISION™

- Superjoystick™ with 2 Fire Buttons** 29.95 †  
This is the same quality joystick we've been selling for Atari® 5 year mfr's. warranty.
- Ball Handle (EZ Joystick)** 10.00/pr. †  
For Coleco™
- Joystick "Y" Adapter** 10.00/ea. †  
Allows use of G.A.M.E.S.™ superjoystick with standard Coleco™ controller. 9-wire cable.
- Controller Extension Cord** 9-wire cable. (9 ft.) 10.00 †
- Colecovision™ Dust Cover** 7.95 †  
Heavy vinyl with logo.

Visa and MasterCard holders may call to place orders: 1-800-626-9592.  
**NO C.O.D. ORDERS.**  
(Dealer inquiries welcome.)

# G.A.M.E.S.™

Direct all mail order & catalog requests to Van Nuys.

**San Fernando Valley:**  
6626 Valjean Avenue  
Van Nuys, CA 91406  
(213) 781-1300

**Orange County:**  
10529 Ellis Avenue  
Fountain Valley, CA  
(714) 964-2711

**South Bay:**  
2814 W. Sepulveda  
Torrance, CA  
(213) 530-7905

**Thousand Oaks:**  
3649 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, Ca  
(805) 497-6115  
(213) 991-1153

For information call: 1-213-781-1300  
(Mon.-Fri. 9-6 PST / Sat. 9-5 PST)



*Popeye*  
The Sailor Man



You thinks it's all fun and games been the world's most famous sailor? Then, I suggests you tries it yerself.

You try makin points with Olive Oyl, that fickle, damandng, stringbean of a dame. Likes you got nothin better to do than runnin around tryin to catch her hearts.



You try bein chased around by that fat swab Brutusk, without a chance to catch yer breath.



*As soon as ya gets yer spinart, they all run away*

And I'll tells ya, that big blubber ball ain't as dumb as he looks.

You try doin all that whilst yer gettin pelted with beer bottles by that discustipatin

Sea Hag. She ain't no lady, that's fer sure.

And you try fightin off the vultures whilst Olive screams for H-E-L-P.

And you try to keep from gettin yerself killed by them bouncin skulls. I doesn't know where they comes from, but I doesn't like 'em one bit.

And woist of all, whilst you're doing all this,

*No garble punch out these bottles before they punch you (or if happen they're non-lethal)*



# YA CAN'T BE WIMPY IF YA WANTS TA PLAY POPEYE.



*Olive drops notes whilst you run around tryin to make points.*

they keeps movin the spinach around so's you can never find it when you needs it. Blow me down, it ain't hardly fair.

I'll tell ya, ya gotsta be some kinda sailor to play Popeye.\*

You gotsta be fast. And ya gotsta thrive under pressure.

Cuz, me home video game is just like the hit arcade game by Nintendo...

With three screens of



*olive holds it! blabberin ya*

non-stop action and incredible graphics.

So's if it's a challenge yer lookin for, and ya thinks

ya gots what it takes, why be messin around with them other silly games. Do what I does every day. Play Popeye from Parker Brothers.



*to thinkin for fun forget with Brutusk? No try it*



Just one piece of advice. I doesn't suggest ya tries it if ya eats yer spinach in a quiche.



*Screen 3 is the most dangerous of them all*



**PARKER BROTHERS**

Popeye is available for Atari 2600, Intellivision, Atari 5200 and ColecoVision Systems; Plus Atari 400 and 800 and Commodore VIC 20 home computer systems.



# MATTEL STRIKES BACK

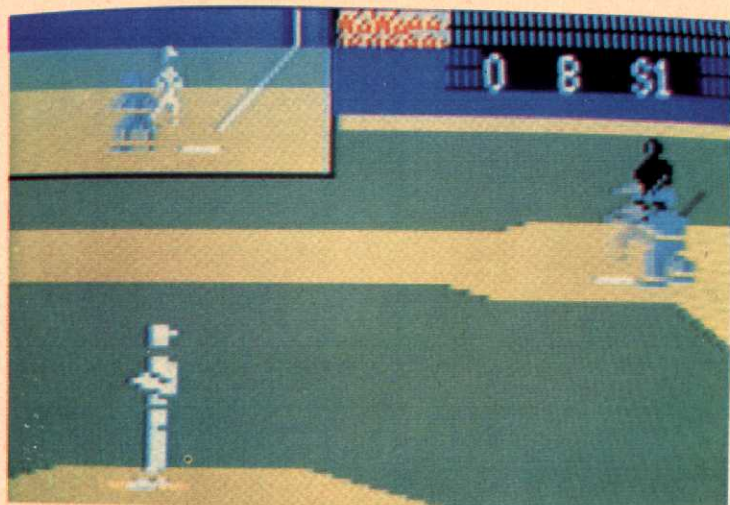
Here comes Aquarius II, The Entertainment Computer System... and Intellivision IV!

It was a lot simpler last year. If you wanted a video game system, you either got an Atari VCS or Mattel's Intellivision. The VCS had more hit games and cost \$140. Intellivision was running about \$210 at the time, but it had better graphics. *Odyssey*® and *Astrocade* were a distant third and fourth.

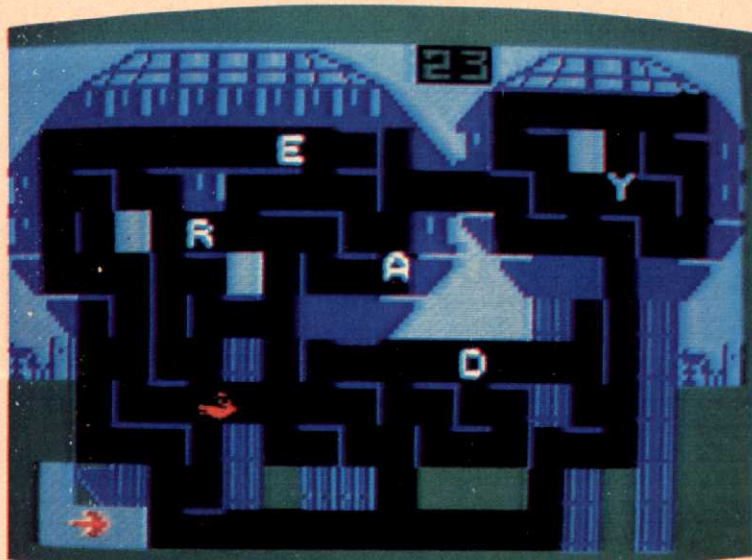
Then along came ColecoVision and the Atari 5200, which both had improved graphics, bigger memory, better game play and licensed titles like *Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong*, *Defender* and *Zaxxon*. Mattel, which used to be number two, was left in the dust. The question was—

# SUPERGRAPHICS

## World Series Baseball



## The Jetsons: Ways With Words



would they roll over and die... or would they stand up and fight back?

### Intellivision II

Intellivision II is not much different from Intellivision, but it wasn't meant to be. It is a slimmed-down, higher-tech looking unit that serves one main purpose—to bring down the price of the Mattel game system. Intellivision II has been selling for as low as \$99, with the choice of getting as a rebate either an Intelli-

voice unit and a \$5 discount on any game, or a \$50 rebate with the purchase of two games. Either way, the actual cost of the system, including rebates, is somewhere between \$20 and \$60, even lower than the Atari VCS.

There are a few improvements on the original Intellivision. A red LED light is provided so it isn't so easy to leave the unit on overnight accidentally. The cords are longer and *detachable*, so you don't have to send the whole system away to

get the controller fixed. And detachable controllers open up the possibility of other companies making "deluxe" controllers. Fortunately, Mattel made all the game cartridges for Intellivision and Intellivision II compatible.

Most importantly, Intellivision II owners have the option of purchasing the System Changer, a device like the Coleco Expansion Module #1, which allows you to play Atari VCS cartridges. For the first time, Atari games and Intellivision games can be played on the same system.

### M Network

When every company in the world was starting up last year to make games for the Atari VCS, Mattel jumped in, too. A lot of those companies are gone now, but Mattel has expanded M Network this year. Now they are making computer games. The first three games, compatible with the Apple and IBM computers, will be **Night Stalker**, **Lock 'N' Chase**, and the arcade hit **BurgerTime**.

Far from abandoning the old Atari VCS, this year M Network will release **Tron Deadly Discs**, **BurgerTime**, **Adventures of Tron**, **Mission X**, **Star Strike**, **Air Raiders**, **In Search of the Golden Skull**, **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons**, **Rocky and Bullwinkle**, **Masters of the Universe**, **Kool-Aid Man**, and another recent arcade game, **Bump 'N' Jump**. Mattel used to sit back and let Atari, Coleco, and Parker Brothers snap up all the hit arcade licenses. Now they pursue them much more aggressively.

### Intellivision Games

In addition to **BurgerTime**, owners of Intellivision and Intellivision II will be blessed with at least 16 new games in the near future. **Motocross** will simulate the breakneck world of motorcycle racing, and you will even be able to design your own race course. **Vectron** is a space game which will pit you against some nasty enemies—the Hungrees, the G-spheres, the splits, the sweeps, and the prizums. **All-Star Major League Baseball** is an improved version of the highly acclaimed **Major League Baseball** from a few years ago. In **All-Star**, you can kick up a cloud of dust as you slide into third base. Other Intellivision games will include **Loco Motion**, **Mission X**, **Buzz Bombers**, **Thin Ice**, **Royal Dealer**, **Mystic Castle**, and **Bump 'N' Jump**. Our only complaint is the lack of newer games for the Intellivision module. If you've got **Tron Solar Sailer**, **Bomb Squad**, **B-17 Bomber** and **Space Spartans**, you've got them all.

### A Long Time Ago...

In a galaxy far, far away, it seemed, George Plimpton promised that we would someday be able to turn our Intellivisions into computers. Finally, that day has come. The Intellivision Entertainment Computer System is, essentially, two peripherals that can be plugged into either Intellivision or Intellivision II to make them into more than just game machines.

The first peripheral, the Intellivision Computer Adaptor, plugs into the right side of the Intellivision. It features built-in BASIC program language, 2K RAM and will expand the sound capability of Intellivision. With the Computer Adaptor, of course, you get a keyboard. The 49 key keyboard is laid out like a typewriter, but the keys are more like those on a calculator, so they're really not made for writing long term papers. However, if you've never touched a computer before, you can learn many of the fundamentals on your Intellivision.

Mattel is releasing some very simple software programs to run on your Intellivision Computer. How can anybody be threatened by titles like **The Jetsons Ways with Words**, **Number Jumble**, and **The Flintstones Keyboard Fun**? In addition, you can learn BASIC with **Mr. BASIC Meets Bits 'N' Bytes** and **Program Builder**. Another program called **Game Factory** lets you program your

## "In World Series Major League Baseball, you can program Fernando Valenzuela to try and strike out Babe Ruth."

own games. You can choose from a library of different characters or backgrounds, and you can even plug in some of your Intellivision games and borrow charac-

The other peripheral in the Entertainment Computer System is the Intellivision Music Synthesizer. This is a 49 key piano-type keyboard which must be purchased separately and plugged into the Computer Adaptor. With a **Music Tutor** or **Melody Blaster** cartridge, you can learn to read music, play the piano, and even write your own songs. *Melody Blaster* is actually a variation of *Astro-smash*—musical notes fall from the sky in the pattern of popular songs and you have to

play the right keys to shoot them down.

Other peripherals, such as a Data Recorder, Intellivision Printer, and Intellivision Program Expander (adds 32K RAM and 12K ROM) will be available shortly.

### The Aquarius Computer

Rather than turning your game system into a computer, some of you may just want to buy a *real* computer. For you, Mattel has created Aquarius. When Aquarius first came out, it caught a lot of flak from people, mainly because of its rinky-dink keyboard. The keys were calculator-type keys, and there wasn't even a space bar. It might have been useful for young children, but for everybody else, forget it.

Fortunately, Mattel realized Aquarius was a mistake, and now we have Aquarius II. In addition to a full-stroke typewriter keyboard, Aquarius II is more powerful than Aquarius—12K ROM and 20K RAM expandable to 64K. For those of you who are interested in such things, Aquarius II has a Z80A microprocessor, built-in Microsoft BASIC, 16 colors, 320 × 192 resolution, 40 × 24 character display, upper and lower case letters, CP/M capability... and even a space bar.

Naturally, the Aquarius is richly supplied with peripherals. The Aquarius Printer connects to the rear of the com-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36



**Mattel's Aquarius computer—it took a lot of flak for its "calculator" keyboard. Aquarius II is coming at the end of the year, with more memory and keys you can type on.**

# WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU?

## ACTIVISION

Decathlon, Space Shuttle, Crackpots (VCS), Beamrider, Worm Whomper, Dreadnaught Factor (IN), River Raid, Kaboom (4/8/12).

## ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL

War, Labyrinth of Crete, Triad (4/8/12). Tunnel Terror, Curse of Crowley Manor, Pirate Adventure, Triad (AP).

## AMIGA

Mogul Maniac, Surf's Up, Off Your Rocker (VCS).

## ATARI

Joust, Pole Position, Battlezone, Dig Dug, Moon Patrol (VCS & 5200). Jungle Hunt, Ms. Pac-Man, Road Runner, Goofy, Xevious, Baseball, Berzerk, Pengo, Tempest, Robotron (5200). Cookie Monster, Alpha Beam, Big Bird, Dumbo Flying Circus, Miss Piggy Wedding, Pigs in Space, Charlie Brown, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Krull, Snow White, Dumbo (VCS).

## AVALON HILL

London Blitz, Death Trap, Wall Ball (VCS). Runnequest, Dragon Pass, Elric.

## BRODERBUND

Lode Runner, Drol, Spare Change (AP). Cargo Bay (4/8/12). Solo (VCS). Sky Blazer (VCS & VIC). Choplifter, Serpentine (5200 & 64). A.E. (VIC). Seafox (VIC & 64). David's Midnight Magic (64).

## CBS ELECTRONICS

Targ, Kickman, Tunnel Runner (VCS). K-Razy Antics, K-Star Patrol (VIC). Wizard of Wor, Gorf (5200 & IN). Wings, Domino Man, Madden Football (5200, IN, COL, 4/8/12). Solar Fox (IN, 4/8/12, 5200). Blue-Print (5200, IN, 4/8/12). Mountain King (VCS, 5200, COL). K-Razy Shootout (5200). Omega Race (5200, VCS, IN, 4/8/12). Satan's Hollow (5200, 4/8/12).

## COLECO

Time Pilot, Tarzan, Wild Western, Front Line, Subroc, Destruction Derby.

## COMMAVID

Rush Hour, Stronghold (VCS).

## CREATIVE SOFTWARE

Save New York (64). Mutants in Subway. Rat Hotel, Pipes (VIC).

## DATAMOST

Conquering Worlds, New Human Fly, Ardy the Aardvark, Space Ark, Cavern Creatures, The Biletoads, Snowbound (AP). Cosmic Tunnels, Wiz N Roo, Mail Boy, Night Raiders (4/8/12). Topsee Turvee, Jet Boot Jack, Paint Wizard (64 & 4/8/12). Monster Smash (64, AP, 4/8/12). Venus Voyager (64). Roundabout (VIC, AP, 4/8/12).

## DATASOFT

Moon Shuttle, O'Riley's Mine (4/8/12). Dallas, Pooyan (4/8/12, TRS, AP, VIC, 64). Zaxxon (AP).

## ELECTRONIC ARTS

Hard Hat Mack, Axis Assassin (AP). Archon, M.U.L.E., Worms? (4/8/12).

## EPYX

SWAT Rescue, Gateway to Apsah, Lunar Outpost, Pit-Stop, Rom's Revenge, Silicon Warrior, Jumpman Junior, Seawolf II, Gun Fight, Circus, Spectar, Fire One, Star Fire, Oil Barons, Dragonriders of Pern.

## FIRST STAR

Soap Suds (VCS). Rent Wars, Flip Flop (4/8/12 & 5200). Bristles (4/8/12, AP, VIC, 5200).

## FOX

Porky's, Mash II, Fall Guy (VCS, VIC, COL, TI, 4/8/12).

## GAMESTAR

Star League Baseball, Adventures of Dutch Dugan (4/8/12).

## GCE

Pole Position, Star Castle, Batter Up, Dark Tower (VEC).

## IMAGIC

Beezer (IN). Tarantula, Solar Storm, Hop To It (VCS). Fathom (VCS, COL, VIC, 4/8/12, IN). Moonsweeper (VCS, VIC, 4/8/12, IN, COL). Nova Blast (VCS, IN, COL, 4/8/12, VIC). Flap (VIC, IN, 4/8/12).

## INFOCOM

Suspended (AP). Enchanter, Planetfall.

## KONAMI

Pooyan, Strategy X, Scramble, Marine Wars (VCS).

## MATTEL

Kool-Aid Man, Bump 'N' Jump, Masters of Universe (IN, VCS). Vectron, Motocross, Rocky and Bullwinkle (IN). Mission X, Loco Motion (VCS). Burgertime (AP, IBM, IN, VCS). Night Stalker (IBM, AP).

## ODYSSEY

Adventures of the Pink Panther (VCS & COL). Power Lords (VCS, COL, ODY). Cavern (COL).

## PARKER BROTHERS

Q\*Bert (VCS, 4/8/12, VIC, 5200, 64). AstroChase (VCS). Popeye, Risk, Chess (4/8/12). Super Cobra (VCS, 4/8/12). Tutankham (VIC). Frogger (VIC & 4/8/12).

## PENGUIN

Pie Man, Crime Wave, Spy's Demise, Transylvania, Thunderbombs (AP).

## ROKLAN

Castle Hassle, Rockball, Eyes, Da' Fuzz, Lifespan (4/8/12).

## ROMOX

Taxi, Sea Chase, Waterworks, Topper, Starion (4/8/12). Hen Pecked, Ant Eater (TI). Princess and Frog (TI & VIC).

## SEGA

Congo Bongo, Buck Rogers, Star Trek (VCS, 5200, VIC, 4/8/12, TI). Thunderground (VCS).

## SIRIUS

Ozzie Ozone, Wayout, Shadow Scorchers (64). Critical Mass, Gruds In Space (AP). Cineman, Wavy Navy, Alpha Shield, Capture the Flag (4/8/12). Fast Eddie, Snake Byte, Turmoil (VIC & 64). Final Orbit, Spider City (VIC, 4/8/12). Squish 'Em, Repton (VIC, 64, 4/8/12). Buzzard Bait (AP & IBM). Plasmnia (AP & VIC). Type Attack (4/8/12 & VIC).

## SIERRA ON-LINE

Jawbreaker (4/8/12). Golf, Mouskattack (IBM).

## SPECTRAVIDEO

Frantic Freddy, Armored Assault, Spectron, Super Cross Force, Renegade, Space Swarm, Frogger, Quest for Tires (SPEC).

## SPINNAKER

Alphabet 200, Cosmic Life, Delta Drawing, Delta Music, Facemake, Up for Grabs (4/8/12 & 64).

## STARPATH

Rabbit Transit, Sweat, Survival Island, Party Mix, Sword of Saros (VCS). Dragonstomper, Escape from Mindmaster (COL, 4/8/12). Phaser Patrol (COL).

## SYNAPSE

Protector II, Picnic Paranoia, Pharaoh's Curse, Shadow World, Dimension X, Blue Max (4/8/12). Astro Patrol, Squeeze, Salmon Run (VIC). Fort Apocalypse, Survivor (64). Shamus (64, AP, TRS). Drelbs (4/8/12 & 64).

## TELESYS

The Impossible Game (VCS).

## THORN EMI

Orc Attack, River Rescue (4/8/12). 4th Encounter, Sub Commander (VIC). War Games (VIC, 4/8/12, TI).

## TIGERVISION

Miner 2049er (VCS). Polaris (VCS, 4/8/12, VIC, TI).

## TRONIX

Deadly Skies, Gold Fever, Scorpion (VIC). Juice (4/8/12, 64).

## UMI

Pennant Drive, Word Feud, Grand Master, Fuego (VIC & 64).

VCS=Atari VCS, IN=Intellivision, 5200=Atari 5200, 4/8/12=Atari 400/800/1200 computers, COL=ColecoVision, GEM=Coleco Gemini, VIC=Commodore VIC-20, 64=Commodore 64, AP=Apple II, TRS=Radio Shack TRS-80, TI=Texas Instruments TI 99/4A, VEC=Vectrex, IBM=IBM PC, ODY=Odyssey<sup>2</sup>, SPEC=Spectravideo computer.

# CLUES

# ARE YOU AWESOME?

**Y**ou just scored 85,000 on *Asteroids* and you feel great. Then you score 400 on *Breakout* and you feel lousy. But actually, 400 is pretty good for *Breakout*. Since video game scores are not standardized, there has never been a way to tell how the score of one game compares with another. . . until now. The games and scores on these pages are not based on the "casual" player. They are based on hardcore, dedicated, obsessed video fanatics. Like you.

HOME VIDEO GAMES		AVERAGE	GOOD	AWESOME!
ASTEROIDS	(Atari)	40,000	70,000	200,000
ASTROSMASH	(Mattel)	200,000	500,000	850,000
ATLANTIS	(Imagic)	100,000	125,000	200,000
BURGERTIME	(Mattel)	75,000	150,000	250,000
COMMUNIST MUTANTS	(Starpath)	12,500	200,000	999,999
COSMIC ARK	(Imagic)	10,000	17,500	25,000
COSMIC AVENGER	(Coleco)	15,000	40,000	73,000
DEFENDER	(Atari)	1,000,000	3,000,000	14,000,000
DEMOLITION HERBY	(Telesys)	4,000	8,000	40,000
DEMON ATTACK	(Imagic)	85,000	110,000	130,000
DONKEY KONG	(Coleco)	100,000	300,000	780,000
EMPIRE STRIKES	(Parker)	2,000	4,000	6,983
FAST FOOD	(Telesys)	2,500	5,000	8,400
FREEDOM FIGHTERS	(Odyssey)	200	850	9,999
FROGGER	(Parker)	1,000	1,500	3,201
JAWBREAKER	(Tigervision)	15,000	22,000	30,000
K.C.'s KRAZY CHASE	(Odyssey)	500	1,250	5,000
KABOOM	(Activision)	3,000	10,000	999,999
LOCK 'N' CHASE	(Mattel)	20,000	50,000	100,000
MISSILE COMMAND	(Atari)	30,000	80,000	200,000
MOUSETRAP	(Coleco)	100,000	400,000	1,000,000
NEXAR	(Spectravision)	45,000	250,000	700,000
PAC-MAN	(Atari)	50,000	100,000	300,000
PHOENIX	(Atari)	15,000	40,000	73,000
PICK AXE PETE	(Odyssey)	500	1,250	9,999
PITFALL!	(Activision)	20,000	40,000	114,000
RIVER RAID	(Activision)	15,000	60,000	1,000,000
SPACE INVADERS	(Atari)	50,000	75,000	200,000
STARMASTER	(Activision)	3,800	3,975	3,971
TURMOIL	(Fox)	25,000	70,000	110,000
VENTURE	(Coleco)	150,000	500,000	1,200,000
ZAXXON	(Coleco)	70,000	200,000	500,000

# CLUES

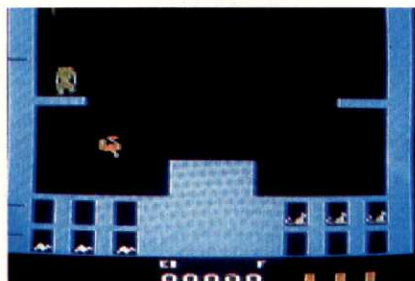
ARCADE GAMES		AVERAGE	GOOD	AWESOME!
CENTPEDE	(Atari)	100,000	200,000	400,000
DEFENDER	(Williams)	200,000	600,000	1,500,000
DONKEY KONG JR.	(Nintendo)	350,000	500,000	900,000
FOOD FIGHT	(Atari)	1,000,000	5,000,000	8,000,000
GALAGA	(Midway)	500,000	1,000,000	5,000,000
JOUST	(Williams)	300,000	500,000	1,500,000
JUNGLE HUNT	(Taito)	35,000	70,000	200,000
MS. PAC-MAN	(Midway)	100,000	220,000	250,000
POPEYE	(Nintendo)	100,000	200,000	320,000
POLE POSITION	(Atari)	30,000	45,000	64,000
Q*BERT	(Gottlieb)	200,000	500,000	1,000,000
ROBOTRON	(Williams)	1,000,000	1,500,000	2,000,000
TEMPEST	(Atari)	400,000	800,000	1,300,000
TIME PILOT	(Centuri)	250,000	1,000,000	2,000,000
TRON	(Midway)	75,000	150,000	1,000,000
TURBO	(Sega)	30,000	50,000	100,000
ZAXXON	(Sega)	200,000	500,000	1,000,000

COMPUTER GAMES		AVERAGE	GOOD	AWESOME!
APPLE PANIC	(Broderbund)	100,000	250,000	675,840
AZTEC	(Datamost)	500,000	1,000,000	1,200,000
CANYON CLIMBER	(Datasoft)	20,000	30,000	40,000
CHOPLIFTER	(Broderbund)	15	25	64
CROSSFIRE	(Sierra On-Line)	600,000	1,200,000	2,770,000
GORF	(Roklan)	15,000	30,000	50,000
JUMPMAN	(Epyx)	20,000	35,000	60,000 +
MINER 2049er	(Big Five)	15,000	35,000	100,000
SERPENTINE	(Broderbund)	500,000	1,000,000	5,120,300
SNEAKERS	(Sirius)	3,000	10,000	40,000
SNACK ATTACK	(Datamost)	5,000	20,000	50,000
SNOOPER TROOPS #1	(Spinnaker)	25 hrs.	20 hrs.	10 hrs.
SURVIVOR	(Synapse)	40,000	70,000	110,000
TUBEWAY	(Datamost)	20,000	70,000	100,000
WAYOUT	(Sirius)	40	20	11
WIZARD OF WOR	(Roklan)	30,000	70,000	100,000
ZAXXON	(Datasoft)	40,000	62,500	100,000

have to pass a predetermined number of cars or you'll be disqualified. Yet if you give a little too much gas, you crash. So keep a close eye on the color of the sky (it changes as the race progresses, to reflect the time of day), and soar around the track. After all, your score is determined by the number of miles you travel.

To put it simply, *Enduro* is the best driving game ever created for Atari VCS. Your engine roars as you accelerate, and your mileage is clocked on an odometer that even registers tenths of a mile. While it may seem strange to steer with a joystick instead of a paddle, your car is surprisingly easy to control. The designers have cleverly utilized color to create skies, which are absolutely beautiful. And thanks to the occasional trips through snow and fog, the game does not become boring. For those of you who enjoy racing car games, this exciting and challenging contest is highly recommended. It actually approaches Coleco's *Turbo*.

Activision, for Atari VCS



## SKY SKIPPER

C+

You are the pilot who must shoot gorillas and rescue the animals that they have captured. When you shoot a gorilla, you have a limited amount of time to complete your mission or he'll regain consciousness and the animals will return to their cages. You must also keep an eye on your fuel gauge, and, most importantly, don't crash into any walls or you'll instantly lose a life.

Playing the game becomes a measure of your ability to travel within narrow pathways. If you're into games that require a great deal of precision, you may enjoy the challenge. Others, however, will quickly become frustrated, and may find the game repetitive. To the designer's credit, whenever you free one group of animals, you are presented with a different maze, with a new set of obstacles.

Parker Brothers, for Atari VCS



## NOVA BLAST

B+

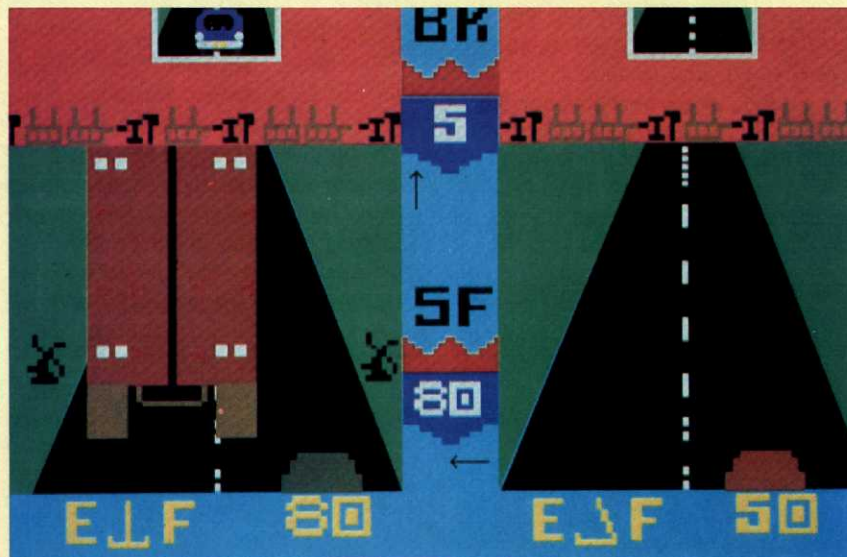
You must protect four cities that are enclosed in capsules. You battle wave upon wave of attackers with your lasers and bombs. To aid in your defense, you are equipped with damage and fuel indicators, radar, and a beaming device that will temporarily replace destroyed

capsules.

In many ways *Nova Blast* is similar to *Defender*. This is a scrolling contest in which you fly around shooting at numerous enemies. The graphics are excellent, especially the domed cities with their clear, vibrating capsules. The special effects are equally exciting. When a capsule is destroyed, it smashes into pieces that fly in every direction. One interesting feature of this game involves the attackers—only one type of creature opposes you at a time. So, if you like plenty of shoot-'em-up action, you'll have a great time with *Nova Blast*. And since there are still a limited number of quality space games for Intellivision, it's a fine addition to your collection.

Imagic, for Intellivision

## GAME OF THE MONTH



## TRUCKIN' A+

If designers are interested in knowing what makes an outstanding game, they should look at *Truckin'*. The game is so involved, it is impossible to fully describe it here. In brief, there are two different games. In the first, you must drive through eight cities in the shortest time possible. You can choose from 59 different routes. In the second, your goal is to deliver loads of cargo to various cities in order to make as much money as possible.

*Truckin'* is one of the most complex video games ever produced. The screen

switches from a view of the road, to a gas station, to a rest stop, to charts that present vital information. When you are travelling on the highway, you simply avoid the other vehicles. But a closer look reveals a horn which you blow to warn other vehicles, scenery representing the area in the country you are in, and police who catch you when you speed. In this game you do more than step on the accelerator. In fact, *Truckin'* is to racing games what *Star Raiders* is to space games.

Imagic, for Intellivision

# REVIEWS



## HAPPY TRAILS

B-

*Happy Trails* is a maze game that is unlike any other video game. The difference? You control the maze. The playfield is divided into square segments, with winding paths crossing each segment. You control a bounty hunter (a big hat with feet). You must arrange the maze before your bounty hunter walks off the path. On your way, you attempt to collect money bags and capture Black Bart, the villain.

You'll either love it or hate it. There's a great deal of strategy involved, and those of you who enjoy maze games will be challenged by the unending number of mazes. But the gamer who revels in shoot-out action will quickly become bored.

Activision, for Intellivision



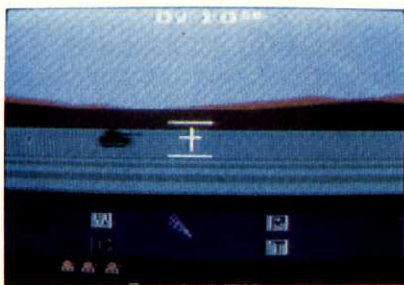
## GORF

B+

The unique feature of this space game is that you get four separate missions. When you eliminate one wave of opponents, instead of challenging a faster group of the same creatures, you begin a completely different task. The first wave, "Astro Battle," closely resembles *Space Invaders*. The second round, "Laser Attack," pits you against robot ships that are firing lasers. The third round, "Space Warp," requires you to dodge radiation bombs and destroy new robot ships. In the fourth round, "Flagship," you must avoid fireballs and destroy the flagship's internal reactor.

For the most part, *Gorf* is another shoot-'em-up that tests your reflexes. But it will probably hold your interest longer than the average space battle, since each contest is really four games in one. Add to this Coleco's usual quality sound effects and graphics (the space warp scene which places you in the middle of streaking red, orange, and yellow lights is particularly outstanding) and you end up with a very good game.

Coleco, for ColecoVision



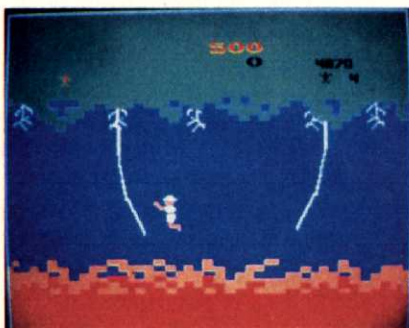
## ROBOT TANK

A

"Excellent," "fantastic," and "incredible" are not good enough words to describe this *Battlezone*-clone. You are in the tank, and tanks are all around firing, for some reason, big black squares at you. You can roll toward them, away from them, and turn in circles. The scene changes from day to night and the weather changes from sun to fog and snow. If you've got video-damage, you can use your radar scope.

You will be amazed. Realism—incredible. Graphics—terrific. Game play—very good. Sound—average. Overall rating—Super Wonderful Fun.

Activision, for Atari VCS



## JUNGLE HUNT

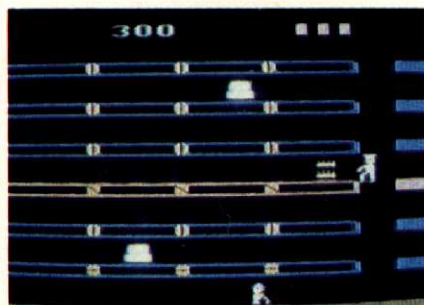
B+

Your wife has been kidnapped by savages. To rescue her, you must swing on the vines through the Deadly Forest,

swim past crocodiles in Reptile River, leap over boulders in Boulder Field, and avoid the spears thrown by the savages in the Cannibal Camp.

Considering the limitations of the VCS, this adaptation of the arcade hit is quite good. There are four colorful scrolling scenes and each setting contains its own bunch of obstacles. The cartridge includes two versions, one for beginners and one for experts, so every member of the family can expect to be challenged. As for the graphics, don't expect the detail of the arcade game, but all in all, they're satisfactory. At least you can readily tell what everything is. And there are some features that are rarely seen in a VCS game. For example, when you kill a crocodile, the points that you have earned appear on the screen. This game is not quite up to the level of Activision's *Pitfall*, but enough of the flavor of the arcade hit has been maintained to make it a winner.

Atari, for Atari VCS



## CAKEWALK

B-

You're a baker who has to catch cakes that are travelling along six conveyor belts. If a pastry falls, a janitor cleans up the mess. When enough cakes have been boxed you earn a coffee break.

*Cakewalk* is a fast-moving contest that will really test your strategic thinking. You can freeze one conveyor belt at a time, but you still must deal with five rows full of rapidly approaching goodies. There are 16 variations, which allow you to choose between such options as fast-moving bakers, faster conveyor belts, and bakeshops filled only with dancing gingerbread men. There are different types of cakes, even cakes with candles, and when they drop they turn into mush. To break up the monotony, there are deadly knives and forks.

CommaVid, for Atari VCS

## ONE ON ONE

By Michael Blanchet

**DRACULA (Imagic, for Intellivision)**

**PITFALL! (Activision, for Intellivision)**



UNLIKE THE MOVIES AND BOOK, *DRACULA* FOR INTELLIVISION IS NOT A "scary" game. It's actually quite funny—a tongue in cheek contest in which the player, turned vampire, must creep through town in search of victims.

The game begins in an English graveyard. "Drac" emerges from his tomb and floats to the sidewalk in bat form. In each round there are an increasing number of available victims. Drac must find them all, bite them and return to his coffin before the timer reads six a.m.

To flush out a victim, Drac just knocks on the nearest door. If someone emerges, Drac has to chase him. He can do so either in bat or man form. As a bat he's capable of swift flight, but also a sitting duck for the vulture that's stalking him. When he wishes to bite his victim, Drac must revert back to human form. At this point you can either bite him or turn him into a zombie, which in turn can be dispatched against the bobbies that are hot on your trail.

The game really heats up when these cops start walking the beat. While chasing his victims, he must also avoid the cops and the wooden stakes they're tossing at him. If a stake hits him, the Count is temporarily immobilized and must wait for it to disintegrate before he can move.

*Dracula* is best when played by two people. In this mode the contestants alternate control of the vampire. One plays the Count while the other controls the victim. When a victim is turned into a zombie, he can be used to attack the cops. In the one-player version you may find it difficult to use a zombie to any

advantage.

*Dracula's* greatest asset is that it's a challenging game that's also humorous and lighthearted. One of the nicest touches is the Count's lumbering walk.

Graphically, *Dracula* offers a wealth of detail. Thunder rolls, lightning bolts dance across the sky, and there are even cracks in the sidewalk and puddles along the side of the road.

Compared to most Intellivision games, *Dracula* is easy to learn. Just select the difficulty level and you're off. As expected, Drac is a little tough to control. Regardless, this game is as much fun to watch as to play.

Graphically, there's little difference between VCS *Pitfall!* and its Intellivision counterpart. As an Atari cartridge, it looks top-notch in light of other VCS games. In the Intellivision format, though, the graphics are inferior to recent Imagic offerings, not to mention some of Mattel's own stuff. The mechanics of play also remain unchanged, and this detracts slightly from the game. As a VCS cartridge, *Pitfall!* is amazingly complex, but as an

Intellivision cartridge it loses ground to other recent fantasy adventure offerings.

The object of the game is to collect as many of the 32 treasures as possible within 20 minutes. The jungle spans 255 screens, connected end to end.

Finding the treasures is easy. It's getting to them that's difficult. Upon exiting the first screen, "Pitfall Harry" encounters a never-ending trail of hazards: tar pits, rolling logs, crocodiles, fires and snakes. These can be avoided by running leaps and swings across conveniently placed vines. Easy enough to do with a joystick, but another story entirely with the Intellivision disc controller. That darn disc seems to contradict everything logical about moving a game character. I found it quite difficult to coordinate the functions of running and jumping in unison. This can make the game a frustrating experience.

If you're looking for pure adventure, *Pitfall!* might be the way to go. But since it was originally made for the Atari VCS, don't expect to get bowled over. For treasure hunters who prefer to stray from the beaten path, buy *Dracula*.