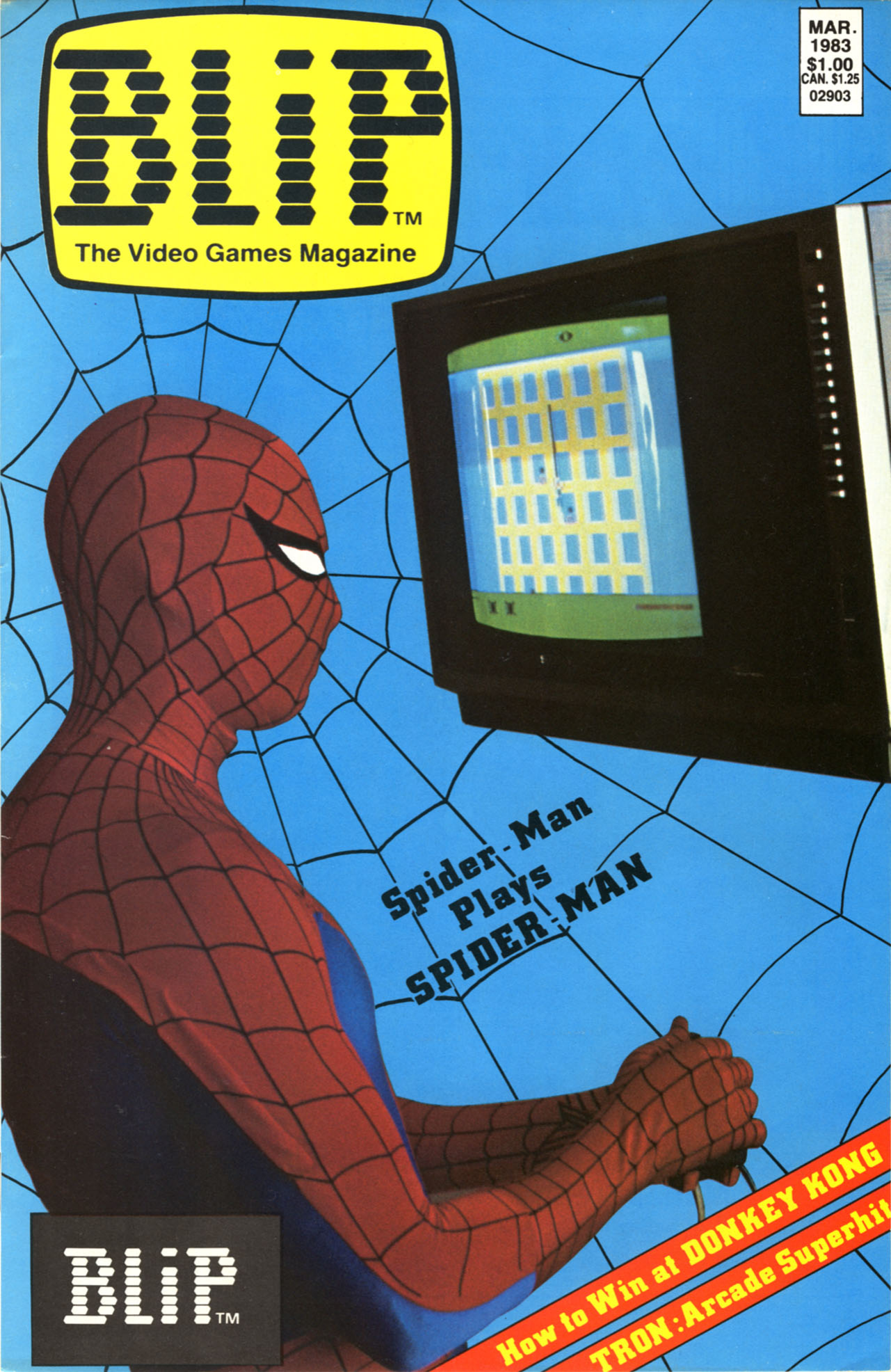

BLIP™
The Video Games Magazine
MAR. 1983
$1.00
CAN. $1.25
02903
Spider-Man Plays SPIDER-MAN
How to Win at DONKEY KONG
TRON: Arcade Superhit
BLIP™

LOCK 'N' CHASE™*

LOCK OUT THE POLICE AND GRAB THE GOLD.
BEFORE THE POLICE GRAB YOU!

MATTEL ELECTRONICS®
INTELLIVISION®

*Used under license from Data East Inc. © 1981, 1982 Data East Inc.

©Mattel, Inc. 1982 All Rights Reserved

BLIP

The Video Games Magazine

If you have any questions about video games or computers, write them down and send them to us. If there are things you want to read about in BLIP, get a letter off to us right away. Or maybe you just want to tell us what you think of the magazine.

We won't be able to print every letter we receive, but we will read them all. And we'll print the ones we think most readers would be interested in. Here's the address:

BLIP Letters
Marvel Comics Group
387 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10016

BLIP
Volume I, No. 2
March, 1983

PUBLISHER
Stan Lee

EDITOR
Joe Claro

DESIGNERS
Nora Maclin
Barry Shapiro

ART/PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Danny Crespi

CONTRIBUTORS
George Sullivan
Robert Harras
Ron Zalme
Rick Parker
Eliot R. Brown
Michael Tweed
Gary Brodsky

Art and photo credits: cover and pages 2-5, Michael Tweed; pages 13, 29, 31, Ron Zalme; pages 14-16, 17, Eliot R. Brown; page 22, Imagic; pages 24, 25, 27, Gary Brodsky.

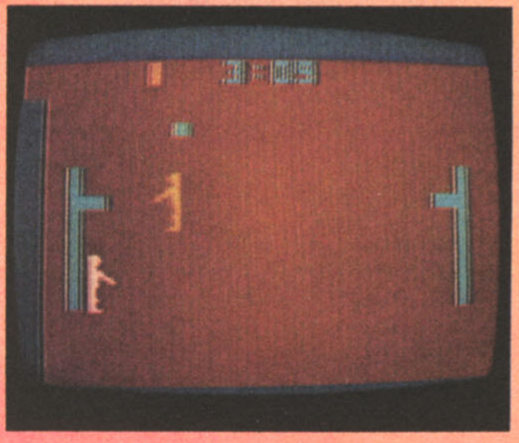
C O N T E N T S

SPIDER-MAN	Spidey joins his creator and a group of fans to try out his new video game.	2
END GAME	Green with envy, the Goblin tries to upstage the star of the new video game.	6
NEWS BLIPS	3-D video games, electronic phone books, news about arcades.	13
BLIP TIPS I	A look at the basketball cartridges from the Big Three in home video systems.	14
BLIP TIPS II	How to improve your score at DONKEY KONG.	16
TRON	Why the movie bombed, while the game took off like a rocket.	18
DESIGN WIZARD	BLIP talks with Rob Fulop, designer of DEMON ATTACK.	22
BLIP CONFIDENTIAL	Quick tips on improving your score in 10 popular arcade games.	24
HALL OF FAME	An update on top scorers around the country.	26
SOCKS AND PARCHEESI	A not-so-serious story about the perils of video games.	29
VIDEO WORD SEARCH	Test your eye-hand coordination with a pencil instead of a joystick.	32

BLIP TIPS!

BASKETBALL

Basketball is a game of precision passing and shooting, tight defending, quick rebounding, and nonstop action. These things make it one of the most difficult of all sports to translate into electronic form without losing a feeling of realism. Three major game manufacturers—Atari, Intellivision, and Odyssey^2—have given it a try. Their efforts have produced mixed results.



ATARI BASKETBALL

Atari's game is one-on-one basketball—two opposing players shooting, blocking, and rebounding. Each game lasts four minutes.

ATARI BASKETBALL can also be a one-player game, with you against the computer. The toughness of the computer's player varies with the score. If you fall behind, the computer gets careless on defense, allowing you to get clear and shoot. But when you take the lead, you're dogged by a demon defender who stays with you every step of the way.

Whether you're playing the computer or a "live" defender, game strategy is the same. On defense, stick to your opponent like wallpaper. Keep trying to get your feet even with his. That's when you're allowed to make a steal.

If he breaks into the open, try to get your body between him and the basket. Then when he shoots, punch the red button. This is how you block a shot.

On offense, the key factor is to be evasive. When you have the ball, dart around the court crazily. The idea is to shake your opponent so you can get open and fire at the basket.

If you're close to mid-court when you shoot, don't hit the red button until the ball is above your head. Closer to the basket, you can hit the button when the ball is about face level.

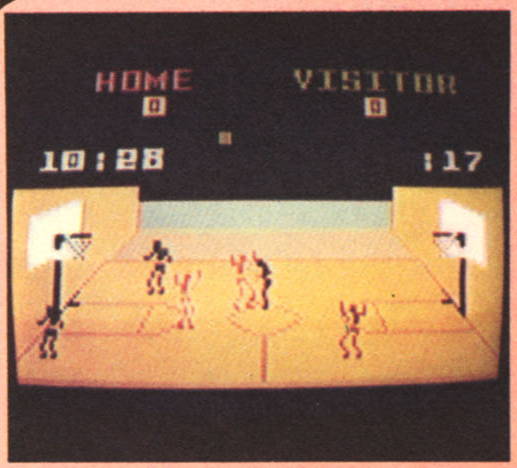
INTELLIVISION NBA BASKETBALL

This cartridge reinforces Intellivision's reputation for superior graphics. It pits two teams of three players against one another. Each player runs, jumps, dribbles, and shoots in realistic fashion. The baskets look like baskets, and the court has a center circle, a mid-court line, and free-throw lanes. You even get cheers and boos from the crowd.

Each game has four quarters of 12 computer "minutes." There's even a countdown clock to enforce the NBA 24-second rule.

You move one of your team's three players with the Intellivision directional disc. The computer controls the other two players.

The overlay on the keypad divides the court into nine different zones. To pass, you press the button for the appropriate zone. The ball leaves the player's hands and will be caught by a teammate, if he's in the right spot. If he isn't, the ball may sail out of bounds or be caught by an opposing player.



As in real life, your success at shooting depends on your distance from the basket. Expect to hit on 90% of your layups, but only on about 5% of your mid-court jump shots.

Defensive skills are very important in this game. You should work at learning to intercept passes. Blocking shots is another defensive skill that can help you win.

While NBA BASKETBALL gets high marks for its visual appeal, it lacks the competitive spirit of the Atari cartridge. At first, you have to look at the keyboard every time you want to pass, block, or shoot, and this slows the pace of the game. If you're going to generate any excitement, you'll have to learn to handle the controls almost by instinct.

ODYSSEY² BASKETBALL

Odyssey², which introduced this game in 1978, was the first company to try a basketball cartridge. Like Atari's game, this one offers a one-on-one, full-court version of basketball. Unlike the Atari game, Odyssey² doesn't allow you to compete against the computer.

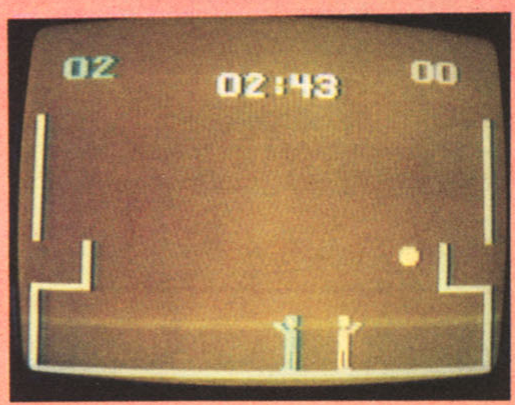
Each game is five minutes long. You use your joystick to move a player around the court, and the action button to take a shot.

The game begins when the ball is dropped from the top of the screen. The first player to touch it has possession.

On defense, you can get possession in two different ways. You can steal the ball by touching it just as your opponent shoots. Or you can hound him and keep him from shooting at all. If he goes more than eight seconds without taking a shot, you get the ball.

Shot-taking in this game is not as realistic as it should be. If you're close to the basket, the ball won't go in because of the steep angle. (Obviously, this game was thought up without the slam-dunk in mind.) If you're too far from the basket, the ball won't reach.

The best strategy is to shoot from just outside the foul circle. Unfortunately,



you'll have to imagine where the foul circle is. It isn't marked on the Odyssey court.

The fallaway jumper is a better tactic. Drive for the basket as if you're about to go for a layup. Then suddenly reverse direction and shoot. This works more consistently than any other shot we tried.

If you're nuts about basketball, but not crazy about any of the cartridges now available, be patient. Atari is about to announce a brand-new basketball cartridge, said to be far superior to the current one. And software manufacturers like Imagic, Activision, and Apollo are bound to be getting into the basketball act soon.

Better days are just ahead.

—George Sullivan

FLIP™

The Video Games Magazine

NEW FROM MARVEL COMICS!

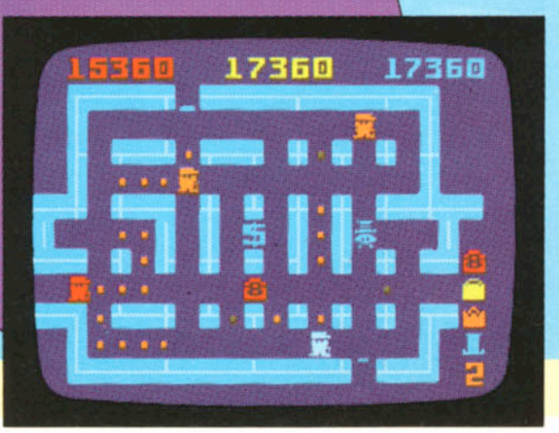
JUNE
1983
$1.00
CAN. $1.25
02903

Video Games Go HOLLYWOOD

FLIP™

LOCK 'N' CHASE™*

LOCK OUT THE POLICE AND GRAB THE GOLD.
BEFORE THE POLICE GRAB YOU!



MATTEL ELECTRONICS®

INTELLIVISION®

*Used under license from Data East Inc. ©1981, 1982 Data East Inc.

©Mattel, Inc. 1982 All Rights Reserved

BLIP™

The Video Games Magazine

Vol. I, No. 5
June, 1983

President
James E. Galton
Vice-President, Publishing
Michael Z. Hobson

Editor
Joe Claro
Assistant Editor
Dan Koeppel
Designers
Nora Maclin
Barry Shapiro
Production Coordinator
Danny Crespi

Cover by
Sam Viviano

CONTENTS

VIDEO GAMES GO HOLLYWOOD	Everybody loves movies. Mostly everybody loves video games. What do the two have to do with each other?	2
BLIP LETTERS	A sample of what we get in the mail	5
BLIP TIPS I	TRON cartridges from M Network	6
BLIP TIPS II	ZAXXON	8
KNOW YOUR ENEMY	Twenty of the world's best-known video game characters. Ten of 'em are good, and the others are evil. Match the heroes with the villains.	12
A LOOK AT COMPUTER CAMPS	Toast marshmallows, go hiking, and expand data bases. A rundown of summer camps that combine fun and technology.	14
PLAYER'S CHOICE	The latest from Intellivision. Atari's new keyboard. DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS.	18
NEWS BLIPS		22
BLIP TALENT SEARCH	We asked readers to design new video games. We had to dig ourselves out from the avalanche of replies. Here are our five favorites.	25
THE BRADY BUNCH	Our latest suggestion for games we hope we'll never see	29
BLIP SURVEY	One lucky winner wins a prize. But all of you are helping us plan future issues.	31

CONTRIBUTORS
Gary Brodsky
Michael Carlin
Ron Fontes
John Morelli
Rick Parker
George Roussos
George Sullivan
John Tebbel
Martha Thomases
Ron Zalme

BLIP™ Vol. 1, No. 5, June, 1983. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP. James E. Galton, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Z. Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing; Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly.

Copyright © 1983 by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved.

Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate $12.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign $15.00.

Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at NEW YORK, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.A.

This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. BLIP is a trademark of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Subscription Dept., Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.

BLIP TIPS!

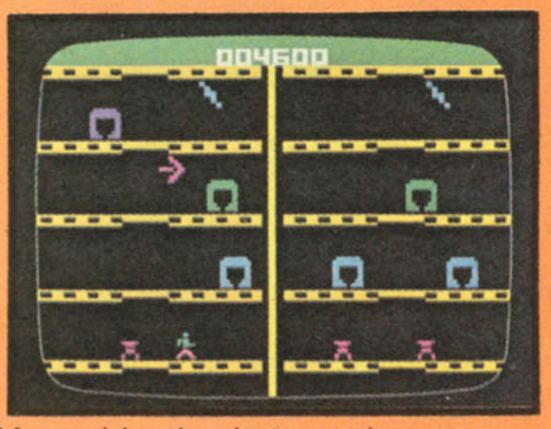
TRON

Actually, TRON isn't just a single video game. There are six different games based on the Walt Disney movie now being offered to players. We featured the arcade game in an earlier issue of BLIP. The other five games are cartridges designed by Mattel for home systems. These include three Intellivision games and the two M Network cartridges described here.

ADVENTURES OF TRON

This is a chase-and-climb game, but it isn't anything like DONKEY KONG or DIG DUG. For one thing, it isn't cute.

The action is fast, and slightly mechanical. Your enemies are deadly grid bugs and recognizers. They travel along a four-level board in groups of three. Also floating along at each level are various objects, called "bits."



Your objective is to work your way up to the top level, collecting all the bits, and avoiding collision with any of the attackers. On later boards, a tank will chase you while you're trying to accomplish this.

Besides running, there are three ways to maneuver about the screen. In order to move up a level, you must use the elevators. These are located at either side of all four levels. On the lowest level, just stand on the platform and move your joystick forward to go up. On the upper levels, you must first leap across the Input/Output beam. This is a ray that runs down the center of the screen. Jumping over the ray activates the lifts.

To move down, you can use that same beam. The I/O ray will take you straight to the bottom. Use it to escape when enemies are closing in on you. You can also move down single levels merely by pulling the joystick toward you. Your man will jump to the level below, or further, depending on how precise your touch is on the joystick.

TACTICS

- After being deposited at the bottom level when the game starts, immediately leap up and grab the first two bits. You'll notice that there are no grid bugs menacing you. Not yet, anyway. They start at the top level, and work their way down, moving from left to right, then from right to left. If you work quickly, you can clear the first two levels of bits before the recognizers get you. Recognizers are grid bugs that appear at the top three levels. They turn into the slightly smaller bugs when they reach the bottom.

- Learn to follow the path of the descending grid bugs. They move in only one direction on any given level. If you stay behind them, you can speed from level to level with just a little practice. Don't try to jump your enemies! While it is possible, it's very difficult. If you get into a situation where a bad guy is that close, the best strategy is to jump down to the next lower level.

- Once you learn to follow the descending pattern, you will whiz through the first three boards with little difficulty. On the third and the fourth boards, though, tanks start to appear. Like the grid bugs, tanks follow a simple descending pattern. If you can stay behind

a tank, it will pose no threat. Until the fifth board, that is.

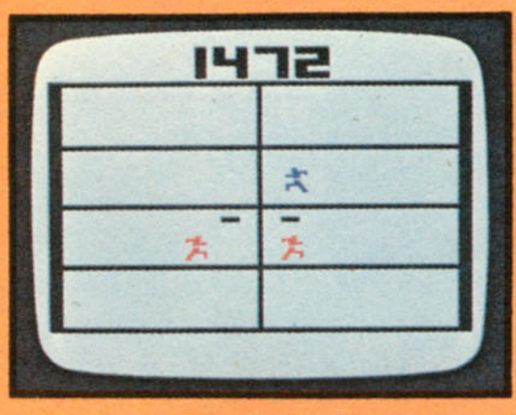
● On the fifth board, the tanks begin to appear in pairs, or three at a time. Although it might seem that an individual tank is patrolling a certain level, this is not the case. They are all following that familiar descending pattern.

● The Solar Sailer (that's the way Mattel spells it) is an arrow that flies back and forth on the third level. It is not a bit. But it can be used as a handy way to cross the I/O beam and activate the elevators. When leaping onto the Sailer, make sure that you are not going to be deposited between recognizers at the other side of the screen. If you do get caught between recognizers at any time, just follow their path until you can reach the I/O beam. Then just travel down to the bottom, and work your way back up.

● One last tip: Don't get caught at the screen's edges. You may not be able to jump safely from there. Then you'll have no choice but to watch, and wait for your inevitable doom.

TRON DEADLY DISCS

The M Network version of this game is nowhere near as complex as the Intellivision version. For one thing, the action is slower. For another, the controls are much harder to use. Even so, DEADLY DISCS, while not as good as ADVENTURES OF TRON, is still an exciting game.



The setting here is a deadly, futuristic jai-alai arena. Tron is facing a horde of attackers, who appear on the screen three at a time. They are armed with Deadly Discs, which must hit Tron five times to kill him.

Tron is also armed with discs. He only has to strike an enemy one time, but a dead enemy is quickly replaced. Attackers enter the arena through portals on all four sides.

Each portal can be "locked open" by hitting it with a disc. A pair of portals, with one locked open, become a teleportation device. You can enter the open one, and re-enter the board on the other side through the opposite portal.

TACTICS

● The secret is getting the disc to return to you. A single hit on the fire button will send a disc out. Only one disc can appear on the screen at a time. If the disc you fire hits an attacker, you get a new disc. But if it misses, the disc will keep going, until it hits a wall and bounces back to you. You can retrieve an errant disc quickly, however, by pressing the fire button as soon as you see that you have not scored a hit. This will call the disc back to you immediately.

● Don't wait to see if your disc will hit. Keep moving. Learn to visualize the course of your disc, and the course of your attackers. If you can see that a disc you have fired will miss, tap the fire button, and position yourself for your next shot. The disc will return to you, no matter how far you have moved from your original position. Once the disc has returned, fire again. You can use this method over and over again, from a distance. With practice, you will be able to quickly vanquish your attackers while remaining safely out of the path of enemy discs.

● When teleporting, make sure that you are using the device to your advantage. Many times, a group of attackers will turn and bombard the exit gate with discs. You can get caught in a crossfire and use your five-hit limit up very quickly. Try to avoid the corners for the same reason.

Player's Choice

TWO GIANT STEPS

Remember the good old days? It wasn't too long ago that Atari VCS and Intellivision were the only home-video game systems really worth talking about. Now, ColecoVision commands a large share of the market, and low-priced computers are becoming more and more popular. The time has come for Atari and Mattel to make some changes.

ATARI

Those changes have been made, and the results are very exciting. Atari and Mattel have realized that, in order to stay on top, they have to do two things: offer more computer capabilities, and produce games with better graphics. And both companies are doing just those things.

Atari, which still commands the lead spot in sales, has just introduced a whole series of new units and accessories. Our favorite is a computer keyboard called "My First Computer." This accessory plugs right into the game port on the old VCS.

It can play games; it can teach you to write and store programs; and best of all, it costs under $90. There are over 10,000,000 VCS units out there, and "My First Computer," could really be a worthwhile investment for families that own the old consoles.

There will also be a whole series of superior games and program software available for the keyboard. This will allow VCS owners to get better graphics without spending money on a new system.

If you already have spent that money on a new system, don't despair. There is also a keyboard in the works for the Atari 5200. And if you already are heavily into computing, Atari has added a new, top-of-the-line computer, the model 1200. That machine will probably compete with the Commodore 64 and the Texas Instruments Pro.

INTELLIVISION

With all of this new movement from Atari, and with ColecoVision selling strongly, you might think that George Plimpton would take his Intellivision and go home. Well, in a way he has. But he's come back—with a new model.

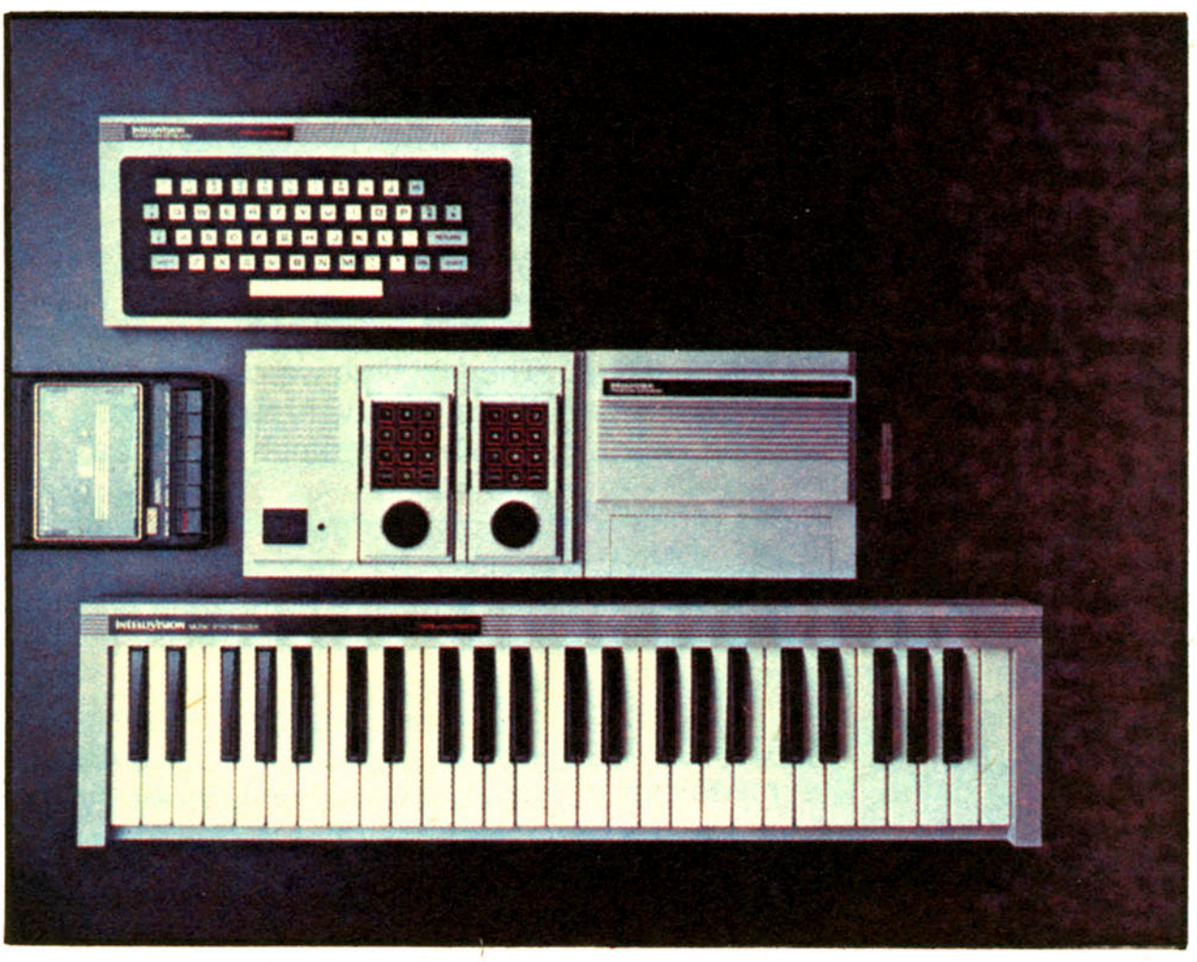
Intellivision II is no longer just a game-player. It is part of what Mattel "modestly" calls an Entertainment Computer System. Intellivision fans can still play all their old favorites, like MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL and SPACE HAWK. But now they can also use the Intellivision system as a true computer.

Mattel has been promising a keyboard for a long time, and they've finally delivered. A computer-expansion module with a typewriter-style keyboard will be available soon. Musicians will be able to add a piano keyboard.

Best of all for game lovers, Intellivision now has an Atari adapter. That means you'll be able to play all those Atari cartridges on the Intellivision system. (All these new accessories will work with the original Intellivision unit, as well as Intellivision II.)

To satisfy those who demand arcade action at home, Mattel is also about to release a third-generation system. It's called—you guessed it—Intellivision III. It will have improved graphics and a voice. Intellivision III will also accept all the accessories that come with Intellivision II.

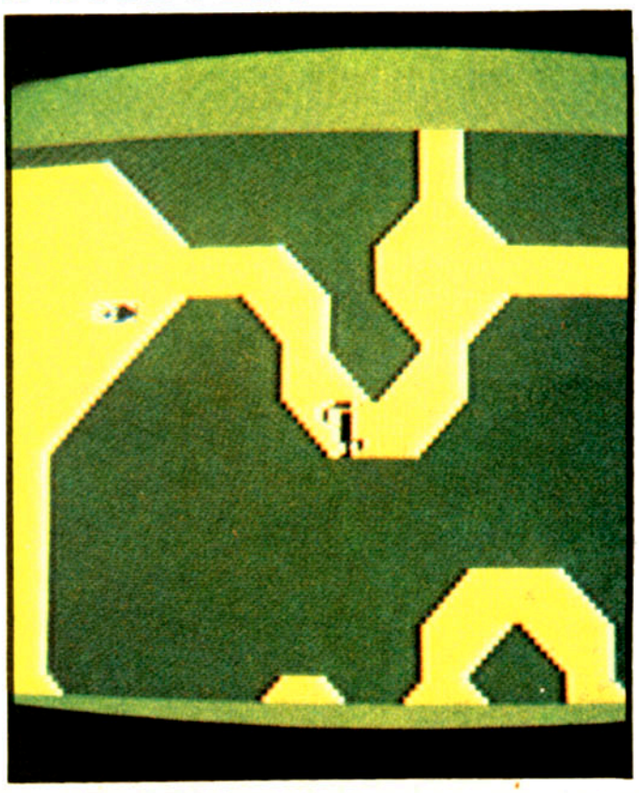
When we were writing this story, Mattel wasn't sure how much any of these items would cost. They did know, however, that Intellivision II would cost less than the original system did when it first came out.



Does all this mean that the good old days of Atari and Mattel battling only each other have returned? Not really. Coleco-Vision is too good a game system for that. And Coleco has their own computer and fourth-generation games planned.

Magnavox, which makes the Odyssey system (remember them?) is also shifting gears toward computers. But it does look as though the video game companies are entering a new phase in the battle. They are, in a sense, becoming more than just video game companies.

SCROLLER COASTER



There's no contest for the most exciting home game we've seen this month. It's Intellivision's ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS. It's not only a lot of fun to play. It's even interesting to sit and watch someone else play the game.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS is a scroll game. That means the terrain you're playing on rolls across the screen. As you keep running, the terrain keeps changing.

You control a runner who has to enter a series of mountains that are filled with caves. The path opens in front of you as you run. You are constantly making choices about which direction to run in. Your choice determines which path opens up—and what challenges will scroll across the screen as you run.

Inside each mountain, you'll find tools and weapons that will help you get through the game. There's an axe that will get you through a forest quickly. There's a key that will unlock a gate for you. There's a boat for traveling along a river. And there are arrows, which you need to fight off the dozens of monsters and animals you'll face as you run.

Hidden inside each mountain is a ladder that will get you back aboveground. Each ladder is guarded by a monster or animal. You have to kill it with your arrows before you can climb out.

Once outside, you make your way to another mountain. This is where the boat, the axe, and the key may come in handy.

The final mountain is where the treasure is hidden. You're looking for two halves of a crown, in different locations inside the mountain. Each half is guarded by a winged dragon.

The dragon moves faster than all the other threats you've faced so far. And it can be killed only by three rapidly-fired arrows.

Kill the dragon, and you get half the crown. Then scroll along until you find the other half, guarded by another dragon.

The first time we captured that second half, we got a very nice surprise. A musical note of triumph sounded, and the game ended.

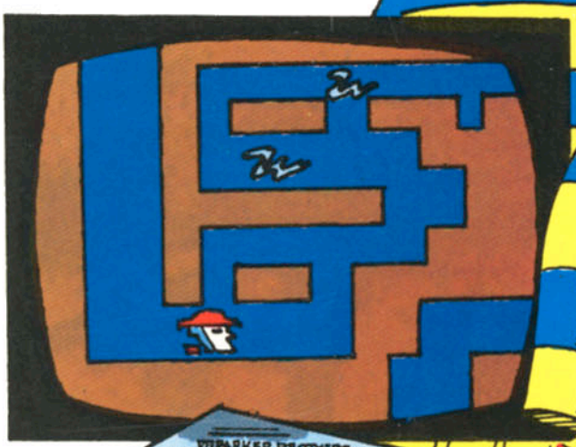
Most video games go on and on until you lose all your players, or just get bored with your point total. This one has an ending. You can actually be declared a winner.

The game has good graphics, a constantly changing screen, and enough surprises to keep anyone busy. Add to that the fact that it has a genuine ending.

The sum total? Intellivision's ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS is a real winner.

Tutankham

THE HOME VIDEO GAME YOU'VE WAITED 3000 YEARS FOR

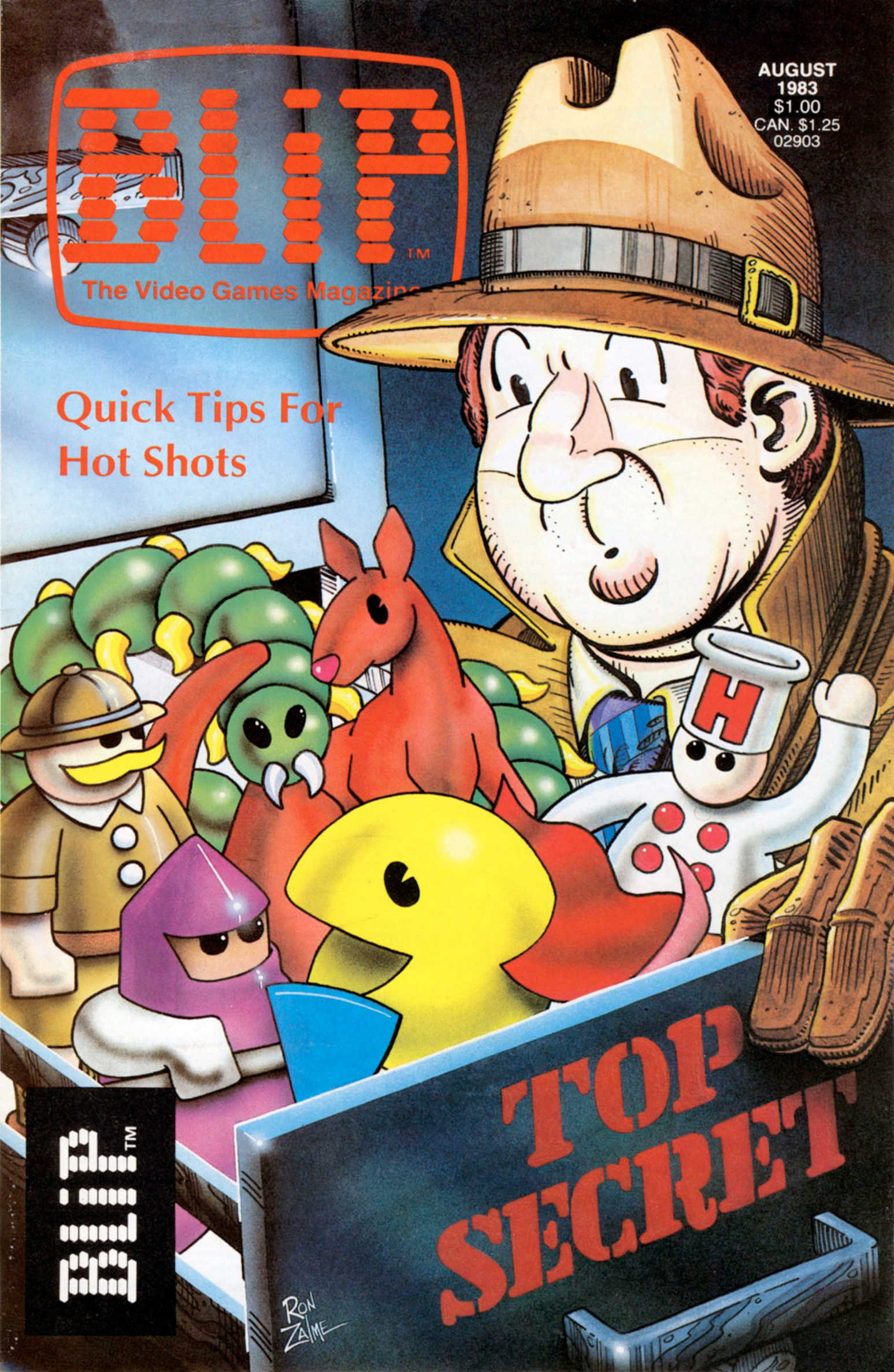


COMING SOON!

Tutankham, the video game where you race through a pyramid to find Tut's treasure. The game where you're attacked by the fiendish guardians of the tomb. And you fight back with your laser guns. You capture the keys to the treasure room and then the treasure is yours. All the action of the hit arcade game is coming to your Atari® or Sears® home video system. From Parker Brothers, of course.

®PARKER BROTHERS
THE ONES TO BEAT

© 1983 Parker Brothers, Beverly, MA 01915 TUTANKHAM game graphics © 1982 Konami Industry Co., Ltd TUTANKHAM is a trademark of Konami Industry Co., Ltd and used by Parker Brothers under authorization. Atari is a trademark of Atari Inc. and Sears is a trademark of Sears Roebuck and Co.


ELIM
The Video Games Magazine
AUGUST
1983
$1.00
CAN. $1.25
02903
Quick Tips For
Hot Shots
TOP
SECRET
RON
ZAIME

GAME PLAY SHOWN IS FOR THE INTELLIVISION® GAME SYSTEM AND SEARS SUPER VIDEO ARCADE SYSTEM. ALSO AVAILABLE SEPARATELY FOR THE ATARI® 2600 AND SEARS VIDEO ARCADE SYSTEM.

KOOL-AID® AND KOOL-AID MAN™ ARE TRADEMARKS OF THE GENERAL FOODS CORPORATION.

MATTEL ELECTRONICS, M NETWORK AND INTELLIVISION ARE TRADEMARKS OF MATTEL, INC. ATARI IS A TRADEMARK OF ATARI, INC.

MAIL-IN CERTIFICATE

For Your **FREE** KOOL-AID MAN™ Video Game worth $20.00, just send:

check one

- ☐ 125 Kool-Aid® Proof-of-Purchase Points
- or
- ☐ 30 Kool-Aid® Proof-of-Purchase Points ***and*** $10.00 (make check payable to Video Game Offer)

Mail To: KOOL-AID MAN™ Video Game Offer
3 Stuart Drive, P.O. Box 8153,
Kankakee, IL 60902

Name _____
(please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

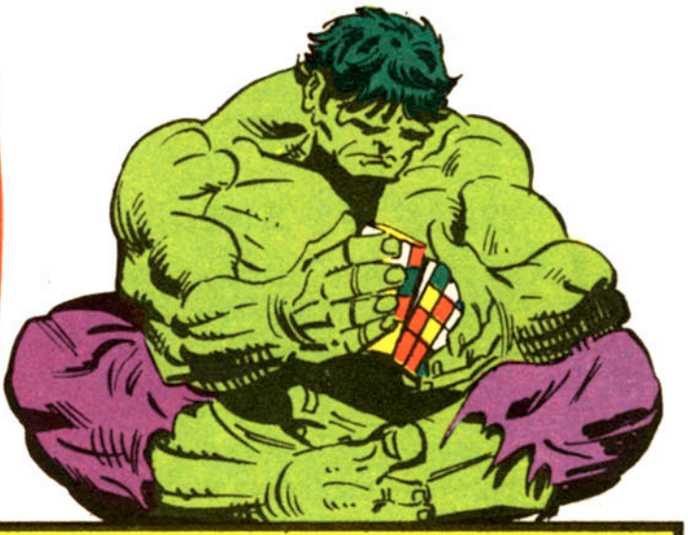
Check Cartridge Desired: ☐ Intellivision® *or* ☐ Atari® 2600

Offer void where prohibited, taxed or otherwise restricted. Void in Puerto Rico and Wyoming. Allow 6-8 weeks for processing request. Offer good only in USA and U.S. Government installations.

Offer good while supplies last. Certificate must accompany request.

BLIP™

The Video Games Magazine



Vol. I, No. 7
August, 1983

President
James E. Galton
Vice-President,
Publishing
Michael Z. Hobson

Editor
Joe Claro
Assistant Editor
Dan Koeppel

Designers
Nora Maclin
Barry Shapiro

Production
Coordinator
Danny Crespi

CONTRIBUTORS
Howard Blumenthal
Jim Koeppel
Mike Meyers
John Morelli
Rick Parker
Brian Scott
George Sullivan
Ron Zalme

Cover by
RON ZALME

CONTENTS

NEWS BLIPS	"Smart Houses," computers and libraries, and more. All the latest news for you to use.	2
THE HULK	Parker Brothers' latest adaptation from Marvel is our latest adaptation from Parker Brothers. A BLIP comic feature!	4
BLIP CONFIDENTIAL	Quick tips for hot shots. How to improve your scores on a whole slew of the latest games.	10
PLAYER'S CHOICE	Special this issue—BLIP tells you what's new from Atari, Coleco and Mattel.	13
BLIP TIPS I	Hot tips on MS. PAC-MAN. We tell you why the lady is a chomp!	18
LETTERS	Signed, sealed and delivered, comments and questions from our readers.	21
BEYOND VIDEO GAMES	A new monthly feature about computers makes its debut this issue!	22
WORDHUNT	Seek, and ye shall find—here's a puzzle to challenge your mind.	25
FRONT RUNNERS	Games of fame, best sellers, up-and-comers, and arcade aces. BLIP's statistics column.	28
BLIP TIPS II	Here's a sequel that you've probably seen. The low-down on DONKEY KONG JR.	30

BLIP™ Vol. 1, No. 7, August, 1983. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Z. Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing; Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright ©1983 by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate $12.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign $15.00.

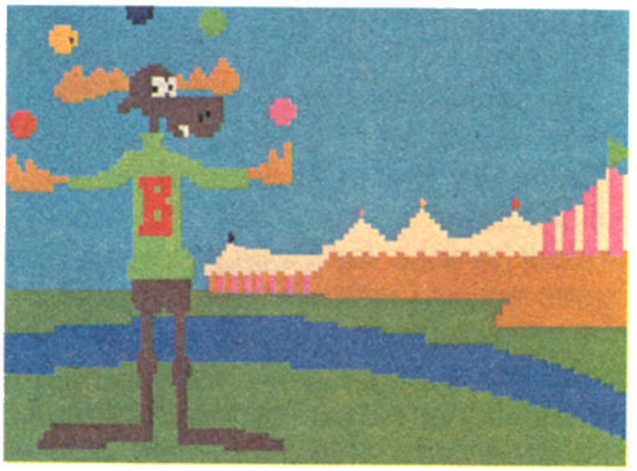
Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at NEW YORK, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.A. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. BLIP is a trademark of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. Postmaster: Send address changes to Subscription Dept., Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016

Player's Choice

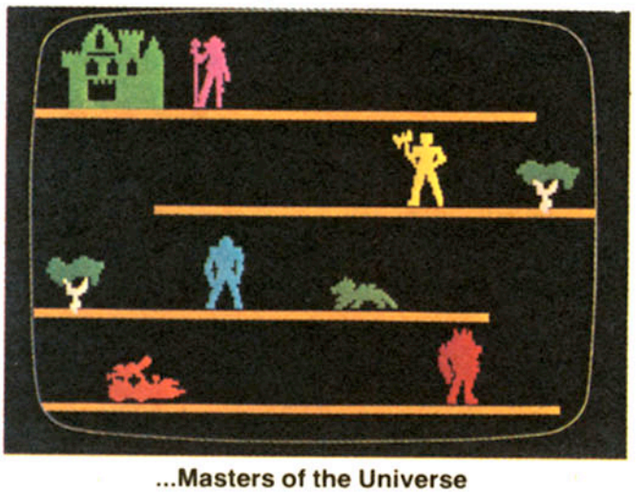
THE LATEST WORD

All from Mattel

Kool-Aid...



...Rocky and Bullwinkle...

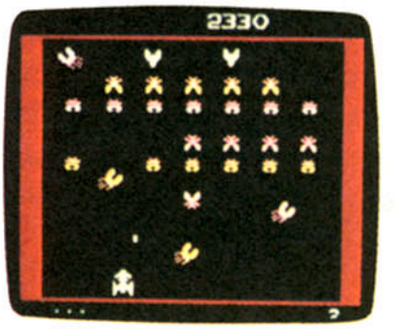


...Masters of the Universe

If you're reading this magazine, you're probably a big fan of video games. And if you're a big fan of video games, you've probably noticed one thing. There are a lot of them out there. Some people liken the rush of new products to a flood. Everything is coming in wave after wave.

It's a good thing you have BLIP to tell you what to expect. Most department and specialty stores that sell video games can't keep a complete stock on hand. There are just too many new products, and the stores don't have the space to keep all that stuff in.

So we've put together a list of what's new, so that you won't have to go to every store in town to get the most out of your home game system. If you can't find what you want in your favorite store, ask. Most retailers will be happy to order what you want.



ATARI

Mattel and Coleco are hot on Atari's heels in the quest for leadership of the home video game market. So Atari is pulling out all the stops. Over the next three months, look for four new arcade adaptations from the industry leader.

The first new Atari game is actually an old favorite. GALAXIAN was one of the original arcade hits. It also went over pretty big on the Atari 5200 advanced game unit. Now, Atari is releasing a version of GALAXIAN for 2600 owners. That game should be out by the time you get hold of this magazine, so look for it in the stores.

ACTION BASEBALL, fans will also get to try their skill at FOOTBALL and BOXING by the middle of the summer. The football game will feature realistic sound effects and more players under your control than other games offer.

Coleco's BOXING is more than just a video game. It is one of those movie adaptations that we've told you about in the past. Guess which popular film this Coleco cartridge comes from? Here's a hint: one of the boxers pictured in the game has a Mohawk haircut.

Coleco is devoting a lot of attention to sports games that rival Intellivision and Atari RealSports. But Coleco isn't forgetting that its big strength is in bringing arcade games into your living room. Fans of BUCK ROGERS, MR. DO and TIME PILOT will be happy to know that Coleco is bringing these favorites home for dinner.

MATTEL

During the next few weeks, look for the release of seven new cartridges for Intellivision and two new cartridges for the Intellivision computer keyboard.

Mattel was the first home video game to have a voice. We haven't been very happy with Mattel's use of its voice synthesizer unit. But now there's a game for Intellivision that does more than just yap away at you.

SPACE SHUTTLE is one of those interstellar strategy games that make you think as well as act. In this one, you've got to repair satellites, maneuver through asteroid fields and refuel your ship. Three different voices will help you get through your mission. The game also has seven different screen views. You can watch your instrument panel, launch pad, radar screen, deep space, and more.

Mattel is also getting into arcade adaptations. Both BURGER TIME and LOCOMOTION should be out by the time you read this. Mattel has really had to scramble since ColecoVision grabbed a large part of the arcade-game market. These two adaptations should measure how well Mattel has done at competing with the newer company.

One place where Mattel's leadership still remains pretty strong is in sports games. But even here, Coleco and Atari are gaining ground. Coleco's new baseball game will feature a series of multi-screen views. Mattel is also releasing a new baseball cartridge, MAJOR LEAGUE ALL STAR BASEBALL. It will include views of the action that look a lot like TV sportscast pictures. Improvements over the original MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL include fly balls, more pitches, and better sound effects. Sorry —you'll still have to bring your own hot dogs.

Mattel will also be coming out with a whole slew of original adventure games.

In MISSION X, you're on a secret bombing mission. You fly over enemy territory, wiping out battleships, tanks, artillery guns, and bridges. Action takes place both at day and during the night.

Then there's the second DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS cartridge, called the TREASURES OF TARMIN. This will be a continuation of the search-and-strategy game that we told you about in an earlier issue.

For old-time game fans, Mattel will be coming out with a video version of PINBALL. "Tilt" controls will not be available, however.

For aspiring rock stars, Mattel will be coming out with a new variation of ASTROSMASH that uses the piano keyboard accessory available with Intellivision II. In ASTROMUSIC, you have to shoot down notes to play well-known songs.

Another game for musicians is called MELODY MAKER. This one is more serious than ASTROMUSIC. It allows you to compose your own music.

BEYOND VIDEO GAMES

by Howard Blumenthal

About twelve years ago, two engineers working in different parts of the country came upon a very similar idea. Nolan Bushnell, working outside of San Francisco, had an idea for a computerized space game that could be played on a special television screen. Ralph Baer, working in New Hampshire, had an idea for a new kind of toy that could be connected to any television set. The toy would play something called "video games."

When people first heard about these inventions, they were sure that Bushnell and Baer had lost their minds. Play games on a television screen? What a ridiculous idea!

But when those people saw Bushnell's SPACE RACE and Baer's ODYSSEY, the laughter stopped. Some people realized then that the home computer age had begun.

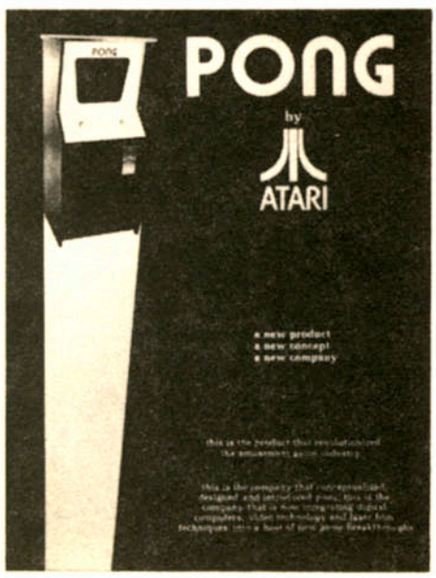
Of the two products, Baer's ODYSSEY was initially the bigger success. Here was the very first home video game system. It had about twelve cartridges that offered games like Hide-and-Seek and Tennis. All the ODYSSEY games were very simple. A single white blip would move around your screen. You had to attach a plastic overlay to your television in order to create a play-field.

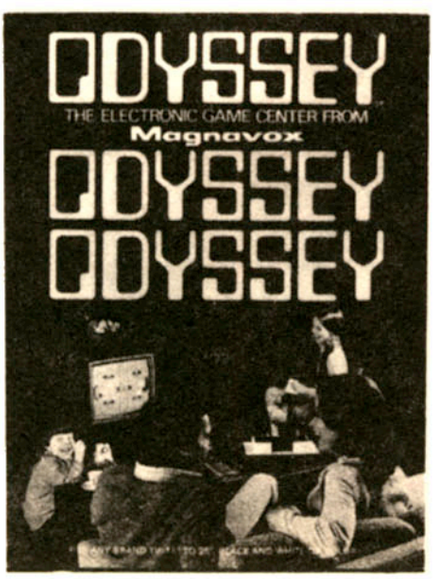
Bushnell's SPACE RACE never attracted much national attention. It was popular in San Francisco, but that wasn't enough. So Bushnell went back to the drawing board. He returned with a new game called PONG.

PONG was the game that really started it all. When compared with today's games like TRON or ZAXXON, the black-and-white PONG seems pretty simple. But it was hot stuff in 1972, when it first came out. People would sit for hours, usually in bars and airports, controlling that single white paddle to volley a little blip back and forth with an opponent. It wasn't sophisticated, but PONG was a big hit everywhere. It was also the start of an empire. PONG was the first product from a new company called Atari.

TAKING IT HOME

PONG was a big hit for about three years in the pinball arcades. Then in 1975, Atari came out with a small black box that could turn any television set into a PONG game.





People again thought Bushnell was crazy. Who would spend $50 on such a toy? The skeptics thought the new company might be smart to stay in the arcades, and leave the living rooms to Monopoly.

The home versions of PONG were, of course, another Atari success. But Atari had plans beyond the simple game console. They wanted to make a machine that played more than one game. They thought a unit that accepted cartridges would be the next big thing. So, Atari announced that they were going to take the first step toward getting a computer into every home.

Once again, people laughed. The new game machine originally cost almost $200! Nobody would pay that much for such a complicated toy. Stores won't even sell it, people predicted.

This time, it looked as though the skeptics were right. In 1977, over 100,000 Atari VCS systems were sitting, unsold, in warehouses. Store owners didn't want to sell such an expensive toy.

Would home video games ever catch on? Fairchild introduced a game called CHANNEL F, and it was a failure. OYDSSEY had been taken off the market. Coleco was marketing a machine called TELSTAR. It didn't do very well, either. Even Atari's original PONG was in a slump.

The keyboard that never was: Mattel's original Intellivision system.

At Atari, executives were beginning to think they had made a mistake. Was the VCS a disaster?

PICKING AN APPLE

But off in another corridor of the Atari headquarters, two engineers were hard at work. One was a designer who had originally worked on the VCS. Another specialized in making pocket calculators. They were working on something that went far beyond the slumping VCS game machine. They dismantled a calculator and a VCS, added a few advanced circuits and a keyboard, and created the first home computer.

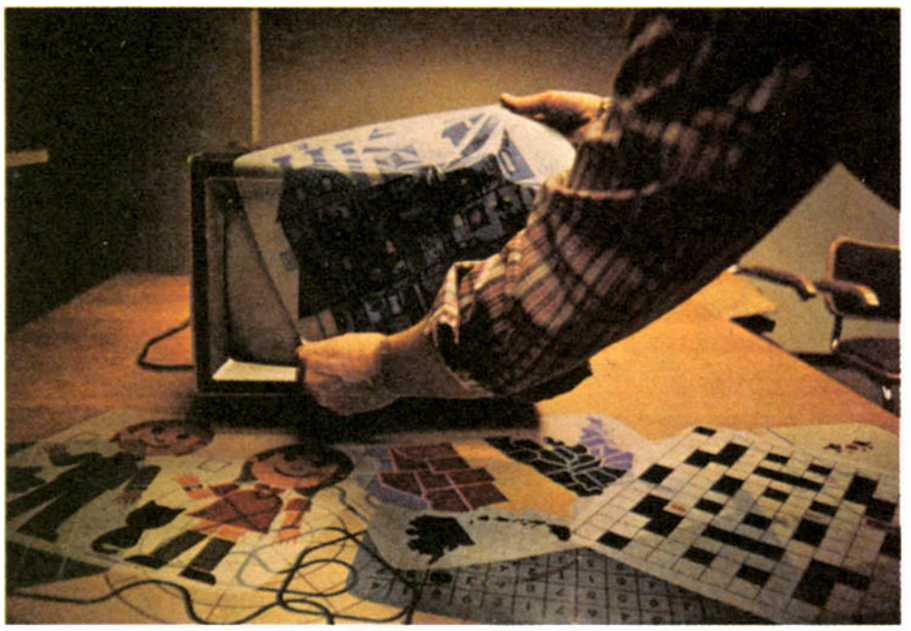
The two engineers—Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak—left Atari to work on their project full time. They called it the Apple Computer. Like the VCS, it could be connected to any TV set. And it could do a lot more than play games.

Meanwhile, Atari was having another go at it with the VCS. Retailers began discounting the unit. Atari was beginning to introduce new games that were adapted from popular arcade games. By the middle of 1979, stores just couldn't get hold of enough VCS machines. Everybody wanted to play games like SPACE INVADERS and BREAKOUT at home. Atari was again on top.

But the video games industry was changing. People wanted more. They wanted more games, they wanted more features. Most important, they wanted the chance to turn their video game machines into home computers.

The first company to really recognize this was Mattel. They introduced Intellivision, which featured better graphics and sounds than the Atari games. They also promised that one day, Intellivision owners would be able to turn their game machines into computers by adding a keyboard.

People who bought the original Intellivision Master



Struggling with a PONG overlay was just one thing that made the first video game system more than a little different.

Component waited for that keyboard. And waited. And waited. Going from games to computing wasn't going to be as simple as people expected.

A CROWDED FIELD

The idea of a combination video game/computer system was on the minds of many manufacturers by this time. Magnavox reintroduced the Odyssey system with a keyboard. The keyboard looked like a computer, but it couldn't make the system perform like one.

A small company called APF did make a combination game/keyboard computer unit. It was very similar to Mattel's design. But the games available for the "Imagination Machine" were never very good, and the system was a failure.

Atari was the first company to really make the video-game/computer connection. They introduced the now-famous 400/800 series, which cost a lot less than the Apple. These computers all had full-color graphics, quality sound effects, and, maybe most important, arcade-like cartridge games.

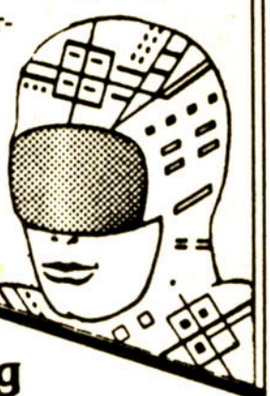
STAR RAIDERS, introduced in 1980, was the first game created for the Atari computers. It was soon followed by MISSILE COMMAND, PAC-MAN, DEFENDER and SPACE INVADERS. All these games were available for Atari's VCS and its computers.

These days, Atari's engineers design a game for the arcades first. But if a game is a success, they redesign it for all the Atari systems currently available. A game like CENTIPEDE is now produced for all Atari players, whether they have their fun in the arcades, with a VCS or Atari 5200, or by using one of the 400/800/1200 series computers.

If you get the chance, compare the different versions of CENTIPEDE. You'll find that the game is the same, but the differences in the action within each version are varied. These variations tell us what the future of video games is all about. Atari is well aware of that future, as are hundreds of other companies. But you'll have to wait until next month's column to find out exactly *what* that future holds.

I challenge you

to a dangerous battle for the beautiful Venus 11-b!



24 exciting videomaze games for only $2.50

MAZEWARPS™ is a portable video game book that combines mazes and an action-packed science-fiction adventure story.

Venus knows the secret code to the Power-sphere. And evil **Dicto/Galaxis,** of the Platform Empire, wants it. Space-warrior **Trax** must use all the power at his command to save our heroine.

Only you, as Trax, can rescue Venus by working through all the mazes in a thrilling race against time.

MAZE WARPS

written and illustrated by

VLADIMIR KOZIAKIN

Paperbound $2.50, now at your bookstore.

Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.