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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

THE PARALLEL WAR IS OVER!

The **Red Baron vs. Taito** case on the legality of parallel PC boards ended Jan. 22 when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the Ohio-based operator's appeal. Therefore, the decision of the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals stands: it is legal to buy and sell parallels but illegal to "publicly perform" (operate) them. Taito and (by osmosis) the whole video game manufacturing community has won and it is now possible that one or more members of that community will front-burn investigative and legal actions against operators who may continue to use parallel PCBs on routes or in arcades.

Red Baron's **Bill Beckham** said he was "very disappointed and surprised" at the Supreme Court's interpretation of the copyright law. "It's hard to believe it's legal to purchase a product but illegal to use it for the purpose for which it was manufactured," he said. "However, we must face the fact that this is exactly what the 4th Circuit decided and the Supreme Court chose not to rule on it," he added.

Many will say this is now the law of the land, but some will take a more narrow view and say it only affects the 4th circuit's jurisdiction (Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, etc.). But when the Supreme Court acts (and their refusal to hear an appeal is a resounding "act"), the precedent rings loud and clear in every other U.S. federal court district. In the final analysis, the parallel war is over and it's foolish for anyone to set such a game before the playing public regardless of his geographical jurisdiction. And, AAMA's board policeman **Bill Kidwell** awaits instructions for specific members to turn up the flame on his investigative work right as this is printed.

Beckham has been a gentleman throughout this ordeal. In a press release issued after the Supreme Court's decision, he said: "Hopefully the fight has not been for naught. We wanted an on-point case, we got it and we took it as far as our law allows. We might not like the results but at least we've gotten a definitive answer to the controversy that has split this industry for at least three years and we are all going to have to live with it."

Despite the loss of his case, Beckham hopes the video manufacturers have heard "the uproar and discontent from U.S. operators when they have to buy games in dedicated format that are available to operators in every other country as kits and that they will adjust their marketing policies accordingly." If this happens, Beckham feels his "war" will have been worth it, but as he adds, "only time will tell."

Beckham said he has the "utmost respect" for the people at Taito. "From middle and top management, including their attorneys and their leaders in Japan, they handled this entire episode with class and dignity. There were many times they could have used their strength and resources to take advantage of their position but they never did. I believe they realized that this was a question that needed to be answered for the good of the entire industry and they acted accordingly and shouldered the burden for the rest of the manufacturers. They fought fair and hard and they won. For this, they should be congratulated," he declared.

The whole three-year ordeal was costly for both Red Baron (and its supporting operators) as well as for Taito. This final decision comes at a peculiar time when video kits are a hard sell and the hottest item is dedicated *(Turtles)*. But Beckham's plea for equal treatment vis-a-vis other markets rang loud and clear throughout the course of this case. Perhaps the epitaph to this whole thing comes from Beckham himself: "The purpose of war is for peace and the ultimate purpose of this war between the manufacturers and operators was to bring peace to the U.S. industry." No one could put it better.

WRITE IT DOWN — The ACME show runs March 9-11 at the Chicago Hyatt downtown. There's been some confusion here and there about the exact trade show hours. **Judy Novac & Bill Glasgow** said the following can be "carved in stone": Friday (9), distribs only from 8:00 to 11:00 AM with general trade admission running 11:00 to 5:00 PM. Saturday, distribs from 9:00 to 10:00 AM, general from 10:00 to 5:00 PM. Closing day (Sunday), only general trade from 10:00 to 4:00 PM. Let's correct another thing: Sunday morning's speech by footballer **Terry Bradshaw** is **free** to all registered trade people, but it doesn't include a free continental breakfast.

ACME AWARDS — An all-show cocktail party for anyone with a badge will be held Friday evening during which AAMA's first Achievement Awards will be presented (best games, etc.). Manufacturer and distributor of the year awards will be passed out at the **Joe Robbins** dinner Saturday night.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

FEBRUARY 1990

TOP GAMES NOW IN OPERATION, BASED ON EARNINGS-OPINION POLL OF OPERATORS

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (2)**	**9.65**	**77%**
➡	2	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (2)	8.90	30%
	3	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (10)	8.82	48%
➡	4	ALL AMER. FOOTBALL (Leland) (3)	8.51	26%
➡	5	OFF ROAD (Leland) (11)	8.33	79%
	6	TEAM QUARTERBACK (Leland) (15)	7.86	36%
➡	7	MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE (D.E.) (2)	7.82	24%
➡	8	S.T.U.N. RUNNER (Atari) (3)	7.73	32%
	9	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito)(10)	7.65	54%
➡	10	S.C.I. (Taito) (1)	7.64	16%
	11	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (8)	7.54	46%
➡	12	CRIME FIGHTERS+ (Konami) (6)	7.52	60%
	13	FINAL LAP (Atari) (15)	7.47	26%
	14	CYBERBALL (Atari) (11)	7.30	34%
	15	CHASE H.Q. (Taito) (14)	7.27	51%
	16	TOP SPEED (Romstar) (16)	7.24	21%
	17	OUT RUN (Sega) (38)	7.15	67%
	18	NARC (Williams) (12)	7.13	50%
➡	19	SUPER MONACO GP (Sega) (5)	7.12	24%
	20	SUPER HANG-ON (Sega) (31)	7.09	55%
	21	POWER DRIFT (Sega) (13)	7.03	29%
	22	MECHANIZED ATTACK (SNK) (8)	6.95	27%
	23	ROADBLASTERS+ (Atari) (28)	6.76	61%
	24	OPERATION WOLF (Taito) (26)	6.71	73%
	25	AFTER BURNER (Sega) (28)	6.70	58%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

best new videos

➡	1	FINAL [u/r] (Capcom)	8.31
➡	2	BEAST BUSTERS [u/r] (SNK)	7.82
➡	3	GALAXY FORCE [s/d] (Sega)	7.45

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**U.N. SQUADRON [S] (Capcom) (4)**	**9.56**	**29%**
➡	2	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (7)	8.44	73%
➡	3	BUSTER BROS. [H] (Capcom) (1)	7.95	15%
➡	4	50 CALIBRE [V] (Romstar) (3)	7.95	15%
	5	GOLDEN AXE [H] (Sega) (8)	7.93	76%
➡	6	TOKI [H] (Fabtek) (2)	7.81	20%
➡	7	TECMO WORLD CUP '90 [H] (Tec.) (2)	7.73	8%
➡	8	AMERI DARTS [H/V] (Ameri Corp.) (1)	7.70	7%
➡	9	VS. CRIME FIGHTERS (Konami) (4)	7.67	27%
➡	10	TASK FORCE [V] (Amer. Sammy) (1)	7.50	7%
➡	11	RAMBO III [H] (Romstar) (1)	7.43	10%
	12	ARCH RIVALS [H] (Bally/Midway) (8)	7.36	73%
➡	13	CRIME CITY [H] (Taito) (4)	7.28	21%
➡	14	WILLOW [S] (Capcom) (4)	7.10	31%
➡	15	SHADOW DANCER [H] (Sega) (1)	7.04	17%
➡	16	CAPCOM BOWLING [V] (Capcom) (18)	7.02	47%
➡	17	E.S.W.A.T. [H] (Sega) (3)	7.01	60%
	18	GANG WARS [H] (SNK) (4)	7.00	17%
➡	19	SKULL & CROSSBONES [H] (Atari) (1)	7.00	10%
	20	TETRIS [H] (Atari) (10)	6.86	64%

[H] horizontal [V] vertical [S] system [R] retrofit

flippers

➡	1	**ELVIRA (Bally/Midway) (4)**	**8.66**	**56%**
➡	2	POLICE FORCE (Williams) (5)	8.21	48%
	3	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (10)	8.17	51%
➡	4	BAD CATS (Williams) (2)	8.12	28%
➡	5	MOUSIN' AROUND (Bally/Midway) (1)	8.00	29%
➡	6	MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL (D.E.) (4)	7.83	31%
	7	CYCLONE (Williams) (22)	7.67	67%
➡	8	LIGHTS, CAMERA...(Gott./Prem.) (2)	7.60	13%
	9	TAXI (Williams) (16)	7.33	60%
	10	JOKERZ (Williams) (13)	7.19	46%

➡ *available brand new at certain distributors; number following brand shows months on chart including this one.*

RATING: *Operators were mailed "ballot sheets" listing games in active operation in U.S. locations and game centers and asked to "rate" the earning performance of each on the "1 to 10" measure: 10 for "power-house earnings," 9 for "excellent," 8 for "very good game," 7 for "good game," 6 for "decent game," 5 for "just average," 4 for "below average," etc. The written votes were tallied up and divided by the actual number of times the specific game was rated. Hence, the decimal points.*

DIST.: *The percentage of the surveyed arcade and street location operators who have the item on location. No upright videos rated by less than 15% of these operators appear on the Upright Videos chart, but promising new items appear under Best New Videos.*

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RePlay magazine

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COVER

"It's a jungle out there," but the fabulous folks at Fabtek have got a hot kit for you with 'Toki.' And when we say hot, we're not kidding — the game entered the RePlay Players' Choice software chart last month at the number two spot. 'Toki' (a horizontal kit licensed to Fabtek from Tad Corp.) features challenging play, cute graphics and play appeal for all ages, says the firm, as the main character gets turned into a gorilla by the evil powers and must rescue his beloved, Miho, and regain his manhood. Proudly presenting the game on our front cover are Fabtek's Frank Ballouz, Drew Maniscalco and Jeanne Ballouz and several of the game's characters.

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EDITORIAL

Few new video games are selling with anything approaching "vigor" except for Turtles, *even though there are more than a handful of other good uprights and kits on the market. In the words of one video manufacturer, "I've been in this business since video first came out and it's never been this bad." Indeed, there are some games high up on the chart that are moving into the field in such small numbers it makes you pause to wonder where this is all leading.*

A number of distributors have backburned video today the same way they downgraded jukeboxes in the pre-CD period. In those cases, video and CD boxes have done a position flip flop with new music machines playing first violin in the industrial orchestra while video jumps up now and again to do an impressive oboe solo like Turtles. *Why?*

A great caption cartoon appeared in the papers a few years ago that showed a guy talking to a wilted house plant in soothing tones while the plant was screaming "water, dummy, water!" Plenty of people have been "talking" to the video game market and, sorry to say, ignoring the operator's relentless scream: "Give us something different at a proper price! The play will come up and we'll make some money again!"

Admittedly, Turtles *is a kick, punch & jump game, but it's tied into a roasting hot group of "celebrities." And it's modestly priced! Konami knew it could have charged more, but in the words of one key executive there, "we wanted to do something for the operator, so we left a bunch of money on the table for him to work with."*

Let's be brutally candid. A load of operators think the video manufacturers are gouging on prices and a load of manufacturers think operators are booking more on video than they care to admit. The only faction that knows the true "skinny" on prices is distribution. Somehow, the "twain" must be met on price vs. R.O.I. to suit all three levels of the industry, and it is the distributor's responsibility to push for this. If the proper price can't be married to a game's play appeal in board rooms, the law of supply and demand will do it for us. Maybe that's happening now?

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INSIDE

FEBRUARY 1990

SPECIAL ARTICLES

VIDEO STATUS
The "state of the industry" is just jim-dandy, according to some arcade operators. But many manufacturers, distributors and (especially) street operators sound rather ominous about sales and earnings these days — especially when it comes to coin-op video . . . . . pg. 25

CES SPECIAL REPORT
On the other hand, home video is screaming into 1990 with: 1. more titles than coin-op; 2. new technology in presentation and game controllers; and 3. much higher sales and per-unit profitability for manufacturers . . . . . pg. 38

VIDEO HI-TECH
Tired of "the same old thing" in video? It doesn't have to be that way. Recent expos unveiled everything from CD-Rom interactive movies, to "Del Vision" 3D technology, to what we call the "Ultimate" video game. Check it out beginning on . . . . . pg. 47

THE WICO STORY
Everybody knows "about" them, and most of us deal with them . . . a lot. But few of us know what really goes on behind the scenes at this vital supplier. Read the Wico story . . . . . pg. 75

WHIRLWIND
The latest pin from Williams is a disaster. At least, it's themed around disaster! Actually, it's an imaginative honey that'll (literally) blow your hat off. It's designed by Pat Lawlor, the same pinball maven who brought vertical playfields and 7.0 quakes to flippers . . . . . pg. 98

HMS MONACO
Where are Gilbert and Sullivan when you need them? They should re-write 'HMS Pinafore' and compose a nice little operetta in honor of Monaco, the leader in jewelry-type merchandise for redemption operators . . . . . pg. 92

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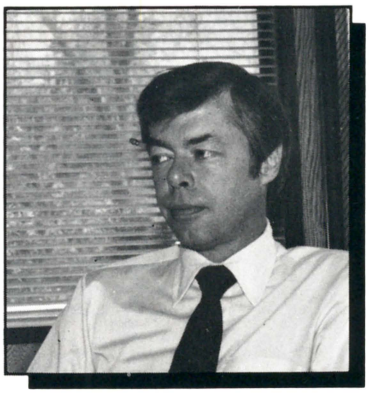

As members of this industry know, there's more to the video "game" than what the players see on the screen. There's the "game" played between the video developers and the operator-buyers. The playing field is the marketplace and the distributor is the "referee" whose own share of the stakes rises and falls according to how well that "game" is played. It's a serious one for all three trade levels today, possibly for all four levels if you add in the players.

This latter audience has been composed largely of teenage males . . . a "burger & fries" crowd that many in the business think may be tiring of the "burger & fries" games (martial arts & drivers). Many trade people have been pleading for some menu substitutions, crying out for that "different video" they believe will reawaken the player's palate. It's hard to argue against their cry, yet it's clear that items like Double Dragon, Ninja Gaiden, Hard Drivin' *and* Turtles *have been among the top earners in recent times and they're all "burgers & fries" games.*

What exactly does it mean to be "different"? Many operators are asking for something different enough to go into the street, not that we haven't seen things like Tetris *and* Block Out *and some solid sports items like* WWF, All American Football, Arch Rivals *and* Capcom Bowling. *So, hasn't the market been properly supplied, or will the operator continue to dream about* Pac-Man *until the end of time?*

Granted, a lot of good stuff has come along geared to the arcade. And yes, video prices in general have gone up, certainly on a lot of kits. But while some say the price is where it's at, others say it's relative ("it doesn't matter if it earns in the cash box"). Regardless, the video developers have to confront this theme/price situation today. Like it or not, the "game ball" is squarely in their court.

The new themes & prices for the spring market will be on display at ACME, March 9-11 in Chicago. One entry will be the long-awaited MicroProse piece, a "thinking player's war game". Thinking operators should be at ACME to inspect all new goods with an unemotional, businesslike attitude. Video, after all, has been of enormous historical benefit to the entire amusement industry and to most of the operators in it. Let's quit talkin' and start chalkin'.

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VIEWPOINTS

Dear Ed:

As you know, the Jersey Shore has been the hub for merchandising and redemption equipment since the mid fifties. Redemption and merchandising are as basic to myself and my associate Wylie Irwin as apple pie. During a recent plane trip, he and I had a chance to share our thoughts on the history and the present picture with this type of equipment.

If you think back to 1984, our industry was looking for a "unique new form of entertainment." While employed by Betson, we approached Bert Betti, Chairman of H. Betti Industries, with the redemption concept. He then offered us the opportunity to take redemption nationally.

At a seminar, Wylie and I spread the virtues of redemption/merchandising to a very skeptical audience. We explained that cranes were just the start; ticket/token award games were really the backbone of redemption. This type of game creates new repeat customers that have fun while they win prizes.

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Well, look at what has happened since 1984. Cranes took the country by storm in 1985, '86 & '87. But, good operators soon realized that this business was not merely plugging a machine into a 110 volt power source. It required proper merchandising with a good variety of prizes while watching your percentages. There are operators still making good money some four and five years later with the same piece of equipment. Others, looking for the easy dollar, not willing to work, fell by the wayside.

Now, skill games that award tickets or tokens appear on the national scene. Remember, we believe this is the backbone of redemption. But here a well-run redemption center is all important. Encourage customers to accumulate those tickets and tokens. "Hook" the player by displaying the Batman item or VCR. Just displaying low end merchandise is not how it is done.

When it comes to equipment, there are many points that must be considered. How should it be percentaged? How do I attract the adult players? What is a good machine "mix"? Should I use tokens or tickets? What are the legal ramifications? How much space do I need? The questions can go on and on but the key is to get the customers into your establishment.

At the September AMOA show, redemption equipment was displayed throughout the exhibition hall. My point is this: just buying equipment does not predetermine success. Operators must learn that hard work and knowledge are a must to guarantee their success.

We at Coin Concepts knew back in 1984 as we do today that redemption is big business. Wylie and I started "Coin" because of this. We are dedicated to the education of interested operators as well as making available solid earning equipment. I am proud to see redemption becoming a larger part of the coin-op industry.

Sincerely,
Art Warner
President, Coin Concepts
East Brunswick, New Jersey

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — *If you have something to say, RePlay has a place for you to say it. . . this "Viewpoints" section. Letters should be mailed to RePlay Magazine at P.O. Box 2550, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. While letters signed "Anonymous" are accepted and printed, please send your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Any questions? Call us at: 818/347-3820.*

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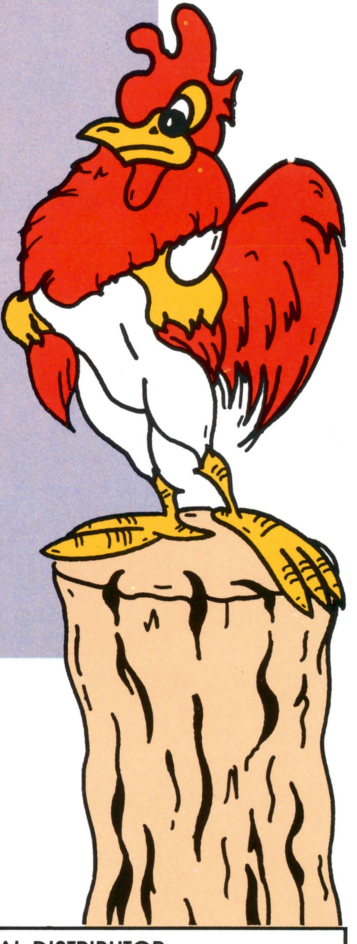

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NEWS DIGEST

ARCADES FAIRLY HAPPY, BUT MANY STREET OPERATORS ARE SINGING THE BLUES

What is the **"state of the industry"?** On the coin-op grapevine, most of the arcade owners we talk to say they're doing pretty well. Some lucky devils even say, "I'm doing **better than ever."** At least one prominent arcade operator credits its home games for helping to make arcades more acceptable "family-type" places. Yet many street operators report their 1989 **overall income was down.** They say pins, pool, redemption, etc. are up. Poor cashbox performance by coin-op video games is the major reason cited for the



street's overall income slump. In turn, many blame coin-op video's poor performance on home game competition. Operators speak their piece on "the state of the industry" in a report starting on **page 25.** (Get more insight on operator health in this month's "Operator Opinions" feature, which follows our "state of" story.)

JAPAN'S COIN-OP VIDEO UP, REPORTS SAY

Home games are significantly down and coin-op is coming back in Japan, according to reliable U.S. sources with strong connections to Japanese manufacturers. "Japanese coin-op video has enjoyed a 20% rebound in the last four months," one source stated. "That's not full recovery, but it's encouraging — especially when you remember that American market trends often follow Japan's. The improved Japanese cash box comes right on the heels of, or right alongside, a drop in Japanese home game sales. The lesson here is that anything that goes up that fast, can also go down pretty fast. Nobody wants to see home game makers hurting, but it would be nice for coin-op if the two markets balanced out so everybody could make money."

TRADE WILL GIVE DOLLAR COINS A CRUCIAL PUSH IN D.C.

We're going into the final stretch on **dollar coins** as the industry gears up for its annual lobbying trip to **Washington, D.C.** Yes, AMOA and AAMA members will both visit the Nation's Capitol **April 29-May 1** in a cooperative effort to lobby their congressmen and senators on behalf of the trade's favorite legislation. According to AAMA Exec VP **Bob Fay,** the dollar coin proposal needs just a few more sponsors to make it into committee hearings. That's the key hurdle; a vote could conceivably come later this year. Also in Washington, both trade groups will sponsor a Tuesday, May 1 **Congressional Reception.** Hundreds of congressmen, their families and staff will



play games, hear jukeboxes, and compete in good-natured "Democrat vs. Republican" tourneys on pinballs, basketballs and (for the first time this year) electronic dart games. A special benefit for underprivileged children is tentatively set for Monday, April 30. In conjunction with the D.C. trip, AAMA will hold its annual board meeting and elect officers for the new term. AMOA and AAMA members should watch their mail for information on programs, housing and registration.

WICO CELEBRATES 50TH ANNY

WICO, the nation's largest parts and supplies house headquartered in Niles, Ill., marks its 50th year supplying operators and distributors with spares to keep their national coin-op engine purring. They've come a long, long way since their first outlet on Madison in Chicago and today actually produce around a third of the products they sell. They are also heavily into OEM manufacturing for pinball and video game makers and are probably the world's largest producers of joysticks, combining their trade and retail businesses. Read all about the purveyors of industrial "soup to nuts" in our **Spotlight Special,** beginning on **page 75.**

INDUSTRY VET BOB LENTZ TO HEAD BALLY DOMESTIC SALES



Bob Lentz, a 15-year coin-op manufacturing veteran, is joining the Bally/Midway division of WMS Industries as its new domestic sales topper. Reporting to the firm's VP of Sales & Marketing **Steve Blattspieler,** Lentz will pilot sales of their pinball and video product to distribs in the U.S. and Canada. The new Bally exec entered the industry back in 1975, hired by Joe Dillon at the "old" Seeburg — then a division of Xcor, run by Lou Nicastro. Since that gent is now Chairman of WMS, the wheel has come around and Bob is working for Lou again! After Seeburg, Bob worked for NSM, then the "new" Seeburg and most recently as a sales rep for Merit Industries. Lentz told *RePlay* he's happy Blattspieler selected him as his new man for domestic sales (that slot has been vacant for some months, since their former salesman Ron Bolger went to American Vending Sales). "I look forward to working with the Bally distributors, many of whom I've known for years," Bob said, "as well as to a good year for the Bally and Midway amusement line!"

HOME VIDEO HAS IT ALL AT WINTER CES: MORE TITLES, MORE DOLLARS, MORE HI-TECH



Home games looked stronger than ever at the **Consumer Electronics Show** last month (Las Vegas Convention Center, Jan. 6-11). Some 50 suppliers are producing titles for Nintendo's system alone, and their portable Gameboy is expected to do a billions dollars' worth of business (hardware and software) this year. Sega and NEC showed games that truly were "arcade quality"... and all three system makers demonstrated hi-tech upgrades that are starting to put the home **ahead** of coin-op. The best news for operators was that some fine home titles are coming to our market, too. We look at CES home video, compare it to coin-op, and examine new technologies like "Del Vision" and CD-Rom, in our special section starting on **page 38.**

SNK SMILING WITH 2 FINE DEDICATED GAMES; MULTI-GAME SYSTEM COMING AT ACME

Presently shipping their impressive ***Beast Busters*** triple-gun video game, SNK's Osaka designers are now also serving the trade with a low-priced upright called ***Search and Rescue.*** Furthermore, at the March ACME show, they'll bow a brand new multi-game system! *Beast Buster's* collections are topped at arcades only by *Turtles,* the firm boasts. And the new *Search and Rescue,* while very modestly priced, is a "quality" item which price-sensitive operators should welcome. Units began shipping to dealers last week. The system which bows at ACME is called ***Neo-Geo.*** It premiered to international distribs in Osaka on Jan. 31. This multi-game cabinet will not be a theater for "home-oriented" games, according to SNK's American chief **Paul Jacobs,** but will feature programs designed especially for the coin-op market. The cabinet with 19" monitor will offer players a choice of four games, while the 25" model will offer six. For details, see our story inside on **page 61.**

NEW TRADE ASSOCIATION FOR KIDDIE RIDES FORMED

A group of operators has formed the **American Kiddie Ride Assn.** "for the unity and betterment of the kiddie ride industry." They plan to offer competitive insurance and financing for kiddie ride purchases. President of the new group is **Tom Theisen** (Theisen Vending, Minneapolis). Other officers include Universal Vending's **Steve Caplan** (Portland), Just Games' **Fred Gillmann** (San Diego) and **Jerry Reda** of Just Kiddie Rides (Plainview, N.Y.). Executive Director is **Anita Bennett** in Minneapolis. Joining costs $50 a year for members and associates; a board of directors will be chosen at the group's first meeting at 9 AM on March 10 at the Allerton Hotel (701 No. Michigan Ave., Chicago). To learn more, contact AKRA at 3800 Nicoliet Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55409; 612/827-5588 in state or toll free at 800/633-3436.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN: IRV KEMPNER, CISSIE GERSH & FERD TUTTLE

Three notable coin-op personalities have passed on. We received late word of the November death of **Irving "Kempy" Kempner.** For nearly 40 years, Irv was the standout salesman for Runyon and, later, Betson Enterprises in New York and New Jersey. **Cissie Gersh,** wife of surviving *Cash Box* co-founder Bill Gersh, died Jan. 4 at age 72. She was Bill's lifelong partner and his constant inspiration. Finally, Struve Distributing's **Ferd Tuttle** left us on Christmas Day, 1989. As the secretary and controller of that Salt Lake City outfit, "Cousin Ferd" was also the friend of many operators. All of these folks will be missed by their many friends in the industry. More complete accounts of their separate lives and careers are reported on **page 64.**

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GRAND PRODUCTS' TO BOW NEW GAME CONCEPT AT ACME

Grand Products will bow a brand new piece at the ACME show, and their **Stan Jarocki** says it will be "a hot-shot game for street operators." Stan was hush-hush on particulars, but did say it's got electro-mechanical elements "married" to a video monitor (it's not your usual video game). "This is a very exciting product. We figure around 95% of the ones we sell will land in street stops and really 'get the ginger up' in the coinbox," he declared. Grand was scheduled to begin location testing Jan. 29. Production is slated to begin even before the ACME premiere, so interested operators will be able to buy (and get) models right away after the show. The concept was designed at Grand by **Dave Marofske** and the lads (with some help from an outside software developer). Development has been underway for a year, and we're anxious to check it out. The street scene could use another hot piece.

SECOND ANNUAL LOVE MONTH JUKE PROMO UNDERWAY

Music operators and major record makers are joining forces again this month: it's **"Love Month II,"** the Valentine's Day themed jukebox promotion, featuring love songs by three contemporary artists. Over **10,000 jukebox locations** nationwide are participating, said AMOA. Highlighted are "How 'Bout Us" by Grayson Hugh (RCA); "Whole Wide World," by A-ME Lorain (RCA); and "Forever" by Kiss (Mercury-Polygram). Participating operators bought these records or discs at their participating one-stops, and received a free "Play Your Heart Out" promotion package, courtesy of Sterling Title Strip (Pittsburgh, Pa.). The package consisted of a "Play Your Heart Out" poster (with pictures of the artists and their records) for display in jukebox locations, plus special title strips to call players' attention to the three featured songs. AMOA's label liaison **Sam Atchley,** himself an award-winning songwriter, coordinated the whole effort with all the organizations involved.

Other jukebox promo news: remember November 1989 **"AMOA-Miller High Life" jukebox promotion,** with "Buy That Man a Miller"



singles playing on jukes in eight major U.S. markets? It's now completed and eight operators who participated in the promo recently received fully-loaded, nostalgia styled jukes as grand prizes from Miller and AMOA. Winners of the prizes (valued at $6,500) were: **Sheila Keith** (Birmingham, Ala.); **Maurice Dennis** (Montgomery, Ala.); **Jim Motts** (Milwaukee, Wisc.); **Beth Stein** (Cincinnati, Ohio); **Daniel Brindza** (Cleveland, Ohio); **John Dob** (Philadelphia, Pa.); **Tom Flagherty** (Pittsburgh, Pa.) and **John Kaake** (Detroit, Mich.). The contest also involved radio call-ins and sweepstakes entries for consumers; eight of them also won full-sized jukeboxes. Jukebox t-shirts and jukebox-styled radio/cassette players were also awarded.

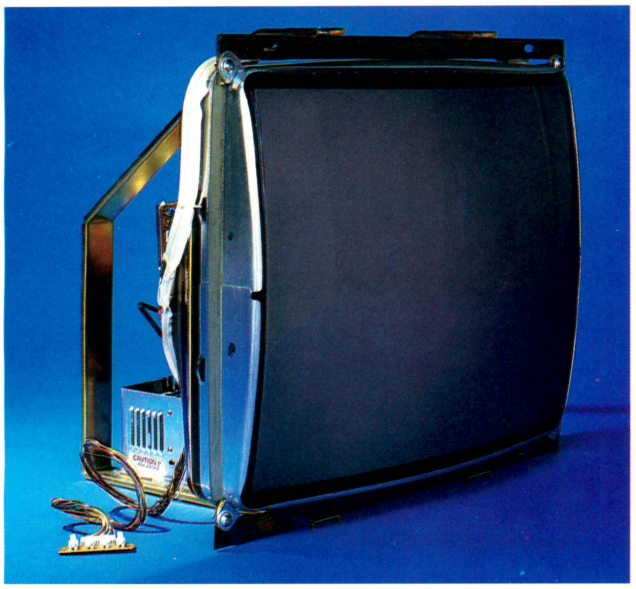
OREGON LOSES VIDPOKER FIGHT; BLAME ELECTION-YEAR POLITICS

Video poker legalization appears dead in Oregon. Early in January, the state's governor ordered the State Lottery Commission to cancel plans for implementation of Oregon's 1989 pro-poker law. "We were really hoping to have our poker machines on line in January," said operator **Cheryl McCown,** president of the Oregon AMOA. "It was a major blow when we got the bad news." For four years, Oregon operators had fought for the right to operate video pokers. In mid-1989, they seemed to win a victory: the state legislature voted that video pokers could be used to raise state revenues. But the new law didn't say who could run those legal pokers: private enterprise or the state government. The issue became an instant political football. "The governor never liked the situation and our attorney general, who's running for the governorship, used operators as his favorite target," explained OAMOA's McCown. "The incumbent governor didn't want video poker to be an issue in his 1990 reelection campaign, so finally he told the Lottery Commission to drop it." That leaves the pro-poker law still on the books, but it's in political limbo until after the election, at least. More bad news: the governor says he will try to get video pokers outlawed once again, during the next legislative session. Said OAMOA's president: "At this point, I think our future lies in dart and pool leagues."

PAMMA MAKES "FINAL" VIDPOKER LEGALIZATION EFFORT

The never-say-die operators of the Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Assn. have been trying to get pay-off video pokers legalized in the state since the mid-1980s. Despite support from prominent members of the state legislature, in previous attempts they've lost the key contests, when the votes were counted. But they're not giving up. "This is the fourth time in eight years we've tried this," said PAMMA Executive Director **John Milliron.** "It's a long shot, but this is the best atmosphere we've had yet." By the time you read this, PAMMA has probably introduced a new bill to legalize vidpokers into the Pennsy House of Representatives. PAMMA said its Legalization Committee, Milliron and legal counsel **Wayne DeLuca** have been working on the bill for over six months. They termed it "the most detailed and comprehensive ever proposed in Pennsylvania." If passed, the bill would allow municipalities to vote individually on whether poker would be legal in their area. If they vote yes, the bill provides for four different types of licenses (manufacturer, distributor, operator and location) and you could only apply for one type. Vidpokers would be restricted to five per liquor-licensed location only. A state oversight commission would be established, and after a two-year phase-in period, net proceeds would be split as follows: 35% to operators, 35% to location owners and 30% to local government (including schools and anti-drug education). PAMMA conservatively estimates that once the revenue sharing kicks in, the state's annual share from poker profits would be $120 to $140 million per year. Look for an update on PAMMA's progress in "Hot Off the Press."

THE PICTURE IS CLEAR!!



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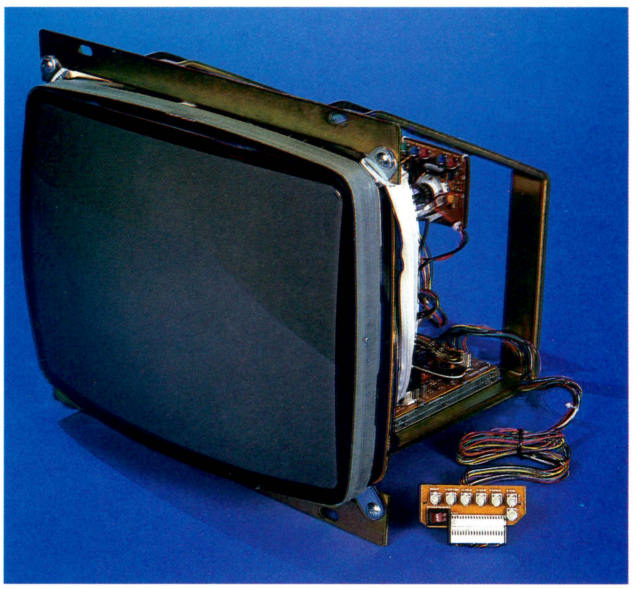

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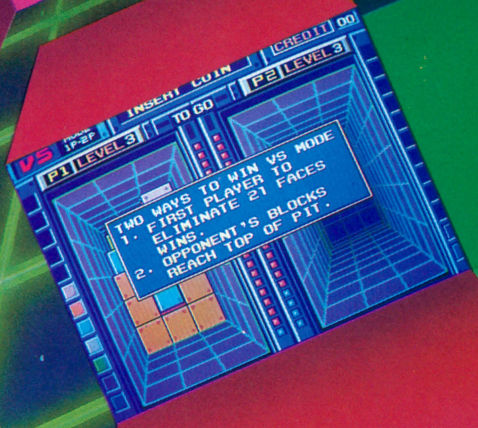

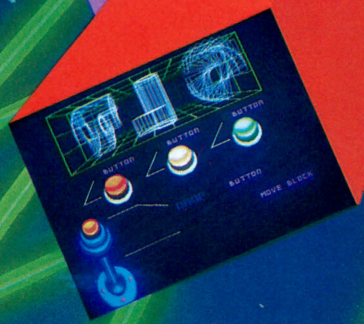

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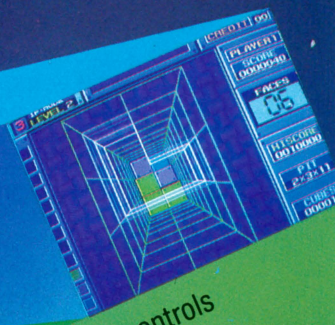

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SCRIBNER HEADS PIONEER'S U.S. JUKE SALES; FIRST UNITS ARRIVE AS DISTRIB NETWORK BEGINS TO JELL

Pioneer Laser Entertainment has named industry vet **Paul Scribner** as national sales manager of their jukebox division. The company, which premiered its dedicated CD jukebox at AMOA Expo '89, said the first large lot of 100 jukeboxes would arrive in the U.S. the first week of February, fresh off the Tokyo production line. "Another 200 will arrive at the end of this month, then 300 more shortly thereafter," said Scribner, whose style is confident and relaxed. "After that," he added with a smile, "Pioneer will provide me with as many as I want!"



Entertainment president **Ted Karasawa** said Scribner's appointment "demonstrates our commitment" . . . and that Scribner's experience would help Pioneer become "a major manufacturer in the jukebox market."

As Pioneer's sales topper, Scribner will oversee all jukebox marketing, advertising and PR. The post also entails coordinating and operating a national distributor network for Pioneer. To that end, Scribner spent January in a series of meetings in New York, Chicago and Long Beach, Calif. where interested distributors met Pioneer execs for an exchange of information. Scribner said he'll announce Pioneer's "first batch" of 10 or so U.S. jukebox distribs in early to mid-February. Then, over the next several months, Pioneer plans to build its distributor network to around 25 distribs, covering the U.S. and Canada. No formal meeting of Pioneer juke distributors is planned prior to the ACME show, he added.

Scribner, a New York native, previously founded and operated Game Room Amusement Co. (food vending and video games). Other prior posts included director of marketing for AM Bruning (worldwide micrographics); national sales manager for CalComp's microfilm products; and district marketing manager for Kodak. Pioneer Laser

TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT: CONTROVERSY OVER BACKGROUNDS IN SEGA DRIVER

If you were watching a broadcast of a professional auto race on TV, you would probably see a number of corporate logos flash by in the background as the cars sped around the track. That's what game designers had in mind when they provided fleeting glimpses of billboards and race car insignia in Sega's *Super Monaco GP*. Unlike home video games made by certain other manufacturers, some of which display Pepsi logos and others as part of a promotional tie-in, these images were not put in the game for advertising purposes, Sega USA explained. "Creating realism is an objective of the whole arcade industry," spokesmen for the firm explained. "There are absolutely no paid or intentional advertisements contained in any of Sega's arcade or home video games," the firm stated, "and it is inaccurate for any group to call them ads . . . These background simulations and likenesses clearly are **not** intended to advertise any product or endorse any lifestyle or behavior." Reportedly, a group of physicians in Atlanta had complained to tobacco giant **Philip Morris** that the Sega driver was "advertising" cigarettes to youngsters. Sega stated in mid-January that "because some groups have misconstrued the intention of these graphics, we began taking steps to remove them several weeks ago." And that, let's hope, is the end of that.

OHIO OPS ISSUE DOLLAR COIN CHALLENGE

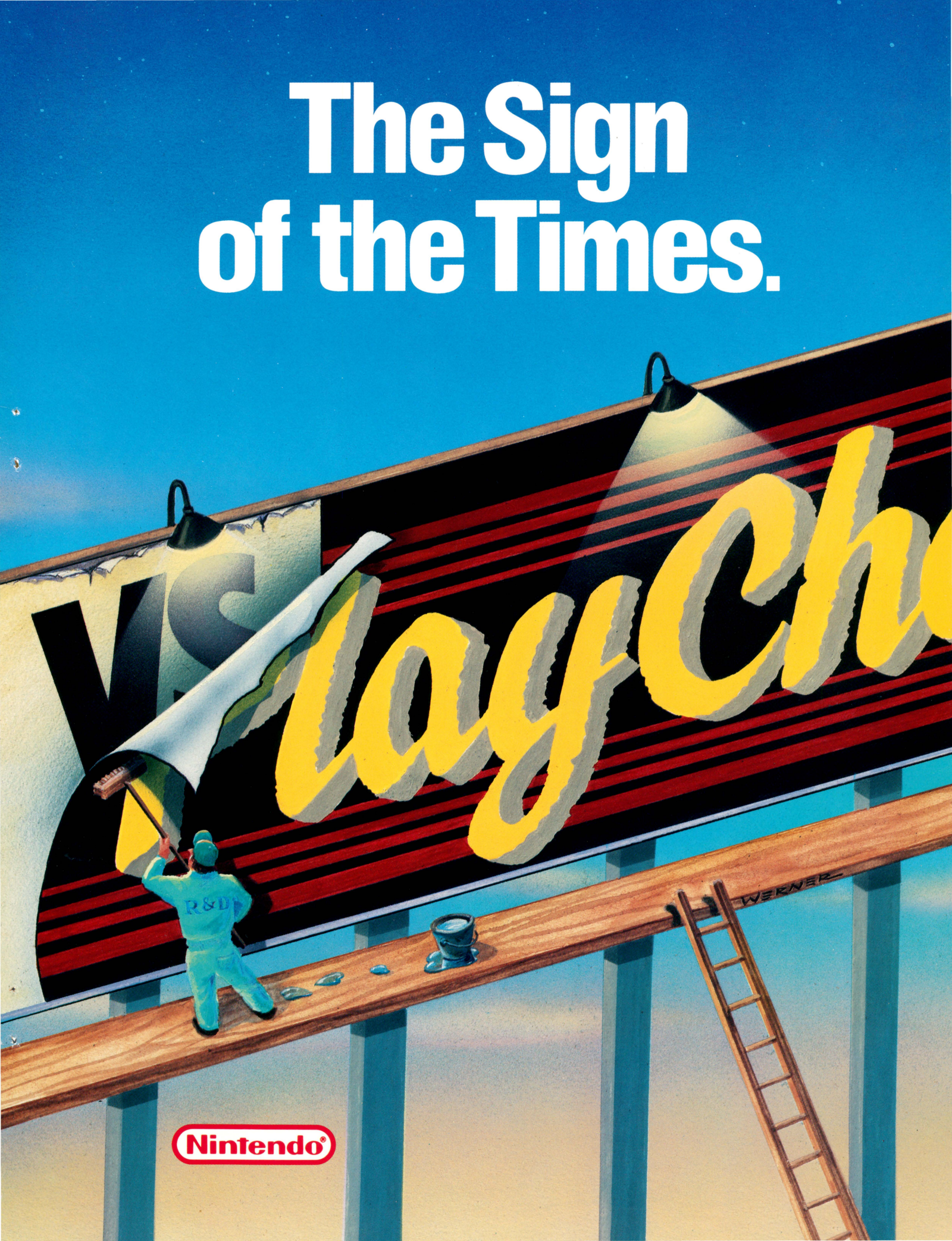
Attention, state operator groups: the Ohio Coin Machine Assn. thinks they're better lobbyists than you. And they're willing to prove it. OCMA president **David George** is boasting that his group can recruit more Congressional sponsors for **dollar coin legislation,** percentage-wise, than any other state association in America. They've issued a nationwide challenge to their counterparts, and they're willing to ship "a case of fine Ohio wine" to any such group that accepts this challenge and tops their mark.

Of course, if you accept the challenge and lose, you've got to pay tribute to OCMA's superior political skills with a gift of similar value, which similarly represents your state. So you might as well go ahead and buy that case of California champagne right now, CCMA. As for you guys and gals in FAVA, the Ohio operators are already smacking their lips over all those juicy Florida oranges you'll have to send them. "If your state has a total of 15 or more U.S. Senators and Representatives, you're eligible to compete with us," OCMA execs said. "We're contacting our congressmen and senators right now! You can accept our challenge by writing to Jim Hayes, OCMA Legislation Chairman, c/o Gem Music & Vending Co., 30 No. Clinton St., Dayton, OH 45402." By the way, OCMA's **new address and phone** is 2011 Riverside Dr., Ste. 450, Columbus, OH 43218; 614/486-8677.

LARAMIE INTERESTS MOVE TO BIG NEW SPREAD

The good ol' boys at that Texas plush supplier, **Laramie Interests,** are still roundin' up their usual low-cost custom assortments of quality redemption merchandise for operators. But as of Feb. 5, they're doin' it from a different spread: a 50,000-sq.-ft. "Custom Plush Pak Headquarters" located near the Houston Astrodome. Laramie's new "ranch house" combines a 900-sq.-ft. showroom, offices and warehouse space. Cattle boss and cowgirl **Larry & Tami Morris** are also beefing up their computer technology for even better customer service, customer records, invoicing and inventory management. (And to think it all began four years ago in Larry and Tami's garage.) Said Larry: "The purpose of both improvements is to better serve our customers — as always, our success is a reflection of their success." Drop by for a visit or call toll-free at 3635 Willowbend, Ste. 318, Houston, TX 77054; 800/237-5874 in Texas or 800/421-8687 from other states.

The Sign of the Times.



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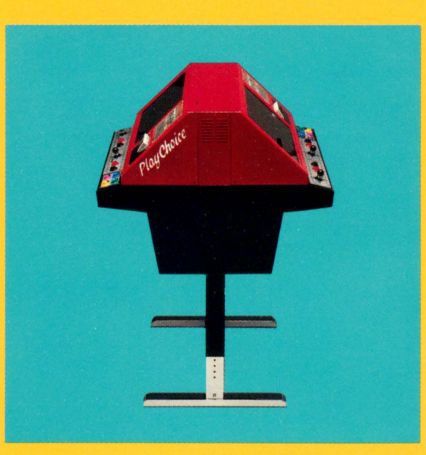

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On Your Mark...

by Marcus Webb

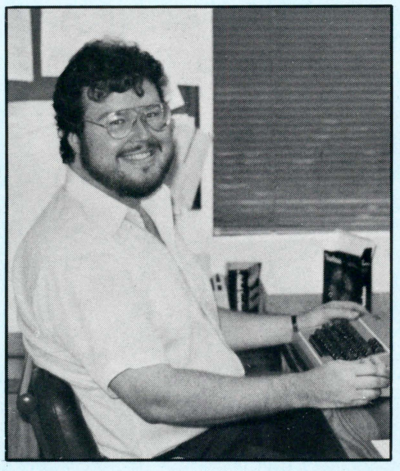
If you thought the '80s were about hi-tech, wait till you see the '90s. Technology transformed the jukebox market last decade, and now similar breakthroughs are in the offing for video games — everything from new controllers to "virtual reality," which sends you totally "inside" a computer-generated environment.

The trouble is, nobody seems to be planning to bring these dazzling new video technologies to the coin machine industry. Why, then, should the American operator bother to read about them?

First, so you'll know what your competition is going to be. Second, so you'll know the whole story when you are told, "There really isn't any new technology we can offer you." And finally, so that you'll be in a position to ask that similar products be introduced into your own market, so that you can have a solid piece of this "sky's-the-limit" future. If you ask for these technologies, you still may not get them. But at this point, it appears practically guaranteed you won't get them, if you don't ask.

In recent months, many of you have come up to us at industry events and said, "Thanks for running those stories on hi-tech." It's our pleasure. We figure you want to know what's happening in your industry. We also figure you need to now what's happening in related industries that will affect your future. Most of all, we want to ensure that you never have any reason to say, "Why didn't my trade magazine inform me that these crucial developments were going on?"

In the short term, it may appear to some that home video is running away with the entire games market. "I'm burning a lot of midnight oil, trying to stay profitable," one beleaguered street



operator mused recently. "But I recall that railroad businessmen burned a lot of midnight oil, too, in the late 1950s when airline passenger travel exploded. And where did it get them?"

Don't despair. Technology is moving so fast that anything is possible . . . including a full-blown coin-op video rebound. As this issue shows, the "R" (research) has already been done; now it's time for the "D&A" (development and application to coin-op). Only manufacturers can make this happen, but operators can help by supporting those firms which truly innovate, and which bring new technology to the market.

*Sure, hi-tech is expensive. Always has been. Remember, the first jukebox cost $200 in an era when milk sold for 5 cents a gallon. But then, those early operators recouped their $200 investment in 4,000 plays. To get the same ROI today, the industry would have to charge $2.50 per play on a $10,000 simulator (with no location split). And that's **your** responsibility, Mr. Operator. Manufacturers must provide the games that justify those play-prices, but they can't set play-prices or commissions for you.*

We've all got our part to play in moving the industry forward. Let's stop pointing fingers of blame at each other, and get busy doing our share.

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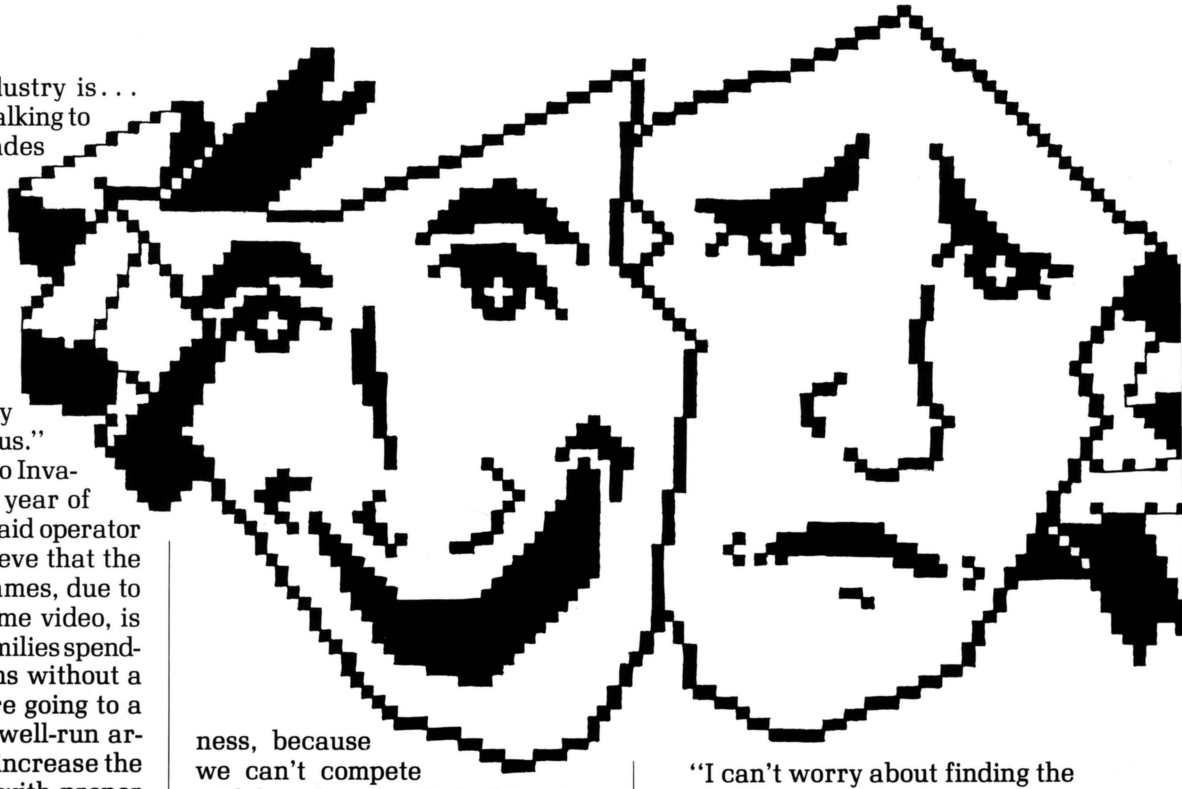
Video Status Report

for coin-op video, "it's the best of times, it's the worst of times"



The state of the industry is... what? Great, if you're talking to many operators of arcades and game rooms. Terrible, if you ask some street operators.

"We're doing numbers that approach our 1981 peak," said one cheerful Midwestern game room operator. "College sites especially are performing well for us."

Up in Canada, "Video Invasion is having the best year of its nine-year history," said operator Wayne Fromm. "I believe that the acceptance of video games, due to the proliferation of home video, is the main factor. I see families spending $20 for game tokens without a thought, as if they were going to a movie. I feel that any well-run arcade should be able to increase the bottom line this year, with proper promotion and attention to detail."

A Los Angeles-area arcade operator agreed: "We invest plenty of money in video and we make sure we have the top games," explained Larry Stern (Space Station, Northridge). "We're doing nicely, thanks. Of course, a major factor in our success is that we're not saddled with high location splits."

BEARISH ON THE STREET

But the "state of the industry" is not good, if you're talking to street operators. Many have identified a single culprit. "Video is dead because of home games," stated Cheryl McCowan, president of the Oregon AMOA. "I didn't used to think it was affecting us all that much. But now it definitely is."

"Video is pretty dead," agreed a large Southwestern operator who specializes in C-stores. "We're being squeezed out of the video business, because we can't compete with home games. Pinball has kept us going for the moment, but long-term it's not a panacea."

"On average, my video game income is down 50% compared to three years ago," said one street operator in the American heartland. "Income in convenience stores has dropped 53% over the same period."

"We're basically putting a freeze on new game buying and taking a wait-and-see approach," stated a middle-sized street operator in the Northeast. "The trend is clear. This recent Christmas was the second in a row where home video was the top gift item. That really did it."

MANUFACTURER WOES

Manufacturers are reporting a similar state of affairs: flat sales, slow sales, no sales. "I'm afraid it's shaping up to be as bad as 1982," one said.

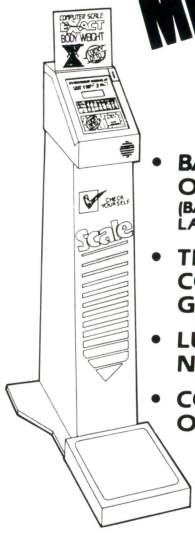
"I can't worry about finding the light at the end of the tunnel; I'm struggling to survive day by day!" said a second. "It's 1982 all over again," commented a third. "I have a very good game that's earned top dollar in Japan, and it's doing great for American operators — those who buy it. But I can't seem to get distributors to push it hard enough, or get enough American operators to try it."

A few distributors are making determined sales efforts, but many are still living in "sample city." Their reply: "The operators just aren't buying. Can you blame them? All the games look alike."

ANTIDOTES & HOPES

Is it all roses in the arcades? No. One chief of a major arcade chain recently mused that perhaps a nationwide forum of his arcade colleagues should be called. Proposed topic: how to quicken the pulse of

MR. VEND SCALE



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the video game business.

Likewise, is it all doom and gloom on the street? No, again. Eddie Velasquez, president of the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Assn., believes that with some creative promotional effort, coin-op video can flourish. "Maybe we can find a way to piggyback on the advertising being done by home games," he mused. "But however we do it, promotion is the answer. The days of just plugging in a game and collecting the quarters, are over."

One Texas operator says he's promoting video in C-stores with big marquee-type signs which are visible from the parking lot . . . and, he says, it's working. "Players don't come in to buy a coke and then say, hey, I think I'll play a game," he explained. "If you talk to players, you discover that they come to a location specifically to play a certain game — especially the hits. Advertise the hits, and you'll get the collections."

At least a few canny street operators say that "when others are hurting, that's the time to bore in." These operators buy up routes of competitors who are leaving the business. They press locations for better cashbox splits. And they take advantage of discount prices from manufacturers.

"I'm hearing a number of operators say that within a year, they'll have stopped buying video," one respected Northern street operator said. "I think that's ridiculous. There are some excellent bargains around, especially if you go for the closeouts." Some good kits from major manufacturers are selling for around $700, he added. R



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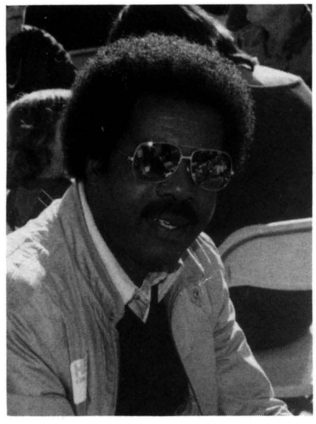
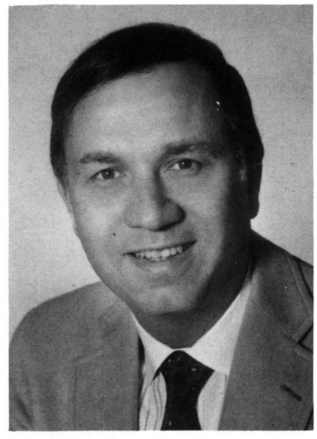
Operator Opinions

Q: *How's business?*



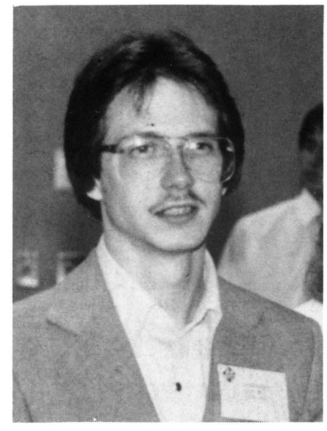
DANNY EVANS
Evans Vending Company
Los Angeles, California

I have one arcade, but mostly operate a street route. I've been in the industry since 1980. My 1989 income was down about 30%. What accounts for that? I believe home games are a major part of it. I've seen people standing in line to buy those home games in department stores and consumer electronic stores. Kids have their own video systems and all kinds of electronic entertainment at home now. Also, we have more competition on the street. Maybe the number of operators is the same, but every time you put games into a location, somebody puts even more games right next door. And then another fellow adds even more games down the block! So operators are splitting up the income and we're all making a lot less... 30 to 50% less. There's nothing positive coming, so I'm kind of depressed and not being aggressive right now. I have a partner and his profit has dropped about 50%, too. One good thing is that my distributor gives me useful advice; he comes out with good ideas and keeps me floating with new games and kits. This year will tell whether I'll stay in the business, or get out.



FRANK ASH
Champions Arcades
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Our arcade chain goes from East to West Coast. In this interesting market, you go wherever you can get the right locations! Our arcades are located in several Eastern Seaboard states, and also in the great State of Washington. We're in an expansion mode, so when the final figures for 1989 were tallied, I smiled and I cried. You have good and not-so-good locations. Generally speaking, we're optimistic for the future. We recently opened some new locations and will do more this year. With the redemption part of the business growing as it is, it's opened markets for us we previously wouldn't consider. Redemption has changed the nature of the mall arcade business in particular, and the coin amusements business in general: it's not as one-dimensional as it used to be when all we had were videos, pinballs, etc. We need more space and are earning more income. We can give prizes, which you can't do with a TV screen. So we had a decent year in 1989 and will do even better in 1990. As for video, there's room for great games like Konami's 'Turtles' and SNK's gun game, 'Beast Busters.' But the home market certainly has affected us. How much, I don't know. Years ago, arcades offered much more than home games did. That's not the case today.



ED NEARGARDER
Celina Music Co., Inc.
Celina, Ohio

We're holding our own so far, but it's getting tougher. Our 1989 gross income was down just a little, but expenses were much higher — fuel, electricity, CD albums, vehicle maintenance. So my bottom line was 20% off. Our state lottery is taking some of the leisure dollars away from us, too — people are going to gamble before they spend that money on other amusements. As for buying new equipment, the cashbox doesn't improve enough to warrant buying a new video game. Most of my locations are bar locations, and nobody's making games for them. I do have a lot of people asking for driving games, but they are too high-priced. I also feel the pinball games are priced too high. There is no way we can get 50 cent play. Besides, pins don't last much longer in a location now than a video game: two or three months. They go around your route pretty quick.

As for CD music, that hasn't helped me very much, either. The cash box goes up maybe $50. It's hard to program CD jukes, because everybody has a lot of requests. And locations with 45 jukeboxes don't understand why we can't supply them with popular hits on 45s. Sometimes they just don't believe you, when you say a particular record isn't available in that format. They realize their location doesn't justify a dedicated CD or even a combo, but they're still unhappy — and that's how you lose locations to another operator. I don't feel the record companies are doing us any justice. I see a lot of single cassettes in stores, but I don't know anybody who uses them, so why

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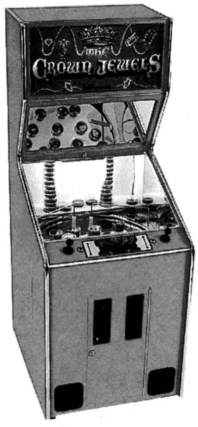

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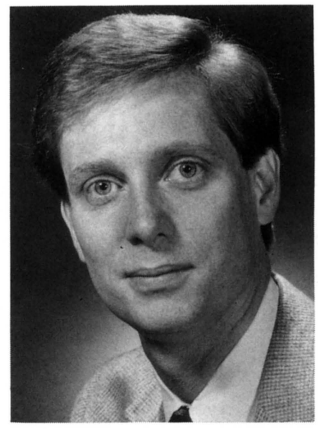
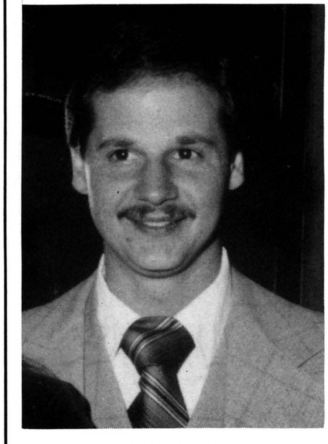
are they cutting out 45s? We're trying to make a buck, too. I'd like to see the industry take a stand and insist that 45s remain available until we're through this transition period. We operators are all in the same boat. We just kind of let the manufacturers go on, forgetting that it takes us longer to make that return on the investment. So if we get a game that's a dog, we just have to eat the loss.



DAVID LLOYD and JOE ABOYD
Putt-Putt Golf Courses of America
Fayetteville, North Carolina

David Lloyd, CEO: I think the consensus is that the industry right now, in terms of game rooms, is flat. We have some locations that are doing well: they're above '88 or '89 figures. Those are in the minority, sad to say. Most are flat since '88. A few of our game rooms are actually down. Many of our operators are saying, "We don't have quality new games to buy. We're buying mediocre kits that don't make a difference. We're just moving revenue around the room from piece to piece. We don't have any new high-impact pieces that really make a difference." I'm afraid I agree with that. There are four or five good pieces out there, but after that it's pretty ho-hum. The last time I discussed this with a distributor, their main concern was how much time, energy and money the manufacturers were devoting to home units instead of coin-op games. It's just my opinion, but it looks to me as if manufacturers have realized they can sell hundreds of thousands of home cartridges (or even millions) at a higher per-unit profit, and for less hassle, than an arcade piece. For an coin-operated game, optimally, they've got three to five thousand sales. We just don't have enough arcades today for it to be as attractive a market for them. The rumor was that in 1981, we had estimates of 10,000 arcades and game rooms. But since then, the word is that we're down to 5,000 game rooms. So right now, the industry seems to have directed its attention to another market. Our distributor says many of his street operators' income is down 40%. Where are we going? At last fall's trade show, we had hoped to see some new, innovative equipment. . . and we were disappointed.

Joe Aboyd, Game Room Operations Manager: The bottom line is, there are only so many ways you can market a martial arts game. Manufacturers found a good theme here, but they've pretty much stayed with it, leaving us high and dry while they go to the home market. True, we have sports and driving games, but the game makers need to realize that arcades and street stops are the foundation of this industry. Home players first learned to enjoy video games in the arcade.



MIKE CINQUEGRANA
State Music
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Our income for 1989 was definitely off. Before, when I put a new game in, the cashbox would double. Now, it just goes up $30 or $40 a week. The economy

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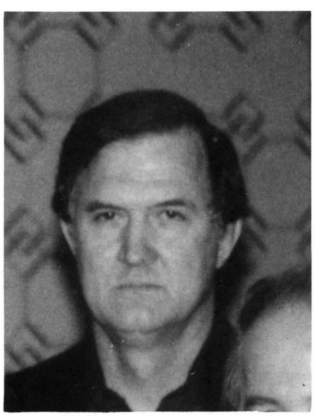
has a lot to do with it; I think people are getting scared. Once they hear there's no money, they stop spending. Which category of equipment dropped? It was off overall, especially at the end of 1989. To compensate, we just keep rotating it around. We're in the moving business! We don't buy much new equipment except kits. I just move them around, even if a location had it a year or two earlier. By the time I move it back to the original location, the place may have all new customers who have not seen that title before. New games are so expensive! Even 'Turtles' costs a lot. It will eventually pay for itself, but it takes a long time. Locations splits are about the same as ever. We're operating on 50-50. The locations are not asking for new games all the time, either. They realize new equipment won't earn like it used to.

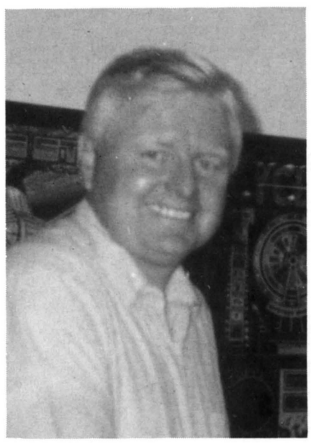


C.G. FORSYTHE
Video Entertainment Corp.
Grand Prairie, Texas

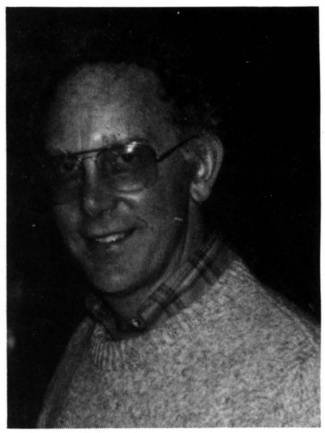
I operate a street route and it's significantly down. Sales are down, costs are up and at the moment, we can't pass the increased costs on to our customers. Two or three years ago, a 100-game route in 7-Eleven stores would average $35 per game, per week. The operator would be highly upset if the revenue dipped to even $30. Nowadays, at least in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area, those places are $17 to $18 per week for video games. So you're looking at a 50% drop in video game income. In my opinion, the reason is the home videos. I know the manufacturers would dispute that, but if you talk about a $3 billion industry that's cropped up, those dollars have to come from somewhere. There are only so many amusement dollars available, which means those dollars are coming out of operator's pockets. Despite what some say, the problem is not the economy, which is pretty good. What can I do about it? Well, I cry a lot. I was reading your magazine yesterday, looking at game ratings and thinking about my next purchase. Buying equipment is an art form in this business: we have less money to buy with, but game prices are higher. So the route is getting a little older. For small operators running close to the break-even line, they may be in trouble (especially if they have any debt service) and it's depressing. Mostly we've been buying kits lately. If you have a street route, that's the way to survive. Few street routes will support a $3,000 piece these days. I've also gone more into cranes and pinball, since those games can't go into the home market. With Sega and NEC offering 16-bit home systems, competition from home games should get worse. They're expecting home video revenue to rise from three billion to maybe five billion. That should hurt us even more. And if you couple that with the fact that conversion kits did cost $695 a couple of years ago, but now cost $1,295 to $1,495... well, the operator is between a rock and hard place.

LYNN HANCOCK
Galaxy Games
Mesa, Arizona

I operate chiefly video games because Arizona's laws are so restrictive. My overall opinion of the business is a real downer; I think we're in tough times. It's like in 1982 and 1983. What happened then was that players caught up with the technology of coin-op games; players became familiar with it. What brought the player back to coin-op video was when technology advanced. But now they've got the same technology in the home



systems, so kids are bored with what's in arcades. At the same time, the kids are excited by home systems. All their money is going to home cartridges. All the manufacturers seem to be putting their money into home systems and they are putting us on the wayside until the arcade end provides more income. It's just a numbers game with them. They're not producing much, because the sales aren't there ...and we're not buying much, because the games aren't there! It's a Catch-22 situation. What happened in 1989 with our company is that we've gone through quite a bit of growth in the last couple of years. We've added 300 or 400 pieces of equipment, so our gross didn't fall...but it didn't go up, either. It should have gone way up, from adding that much to the route. We did notice per-machine averages falling. In our street locations — C-stores, bowling centers and so on — our gross is down 30 to 50% over a two-year period since the slide started. We do have some locations I'd call arcades, such as pizza places with 20 games and up. Some of those remain the same, a few went up slightly, but for most the gross is down. Until we get something new and different, the industry will be in the pits. The way it will turn around is when the kids get tired of buying the same old games for their home systems. Then manufacturers' revenue will dry up. The pressure will be on, and somebody will come up with a money-making idea for our segment of the market. It will happen because everything goes in cycles. At least, I hope I've got it pegged right!



NORMAN PINK
American Amusement Arcades
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The street business has not been exciting. We run a very strong league program, and that has helped maintain the income from pool and darts. We've increased play-pricing of pool from 50 to 75 cents, and that went along quite smoothly. Novelty games and action games like basketball, pool and darts haven't fallen off as much as video. Some locations are off, but I don't want to stress doom and gloom. The bright side is, we've got some locations that are doing better, because they're promoting in-house. They've remodeled, or gone to a sports theme, or added TV sets, or changed the menu, bringing more customers into his club or bar. These locations are drawing adults who might have gone to a passive restaurant to eat; sometimes they bring their kids and they'll play games if there's an accessible game room. Adults who wouldn't play a pin or video will play the basketball game. We've also seen a resurgence of air hockey, both in arcades and the bars. The arcade business in our area has been good. We had an excellent Christmas season. With 'Turtles,' we can't see that the entire location's volume goes up. But if we didn't have 'Turtles,' would the volume be down? It's hard to determine. Licensed redemption products with Turtles characters are also becoming available; we get those whenever we can. Redemption income is going up.

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This year's ACME takes place in Chicago's Hyatt Regency, Thursday through Saturday, March 9-11. For ambitious learners, the seminar schedule actually begins a day earlier, on Wednesday March 8. Then it's three days of exhibits as operators, distributors and manufacturers pour through the aisles, taking in the latest and hottest in videos, jukeboxes, pinballs, darts, basketball, air hockey, shuffle and roll-down games, cranes and redemption units, video pokers, impulse games, novelties and classics, coin counting mechanisms and much, much more!

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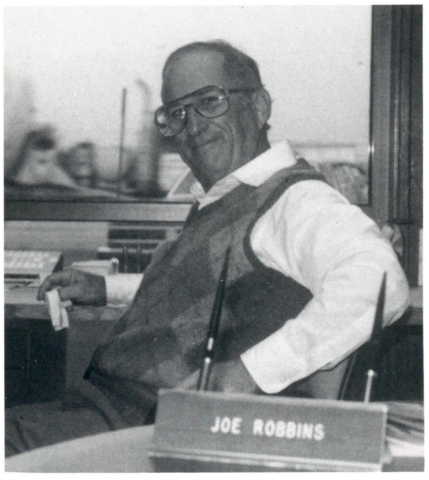
TECHNICAL SEMINARS

This year's seminar program is generously populated with both technical and management sessions.



Joe Robbins will be honored at the Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation's annual Appreciation Dinner on Saturday, March 10, during ACME '90. The show runs March 9-11 in Chicago.

On the technical side, jukebox and pinball clinics (each lasting two hours) will be offered by reps from major firms: music sessions by Rowe, NSM, Seeburg and Rock-Ola ... flipper classes by Williams, Bally, Premier and Data East. Also, operator and cabinet maker Todd Erickson will talk cabinets, and arcade school whiz Randy Fromm will lead various classes on power supplies, monitors and conversions. A troubleshooting seminar will be led by route expert Gary Huff.

Management sessions will include talks by operators Frank Seninsky, Todd Erickson and Charlie Ross, along with management professor Dick Preismeyer. Topics to be covered include employee relations, shopping for insurance, location profit analysis, working with bankers, video operating, and overall company improvement.

A key session will be the traditional "Manufacturer Firing Line." In this always-lively affair, operators can bring up whatever is on their minds: "gripes, likes and swipes" from pricing to product to quality control. This one's slated for Friday afternoon from 3-5 PM; no registration is needed for attendance to the Firing Line.

ACME leaders say they've made every effort to keep seminar hours from conflicting with exhibit hours. That's one reason for the extra day just for seminars, before the show floor opens.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Former Pittsburg Steelers' quarterback Terry Bradshaw will give a motivational seminar called "The Sporty Side of Life" on Sunday morning; no admission ticket is required to this free event.

One of the main attractions at any ACME show is the annual fund-raising dinner of the AAMA Charitable Foundation. This year's guest of honor is "himself," Joe Robbins, one of ACME's "Founding Fathers" (he's also the founder of the AAMA-CF). Joe has decided that proceeds from this year's dinner will go to "Starting Now," the primary youth program at Highland Park Hospital.

ACME 90
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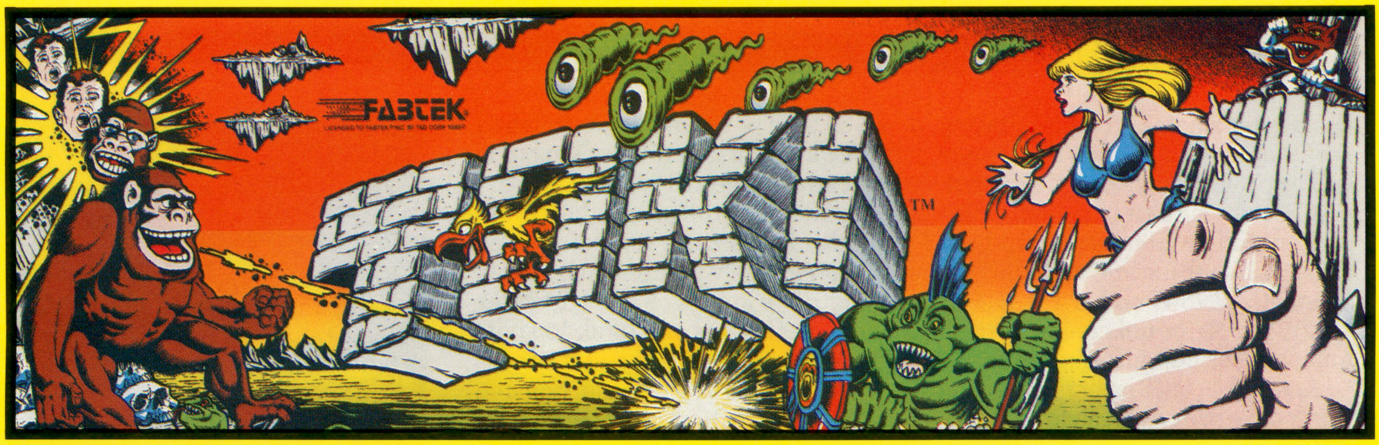

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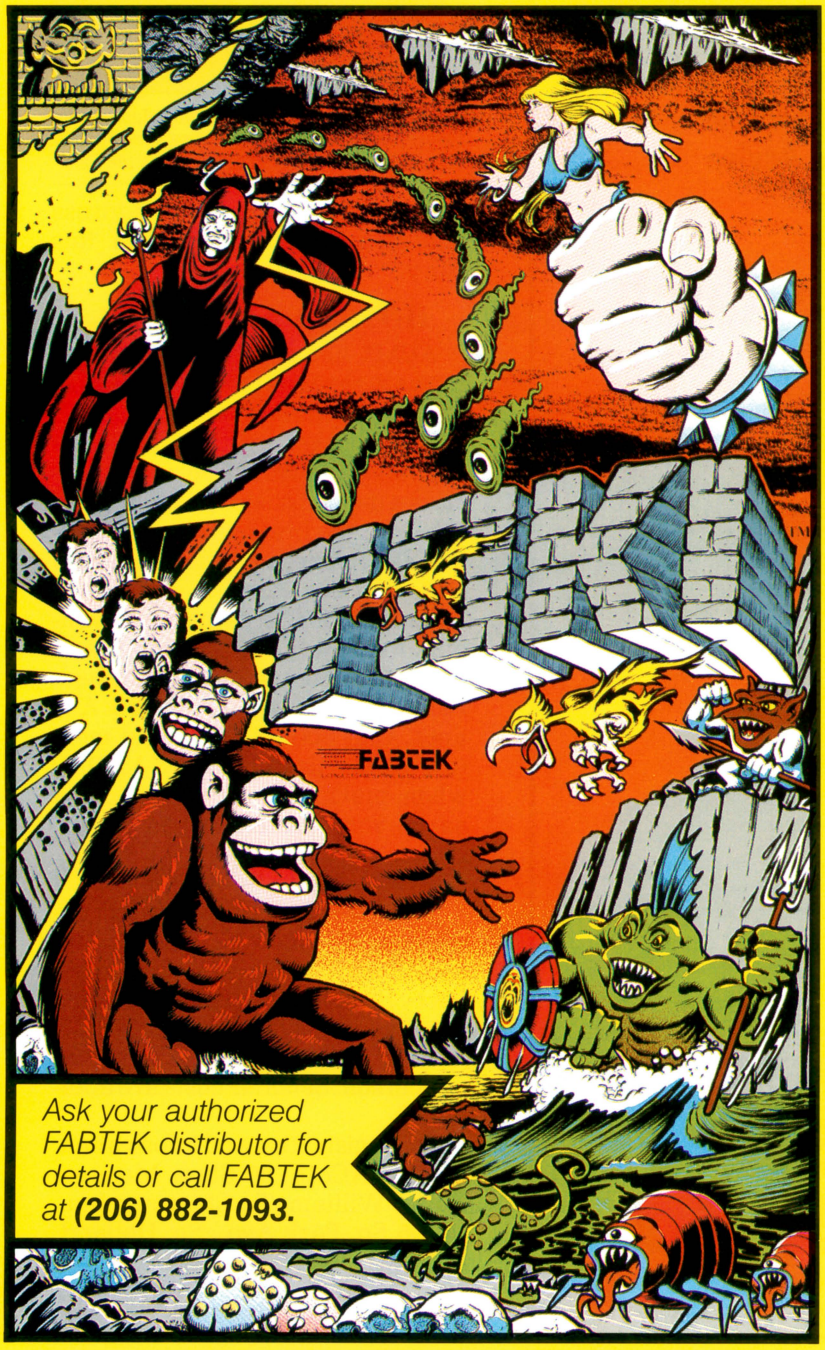

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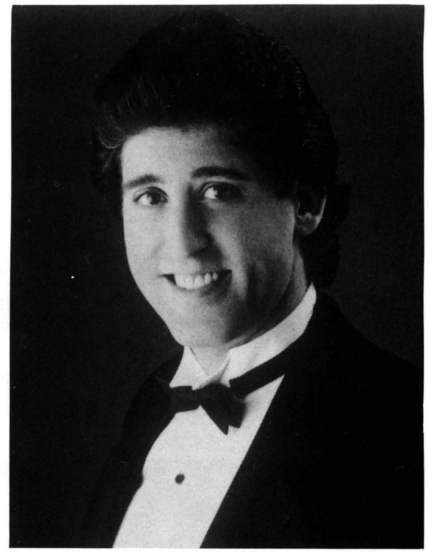
Besides testimonials to this industry great, entertainment at the dinner will be provided by Fox TV Network star Danny Gans and a golden oldies rock 'n' roll band called JP and the Cats. To honor Joe and help the kids of Starting Now, call AAMACF at 703/494-2758 for ticket reservations and sponsorship information.

Another ACME special event is the spouse programs. Friday offers a $25 tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park houses and his own home and studio. Saturday is a $40 "art encounter" at the private home and studio of a Chicago artist, followed by an Art Institute tour and lunch. Sunday brings a $20 "gangster tour" that takes you back to spots that Capone, Dillinger and others made famous during the Roaring '20s. Registration may be accomplished by contacting the address and phone at the bottom of this story.



Entertainment at the AAMACF annual Appreciation Dinner will be Danny Gans (pictured above) and an oldies rock 'n' roll band called JP and the Cats.

HOTEL & AIR TRAVEL

ACME has reserved a block of rooms at the Hyatt for showgoers at special convention rates. You can't make direct reservations, so fill out a Hotel Reservation Form and enclose a deposit check, payable to the hotel, for the first night's stay. Contact the address and phone at the bottom of this story.

Reduced air fares are also available for ACME '90 attendees and their traveling companions through Zenith Travel and American Airlines. Call 800/433-1790 and mention Star File Number S-1330BD when making reservations. Book early! Some restrictions apply.

REGISTRATION

Total cost for badge, exhibit admission, All Show Cocktail Party, Manufacturers' Firing Line, and Terry Bradshaw's speech was just $15 if you registered before Feb. 1. At this date, the price is now $20 per person. Seminar costs are additional.

For registration and information, contact ACME '90 Show Management, William T. Glasgow, Inc., 16066 So. Park Ave., So. Holland, IL 60473; phone: 708/333-9292; fax: 708/333-4086; telex: ITT 494-3831 BG UI.

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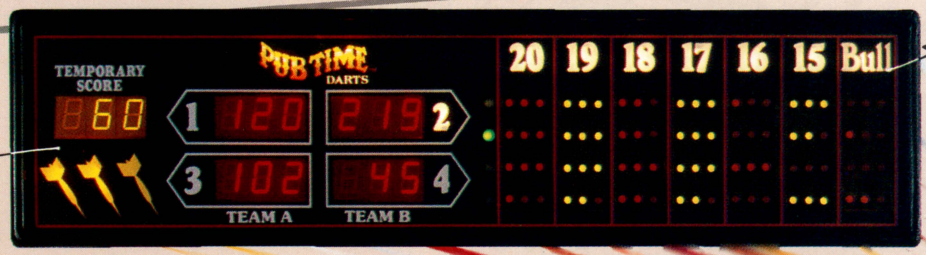

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Home Games Look Robust at Winter CES Show; "Coin-Op Must Get On Track Fast," Observers Say

Style. Class. Exciting products, polished presentation. And lots and lots of money.

That was the first impression made by the massive home video game display area at the recent Consumer Electronics Show (Jan. 6-11, Las Vegas Contention Center). Video game hardware, software and peripherals had a giant building all to themselves at the Winter CES. They filled this hall to capacity with home systems by Nintendo, Sega and NEC, plus mountains of software from those three firms, as well as from major suppliers like Atari-Tengen and many others. Overall, the home game market appeared very healthy, although some tradesters were somewhat unclear about the market's long-term direction.

NINTENDO STILL LEADS

Nintendo proved itself — once again — the dominant force with some 50 software suppliers, all arranged in a huge "compound" under the huge Nintendo signs. Each supplier offered multiple titles for Nintendo's handheld Gameboy hardware and/or for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Nintendo believes the industry will do a billion dollars' worth of business with Gameboy alone, plus another three billion with NES hardware and software.

A few forthcoming NES titles, such as Arcadia's *Spot,* are also slated for coin-op release. *Spot,* an imaginative color-strategy board game, features the red "Spot" character from the 7-Up logo. The game will enjoy plenty of promotion from the beverage firm and could have excellent arcade and street potential. (The Russian game programmer who created *Tetris* was present at CES; he reportedly called *Spots* "the best game here.")

Some industry observers have been suggesting that the home game market is beginning to "mature." Nintendo disagrees, saying sales of both software and hardware remain very high. Fourth-quarter 1989 software sales were up 28% over the same period for the previous year, said the firm. Accordingly, Nintendo has increased its U.S. hardware allocation from 6.0 to 7.5 million units for 1990. (That is, 1990's allocation will be about the same as it was in 1989.)

"We believe the sustained U.S. consumer demand means that the NES is as hot as ever," stated Nin-



Above: ***The Las Vegas Convention Center, site of the Winter Consumer Electronics Show;*** *Below:* ***Marcus Webb checks out Sega's home game system in their neat maze-type exhibit at the show.***





Arcadia's Justin Heber with his friend, Spot, the red "spot" on the 7-Up logo (you've seen him pop from the cans in the firm's commercials). Spot, the game, is coming from Arcadia for Nintendo's NES system and is also slated for coin-op release. (It's a fun color-strategy game.)

tendo of America president Minoru Arakawa. "We also believe the hefty marketing support we've put behind our product is paying off in the stores. The strength and stamina of sell-through has surprised a lot of the skeptics."

HI-TECH UPGRADES

On the technological side, Nintendo has signed an agreement with Archer International, the Canadian firm which has created "3D sound." Archer's patented "QSound" process could also be applied to arcade video games, the firm advised.

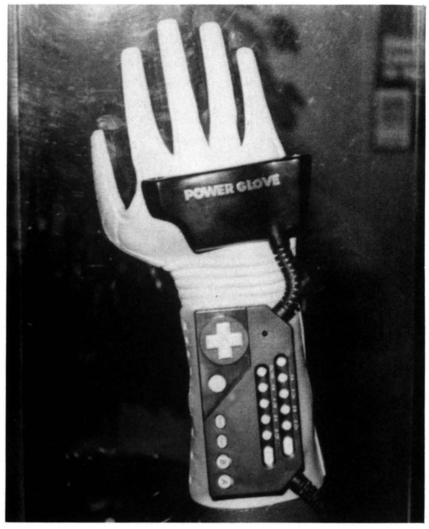
More technical upgrades: at CES, Nintendo demonstrated new controllers such as "U-Force" from Broderbund Software. Computer sensors in the U-Force accessory "read" your hand motion; you never have to physically touch anything to play a game.

Also displayed for NES was the "Power Glove" from Mattel, a glove-type controller with sensors embedded in it. Some future NES games (slated to come out later in 1990) will show a silhouette of a hand on the screen: whatever your real hand does with the Power Glove, the cartoon hand will do on the screen: move left, right, up and down. The cartoon hand can also move forward, going further "into" the image, for a 3D "virtual reality" effect.

ATARI IN ACTION

Atari's home game subsidiary, Tengen, boasted a full catalog of games for hardware made by Nintendo, Sega and NEC, along with PC-based floppy disc games. These ranged from arcade hits like *Hard Drivin'* and *Shinobi,* to brand-new games featuring characters licensed from hit movies, such *Police Academy* and *License to Kill* (last summer's James Bond flick). "We're having a great show," said Atari's Mike Taylor. Tengen topper Dan Van Elderen said the NES market had plenty of room for additional sales growth.

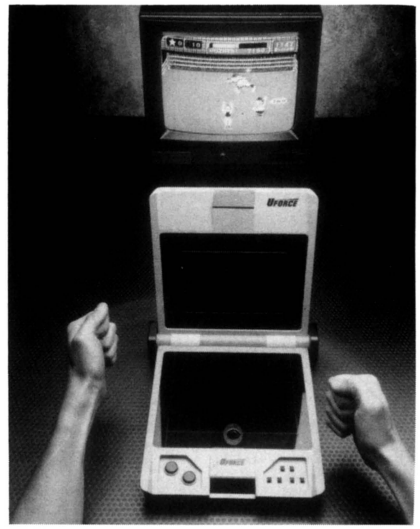
Over at the Mirage Hotel, Atari demonstrated its "Lynx" hand-held video game system. Lynx features color graphics and some built-in hardware programming which frees up software to create more sophisticated gameplay. So far only three games are available for Lynx, but Atari said the product sold out its limited 1989 fourth quarter production run, which was confined to a New York City test market. Brisk sales were predicted to continue as full production and nationwide marketing gets underway in 1990.



Mattel's "Power Glove" for the Nintendo system.



Broderbund's "U-Force" controller "reads" your hand motion to control action on the screen.



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Many of the licensees for Nintendo's home system had booths within the enormous Nintendo exhibit. At American Technos' booth are Happ Controls' Dennis Sitcler and American Technos' Greg Rice and Aldo Donnaloia.



Romstar's Rene Lopez, Joyce Kaehler & Heh-Kyu Lee at the WCES.

SEGA'S IMPRESSIVE LINE

Sega came on very strong with its 16-bit Genesis system. The Genesis people made no bones about taking on coin-op, either. "We've dared to set up three of our Genesis games right next to the arcade versions of the same games," stated one Sega home game division exec. "And we don't believe you'll be able to tell the difference."

Many onlookers couldn't, including one coin machine operator who said: "This is the first time I would really say that home games have matched arcade quality, point for point. They have left nothing out: graphics, depth of gameplay, it's all there."

Most of Sega's new titles featured licensing of well-known people, characters, etc. Included are sports personalities *(Tommy Lasorda Baseball, Jim Palmer Golf)*, famous comic book characters *(Spiderman)* and big-budget movies *(Dick Tracy,* which will be a summer 1990 release starring Warren Beatty).

MOONWALKER FOR COIN-OP?

Apparently, only one of Sega's new home system titles may be slated for coin-op release, but it's a biggie: *Moonwalker.* This game features an animated Michael Jackson, dancing and fighting his way through various backdrops. The brilliant graphics are based on digitized film of Jackson actually dancing ("You got all my moves down," Jackson reportedly congratulated designers). The game's soundtrack includes music from three of Jackson's hit melodies: "Bad," "Beat It," and "Diana."

According to Genesis execs, *Moonwalker* is slated for simultaneous home/coin-op release in July. Sega coin-op staffers said this was not accurate, but could not give us correct details at presstime.

Technological innovations coming soon from Sega include modem-





Left: ***Michael Jackson tries out the* Moonwalker *home game for the Sega Genesis System.*** *Right:* ***The coin-op prototype of the game which was displayed at the WCES. (At presstime, Sega coin-op execs were unable to provide full details on the possible release of this game for the coin-op market.)***



Data East's VP/Liason Officer Hideo Fukuda with Marcus Webb at the CES.



At Capcom's booth is their Joe Morici with operator Pete Casas & Marcus Webb.

linked gameplay for selected titles. Called "TeleGenesis," this accessory lets players hook up their Genesis systems over the phone and play the same game interactively and competitively. Doing this with Sega's baseball title, for example, gives one player the batter's point of view, while the other player gets an outfielder's point of view.

The gap between home and coin-op games was underscored in a different way by a game called *Phantasy Star II.* It takes at least 250 hours to play to completion, and it comes with a 110-page "hint book." Slated for Genesis release in late February, this one obviously won't be heading to the arcades.

NEC & CD-ROM

Like Sega, Nippon Electronics Corp. also has a 16-bit system. Theirs is called TurboGrafx-16. NEC was slow to release titles in 1989, but they say software product intro should pick up at a rapid pace this year. New titles will include *TV Sports Football,* which can be played by five players simultaneously, via a special add-on accessory.

The real excitement at NEC is happening with their CD-Rom projects. For those who don't know, CD-Rom is a silver 5½ inch disc which looks just like the ones that go in a jukebox. But a CD-Rom disc contains "read only memory" and can store around 2,000 times more programming instructions than a cartridge type game.

NEC's CD player is a very expensive ($399) add-on to their basic system. So far only two CD-Rom titles have been released for it: *Final Fight* and *Monster Lair.* Neither of these titles boasts gameplay or graphics which are "$400 worth" better than standard video. So what's the big deal about CD-Rom?

Simple. CD-Rom has the potential to take video games to their next "quantum leap" of realism and excitement. You can read more about CD-Rom elsewhere in this issue, but



Marcus Webb at the Tradewest booth with the firm's Byron and Leland Cook.



At Irem's NES display are the firm's Director M. Sasatan, General Manager M. Fujimoto and their U.S. chief Frank Ballouz.



the relevant point here is that nobody at NEC contemplates bringing this major innovation to coin-op.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Although some coin machine operators believe home games have positive side effects for street and arcade games, many do not share this view. Some operators, in fact, would like nothing better than to see home games commit hari-kari again, as they did in the early 1980s. Either way, the future of home video remains a topic of prime interest to the coin machine industry.

For all the money and hype surrounding home video systems, some software suppliers at CES were not certain where their market's future lay. Home game manufacturers now estimate they have a little over 20% market penetration in the U.S., but getting higher than that may be difficult, observers believe.

One long-time industry member (whose firm makes non-video amusements) summed up the CES show and the home game market in a single word: "Confusion." Asked to elaborate, this tradester explained: "Titles for Nintendo's Gameboy were everywhere at CES and, in a sense, all the attention paid to this new format put a 'freeze' on the regular NES market. All the emphasis was on Gameboy, where there is still room for growth. Regular NES games were almost secondary, perhaps because NES is entering a plateau. They've got a maturing market where the themes are starting to become repetitious. At $45 per cartridge, a kid doesn't really want to buy a dozen different manufacturers' hockey games. Game cartridge buyers are increasingly into 'cherry picking.' Today, an advertising blitz can sell millions of dollars of software, regardless of quality. At some point in the near future, that won't be true anymore. Players will start renting games more often, before they buy them, to make sure they're getting good value for their money."



At the Sega Genesis System exhibit is RePlay's Key Snodgress (the one without the horns) with a character from the home game, **Phantasy Star II.**

Is the Nintendo market in fact maturing and slowing down? The toy industry trade journal, *Toy & Hobby World,* reported — perhaps prematurely — in December 1989 that NES sales were slower than Christmas of 1988. "This could be the beginning of the long-expected slowdown in the home video game market," trade reporters claimed.

NINTENDO CONFIDENCE

As mentioned above, Nintendo says sales are still humming along nicely. And key NES software suppliers like Konami, Tengen and Acclaim Entertainment took pains to state their faith in the continued potential for growing home video game sales.

The questions center around what happens after NES and Gameboy do eventually run their course. As one CES observer stated: "Software suppliers are asking, what is our future? Portable games? CD? 16-bit systems? They're not sure which, if any, of these alternatives is the road to take."

But if some software suppliers are unclear on the future, it could mean simply that they're waiting for Nintendo to provide the next leadership move. One software manufacturer who works closely with Nintendo said, "I'm not free to discuss Nintendo's future plans for the home game market, but I know what they are up to . . . and believe me, they'll still be a giant, successful firm with a growing and developing market at the end of this decade."

Based on Nintendo's track record so far, this prediction could prove accurate. If so, coin machine operators had better start thinking about how they can "piggyback" on the Nintendo phenomenon.



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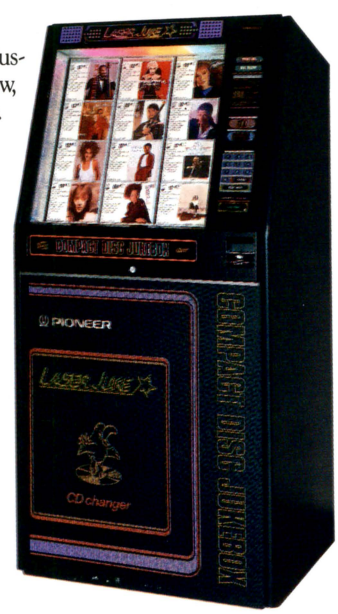

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No Contest

home video has coin-op beat in sales, number of titles, & new technology

Home systems vs. coin-op video: it's no longer just a case of the tail wagging the dog. At the first Consumer Electronics Show of the 1990s, (Las Vegas Convention Center, Jan. 6-9), it was clear that the home game "tail" is thrashing the coin-op "dog" within an inch of his life . . . at least, for the moment. Home games are producing much larger sales, introducing far more technological innovation, and receiving the overwhelming majority of new titles.

At present, home games are no longer an "aftermarket," even though some tradesters persist in using that outdated vocabulary. But is it an "aftermarket" when most software suppliers are producing five home system titles for every one coin-op title? Often as not, that lonely coin-op title is slated for simultaneous release to the home. Some aftermarket!

Technological innovations coming fast and furious to the home include portable game hardware, CD-based software, 3D sound reproduction, modem-linked gameplay, and unique new controllers. No manufacturers are talking about bringing these exciting developments to coin-op (although, where practicable, the suppliers of these add-ons would obviously love the additional income).

Most of all, home games remain the dominant market where it counts: dollar volume. Sales of home game cartridges remain steady and large (though they are no longer climbing at 1988's skyrocketing rates). More importantly, perhaps, individual home game cartridges offer a profitability which is superior to coin-op's. For an R&D investment of $100,000, software suppliers can gross $40 million or more in cartridge sales . . . and that's for a title which performed only "so-so" in arcades.

Sales of coin-op and PC video games lag badly behind the home's scorching pace. Some top-ranked coin-op video titles are struggling hard to reach 1,000 unit sales, while so-so home game cartridges can sell a million units (if properly promoted). Sales of vidgames on floppy discs, aimed at the personal computer market, are off by 30%, one manufacturer reported.



The West Hall of the Convention center, where the home video game business is on stage during WCES.

As a group, dual-market manufacturers look upon home games' dominance with a mixture of indifference, regret, and cold-eyed realism. "Coin-op had better get on track with home games and their technology real fast," one manufacturer said starkly.



Entering the enormous Nintendo "exhibit" at the WCES, attendees walked between two towering black columns covered with Nintendo title artwork driving home the volume of product available for the home market through just one of the players.

"Coin-op still counts as an important proving ground for future home system titles," said another manufacturer. "We believe there is a direct relationship between the arcade, where new ideas are tested, and the home, where the sales potential is greater."

"Coin-op is more than just a proving ground for home games," a third software supplier stated. "It's a source of creativity and new directions. Coin-op's less-restrictive technical parameters give video game designers more room for experimentation and creativity. The trouble is," this manufacturer added, "very few software suppliers have been exploiting that potential in the last couple of years."

For coin machine operators, the best news at the Winter CES was this: dual-market manufacturers and software suppliers pledged to remain active in coin-op . . . and some excellent home titles are "also" slated for release to street and arcade operators.

Coming: a Video Game/Movie

incredible CD-Rom technology could revolutionize (home) video games

The long-awaited "quantum leap" for video game technology will arrive this fall . . . but it won't be offered to coin machine operators. From a technical point of view, the next generation of video game technology is something called CD-Rom, though it's unclear as yet whether this technology will be "it" from a marketing point of view.

The "Rom" stands for "Read Only Memory," and it's a way of storing computer programming (including video games) on a 5½ inch CD. You play the disc on a small mechanism (similar to a Sony Discman) which is attached to a personal computer or to a home video game system.

What's so special about CD-Rom? "CD game technology is going to allow us to do what we've always dreamed of doing: interactive movies." So says David Riordan, director of interactive entertainment for Cinemaware (Westlake Village, Calif.). Cinemaware is the software supplier for history's first "interactive movie" title, *It Came from the Desert.* Slated to arrive in retail stores for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 home game system, *Desert* was inspired by 1950s "B" horror films like *Them.* The game is a clever "movie" that the player can actively participate in.

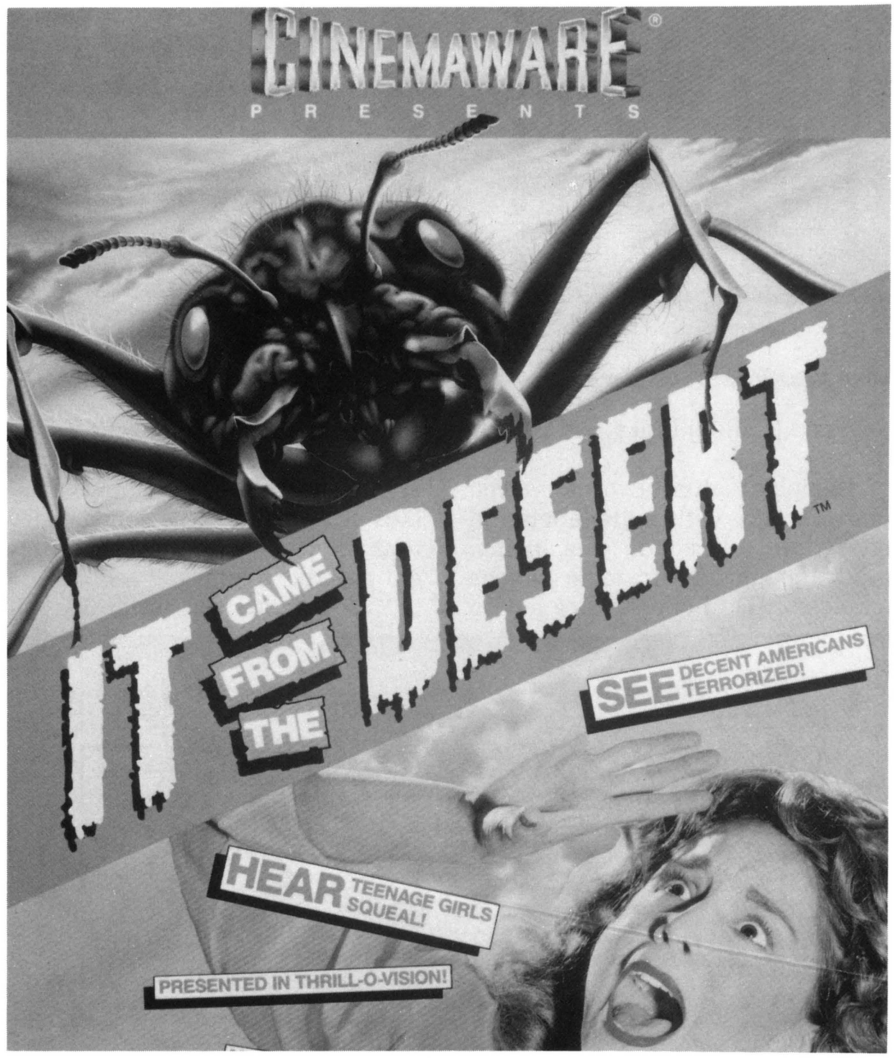
INTERACTIVE MOVIES

It Came from the Desert is set in a bleak California desert town called Lizard Breath . . . which is being invaded by giant, radioactive ants. The player takes the part of the movie's hero, who must convince the townspeople that this threat is real and must lead the counterattack. Rival characters try to prevent the hero from locating and destroying the creatures' nest within the 15-day time limit.

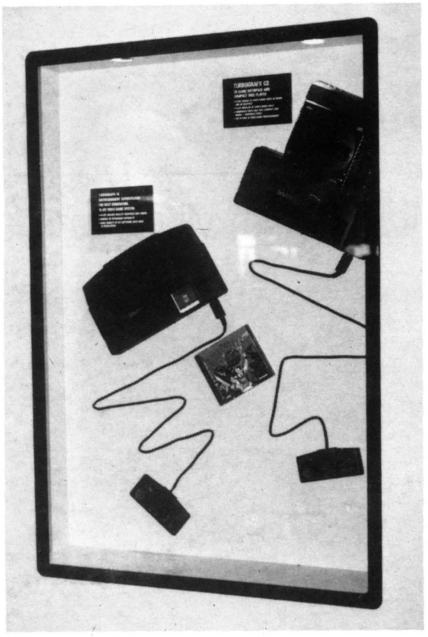
Desert features full-color, 15-frames-per-second, movie-type type graphics which are digitized from video photography. These images are slightly jerky and there's no camera motion (tracking, pans, etc.). But the video is still highly effective, because it features a cast of actors playing fully developed characters, who speak clever lines to enhance the mood and advance the plot. Dialog is pre-recorded and is spoken aloud with CD-quality reproduction.

"Ants . . . the size of gas trucks!" gasps one character. "I don't even like little ants at picnics!" exclaims the hero's girlfriend. Men yell. Women scream. Music throbs. Explosions rumble. Sound effects and music are also CD-quality.

A second visual component of *It Came from the Desert* is full-motion computer graphics during the ants-in-action sequences. These graphics resemble the top-of-the-line animation of today's arcade games. Sequences have the hero confronting giant ants with pistols, flamethrow-



A promotional brochure for Cinemaware's CD-ROM game, **It Came from the Desert,** *which is the first-ever "interactive movie" title. It will be made available for NEC's* **TurboGraphix-16** *home game system.*





At left: ***A display at NEC's CES booth showing their home game hardware with CD player.*** *At right:* ***RePlay's Key Snodgress at the NEC booth with their home game setup.***

ers and (finally) tanks and fighter jets.

Gamplay features two interwoven movie scripts with multiple sets and storylines, detailed role-playing, and thoughtful strategic player choices. Also included are action sequences demanding arcade-style skills, physical reflexes and dexterity. A wealth of programming variables offer a new experience every time you play . . . and several different possible endings.

"We watched all the old '50s sci-fi horror movies and integrated every possible cliche into the game, too," chuckled Cinemaware's Riordan. "In addition to being exciting and fun, the game will also make players smile as we satirize these corny, familiar bits."

A FACT OF LIFE

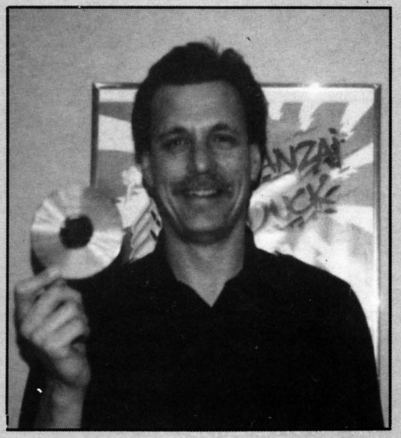
How can a video game do all this? CD-Rom offers 2,000 times the storage capacity of a standard video game. With all that programming power, "CD-Rom games will give us the power to create far more involving storylines and generate much more complex emotions than we can in today's standard video games," said NEC's Vice President of Home Electronics, Ken Wirt. He continued: "When was the last time a video game made you laugh or cry, or feel frightened? We believe CD-Rom capability will revolutionize the way video games are created and played in the 1990s. CD-Rom is not the distant future, it's today. With this new generation of technology, our competition isn't the arcades anymore; it's TV."

An ambitious goal, but Ken Wirt is certainly right about one thing: CD-Rom is a fact of life "today" . . . and it isn't just a video game technology. It's already up and running as a major home computer add-on. In Japan, some 300,000 CD-Rom players are already used in con-

To Cinemaware, "Coin-Op, Home Games & Computer Games Are All One Industry"

Cinemaware was founded in 1987 by visionary software agent Bob Jacobs and his wife Phyllis. A crucial company sparkplug is David Riordan, who formerly held creative posts at Lucasfilm, Atari and Malibu Grand Prix/Millenium Games. NEC owns 15% of Cinemaware, but the firm remains free to produce software for other home game systems . . . those on the market today, and those yet to come.

Located in the California foothills about an hour Northwest of downtown Los Angeles, Cinemaware specializes in interactive entertainment for all kinds of media. They currently produce low-end VCR video games for Viewmaster and grownup-oriented games for personal computers (a simpler version of *It Came from the Desert,* sans digitized video of actors and spoken dialog, is already out for the Amiga PC). On the high end, they're pioneering CD-Rom "interactive movies" for NEC.



Cinemaware's David Riordan with their CD game.

Even more ambitious projects are in the works. A World War I air combat simulation called *Wings* will be Cinemaware's first Compact Disc-Interactive title. It will launch in 1991, in conjunction with the new CDI players which will also arrive on the consumer market next year.

The PROFIT MAKERS

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If CD Jukeboxes Can Be Made Safe for Street Locations, Why Not CD Video Games?



RePlay's Marcus Webb, Acclaim's Greg Fischbach, Electronic Arts' Trip Hawkins & NEC's Ken Wirt.

In mid-1989, executives at NEC were talking about bringing CD-Rom games to coin-op. Regrettably, by late '89, such plans were no longer under discussion. At last fall's InterTainment '89 expo, NEC Home Entertainment VP Ken Wirt cited CD's delicate mechanisms and the 1982 laserdisc fiasco as reasons against offering this next-generation technology in the coin-op market.

But at the same occasion, Trip Hawkins (president of software supplier Electronic Arts) asked: if CD can be made location-safe for jukeboxes, why not for coin-op video games?

Why not indeed? Otherwise, coin-op faces the very real possibility that the next major technological games innovation will pass us by.

sumer households. In the U.S., some 125,000 CD-Rom discs were being produced per month by the market leader, Digital Audio Disc Corp., as of last October. Industry-wide, 1990 sales of CD-Roms are expected to reach $185 million.

What's being done with all these CD-Rom discs? Some are being used as the medium for a new audio- and video-enhanced encyclopedia. To enhance the text, the disc might show X-ray footage of bones, or play a snippet of Beethoven or a speech by Martin Luther King, etc. Other CD-Roms are being used for more powerful or extensive versions of standard computer software. One CD-Rom application lets you receive over 13,000 magazine articles per month, on a single disc.

DRAWBACKS

So CD-Rom is here to stay, at least for the information and computer industries. For the video game industry, it's a question of how successful CD-Rom will be, when applied to amusements. "The sticking point is going to be price," said one long-time industry observer. "$400 for a CD-Rom player is a lot to pay for what is, let's face it, a toy." Of course, if CD-Rom players (which can also play standard music CDs and others) become standard in the American market, as is happening in Japan, the hardware price won't be a factor.

Other software suppliers argue that, regardless of price, CD-Rom is not the best "platform" for full-motion, full-color, movie-type graphics. "It's like saying, instead of building a real speedboat, I'm going to add more and more horsepower onto this plastic toy duck in my bathtub, until it gets up to 250 knots per hour," complained one software maker.

Even CD-Rom enthusiasts like Cinemaware's David Riordan notes that the amusements industry is "conservative," i.e. notoriously slow to jump on new technology. "Nobody wants to be first," Riordan said. "But if the first game with a new technology is a hit, then everybody else rushes to produce a cheap, low-quality, me-too product... which usually fails. Then they say, 'See? We told you this new technology wouldn't work.'"

THERE'S MORE: CDI

Despite these potential obstacles, at least one — and possibly more — additional CD-Rom player systems are coming out to join NEC's CD player in 1990. "Most home video game system manufacturers are now playing around with CD drive additions," stated Riordan. "But it's going to be 1991 before you see most of the major players introduce drive hardware (to the consumer market)."

Electronic Arts prexy Trip Hawkins forsees earlier CD-Rom system introductions. Late last year, Hawkins predicted that 1990 would be a "confusing year with many new formats and products." Hawkins further predicted that market leaders in this new system platform would emerge by year's end.

By 1991, an even more ambitious

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technology will arrive with video game applications: Sony and Philips will bow hardware called "CDI" (CD-Interactive). CDI can do even more and better motion picture-type graphics than CD-Rom.

Of course, it's even more expensive than CD-Rom players. "Like VCRs, a CDI player hits the market starting at $1,200 and that price will drop 50% in five years," stated Bill Volk of Mediagenic (Menlo Park, Calif.).

Price notwithstanding, innovative software suppliers are already crafting games for the CDI platform. Titles currently in the works include an ABC-sponsored golf simulation which uses two different depth-planes of digitized video images to exactly duplicate Palm Springs' most famous golf course. A third plane of computer animation is super-imposed on top of this, to show the golfer in the foreground. Gameplay offers a full range of club choices, precise control of backswing and forward swing, and ultra-realistic ball flight results. Soundtrack features extremely realistic sound effects, TV-broadcast type narration, appropriate recorded crowd response, etc.

Another CDI game is a fantasy baseball league, being produced in cooperation with The Sporting News. Players will be able to compose their own team, using any famous player in baseball history. Film-like images of these players will be digitized from video and old film clips; programming will give each player a unique playing "profile" and historically accurate strengths and weaknesses, etc.

As video game pioneer Nolan Bushnell told the InterTainment '89 expo in New York last fall, "I think we're embarking on a new phase in the entertainment industry. Many projects that have been talked about for years are finally coming to pass." Bushnell reviewed many emerging technologies, not just video game platforms, and concluded: "As the boundaries continue to erase, many of the problems people have with the interface of multiple technologies are going away. I see no limitations. I think the future is finally starting to happen."

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3D or Not 3D?

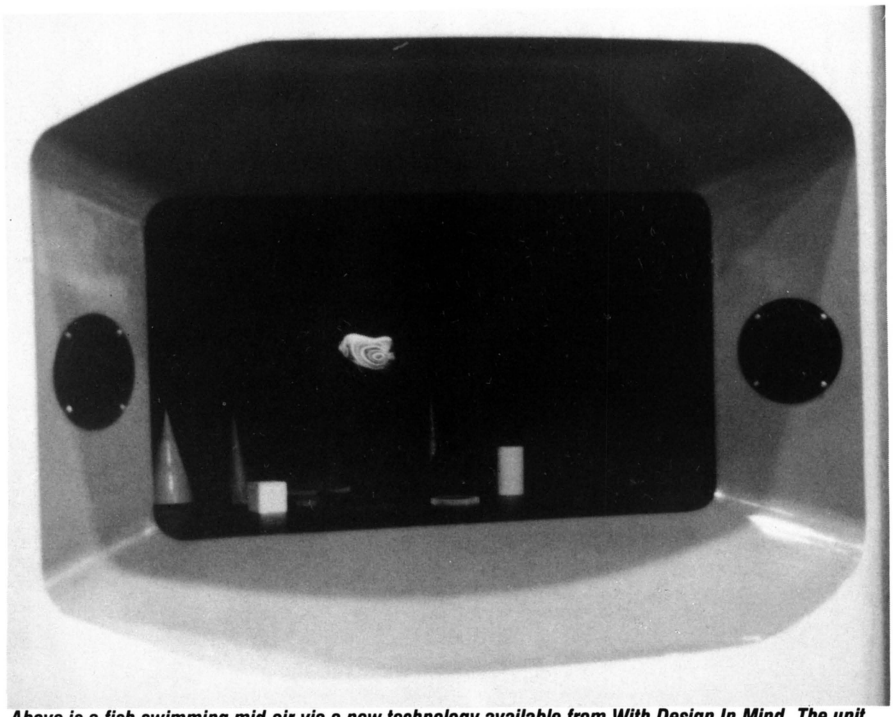
CES offered a breathtaking hi-tech upgrade for coin-op video: Del Vision

What does hi-tech hold for coin-op's future? Trade talk at the Consumer Electronics Show (Jan. 6-11, Las Vegas Convention Center) suggested that new technology could bring new life to street and arcade video games.

A Southern California firm called "With Design in Mind" demonstrated a new 3D imaging technology called "Del Vision" which could almost be called "the hit of the show." Licensed from Japan, Del Vision creates hologram-type images in full color, but reportedly does not use holography to accomplish this feat. One source said the system stores full-color, full-motion video footage on a laserdisc and projects it via mirrors, or onto mirrors, but we couldn't get the company's principle to confirm this.

Regardless of how the illusion is achieved, Del Vision's results are breath-taking. One unit displayed on the CES floor seemed to show gold, red and white fish floating in the air, inside an open cabinet. When the scene changed to show a transparent, luminous jellyfish floating the the same "space," the appearance was so realistic, it was uncanny. Observers could move their hands right through the space where the images appeared to be.

Another Del Vision display seemed to have a four-inch high, full-color ballerina dancing on top of a horizontal mirror. The ballerina seemed to be three-dimensional and she was presented in full-color, movie-type images, not animation. She moved precisely in time to the music. Again, observers could move their hands through the space that seemed to contain this image.



Above is a fish swimming mid-air via a new technology available from With Design In Mind. The unit, displayed at the CES show, creates hologram-type images in full color and was quite something to see. (This photo does not, in any way, do the technology justice; we'll try for better in a future issue.)

Applications for Del Vision, said company execs, include point-of-purchase attractions, complex data displays, sales training demonstrations. . . and video games. "There are major players working behind the scenes to develop coin-op video game applications for Del Vision," stated Art Rosenthal, president of With Design in Mind (Chatsworth, Calif.).

Existing vidgame makers were quick to see the potential of the system. "Suppose you use the Del Vision process to create the illusion of 3D targets floating in space, right in front of a video game screen," one leading coin-op manufacturer suggested enthusiastically. "Make it a gun game with laser optic shooting; hits and misses would be picked up by the TV monitor. You could create the most exciting video game anybody has ever seen! With some new ideas like that," this manufacturer concluded, "coin-op could come roaring right back."

"Del Vision could be interactive with video game technology," stated Acclaim Entertainment president Greg Fischbach, a very successful NES software supplier. He added: "We want to eventually get into doing video games using this type of technology."



RePlay's Marcus Webb looks in at another of the Del Vision units. This one featured a ballerina.

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As a shooting game, *S.C.I.* excites the senses with its realistic and action-packed screenplay.

Tony and Ray are two detectives with the Bureau of Special Criminal Investigations demonstrating daily their dedication to truth, justice and the American way. Now, Tony and Ray have been given the most important case of their lives. A dangerous band of thugs has kidnapped the Mayor's daughter, Jennifer, and is holding her in a warehouse somewhere on the south side... HUGGING A TIME BOMB!

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When the report comes over the radio that one of the suspects has been spotted, Tony and Ray waste no time and jump into action. The pursuit is fast-paced and full of action with Tony at the wheel and Ray pumping lead out of his 44 Magnum into the criminal's car. Periodically during the pursuit, a police helicopter air-drops artillery providing Ray with even greater fire-power.





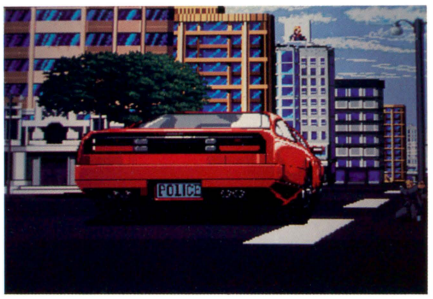
In pursuit of wanted criminals, the player must race against time through city back-roads, country dirt-roads and the winding curves of a mountain side. He must use skill in maneuvering around such dangers as falling rocks, opened bridges and even the crashing of waves onto an ocean-front highway. And a vibrating steering wheel which reacts to these changing road conditions makes it all seem real.





But the pursuit is only part of it. The action heightens as the player spots the criminal's car...and the real chase is on! Not only do the varying road conditions make demands on the player's driving skills, but in the chase, his skillful use of a 44 Magnum is required. With one hand on the wheel and the other on his gun, the player of *S.C.I.* aims his sight toward crime and stands ready for some real action.

And when the action stops, the player can keep it going with Taito's Continue Play Option.









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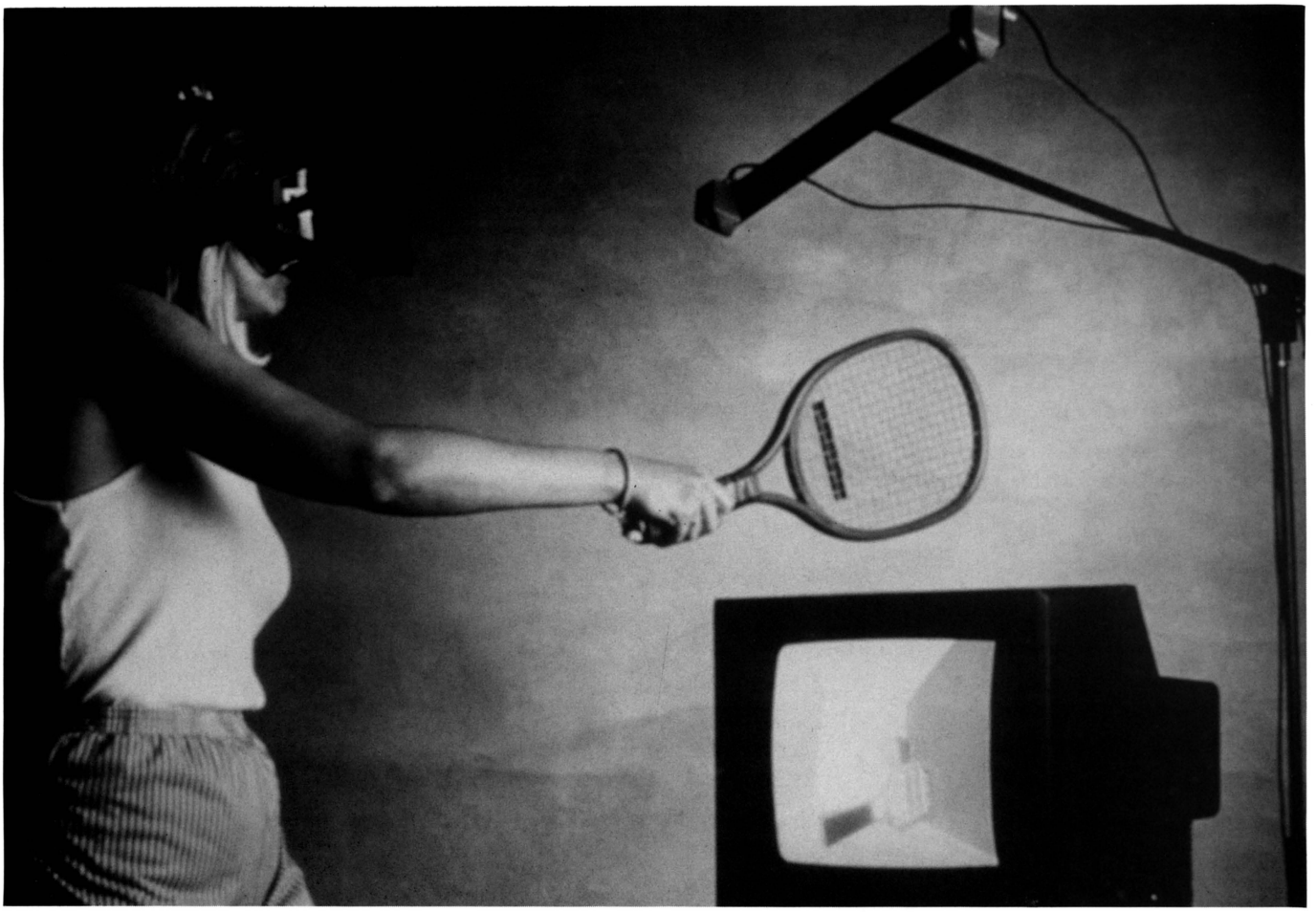


The ULTIMATE Video Game

in "virtual reality," you can actually walk around inside a 3D computer environment

And now for a mindblowing peek into the future . . . except that it's happening *today*. How would you design a building on a computer . . . then physically walk around "inside" the lifesized, 3D computer images?

How would you like to actually play racquetball, holding a real racquet in your hand . . . except you're using a ball which isn't really there . . . and the ball bounces off walls of a court which totally surrounds you . . . a court which, by the way, exists chiefly inside your head?

How would you like to jump on a real bicycle and "fly" it over the road?

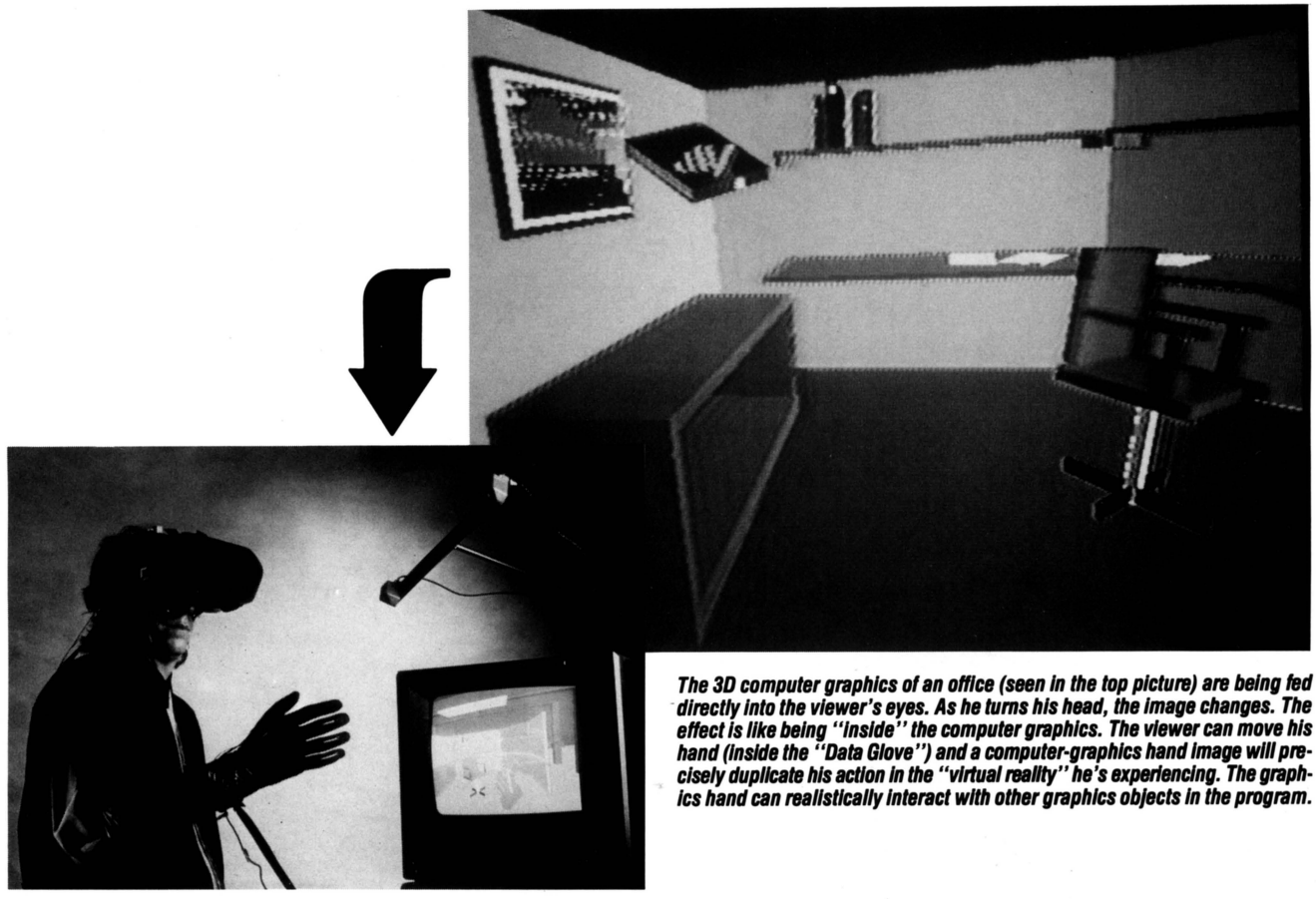
We're talking about a controlled hallucination which is deliberately designed for fun and profit. What do you call a full-color, three-dimensional computer environment that you can walk around inside of? The name for this new medium is "virtual reality" . . . and it's no longer the stuff of science fiction. Computer programmers at NASA and at several large, private, hi-tech companies have developed this technology to the point where corporate and government applications are only a short while away. Entertainment uses, researchers say, will follow close behind.

This woman is having the experience of actually playing racquetball. Two monitors directly in front of her eyes provide a 3D "total environment" of a racquetball court. As she moves the real racquet in her hand, a 3D video racquet precisely duplicated her movement in the "virtual reality" court . . . and hits a "video ball" which reacts just like a real one. A simplified, 2D version of what she's seeing may be viewed on the monitor at right.

Virtual reality is the ultimate video game.

MARKET RECEPTION

Actually, this new medium was displayed at the Consumer Electronics Show of 1986, but it was a bit ahead of the market. Now, the market is catching up. Virtual reality systems were discussed at length by the people who are actually devel-



The 3D computer graphics of an office (seen in the top picture) are being fed directly into the viewer's eyes. As he turns his head, the image changes. The effect is like being "inside" the computer graphics. The viewer can move his hand (inside the "Data Glove") and a computer-graphics hand image will precisely duplicate his action in the "virtual reality" he's experiencing. The graphics hand can realistically interact with other graphics objects in the program.

oping them, at last fall's InterTainment '89 conference on interactive entertainment in New York City (sponsored by Alexander & Associates). Virtual reality is also starting to get attention from video game enthusiasts.

In fact, a Bally/Midway subsidiary was reportedly developing a virtual reality game for coin-op in 1982, when the industry's crash killed the project. "But this year, for some reason, it's in the wind everywhere," one former Bally team programmer told a magazine called *Video Games & Computer Entertainment*. "Everyone wants to get into it."

HOW IT WORKS

How does virtual reality work? In its simplest form, these simulations require the user to don a goggle-type headset which places two different monitors directly in front of his eyes. Each monitor shows the same computer-generated scene, providing a slightly different perspective to the left and right eye. Special optics provide a wide field of view, and a comfortable viewing distance.

The head mount also contains sensors which track the motion of the user's head. The user can turn his head, or turn his body 350 degrees, and the scene changes accordingly. The user can walk around inside the scene.

Or he can drive a vehicle through the computer scene. Or ride a bicycle. Or fly. . . without needing wings, rockets, engines, jets or airplanes.

If the user is wearing a sensor-embedded glove, he will see a computer-generated cartoon "hand" floating in space in front of him. Whatever he does with the "data glove" in real space, the computer-generated hand will precisely duplicate in the virtual reality environment.

By manipulating the data glove, the user can pick up an imaginary apple which only exists in the computer program, and throw it into the air. He can play racquetball with an imaginary ball that reacts just like a real ball. Or, if the computer is programmed differently, the ball could react as if the racquetball court were stationed on a planet whose gravity is only a fraction of Earth's.

FANTASY ENVIRONMENTS, 2-PLAYER INTERACTION

There's more. By wearing a full-body computer sensor suit, the user can manipulate a cartoon, computer-generated human body which exists only inside the computer environment. Or the user can be a bear, or space man, or dragon, whatever character or image the computer provides. By manipulating the software, programmers can let users experience a virtual environment whose physical characteristics are bounded only by the programmer's imagination. You want walls made of water? Floors made of flame? Want to walk over rainbows and swoop through cosmic nebulae? With virtual reality, anything is possible.

Two or more users can plug into the same virtual reality program, and their "virtual bodies" can interact. This has already been done in prototypes set up by artificial reality firms. Eventually, researchers believe that two users who are miles

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カイアスは、わずか15歳にしてアカメン帝国の王となったが、
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apart can interact as though they were in the same room. Even more complex simulations require users to wear full helmets which provide total "surround sound." In the future, these helmets could also conjure up 3D data displays that seem to float in the space between the user and the artificial environment.

NASA & BUSINESS USES

Some of the research for virtual reality systems is going on at NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif. At InterTainment '89, NASA's Scott Fisher said he believes astronauts will eventually be able to send a robot out to fix their rocket ship's broken antenna or whatever, remaining safely inside the ship and performing the repair in virtual reality, while the robot duplicates the action (and takes all the risks) outside.

Using the same technology, hooked up via satellite transmissions to remote cameras, a future astronaut could "walk around" on the moons of Saturn... while still remaining physically present at a NASA command center on Earth. More mundane uses would make it easier for architects and engineers to design and test their various products.

VIRTUAL REALITY GAMES

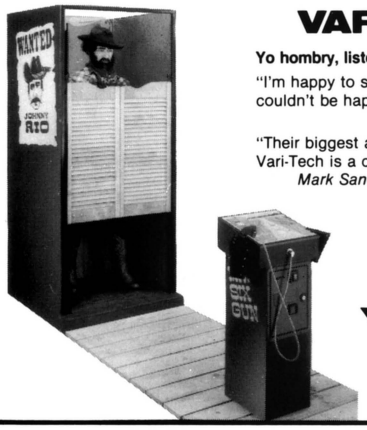
Expensive government and corporate applications aren't the only uses for virtual reality. At Autodesk, Inc. in Sausalito, Calif., a virtual reality system called "Cyberspace" is now under development. They foresee a "cheap consumer/entertainment market" for virtual reality systems in the "near future." (For Autodesk, that means at least a few years. Visionaries take the long view.) The variable-gravity racquetball game and the "flying bicycle" are already up and running at Autodesk, for example.

A fellow named Randal Walser is the architect of the Cyberspace project. He's also in charge of sports and entertainment uses. By the way, Walser used to work on that Bally/Midway virtual reality project, alluded to earlier.

Right now, Autodesk says the hardware for designing and presenting virtual reality costs about $30,000, but they expect that to plummet in the next few years.

Closely involved with virtual reality projects is Jaron Lanier, chief executive of VPL Research (Redwood City, Calif.). His firm makes the Data Glove used in many current simulations. At InterTainment '89, Lanier was an enthusiastic proponent of game applications. "People can meet each other in this new place, taking on any form they wish and having any experience that can be imagined," he said. "Virtual reality is shared and objectively real like the physical world... composable like a work of art... radical like an LSD experience... and unlimited and harmless, like a dream."

Move over, 'Tron' and 'Neuromancer.' The day of jumping inside your computer program is here!



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Bustin' Out

SNK's *Beast Busters* dedicated video gun game makes its mark

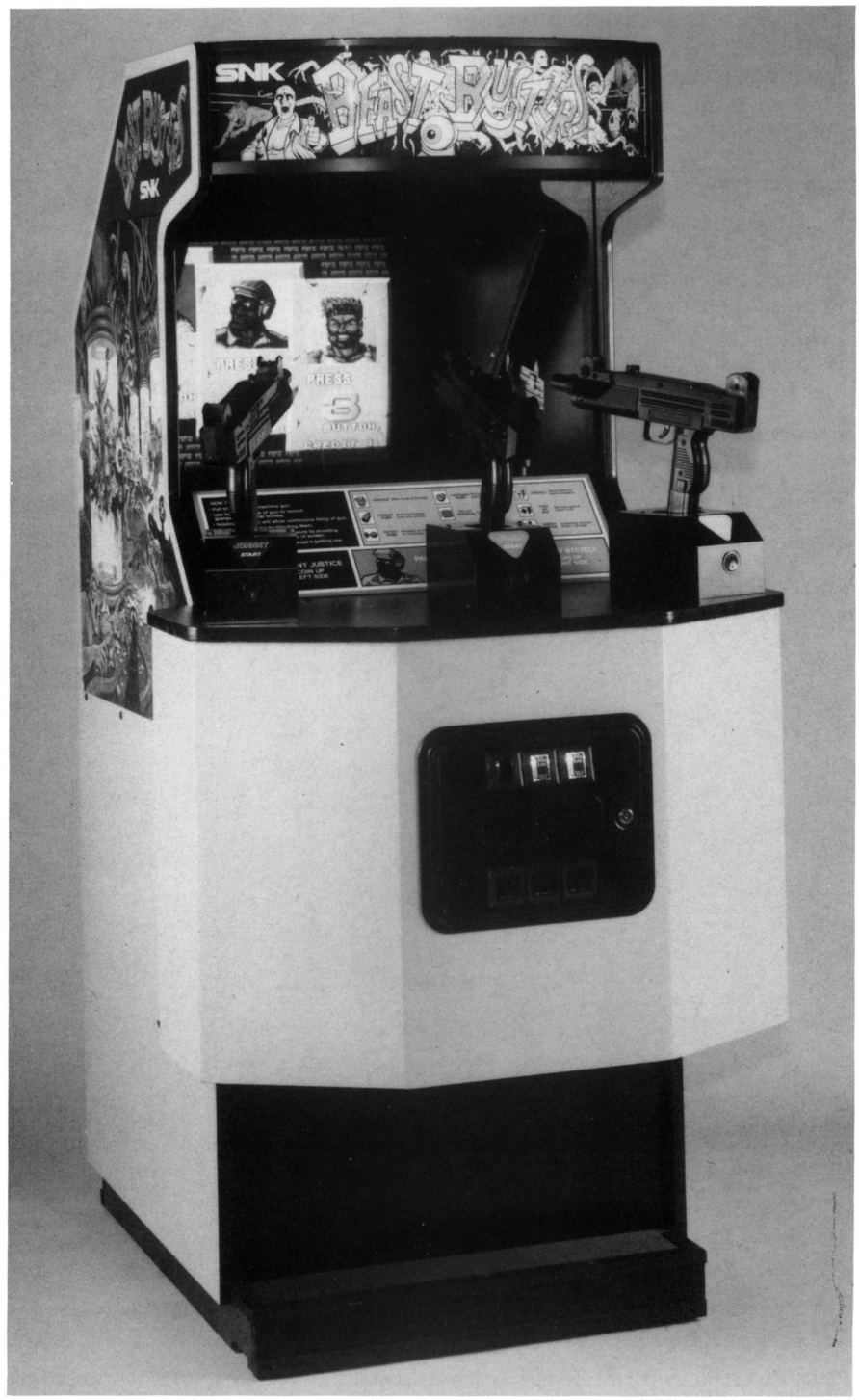
According to SNK, their newly-released *Beast Busters* is proving to be a crackerjack piece for game rooms and minicades. Citing field collections second only to *TMNT Turtles* (the industry's present "high tide" mark on the video game coinbox), this first-ever 3-player video gun game began shipping to SNK distributors in bulk quantities Jan. 10 from the contracted Dynamo fabricators in Texas, and field reports from arcade operators show it's got shoulders.

Three shoulders, that is: the game sports three Uzi machine gun replicas mounted on a broad console, enabling one to three players to blast away at a bizarre assortment of zombie-like enemies throughout seven scenes of mayhem. One obvious reason for the game's coinbox success is its vend: 50¢ to start, 25¢ to continue (players have about 10 seconds to insert the continue-quarter, otherwise they go back to zero and have to plug another half buck into the coin chute and try again).

The game, by the way, can be operator-set to charge 50¢ for continue play. Of course, new players can join into a game already in progress (it's simultaneous play) any time they want for a half buck. This is a cooking game, complete with red (or optional) green blood graphics (there's no option on the color of the slime: green is "in").

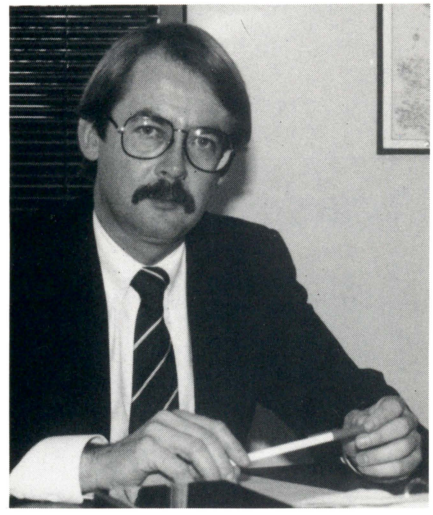
Each player elects to be one of the good guy characters (Paul, Johnny or Sammy). Operators can set the game on one of four difficulty levels. Scenes take place in a subway station and other settings in the city of doom, and even in an elevator shaft. Zombies and other blue-skinned enemies just don't stop attacking. There is a lot of ginger here.

SNK's American President Paul Jacobs said he's getting some "very good" reorders for the piece from his distributors. He also returned recently from London's A.T.E.I. exhibition where the game was shown at the Electrocoin booth (he reported that Electrocoin booked some



good orders for the piece during that U.K. convention). Electrocoin builds the game for SNK there, as Dynamo does Stateside; the difference is the size of the unit (since U.K. pub locations are smaller, so is the console on which the three guns are mounted).

SNK will continue to produce *Beast Busters* on distributor order. Meantime, they've readied their following release which begins shipping early this month. It's a price game called *Search and Rescue*. As the name implies this dedicated upright is a one- or two-player search for survivors and the black recording box of a space craft that has crashed on a mysterious planet. Enemy alien creatures are out to prevent the success of their mission. It uses SNK's rotary joystick previously "made famous" on their *Ikari Warriors* and *Guerilla War* games.



PAUL JACOBS

Come ACME, something truly special will be unveiled for American operators. SNK's awaited *Neo-Geo System* multi-game upright will be premiered at their show display (international dealers will have seen it beforehand at a special Jan. 31 showing in Osaka). The *Neo-Geo* will offer four games in a 19" monitor cabinet or six in a 25" model, all of which are reportedly "state of the art" designed for the coin machine business. "This system is very advanced and should not be confused with any other multi-game video now on the market," Jacobs advised.

So, from uprights, to kits, to system games, SNK is offering a rather full menu of video fare for early 1990 and beyond, including the modestly-priced *Search and Rescue* upright that could show a lot of things in the rather testy market America finds itself in at present times.



FIND THE STERN IN THE STOCKADE — ***Maybe "stockade" is a bit stringent, but you have to have been at Chicago's Zum Deutschen Eck Restaurant the night of Dec. 8th to know the true feeling of "togetherness." It provided the setting for Atlas Distributing's annual Christmas party and as usual, the crowd that turned out busted the walls. Now to the contest. Since everybody knows what Gary Stern looks like, see if you can locate him in this sea of trade humanity. Score yourself a hundred points if you do (score only 1 each for Jerry Marcus, Eddie Pellegrini and the Atlas wives; score 5 points for Rich Robbins, Mike Minor, Mort Ansky, Frank Pellegrini and Bob Lentz. Those finding Gary can throw away their eyeglasses (and RePlay will give a free subscription to its printer for a job well done).***

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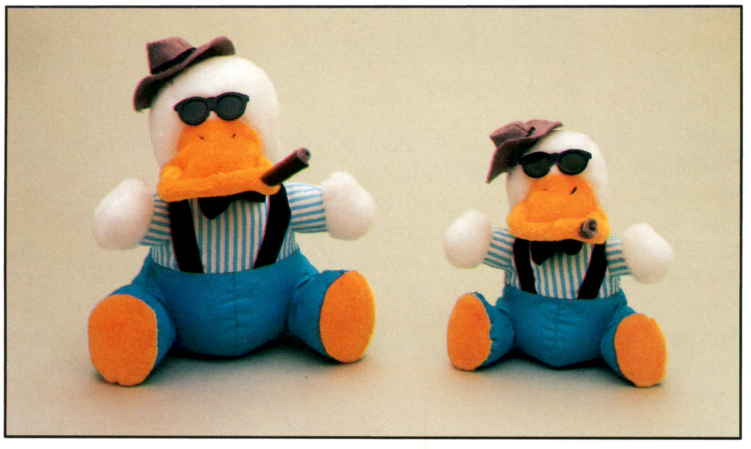

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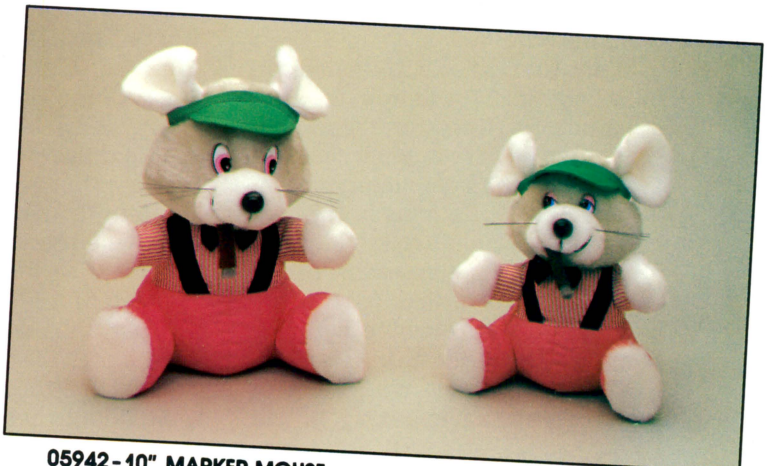

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Goodbye, Old Friends

farewell to salesman Irv Kempner, Mrs. Bill (Cissie) Gersh, & "Cousin Ferd" Tuttle

Irving Kempner. Cissie Gersh. Ferd Tuttle. They all made their marks on the coin machine business, or at least on the hearts of those tradesters who knew and loved them. They're gone now, but we'll never forget...

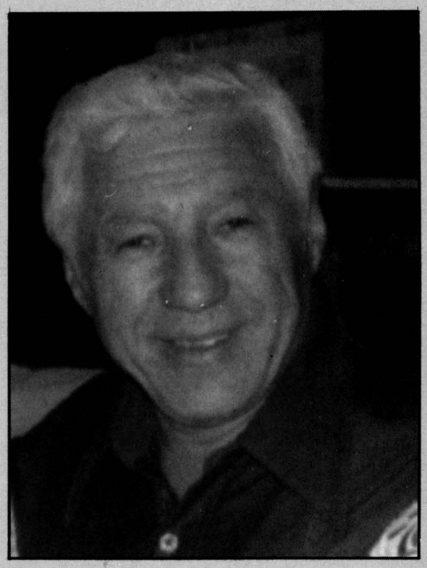
IRV KEMPNER

RePlay received late word of the death of Irving Kempner, the well-known "kissing salesman" who, before his retirement, worked for Runyon Sales & Betson Enterprises in the New York metro area. He passed away Nov. 18 at his retirement home in Boynton Beach, Fla. Known and loved by a legion of New York and New Jersey operators, "Kempy" devoted nearly 40 years to the trade. Generally considered one of coin-op's greatest all-around salesmen, he was said to know the metro region better than the mapmakers.

Kempner spent most of his career working for Runyon. Indeed, he opened their famous 10th Ave. outlet with Jack Mitnick back in 1945. Closely identified with Runyon's major product (AMI phonographs and Bally games), Kempner's tempo frequently had him spending just one or two days per week in the office, and the rest out in the field, calling on operators or meeting them for dinner.

When Runyon sold its dealership to Betson in 1978, Kempy covered the same territory for them, concentrating on surrounding counties even though he knew many operators in the city. Retiring in 1981, he and wife Norma moved to Florida.

His friend (and Runyon colleague of 24 years) Morris Rood told *RePlay* he had spent an evening with the Kempners in Florida only a week before Kempy passed on. "He and I had great fun speaking of old times," said Morris. "I will miss him, as will a lot of others he came into contact with."



IRVING KEMPNER

Irv Kempner is survived by wife Norma, sons Kenneth and Robert, and by at least one grandchild named Daniel. He's also survived by a great many friends. May he rest in God's peace.

CISSIE GERSH

Cissie Gersh, the well-known lifelong mate of the legendary Bill Gersh, died Jan. 4 after suffering a stroke. Many industry veterans knew Cissie during the years Bill worked *Cash Box* up from a mimeographed sheet of used equipment prices, to the prominent record/coin machine trade journal it had become when he sold it in the late '50s. After a five-year moratorium, he founded *Marketplace* and published it until the mid-1980s.

Although Cissie reportedly never worked at either magazine, her artistic talents helped Bill as he conceived his numerous ideas for the publications. On her own, she spent a good deal of time as a Spanish/English teacher.

Services took place Jan. 7 at the Menorah Chapel, near their North Miami retirement home. She was buried in a Ft. Lauderdale cemetery. Besides relations like her daughter Gail (a doctor) and son Richard (a prominent public relations agent), others in attendance at the services included long-time industry friends Sol and Irene Tabb. Said Tabb: "Cissie was Bill's whole life. He is very lonely right now, but he'll be okay because he still has that famous Gersh spark." Our condolences to Bill and the family.

FERD TUTTLE

Call her "Miz Struve." Call her "Cousin Ferd." Many operators who dealt with Struve Distributing's office in Salt Lake City did just that. This lady was a popular industry veteran who served as secretary, controller and operator's friend at the organization... having joined it 28 years ago, just six months after Pres Struve founded it. She was a real fixture.

Ferd died on Christmas Day at the age of 72. She had battled cancer for some months. Many operators joined Struve staffers in paying their respects at the Larkin Mortuary, where services were held. Burial took place in the Salt Lake City Cemetery.

Ferd is survived by her husband Kent, a son, two daughters and several grandchildren. "She was an effective worker and a fun lady to talk with," recalled one tradester who knew her. Many, besides Pres, Stan and Kent Larsen, will miss her... including the people at this magazine. May she rest with the angels.

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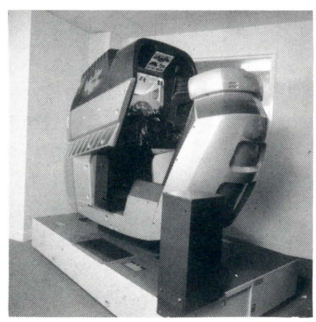

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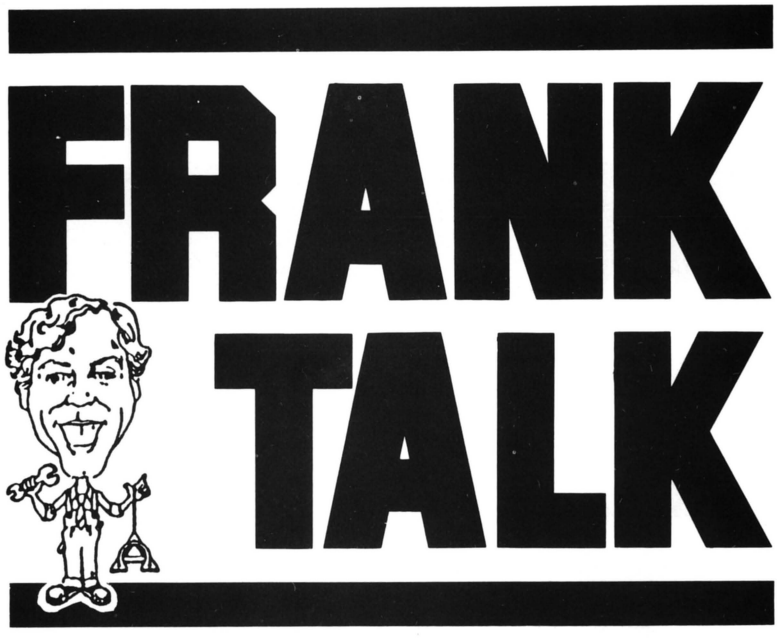

by Frank "the Crank" Seninsky

Come On, AMOA & AAMA! Let's Work Together to Kill Unfair License Fees

I have some good news and some bad news. The bad news is, the coin amusement industry remains on a down cycle at the moment. The good news is, home video is cyclic, too . . . and right now, I believe it's showing signs of beginning to drop a bit in Japan. Sometime later this year, I predict the home game market, worldwide, will begin to soften . . . and that could be good news for coin machine operators. As the home market softens, coin-op will head upwards.

This is the first column I've written for *RePlay* in the 1990s (my January column was written in December). As I survey our industry and our market situation, I see many encouraging indicators about what lies ahead. Positive signs include the future down-cycle of home games . . . new polygon technology and hi-resolution graphics in coin-op video . . . and the very real chance that dollar coin legislation will pass. Finally, as suppliers of low-priced entertainment, we're in better shape than most to survive if the country does enter a serious recession, as many economists expect.

At the same time, I see another trend which is discouraging — a trend which could put you and me out of business, if we don't do something about it. This trend is *unfair licensing,* which has begun to rear its ugly head once again from New York to California.

Some examples: I operate some games in Baltimore County, Maryland. This county just raised its annual per-machine license from $100 to $150. And that's not the end! Maryland also makes us buy a separate state license sticker for every pinball machine which costs an additional $22 per year. And on top of that, you have to give 10% of the gross to Baltimore County.

Figure it out: we give 10% to the County, 50% to the location, and another several percent to the County in license fees. In addition, we have to pay state corporate income tax and state personal property tax (based on a percentage of original cost of games that we operate in Maryland). Then there's federal income tax, if you somehow actually show a profit. Wow!

When you add all that up, it makes it very difficult to turn a profit. Based on my calculations, an operator makes anywhere from two to three dollars per week after paying all his expenses on a video or pin game. That's between $100 and $150 per game, per year . . . and this is handed over to the politicians, just to pay the $150 in county license fees!

Sadly, Baltimore County is not the only place having problems. The Baltimore City fee is now $450 per game. In New York City, license fees went up 700% (from around $25 per game to $175), wiping out one third of the machines on location there. California operators are also facing unfair license hikes in Los Angeles County.

What needs to be done? In the past, I've suggested that AAMA and AMOA should take charge of

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this battle, and go around the country fighting unfair taxes and licenses. Operator Todd Erickson agrees with me on this and has made the same suggestion. We're not seeing any motion on this, so let me to spell out the proposal in a bit more detail...

Think of this: wouldn't it be nice if AMOA attorney Roy Wolff and AAMA Exec VP Bob Fay could help us, perhaps by finding a federal statute holding city officials responsible and personally liable in court, if they use license fees illegally to raise city, county and state revenues? Between these guys and Bob's FBI contacts, maybe we could even use the RICO law (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) to take on these unfair fees.

Wouldn't it be nice if AMOA and AAMA formed a joint committee to fight unfair legislation of all types? We could call it the "Truth in Licensing Committee," and fund it so that the committee would be empowered to sue local officials who are responsible for capricious licenses and illegal discrimination against our industry. For once, we could make them do their homework about our industry, instead of relying on second-hand information, prejudice and stereotypes.

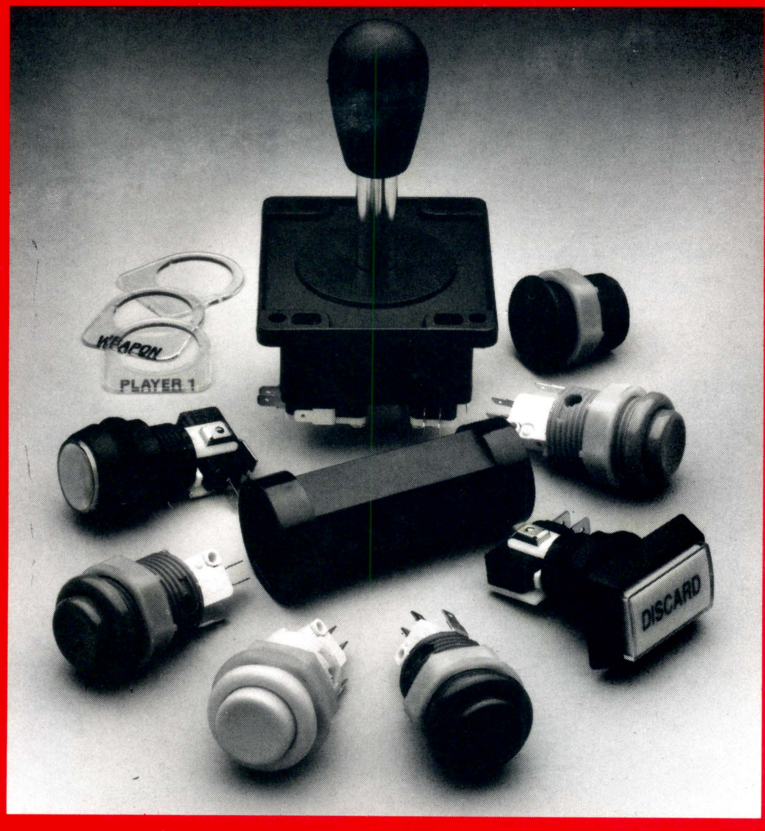
All you have to do is take on one city council with criminal charges, and word will get around. City, county and state officials would tell each other, "Let's be careful when setting our amusement game license fees and taxes. Let's make sure they're fair and reasonable. Otherwise, we'll get sued personally, like that city councilman in Anywhere, USA."

In truth, we would probably just have to file a lawsuit only one time. I don't really expect that we would have to take the case to court, either. The defendant would probably back down and settle out of court ...but the precedent would be set.

Political cooperation is crucial in fighting these license fees, etc. City councils, county bureaucrats and state legislatures are much more impressed by protests from local operators, when they know that statewide, regional and national business organizations are supporting the local guys. For example, it sure helped the trade in Long Beach, Calif. to successfully fight a local anti-arcade ordinance, when the city council knew that AMOA, CCMA and AAC were all standing behind the town's operators.

That's why, at our next meeting of AMOA of New Jersey, we're going to look into ways of getting other state operator associations in our region to cooperate with us on these issues. Who knows? We may be putting out a part-time job offer to Mr. Fay, exclusively for our own state!

Don't get the idea that I believe only in reacting with threats and lawsuits after negative legislation is passed. We must continuously take a "carrot and stick" approach. Lawsuits are a powerful stick, but the carrot is making friends with your



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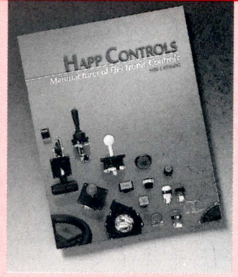

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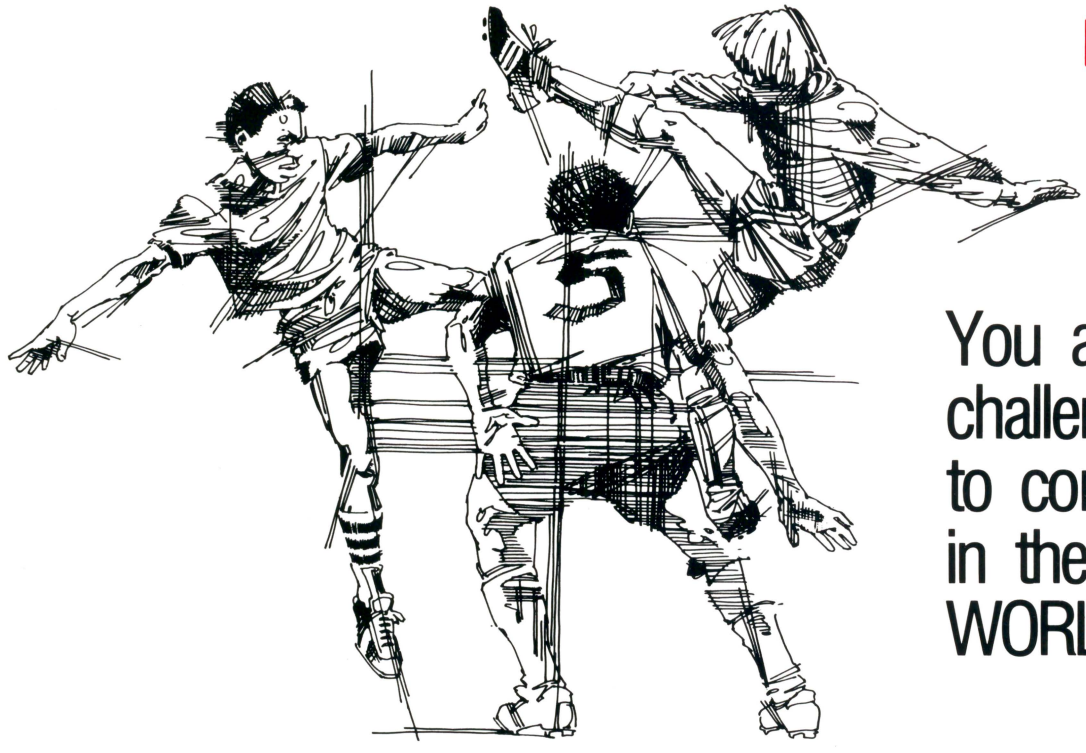

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local legislators *before* there's a problem, educating them about our industry and its needs. If we had done this city by city, county by county, and state by state over the past decade, we wouldn't be facing so many unreasonable tax hikes now. It's never too late to make friends with your local politicians.

But where friendship doesn't work, it's good to have the courts as a last resort. As I lay and dream, I can see newspaper headlines that would have coin machine people dancing in the streets: "Truth in Licensing Committee Sues City Councilman; Group Charges Politician with Gross Negligence in Setting License Fees." "Former FBI Agent Shakes Up County Bureaucrats." "CEO of Japanese Game Manufacturer Testifies on Behalf of U.S. Operators." "City Council Admits Unfairness; Drastically Slashes Licenses to Reasonable Levels." (That's the politician's version of a closeout.) And then *RePlay* could run a follow-up headline of its own: "Operators Invest License Rebate in All New Equipment; Manufacturers, Distribs Rejoice."



How about it?

Upcoming Seminars Offer Great Tips

The Star*Tech Journal/Frank "The Crank" Seninsky Regional Seminars are getting underway now. Here's a preview of the kinds of useful tips and hints you'll hear in my session.

Insurance problems: as I've explained before, having your employees use their own vehicles on the job saves you money. But if company property is stolen from employee vehicles, their homeowners or apartment insurance may not cover your loss. Within one week of discovering this problem, my agent and I came up with a "property floater" clause for my policy. It covers 15 vehicles for losses of company property, parts and equipment of up to $1,000 each. The policy costs $206 per year. More nuggets like this will be covered in an overall presentation on shopping for insurance.

Employee Relations: some things to think about. At AMOA's Notre Dame Executive Development Program, a nationwide study of many industries was presented. This study reported that 66% of all employees said they'd work harder, if the boss treated all employees the same. Also, 24% of owners and managers' time is spent resolving conflicts in their own companies! And 17% of all workers don't think their job is important in relation to the overall work accomplished by their employer. For each employee who enters your company, then leaves, the average cost is between $2,000 and $4,000 dollars. Obviously, all of this means there is a lot of room for improvement in most firms. I'll discuss how to eliminate some of these problems in a discussion of finding, hiring, training and managing employees.

Legal Disputes: today about 95% of all cases are settled before trial, out of court . . . and the lawyers are still making all the money! But more and more companies are going to binding arbitration and leaving out the lawyers. That means these businesses settling their differences more cheaply, quickly and efficiently. Arbitration is the wave of the future . . . and I'll tell you how to put it into your contracts.

The times and places for our next regional seminars will be Feb. 10-11 at American Vending Sales in Elk Grove, Ill.; then Feb. 24-25 at Shaffer Distributing in Columbus, Ohio; then March 31-April 1 at Birmingham Vending in Orlando, Fla. The last two are April 21-22 at New England Coin of Norwood, Mass. and May 19-20 at Betson Pacific in San Francisco. More seminars are in the works. If you'd like to attend, call me, Frank Seninsky, for details at 201/287-4990.



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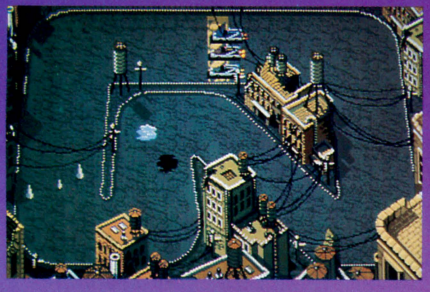


The city—watch out for falling power lines and the falling water tower.



The desert—the mountain will crumble and fall onto the track.



The refinery—be carefull of creating oil spills.



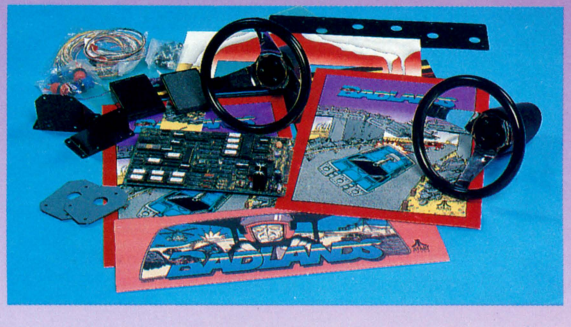
Custom car options include missiles, tires, turbo, speed, and shields.

It has been 50 years since the nuclear disaster. The sport of sprint racing is now a ruthless battle between armed cars. These races take place on tracks built in the ruins of the dangerous nuclear zone known only as the BADLANDS.

This is sprint racing gone BAD! It's all-out war on the track as players blast away at the drones (and each other) to finish first! Players shoot playfield targets for extra points and bonus missiles!

One or two players can race at any time with Badlands' buy-in and game continuation features. If a player loses to one of the drone cars, he can put in another coin to continue on to the next heat and retain any custom car options he has acquired.

Badlands has eight unique track layouts set in eight different animated backgrounds that react to player shots and crashes. These tracks change as the level of difficulty increases.



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Pinball's True Believer

Roger Sharpe of Williams is the industry's evangelist for flipper games

As the CEO of a widget factory said while admiring a giant billboard which advertised his product: "That's not promotion — that's poetry."

After seeing how well promotion worked in connection with the Jukebox Centennial, industry leaders have decreed 1990 "The Year of the Pinball"... and tradesters are hoping to create a little "poetry" on behalf of the silver ball. To that end, AMOA and AAMA have formed a joint Pinball Promo Committee chaired by operator John Bell. Other committee leaders include Clyde Knupp (education) and Gene Urso (tournaments).

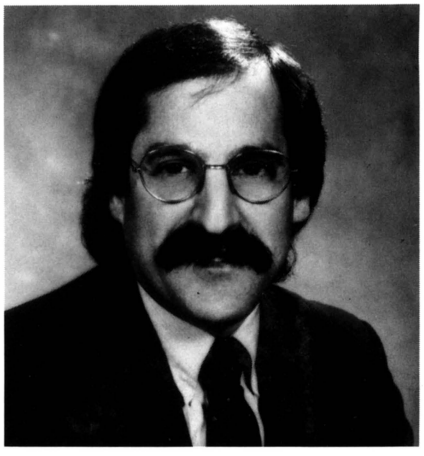
Getting back to "PR poetry," Roger Sharpe, marketing director at Williams, has been named to head up the joint committee's marketing arm. Good choice: even before the committee was formed, Roger Sharpe was already busy contacting major national news media to spotlight his company's products and the industry in general.

"It's just part of what I do," Sharpe explained. "Dealing with the consumer media is really not that much different from dealing with trade papers, except that you are trying to promote the whole industry instead of exclusively sell one product. You send out mailings, make some phone calls, be persistent... and eventually you make a dent."

Some dent. In the last year, Sharpe has helped generate pro-pinball stories in *The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Chicago Tribune, USA Today, The Dallas Times-Herald, Crain's Chicago Business,* and on the NBC radio network.

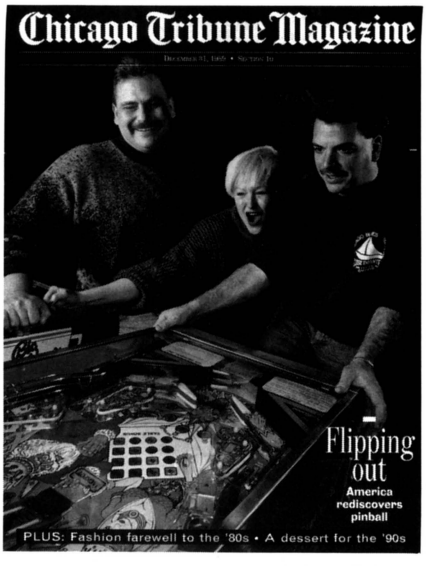
"The fact of these articles appearing, is not due to me personally," Sharpe explained modestly. "There are so many programs and publications out there with a need to fill space or time. What's more fun and newsworthy than our industry?"

Although it's well known to those of us in the trade, many average readers out there still don't realize that today's pinballs offer clever new themes, sophisticated sound, computer-controlled light shows, and razzle-dazzle gameplay that lifts them into an entirely different category from the flippers of old. When "pitching" the coin machine industry to mass media reporters, Sharpe explains all this... and often as not, reporters eagerly print it.



Williams' ROGER SHARPE

"We need to create allure and give some ammunition to those who are facing outdated attitudes," Sharpe said in explaining his PR philosophy. "There are still some people and places in this country where it's believed that 'games cause juvenile delinquency.' If we don't fight these stereotypes, they can result in negative legislation. We need to communicate to the public at large that the pinball business is healthy and doing well. Where else, other than coin amusement machines, can you have so much fun for a buck? I tell the mass media that we're a $7 billion dollar a year industry and I explain the wide spread of equipment we offer. It proves we're a genuine industry. A lot of people don't like to mention money figures when dealing with the media, because they think it invites unfair taxes. But it's a double-edge sword: bigness commands respect. If we hide our heads in the sand, we'll never make progress."



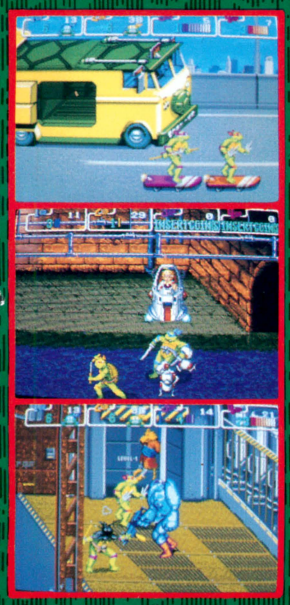
The cover of the Dec. 31, 1989* Chicago Tribune Magazine, *which featured an article on pinball.

Although some tradesters are shy about dealing with the mainstream press, Sharpe believes every coin machine person can help the industry polish its image by playing "PR executive" once in a while. They key to success, he said, is consistency.

"To get it done right, you've got to devote yourself to it on an on-going basis," he said. "Once you start, don't stop! Just keep feeding a steady stream of material to the same news people, and don't feel bad about a rejection. Send recent stories, photos, press releases, whatever you can. Eventually, you'll break down the barrier. A lot of it is based on hitting a responsive chord. When a reporter returns your call and says, 'Oh, I didn't know that!' — you're in."

Promoting pinball and coin amusements is obviously a labor of love for Roger Sharpe — but it's an approach he feels is strongly needed, even beyond the "Year of the Pinball" effort. "For the beginning of a new decade, this kind of PR is an approach we need to take," he stated. "Most amusement companies are doing it for home games. If they devoted 10% of that effort to arcade games, we'd all benefit."

Put TURTLE POWER To Work For You!



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES®

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- DEDICATED UPRIGHT
- HORIZONTAL MONITOR
- BUY-IN FEATURE
- CONTINUATION FEATURE

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES®



Description:

Cowabunga! The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have arrived! The heroes in a half-shell, Leonardo, Raphael, Donatello, and Michaelangelo, are rockin' and ready to take on their archenemy, Shredder.

Their radical rat mentor, Splinter, trained the teens to be experts in the art of Ninjitsu. Each turtle has his own area of expertise. Leonardo, the level-headed leader of the green guys, wields razor-sharp katana blades. Michaelangelo, the party dude extraordinaire, whirls nuchakus at blistering speed. Donatello is a wizard with machines, as well as his weapon, the bo staff. Raphael, the wild boy of the bunch, channels his raw energy into brandishing a lethal pair of sai.

The fearless Turtles begin the game on a mission to rescue their companion, ace reporter April O'Neil, from a burning building. They battle the flames and the evil soldiers of Shredder's Foot Clan, only to have April abducted by Shredder himself. Splinter, their Ninja master, has also been kidnapped. Laughing in the face of danger, the Turtles boldly set out to save their friends and find the secret headquarters of Shredder and the Foot Clan, the Technodrome. The Technodrome also houses Krang, the brain behind the entire evil organization.

Not only are the boys being attacked by the Foot Clan soldiers, but Shredder's henchmen Bebop and Rocksteady are also out for turtle blood. The Turtles make their way through various streets, alleys, and sewers using whatever means they can—on foot, by jet-powered skateboards, or via the party van. Once they rescue April and Splinter, the guys go on to find the Technodrome. But even if they succeed in blowing up the Technodrome, there is no guarantee that Krang and Shredder have been destroyed with it. The demented duo may have escaped to Dimension X, where no one can find them, to hatch more heinous plots against the Turtles. However, as long as our heroes have breath in their bodies, you can bet no one will make turtle soup of them!

- **DEDICATED UPRIGHT**
- **HORIZONTAL MONITOR**
- **BUY-IN FEATURE**
- **CONTINUATION FEATURE**
- **PLAYER CONTROLS:**
  - 8 WAY JOYSTICK
  - JUMP BUTTON
  - ATTACK BUTTON

KONAMI®

SPOTLIGHT SPECIAL

WICO · THE · SOURCE™

Wico Celebrates 50 Years In Parts Supply Boasts Largest Assortment of Spares in Biz

No matter who you are in the amusement, music and vending machine industry, chances are you're a Wico customer. There's little need to introduce the name of this giant parts and supplies house to anyone who makes his living operating, distributing or manufacturing coin machines. Wico has become as much a "fixture" of the trade as the joysticks, coils, machine locks, contact switches, bulbs, pinball bumpers and the rest of their exhaustive array of machine ingredients which they either make or sell.

They call themselves "The Source" and while this giant organization may not have the "soup," they certainly have the nuts, along with the bolts (including bolts of billiard cloth) and a bewildering roster of other doodads, big and tiny, that go a long way toward keeping the national coin-op engine up and purring at locations here and even overseas.

Everything about Wico spells complete. They have the most complete sales force of any company on any level of the industry, bar none. Their annual parts catalog (which commands a 25,000 print-run and is sent to tradesters free of charge is half as thick as the one brought out by Sears for homeowners. The most recent catalog states that over 18,000 separate parts items are in stock, but according to some company executives, that could be a conservative estimate.

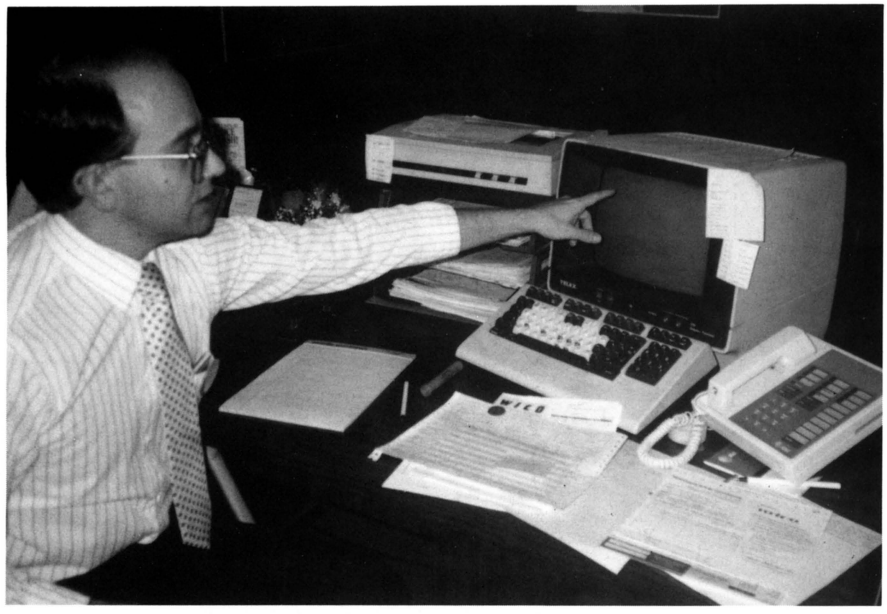
For sure, if you multiply the number of different items (e.g. pool cues and vending pumps, chemicals and screwdrivers) by the quantity of each on the shelves at their Niles, Ill. headquarters or at the five regional branches they maintain in the U.S.A., the combined total of Wico's "barrel of parts" numbers in the millions.



Four who make the Wico engine go. Surrounding company President Ed Sololofski are (left to right) Mike Rudowicz, Jim Tierney and Dave Ruber, representing sales, merchandising and internal operations.

Does it take a logistical genius to keep track of all this inventory, and the orders, shipping, billing and receiving? What could be a nightmare for the disorganized runs like a Swiss watch at Wico, thanks to a smooth management chain headed by President Ed Sokolofski, a strong merchandising group led by Jim Tierney, an aggressive sales organization piloted by Mike Rudowicz, a silk-smooth order-fulfillment routine commanded by Operations VP Dave Ruber, and to other well-functioning departments . . . all backed up by an IBM 4341 computer system that's as large as some bowling center arcades.

As the organization enters its 50th year, its scope has broadened from its original purpose to include O.E.M. parts manufacturing for video and pinball companies, plus the manufacture of coin chutes (like the ABT brand which they own), of joysticks and other computer-related parts for home retail and of items for the entire billiard industry (trade and consumer). But the coin operator's daily needs in spares and repair supplies . . . be they served directly from Niles, from one of the branches or over a parts counter at a machine distributorship they deal



Sales VP Mike Rudowicz shows map which breaks out the territories covered by his road salesmen.

with . . . is still Wico's chief target. It's been the target since the company was founded.

BACKGROUND

The company started up back in 1940 as the Harry Marcus Co. with offices at 673 W. Madison in Chicago. Two years later, they moved the renamed Wico to Pulaski Road where they headquartered until the move to Niles in 1970. Their first products included rubber rings for pingames, contact switches, coils, plastic pinball bumpers and later on, even a 45 rpm conversion kit to turn jukeboxes over from the 78 rpm mode. (They also handled salad bowls and rope for a while).

Wico built the 117,000-sq.-ft. Niles headquarters and opened it just around 20 years ago from this writing. The original Wiczer ownership sold its interest in the company to a New York investment group in July of 1986, just after Sokolofski came aboard (this five-year veteran spent the bulk of his previous career in sales and marketing of such disparate products as Turtle Wax and Moog music synthesizers).

When you mention Sokolofski's name to company executives like Rudowicz, Ruber, Nolan Lameka, Rick Sonnicksen and Jim Tierney, you get the idea the company chief is some sort of guru. But they aren't waxing the boss' apple; they frankly stand a bit in awe at the ease with which he juggles hundreds of departmental balls in the air and never seems to drop anything.

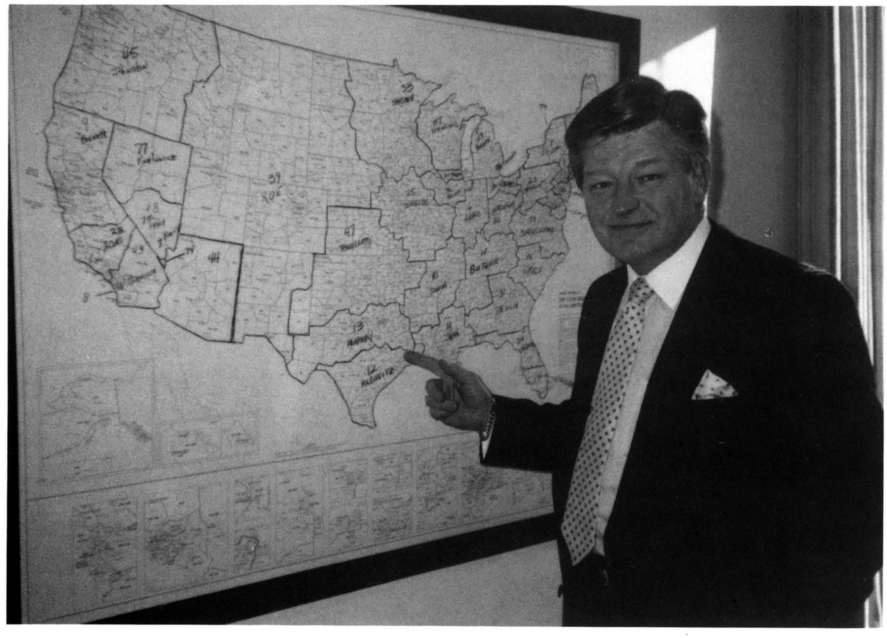
On top, Sokolofski is a "people person" and runs incentives for employees who score on-job attendance records (Wico also maintains a full-menu employee cafeteria at Niles where the cost is low but the quality high). Of course there are those ubiquitous "the customer comes first" signs all over the building's walls to remind employees of their real goal: serve the customer.

The "real menu," of course, is the enormous selection of parts and repair supplies Wico sells. Although they're heavy into the consumer, billiard and home video retail industries, most products are sold to the coin machine trades (jukebox, game and vending). Sokolofski guesses that about 60% of the goods sold into this industry go directly to operating companies ("the mom & pop routes out there in the woods," he smiles) and the balance is sold into major metropolitan areas, largely through independent distributors.

Whether an operator buys from a Wico salesman, from their catalog or over a distributor's parts counter, the prices of the goods are largely the same. It's all a matter of convenience and to Sokolofski, a matter of customer service. "We don't compete with distributors on price," he says. "We just want operators to be able to get their hands on the supplies they need in as brief an amount of time as possible."

MODERN TIMES

After fifty years in any business, certain things were bound to change. Today's Wico is almost as much a parts manufacturer as it is a supplier. Roughly one-third of the products sold these days are actually made by or for Wico, and these include the broad line of home video



Dave Ruber points to inventoried parts item on a computer terminal (unfortunately, our camera didn't pick up the copy). Quantities of specific products can be assertained in just a few seconds.

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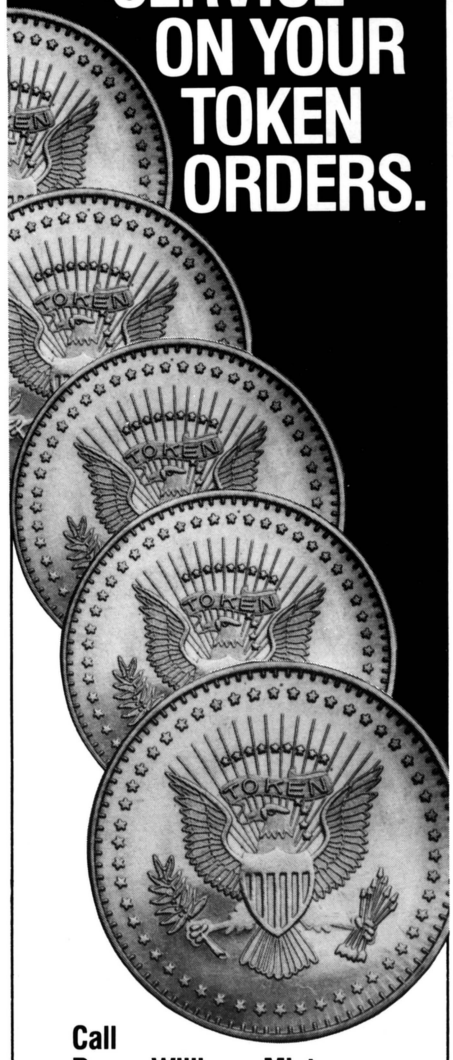

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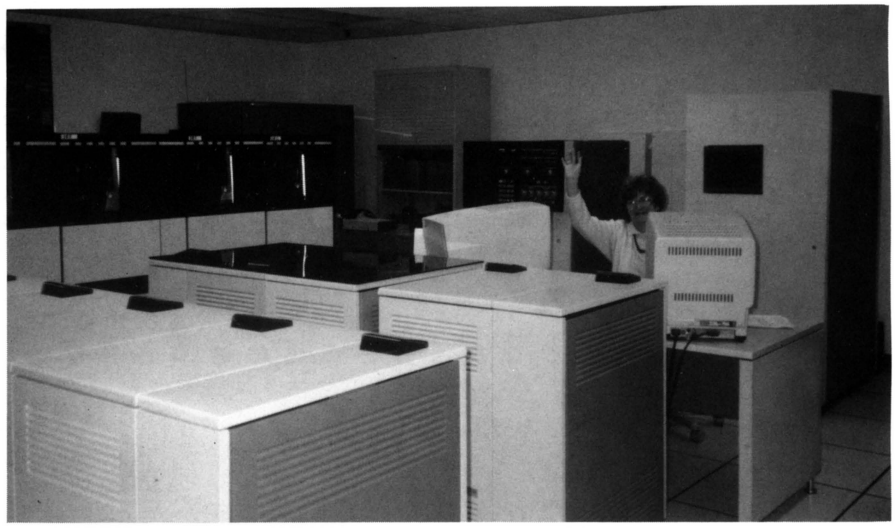


A view of "the brain," Wico's IBM 4341 system with Barbara Konzcal saying hi to readers.

joysticks produced by their newly-acquired Suncom Division (from low end TAC-2 sticks up to their exotic Tandy items). When you combine the number of joysticks sold to operators, to retailers and to game manufacturers, it's probable that Wico is the largest joystick manufacturer in the world today.

Wico makes numerous other items at the Niles plant, maintaining injection molding and metal fabrication machinery for things from video knobs and buttons all through a series of catalog entries that even include money safes. Counting in the Suncom employees, Wico in Niles employs around 225 people in the plant and in offices today. Added to those at the branches, plus the field salesmen who work the roads (mostly from their own homes), about 300 folks in all get their paychecks from "the house that Wico people built."

Operators know it's easy as pie to order from Wico. If they don't do it by the catalog or don't pick up things at a local distributor's parts counter, there's a good chance they will either get a call from a Wico telemarketing person touting this month's special or a physical call from one of the 38 field salesmen.

This latter force reports respectively to Ralph Orlowski (East) or Doug Blair (West), both of whom report to sales chief Rudowicz. In addition, each of the five branches maintains sales people (these report to Dave Ruber). Since every item in stock is logged in the branch computer (in line with the computer at the Niles office), sales fulfillment is a push of the computer keyboards.

Ruber estimates that around 95% of all parts orders go out to operators within 24 hours of receipt. Most shipping is done UPS (a special 45-foot UPS truck just for Wico arrives at their Niles headquarters every workday). All shipments are carefully inspected before going into the carton and are stuffed with a flyer advertising the month's special offers. Bills for products ordered are sent out the very next morning, thanks to the IBM system. It's all quite automatic; if it wasn't, chaos could set in very quickly.

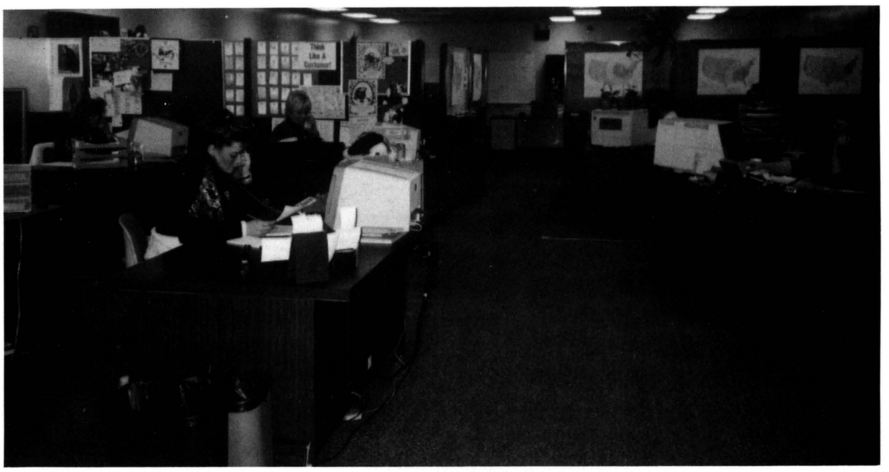
THE IBM BRAIN

Just how are literally millions of parts accounted for and how does Wico know at any given time what it has in stock and how many of each? The answer is that everything is logged in that giant IBM system and at the push of a few buttons at headquarters or at any of the branches, the order-taker can see clearly on the monitor what's available and how many are in the house. As Ruber says, "Without that computer, we wouldn't be able to serve our customers as fast." Dave Ross is Director of Data Processing; he's been with the company for over 13 years.

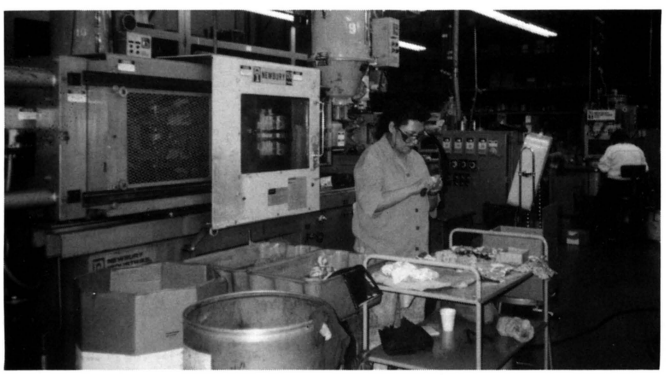
After checking the computer screen, it's easy to locate the physical product. Warehouse shelves are flagged from A down to H with the most frequently-ordered parts (like fuses and cue slip-on tips) sitting on



The print shop does flyers, business cards and internal business forms. Here we see Bruce Smith (right) with department manager John Battaglia.



Seven telemarketing people call out to the trade to create new customers and notify them about the specials.



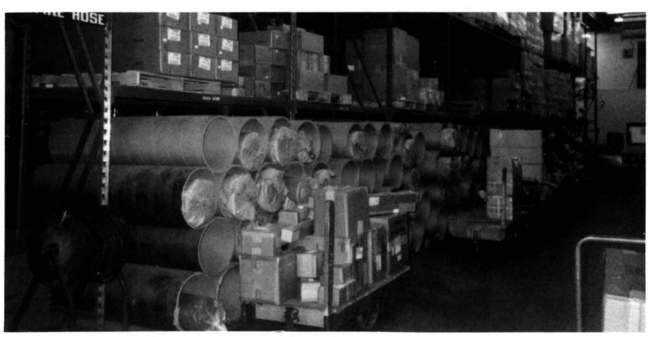
Hard at work in the injection molding department, a lady punches out video game knobs. They also make buttons and other plastic parts for the game.



Metal fabrication — Wico even makes its own money safes.



Orders are inspected and cartoned and ultimately delivered to the dock for UPS pickup. Wico gets a special 45-ft. truck to the dock every day.



Bolts of billiard cloth in the Wico warehouse come from such suppliers as Mali, House and others. From the yardage they've sold over the years, they could probably cover Soldier Field several times!



The tedious and exacting job of winding pinball coils is an old art at Wico. As often as not, ladies perform this kind of work.



Wico's employee cafeteria offers inexpensive meals and snacks but the quality is high. A choice of main entrees is always offered.



Feeling insecure? Call Wico. They've got a truly wide line of locks, hasps and you-name-it.

the A aisle shelves and the slowest moving items (like ten-year-old pinball backglasses) resting back on the H shelves. Requisition forms are punched up on the computer terminal, given to warehouse men who locate, remove the goods and deliver them to the shipping section. After inspection and packing, off they go.

There's a $25.00 minimum order when buying from the catalog, but it's not hard to meet that goal since there's so much listed there that the operator can always use. And to make things even easier, operators can pay with either Visa or MasterCard (to help avoid C.O.D. charges) besides company checks. Catalog sales, by the way, account for a generous portion of Wico's annual sales volume.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Besides parts supply, Wico provides special services for customers. For example, they do big business keying machine locks so the same key can open a multitude of machines on the individual operator's route (minimum order of 25 is needed). They also rebuild coin counters/sorters and coin mechs, vending pumps and some other staples. "It's often cheaper for an operator to have us rebuild something for him than to buy it brand new," says Ruber.

Wico also provides custom-built O.E.M. parts for machine manufacturers. Under an exclusive arrangement with James Industries, Wico

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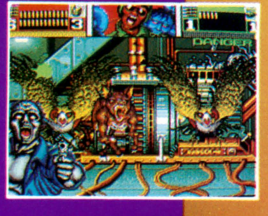

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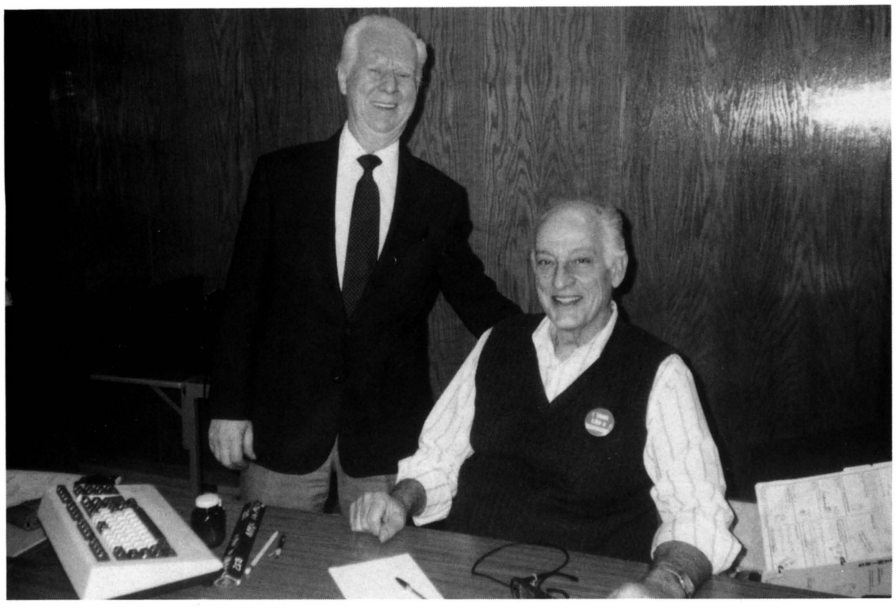


Dave Gunstein, a 43-year veteran at Wico (specializing in security products) with another vet, Rich Santercola (seated). Rich does promotional materials.

today is producing many components for video game and pinball makers. Some of these parts are "proprietary," that is, unique to the specific machine (such as the special joystick for Konami's *TMNT Turtles).* Wico will not offer any of these to outside parties as long as the units are being built by the contracting manufacturers, but will offer them to the industry afterward as replacement parts for those machines.

Manufacturing is big business at Wico as it enters its second half-century. Among the top execs piloting this mission are Rick Sonnicksen (O.E.M. Mgr.), Raul Engel (Dir. of Mfg.) and Ed Brooks (Dir. of Mfg. Services). One thing Wico will not build is a complete coin machine. "We tried that once with a pinball called *Aftor,* but that's ancient history," Sokolofski says. "This company will never make or distribute games, that's policy," he adds.

SALES PROMOTION

Under Jim Tierney and Rich Santercola, the company makes sure the industry knows what Wico has to sell and how to buy it. They are very aggressive in the advertising and sales promotion area. Besides the catalog (which they prepare but have printed outside), they issue six to eight special flyers each month touting some special bargain on joysticks, bulbs or whatever. They maintain a fully-outfitted art department at Niles to prepare all this literature (they also do business cards and internal forms as well). By the way, Wico also publishes different catalogs for the bottling and gaming industries (they sell slot machine handles, for example).

Sales promotion, and the actual salesman-to-customer interaction are among Wico's true strengths. Another is their network of branches (they maintain outlets in Dallas, Las Vegas, Fairfield, N.J., South Gate, Calif. and Norcross, Ga.). Roughly 90% of Wico's overall business is done stateside with around 10% coming from foreign markets at this point (Vartkes Sinanian is their Export Manager).

Another obvious strength, according to Sokolofski, is the huge assortment of products they offer coupled with the speed of delivery once ordered (branches stock and ship many parts to operators but the bulk of the goods goes out to the field from Niles).

"Maybe something else should be



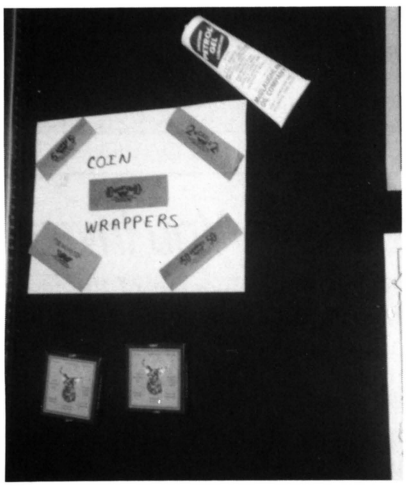
Fastest moving products are stocked on shelves tagged alphabetically. Fuses are among them since Wico sells a ton of these items.



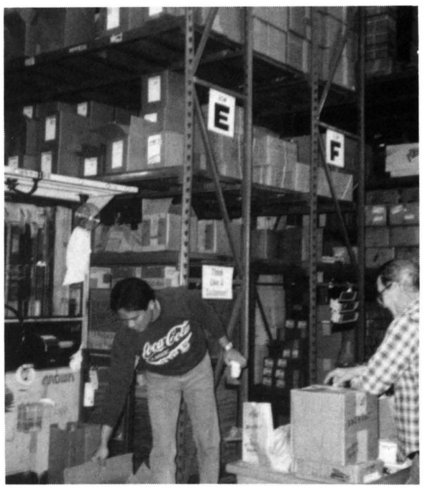
Billiard supplies for trade and retail are big for Wico. This display sits out by the main entrance to their Niles headquarters.

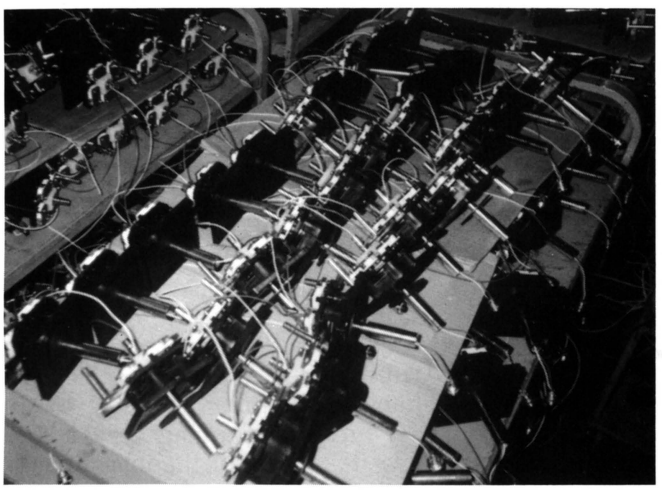


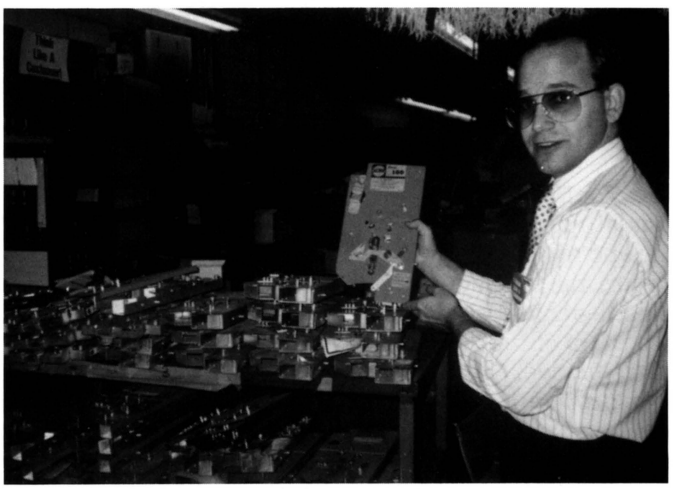
Ladies perform the exacting task of keying locks alike. Wico once keyed 1,500 for one operator (sounds like a big route, doesn't it?).



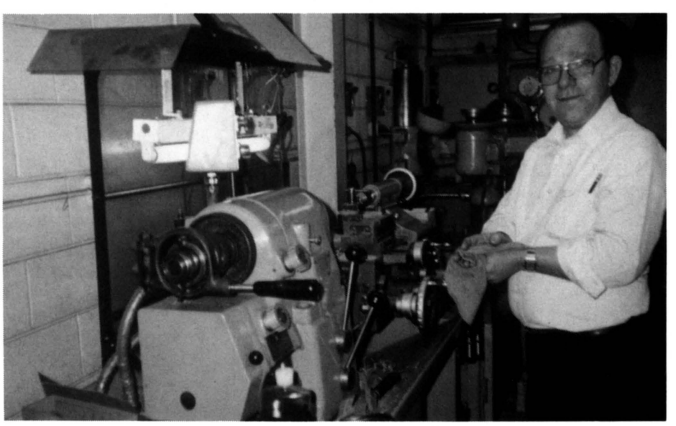












Above: ***A montage of photos taken at Wico showing a variety of other jobs going on from keying locks to rebuilding coin counters to joystick manufacture.***

said about this company," Sokolofski states. "As we enter our sixth decade, we do so sitting on the leading edge of the coin machine parts business. I'm proud that Wico is setting standards in parts manufacturing and that so many machine producers are incorporating our goods into their equipment. We really have become 'the source' for parts and components for so very many on all levels of this industry."



All sorts of video joysticks are produced at Wico, including these exotic items. From O.E.M. to retail sticks like the Tandy line, Wico shakes a big stick.



The newly-acquired Suncom division specializes in making and selling hardware products for the home video and computer maket.

Those Legal Questions

by LAURENCE MERRITT & DAVID HAGEN

"Blue Suede Shoe" Operators Are Back; Think Before You Invest

We have always been very wary of the various investment schemes which seem to circulate around the country from time to time. As you may recall, we encouraged our readers to develop an "investment team" which consists of an attorney, accountant and a trusted friend to review a potential investment *before* it is made (see Jan. 1989 column).

During the last few months, we've seen a new type of investment "opportunity" going around the country. Essentially, the deal is this: an investor is asked to put up sufficient funds to purchase a number of vending and/or amusement machines. In return, the promoter agrees to place these machines on location and take a portion of the collections. All the investor does is advance the purchase price of the machines and wait for the profits to roll in.

While we are sure there are many, very legitimate, business opportunities such as this around the country, we encourage our readers to think long and hard about a number of things before getting into this type of investment.

First, think about control. In this type of investment, the investor has very little control over how the machines will be operated. Those of you who operate routes know that the critical element in your business is you and the quality of your locations. Letting someone else make the day-to-day decisions regarding the business is risky.

Also, a passive investor has no control over the collection and accounting process. Because investors typically live some distance from the route, they have no control over how the coins are collected, counted and divided. This also is a risky proposition. In one case we were involved in, the promoter never put the machines on location. After the machines were purchased, they were simply delivered to the investor's home! This is perhaps an investor's worst nightmare.

Second, think about common sense. If the machines and the route are such a good opportunity for profit, why doesn't the promoter simply go out and borrow the money to buy the machines himself? Many times it's difficult for someone starting a route to obtain financing to buy machines. However, there are ways that it can be done, short of promising an investor a percentage of the profits.

If you do want to invest money to help someone start a new route, it is far better to give them a loan, so that person can purchase the machines himself. You can then take back a security interest in the machines, to secure the repayment of the loan. This way, if the interest is not repaid, at least you have a security interest in the machines to cover, or help minimize, your losses. With this investment scheme going around the country, an investor could end up receiving *nothing* if the machines never generate a profit.

Third, think about distance. This relates somewhat to the control element discussed above. However, we find some investors willing to make investments at great distances and across state lines. In the event the deal goes sour, it will be necessary to file suit in another state. This means hiring an attorney at a distance, which can be difficult. Also, it will become necessary to make several trips to that other city for depositions, trial, etc.

Fourth, think about the amount invested. Most of the investments with this type of deal average ten to twenty thousand dollars. Once again, if the deal goes bad, it will be necessary to litigate; and whenever one considers suing, the economics must be considered. For example, if $10,000 is invested and the deal goes bad, it could cost between $5,000 and $10,000 in fees (and take one to three years) to obtain a judgment. For many, it doesn't make good economic sense to invest that kind of time and money to recover $10,000.

Admittedly, you can recoup your attorneys' fees if you put an attorneys' fee clause in the investment contract (as we always recommend). However, those attorneys' fees are only added on to the judgment at time of trial. The client (you) must pay all the fees in the meantime. Many might consider this "throwing good money after bad."

Once again, there are probably many very fine investment opportunities such as the one discussed in this column. However, we want to caution our readers about potential pitfalls that may come with this type of investment. We encourage you to *think before you invest!*



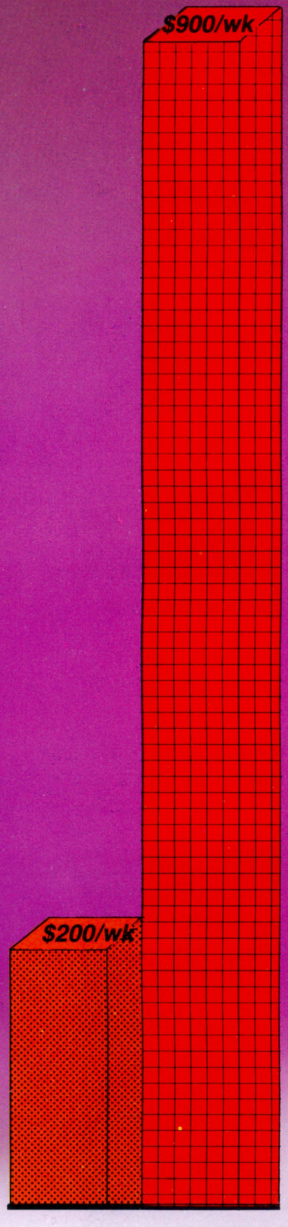
MERRITT



HAGEN

Laurence Merritt has been helping operators with their legal problems for over 12 years. He has experience as a Judge Pro Tem in the Santa Monica Municipal Court and as a family law mediator for the Los Angeles Superior Court. He is also on the panel of arbitrators for the L.A. Superior Court in addition to teaching courses for paralegals at Waterson College. His partner, David Hagen, also has a great deal of experience representing operators in litigation matters. Both welcome comments and questions — they may be reached at their offices by writing or phoning: Merritt & Hagen, Attorneys at Law, 6400 Canoga Ave., Ste. 311, Woodland Hills, CA 91367; 818/992-1940.

BIG crane COLLECTIONS are REBORN



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Test spots were locations that had regular size cranes for 1 to 2 years and were replaced by or added to with Hollywood Jumbos. This graph shows an average of the test results.



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Grand Day In Grand Rapids with Rowe;

Back in mid-November, the Rowe AMI brass invited a select group of jukebox operators (plus a number of folks from the press) to a day of fun and learning up at their Grand Rapids, Mich. phonograph plant. It was a fine capper for the 1989 Jukebox Centennial celebration. Indeed, the day-long affair was highlighted by a lunch at the plant where dessert was a 100th anniversary birthday cake (yes, they sang "happy birthday, dear jukebox" and blew out the candles).

Operators like Wally Bohrer, Jim Hayes, Ed Velasquez, Tami Norberg-Paulsen, John Bell and AMOA's current President Jack Kerner got an indepth tour of the Rowe assembly facilities and later on, a special peek into Rowe's jukebox museum (and a take-home souvenir book featuring past Rowe jukeboxes and accompanying advertising slicks). AMOA permanent staffers John Schumacher and Fred Newton also enjoyed the tour.

Rowe's principle jukebox assembly lines are set up in their newer plant across the street from the original works which date back to the 1920s. Each line in the new plant was running strong as the firm was back-ordered on its line of CD hardware (the old factory is more or less dedicated to parts manufacture now).

CD is the happening item for Rowe in Grand Rapids. Estimates are that 70% of the machines produced are dedicated CD phonographs, 20% are combo's and only 10% are pure 45 vinyl (and that percentage is shrinking). One new jewel on the line is the *WallStar*, their remote CD selector that ties in either with a CD-100 box or with a hideaway (also in production on the line).

Since the November meeting, the *WallStar* has begun to take off in the U.S. It's already on thousands of stops in certain European locations. This small, wall-mounted song-selector has enabled some American operators to get coin music into some upscale lounges that previously didn't care for a full jukebox (or perhaps didn't have room for one). AMOA's prexy Kerner himself has put a *WallStar* tied into a CD-100 into an upscale bar in New England and reportedly enjoyed quite a surge in collections (the overplay is strong).

So much talk already. Here are some snapshots taken at that grand affair.



Facade of the original AMI plant looks like an apartment building but has a load of humming machines inside.



Grand Rapids Production Manager Steve Price (left) showed Joel Friedman, Jack & Shirley Kerner and other guests **WallStar** *remote CD boxes coming down the line.*

Firm's WallStar *remote CD cooking*





Above: ***Head designer Joe Krestakos with the*** **Model D,** ***Rowe's first 45rpm box, which they brought out in '51. There's 55 years of history in the museum.***

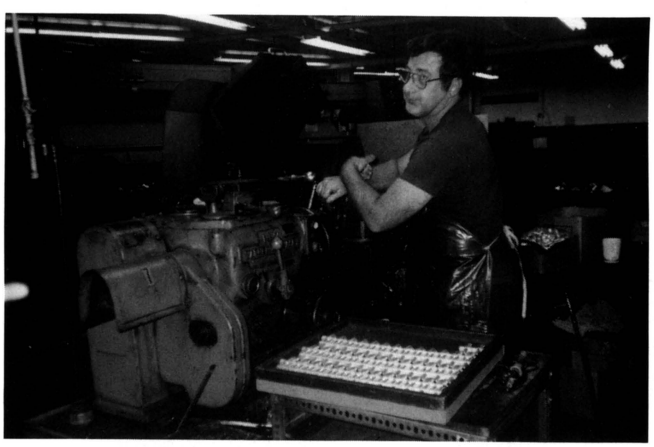
Right: ***the 1934*** **Model F** ***is on stage at the museum. Showing it off are John Bell, Jerry Gordon, Jim Hayes, Tami Norberg-Paulsen and Jack Kerner.***



The Centennial birthday cake, complete with a dollar bill ornament to show the business has come a long way since the days of nickel-play.



RePlay's Eddie Adlum in the shadows at left hugs one of these old beauties in the Rowe museum. It was quite a treat to view the gorgeous machines.



Line worker in the original plant punches out components for the new roster of CD boxes. The firm is doing quite well with their **WallStar** ***remote CD selector.***



Packed and ready to ship: a view of the goods at Grand Rapids plant ready to freight out to domestic and foreign distributors.

TODD ON TARGET...

THE VIEW FROM THE STREET.

Think Positive!

don't let these "Seven Myths of Coin-Op" get you down

by TODD ERICKSON

Video "seems" like a bad investment today, at least the the eyes of many operators. Indeed, some operators feel that in a few years, they won't be operating any video games at all!

I've heard this same sort of pessimistic talk many times in the last 15 years... but the pessimists have been wrong every time. I'm still in the video business, and so are they. I'm still happy about it. They, for some reason, aren't.

I think I know the reason they're so unhappy. As Cassius said to Brutus (or would have, if he'd been a coin machine operator): "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our video games, but in ourselves." As I speak to the gloomier members of the trade, some of the same ideas and assumptions keep popping up. In fact, I've heard them so often lately, that in my own mind I call these ideas "The Seven Myths of Coin-Op."

Briefly, they are:

1. All games are created equal for all locations.
2. The present popularity of home games will last forever.
3. Coin-op video is dead.
4. Buy only the top game; it will last forever!
5. Old junk cabinets earn the same as new ones with 25 or 27" monitors.
6. Dirty games earn the same as clean ones.
7. Games don't have to be rotated, because the customers get around enough on their own.

Some readers might be smiling right now, because these ideas are so obviously false. Other operators



believe these statements are gospel truth. Which is it? Are these ideas myths, or reality? Only you can answer!

On my route, at least, they're myths. I'm not giving in to defeatist thinking, so I'm not contributing to my own problems. That's why I'm still optimistic about the long-term prospects for the industry in general, and coin-op video in particular. I certainly hope the same is true for you and your route.

Let's start by looking at Myth Number Three, "Coin-op video is dead." Quite a few operators are voicing that belief these days. But I don't believe it at all! (By the way, the publishers of this magazine most assuredly don't believe it.) Let me tell you why.

To begin with, I've heard industry people pronounce "last rites" over certain game categories before... game categories which stubbornly refused to lie down and die, but which got up instead, and came back fighting with big-earning, long-lasting hits. Remember 1981, when then-Williams president Mike Stroll told veteran pinball designer Steve Kordek: "I feel sorry for you, because pinball is dead"? I remember it.

Mike wouldn't say that today if he played *Elvira* and noticed its position on the ratings charts. A few months ago, *Earthshaker* was the *number one game in the country*... in *all categories*... according to one industry chart. Pinball wasn't dead in 1981; it had a glorious future ahead of it — for those who had the vision to look beyond the moment.

Yes, video is down today, but there are many ways you can look at this fact. Is the home market the biggest reason? Yes. Now we're back to Myth Number Two, "The present popularity of home games will last forever." Don't bet on it. My sources tell me that Nintendo home sales in Japan are way off lately. Coin-op, which is down worldwide, has come back about 20% in Japan!

What does this mean for us in the U.S.? Our market usually follows Japan's by several months. The same effect could happen here, possibly later this year. I feel that when the consumer stops buying so many home games, he can then spend more of his money on coin-op and other things.

Movies are another major source of competition for the consumer's entertainment dollars. Since last summer, the movie business has been doing great at the box office. This also hurts coin-op. But movies are a cyclic industry, too. They can't stay on top forever, any more than home games or any entertainment medium can. Our time will come.

Pull-tabs and other forms of state-sanctioned risk-reward entertainment are yet a third major source of competition we face. Over half the states in the country running huge-

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ly popular lotteries. And the gambling industry remains at an all-time high (they earn a quarter of a *billion* dollars each year). More and more states are legalizing more and more types of gambling. This trend is diverting dollars that could have gone into our amusement machines, too.

Myth Number Four says "If you buy only the top game, it will last forever." Well, some operators always want to buy the top games. I agree — and the top games are worth paying full price. But that doesn't mean you should totally ignore those games which happen to be further down the list. Some of the "B"games are excellent values when they're offered at reduced prices.

For instance, *Tetris* at half-price was the best value in the kit market. And it's not alone: many distributors have excellent values at discount prices. They over-ordered on some good games, and they're ready to take their losses and move out the inventory. This happens to all of us in this industry, at one time or another. When these values are gone, the prices will go back up.

As for Myth Number Six, which states that dirty games earn as well as clean ones. . . come on! The operator must offer better presentation for his product. This also means cleaning it! The worn flakeboard cabinets need to be replaced with the new kit. Installing 25" Wells monitors and 27" Sharp Image monitors in your cabinets will greatly increase the earning power of those games, too (so much for Myth Number Five, by the way).

Games must be rotated down from the "A" locations faster than many presently allow. Don't believe in Myth Number Seven, which claims that you don't need to rotate games, because players "get around a lot." Even if today's players do perform more location-hopping per hour than formerly, they don't necessarily make all their stops at *your* locations. Indeed, if all they see is the same old games at your places, they may cross your locations off their list! So if players are moving around more, that means you have to rotate games more, not less.

Now, Japan is running a 10-week cycle on many games these days. U.S. operators have to move more in that direction. New drawer-type games are a big help in this regard. Here's a rule of thumb: if you can't install a game in under an hour, your system needs upgrading.

While you are rotating those games, don't become a victim of Myth Number One, which claims all games are created equal for all locations. They're not, because each location draws a somewhat different mix of players. Keep an eye on what types of themes, styles of play, etc., appeals to each location. Then, give it to them. Don't just shove games into the next place on the list, willy-nilly.

My basic message here is one of hope, clear-headedness and self-reliance. Rather than giving in to despair, forget the Seven Myths of Coin-Op. Instead, concentrate on the One Truth of Coin-Op: *nothing lasts forever.* Yes, home systems may continue to be profitable for many, many years. There is no reason why they shouldn't. But they will not always dominate the entire games industry.

Likewise, coin-op will work its way back up. Already signs of this are appearing around us. Some new themes and types of gameplay have begun to arise, such as Atari's addictive, non-violent *Tetris* and a creative sports title which is coming soon from Fabtek.

Another encouraging sign is that our customer base is about to grow again. The original Baby Boomers are all grown up now and having kids of their own. This "Baby Echo" is on the way next, and it represents a whole new generation of children under 12, which will provide a huge new market for us.

So let's think positive thoughts and take positive actions. If we do, we'll be rewarded with "positive feedback" in the cash box! R

The BONDEAL CHART

Top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending Jan. 13, 1990

TOP KITS	Jan. 13	Jan. 9	Dec. 30	Weeks On Location
Burning Force	1	5	1	7
Pang	2	1	2	11
Chequered Flag	3	7	5	80
World Cup 90	4	4	—	2
Arch Rivals	5	2	3	24
Golden Tee Golf	6	3	4	4
Midnight Resistance	7	6	7	8
Zero Wing	8	—	—	12
Fire Shark	9	8	10	5
Rambo III	10	10	9	6
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
Ninja Turtles	1	1	1	6
Hard Drivin'	2	2	2	39
Super Off Road	3	3	3	41
Championship Sprint	4	4	—	103
Monaco GP	5	5	—	20

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All That Glitters

HMS Monaco helps operators turn glittering crane prizes into cashbox gold

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: they're not just for video games anymore. No, they're also available as fun jewelry pins . . . exclusively from HMS Monaco et Cie, Ltd. "Operators have been clamoring for the tremendously successful *Turtles* video game," said Steve Schulman, HMS sales manager. "Now they can use Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to make crane and rotary revenues soar!"

The handsome pins are about 1" high and full-color. They portray 12 "Turtles" characters including heroes Donatello, Rafaelo, Michaelangelo and Leonardo. Starting this February, they are available for shipment in custom packaging for cranes, rotaries and redemption operations.

This exclusive offering is typical of HMS Monaco, which says it's "the largest manufacturer of packaged costume jewelry for use in coin-op games, directly responsible for up to 95% of jewelry in the coin-op marketplace."

The New York City firm is a family business, formed nine years ago by Andrew Paleias and his mother. They were a small mail-order outfit at first, but slowly expanded until today, they serve multiple industries. How big is HMS Monaco today? Well, Andrew's brother Lewis is now Director of Production at a new 4,500-sq.-ft. facility in Greenville, Rhode Island, where the firm does much of its manufacturing, packaging, shipping and storage.

HMS came to the coin-op redemption business when merchandise expert Ira Erstling noticed the triple cranes making inroads on Jersey Shore arcades. Ira persuaded one arcade owner in Seaside Heights to try Monaco's boxed jewelry in the center bay of a new crane. "During that first summer, three center bays of that arcade's crane grossed $60,000 using exclusively $15,000 worth of our jewelry," Ira recalled with satisfaction.



HMS Monaco et Cie, Ltd. President Andrew Paleias and VP Ira Erstling in their New York City offices.

Word spread quickly. Other arcade owners tried HMS product and confirmed its profitability. Today, the Jersey Shore remains an HMS "testing ground," with the firm's attractive jewelry filling cranes, rotaries, digamarts, and skill dozers, along with redemption center prize showcases.

A year and a half ago, HMS developed the "plush mixer" globe: a plexiglass capsule filled with jewelry, watches and novelties. Geared toward operators who wished to mix HMS type prizes in with his plush. "It's been a tremendous success," said execs. "Cranes are a steady market — in fact, a growing one for operators who know how to merchandise prizes properly. Replacing or enhancing plush with boxed jewelry can recapture lost players and reverse declining revenues. In fact, some of our clients happily report their cranes earn three times as much, when they use our jewelry. Why? Because the customer perceives the value of our watches and jewelry to be very high."



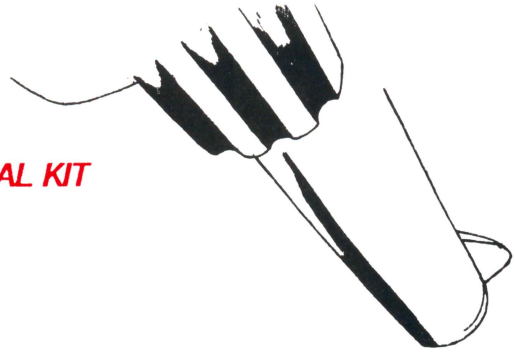
HMS' Sales Manager Steve Schulman.

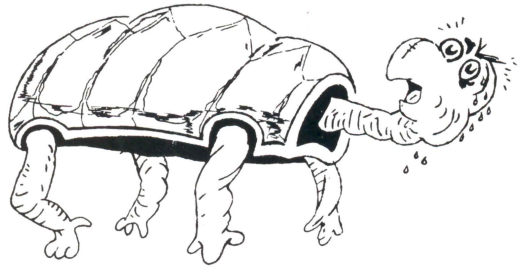
You can say that again. HMS Monaco's latest catalog includes a glittering array of hand-engraved, gold-look jewelry, including pins, pendants, necklaces, baubles for bracelets, keychain ornaments, etc. Many of the pieces are highlighted with "diamond" type stones, as well.

Other attractive HMS product includes golden chains, hi-tech watches, bracelets, fashion rings for men

2 PLAYER VERTICAL KIT

CONTINUATION AND BUY-IN





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Ron Malinowski
Vice President, Equipment Services
Aladdin's Castle, Inc.

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At left, Aurora picks stock in the firm's warehouse while, at right, Indira works at the computer.

and women . . . the list goes on and on. Specialty items such as holiday-themed merchandise is also available, including pumpkin pins, ghost necklaces, Santa watches, etc. You can be sure that this month, some Valentine "sweetheart jewelry" from HMS is adorning the crane of many a happy operator.

Despite the luxurious appearance of these handsome items, "Our capsules are priced right!" said HMS execs. "On a one-kit purchase, the jewelry capsules average $1.24 and the watch capsules average $1.39. Quantity discounts bring these averages down to $1.14 and $1.25." The products are guaranteed; operators who find a broken or defective piece can return it for credit or exchange. Said HMS: "You won't have to change dead watch batteries any more!"

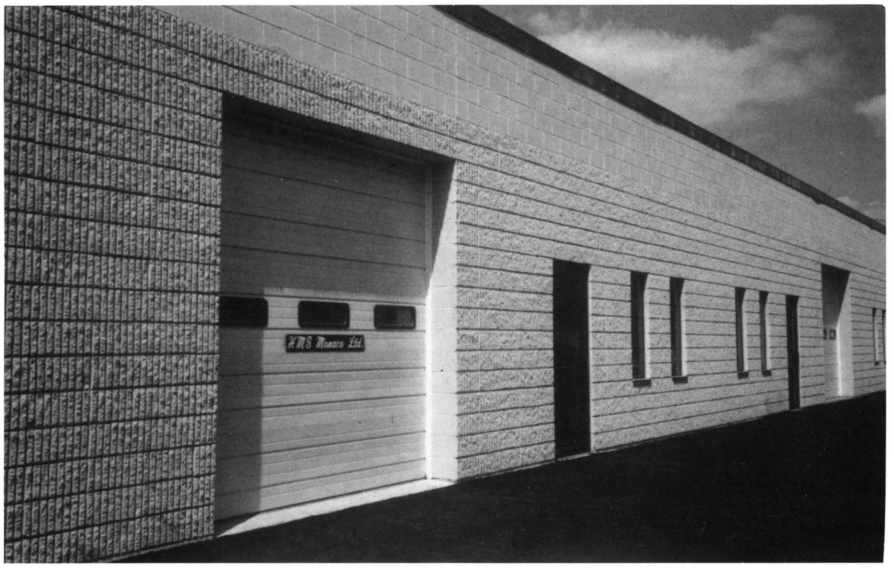
Of course, like all good coin-op merchandise suppliers, the folks at HMS Monaco provide more than product. They also offer expertise, assistance and useful marketing advice to the operator. Ira Erstling has years of experience selling everything from appliances and cameras, to novelties of all types, to retailers and amusement arcades throughout the region. And Steve Schulman has 15 years experience managing a 1,200-piece game route in the Northwest for a major coin-op firm. "I was one of HMS Monaco's customers," Steve said with a smile. "I operated redemption machines with their jewelry in my redemption machines, so I know from personal experience how good it is . . . and how operators can best use this attractive merchandise to make their cranes look good!"

HMS encourages operators to call their toll-free number any time to discuss their needs or questions. They're happy to provide information, advice and pointers. "And if you have any tips or pointers to give us," they like to say, "we'd love to hear them!" HMS also provides excellent written guidelines, telling operators how to set up redemption equipment with boxed jewelry in the playfield.

"Customer satisfaction is one of the reasons for our success," said the folks at HMS. "Each customer, no matter how big or small, is someone very important to us. Each order is customized to make sure the product line applies to each user's needs. We'll help you select the jewelry that's right for your crane, and if we select something that's not effective for you, we'll gladly replace it with other jewelry that's better suited to your needs. We want our relationship to be a long and profitable one . . . for both of us!"

In all, it's a happy crew at HMS Monaco. With their attractive line of product and their redemption expertise, it's easy to understand why they say: "the best days are still ahead!"

HMS Monaco is located at 135 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011; 212/691-9000. Operators are encouraged to call toll-free at 800/777-0901.



The firm's facility in Rhode Island.



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Arcade of Tomorrow

UATA's Dallas site boasts video bar, wall monitor bank & hi-tech lighting

"The arcade of tomorrow" is now open in Dallas, Texas and it features the world's first video lounge with built-in video games in the bar. This futuristic site also includes a huge video wall with built-in monitors. The arcade is called "The Electronic Experience" and is the brainchild of Jon Daugherty, CEO of United Artists Theater Amusements (Palm Springs, Calif.).

"The total amusement center has a conceptual design which will lead the industry into the 1990s and 21st century," smiled UATA's Daugherty. He ought to know: arcade showman Jon introduced glitzy shopping mall amusement centers nearly 20 years ago, in cooperation with well-known Las Vegas casino creator Jay Sarno.

At UATA's latest jazzy, snazzy location, young adults can sit at the bar and enjoy non-alcoholic beverages while they chat and play games. A ceiling cove features a perimeter which constantly changes colors, thanks to hi-tech fiber-optic lighting. Other attractions include an exclusive U.S. presentation of exciting games and attractions from around the world: Italy's *Ghost Train* kiddie prize vender... England's *Beat the Clock* rolldown redemption unit... Italy's *Motor Show* video pinball... and *Lucky 7* redemption games from Britain. Also featured are traditional coin-op sports-themed games, midway-style redemption attractions and many video games. The site is completed by one of the best and largest redemption centers in Dallas. Food service includes hot dogs, nachos and popcorn.

And that's not all! The Electronic Experience arcade is just one attraction in a freestanding, 115,000-sq.-ft. plaza which is totally dedicated to entertainment. This complex, called the United Artists Plaza, offers a multi-screen movie theater, three restaurants, a huge disco and a yogurt store.

The UA Plaza is located to the Central Expressway and Park Lane in Dallas. The project architect was J.R. Minick & Associates of Dallas; Corporate Design of Irving, Texas was the interior decoration consultant.



Above is an artist's rendering of a portion of the "arcade of tomorrow" showing the video game bar. Below are two photos of the Electronic Experience amusement center, which is located in Dallas, Texas.





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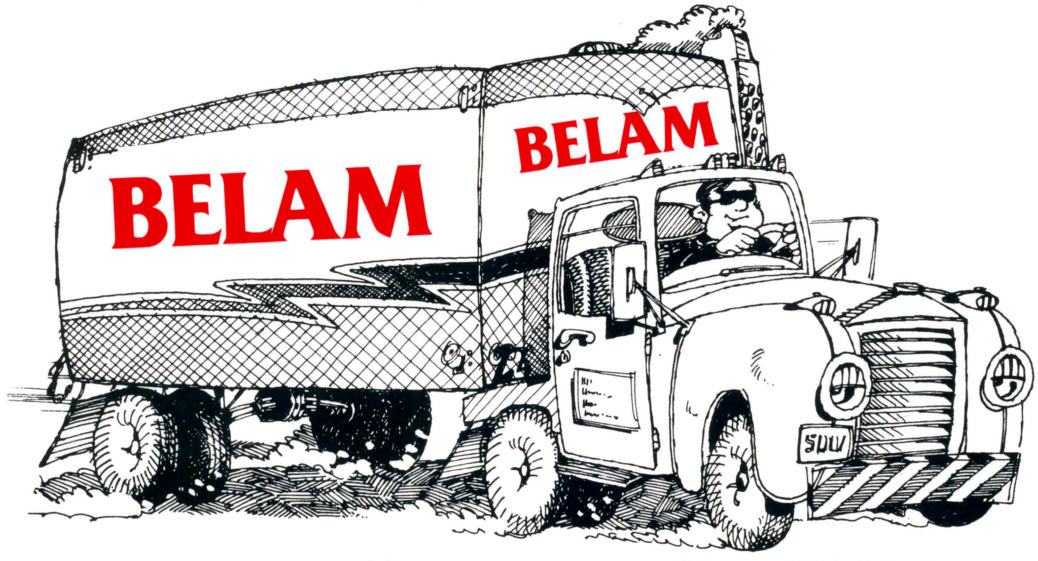

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Whirlwind!

new Williams pinball should give players gale-force excitement

According to operators polled at ACME, the "Most Innovative Game of 1988" was *Banzai Run*, a wild pinball featuring a vertical playfield/backglass.

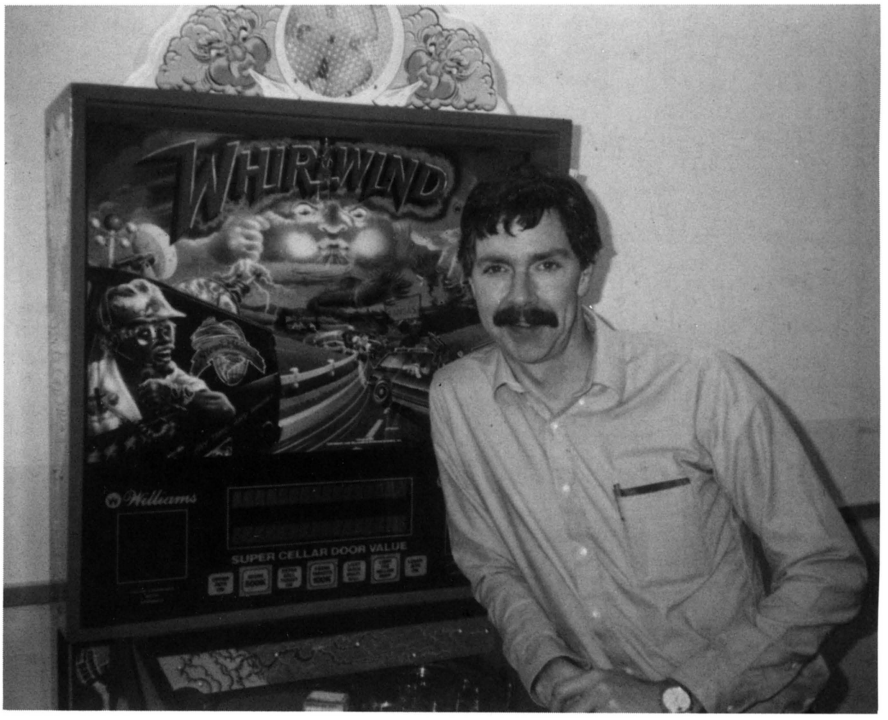
A year later, AMOA honored another Williams flipper as the "Most Innovative Game of 1989" — *Earthshaker* let players feel the trembling and quaking of a mighty California temblor right under their hands.

For 1990, the most innovative game of the year might just be *Whirlwind*. Shipping now, it's — you guessed it — a flipper from Williams. The game boasts a distinguished lineage, because it was designed by the same fellow who was responsible for *Banzai Run* and *Earthshaker!*

Meet Pat Lawlor, age 38. He's been with Williams for three years, and has been doing industry game design since 1980. "*Earthshaker* had such impact that I decided to become the king of 'disaster' pinballs," Pat smiled. The result: *Whirlwind*, a game that whips up gale-force player excitement.

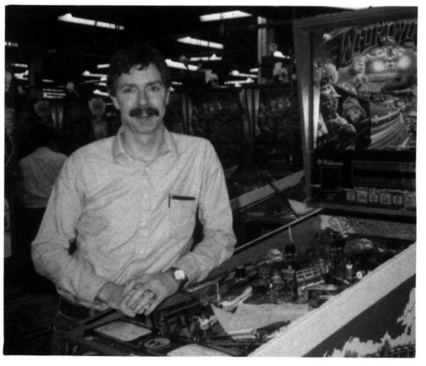
Like all pins, *Whirlwind* was a team effort, and Pat is quick to share credit with his stalwart crew. Bill Pfutzenreuter did software; John Krutch designed the mechanical devices; John Youssi created the art; Chris Granner composed music and sound. "These guys are geniuses," Pat said. "I'm sort of the director who comes up with the concept, but they make it happen."

"We don't treat the whirlwind theme realistically," Pat explained, "but as a cartoon. Looking around, I decided it would be fun to blow air in people's faces. That led me to come up with the wind theme. We have put a fan on top of the backbox. When you generate a 'storm' in the playfield (via spinning the three counter-rotating disks), the backbox fan comes on and blows air in your face. It's a whole new tactile sensation for players, as well as the first time we've pulled off this trick with the rotating disks."



Williams designer Pat Lawlor with his latest project, the new* Whirlwind *pinball. Lawlor also designed* Earthshaker *and* Banzai Run. *(The photo below shows Pat and the game on the production line.)

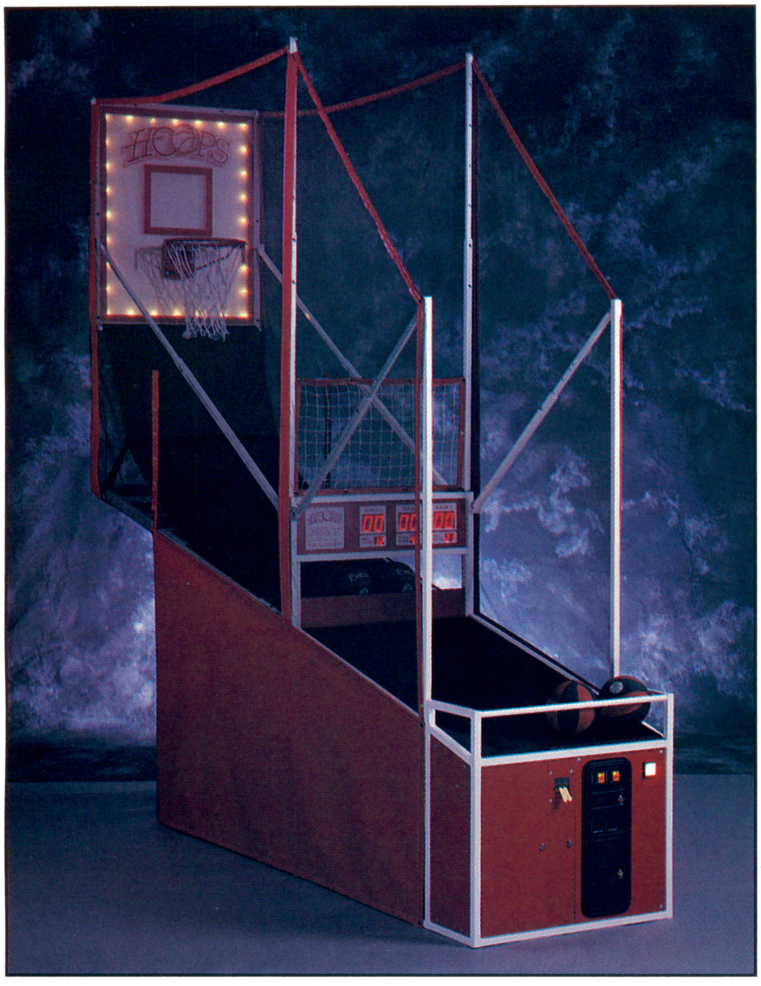


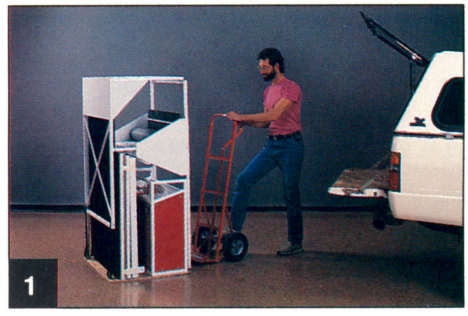


In the process of designing these three winners, Pat Lawlor has quickly developed a trademark of providing unique games that change the parameters of what players expect from pinballs, Williams execs noted proudly. "Americans really like mechanical gizmos," Pat explained. "They like walking around the shopping malls at Christmas and looking at the moving displays, for example. And I recall that, as a kid, one reason I enjoyed playing pinball

HOOPS

The Famous Fold-up, Adjustable Basketball Game









WHAT GAME HAS HELD ITS PLAYER APPEAL FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS?
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In addition to the three knockout features highlighted in the photos, the game offers many important benefits including:

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- Highly reliable, shock mounted microprocessor-based electronics.
- All games have two-player scoring & unobtrusive sound enhancement.
- Coins-per-play, game time, replay level, etc. are operator settable.
- Resilient acrylic backboard with heavy duty custom hoop.
- Attract mode light chaser automatically switches to steady backboard lighting for play in dim locations.
- Optional bill acceptor, ticket dispenser.

Putting the operator's concerns first has produced a game that, though a bit more expensive, will provide many years of value, service and earnings for the discriminating buyer.

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1. GAME FOLDS UP!
The entire game folds up into a self-contained package measuring an astonishing 5' x 2' x 32". Problems with storage and transportation are obviously minimized. Best of all, since the folded game fits through any door, one man can easily install it in under 30 minutes.

2. ADJUSTABLE LENGTH AND HEIGHT
Now you need only one game for all your location situations. This game is adjustable in both length and height from a compact 8' x 8' game to an impressive and challenging 10' x 10' set-up. Any combination of length and height (in 6" increments) is easily set. Adapt to a new size for your next location.

3. DUAL BEAM PHOTOCELL SCORING
Players particularly appreciate the dead-accurate photocell scoring and fast, smooth action of this game. (No ugly plastic ring hanging from the hoop net to break or slow things down.) The accuracy and consistency of scoring is especially conducive to league play.

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was to make the mechanical gadgets do something entertaining on the playfield. Pinball kind of forgot that for a few years and focused on shooting at targets. I'm trying to bring pinball back to putting players in control of the device: you start it going, you control it, you make it happen. *Whirlwind* lets you control very powerful forces of nature. You make these forces appear and disappear on the playfield. You, the player, are the most powerful person in the game."

Getting the fan to blow is the reward which skilled (or persistent) players can enjoy "for one shining moment." Then the question becomes, can you do it again? Players will keep playing to re-experience that high of achieving a playfield coup which makes a "special effect" like the whirlwind happen, Williams said. "Never make a game too easy," Pat said. "Make a game challenging and it will have legs."

Pat's design philosophy is to put the player "in control of the universe" of the pinball. "If the game does something bad and kicks the person in the shins and tells them, you're not the most powerful person, it's a design flaw and players will walk away from it," he explained. "If they do control the game, they'll play it again and again."

Besides the backbox fan and counter-rotating disks on the playfield, other "firsts" offered by this pin include a "Grand Champion" score which remains in the attract mode sequence until operators decide to remove it. (This feature can help operators run contests, etc.) Jackpots have been replaced with the "million-plus" concept, a snowballing point award system that encourages players to keep playing for higher and higher scores. It's the first game since the 1960s to have six jet bumpers. A feature called "Mega Cellar Door Value" sends the ball under the playfield into the "storm cellar" to collect values such as quick multiball, extra bonus, etc. This feature encourages continued play by eventually leading to a climax where every single feature is offered at maximum for one ball.

Whirlwind bowed to the trade at a series of dealer open houses, starting with C.A. Robinson (Los Angeles) on Jan. 19. Promotional materials such as t-shirts will be available from Williams and/or its distributors. "Everywhere we're testing the game in Chicago, it's the number one pinball game," Williams execs said. "It's earning like a top video game." With products like this, operators have a chance to diversify their equipment and give players a new and different experience . . . one they'll enjoy, in all likelihood, for years to come.

"We think *Whirlwind* is going to be a classic," said Williams. "The industry's at a critical junction and this is state-of-the-art product that can help expand to a broad player base that can carry us through the next decade." R

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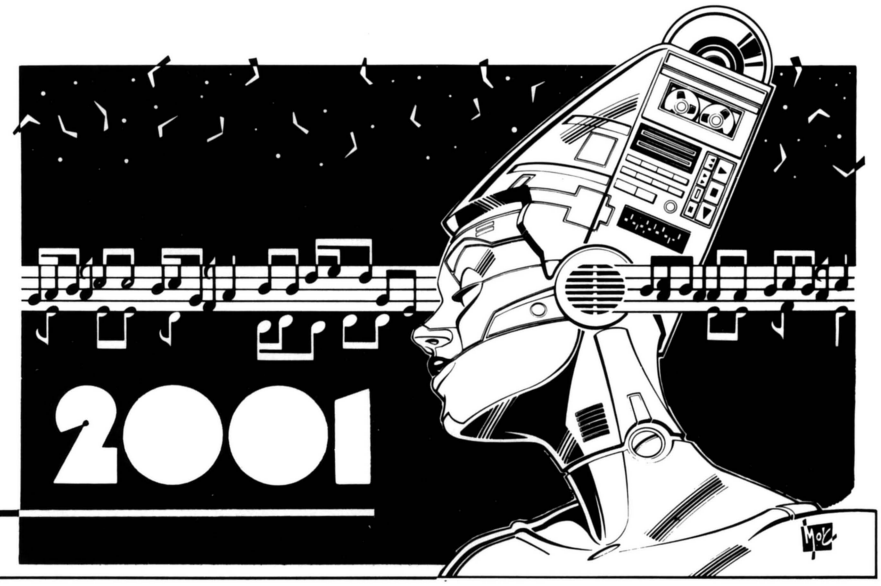


TAKING YOUR MUSIC SERVICES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

External Speakers Can Give Your Jukebox That Million-Dollar Sound

By EMERY KERTESZ and STEVE DEVLIN

Want to keep your jukebox competitive in the 1990s? The challenge is tough, but you can learn how in RePlay's *special series of guest essays, written by music operators Emery Kertesz and Steve Devlin (L.A. East, Hatfield, Penn.).*

"Jukebox operators increasingly find themselves competing for the best locations with big-name sound system firms and multiple TV monitors," according to Emery and Steve. "Fortunately, there's a remedy. You can jazz up your jukebox with hi-tech audio systems and visual auxiliary equipment. This gear is already on the shelf, ready to use," Steve and Emery advised. "Operators already have the service know-how. Putting some glitter on that expertise is what we're all about."

Steve and Emery began this series in our November, 1989 edition with advice on how to market jukebox support equipment to location owners. This month, the focus is on upgrading your speaker systems. We hope readers will take full advantage of this expert advice.

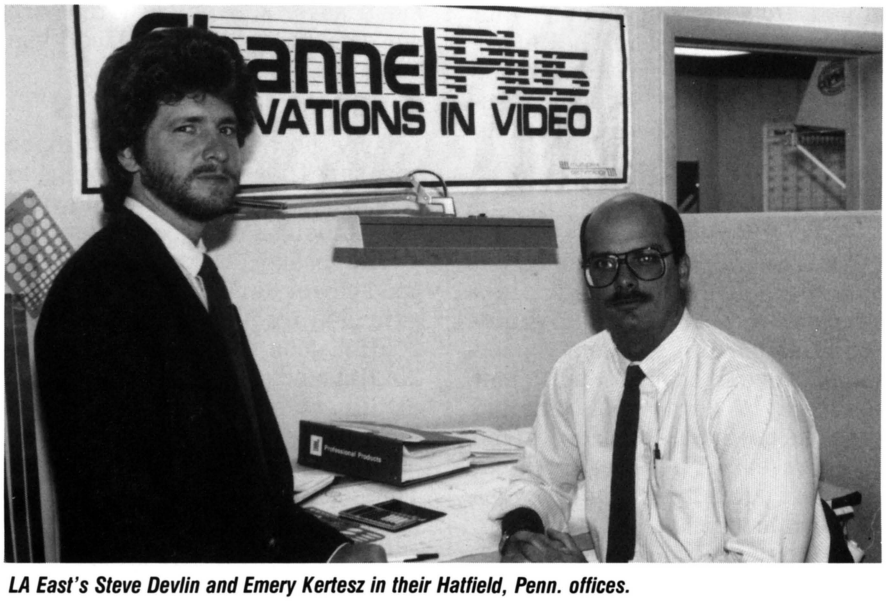
— the editors

One of the best ways to enhance your jukebox is to add high-quality external speakers to the location — speakers which are dedicated to the jukebox. Especially with the rise of CD machines, many coin-op distributors are recommending this addition as an excellent way to get the most out of your investment . . . and many operators are finding that extra speakers allow them to "step up in class."

"Hey, I've got a modern, state-of-the-art CD jukebox," some operators might reply. "Why do I need to add tinny little ceiling speakers?" It's true that in the past, ceiling speakers were not considered good sound reinforcement transducers. But as technology has evolved, ceiling speaker quality and capability have improved dramatically.

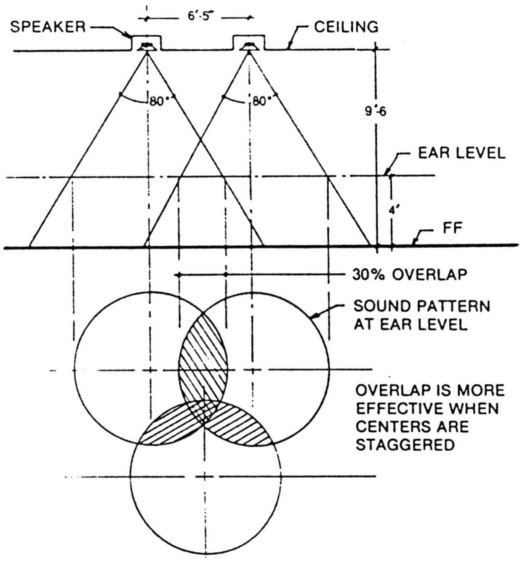
Today, several manufacturers offer speakers with power-handling in excess of 40 watts continuous program. New developments in baffles and backboxes (cabinet behind the ceiling tile) have allowed the ceiling speaker to become much more than just a squawk-box for background music and paging. Now these devices can provide background music and even dance system reinforcement.

Of course, the bottom line is simple: increased revenues. As the number of customers who can hear your jukebox increases, so will the number of customers who *play* your jukebox. The better the music sounds, the more dollars you earn. So let's discuss what you need to know, in order to get into external speakers. First, we'll look at how to sell the idea to locations. Second, installation and wiring considerations. Third, selecting equipment (with an eye toward high quality at a reasonable cost). Finally, we'll touch on speaker system layout.



LA East's Steve Devlin and Emery Kertesz in their Hatfield, Penn. offices.

Fig. 7-11



SELLING THE IDEA

In an upscale location, it may take a bit of effort to convince the location owner and his associates that ceiling-mounted speakers are a good idea. "They will be flush-mounted, small in diameter and very unobtrusive," you explain. Yet somehow, this suggestion often gets adverse comment... especially when interior designers or architects are involved, as often happens in top locations. Stress the increased income that external speakers will provide. Your distributor can probably share some "success stories" from other locations in the area, that you can pass on to the location owner.

As we said in our November, 1988 article, if a location owner is interested in better profits, he's the kind of partner you want to work with. If he's not... well... maybe you'd better think about taking your equipment, your investment and your expertise elsewhere.

GETTING ENOUGH SPEAKERS

After you've sold the location on the general idea of external speakers, it's time to sell them on using *enough* speakers to get the job done right. And here you could run into your second obstacle. Location designers will permit air conditioning outlets, sprinkler heads, and incandescent downlights throughout the ceiling in whatever numbers are necessary to give proper performance. But for some unexplained reason, these same designers often object strenuously to installing enough speakers to give proper musical performance!

"We don't like loudspeaker grilles cluttering up the ceiling," they often say. "You can have so many, but no more than that." Because of attitudes like these, you can walk into many locations today which have a few external jukebox speakers in the ceiling... but not enough of them. Someone has made an arbitrary decision that the ceiling contained "too many speakers," and they decreed that half that many would be satisfactory. (Remember the movie *Amadeus*, where the Emperor Franz Josef complained to Mozart that his music contained "too many notes"?)

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH

You can overcome this objection by explaining that a ceiling speaker installation is much like an incandescent lighting system. A good sound system requires sufficient speakers to cover the occupied space below them, at the level of the listeners' ears. The thing is, typical speakers project the sound waves outward in a cone-shaped pattern. Inside the cone, you can hear fine. Outside the cone, musical quality is much less, or even non-existent.

The table shown on the next page gives center-to-center spacing for loudspeaker placement. This table takes various factors into consideration: variable percentages of overlap, cone dispersion angle (which you can learn from the speaker salesman, or from the literature that comes with the speaker), and ceiling height. (Overlap is measured on the diameter of the cone circle where it intersects the plane of the ear. That's pretty obvious, if you think about it!)

Now, if you look at the diagram (Fig. 7-11), you'll see two adjacent ceiling speakers with 30% overlap and 80 degrees cone pattern, mounted in a 9'6" ceiling. Go back and consult the first table, and we find the required center-to-center distance between speakers in this situation to be 6'5". So in this case, using these speakers, with a ceiling this high, you would need to install a speaker every six and a half feet in the ceiling, for optimum listener enjoyment.

INSTALLATION & WIRE

The next consideration is the installation of the speaker into the tile, and what kind of wire to use. For under $20, you can buy a cutting tool to cut the tile in a fast, professional manner. Keep in mind that some tiles cost a lot of money, so be careful and do the job right!

The wire used to connect the speakers to the jukebox should, in most cases, be 18 gauge. If the wire run gets too long (over 200 feet), use 16 gauge.

SPEAKER SELECTION

Now, how to select the proper speaker. There are many things to consider, so let us narrow it down to the vital signs of a good design.

The speaker selected should have good power handling (25-50 watts), extended frequency response (80-20kHz), good frequency range (30-20kHz), and high sensitivity (95-97 dB SPL, 1 watt at 1 meter). Last, but far from least, the speaker's off-axis performance should be very good. That means it should sound good at the edge of the "cone," not just in a straight line (on axis) in front of the speaker.

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Table 7-6. Distance Between Loudspeakers (Ceiling Mounted)

50% OVERLAP* AT PLANE OF EAR (SEATED LISTENER)

LOUD-SPEAKER ANGLE OF COVERAGE	Ceiling Height, Ft													
	8'-6"	9'-0"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-6"	11'-0"	11'-6"	12'-0"	12'-6"	13'-0"	13'-6"	14'-0"	14'-6"	15'-0"
60°	2'-7"	2'-10"	3'-2"	3'-6"	3'-9"	4'-1"	4'-4"	4'-7"	4'-11"	5'-2"	5'-6"	5'-9"	6'-1"	6'-4"
70°	3'-2"	3'-6"	3'-10"	4'-2"	4'-7"	4'-11"	5'-3"	5'-7"	6'-0"	6'-4"	6'-8"	7'-0"	7'-4"	7'-8"
80°	3'-9"	4'-2"	4'-7"	5'-0"	5'-6"	5'-11"	6'-4"	6'-9"	7'-2"	7'-7"	8'-0"	8'-5"	8'-10"	9'-3"
90°	4'-6"	5'-0"	5'-6"	6'-0"	6'-6"	7'-0"	7'-6"	8'-0"	8'-6"	9'-0"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-6"	11'-0"
100°	5'-4"	6'-0"	6'-7"	7'-2"	7'-10"	8'-4"	8'-11"	9'-6"	10'-2"	10'-9"	11'-4"	11'-11"	12'-6"	13'-2"
110°	6'-5"	7'-2"	7'-10"	8'-7"	9'-3"	10'-0"	10'-9"	11'-5"	12'-2"	12'-10"	13'-7"	14'-4"	15'-0"	15'-9"
120°	7'-10"	8'-8"	9'-6"	10'-5"	11'-4"	12'-2"	13'-0"	13'-10"	14'-9"	15'-7"	16'-6"	17'-4"	18'-2"	19'-1"

**Overlap is measured on the diameter.*

40% OVERLAP* AT PLANE OF EAR (SEATED LISTENER)

LOUD-SPEAKER ANGLE OF COVERAGE	Ceiling Height, Ft													
	8'-6"	9'-0"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-6"	11'-0"	11'-6"	12'-0"	12'-6"	13'-0"	13'-6"	14'-0"	14'-6"	15'-0"
60°	3'-1"	3'-5"	3'-10"	4'-2"	4'-6"	4'-11"	5'-2"	5'-6"	5'-11"	6'-3"	6'-7"	6'-11"	7'-3"	7'-8"
70°	3'-10"	4'-2"	4'-7"	5'-0"	5'-6"	5'-11"	6'-4"	6'-8"	7'-2"	7'-7"	8'-0"	8'-5"	8'-10"	9'-3"
80°	4'-6"	5'-0"	5'-6"	6'-0"	6'-7"	7'-1"	7'-7"	8'-1"	8'-7"	9'-1"	9'-7"	10'-1"	10'-7"	11'-1"
90°	5'-5"	6'-0"	6'-7"	7'-2"	7'-10"	8'-5"	9'-0"	9'-7"	10'-2"	10'-10"	11'-5"	12'-0"	12'-7"	13'-2"
100°	6'-5"	7'-2"	7'-11"	8'-7"	9'-5"	10'-0"	10'-8"	11'-5"	12'-2"	12'-11"	13'-7"	14'-4"	15'-0"	15'-9"
110°	7'-8"	8'-7"	9'-5"	10'-4"	11'-2"	12'-0"	12'-10"	13'-8"	14'-7"	15'-5"	16'-3"	17'-2"	18'-0"	18'-10"
120°	9'-5"	10'-5"	11'-5"	12'-6"	13'-7"	14'-7"	15'-7"	16'-7"	17'-8"	18'-8"	19'-9"	20'-9"	21'-10"	22'-11"

**Overlap is measured on the diameter.*

30% OVERLAP* AT PLANE OF EAR (SEATED LISTENER)

LOUD-SPEAKER ANGLE OF COVERAGE	Ceiling Height, Ft													
	8'-6"	9'-0"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-6"	11'-0"	11'-6"	12'-0"	12'-6"	13'-0"	13'-6"	14'-0"	14'-6"	15'-0"
60°	3'-7"	4'-0"	4'-5"	4'-11"	5'-3"	5'-9"	6'-1"	6'-5"	6'-10"	7'-3"	7'-8"	8'-1"	8'-6"	8'-11"
70°	4'-5"	4'-11"	5'-4"	5'-10"	6'-5"	6'-10"	7'-4"	7'-10"	8'-4"	8'-10"	9'-4"	9'-10"	10'-3"	10'-9"
80°	5'-3"	5'-10"	6'-5"	7'-0"	7'-8"	8'-3"	8'-10"	9'-5"	10'-0"	10'-7"	11'-2"	11'-9"	12'-4"	13'-0"
90°	6'-4"	7'-0"	7'-8"	8'-5"	9'-1"	9'-10"	10'-6"	11'-2"	11'-11"	12'-6"	13'-4"	14'-0"	14'-8"	15'-5"
100°	7'-6"	8'-5"	9'-3"	10'-1"	10'-11"	11'-8"	12'-5"	13'-4"	14'-2"	15'-0"	15'-10"	16'-8"	17'-6"	18'-4"
110°	9'-0"	10'-0"	11'-0"	12'-0"	13'-0"	14'-0"	15'-0"	16'-0"	17'-0"	18'-0"	19'-0"	20'-0"	21'-0"	22'-0"
120°	11'-0"	12'-2"	13'-4"	14'-7"	15'-10"	17'-0"	18'-2"	19'-4"	20'-7"	21'-10"	23'-0"	24'-3"	25'-6"	26'-8"

**Overlap is measured on the diameter.*

20% OVERLAP* AT PLANE OF EAR (SEATED LISTENER)

LOUD-SPEAKER ANGLE OF COVERAGE	Ceiling Height, Ft													
	8'-6"	9'-0"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-6"	11'-0"	11'-6"	12'-0"	12'-6"	13'-0"	13'-6"	14'-0"	14'-6"	15'-0"
60°	4'-2"	4'-6"	5'-1"	5'-7"	6'-0"	6'-6"	6'-11"	7'-4"	7'-10"	8'-4"	8'-9"	9'-3"	9'-8"	10'-2"
70°	5'-1"	5'-7"	6'-2"	6'-8"	7'-4"	7'-11"	8'-5"	8'-11"	9'-6"	10'-0"	10'-7"	11'-2"	11'-9"	12'-4"
80°	6'-0"	6'-8"	7'-4"	8'-0"	8'-9"	9'-6"	10'-2"	10'-10"	11'-5"	12'-1"	12'-9"	13'-5"	14'-1"	14'-9"
90°	7'-2"	8'-0"	8'-10"	9'-7"	10'-5"	11'-2"	12'-0"	12'-10"	13'-7"	14'-5"	15'-2"	16'-0"	16'-10"	17'-7"
100°	8'-6"	9'-7"	10'-6"	11'-6"	12'-5"	13'-4"	14'-4"	15'-3"	16'-3"	17'-2"	18'-1"	19'-1"	20'-0"	21'-0"
110°	10'-3"	11'-5"	12'-7"	13'-8"	14'-10"	16'-0"	17'-2"	18'-4"	19'-5"	20'-6"	21'-9"	22'-10"	24'-0"	25'-2"
120°	12'-6"	13'-10"	15'-2"	16'-8"	18'-2"	19'-6"	20'-10"	22'-2"	23'-6"	24'-11"	26'-4"	27'-9"	29'-1"	30'-5"

**Overlap is measured on the diameter.*

This last item is crucial. It allows you to use fewer speakers . . . which keeps the cost of the entire system down. In a well-designed speaker, the quality of musical reproduction will hold up even when you're 40 to 60 degrees off axis.

The above factors, then, comprise a general criteria you can use. Keep in mind that small variations are not a problem.

SPEAKER SYSTEM LAYOUT

The idea here is to lay out your speaker system so that you get proper sound distribution. If you're working with new construction, keep in mind that you're going to be working with designers, owners and architects, so use sound design criteria (and ask them to do the same). Otherwise, you're going to have problems.

For example, if the ceiling is too low, you'll have to buy a lot more speakers. Why? A low ceiling cuts off the sound distribution of each speaker, by keeping that "cone" of sound too small.

In order to achieve uniform sound distribution, you've got to avoid "hot spots." That is, you can't expect any one speaker to do too much work, or cover too much territory. No speaker should be expected to produce a cone of sound exceeding a 60 degree apex angle . . . not if you expect to get high intelligibility and even sound levels.

As discussed above, this means using enough speakers so that the circular patterns of sound overlap at the level of the listeners' ears. Now, for optimum distribution of the full range of important frequencies, it's a good idea to use enough speakers that you create as much as 50% overlap in adjacent loudspeaker distribution patterns. That is, a listener at a table in the bar who is seated equidistant between two speakers, would hear music just as loudly and clearly as someone right under a speaker.

While some manufacturer's data shows cone angles up to 120 degrees, such wide dispersion is not optimum for speech (i.e., the singers don't sound so hot with speakers like these). Speech intelligibility depends on uniform-level ear coverage of the *higher* frequencies . . . and these tend to beam in smaller cone angles.

On the other hand, where good articulation and intelligibility is not important, such as in background music systems, the speakers may be placed much further apart. But keep in mind that in jukeboxes and foreground music, sound pressure levels are higher and must be even. So you've got to cluster your speakers together more densely.

Obviously, installing an external speaker system can be a complicated task, if you want the results to be professional. Every location is different, both in terms of its physical layout and in terms of its clientele, musical requirements, etc. If you have questions about your ideas for speaker system installation, we'd be happy to help with advice and recommendations, where possible. Call L.A. East at 215/362-2890 and ask for Steve or Emery. Good luck!





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Medalist Proves its Mettle

firm hosts huge December dart outing in Tacoma

In the six years that Medalist has built its dart leagues up from scratch in the Washington/Oregon region, they've staged two, sometimes three grand championships each year for the more skillful players. But none reached the heights their Dec. 15-17 Fall Championships did, commanding around 1,058 teams plus spectators under the broad roof of the Tacoma Sheraton Hotel's Bicentennial Pavilion. It was, in the words of Medalist founder Lee Pepard, "the largest dart tournament ever."

Big, yes. It passed out around $47,000 in prize money plus many thousands more in winner pins and trophies (all cash for these self-sustaining tournaments comes from league fees paid by players, other affiliate operators besides Medalist itself, plus patronage from locations). It was also big in drama.

Coin-op darts, thanks largely to Peppard and his Medalist staff, is quite a sport for the working man and woman in the Northwest today. Weekly bouts at local taverns have become a social focal point for thousands of people. They pay their fees and they play their hearts out... and, they get an extra special kick if they score well enough in the league bouts to get into one of the big finals.



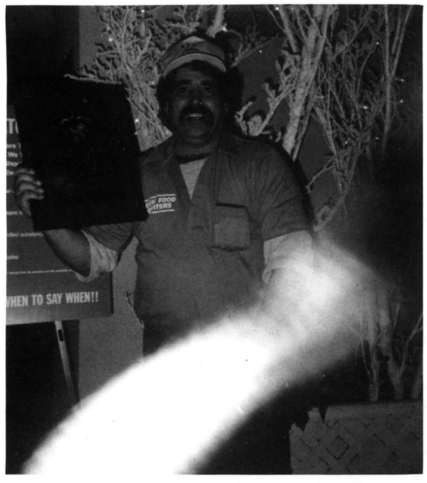
On the control platform, Medalist staffers (including Ed Tuhkanen, Lee Peppard & Liz Dunn) give readers a cheerful wave during the successful Dec. 15-17 Fall Championships in Tacoma.



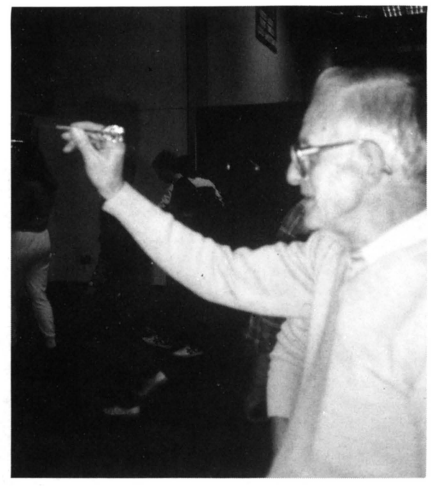
Medalist staffers keep the scoreboard up to date in the various classes of dart competition.



One view of the firing line. Medalist had 94 dart games on stage at the Fall Finals, plus another ten downstairs for practice. This montage shows only one portion of the overall dart arena set up at the Sheraton Tacoma's Bicentennial Pavilion. Around 1,058 teams compteted in the event held in December.



"Bad Bob" Moore displays the Most Valuable plaque he received at the Tacoma dart outing.



Darts isn't just a sport for young adults as this senior competitor proves during the Fall Championships.



A couple of well-trophied ladies from Mario's (Lynwood, WA), Leanne & Judy, display their winnings.

Medalist hosts two grand finales, this latest was called the Fall Championships, even though it was held in December. Here the players competed on everything from Cricket to 301 (and before long, they'll probably invent some new games as well). Medalist trucked a total of 104 dart machines into the Pavilion, 74 of which featured their own *Dart Star* board mounted onto an Arachnid *5000* main frame. Twenty more games were Arachnid *Model 6300s* and five Valley and another five Merit units were on hand for practice.

The Medalist concept was forged by Peppard, a tournament wizard to many of the players in attendance who himself learned the craft from his years with soccer table promotions. He and associates like Ed Tuhkanen and Lizz Dunn are quite the celebrities among the players and well they should be: they have brought fun into a lot of lives.

The fun of winning cash or even just a trophy is big stuff to working people. Now Medalist has joined with AMOA's National Dart Assn. and will send around 50 of their own top winners to the latter's May finals in Las Vegas. "It's one more reason for people to compete," said Peppard, referring to the opportunity for winners to throw against the best of the nation in Las Vegas this coming spring.

Medalist started its dart route in the Seattle area around six years back, always with the tournament concept in mind. It took around three years before they hit their stride and now they welcome affiliate operators into their program (around 23 other operating companies use the Medalist tournament league system on a pay-as-you-go basis). They get a lot for their money (literature, rules and more like an open phone line that gives administrative and player advice).

Basically, Medalist does all of it for the affiliate operator. Too good to be true? No. But the problem for those outside the northwest region is that Peppard will not offer his service to anyone unless his own route exists there. Interestingly, he has plans to expand Medalist's scope down from Oregon into California (they presently service around 300 stops in Washington and Oregon).

So, Peppard, Tuk and company are cooking up quite a dart brew and have now joined in with the NDA. It's a storybook case of promotion married to machine, nothing that new for the "Peppy One" but it sure shows that coin-op darts can be a serious profit center if you're willing to put your back and imagination into it. Congratulations to one and all (players certainly included) on a superb outing in Tacoma.





Many location owners attended the big event, including Kay Daniels, owner of Mario's in Lynwood, pictured above left with friend (and Medalist supremo) Lee Peppard.

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TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 3-4

Valley Darts Qualifying Tournaments. Phoenix, Arizona and Delphi, Indiana. For information, contact VNEA Exec Director Greg Elliot at 800/544-1346.

FEBRUARY 10-11

Arachnid BullShooter V Qualifying Regional Tournament. Holiday Inn, Columbus, Ohio. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

FEBRUARY 10-11

Valley Darts Qualifying Tournaments. Springfield, Illinois. For info, contact VNEA Exec Director Greg Elliot at 800/544-1346.

FEBRUARY 16-18

Merit's World Series of Darts Midwest Open, Minneapolis, Minnesota. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

FEBRUARY 16-18

OAMOA State 8-Ball Championships, Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, Ore. For details, contact OAMOA at 503/343-6642.

FEBRUARY 16-18

Tornado Soccer Tour Kick-Off, Hilton Hotel, Houston, Texas. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

FEBRUARY 17-18

Valley Darts Qualifying Tournaments. Marshall, Minnesota. For info, contact VNEA Exec Director Greg Elliot at 800/544-1346.

FEBRUARY 23-25

Merit's World Series of Darts 3rd Annual Great Lakes Open, Detroit, Michigan. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

FEBRUARY 24-25

Arachnid BullShooter V Qualifying Regional Tournament. Holiday Inn, Torrance, Calif. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

MARCH 2-4

Merit's World Series of Darts New York Classic, Buffalo, N.Y. For more info, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

MARCH 3-4

Arachnid BullShooter V Qualifying Regional Tournament. Hopkins House, Minneapolis, Minn. For more details, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

MARCH 8-10

Merit's World Series of Darts St. Louis Open, Missouri. For more info, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

MARCH 10-11

WAMO 1990 State Pool Tournament, Civic Center Inn, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. For information, contact WAMO at 414/529-4704.

MARCH 23-25

Merit's World Series of Darts Sunshine Classic, Tampa, Florida. For details, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

MARCH 23-25

OAMOA State Soft-Tip Dart Championships, Seaside Convention Center, Seaside, Oregon. For more information, contact OAMOA at 503/343-6642.

APRIL 13-15

Tornado Soccer West Coast Open, Hilton Hotel, San Bernardino, Calif. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

APRIL 21-22

Arachnid BullShooter V Qualifying Regional Tournament. Hooker's Bar-Holiday Inn, Pittsburgh, Penn. For more info, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

APRIL 26-29

WAMO Dart Tournament, Olympia Resort, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. For information, contact WAMO at 414/529-4704.

APRIL 28

1990 MCMOA State Dart Tournament, Detroit, Michigan. For more information, contact MCMOA at 517/372-2323.

MAY 2-5

AMOA-NDA Team Dart V, Sahara Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information, contact NDA at 414/263-2444.

MAY 4-6

OCMA/Valley Pool Tournament, Clark City Fairgrounds, Springfield, Ohio. For more info, contact OCMA at 614/486-8677.

MAY 25-28

Tornado Soccer Masters Open, Hilton Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

MAY 26-28

Arachnid BullShooter V Championship Tournament. Holiday Inn O'Hare, Chicago. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

MAY 26-JUNE 2

VNEA International Eight-Ball Championships, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas. For more info, contact VNEA at 517/892-4536.

MAY 25-28

Tornado Soccer Masters Open, Hilton Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

MAY 26-JUNE 2

10th Annual Valley Int'l. Eight-Ball League Assn. Championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. For information, contact VNEA Exec Director Greg Elliot at 800/544-1346.

JUNE 15-17

Merit's World Series of Darts L.A. Open, Los Angeles. For more info, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

JULY 6-8

Tornado Soccer U.S. Open, Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 3

Tornado Soccer World Championships, Hilton Hotel, Dallas, Texas. For more information, contact Tornado at 817/572-3708.

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AMOA

Amusement & Music Operators Association

TOURNAMENT BRIEFS

MAD-CITY DART CLASSIC — Madison Coin Machine (Monona, Wisc.) and Valley Cougar Darts held this event Dec. 28-29 in Madison. Despite snow and freezing rain, the fun (and the $4,000 in cash and prizes) drew 317 players from four midwestern states to compete in 10 events. Four skilled darters won a vacation trip to Orlando, Fla. Tournament Director Ki Moller thanked Valley's Dave Kristal and all others at the firm for their sponsorship. "We hope to bring the holiday classic back to Madison next year," he said.



MERIT IN TENN. — Merit's World Series of Darts came to Tennessee Oct. 13-15 for the second annual Volunteer Open, a $5,000 event which "went well over" the expected purse (it's drawn from entry fees). Operator Denny Havner hosted the event; after seeing the contest's success he announced excitedly: "Next year we're increasing our third Volunteer Open to at least $6,000!" Denny created a unique and appealing opening night kickoff, inviting local politicians, the sheriff, and media personalities from four TV stations, five radio stations and two newspapers to star in a "Celebrity Competition." Money raised by this and other charity events totalled over $3,000 and went to the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Knoxville. (By the way, the city fathers beat the media crowd. The losers were good sports; they gave the Volunteer Open plenty of press attention anyway.) Congrats to Denny and Merit for a fine competition.



MERIT'S "BADGER STATE" — Nov. 10-12 at "The Bar" in Greenbay, Wisc. was the date and site for the Third Annual Badger State Open, another stop for Merit's World Series of Darts. Indoor volleyball courts provided a unique setting for the successful event, which featured Merit's new *Pub Time II plus 2* game with four-player overhead scoring. The Muscular Dystrophy Assn. benefitted from fund-raising contests in this event; players paid $1 to shoot with paper bags over their heads! Prizes were provided by Merit and the town's Budweiser distrib. Denmark Coin was the operator-host, with help from Merit tourney director Scott Doughterty and Oshkosh-based dart distributor English Connection's Bruce Holmes.



OLYMPIC AIR HOCKEY! Not quite, but Dynamo's air hockey table did bring the sport to the AAMA-sponsored Olympic Game Room at the U.S. Olympic Festival in Norman, Okla. last summer. Champs Tim Weissman, Mark Robbins, Paul Marshall and Connie Rector demo'd the sport.



ARACHNID IN MAINE — It's the fifth annual Bullshooter tour! Arachnid dart action came to Waterville, Maine Oct. 6-8 for a qualifying tourney. New England Coin-Op and Ferris Music co-sponsored the event, held at the Elm Plaza Fitness Club. Eight events ranged from Open Singles to Women's Doubles, with cash prizes going to the eight top winners in each. Seen here: Joe Ferris with Women's Singles winner Rosie Robichaud.



KANSAS BULLSHOOTER — Nov. 11-12 was an early Thanksgiving for darters who enjoyed Arachnid's regional qualifying tourney in Kansas City. Execs termed it "a huge success with the largest number of entries so far in this year's Bullshooter V tour." Bird Distributing co-sponsored the event, which qualified first through third place winners in each category for the Bullshooter finals in May. Pictured: Pro Singles winner Kirby Regenald with Arachnid's J.L. Woodward.

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VALLEY CUP — The Fourth Valley International Dart Championships takes place in Orlando, Fla. at the end of March. Overseas teams will shoot against U.S. players for the prestigious "Valley Cup." Valley Marketing VP Alan Schafer said 1990 would be the tour's most successful year yet, with local U.S. events running through February. The Orlando event will be followed later this year by a U.S. vs. Germany event in Europe. Valley's German distributor, NSM, will play a key part in all of this. In addition, Japanese dart contests will occur in Tokyo early this year.

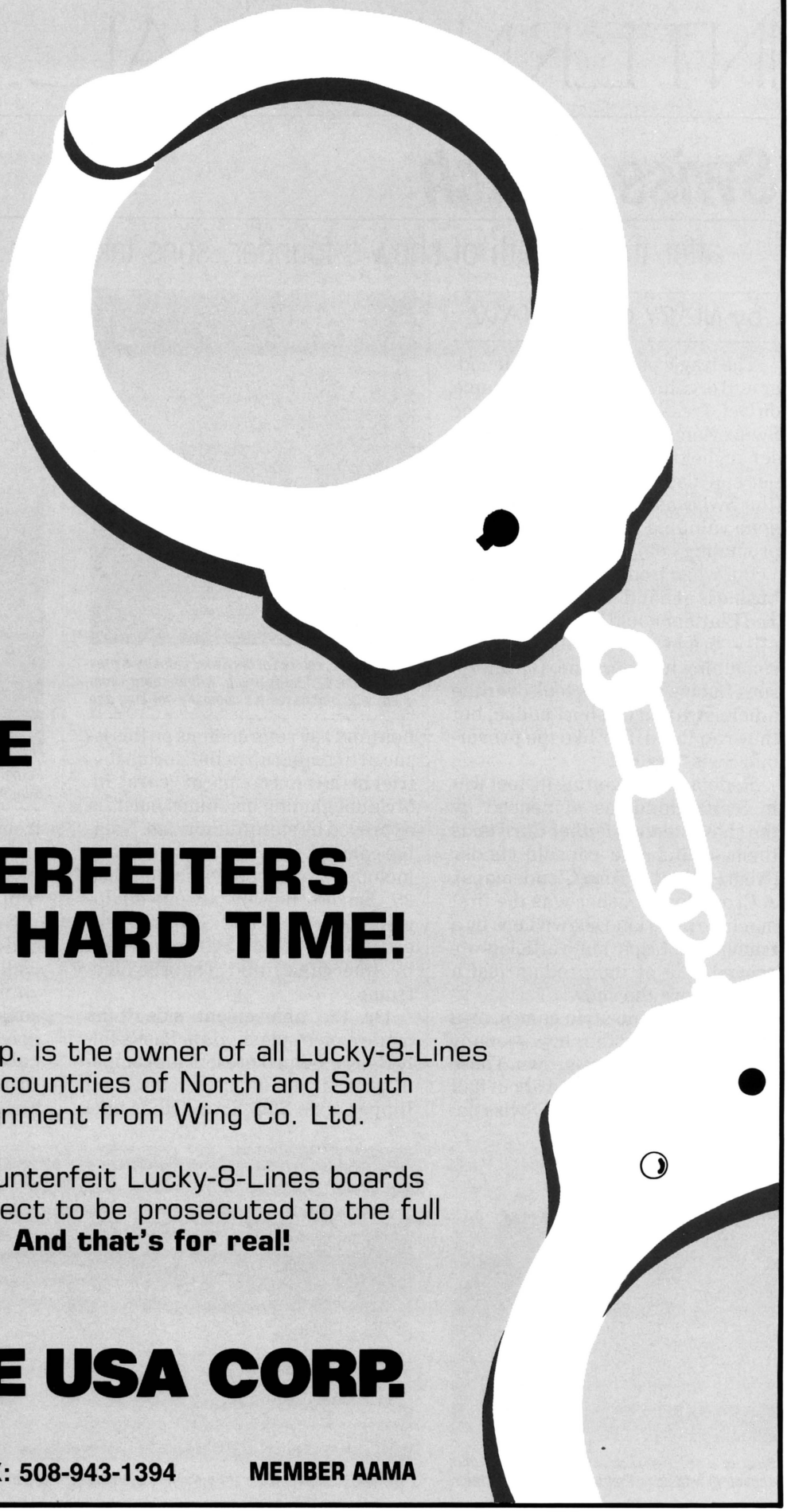
BULLSHOOTER IN TACOMA — Top dart shooters flocked to the Sherwood Inn of Tacoma, Wash., which hosted a $5,000 qualifying dart tournament Nov. 18-19 as part of Arachnid's Bullshooter V. Regional distribs General Coin and Music-Vend co-sponsored the event, which boasted eight contest divisions. Top players in each category qualified for the Bullshooter finals, slated for Memorial Day weekend in Chicago.



MERIT TO IOWA — They called it the "Second Annual Michelob Dry Quad Cities Open Dart Tournament." It was the Nov. 17-19 event in Merit's 1990 dart season, held at Millertime Billiards (Moline). With 32 Merit dart games, bleachers for guests and lots of brew for thirsty players, the contest drew talented players from six states. Operator hosts were Ken and Jan Auker (Quad Cities Amusements). Special events that weekend raised $600 for the local Easter Seals charity, too.



HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP — Fame City in Houston, Texas hosted the 1989 Fall Hockey Championships on Nov. 4-5, an event which awarded players cash and prizes totalling $7,500. Sponsors included Dynamo (three of their hockey tables were used), Fame City, Games People Play, Fun Factory Inc., U.S. Golf & Games, Red Baron's Nickelodeon Fun Factory and local businesses. Houston papers wrote up the event and a local TV news crew broadcast a film report. Tim Weissman, age 19, decisively blasted his way to the title of National Champ. Seen here are the top winners, not in order of their finishing places: from left, that's Jesse Douty, Bob Hernandez, Women's Champ Connie Rector, Phil Arnold and Tim Weissman. A special guest was the now-retired "father of air hockey," Bob Lemieux. Info on future tourneys is available from Mark Robbins of Dynamo at 800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699.



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MEMBER AAMA

Swiss Watch

after tragic death of show's founder, sons take over. . .and do Dad proud

by MARY OPENSHAW

The tragic passing of show founder and organizer Ted Blattner came on Oct. 7, casting a sad shadow over Switzerland's Oct. 10-12 Automatenschau, held at a Zurich hotel. Blattner had also been secretary of VSA (the Swiss association), which has done valuable work defending and promoting coin games.

But when tradesters turned to the business at hand, the show was one Ted Blattner could have been proud of — bright and interesting, with something for everyone. Blattner's sons Lucius and Felix took over the administration on short notice, but they ran this affair like the proverbial Swiss watch!

Redemption is getting its feet wet in Switzerland, as evidenced by the show-stealing *Father Christmas* theme-switchable capsule vender (from Holland's Tony Gloudemans). A Crompton's pusher was the first machine of its kind shown here by a triumphant Lispa; state officials approved sale of the product just a week before the show.

Pay-out casino-style games, as a class, dominated the show — many imported, some home-grown. These are allowed to operate in about half the major districts of the Swiss nation (and key referendums on this issue are coming up in the Zurich district in the next couple of years). Individual gaming machines must be approved by state authorities. Notable gambling pieces displayed here included Checkpoint's *Golden Disc 25*, Escor's line of pay-out equipment (they also rep NSM), and others from England's Barcrest (rep'd by Intergame) and Theurer-Electronic.



Erich Braker, veteran of the Swiss industry & president of the VSA trade group, with Bernard Thommen, who purchased his company not long ago.

On the amusement side, pins made a nice splash. Data East's Jolly Backer helped present his company's latest pins, along with the small flipper-style *Slap Shot*. Other pins from Williams and Premier were shown here for the first time, while Braker Automaten displayed Bally flippers.

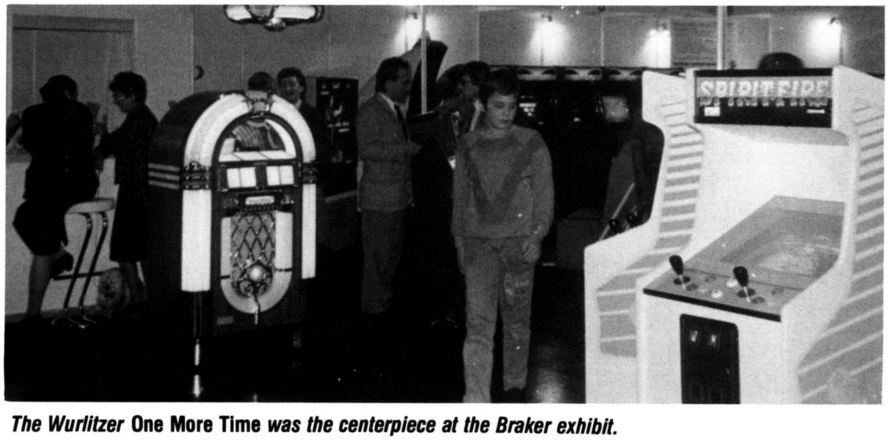


Bernard and Hanni Thommen of Braker, which distributes Taito product in Switzerland.

Switzerland has many arcades, and the top videos and simulators do well in them. Spanish-owned Alvaplay assembles and exclusively sells Sega games here; Sega's top driver and its multi-game system cabinet both earn handsomely here. Braker presented Taito's latest games with great fanfare as well.



Prost to a successful show! Game maker Armin Theurer (l) with Hans Thalmann, a Swiss operator.



The Wurlitzer **One More Time** *was the centerpiece at the Braker exhibit.*

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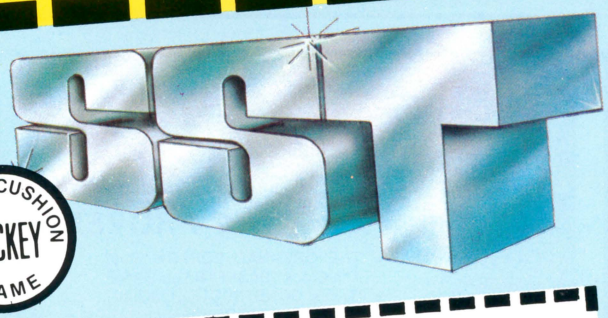

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Darts are coming up in Switzerland after a slow start. At the show, Valley darts were said to be selling nicely (rep'd by Escor); Arachnid darts (rep'd by Einer Askvig) were testing the market.

One U.S. product shown here for the first time to get local reaction: a Dynamo pool table. Also for pool, a German ball-timer system made its Swiss debut, to good reception. Table games from Billiard Brunner rounded out this class of equipment. Peripherals shown included Scherer-Alarm's goods and coin handling equipment from Tresmer AG.

This year's participants have already booked nearly all the space for the 1990 show. All segments of the trade pronounced themselves quite pleased with the '89 edition. The Blattner brothers will run things once again this year . . . and it will no doubt remain a tribute to their late father's leadership.



Data East personalities cooperating with their Swiss distributors. Left to right: D.E.'s Lou Rudolf, Bruno Weider of Novomat and D.E.'s Jolly Backer.



Karl Stutz of Escor with the NSM **CD Fire** *wallmount jukebox that the firm presented to showgoers.*



International visitors to the show included (left to right) John Morgan of Applied Screen Print (famous throughout Europe for their glasses), Swiss manufacturer Peter Schorno, and Olaf Andresen, who represents Applied Screen Print in Europe.



Einar Askvig of Arachnid in Belgium with the **English Mark Darts** *game at the Novomat booth.*



Nicky, who is English and works for Lispa (the Swiss firm that obtained the authorization for pushers in Switzerland) with the Crompton **Casino Roulette** *model, specially developed for the Swiss market.*



At the Intergame booth are Mattias Schaufelberger, RePlay's Mary Openshaw and Eric Horley.

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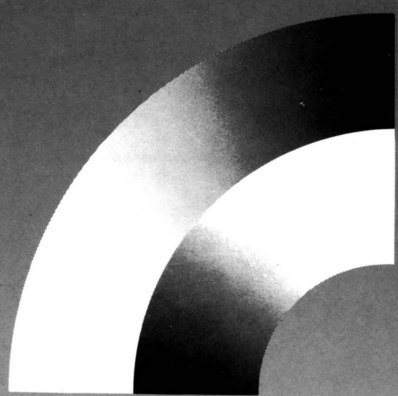

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HOTHITS PLAY LIST

Top 45s and compact discs on jukeboxes as rated by operators & programmers. ★ = significant crossover activity.

POP

★ 1. **ANOTHER DAY IN PARADISE,** *Phil Collins, Atlantic 88774*
2. **FREE FALLIN',** *Tom Petty, MCA 53748*
3. **DOWNTOWN TRAIN,** *Rod Stewart, Warner Bros. 22685*
4. **DON'T KNOW MUCH,** *Linda Ronstadt (featuring Aaron Neville), Elektra 69261*
★ 5. **ALL OR NOTHING,** *Milli Vanilli, Arista 9923*
6. **WHAT KIND OF MAN WOULD I BE,** *Chicago, Reprise 22741*
7. **PEACE IN OUR TIME,** *Eddie Money, Columbia 73047*
8. **ROCK AND A HARD PLACE,** *Rolling Stones, Columbia 73057*
★ 9. **OPPOSITES ATTRACT,** *Paula Abdul (duet with The Wild Pair), Virgin 99158*
10. **LOVE SHACK,** *The B-52s, Reprise 22817*

C/W

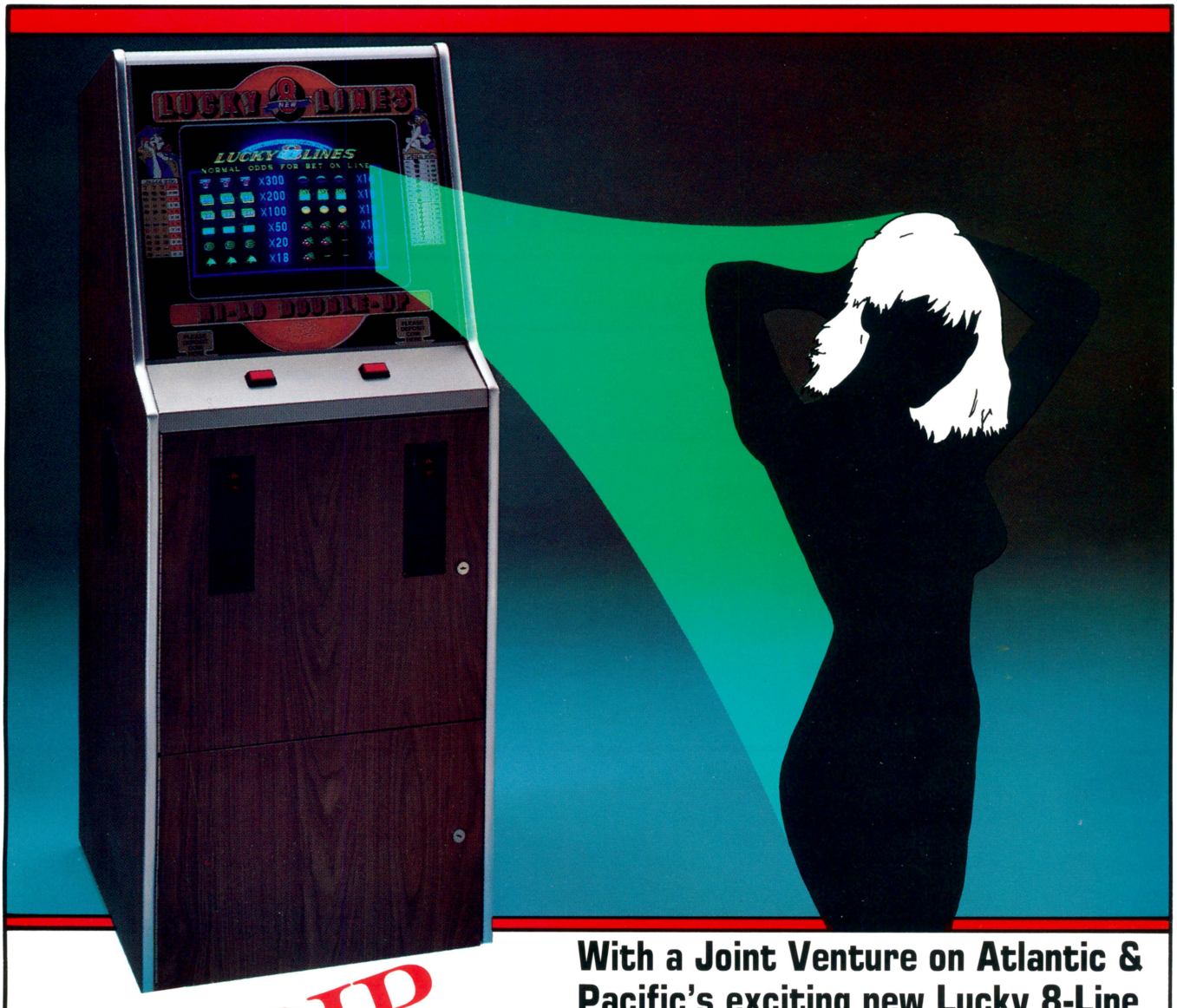
1. **NOBODY'S HOME,** *Clint Black, RCA 9078*
2. **STATUE OF A FOOL,** *Ricky Van Shelton, Columbia 73077*
3. **IT AIN'T NOTHIN',** *Keith Whitley, RCA 9059*
4. **SOUTHERN STAR,** *Alabama, RCA 9083*
5. **ONE MAN WOMAN,** *The Judds - Curb/RCA 9077*
6. **SIMPLE MAN,** *The Charlie Daniels Band, Epic 73030*
7. **CHAINS,** *Patty Loveless, MCA 53764*
8. **THAT JUST ABOUT DOES IT,** *Vern Gosdin, Columbia 69084*
9. **TILL I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE,** *Billy Joe Royal, Atlantic 88815*
10. **MY ARMS STAY OPEN ALL NIGHT,** *Tanya Tucker, Capitol 79810*

R&B

★ 1. **RHYTHM NATION,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 4904*
★ 2. **TENDER LOVER,** *BabyFace, Solar 74003*
★ 3. **I'LL BE GOOD TO YOU,** *Quincy Jones w/Ray Charles & Chaka Khan, Qwest/W.B. 22697*
★ 4. **BLAME IT ON THE RAIN,** *Milli Vanilli, Arista 4904*
★ 5. **OPPOSITES ATTRACT,** *Paula Abdul (duet with The Wild Pair), Virgin 99158*
★ 6. **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE,** *Stacy Lattisaw with Johnny Gill, Motown 2026*
★ 7. **OWWWW!,** *Chunky A, MCA 53736*
★ 8. **PUMP UP THE JAM,** *Technotronic featuring Felly, SBK 19701*
9. **ELECTRIC BOOGIE,** *Marcia Griffiths, Mango/Island 7832*
10. **WALK ON BY,** *Sybil, Next Plateau 50111*

CDs

FOREVER YOUR GIRL, *Paula Abdul, Virgin 90943*
GIRL YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE, *Milli Vanilli, Arista 8592*
STORM FRONT, *Billy Joel, Columbia 44366*
FULL MOON FEVER, *Tom Petty, MCA 6253*
. . . BUT SERIOUSLY, *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82050*
JANET JACKSON'S RHYTHM NATION 1814, *Janet Jackson, A&M 3920*
STEEL WHEELS, *Rolling Stones, Columbia 45333*
HANGIN' TOUGH, *New Kids On The Block, Columbia 40985*
JOURNEYMAN, *Eric Clapton, Duck/Reprise 26074*
THE END OF THE INNOCENCE, *Don Henley, Geffen 24217*



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HOTHITS BEST NEW

New singles rated chart-bound by our reporters. ★ = significant crossover activity.

POP

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO LIVE WITHOUT YOU
Michael Bolton - Columbia 73017

I'LL BE GOOD TO YOU
Quincy Jones w/Ray Charles & Chaka Khan - Qwest/W.B. 22697

PUMP UP THE JAM
Technotronic featuring Felly - SBK 07311

ROAM
The B-52s - Reprise 22667

JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME
Lou Gramm - Atlantic 88781

I GO TO EXTREMES
Billy Joel - Columbia 73091

ESCAPADE
Janet Jackson - A&M 1490

SWING THE MOOD
Jive Bunny and The Mastermixers - Music Factory/Atco 99140

WOMAN IN CHAINS
Tears For Fears - Fontana/Mercury 876248

TENDER LOVER
Babyface - Solar 74003

LOVE SONG
Tesla - Geffen 22856

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE
Young M.C. - Delicious Vinyl/Island 99137

SOMETIMES SHE CRIES
Warrant - Columbia 73095

NO MYTH
Michael Penn - RCA 9111

CW

A BOTTLE OF WINE AND PATSY CLINE
Marsha Thornton - MCA 53762

HARD ROCK BOTTOM OF MY HEART
Randy Travis - Warner Bros. 19935

OVERNIGHT SUCCESS
George Strait - MCA 53755

WHERE'VE YOU BEEN
Kathy Mattea - Merucry 876262

LITTLE GIRL
Reba McEntire - MCA 53763

HEARTBREAK HURRICANE
Ricky Skaggs - Epic 73078

QUITTIN' TIME
Mary Chapin Capenter - Columbia 69050

SEEIN' MY FATHER IN ME
Paul Overstreet - RCA 9116

HERE IN THE REAL WORLD
Alan Jackson - Arista 9922

SOONER OR LATER
Eddy Raven - Capitol 44528

IN MY EYES
Lionel Cartwright - MCA 53723

NO MATTER HOW HIGH
The Oak Ridge Boys - MCA 53757

KEEP IT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD
Exile - Arista 9911

JUST AS LONG AS I HAVE YOU
Don Williams - RCA 9119

R&B

HERITAGE
Earth, Wind & Fire (featuring The Boys) - Columbia 73205

TURN IT OUT
Rob Base - Profile 5275

JAZZIE'S GROOVE
Soul II Soul - Virgin 99145

NO MORE LIES
Michel'le - Ruthless/Atco 873214

RIGHT AND HYPE
Abstrac' - Reprise 22872

THIS ONE'S FOR THE CHILDREN
New Kids On The Block - Columbia 73064

ALL NIGHT LONG
Kool Moe Dee - Jive/RCA 1307

TO KNOW SOMEONE DEEPLY IS TO KNOW...
Terence Trent D'Arby - Columbia 73217

POISON IVY
The Young & The Restless - Pandisc 036

COMFORT OF A MAN
Stepanie Mills - MCA 53769

HELP THE CHILDREN
M.C. Hammer - Capitol 44497

GET THE JOB DONE
Big Daddy Kane - Cold Chillin'/Warner Bros. 22719

(YOU MAKE ME FEEL) LIKE A NATURAL MAN
James Ingram - Warner Bros. 22862

YOUR SWEETNESS
Good Girls - Motown 1976

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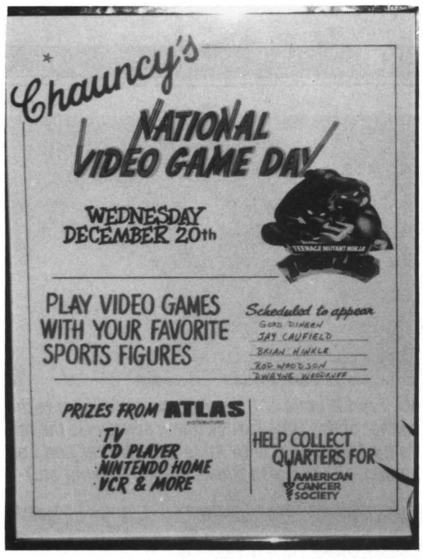
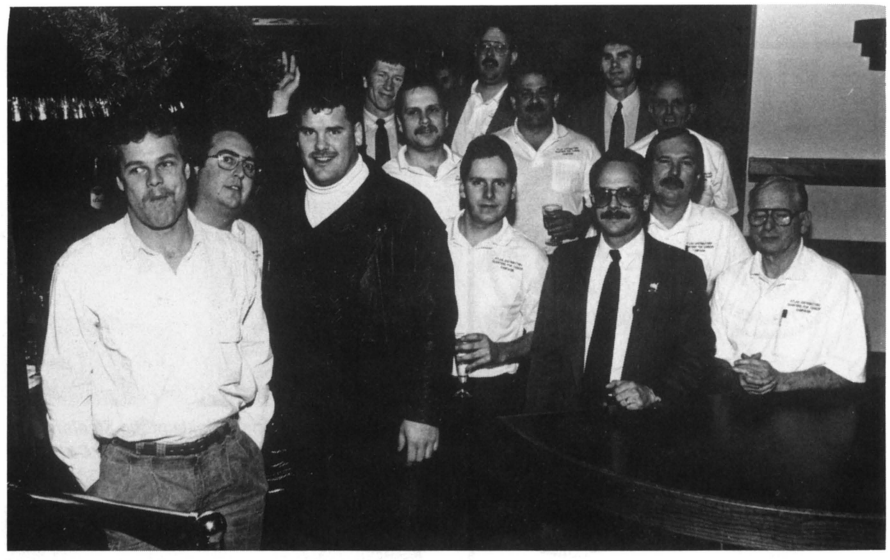




Left: ***A sign promoting National Video Game Day at Chauncy's.*** *Right:* ***Three great teams! Members of the Penguins and the Steelers join with the Atlas gang to collect "Quarters for Cancer." The event raised over $2,000 for the American Cancer Society through game collections and a raffle with many great prizes.***

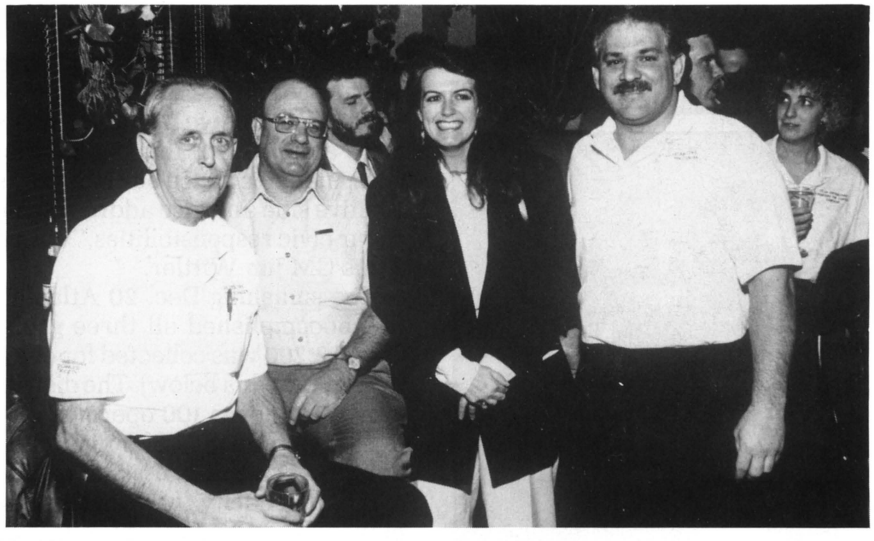
Celebration Time

Dec. 20 was "National Video Game Day," thanks to Atlas-Pittsburgh

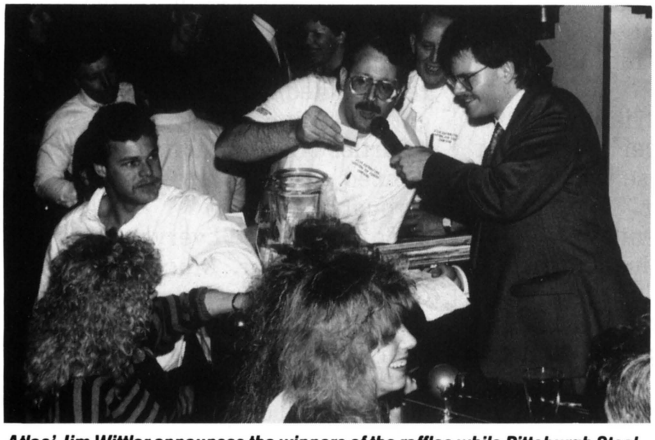
Quick, name three major holidays: Christmas, Thanksgiving and... National Video Game Day?

You better believe it. At Atlas Distributors Co. (Pittsburgh, Pa.), the real excitement last Dec. 20 did not center around a jolly, red-suited man with a long white beard. No, the electric tingle in the air at Chauncy's nightclub in Station Square was sparked by a humdinger of a coin machine promotion, dreamed up by the team at Atlas: National Video Game Day!

Some tradesters are saying that video games need more promotion as we move into the 1990s, and Atlas heartily agrees. "This event was the ideal way to get our customers



Atlas' Clarence Smoyer, Brimmer Vending's Bub Brimmer, SNK's Rachel Davies and Atlas' Lou Larson.



Atlas' Jim Wittler announces the winners of the raffles while Pittsburgh Steelers player Brian Hinkle looks on during the Dec. 20 event.



Highlighting the Dynamo home soccer table which was raffled off are Penguins players Gord Dineen & Jay Caulfield and Atlas' Pete Bechtol & Eric Hammerstrom.

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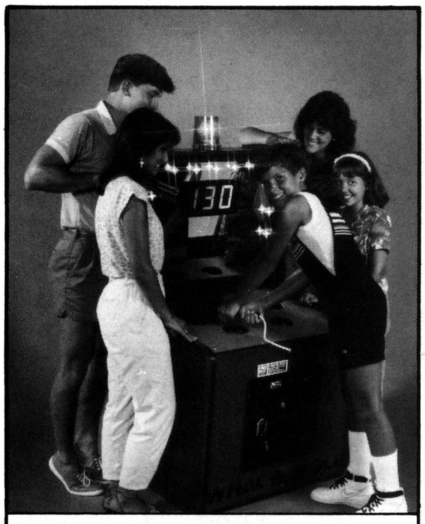

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Tom Rickets and Brian Hinkle of the Steelers take time out from SNK's **Beast Busters** *to take a picture with these lovely Chauncy's customers.*



Mr. Fred Woods of State Amusement Co. was the winner of the **TMN Turtles** *game donated to the raffle by Atlas. He's with Atlas' Jim Wittler and Lou Larson. (That's also Steve Walton looking on.)*



Chuck E. Cheese explains the finer points of coin-op video games to this bevy of beauties.



Ready for the pro tour after a round of Strata's **Golden Tee Golf** *is this Chauncy's patron at the event.*

motivated about video!" enthused Lou Larson, assistant manager at Atlas. "We felt we needed to focus more attention on this category of equipment, enhance our industry's positive side and also address some of our civic responsibilities," stated Atlas GM Jim Wittler.

The smashing Dec. 20 Atlas affair accomplished all three goals. Over $2,200 was collected for charity (more on this below). The distributor hosted over 100 operator customers and about 1,600 nightclubbers to an evening of video excitement and charity fundraising. Displayed were 17 top uprights and kits, representing over a dozen major manufacturers. Coins collected during the busy night of gameplay were all donated to the American Cancer Society.

"This is Atlas Distributors' 1990 'Quarters for Cancer' campaign kickoff," explained service manager Clarence Smoyer. "We hope to do other special events in 1990 to help in the fight against cancer."

Besides game collections, Atlas and 14 manufacturers sponsored an all-night raffle with proceeds going to the same charity. Grand prizes was a Dynamo home soccer table; others included a TV, a VCR, a CD player, Chuck E. Cheese gift certificates and a Nintendo home game system.

Donating for the raffle were Ameri Corp., American Technos, Capcom, Data East, Fabtek, Game-Tek, Dynamo, Rowe, Konami, Leland, Nintendo, Strata and Taito. In addition, operator customers bought $100 tickets in a separate raffle sponsored by Atlas. The prize: a Konami *TMN Turtles* game, won by Fred Woods (State Amusement Co.).

Glitter galore spiced up this Atlas promo, as usual. Local sports stars who played games and helped award prizes included Gord Dineen and Jay Caulfield of the Pittsburgh Penguins hockey club, plus Brian Hinkle and Tom Ricketts of the Pittsburgh Steelers. Data East's Steve Walton and SNK's Rachel Davies represented manufacturers. More glitter: a giant TV screen showed "Turtles" cartoons, and the crowd danced away to Top 40 selections through the night.

Said Atlas: "Everybody went home a winner. Much good was done, not only for industry, but for the local community as well. Our operator customers and manufacturer suppliers helped us make this our best promotion ever . . . and they helped us showcase the industry in a positive light."

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NEW PRODUCTS

Atari's KLAX

Klax, the "stack the tiles" game from Atari, is available in three formats: full sized dedicated upright, compact size upright, and universal kit. The kit includes a PCB, controls, JAMMA harness, bezel and artwork for header, control panel and side decals.

Theme: abstract skill-puzzle game.

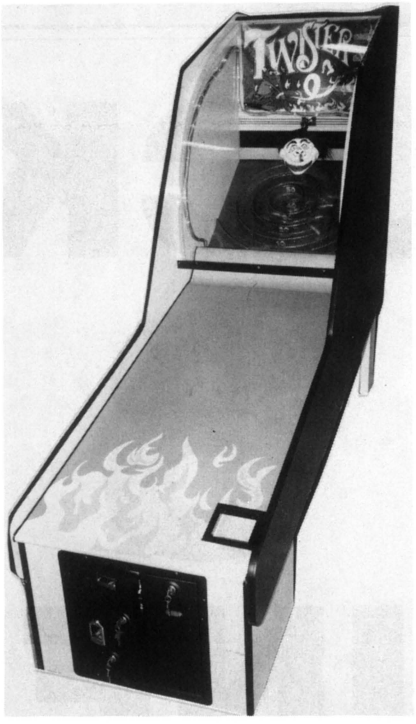
Gameplay: this one achieves what designers are always aiming for — simple to understand, but challenging to play with many skill levels. The player must use his joystick to move a "launching pad" into position to catch colorful tiles which come "marching" down a long path. After catching the tiles on his pad, the player must "flip and stack" them (via buttons). Goal is to stack the tiles in a way that arranges three in a row of similar color. Rows may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal.

Features: lots of special sound effects and nice graphic touches (such as tiles falling into a volcanic pit if you don't catch them) round out the game. Also, an industry first: the attract mode shows "Klax" t-shirts which players can buy from Atari (no contest involved). Add-a-coin encourages players to keep the game going . . . and earning.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Atari Games Corp., P.O. Box 361110, Milpitas, CA 95035-1110; 408/434-3700.

TWISTER Update from Exidy

Twister, the fun redemption/rolldown game, has been upgraded with a reinforced cabinet and new design. "You want it, you got it" is the idea, because the game was changed according to direct feedback from industry technicians and operators.



New features include a plex "top hood;" optically coupled sensor switches; a combined unit with coin mech, ticket mech and security coin box all in one; flashing attract lights; and a trap door for easy bottom access.

For more information, ask your distributor; or for referral it's Exidy, Inc., 4770 Caterpillar Rd., Redding, CA 96003; 415/325-5814.

DUX from Two-Bit Score

Dux is an inexpensive set of ROMs to upgrade any original 'Centipede' or 'Millipede' game. Just plug these new chips right onto the original CPU. Once it's installed, the player finds himself in an apple orchard, armed with a double-barrelled shotgun. Flocks of ducks pass overhead, working their way closer. Players must shoot to kill, before the ducks swoop down and attack! Falling dead ducks are also dangerous. The version for 'Millipede' also includes bird dogs, exploding pick-up trucks, helicopters, buzzards and more.

For more information, contact Bob Sokol at Two-Bit Score Amusements, 11,6000 Manchaca Rd., Ste. 305, Austin, TX 78748; 512/282-9369.

ENM Electric Counters

Series E8E is a miniature, six-digit adding counter (using DC electric current) which can't be influenced by magnetic fields. Compact, consuming low power, the unit is ideal for small battery-powered installations or other OEM applications or direct PCB soldering. Unit may be set in four different positions of reading and PCB mounting.

Features: easy-to-read figures; durable, sealed, waterproof plastic case; highly accurate, reliable counter; operating temperature ranges from minus 40 to 85 degrees Centigrade; available in 1, 1.5, 3, 4.5 and 6 VDC.

For more information, ask your distributor or ENM Company, 5617 NW Hwy., Chicago, IL 60646-6135; 312/775-8400.

Lazer-Tron's SHUTTLE LAUNCH

Shuttle Launch is a new group lazer race midway game.

Theme: shoot your lazer gun to race your space shuttle up the track against others.

Gameplay: each player shoots at his own set of targets. With each hit, the player's shuttle moves further up the track. First player to "dock at space station" wins. Midway and coin-op models available.

For more information, ask your distributor; or for referral it's Lazer-Tron, 7042-B Commerce Circle, Pleasanton, CA 94566; 415/460-0873.

TECHNICAL TIPS

Conversion Hook-Ups

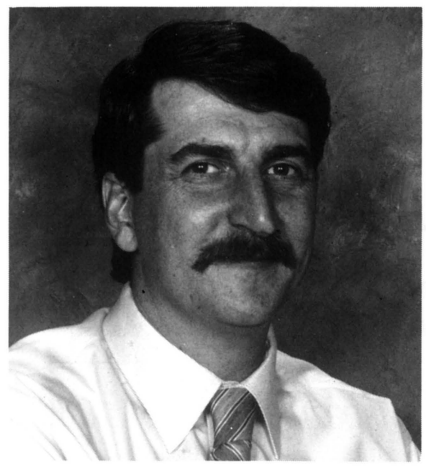
a look at AC power distribution and other connections

by RANDY FROMM

When you get right down to it, there's really not much to a video game. Other than the logic board itself, a video game is little more than a speaker, a monitor, and a power supply. Oh, there are some other components as well, such as an isolation transformer, fluorescent lamp and perhaps a fan, but it's all pretty simple.

AC POWER DISTRIBUTION

I encounter vast differences of opinion as to the "correct" way to hook-up the 120 Volts AC power in a game. I will begin by stating clearly (and for the record) that while I believe that the power distribution scheme presented here is "correct" (and I will present the reasons anon), other hook-ups may be just as valid. Hey...if it works for you, who am I to say you're wrong!

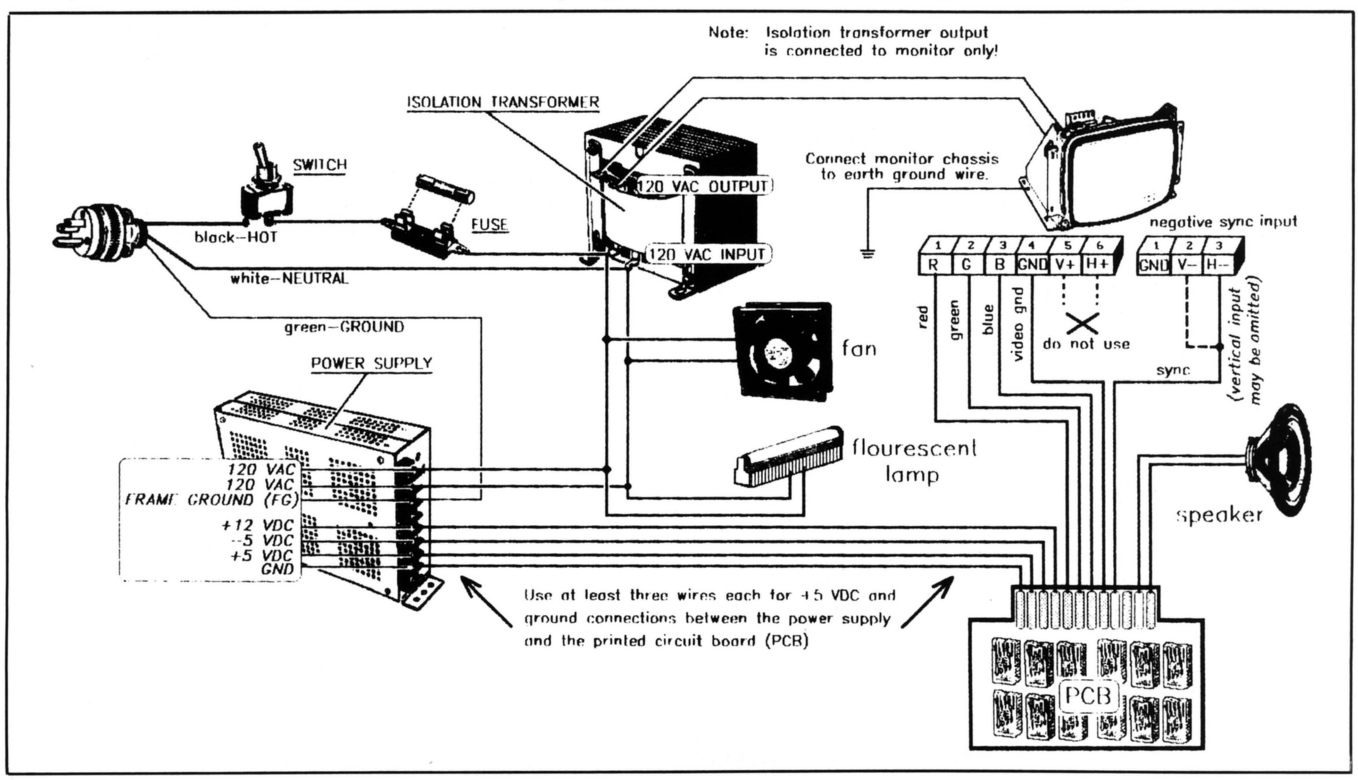


RANDY FROMM (For the schedule of upcoming classes of Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools, please see the ad on page 137 in the Buyers' Bulletin.)

The main point of contention (as far as AC power distribution is concerned) regards the 120 Volts AC power source for the fluorescent lamp, fan and power supply. Should you take the power from the output of the isolation transformer or directly from the 120 VAC line?

Referring to the drawing, you can see that I prefer that the isolation transformer is used to power only the monitor. Everything else that requires 120 VAC power is connected directly to the 120 VAC line through a fuse and a switch. This includes the power supply!

Here's the logic to this: The purpose of the isolation transformer is to break the connection between "neutral" and "earth ground" (see *Replay*, Jan. 1990, pg. 155); to "isolate" the monitor from the rest of the AC powered world. If you connect all of the AC powered jazz in the game to the output side of the transformer along with the monitor, you ain't exactly isolating the moni-



tor from the rest of the game! This can cause some problems such as damage to the video or sync circuits in both monitors and logic boards. By connecting the monitor alone to the secondary winding of the isolation transformer, complete electrical isolation is all but assured.

Another important point to consider is the efficiency of the isolation transformer itself. A transformer's 80% efficiency rating means that fully 20% of all the power drawn through the transformer is converted into waste heat. The additional load of the power supply, lamp and fan can easily double the load on the transformer to 150 watts or more, producing over 30 watts of waste heat!

For those who feel that it is important to connect everything to the secondary winding in order to forestall the possibility of electrical shock, you should consider that you probably handle all kinds of electrical appliances every day that aren't connected to an isolation transformer. Besides, there are plenty of ways to get shocked inside a video game, even with everything isolated!

OTHER CONNECTIONS

The other connections are pretty self-explanatory, but let me clarify a couple of notes on the drawing. One is to be sure to use several wires to carry the power supply current for the plus-5 VDC and ground connections. This can reduce or prevent burned connectors. It's also a good idea to keep these wires as short as possible to prevent excessive voltage drop as the current makes its way from the power supply to the logic board. Don't get carried away and make them so short that you can't easily pull out the power supply for servicing. (I hate when that happens!)

Monitor connections are generally straightforward, but some people have a little trouble understanding the "sync" connections. In a nutshell, the sync signal keeps the monitor picture from rolling top to bottom or shifting left to right; it "synchronizes" the monitor to the logic board.

Virtually all of today's games use "composite, negative sync" to synchronize the scanning rate of the monitor to that of the video signals that are being generated by the logic board in the game. Most monitors have the capability of using either negative or positive sync inputs. Since our games use negative sync, the positive sync inputs at pins 5 and 6 of the video input connector are not used. Instead, only the negative sync input connector is used.

The composite sync output of the video game's logic board actually contains two distinct types of sync signals; vertical and horizontal. These two signals are combined on the logic board and sent out as "composite" sync. Some monitors can handle a composite sync signal better than others. With Wells-Gardner monitors and some models of Hantarex monitors, connect the composite sync wire to the negative, horizontal sync input. The vertical sync input can be left unused. In fact, connecting the composite sync to the vertical sync input may cause a jumpy or otherwise unstable picture. First, try connecting the composite sync output of the logic board to the horizontal input of the monitor only. If the picture is stable, leave the vertical sync input disconnected. If the picture is rolling vertically, connect the sync to the vertical input as well.

Author's note: An in-depth seminar on video game conversion techniques will be presented at the upcoming ACME convention; Saturday, March 10 at 8:00 AM. If you're going to the show, be sure to drop by and say hi! — Randy

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine Jan. 15, 1989

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Super Formula (Vid. Sys./Taito)
2	Final Fight (Capcom)
3	Gradius III (Konami)
4	Tetris (Sega)
5	Capcom World (Capcom)
6	Shadow Dancer (Sega)
7	Search and Rescue (SNK)
8	R-Type II (Irem)
9	Fire Shark (Toa Plan)
10	Bases Loaded (Jaleco)
11	Super Masters (Sega)
12	World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
13	Violence Fight (Taito)
14	Super Volley Ball (Vid. Sys./Nam.)
15	World Stadium '89 (Namco)
16	Task Force Harrier (UPL)
17	Dangerous Seed (Namco)
18	WWF Super Stars (Technos)
19	Pang (Mitchell)
20	Astyanax (Jaleco)
21	Midnight Resistance (Data East)
22	Volfied (Taito)
23	Capcom Baseball (Capcom)
24	Flash Point (Sega)
25	Champion Wrestler (Taito)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Beast Busters (SNK)
2	Final Lap [deluxe] (Namco)
3	Winning Run/Suzuka GP (Namco)
4	Big Run (Jaleco)
5	Super Monaco GP [dlx.] (Sega)
6	S.C.I. (Taito)
7	Four Trax (Namco)
8	Hard Drivin' (Atari/Namco)
9	Final Lap [standard] (Namco)
10	Winning Run (Namco)
11	Operation Thunderbolt (Taito)
12	Turbo Out Run (Sega)
13	Power Drift [deluxe] (Sega)
14	Out Run [deluxe] (Sega)
15	Segaia [Darius II] (Taito)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Earthshaker (Williams)
2	Banzai Run (Williams)
3	Big House (Gotlieb/Premier)
4	Cyclone (Williams)
5	Jokerz (Williams)

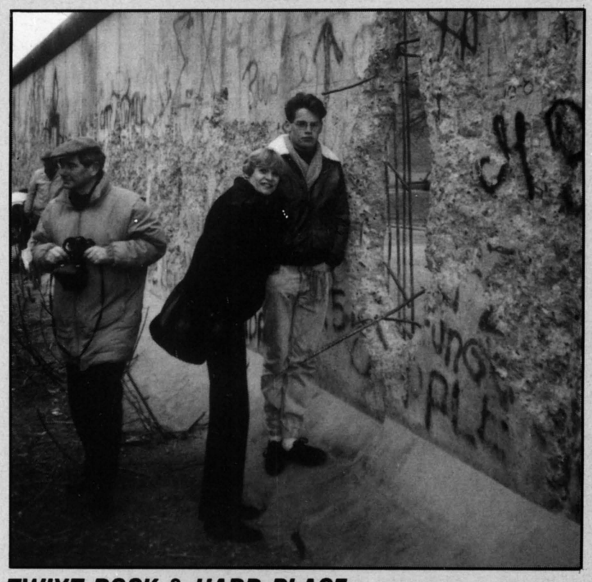
GRAPEVINE

international

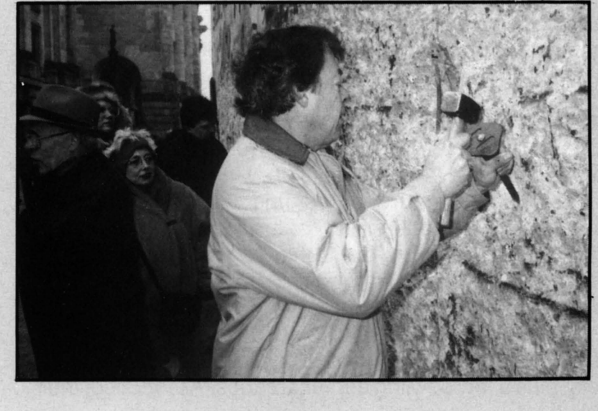




ATEI VIEWS — Betson redemption chief John Margold favored us with two cute snaps from London's mighty ATEI show, held in early January. First, we see Sondra Doyle and Crompton's Bernie Walder share a laugh by *Hoop Shot* basketball (an "extremely hot item in England," John advised). Second, John himself with Gordon Crompton and his firm's six-player pusher. Beautiful shots, we think. (Say, John, want a free-lance photographer credit on your resume?!)



TWIXT ROCK & HARD PLACE — *RePlay Magazine* execs Ed & Tippy Adlum, along with their son Ken, spent their holiday vacation in Germany, visiting Tippy's relatives up near the Danish border and (like thousands of other tourists wishing to see history in the making) sandwiched in a side train trip to Berlin. That's Tippy and a rather cold Kenny checking out a hole in the infamous Berlin Wall (the graffiti on the barrier looks like a New York City subway car). Below, Eddie gets his lick in with borrowed hammer and chisel (he came home with some nice wall chunks, as well as the sniffles you can easily pick up on a Euro trip that time of the year). "I suppose news writers back in the Neanderthal period wrote editorials this way," said Ed, "but I prefer a typewriter."





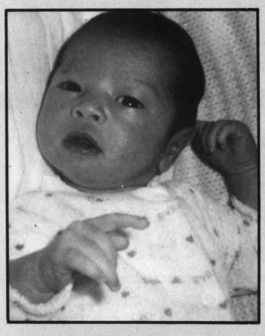
BARKING UP THE RIGHT TREE — Video Invasion (Toronto, Ontario) staged a holiday-season arcade promotion which "went to the dogs" with United Artists Pictures. The arcade and studio teamed up to present a preview screening of "All Dogs Go to Heaven," an animated family film. Families who booked the arcade for birthday parties last October received free passes to a special showing of the film. Also in October, guests at birthday parties could win passes via drawings held in the arcade. According to operator Wayne Fromm, "The screening took place at a major suburban shopping mall and overflowed to twin screens. The day after the screening, the star — Charlie, a cartoon dog — was on hand at Video Invasion giving out balloons, posters and stickers. Free hot dogs (woof, woof) were also given out, courtesy of a local meat processor. "So," punned Wayne, "our patrons had nothing to beef about!" The photos depict (from left) Charlie, UA's Tami Weinberg, and Wayne with his little one, Sage Fromm.

DOYLE GAME SHIPPING — Doyle and Associate's *Hoop Shot* basketball game continues to rack up higher sales each year, just as it has since it bowed in 1985. At ATEI, Crompton's was pleased to show the game (they're the exclusive distrib for England, France and Belgium). Container shipments began in December and the backlog is fierce, Sondra Doyle reported from the firm's Sarasota, Fla. headquarters.

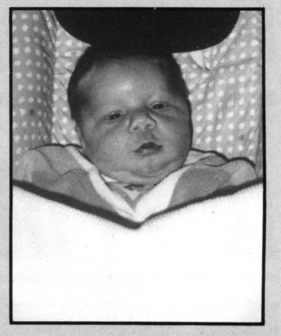
southwest

BACK FROM LONDON WITH PRIZE — Jeff Walker (of Geoffco Marketing) returned from the London ATEI show with the exclusive rights to distribute the *Bowlingo* alley in the U.S., Mexico & South America. In association with Belgium Amusement's Hank Grant, Jeff will be marketing the big bowling alley in this part of the world and he sees potential, especially considering the rather soft market for video product right now.

ROYAL BUYS SILCO L.A. — Royal Vending Services Ltd. on Dec. 22 acquired the street routes operated by Silco's Los Angeles division. Combined with their existing 20th Century routes, this puts Royal squarely among the largest street operations in the highly-populated Southern California region. According to Royal prexy Russ Love (who worked at Silco's Van Nuys office a while back), the new locations are in L.A., Orange, San Bernadino, Riverside and Ventura counties, and range from mom and pop locations to chain outlets, plus a few bowling center arcades. As for Silco, their routes include Hawaii and the mid-California region. Silco sold its San Diego routes last year to Marvin Gray, who is now running them with his son Buddy.

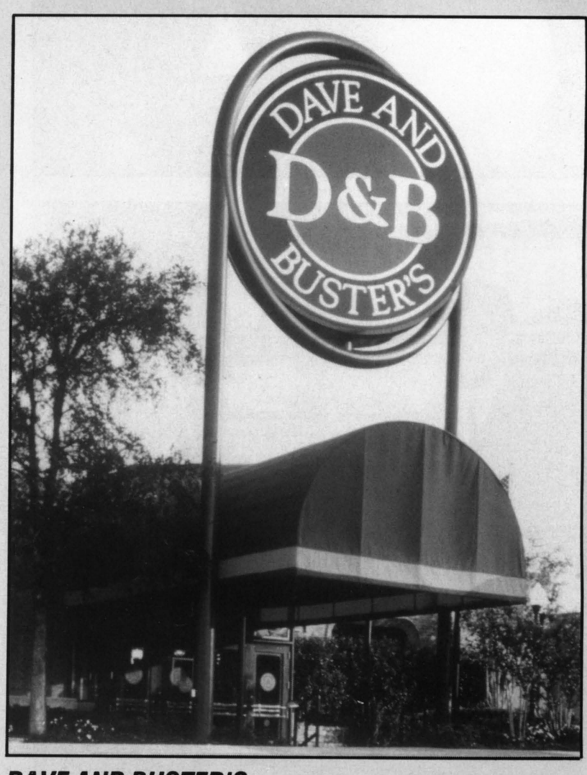


MARKO-ALFONSO ALEJO



JEFFREY EDWARD FROLEN

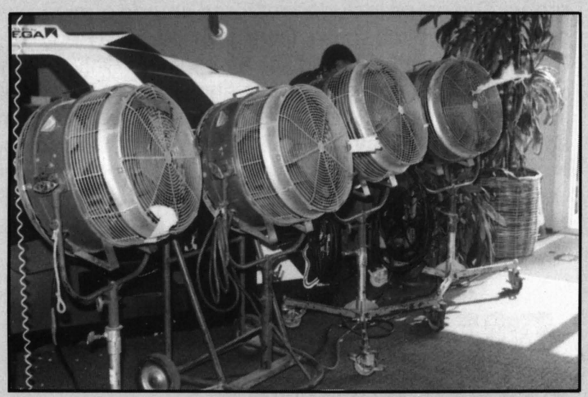
NEW ADDITIONS — Mayoni Enterprises, makers of venders and impulse games, has two new additions. Marko-Alfonso Alejo was born Dec. 13 to receivable clerk Lourdes and her husband Chito. He weighed in at 6 lbs. 4 oz. Also, Jeffrey Edward Frolen made his appearance Nov. 18 at 7 lbs. 7 oz.; parents Mary and Randy are delighted. So are we!

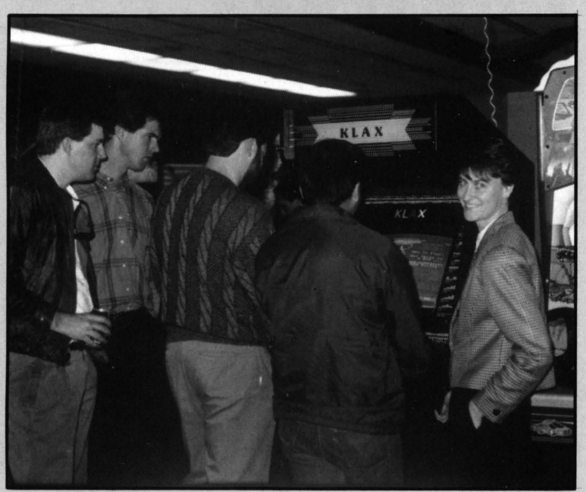


DAVE AND BUSTER'S is a famous firm which operates two upscale restaurant/entertainment complexes in Dallas. Each location is free-standing and has about 30,000 sq. ft. where you can amuse yourself all day. 1989 sales will top $10 million. Well, youth fashion apparel marketer Edison Bros. Stores, Inc. (St. Louis, Mo.) announced in December that they'd purchased a majority interest in Dave and Buster's. Better yet, they're planning to take the concept national under the direction of founders Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley, who each retain an equity interest.

HERE AND THERE — Some of the best "operator mail" we get at *RePlay* comes from the comments penciled onto the bottom of our *Players' Choice* ballots. Here's a sampling of recent remarks. Writes one operator: "When I told my 8-year-old nephew that a new game called *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* came out, he said, 'I know, Uncle Jack. I'm getting it for my Nintendo.' Are they kidding or what?" Nope, a lesser version of the hit was out even before the coin-op version was. Another operator writes: "My game room is next to a high school with 2,000 kids. The girls want to know if there will ever be any new games. They don't like sports and karate things." If you check your distributor, you may see *Block Out* and some other games like *Wheel of Fortune.* On the latter, another operator would like to see a heavier spinner on *Wheel* for "more realistic play."

From the Buckeye State comes this: "I'm glad to see the industry getting together to set pinballs on 50-cent play. We already have videos that cost more and a single play could never last as long as one on a pinball." Then comes the anti-home video comment: "I hate to admit the doomsday predictors were right," says this Houston reporter, "but the Nintendo home graphics are too good for coin-op to prosper." But fear not, coin-op, for as another operator foretells: "What can be conceived can be created!" Is that a harbinger of game design in 1990?

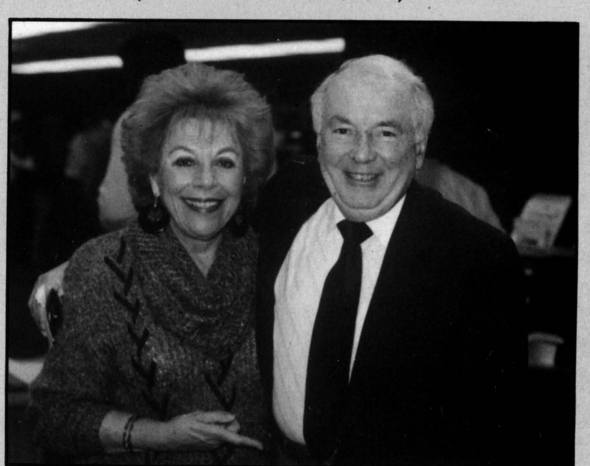




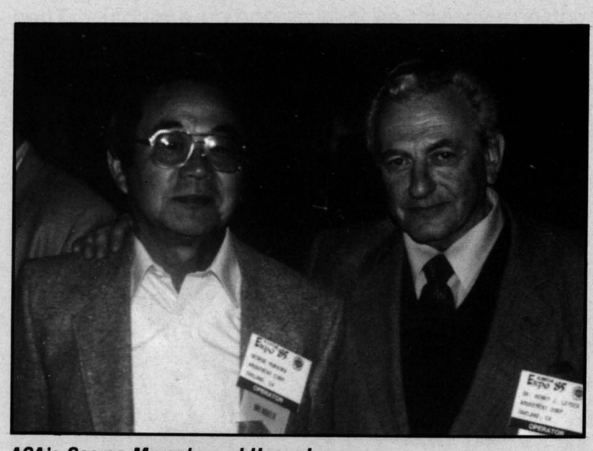




WELL, BLOW ME DOWN! RePlay's Key Snodgress and Williams' Lesley Ross get blown around by the electric fans placed in C.A. Robinson's L.A. showroom to help announce Williams' newest pinball, *Whirlwind.* The folks at C.A. held a special lunch party Jan. 19 in honor of the cyclone-themed pinball and Atari's hot new *Klax* game. In the photo at left, Atari's Anne Hayes smiles for the camera as numerous SoCal tradesters, including Doug Hutton, Jim Parenti and Israel Morra, check out *Klax* (its shipping now in dedicated models; cabaret models will ship mid-month; kits will be out late March/early April). Anne also showed off their *Badlands* driver kit. Below left, San Diego operators Earl Rizzo and Larry Craciunoiu help show off *Whirlwind,* which ships domestically mid-month (though C.A. was delivering samples to customers the day of the open house). Below right is C.A. Robinson's lovely Leah Bettelman and Lou Zeiden (Lu-Jack Music Co., L.A.) at the event.



CINDY POWELL of C&L Music & Games (Sacramento, Calif.) won the drawing for $1,000 worth of custom pre-packed plush from Best Manufacturing (Waukesha, Wisc.). Best sponsored the contest for its customers last fall; they could submit one entry blank with each order. Nice going by a nice gal.

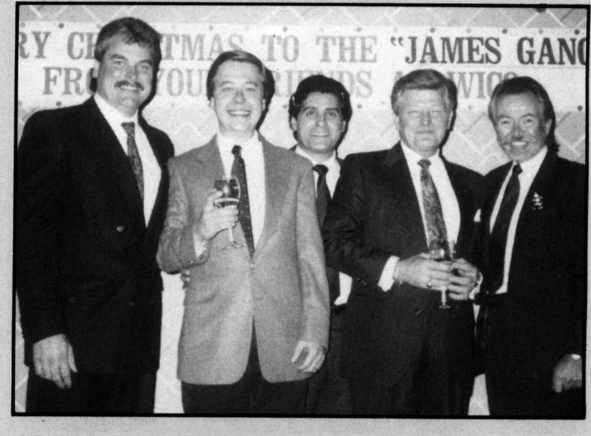


ACA's George Muraoka and Henry Leyser

ONWARD & UPWARD — On Feb. 1, Henry Leyser promoted VP Jack Love to the presidency of Amusement Corp. of America (ACA), kicking himself up to the chairmanship. While Jack will now run the day-to-day California route operations, Henry will devote more time to his new Audio Visual Advertising Corp. project (a point-of-purchase system he'll be introducing in supermarkets etc.). The new product-advertising concept was developed by ACA and the first systems should be going into store testing this month. Other appointments on the route include Marvin White to a VP slot, joining Ray Sargis in that rank. George Muraoka remains Exec VP of their Los Angeles operation.

MIDNIGHT CALLER — This suspenseful NBC-TV show has two coin-op connections. One, it is the favorite program of our advertising director, Barry Zweben. Two, the Jan. 23 episode featured coin machines as background props. The props included restored arcade gun games and a new Dynamo soccer table (provided by a Berkeley, Calif. operating firm called For Amusement Only, run by Jim Tolbert.). Also used on the show were a Wurlitzer jukebox and two pins provided by other local firms, Jim advised. By the way, his operation's showbiz involvement doesn't stop there. If you partake in other extravaganzas staged by the likes of ABC Sports, Billy Graham Productions, etc., you'll see Jim's games on hand.

midwest



AT THE GASLIGHT CLUB — That establishment has a special place in the heart of Jim Roberts of James Industries (Inverness, Ill.). So he took his staff (fondly known as "The James Gang") there for a charming Christmas party. Seen here are (from left) JI's John Blouin, Wico's Rick Sonnicksen, JI's Vince Divincenzo; Wico's Mike Rudowicz, and JI's Jimmy "Himself" Roberts. As you can see from those grins, everybody had a blast. Now, about St. Patrick's Day, Jim . . .

REUNITED — Roger (Boom, Boom) Harvey has rejoined his old boss and buddy Hank Heiser at Cartel Distributing in Livonia (Detroit), Mich. and will specialize in used equipment sales and auctions. After working with Hank for years, Roger went over to Stella Fontana's S&M Game Sales in Redford in 1984. It's nice to see the dynamic duo back together again at Cartel. On the

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personal side, have you been watching Hank's daughter Joyce Heiser on *L.A. Law*? The actress has been putting in some prime performances on this top-rated show.

northeast

CATCHING UP — American Wurlitzer veteran Clayton Ballard forwarded a Nov. 8 letter he received from Al Dietrich. That gent was another "fixture" from the North Tonawanda-based jukebox organization (and we'll bet some old-time Wurlitzer distributors, plus some operators, are nodding their heads right now, remembering Al from days gone by). In his letter, Al says he's now 80 and living with wife Agnes in a retirement home right near the old Wurlitzer plant. (It's now occupied by between 75 and 80 different businesses, Al advised.) Al also said he was contacted by Wurlitzer's old sales chief, Bob Bear, who's feeling well now after a 1988 heart bypass. By the way, Al additionally mentioned this: monthly concerts on "The Mighty Wurlitzer" (organ) are still held at the Riviera Theater in North Tonawanda. Thanks, Clayt, for sharing this news with us!



SUPER! Super Bowl, that is. A young man named Jason Bertman of Pepper Pike, Ohio got to attend the year's hottest football game in person, courtesy of Data East Pinball, Inc. Jason won the tickets as the grand prize in a giveaway sponsored by Data East Pinball during the AMOA Expo '89 in Vegas. ABC Sports donated the tickets for the promotion. Now Jason can go home to his local arcade or street stop and relive that day of glory on Data East's *ABC Monday Night Football* flipper.

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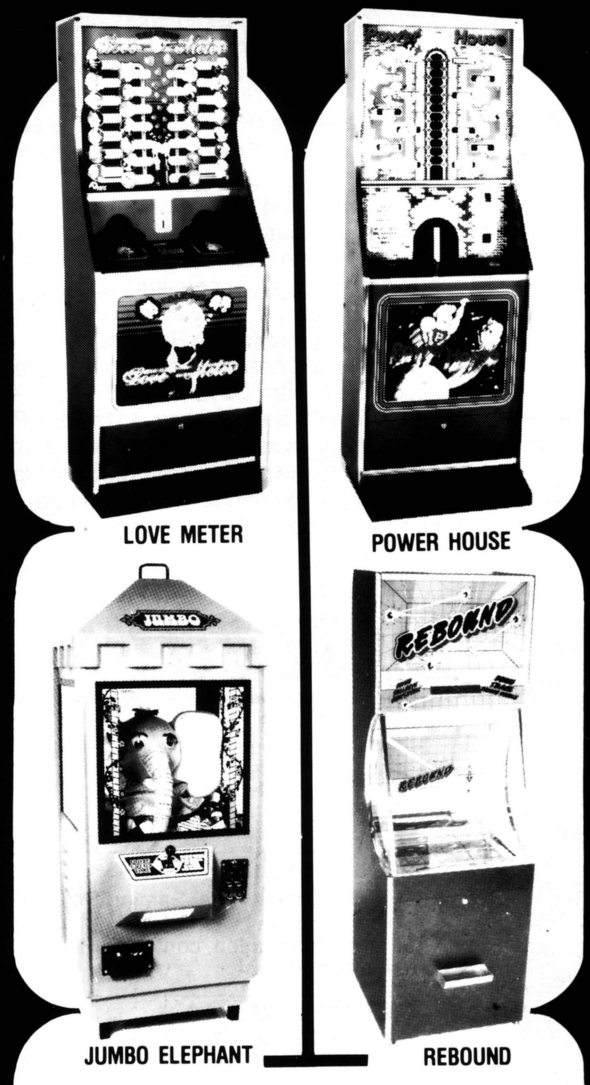

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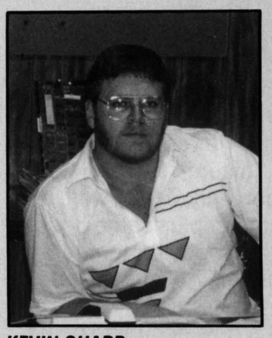
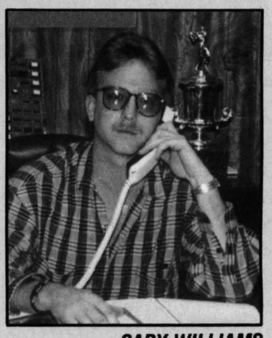
southeast

BCA EXPO '90 — The seventh annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo takes place July 19-21 at the Commonwealth Convention Center in Louisville, Kent. For more information, call 619/278-3877.

SKIP'S DOING FINE — He didn't make it to the London show after all, but Skip Doyle is coming into the Sarasota, Fla. offices of Doyle & Associates each and every business day, making sure everything's up to snuff. This is great news after Skip's successful surgery on Nov. 30 to remove a ninth brain tumor. (Actually, Skip had undergone a nearly identical operation back in 1976, and come out with flying colors, as we all know . . . so this latest round was nothing new for the Rajah of Redemption.) The staff of Doyle and Associates, under the highly qualified direction of Sondra Doyle and GM Pat Talmadge, showed the firm's entire line at the IAAPA "parks" show, and they were a strong presence at the ATEI in London. Prior to the parks show, Skip couldn't come down to the office to critique one new game, so he had it shipped to his home for his personal review! This is recuperative therapy for Skip Doyle (though Sondra isn't always so sure about that)! Keep on plugging, Skip and we hope to see you chipper as always at the ACME. Meantime, anybody who wants to reach the Rajah can write Skip at Doyle & Assoc., P.O. Box 49467, Sarasota, FL 34230-6467. Or fax him at 813-351-8357.



KEVIN SHARP



CARY WILLIAMS

GAMES OF TENNESSEE announced that nine-year industry vet Kevin Sharp's new title is VP of Sales. "We invite any and all to call us at 615/684-0100 for all their equipment needs!" Kevin announced, wasting no time getting down to the job. Also, the distributor has a new salesman named Carey Williams, seen on the phone already in the accompanying photo!

DATEBOOK

FEBRUARY 9-10
AMOA Annual Mid-Year Board Meeting. Palm Springs, Calif. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/644-6610.

FEBRUARY 12-13
IGBE, the International Gaming Business Exposition. Tropicana Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. For more information, contact IGBE at 203/852-0500.

FEBRUARY 23-25
South Carolina Coin Operators Assn., Sheraton Hotel, I-20 at Bush River Rd., Columbia. For more information, contact Helen Sikes at 303/779-2498 or 345-2048.

MARCH 9-11
ACME 1990, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois. For more information, contact Bill Glasgow, Inc. at 312/333-9292.

MARCH 23-25
NAMA Western Convention & Expo (Vending & Food Service Mgmt.). San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, Calif. For information, call 312/346-0370.

MARCH 30-31
Georgia AMOA Annual Trade Show & Convention. Holiday Inn, Roswell. For more information, contact Stan Miller at 404/424-8105.

APRIL 19-22
FAVA 1990 Annual Music & Games Convention & Trade Show, Omni Expo Center, Orlando. For more info, call 904/878-3134.

APRIL 29 — MAY 1
AMOA & AAMA Government Affairs Conference, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. For more information, call AMOA at 312/644-6610 or AAMA at 703/548-8044.

MAY 2
AAMA Annual Board Meeting & Election of Officers. Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. For more information, call AAMA at 703/548-8044.

MAY 2-6
"Team Dart V," the AMOA National Dart Assn.'s International Team Championships. Sahara Resort & Casino, Las Vegas. For hotel info, call 800/634-6666. For tourney info, it's 414/263-2444.

MAY 4-6
Northeast Regional Amusement Machine Convention & Trade Show. Trump Regency Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey. For more information, contact Sue Matterson at 518/439-0981.

MAY 11-12
OCMA Expo '90 Convention & Trade Show, Ohio site TBA. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/221-8600.

THE BLUE PAGES

BUYERS' BULLETIN

A COMPENDIUM OF USED EQUIPMENT ADS & OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE COIN INDUSTRY

A number of video game manufacturers have been successful in enforcing their copyrights and trademarks in the U.S. courts against those who supply or use unlawful copies. Readers are warned of the risks involved when copies of video games are purchased from sources other than the manufacturer or one of its authorized distributors. We can offer no assurance that a video game or printed circuit board set purchased from all the sources of such are legitimate. RePlay asks its readers to write us regarding any complaints about a product or service advertised in this magazine.

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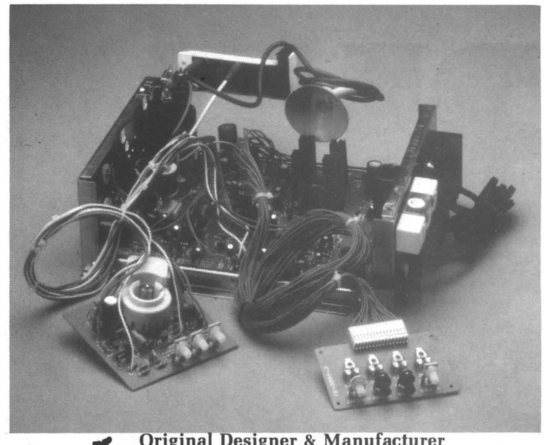

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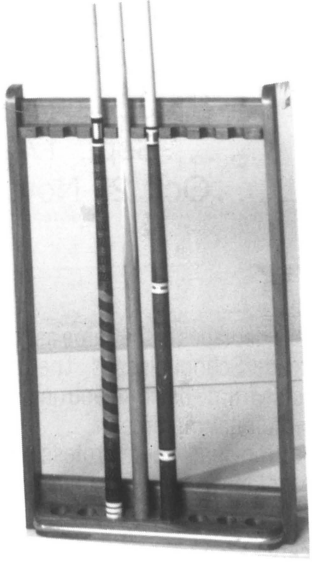

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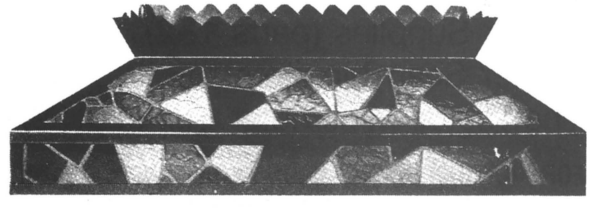

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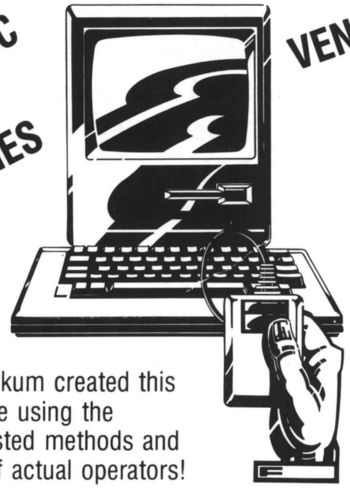

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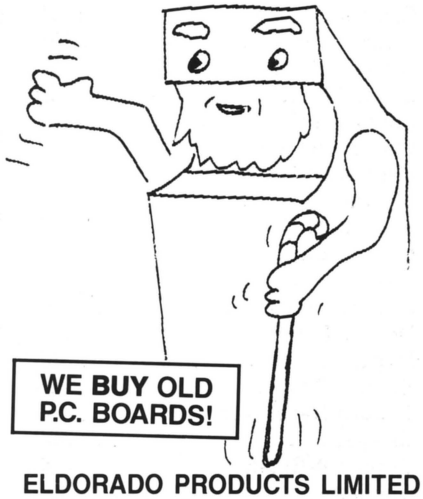

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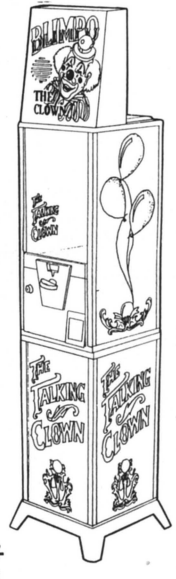

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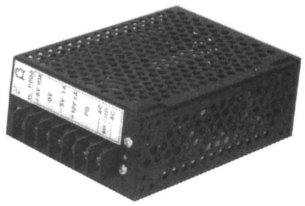

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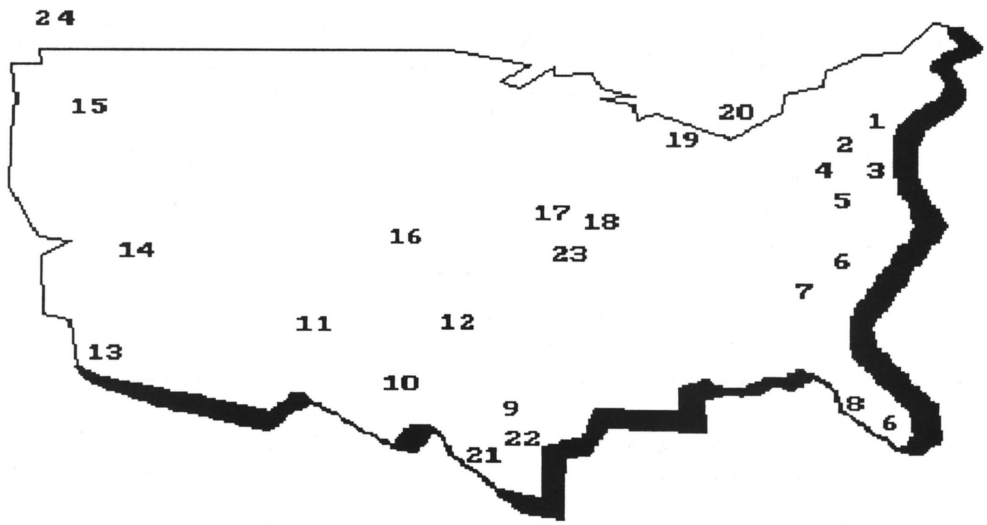

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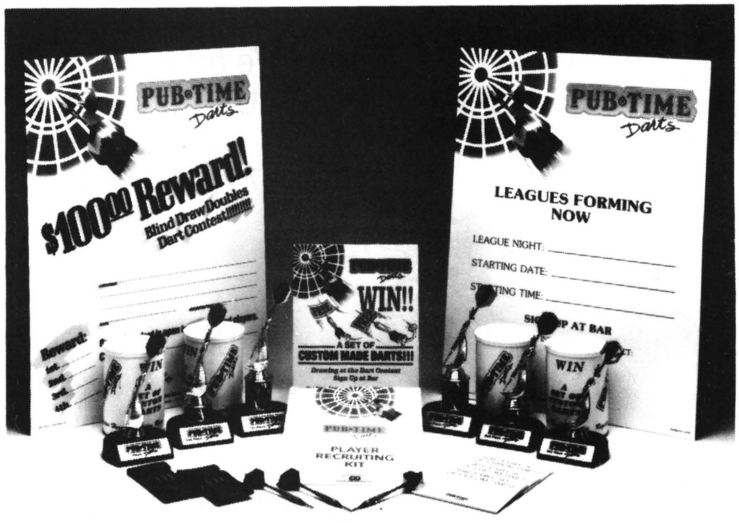

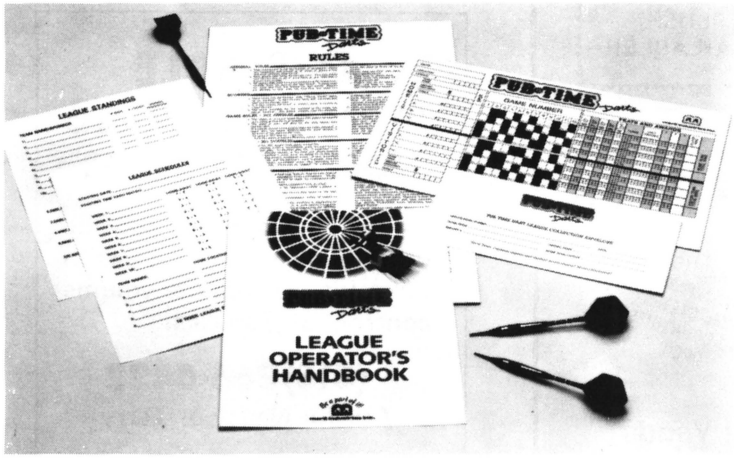

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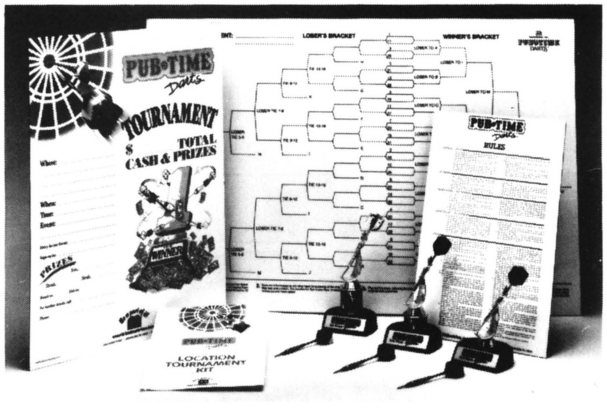

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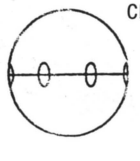



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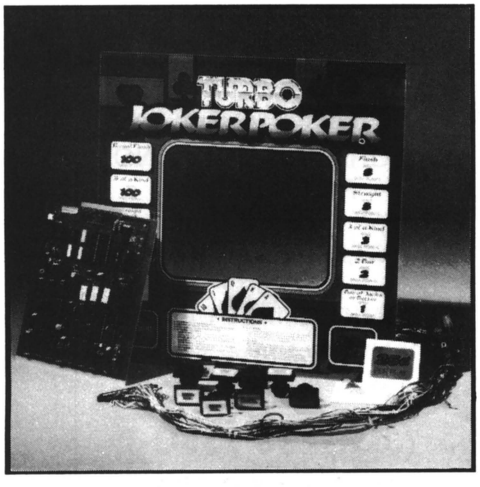

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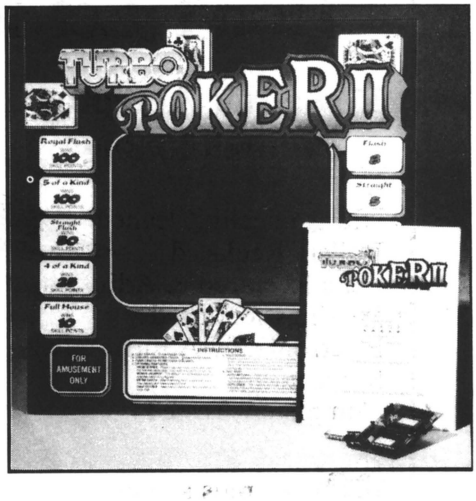

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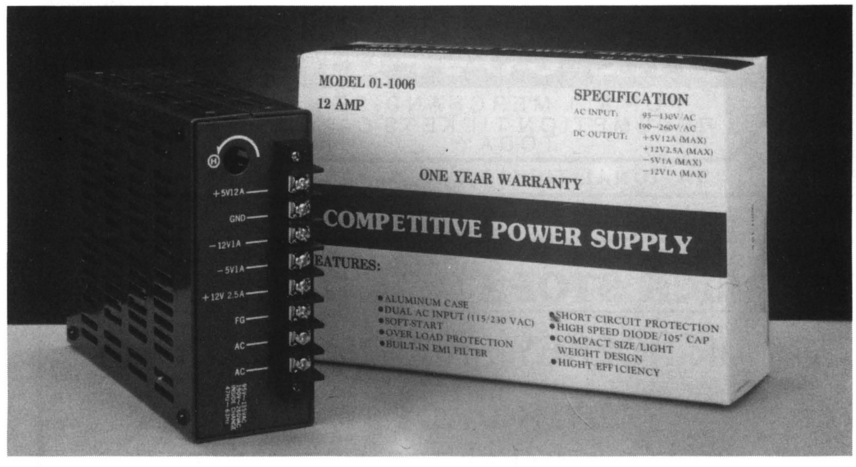

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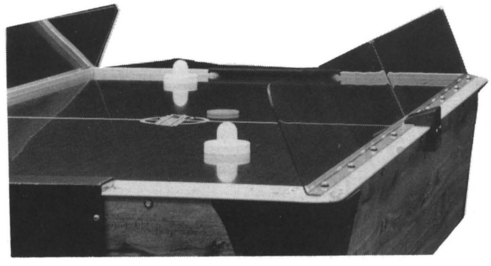

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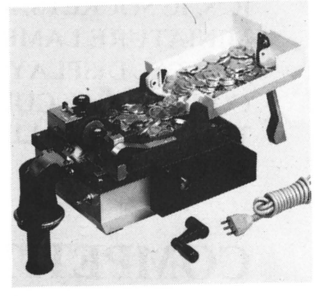

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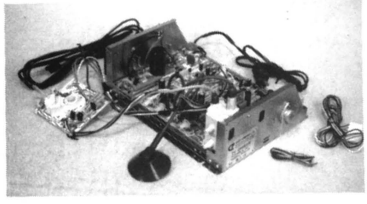

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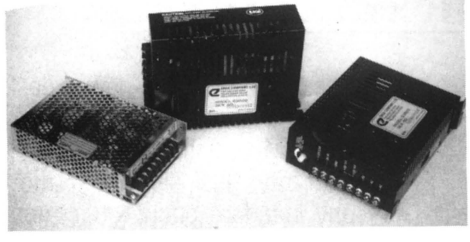

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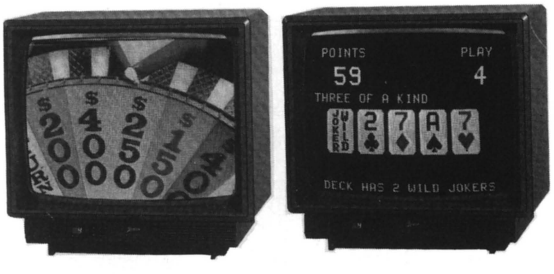

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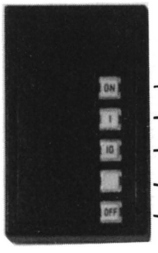

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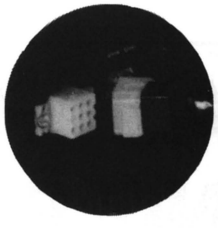

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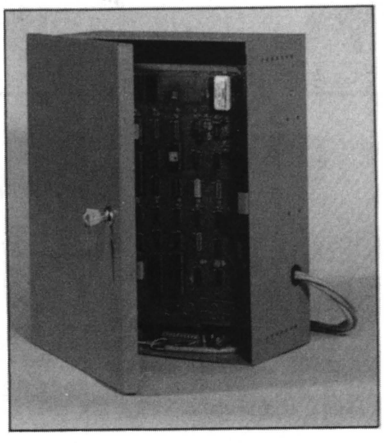

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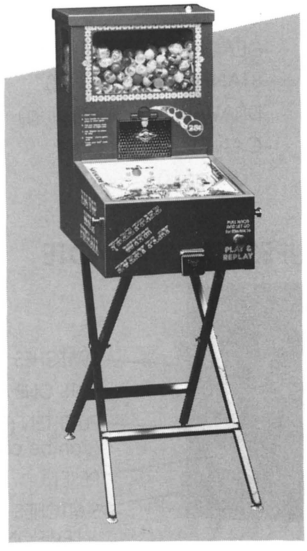

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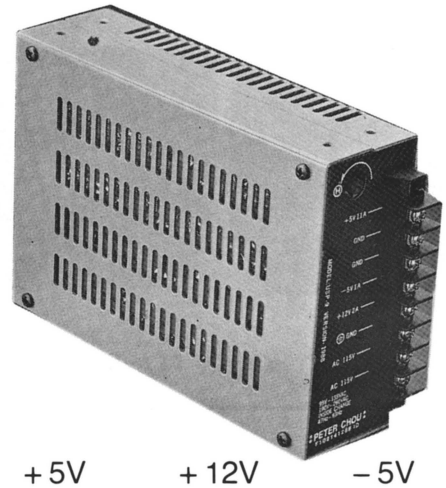

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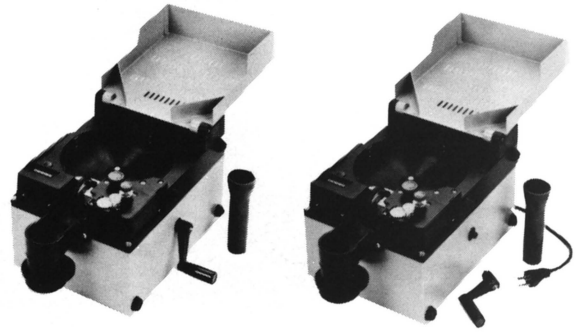

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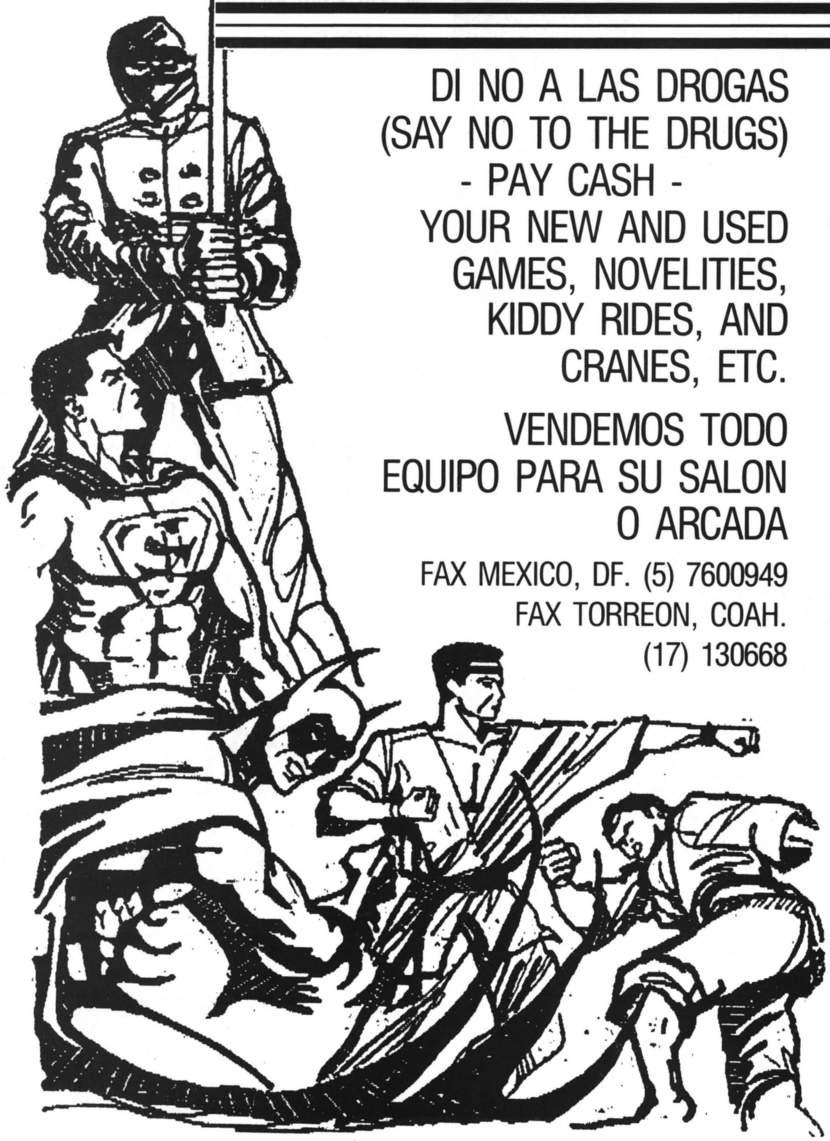

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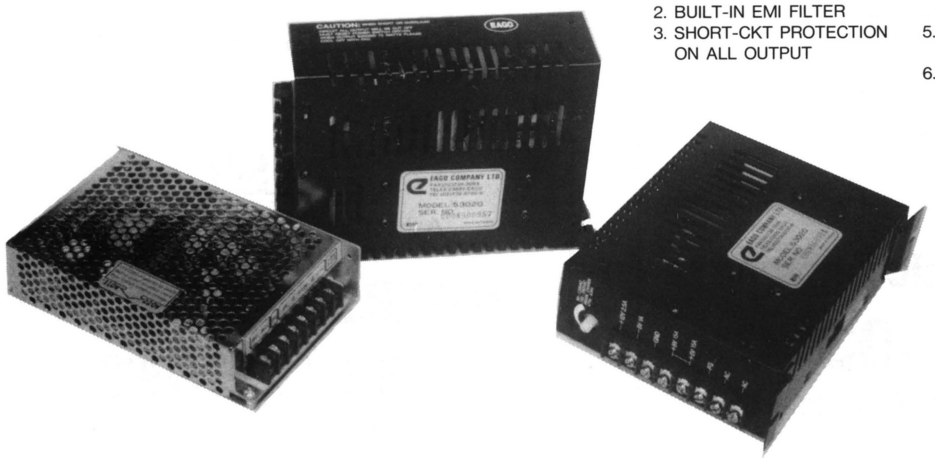

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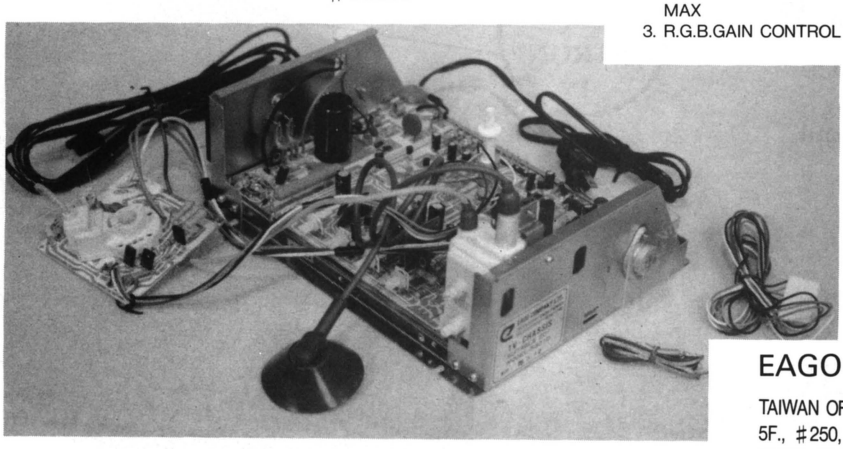

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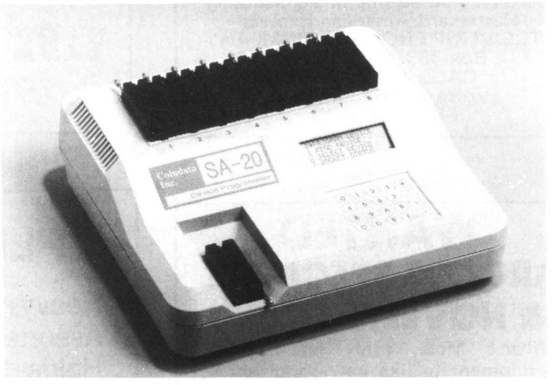

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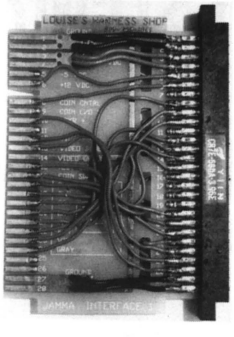

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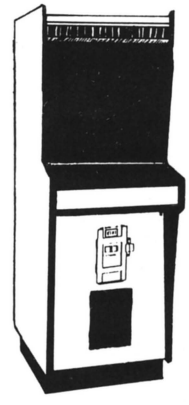

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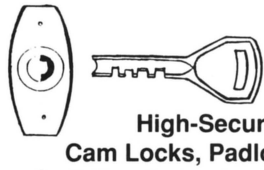

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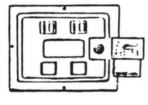

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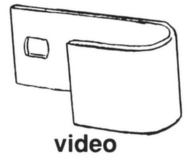

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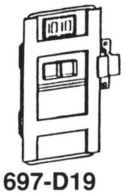

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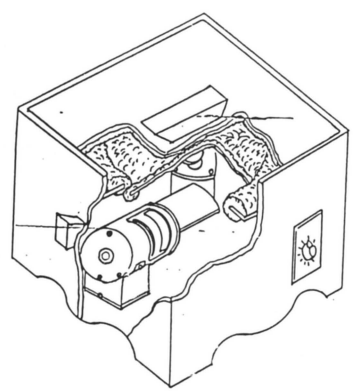

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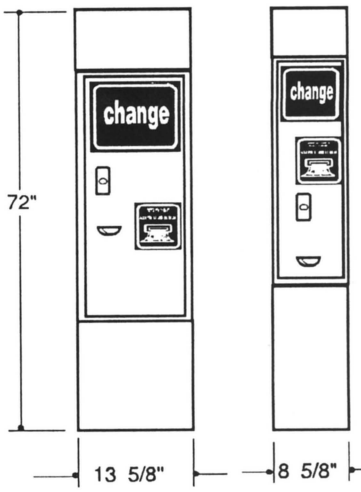

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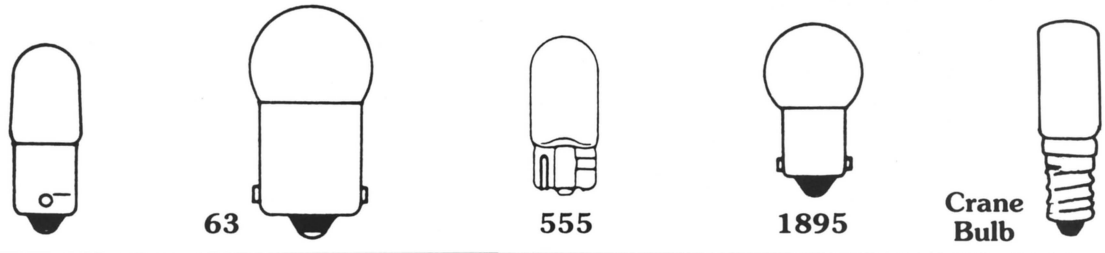

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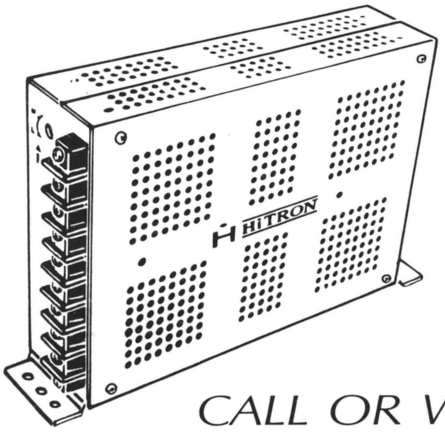

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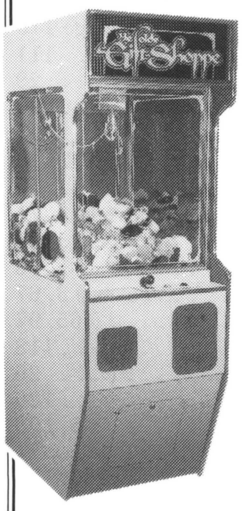

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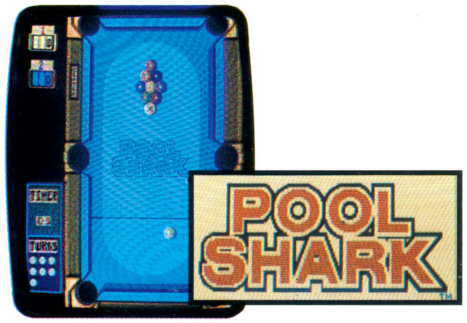



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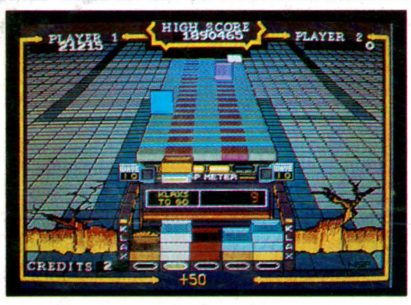

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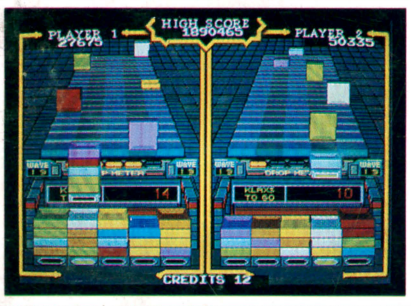

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