april 1990

RePlay

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ACME '90 PRODUCT REVIEW

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

NEW JUKE LICENSE SCHEDULE IN FORCE

After 18 months of negotiations, AMOA and the performing rights organizations ASCAP, BMI & SESAC have jointly announced a brand new annual **jukebox royalty fee schedule** that covers the entire decade. Retroactive from Jan. 1, 1990 and running until Dec. 31, 1999, the schedule clearly benefits the larger jukebox operations (the more machines you license, the cheaper the cost per box). In fact, if you have 19 or fewer jukeboxes to license, the cost is actually larger than it was under the previous "compulsory" schedule mandating $63 per machine.

But, beginning with 20 or more units, the averaged-out cost gets smaller per box as the number of machines you license gets larger under this new sliding scale. And, if $6,000,000 in license fees are collected by the newly-established Jukebox License Office in 1990 (which could be gained by 110,000 or even fewer licensed machines), there could be a whopping 35% **reduction** in fees for 1991 and more reductions afterward!

The agreement was jointly signed by AMOA and the societies on March 1, 1990 and announced at a New York City press conference March 22. Brand new license forms should arrive by mail at all previously-licensed jukebox operations early in April and you have to have your license stickers displayed in your title strip panels by June 1, 1990. If any operators are caught by a performing right rep without one afterward, they're subject to "each organization's applicable form of license agreement" (which is clearly the threat of even bigger fees).

Since improved compliance with the jukebox license is in the interest of both AMOA and the societies, steps will be taken to get word to previously-unlicensed machine owners via jukebox distributors and possibly through press releases in tavern-oriented trade journals catering to bar owners (many of whom own their own single jukeboxes). Any and all jukebox owners who previously didn't apply for licenses have been granted **amnesty** against any prior musical copyright infringements until June 1, 1990, unless a suit prior to March 15, 1990 has been filed.

Two key factors bore on the formulation of this new schedule: 1. the U.S.A. joined the Berne Copyright Convention on March 1, 1989 and thereby, the old "compulsory" license formula became incompatible (a new "voluntary" one had to be constructed); 2. compliance with the old law was less than good and the authors of this new schedule hope its terms coerce the holdouts to join up.

Print space is at a premium on this page, so let's just list the salient points and leave it to the AMOA and the societies to supply the other "short hairs" in their own literature. Operators mostly want to know what it will cost. For 1990, the first licensed jukebox costs $275, the second through the tenth cost $55 each and the 11th and above cost $48 each. Simple math shows that single machine owners (like bars that own their own machines) suffer the highest per-machine charge. Operators with ten machines pay $77 average per-box. A 30-machine route pays $57.66 per machine, a 60-unit route $52.83 a box and a major 100-or-more jukebox operation $50.90 per unit. Licenses run the calendar year and the 1990 one is retroactive to Jan. 1 even though you're paying it almost mid-year. As mentioned, a substantial reduction in fees will come about next year if $6 million is collected during 1990.

Important notes: you cannot any longer pay a smaller fee if you later on install a jukebox for even three months (unless you put the machine in after Dec. 1). However, licenses are still transferable. And although the license is no longer federal law, it is still pursuant to Section 116 A (c) (1) of the Copyright Act (performance of musical compositions) and infringers are liable to civil suit for non-compliance from any and all of the performing rights societies.

Subject to certain termination clauses in the AMOA/societies agreement itself, the new schedule can actually be renewed after 1999 year to year. Fees will be collected by the new Jukebox License Office (which will headquarter at ASCAP in New York City the first four years, at BMI the following four years). A Jukebox Administration Committee is also setting up to advise and consent on all provisions of the agreement (and on compliance) and be composed of one member each of the three societies plus three members of AMOA (drawn from the five chief negotiators **Dock Ringo** (Chairman, **Wally Bohrer, John Estridge, Dick Hawkins & Bob Nims.**

This committee (by majority vote) will determine a very special new wrinkle in this licensing concept: the disbursement of jukebox "promotional" money! Correct. From the first year's revenues, fully $75,000 will be earmarked for the stimulation of jukebox play (as well as for stimulating increased license compliance). AMOA's existing Jukebox Promotion Committee under **Tami Norberg-Paulsen** already has programs on the mind, and this money should go a long way toward their completion and enrichment. This is one more benefit the new license concept has for the jukebox industry, thanks to Dock, Wally & company.

The whole agreement we received reads like a legal document and we tried to bring readers the substantive points. Other facts will be brought forth (like the mandate that wall-box operators have to put the sticker onto the box nearest to the location's cashier, and, if your license check bounces, you'll get a $25.00 surcharge). Forms are coming automatically to all who previously licensed their music boxes and steps will be taken to notify all others about the new agreement. Conscientious operators only need do two things: 1. complete their forms and send checks to the new collection point indicated; 2. coerce any and all who haven't licensed boxes to do so. It's in everybody's interest.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

APRIL 1990

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

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (4)**	**9.61**	**96%**
➡	2	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (12)	8.75	48%
➡	3	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (4)	8.54	32%
➡	4	OFF ROAD (Leland) (13)	8.13	73%
	5	FINAL LAP (Atari) (17)	7.80	28%
➡	6	KLAX+ (Atari) (1)	7.68	20%
	7	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (2)	7.57	16%
	8	ALL AMER. FOOTBALL (Leland) (5)	7.55	27%
	9	TURBO OUTRUN+ (Sega) (10)	7.51	47%
	10	CYBERBALL (Atari) (13)	7.51	31%
➡	11	S.C.I. (Taito) (3)	7.43	21%
	12	CHASE H.Q. (Taito) (16)	7.42	54%
➡	13	MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE+ (D.E.) (4)	7.41	31%
	14	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (12)	7.35	46%
	15	TEAM QUARTERBACK (Leland) (17)	7.34	45%
	16	OUTRUN (Sega) (40)	7.22	64%
➡	17	CRIME FIGHTERS+ (Konami) (8)	7.20	58%
	18	S.T.U.N. RUNNER (Atari) (5)	7.18	34%
	19	TOP SPEED (Romstar) (18)	7.03	20%
	20	SUPER HANG-ON (Sega) (33)	6.97	62%
	21	MECHANIZED ATTACK (SNK) (10)	6.95	27%
	22	NARC (Williams) (14)	6.87	42%
	23	ROADBLASTERS+ (Atari) (30)	6.71	63%
➡	24	SUPER MONACO GP (Sega) (7)	6.71	24%
	25	AFTER BURNER (Sega) (30)	6.70	60%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

best new videos

➡	1	FOUR TRAX [u/r + s/d] (Atari)	8.57
➡	2	LINE OF FIRE [s/d] (Sega)	7.88
➡	3	VAPOR TRAIL [v-kit] (Data East)	7.67

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (2)**	**9.12**	**48%**
➡	2	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (9)	8.36	76%
	3	GOLDEN AXE [H] (Sega) (10)	7.79	77%
➡	4	BADLANDS [H] (Atari) (2)	7.59	28%
➡	5	TOKI [H] (Fabtek) (4)	7.55	27%
➡	6	BUSTER BROS. [H] (Capcom) (3)	7.51	29%
➡	7	TECMO WORLD CUP '90 [H] (Tec.) (3)	7.38	6%
	8	ARCH RIVALS [H] (Midway) (10)	7.31	68%
➡	9	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (1)	7.31	9%
➡	10	U.N. SQUADRON [S] (Capcom) (6)	7.24	33%
➡	11	SHADOW DANCER [H] (Sega) (3)	7.24	33%
➡	12	50 CALIBRE [V] (Romstar) (5)	7.24	23%
➡	13	GOLDEN TEE GOLF [H] (Strata) (2)	7.17	9%
	14	TETRIS [H] (Atari) (12)	7.08	60%
➡	15	VS. CRIME FIGHTERS [S] (Konami) (6)	7.03	28%
	16	CHAMP. SPRINT [S] (Atari) (38)	6.93	42%
➡	17	TASK FORCE [V] (Amer. Sammy) (3)	6.93	11%
	18	WILLOW [S] (Capcom) (6)	6.86	30%
	19	E.S.W.A.T. [H] (Sega) (5)	6.83	61%
	20	ROADBLASTERS [S] (Atari) (31)	6.82	48%

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

flippers

➡	1	**WHIRLWIND (Williams) (2)**	**9.09**	**54%**
	2	ELVIRA (Midway) (6)	8.36	60%
	3	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (12)	8.34	61%
	4	POLICE FORCE (Williams) (7)	7.97	52%
➡	5	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (D.E.) (1)	7.86	6%
➡	6	MOUSIN' AROUND (Midway) (3)	7.71	35%
➡	7	BAD CATS (Williams) (4)	7.59	32%
	8	CYCLONE (Williams) (24)	7.53	69%
	9	TAXI (Williams) (17)	7.38	64%
➡	10	ROBOCOP PINBALL (Data East) (2)	7.37	16%

➡ *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

Whether you call it Capcom's 'CPS' or "the Tuge's chips" (in respect of company-owner Kenzo Tsujimoto's high-horsepower hardware system) the brainy boards which have filled video game screens with such hits as 'Final Fight' and now 'Mercs' have been good for everyone who uses or deals with the products from the Osaka-based gameworks. Capcom has been hot on the charts and in the international cash can for some time and with CPS powering those products, they should remain hot for quite some time to come.

Bathed in the "hot light" of this month's 'RePlay' cover, Capcom's USA execs rest comfortably on an "exploded CPS board," demonstrating the foundation of their present and future. Clockwise from lower left are: Brian Duke, Pat Walton, George Nakayama, Paul Wiederaenders & Bill Cravens.

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EDITORIAL

If this really is a "product driven" business, the money spent by street and arcade operators to see ACME's March 9-11 show may have been one of the best "buys" they made this year. While some operators (often in good conscience) have told their friends who didn't come that there weren't enough "cherries" in the pie to warrant the trip, many others found ample fruit in the exhaustive amount of produce shown. Perhaps some are keeping their secrets to themselves to get first dubs on the better new machines?

A careful post-show examination clearly proves that the manufacturers made a college try to kick the amusement industry's economy into a higher gear. Those efforts, and in nearly every class of machine, could prove their spunk in the weeks and months to come (years in the case of music, redemption and the less-perishable types of amusements). While the more myopic among the trade looking for the next Pac-Man *didn't think they'd found it, if they really "worked" the show and shoved their arms deep into all the "plush" in ACME's "bin," they'd have been blind not to see the sugar.*

There were things for kids (like the little basketball cages), things for the "less-sophisticated" beer bellies at taverns (like a couple of flippers and an inventive item called Slick Shot *that's an "honest" marriage of pool and video), strategy videos for all locations (and for operators tired of kick & punch) and even things for the female set. There was a superb reincarnation of an old golf table idea from Bromley and a superb insight into future tech closeted in a hotel suite by MicroProse.*

These and many other tasty toys for spring and thereafter are covered inside. The better of them should be offered at local dealerships for the no-shows who didn't make Chicago. Unfortunately, hardly all these things will find their way to local dealers, which is the reason we have ACME and AMOA. And if anyone thinks RePlay *is "guilding ACME's lily," just remember that a chunk of that show is owned by one of our competitors. Good show, guys and gals!*

In Final Fight™, They're Serving Cocktails. Molotov Cocktails.



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INSIDE

APRIL 1990

SPECIAL ARTICLES

ACME ROLL CALL

If ACME were a military roll call, here's how it would sound. "Good games? Here. Good presentation and organization? Yo! Good social events? Here! Arcade operators? Here! Street operators? (Quietly) Here. I can't hear you! Street operators?" We muster out the troops . . . . . pg. 42

LET'S DO D.C.

Okay, gang, the time is hot for dollar coins and the trade is roaring into town for its "biggest, bestest" political lobbying trip ever. AMOA and AAMA have remembered we're in show biz, and they're putting on a great show to win friends and influence politicians . . . . . pg. 23

NEED MONEY, HONEY?

Sure you do. Everybody does. But where (and how) do you get it? We asked quite a few operators, some industry credit managers, and even a real live banker who works with the industry. We got some straight-talking, no-jive answers. Special financing section begins . . . . . pg. 115

SPRING BUYING GUIDE

A flood of product has hit the market since we last published one of our "everything but the kitchen sink" catalogs. This one, aimed at helping your spring buying decisions, covers only the new things since January, but that's plenty! . . . . . pg. 149

STREET OPERATORS SPEAK

They're wary. They're thoughtful. They're concerned about the business. They're more enthused about music and pool than video. They want higher play pricing and lower game prices. We did a straw poll of street operators and, as usual, the results were candid and to the point . . . pg. 216

REGULAR FEATURES

ASSOCIATIONS IN ACTION 200
BIG TICKET 187
BONDEAL CHART 185
BUYERS' BULLETIN 225
COVER STORY 183
DATEBOOK 224
FRANK TALK 189
GRAPEVINE 219
HOT HITS ON THE STREET 217
JAPANESE CHART 191
NEWS DIGEST 11
ON YOUR MARK 41
OPERATOR OPINIONS 116
PINBALL CORNER 196
THOSE LEGAL QUESTIONS 186
TOURNAMENT NEWS 181

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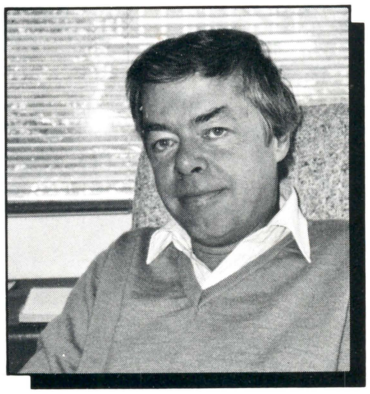

I have several points to make. First, I'm happy that AMOA and the song performance societies finally hammered out an agreement on new jukebox royalties. You may find it peculiar to have to pay royalty fees retroactive to Jan. 1 under an agreement announced March 22. But it wasn't an easy go for Wally Bohrer and the AMOA lads. When you read about it, you'll see it's a "voluntary" payment. But also note that anyone who doesn't "volunteer" can get seriously hurt by the lawsuits expected to come down from ASCAP (et al) on any music operator (even a single site owner) who doesn't pay up.

The charge (for many machines) is lower than in years past and the future looks quite secure. Two things are hoped for: 1. that far more operators pay their fees than did beforehand; 2. that all of this wrangling with the music business should be behind us after the necessary operator checks are written. Songwriters are as entitled to get something when their songs are performed for profit as are operators when they vend those songs on a jukebox.

On another note, there may be some video people who think the court case on the Red Baron matter only precluded the operation of parallel boards in the 4th District of the U.S.A. I ask them to write this on the shop wall and look at it when they're in doubt: Title 17, Section 106(4) *of the U.S. Copyright Code grants exclusive audio visual performing rights to the copyright owner. Just like in the jukebox business, video games are copyrighted software and the owners of those works have exclusive rights to grant (or withhold) the ability of anyone to use their efforts for profit. In simple terms, don't operate parallel boards if your business is anywhere in the U.S.A. or in any other jurisdiction that precludes this. Like it or not, it is Federal U.S. law.*

Finally, a word about ACME and its product. We have devoted a good portion of this issue to the show and to the new goods displayed there for the spring buying season in order to refresh the memories of those operators who saw the show and to bring the "good news" to the majority that didn't. They missed a worthwhile event. However, I understand that a number of distributor open houses that followed ACME enjoyed superior operator attendance, meaning that many (if not most operators) are up to speed on new spring product by now. I think the issue you're holding can very nicely fill in any possible gaps.

CIVILIANS TAKE HEAVILY-ARMED NAVY FIGHTER PLANE ON SUPERSONIC JOY RIDE

NATIONAL
Scoop

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Enemy base littered with bodies following breakout



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NEWS DIGEST

ACME HAD THE GOODS!

ACME was a better show than some tradesters gave it credit for. The expo took place in Chicago on March 9-11. Despite negative judgments by some, the show offered promising new product in all categories — video, pins, music, sports games, novelties and (coming on strong) redemption.

ACME also offered a sterling example of "the industry at work and at play." Our special report covers everything — product, people, parties, atmosphere, awards and special events — with all the facts and plenty of color photos. Complete ACME roundup begins on **page 42.**

PARK ARRESTED AT ACME FOR COUNTERFEIT DEALING

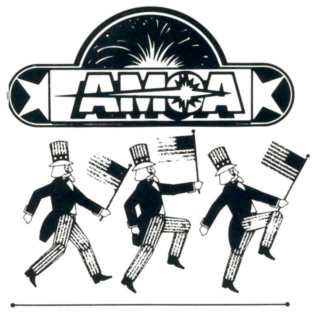
Canadian businessman **Yong Park** (Poara Enterprises, Concord, Ontario) was arrested on copyright infringement charges (trafficking in counterfeit video game boards) at the Hyatt Regency on the second day of the ACME show. The arrest occurred just a few minutes after the exhibit floor closed on Saturday, March 10. When Park appeared at the jam-packed piano bar in the Hyatt's main lobby, U.S. Customs Agent **Glenn Eiden** walked up and quietly informed Mr. Park of the charges. Park was then led away to a quieter site for interrogation by Customs and other federal officials, after which he was reportedly taken to police headquarters in handcuffs. Despite the very public setting, the



initial arrest was made with discretion; few patrons of the crowded bar even realized an arrest had taken place. Friends of Park later posted $50,000 cash bail, sources said. Bail conditions restrict Park to Toronto, where he's obliged to "report in" via daily phone calls to federal officials in Chicago. No trial date had been set at presstime.

$1 COINS HOT ISSUE AS TRADE TREKS TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Strike while the iron is hot! Tradesters are arriving in Washington, D.C. for the industry's annual **Government Affairs Conference** on April 29. That's just five days after the very first Senate hearings on **dollar coins** are scheduled to be held. Talk about great timing! The event is co-sponsored by AMOA and AAMA; both associations will work hard to make new friends in Congress and the White House via special events like coin-op tournaments and an anti-drug gala benefit. Get



Amusement & Music Operators Association
1990 Government Affairs Conference
April 29-May 1 • Washington Court
Washington, D.C.

the full story in our report beginning on **page 23.**

PARALLELS, AGAIN: SENATE TO HOLD GRAY MARKET HEARINGS

We've always said Congress may have the ultimate, final word on the parallel imports issue, and that still could be true. At 2PM on April 4, in Room 226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C., Arizona Senator **Dennis DeConcini** will chair hearings on Utah Senator **Orrin Hatch's** gray market bill, S.626. Testifying in favor of the bill will be officials from COPIAT (Coalition to Preserve Integrity of American Trademarks). Testifying in favor of low-priced, "unauthorized" imports will be representatives of K-Mart and 47th St. Photo. Important note: unless and until Congress acts to change copyright and trademark laws (which could take years), parallel imports of coin-op video games are **illegal to operate** in this country. Is it too much to hope AMOA and AAMA can agree to leave the parallel issue **out** of their lobbying trip to Washington at the end of the month?

POWERS IS NEW DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AT MERIT

Industry veteran **Bernie Powers** has joined **Merit Industries** as Director of Marketing. Powers spent the 1970s and most of the '80s with Bally Mfg. Corp. "His experiences with Bally closely correlate with where Merit markets its products today," said Merit President **Pete Feuer.** "Having experience with both gaming and amusement equipment makes for a good fit in our organization," Feuer added. "He'll be an asset to any company involved in international sales. His unique knowledge of the markets has been beneficial to the community, as well as other companies," stated Thomas de



Save of the U.S. Commerce Dept. Powers, whose strong educational background includes a BS in marketing and management, plus an MBA, will relocate to Bucks County, Penn. with his wife Judi and their four daughters.

CALIFORNIA GAMBLING BUST: POLICE NAB 80 GAMES, 6 OPS

A national illegal gambling operation, apparently based in Las Vegas, has been kicked out of Southern California by police who staged a major raid on March 6. Police seized 80 "8-liner"-type video games which had $1-20 bill acceptors on them. The games were manufactured by a well-known East Coast industry firm. Winners were paid off by location owners who had remote control knock-off devices. Operators had netted **$2 million in profits** in just three months, police said, while location owners netted another $2 million. This $4 million total was over and above the money paid out to winners.



Six operators were arrested on felony charges in the raid; warrants are outstanding on additional suspects. "Conspiracy to distribute slot machines" (a felony) is the formal legal charge. Arrests occurred in various places, including private homes, from Costa Mesa to San Clemente. In addition, about $56,000 in cash was seized. Machines were taken mostly from Vietnamese restaurants, etc., in Orange County cities (Westminister, Garden Grove and El Monte), plus a Laguna Hills warehouse. Ten location owners were cited on misdemeanor charges. Suspects used aliases and various ficticious business names including "United Video," "T and M Entertainment," and "PCM Enterprises" among others, said Detective **Carl Olson** of the L.A.P.D. Vice Squad, who led the investigation. Suspects had set up another office in San Jose and were on the verge of starting a Northern California gambling ring, too, "but they didn't get the chance," Olson said. The investigation originated when competing, honest venders complained to police in some of the affected communities. Local police then consulted L.A. Vice. Said Detective Olson: "The bottom line is we're not going to tolerate slot machines in Southern California. Using the term 'amusement-only' does not dissuade our efforts."

MORE "PLAYERS" ON CD MFG. MAP

Besides **Rowe, Rock-Ola, NSM, Seeburg,** the new **Pioneer** and the "more aggressive" **Wurlitzer USA** all into CD jukebox manufacturing, now comes **Jon Yarbrough** (Micro Mfg., Lavergne, Tenn.) with intentions to rep the Sound Leisure line of CD machines in America. As many know, CD jukeboxes arrived earlier in the U.K. than they did Stateside, and the British-based **Sound Leisure's** products have reportedly been popular there. In the CD box business around three years now, Sound Leisure currently produces eleven jukebox models at their Leeds plant (including even vinyl units). The first to come over here will be their ***Route 66*** (see photo below). Micro will build the cabinets in Tennessee and insert the mech and the rest of the internal parts they'll import from England. Yarbrough will attempt to secure distribution and hopes to import some complete boxes for sample distribution models this very month.

Yarbrough showed goods at a suite during ACME. Sales features, he says, include Sound Leisure's "quality as well as price" (he expects it will sell for 5% to 10% lower than other makes). *Route 66* offers 66 selectable CD discs plus four additonal ones for their background music feature. When asked if the American jukebox operator was ready for a "British" jukebox, Yarbrough answered, "Ever hear of Jaguar?"

Hoping American music operators "get their kicks on *Route 66* (from left at the Micro Mfg. ACME suite) are: Sound Leisure's **Alan Black, Kevin Moss,** Micro's **Jon Yarbrough** and SL's **Albert Truelove.**



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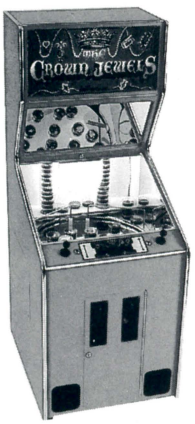

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TRADE COMES TO GRIPS WITH UL ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

"You can't operate that game; it may have UL-approved components but the game itself hasn't been approved by the UL authorities." That was the opening line as the City of Los Angeles cracked down on two ShowBiz Pizza Time locations in the area. "We have been successful in working through the issue," reported ShowBiz Sr. VP **Gene Cramm.** "But it requires a great deal of time and persuasion to accomplish the task." Cramm said his firm has faced similar situations in Virginia and Illinois. "This is a serious, industry-wide issue," Gene told AAMA leaders at the recent ACME. "If we fail to become proactive, the day is not far off when equipment will not be allowed unless it meets specific criteria . . . We need to get moving on this before they start bringing in federal regulations." AAMA President **Gil Pollock** said an AAMA committee would meet with UL members in late March to try to resolve these issues.

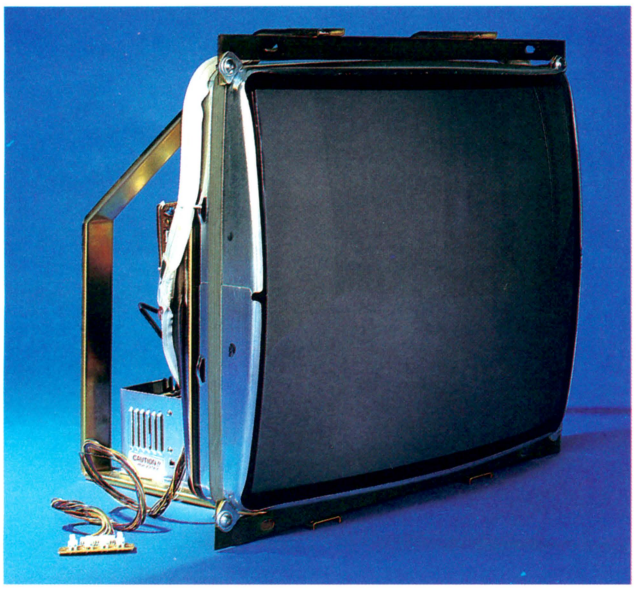
MOUNTIES ARREST CANADIAN VIDGAME COUNTERFEITERS

Canada's Mounties are still getting their man, says AAMA Director of Investigations **Bill Kidwell.** Or in this case, they're still getting their operators who are charged with counterfeiting activities. Latest conviction: operator **Ronald Nutt,** (Nutt's Amusements) pled guilty to possession of 11 counterfeit printed circuit boards and was fined $1,500 in Brantford, Ontario, Kidwell said. Charges were filed by the FES Section of the Hamilton detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Obviously, the Mounties have become "very aggressive" about enforcement ever since that country's new copyright laws were passed in June 1988, Kidwell stated. Kidwell and other AAMA investigators have assisted the RCMP in three other investigations netting 98 counterfeit boards; criminal charges are pending in those cases.

AVS ADDS SEGA & WILLIAMS

The word "vending" may be their middle name, but in the past few years, **American Vending Sales** (Elk Grove, Ill. distribs) has risen as a game dealer as well. And now to add more lustre to the roster of amusement lines they rep, the firm proudly announced the addition of both **Sega** and **Williams.** (Each of these factories uses "split distribution" in the territory, with Sega also handled by Atlas and Williams by World Wide). "We're truly pleased to represent these companies on a direct basis," said AVS music & games sales exec **Ron Bolger.** "Both make dynamite products and we look forward to a great relationship with each." Most of the new products brought out by Sega, Williams (and the latter's Midway division which AVS already handled) should be available for operator inspection at AVS' showroom now, including the continually hot ***Whirlwind*** flipper.

THE PICTURE IS CLEAR!!



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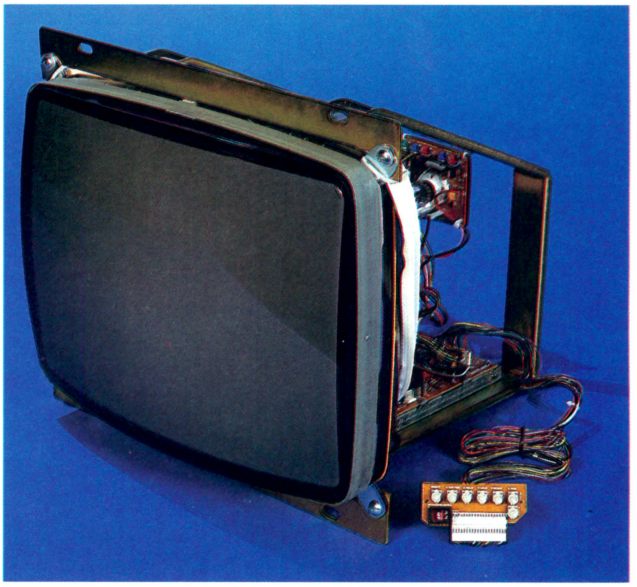

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WURLITZER STEPS FORWARD

Wurlitzer USA opened its Long Island City, N.Y. jukebox & service depot last November in a 20,000-sq.-ft. facility on Vernon Blvd. Then on Feb. 1, they hired popular trade vet **Joe Tedeschi** as the new division's president. The combination of Joe's experience and savvy, coupled with the quality of the product line, should very well spell for a larger share of the American jukebox market under a more aggressive stance themed "Wurlitzer is back!" Tedeschi, who hales from both Rowe International and Coffee-Mat, says, "What goes around, comes around" in reference to the Wurlitzer jukebox. "We've got at least two things going for us: the brand name and the more important fact that our machines work so well." With around 15 folks on staff in New York to support him, Joe's presently moving to score more "main line" distributors. Wurlitzer veteran **Jerry Reeves** will continue to operate out of Orlando but will concentrate his sales efforts on the Southeast territory.

The five other major market areas are in Joe's province and his plans are to invigorate certain existing distributors and also appoint new ones. Besides parts and service, the New York office also inventories jukeboxes imported from the Deutsche Wurlitzer plant in Germany (they presently have between 150 and 200 units in stock including the vinyl *Carnegie* and *Tarock* console) and at presstime, were awaiting initial delivery on the CD version of the gorgeous *One More Time* (vinyl versions are also handled by Wurlitzer USA). Look for a lot more steam from one of the most famous names in coin-operated music.

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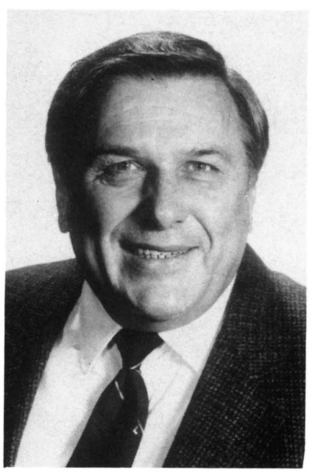
45 SINGLES SALES PLUMMET; CD & CASSINGLES RISING FAST

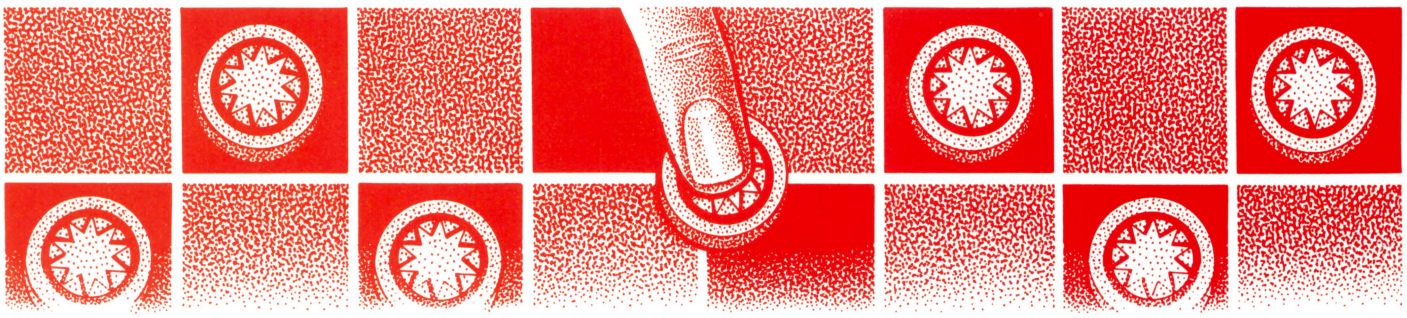
As many tradesters felt in their bones, last year was the major shift from vinyl to CD. . . and now we've got the hard numbers to prove it. Sales of **vinyl 45 singles** fell off the cliff in 1989, **falling 44.2%** from 1988 levels. (Vinyl album sales dropped even further, down over 50%.) Meanwhile, sales of CD albums and cassette singles rose to all-time highs. Cassette singles jumped **over 200%** in sales and dollar volume! These facts come from a March 24 report in *Billboard Magazine*. The number of 45 records sold has slipped year by year, the magazine added: from 82 million in 1987, to 65.6 million in 1988, to only 36.6 million last year. By the way, music videos are climbing into a "small but good" hold on the market: Americans bought nearly 6 million of them last year. Bet Rowe's **Mike Reinert,** who also serves as president of the Music Video Assn., is happy to hear about that!

RECORD SOURCE INT'L. GETS MIXED TRADE REACTION

"The 45 is going down," said **Wally Bohrer,** "but many American operators still can't bring themselves to believe it." Bohrer is a principal in **Record Source International,** a new record subscription service for jukebox operators. Strong reception from overseas operators and a mixed reaction from one-stops (some good, some cool) has greeted RSI's new venture to "keep the 45 alive." (See our March issue for details.) Will similar firms pop up to offer 45s to operators? "If anybody can make the deals with the record labels, they could offer a similar service," Bohrer conceded. "It's quite a challenge, though," he added. "Two record companies have given us verbal exclusives, although in all fairness they know they have to give the one-



stops the same deal." What about persistent rumors that a member of ASCAP is one of the RSI principals? "Nobody from any of the performing rights societies is involved in RSI, although we do have members who are part of major record companies," Bohrer stated firmly.



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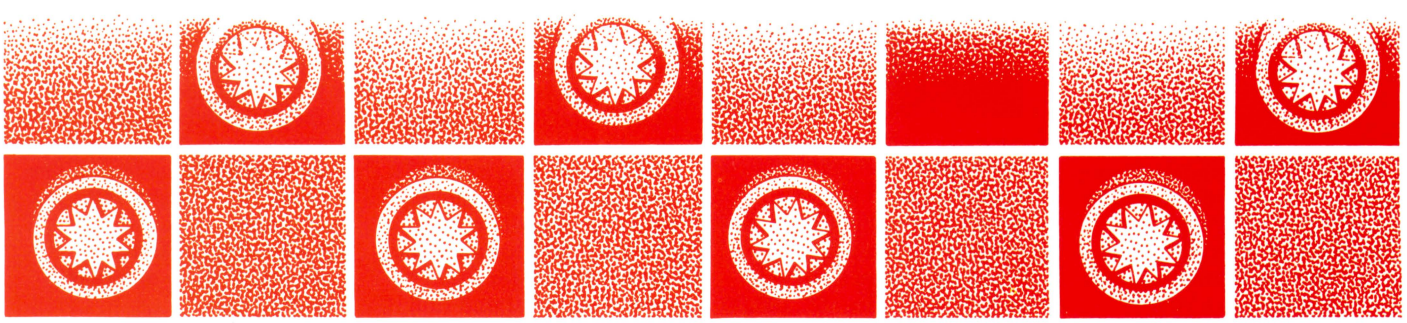
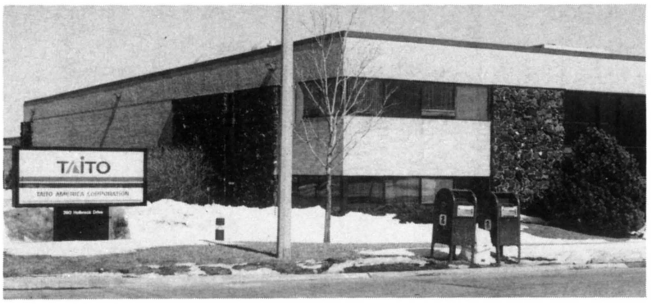


TAITO, BIRMINGHAM (FLA.) HAVE NEW ADDRESSES



Taito Corp. has a new 32,000-sq.-ft. facility at 390 Holbrook Dr., Wheeling, IL 60090. Phone and fax remain the same. "We needed larger facilities to service our customers in a more efficient manner," said prexy **Joe Dillon.** "The move to expanded quarters is also a positive expression of confidence in Taito's growth and the future growth of the industry." Customers, friends and suppliers are invited to stop by and "check us out," Joe added.

The Orlando, Fla. branch of **Birmingham Vending** also has a new address. Their



new 15,000-sq.-ft. warehouse is located at 4542 L.B. McLeod Rd., Ste. A, Orlando, FL 32811; 407/425-1505.

ATLAS/CHICAGO ADDS INDY BRANCH; NEW WINDY CITY DIGS

Add one more top distributing office to the Indiana map as **Atlas Distributing** opens an **Indianapolis** branch. Operators will enjoy learning that the facility is in the same building where the old Bally Midwest outlet was (Sadlier Circle, South Drive). To add more familiarity, their branch manager at the new Indy store will be **Jim Abbett,** the same vet who ran Bally Midwest (Jim was most recently with Seeburg). Atlas President **Jerry Marcus** said at least five other staffers have been lined up to assist Abbett (names, most of which are familiar to state tradesters, will be announced next month). In addition, Marcus said the branch will represent "most major product lines" like Atari, Rock-Ola and Premier.

Back in Chicago, Atlas' headquarters will be moving around the end of May from N. Western over to a 50,000-sq.-ft. facility at 4500 W. Dickens. Formerly occupied the the Dae-Jule candy distributing company, the place has a huge parking lot plus five loading docks. The present store (bought years back from **Eddie Ginsberg)** will eventually be put up for sale after what Marcus calls a "leisurely move" into the new digs. He also expects to hold a used equipment auction around moving time to help move some inventory out to the field rather than into the new outlet.

DATA EAST'S FULL COURT PRESS

With two new videos ***(Vapor Trail*** and ***Two Crude),*** a redemption "sleeper" ***(Wacky Gator)*** and clearly one of the best new pinballs on the market ***(Phantom of the Opera),*** Data East's **Steve Walton** barreled out his chest at his ACME dealer meeting to say, "It's our turn again at the top!" Calling *Phantom* not only Data East's best flipper to date but "the best pinball out there, period," Walton praised **Gary Stern** and **Joe Kaminkow** at their pin division for building product which (in his words) "not only works when it comes out of the box but makes serious money for operators." *Phantom* is quite the pinball theater (it seems Kaminkow is loath to leave even one square inch on the playfield without some target or such on it). Multi-balls, light sync, top shelf sound/music track, ramps, and (if you look hard enough maybe the kitchen sink) add up to a super effort. But when that crypt door opens on the playfield and the organ pipes up, that's the cherry on the cake. Just watch this one hit the heights. Oh, yes, this feature's not on the game, but you'll like it: *Phantom* is lower priced. Stimulating?

IT'S ALIVE! MICROPROSE *F-15 STRIKE EAGLE*

Does anything really live up to its advance publicity? The long-awaited ***F-15 Strike Eagle*** from **MicroProse** home game computer company not only does but surpasses it. This genuinely quantum leap over anything seen thus far on coin-op video was regrettably still unfinished when ACME opened, so the company's execs showed it in a suite at the nearby Fairmont Hotel. Those who walked the block and a half and took the elevator up may have made a journey into the future. This machine (at first blush) is a classy-looking air fighter upright. Turn it on and grab the control stick and you "reach for your seatbelt." This thing is a gravity-defying aerial adventure of shooting, looping, rolling and everything else that the "real" experience of flying one of these zillion dollar air buggies would give you. It



takes more than a bit of learning to feel comfortable (so many features!) but the thrill is unquestionable.

To give you an idea of what's going on here, let's roll out the price: $7,326.00 F.B.O. Hunt Valley, MD. Okay? Now that we have your attention, understand that around $3 million went into this project (something like it has been available for home computers for a while). It offers six "arenas" (phases) with 3 lives for the vend (think paper money here) plus a buy-in. The remaining four arenas should be completed soon and the firm expects to sample distributors beginning in May with full production starting thereafter by the Dynamo plant. The firm's sales topper **Gene Lipkin** hosted numerous domestic and international dealers and larger arcade owners to a looksee and didn't blush a bit when he said, "I know this was the best game in Chicago that weekend." Distribution will be on a exclusive territorial basis. Don't just look for this game, reach out and find it.

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AAMA PREXY POLLOCK MAY MAKE WHITE HOUSE SPEECH

AAMA President **Gil Pollock** will speak April 2 in Washington, D.C. about the coin machine industry's participation in national anti-child abuse efforts. His speech is part of the kickoff of 1990's "Child Abuse Prevention Month." The event, sponsored by the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, may take place in the White House Rose Garden. Definitely on schedule is a glittering dinner at the Kennedy Center which could draw celebrities such as President **George Bush** and wife **Barbara,** actors **Tom Cruise** and **Dustin Hoffman,** and others. AAMA has created a series of celebrity posters touting child abuse prevention; the posters are available for display in locations around the U.S.

WHITE KNIGHT CREATES "ALL NEW" KRAMER MFG. CO.

There's a new Kramer in town, and they're raring to go with fresh financing and plans for expanded product lines. **Kramer Mfg. Co.** has been purchased from the bank which was the major creditor of the formerly bankrupt firm. The "new" Kramer is now a completely different entity and is owned by Zober Industries (Croydon, Penn.), makers of electronic devices used in various fields. Many of the old Kramer's personnel remain at the original offices in New Jersey, doing sales and service, while manufacturing and production will take place at Zober's plant in Croydon. "We're maintaining our video card games, dozers and cranes," said National Sales Manager **Phil Horowitz.** "But now we are also in a strong financial position to move forward with all kinds of R&D for new games. We're planning to make products for the redemption, novelty and lottery markets. We look forward to your continued business and to serving you with the highest quality products!" For sales and information, call toll-free at 800/872-4094. Parts and service is 800/631-2126.

AAMA HELPS DISTRIBS WITH FREIGHT

AAMA is offering members a "national tariff program" to help distributors reduce freight costs. A freight consultant would examine 90 days' worth of distributors' current shipping bills, and would then determine whether an individual dealer could save money by participating in the program. If so, a single freight carrier (selected by the consultant) will handle the program nationwide and will file an individual tariff for each participating dealer. "Our first study of seven distributors showed that under this program, six of the seven could have saved anywhere from $5,000 to $87,000 annually by participating," stated AAMA Exec VP **Bob Fay.** The program was largely negotiated by AAMA Director of Investigations **Bill Kidwell.** AAMA distributor members will receive additional details about the program by mail.



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industry holds Government Affairs Conference this month

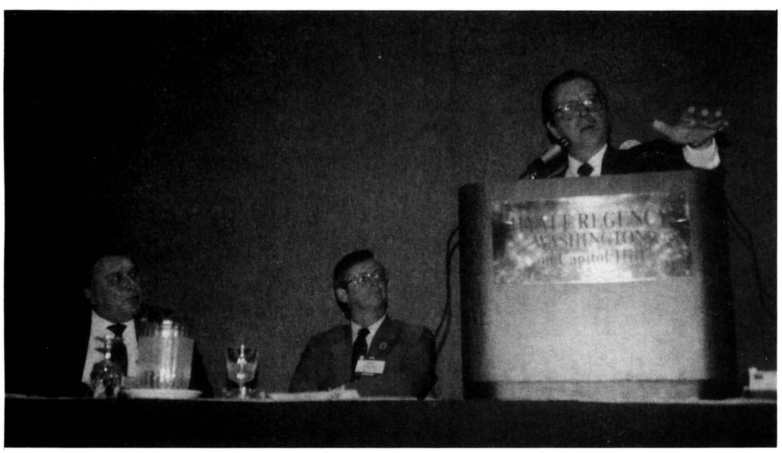
If you live anywhere else, Washington D.C. may seem like a distant, tiresome, and irrelevant place where politicians are sentenced to serve out four-year and six-year terms, for the "sin" of having run for public office.

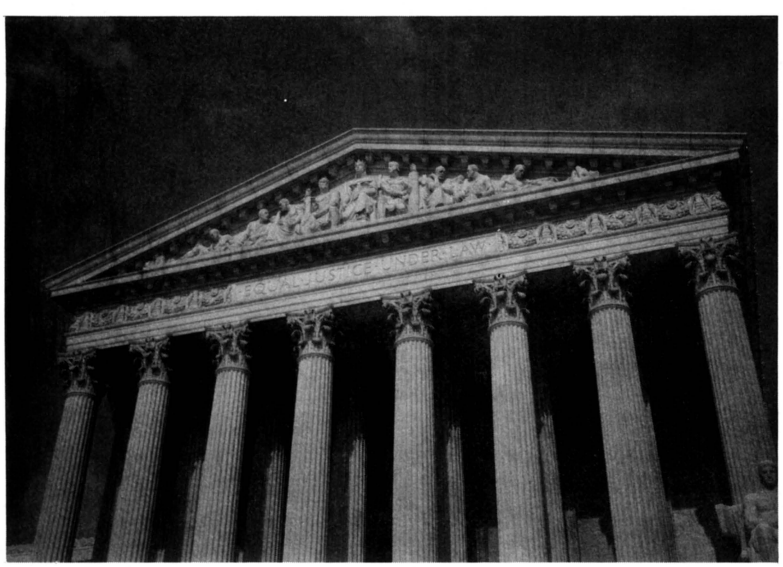
But on April 15, when your tax bill comes due, Washington seems a little more important. And, if just one small part of Rep. Dan Rostenkowski's new tax-hike plan goes through, Washington, D.C. could suddenly become a *lot* more relevant to the coin machine industry.

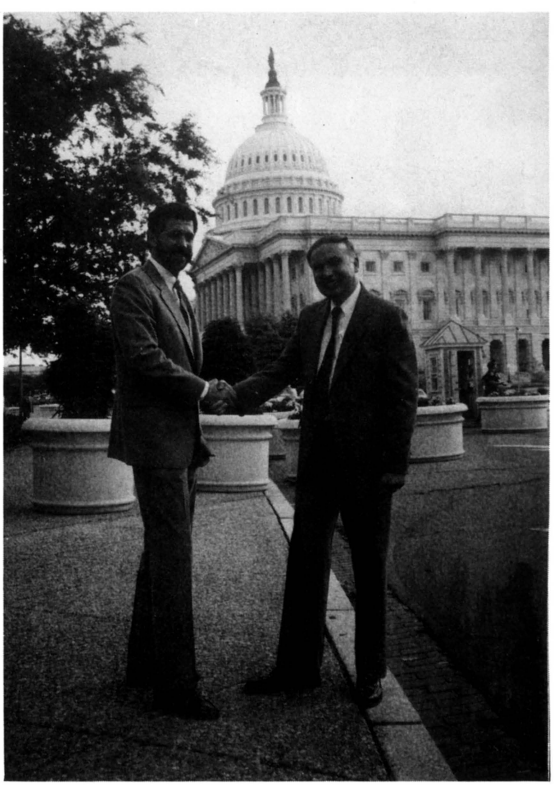
Even if you live in Guam, the federal government has a tremendous impact on the everyday conduct of your business. That's why the coin machine industry holds a Government Affairs Conference every spring in Washington.

The industry's Washington lobbying events have become smoother and more professional each year; also better-attended. But there are still too many members of Congress who don't receive a visit from a single member of our industry. That's especially true of senators and congressmen from states West of the Mississippi. Won't you come to Washington and help represent your state . . . your industry . . . and yourself?

This year's Washington Conference takes place April 29-May 2. Coin machine tradesters are going to tell Congress we could sure use a dollar coin. They're going to tell the White House that our industry contributes significantly to the fight against drugs. And they're going to show Uncle Sam that coin-op amusements provide safe, wholesome en-







Pictures from last year's Government Affairs Conference. At left are AMOAers Wally Bohrer and Dick Hawkins listening to Sen. Pete Domenici, a dollar coin sponsor. AAMA members are also big participants in the annual conference. Pictured below are two folks from that organization, Frank Ballouz and Bob Fay.

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To register for the conference, AMOA members may pay $100 per family (via check or money order, made payable to AMOA). Send your name, company name, address, city, state, zip code, phone and authorized signature to AMOA, P.O. Box 809146, Chicago, IL 60680-9146.



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(AAMA members may contact their group's headquarters in Woodbridge, Va. to learn details of registration.)

Both AMOA and AAMA members will stay at the Washington Court Hotel, just a short walk from the U.S. Capitol Building. Room rates were discounted to $155 for single or double if you reserved last month. If you still need a room, call the hotel directly at 202/628-2100.

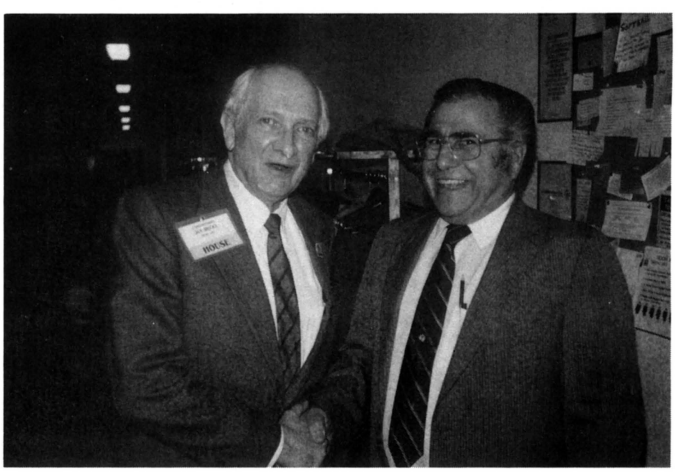
American and Delta Airlines offer steeply discounted fares to trade members in connection with this event. Call American at 800/433-1790 and ask for file S12ZOKS. For Delta, call 800/241-6760 and ask for file RO628.

Should you come to Washington because it's your patriotic duty? Heck, no. Come to Washington so you can look out for own financial interests. Think of the trip as a health plan for your wallet!









Top left are Dock Ringo and Rep. Charles Stenholm at the '88 conference (darts, by the way, will be included in this year's congressional tournament). Top right are Dick Hawkins, Rep. Lindy Boggs and Bob Nims. Bottom left, are AMOA DC liason Bob Wilbur and his wife Nancy. Bottom right, Rep. Jack Brooks and Toss Todaro.

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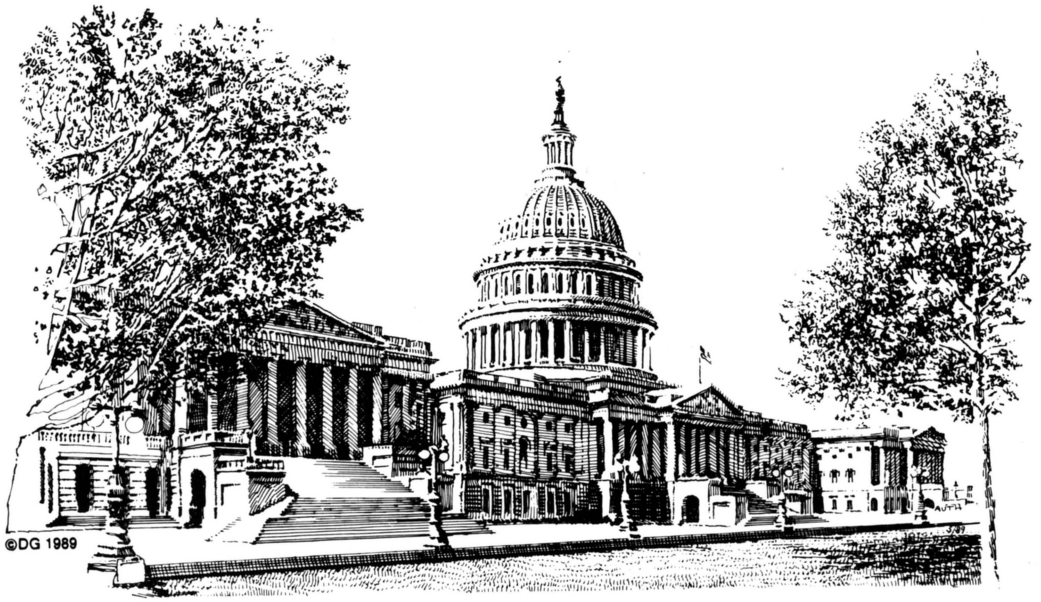

Washington, D.C. Schedule

AMOA and AAMA plan four days of meetings, briefings & special events

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

3-7PM	Registration
6-7:30PM	Welcome Reception

MONDAY, APRIL 30

8:30-9AM	Continental Breakfast
9AM-Noon	Political Workshop & Issues Briefing
Noon-2PM	Luncheon with Congressional Speakers
4:30-5PM	Buses to "Carnival for Life"
5-7PM	"Carnival for Life" benefit
7-7:30PM	Buses return to hotel

TUESDAY, MAY 1

8-9AM	Continental Breakfast
Morning	Congressional visits
Noon	Lunch (on your own)
Afternoon	Congressional visits
5-5:30PM	Buses to Congressional Reception
5:30-8PM	AMOA-AAMA Congressional Reception & Tournaments
8-8:30PM	Buses return to hotel

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

AAMA Board Meeting	time and place TBA
AAMA Congressional Dinner	time and place TBA

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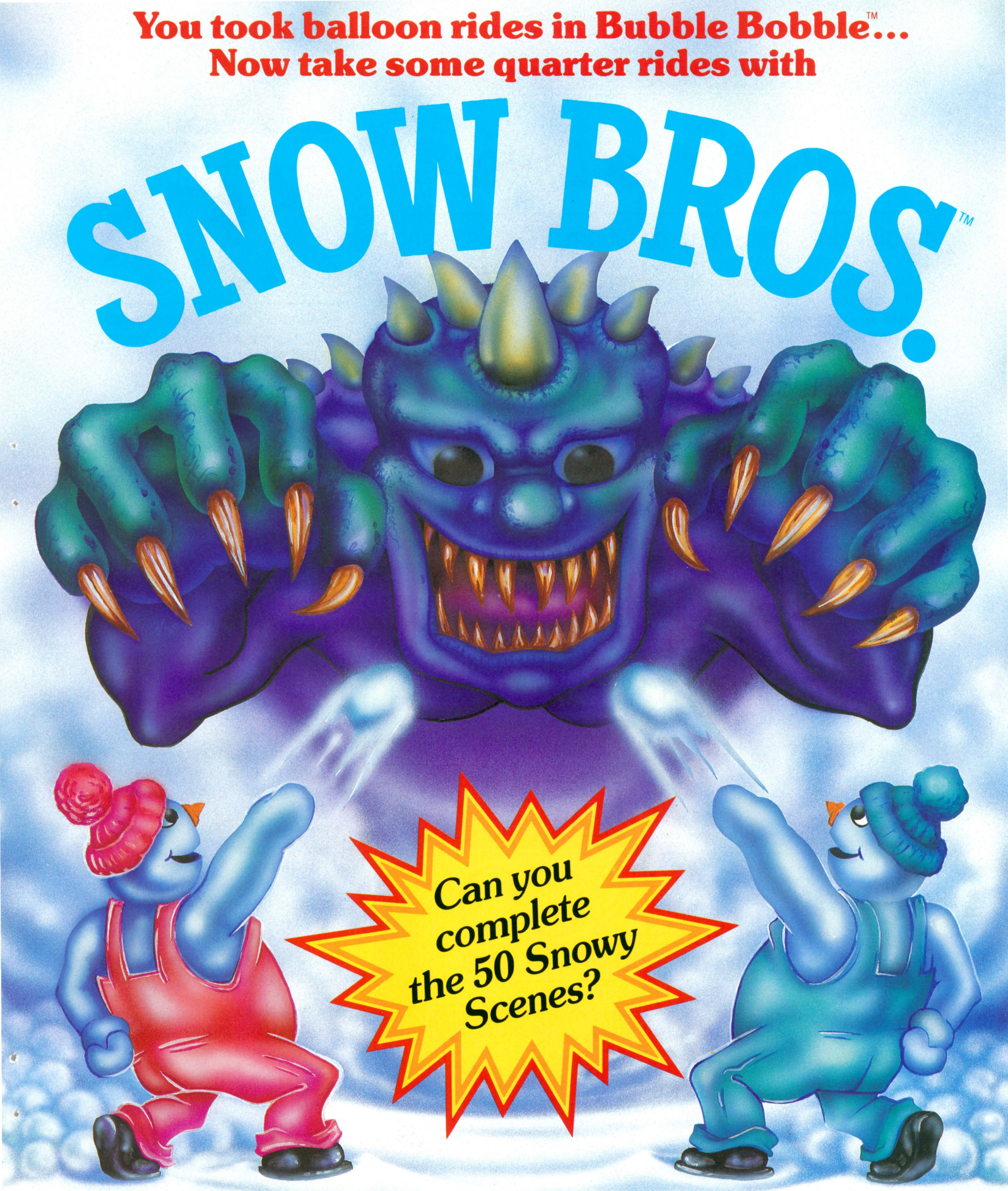

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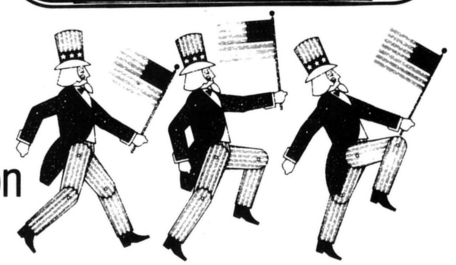
Know Your Legislator

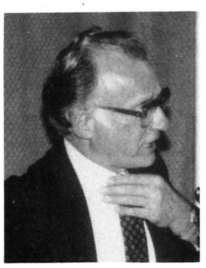
helpful hints from the pros who run Ohio's association



Amusement & Music Operators Association
1990 Government Affairs Conference
April 29-May 1 • Washington Court
Washington, D.C.

One of the most politically active state operator associations is Ohio, thanks to some very sharp operators and also to an extremely professional association management team headed up by Director Paul Corey and Executive Director Judy Martin. Paul and Judy sent along some "guidelines" for getting to know your legislator. Ohio operators use these pointers when meeting state level politicians, but the same general principles apply when you're meeting a federal congressman or senator.

Here's Paul and Judy's expert advice, slightly adapted for application to the federal government.



PAUL COREY



JUDY MARTIN

The most effective contact you can make with your senator and representative is on the local level — that is, in his or her legislative district, right there in your neighborhood or home town. Here are a few suggestions that may be of value.

1. Take time to get acquainted with your senator or representative. Stop at their local office. When they come home to meet the voters, go to the meetings. Introduce yourself. Explain what kind of business you're in, where it is located, and how many people you employ.

2. Become familiar with your legislator's priorities. That is, if you read or see a statement by your senator or congressman in the newspaper, or if you receive a "report to the voters" in the mail, write or call or visit them in response. Offer your support and encouragement for their position, if you agree with it. Do **not** just write or call or visit when you "need" or "want" something.

3. Arrange to meet your senator or congressman in a group with fellow members of the industry, to show the spirit of cooperation and concern that exists among us.

4. Get to know your legislator's staff — administrative assistant, secretary, legislative advisors, etc. They can be very helpful when you are unable to reach the congressman or senator himself. They can also give you much information (copy of the proposed or enacted legislation, date/time/place of hearings, meetings, etc.) without infringing on your legislator's time. This saves your direct contact for more vital items.

5. Organize your facts and discussion points before meeting your representative. Vague generalities hurt the cause, no matter how worthwhile.

6. Finally, let's not overlook the basic courtesies such as the "Thank You" note when your legislator advocates or supports your position.

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The Art of Lobbying

how to talk to your congressman & his staff, by Minnesota's Bob Latz

Bob Latz is the legal counsel and lobbyist for the Minnesota state operator association. As a former state legislator, he sure knows the territory...and he's terrific at coaching operators on meetings with politicians.

The following is adapted from a speech Bob delivered to the AMOA 1989 Government Affairs Conference last year. These points will be included in Bob's forthcoming book, The Art of Lobbying: Power, Politics and Persuasion. *Our thanks to Bob for his generosity in allowing us to reprint this material here.*

The art of lobbying a member of Congress has both similarities to and differences from lobbying elected officials at other levels of state and local government. The most important single difference (other than geography) is the importance of congressional staff. The wide-ranging committee assignments, covering complex issues, make it impossible for any member of Congress to keep track of all the issues of interest to their constituents. That's especially true of those higher on the ladder of seniority and power.

Thus, a great deal of delegation of issues and authority goes to congressional staff. With that delegation goes the ability to significantly influence the member's vote on a given issue.

Given the busy schedules of members of Congress, it's more than likely that you will meet with staff to discuss an issue in depth. Then the staff person briefs the member on the pros and cons. If the issue is right, and things go well in the meeting with staff, a commitment of support from the senator or representative can come quickly.

Here are some pointers that can help ensure success in meetings with members of Congress or their staffs.



Minnesota lobbyist Bob Latz addresses a group of operators.

Create continuity. When the member or staffer remembers you from a previous visit back home or on Capitol Hill, their response is likely to be more affirmative. This depends, of course, on having made a good impression previously!

Announce issues in advance. When you make your appointment, let the congressman's office know what issue(s) you want to visit on. This will enable the member or his staff to do some homework and appear to be knowledgeable about the pros and cons.

If you're pushing a controversial bill, be prepared. Always remember there is a vast difference between lobbying for a bill that is vigorously contested, and lobbying for one that is relatively non-controversial. If it is contested, you can be sure the other side has been there, lobbying their side of the issue (or will be shortly). Be prepared to rebut the arguments of your opponents. Ask the person you meet with if anyone else has lobbied on this issue, and what they said. This will open the door for your rebuttal.

Justify spending taxpayers' money. If your proposal has budgetary implications, be prepared to show the source of the money to fund it, or why the costs should be borne by taxpayers generally. With mounting deficits, it is becoming harder and harder to justify new or expanded programs.

Highlight saving taxpayers' money. However, when you can show cost savings (such as the $120 million per year saved by the phase-out of the paper dollar and its replacement with a dollar coin), you have a better chance of success.

Use visual aids. These, such as the Canadian dollar coin that operators showed to members of Congress in 1989, can be very helpful. A brief one-page "position paper" that can be left at the conclusion of your visit is also helpful.

Go beyond self-interest. While your principal purpose in lobbying is to show how the legislation you propose or oppose directly affects your business, it is also important to show that your concerns go beyond your personal pocketbook and those of your employees and suppliers. Expressing your interest and concerns about broader issues that face our nation can have a powerful impact. (It helps to know the philosophical and political bent of the member, so you don't end up at cross-purposes.) Try expressing your concerns about the budget deficit, acid rain, corporate takeovers, health care costs and like matters.

Ask questions. You will find that asking a question about what is hap-

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Minnesota operators meet with Senator Dave Durenberger during the AMOA's 1988 Government Affairs Conference in Washington, DC.

pening in Congress about a particular issue may have the same effect as making a statement, and with less risk.

Do your homework in advance of the visit. This is critical to your success. Prepare for your visit as you would for a sale to a major prospective customer. Assume you are writing on a blank slate. Assume that the person you are lobbying knows little or nothing about the issue. If he or she does, you will find it out very soon, and can tailor your approach accordingly.

Explain directly how the issue affects your business. Do not be ashamed to be an advocate. Your opposition certainly will not hesitate to make their case as strongly as possible. Politicians and their associates are used to being lobbied.

Stick to facts. Make sure to present facts. Do not exaggerate! Your credibility is critical. If you overstate your case, you will soon find out the limb is sawed off in back of you.

If the staffer takes notes, that's good. If the staffer does not take notes, you should be concerned. Try to ask questions to determine where you are missing the mark.

Build for the future. Remember that whether you win or lose on this issue, you will likely be back again on another. If the member cannot support you on this issue, if you play it right, you will build a foundation for support on another issue.

Do not demand a commitment, and do not get angry if you get a negative response. Try to reason the matter out. The other person may be playing "devil's advocate," or testing how well you are prepared.

Don't make threats. Remember that 98% of the members of Congress are reelected. Never, ever, threaten political retaliation.

Set priorities. A member's or staffer's day is filled with meetings with persons or groups like yours, on a multitude of issues. The more issues you try to lobby on your brief



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visit, the less likely you are to leave a clear message as to what you really want. Therefore, even though you may have a number of concerns, you must set priorities. There is a strong preference toward lobbying only a single issue on a visit. Certainly, two is the maximum. The more complex or controversial an issue may be, the less likely you are to succeed if you try to deal with more than that issue.

Know your representative's background. Knowing certain information about your congressman or senator is essential to tailoring your presentation. Do you know the previous occupation of the senator or House member, before his or her election? What are his/her special interests? What committees does he/she serve on? How long has he/she been in Congress? Is it a solid Democratic, Republican or marginal district? What is the marital status? The spouse's occupation? What is the religious affiliation and clubs and organizations to which the member belongs? What is known about the attitude toward the particular issue on which you are lobbying? Does the member or staffer smoke? Does the office have a no-smoking policy? How has the member voted on the same or similar legislation previously? Has the member stated a position publicly (such as during a campaign) on the subject?

Your professional lobbyist should know how to get the answers to these questions, and should supply you with these answers before your visit. Being armed with this information, and the knowledge of your subject, you can walk through the door brimming with self-confidence.

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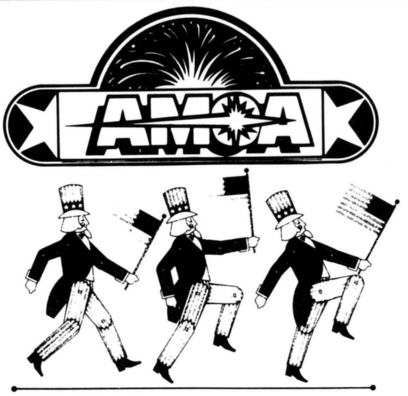
son to an underpaid member of Congress or staffer, if you walk in laden with obvious evidence of your success.

Don't overstay your welcome. Once in the door and after you have met your prospect, be sure to ask how long he or she has available to meet with you. You can then know what to say and how long to say it.

Make sure you introduce each member of your group. Indicate specifically if they are from the member's district or from various parts of the state if you are meeting with a senator.

Describe your business. Give a brief explanation of the nature of your business; how you happen to be in Washington; and the purpose of your visit.

Appoint a lead spokesman. Designate in advance of the meeting who will be the lead speaker for your group and how you will divide up the arguments you want to emphasize. Do not let any one person



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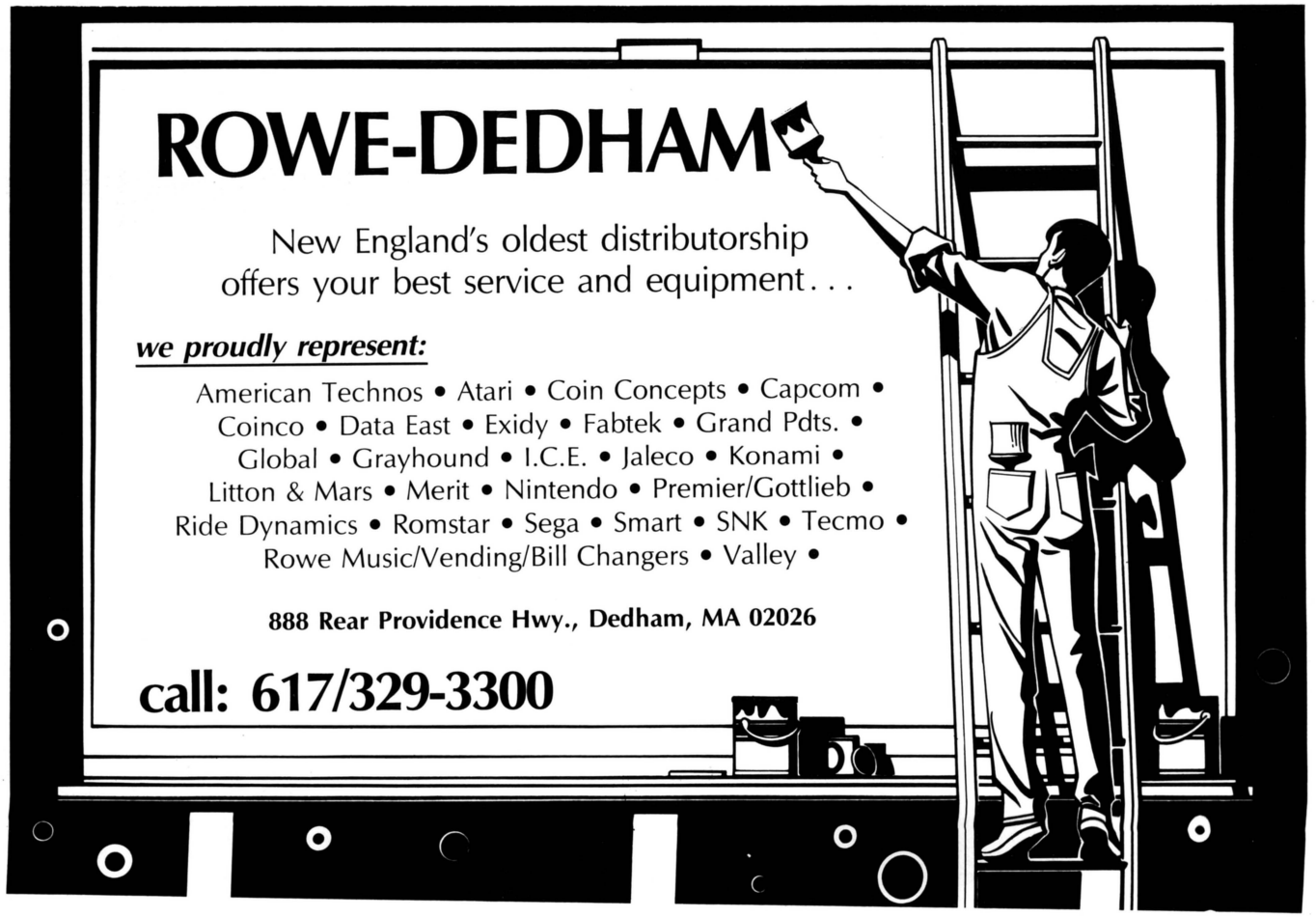
monopolize the conversation, unless you are very limited in time, or the issue is very simple. The more well-prepared people participate, the better.

Use an ice-breaker for people you haven't met before. As an ice-breaker with staff you have not met previously, ask them a bit about themselves . . . such as where they are from, do they specialize in any particular areas, and how long they have been in that particular office. Everyone likes to talk about themselves.

Find common ground with the representative. If you're meeting with the actual member of Congress, talk about your last visit, common friends or business associates, how you support their position on a particular issue, etc. The idea is to try to identify yourself in a friendly (but not too obvious) way with things you have in common.

Like every other new venture for which you have not had any special training, you are likely to be a little scared about the prospect of a visit to Capitol Hill. The nation's capitol is an impressive place to everyone, no matter how many times you have been there.

Just remember that if it weren't for the votes of yourself and others like you, and the dollars you pay in taxes, none of the decision-makers in Washington would be able to continue. They are literally there to serve you . . . and with few exceptions, they will go out of their way to do just that! R



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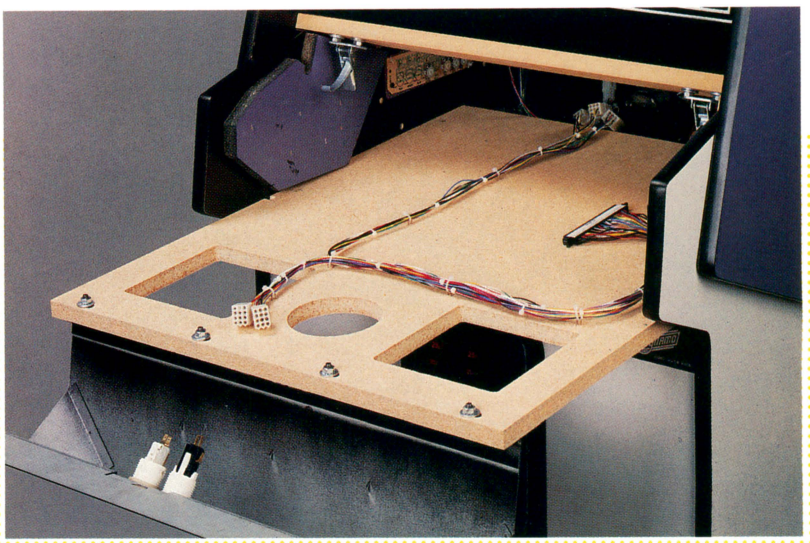
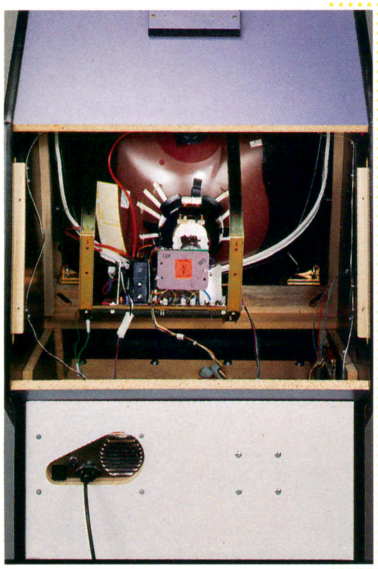


Dynamo's newest cabinet series lets you choose the exact features that are right for your application. This series ushers in a new era in video cabinets—one that lets you customize your game presentation and maximize your profits while remaining compatible with HS-2 models.



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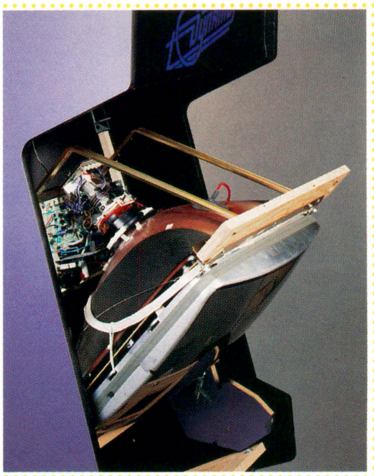

Tilt-out monitor provides easy access

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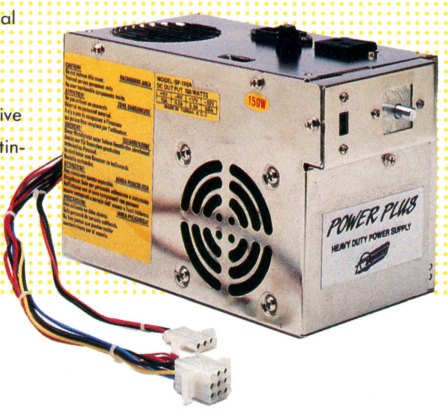
- Adjustable by 5 volts to adapt to any game.
- AMOA standard 3- and 9-pin MOLEX connectors for simple installation.
- Built-in a.c. receptacle for easy access for repairs.



SPECIFICATIONS/SHIPPING DIMENSIONS

MODEL	MONITOR SIZE	MONITOR OPTIONS	CABINET COLORS	SIDEWALL/ROOF CONSTRUCTION	HT	WD	DPT	WT	ITEM #
HS-8	19″	STD	Blue/gray	Particle board	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021800000
HS-8A	19″	STD	Red/gray	Plywood	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021800100
HS-8E	19″	ECON	Blue/gray	Particle board	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021800200
HS-8AE	19″	ECON	Red/gray	Plywood	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021800300
HS-9	25″	STD	Blue/gray	Particle board	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021900000
HS-9A	25″	STD	Red/gray	Plywood	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021900100
HS-9E	27″	ECON	Blue/gray	Particle board	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021900200
HS-9AE	27″	ECON	Red/gray	Plywood	76″	32″	38″	450 lbs.	021900300

DYNAMO

On Your Mark...

by Marcus Webb

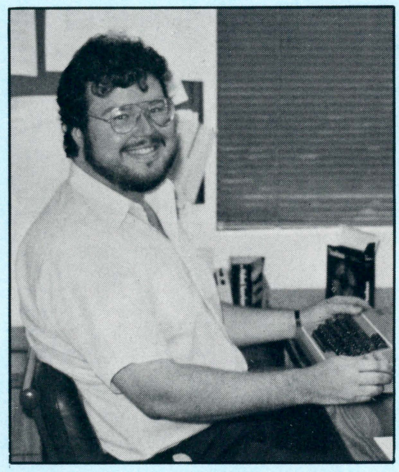
Pessimism about the coin machine business seems to be "required" in some circles these days. Many tradesters look around and see slow sales, spotty cashbox take, and no clear direction for the future. AAMA's president began this year by forecasting a major "market correction." Does all of this mean we're heading for a crash of 1983 proportions?

No. What's happening is our industry is undergoing a dramatic transition. Markets are changing fast. So are operators. Product is slowly catching up. Sure, there are problems, but there's also dramatic promise for the future — and impressive current opportunities.

Let's start with the operators. So many of them ran their businesses the exact same way for so many decades, it's difficult to realize a revolution is underway. Operators are getting smarter, more business-like and professional. They've had to, in order to survive. They're learning to use contracts and computers. They're learning how to play the political lobbying game, how to market themselves and their product.

Operators have stopped cold on buying new products just because they're new, or because somebody is pushing them. Those days will never come again. 1980s operating was about picking the hits and rotating them wisely. 1990s operating is going to be about marketing, lobbying and showmanship.

Markets are changing, too. Video is down; music and pins are up. "New" markets like gambling and redemption are climbing fast. America spends $250 billion per year on gambling; operators are "going where the money is." Operator-run gambling is such a runaway success that it seems to have become AMOA's main focus. One leading poker manufacturer



says Vermont will be the next state to legalize pay-off pokers. A dozen other states are waiting in the wings.

As for redemption, advocates who came on the scene in the mid-1980s correctly predicted exactly what would happen. The early boom ran a couple of years, then came a letdown as the "get rich quick" crowd faded away. Now long-term, steady growth is occurring as the real pros master the retail aspects of this business.

Products are also changing, though not fast enough. A futuristic U.S. arcade complex will debut in a few months, featuring eight cockpit-style, linked, interactive video games in a Disneyland-type setting (street versions will eventually follow). At least one leading American coin-op factory says it's looking seriously at CD-based video for street stops and arcades. Reportedly, so is a respected German factory, perhaps with help from a major Japanese partner. Other factories are working on integrating coin-op video games with hologram-type image systems.

Anybody can see what the industry's problems are. Seeing the opportunities takes more vision... and seizing them takes a different type of approach. The transition is underway. Are you part of the future, or part of the past?

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ACME '90

Chicago expo showcases "the industry at work and at play"

A fair sample of games which promised quality and decent ROI, if not a return to the *Pac Man* glory days, rolled up to the starting line and revved their engines at this year's ACME. Looking for something new and different to jumpstart their stalled market, a restless and sharp-eyed coin machine industry converged on Chicago last month. Their destination: the 1990 American Coin Machine Exposition (Hyatt Regency, March 9-11).

No revolutionary new themes or technology debuted at the show, and no 1990 games were offered at 1987 prices. But open-minded tradesters did find quite a few items they could work with. Very favorable notices went to Capcom's new three-player title *Mercs* (sold in dedicated format), as well as to promising videos such as Konami's *Aliens* and Midway's *Trog*.

Showgoers also gave high marks to a pair of likeable novelty items: Grand Products' pool-video hybrid *Slick Shot* was praised by many as great for tavern locations, while Bromley's miniature golf-themed skill game *Little Pro* was tagged as "pricey, but excellent family fun."

All four pin makers enjoyed crowds around their games: Data East's *Phantom of the Opera*, Midway's *Game Show*, Premier's *Silver Slugger and Williams'* Whirlwind all won fans. These and other major products seen at ACME will definitely help spruce up routes, arcades and distributor showrooms this spring.

Attendance was a mixed bag, with the total numbers up compared to last year, but aisle traffic seemingly a bit light. (Exact numbers are given below.) Overall assessment of the show came from ACME Convention Chairman Bill Cravens. At the event's conclusion, he summed up: "Those who had good product, had a good show. Those who had aver-



Mark Hammond of American Eagle in Waukesha, Wisc. was the winner of the Lincoln Towncar in the AAMACF raffle benefitting the Starting Now — Outpatient Treatment For Adolescent Chemical Dependency at Highland Park Hospital in Illinois. With the happy winner are Bill Cravens and Bob Fay.



RePlay's Eddie Adlum is interviewed about the jukebox business by a Fox-TV newswoman at Pioneer's booth during ACME '90. Around him are Pioneer execs including Jukebox Division VP Paul Scribner.

age product, had an average show. Those who had poor product, had a poor show. Bottom line, was the show a success? Yes."

THE INDUSTRY AT WORK: PRODUCT

ACME represented "the industry at work and at play." The work was obvious as operators and distributors carefully inspected two large floors filled to capacity with 592 booths of new machines, components and supplies from 163 exhibitors. (As far as exhibitors went, at least, ACME was a sold-out event.)

Nods of approval went to several titles. Some of these are mentioned above; others will be detailed in our comprehensive product review (which follows this story). Beyond specific games, showgoers shared the buzz of enthusiasm from two still-rising categories: redemption and (of course) CD music. Reliable standbys such as darts, pool and other sports games got their due (kiddie basketball was this year's "everybody's got one" category). Video pokers, which comprised a very prominent category at last fall's Vegas trade show, were less evident at ACME.

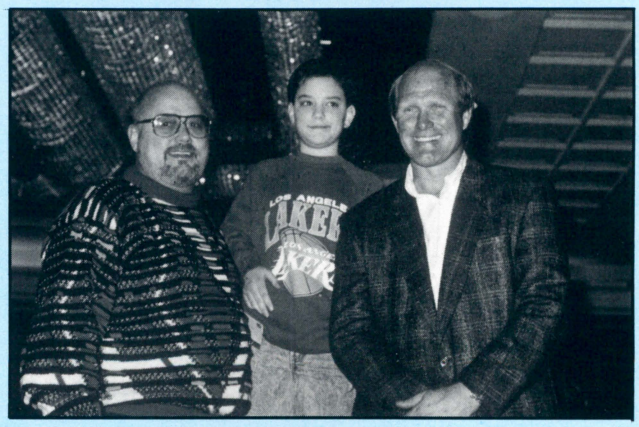
ACME also boasted exhibits by 30 different makers of industry components. These products ranged from coin and currency mechanisms to monitors, cue sticks and assorted supplies. Nearly two dozen ACME exhibitors specialized in redemption prize merchandise — another signal of this market's continued strength.

THE INDUSTRY AT WORK: ISSUES

Plenty of issues were aired at ACME, but for a change, the show was blessedly free of politics, anger





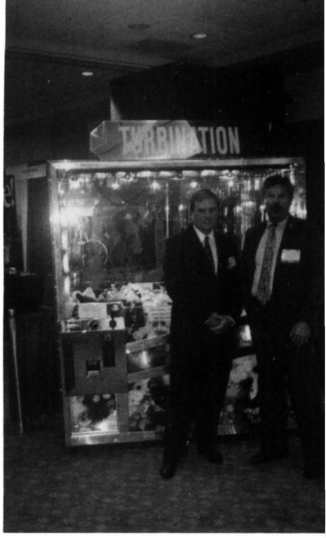


ON THE SPORTY SIDE —

Football star Terry Bradshaw delighted ACME showgoers Sunday morning with tales of the good old days with the Steelers and the current football scene. He answered questions with insight and humor and then took time to sign autographs and pose for pictures with many admiring fans. Pictured above is Bradshaw signing a cute Steelers mini-helmet. Above right is Bradshaw with Bob Fay and Bill Cravens. Right, Bill and son Ryan snap a pic with the legendary quarterback.





Far left: *Belam's Bob and Caron Haim with the Sega* Mega Tech System, *which Bob says is doing quite well (please excuse this dark photo).* ***Middle left:*** *Bay-Tek's Lori Treankler and her* Roll Down, Fielder's Choice *and* Clown Rolldown. ***Middle right:*** *At Fabtek with new goods are President Frank Ballouz, TAD Corp. prexy Tad Yokoyama, Todd Erickson, Drew Maniscalco and Drew's brother Anthony.* ***Right:*** *Hollywood Merchandiser's Ron Clapper and Paul Stanojen with* Turbination, *a snazzy new redemption game.*





Left: *Antique Apparatus had their first-ever national show booth. Pictured is company chief Glenn Streeter, Jerry Abbott, RePlay's Marcus Webb and Rowe's Terry Lacher with the firm's beautiful nostalgia-styled jukeboxes and wall speakers.* ***Middle:*** *At the Merit booth are Bob Whitehead, new Director of Marketing Bernie Powers, Warehouse of Games' Larry Potashnick, Glenn Remick and Howard Smoyer (the firm bowed a new promotional package plus* Pit Boss Superstar *at the show).* ***Right:*** *At Dynamo with their arcadey air hockey table are Mark Robbins, London distrib Reg Morisoli (Direct Machine Distributors), Mark Struhs and Damone Paramore.*

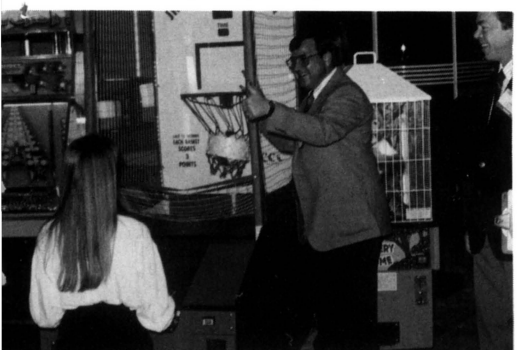







Left: *With their first kit,* Meta Fox, *are the folks from I-Vics — S. Yeou, LeRoy Hancuff and Maria Martinez.* ***Middle left:*** *Ed and Phyllis Seidel show their new* Quackers *game to Marty Shumsky (left).* ***Middle right:*** *At Nintendo showing off their new* PlayChoice *marquee which boldly carries the Nintendo name and new game titles are Al Stone, Kris Holley, Enrique Fong, Jacabo Shemaria (Nintendo's Mexican distrib), Chuck Arnold, Jerry Monday and Donna Hogin.* ***Right:*** *Bob's Space Racers showed new* Redemption Water Race *and* X-Tra Point *to showgoers. Pictured is the firm's Jerry Weiman with Southgate's Ted Schweitzer.*

Left: *Coin Concept's Art Warner shows their new* ***Jr. All American*** *kid-sized basketball to RePlay's Ingrid Adlum (who became "kid-sized" for the photo).* ***Middle:*** *Leland said they'd "sell no swine before its time" and that's just what they did (the game's software wasn't finished to their satisfaction so they didn't show the game at ACME). They did have their two-player, smaller-sized* Off Road *plus the* King Arthur's Roundtable *rotary that Betson will exclusively distribute. Pictured are Scott Walker, Byron Cook, Leland Cook, John Rowe and Ken Anderson at their booth.* ***Right:*** *Smart Industries had lots of new goods to show off at ACME (their* Shoot To Win Jr. *youth-sized basketball, the* Smart Ball *ski alley,* Jackpot *rotary and, of course, their 1990 line of* Clean Sweep *cranes). Pictured is Gordon Smart with Harriet and Lou (Central Distributing) Singer.*







The Coin Coalition had a booth to get further operator support for their Dollar Coin push. At the booth are the AAMA's Don Barnes, Kerry Sharman and Bill Kidwell. They'd love for operators to write senators and congressmen on the house and senate committees urging their support.

and controversy. The only hint of excitement came when a Canadian-based fellow named Young Park was quietly arrested on counterfeiting charges by U.S. Customs officials in the hotel's piano bar on the show's second day. When Customs agent Glenn Eiden slipped on the cuffs, most showgoers didn't know it happened (in fact, most of the people in the bar at the time didn't even realize an arrest had taken place). Still, some key topics were discussed at the show, some in the open, many in private . . . all in an atmosphere of thoughtful tranquility.

Open issues forums were topped by the traditional "Manufacturer Firing Line." Sparsely attended by perhaps 50 tradesters, this Friday afternoon event featured intelligent, constructive and occasionally humorous talk about play prices, dollar coins, games for grownups, home game competition, government inspection requirements, game pricing notification, and more.

One highlight of the "Firing Line" session came when Taito President Joe Dillon came off the podium and waded into the audience to shake hands with "my good friend," operator Bill Beckham (Red Baron, Toledo, Ohio). Until this January, Taito and Red Baron were involved in a long and painful lawsuit over parallel imports. The legal conflict ended in Taito's favor when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear Beckham's appeal. Said Dillon of the overall panel event: "It's refreshing to talk about important issues like coinage and how we're going to get more money in the cash box."



Record Source International was also at ACME promoting their 45 subscription service — pictured are: Bob Nims (signing up), Wally Bohrer, John Estridge, Dock Ringo and Sam Atchley.

THE INDUSTRY AT WORK: MEETINGS

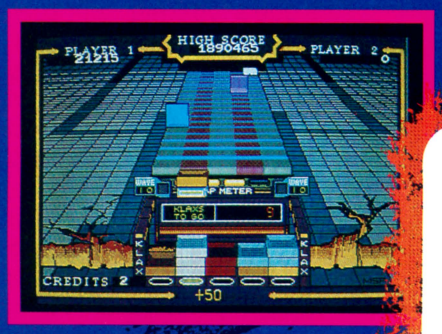
Key issues were also discussed behind the scenes at ACME. Most importantly, an AAMA board meeting took place March 8; a prime topic here was video poker. AAMA President Gil Pollock has openly stated members' concern that as more states legalize gambling on video poker, operators may spend fewer dollars on pure amusement equipment. At the board meeting, AAMA agreed to form a subcommittee headed by SMS chief Sal Mirando to "study trends" in this area.

AAMA board members also met on March 8 with leaders of JAMMA, their Japanese counterpart organization. U.S. trade leaders asked for JAMMA's cooperation in industry standardization efforts, and for financial aid in U.S. industry efforts such as PR programs and dollar coin lobbying. The answer boiled down to, "We'll take this back to Japan and think it over." Observers are not expecting major commitments on funding or standardization to materialize from Japan any time soon.

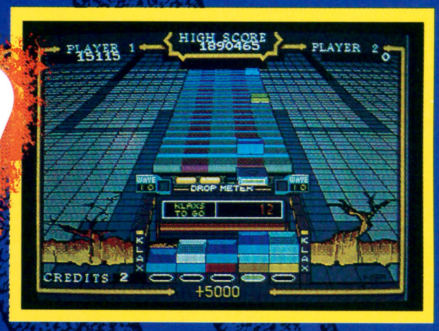
THE INDUSTRY AT PLAY

ACME also gave the industry a chance to play. The show boasted many successful social functions and special events, starting with a glitzy tribute to industry veteran Joe Robbins. Nearly 650 attended the affair, an increase over last year which signals a growing commitment to this annual charity event. The banquet, along with a raffle for a luxury automobile, was organized by the AAMA Charitable Founda-

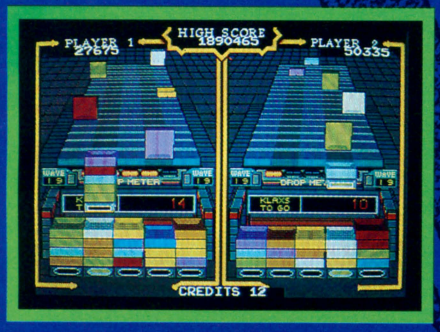
Good Klean Fun



Make a basic KLAX by stacking three high.



Here, three blue tiles create a diagonal KLAX.



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tion. Altogether, the banquet and raffle raised tens of thousands of dollars for Starting Now, a Chicago-based anti-drug organization selected by Robbins.

Also on the "industry at play" menu was the first-ever AAMA award program for "best manufacturer" and "best distributor." It was a California victory all the way: Atari (based just south of San Francisco) swept all three manufacturer awards, while C.A. Robinson & Co. (headquartered in Los Angeles) proudly walked off with the distributor award. AAMA member factories voted for the distributor award, while dealer members voted for the manufacturer honors. Winners received beautiful free-standing plaques made of transparent acrylic, handsomely engraved with the name and year of the award.

ATTENDANCE: UP & DOWN

Attendance at ACME was up-and-down compared to last year's spring show in Reno, depending on which figures were cited. Booth space was up 12% over 1989. "It was a sellout. We could have sold another 10% if we'd had the space available," smiled convention chair Cravens. "We had to turn some people away."

Likewise, the total number of people at this year's show was also up: 5,259 attended in 1990, which is 623 more heads than in '89. Who were they? Well, more of the showgoers were exhibitors this time, and somewhat fewer were operators than last year.

Candidly, the show's major problem was simply that there weren't enough street operators there to witness a serious effort made by the manufacturers. On the other hand, more arcade operators attended this year than last . . . and many of those prowling the show floor during "Distributor Hours" were actually operators, no matter what their badges said!

"Some said attendance looked a little light when they saw the traffic in the aisles," commented Cravens. "You have to remember that in Chicago, we get a lot of one-dayers who drive in, look around, then go home. In Reno, site of last year's ACME, they're packed into the hotel without any place else to go. Basically, the people were here."

Seminar attendance was way down this year, from 1,235 in 1989 to just 760 people attending 1990 seminars. Why? Most seminars took place the day before exhibits opened, when the bulk of the operators had not yet arrived. Also, most of this year's topics had been covered by earlier trade show programs . . . many more than once. "It's probably time for us to address some new subjects," ACME officials admitted.

SMOOTH LOGISTICS

Logistics of the show went quite well. ACME was co-sponsored by AAMA and Skybird Publishing. As always, it was managed magnificently by Bill Glasgow and Judy Novak (William T. Glasgow, Inc.), with superb assistance from AAMA officers and staff, including Cravens, Exec VP Bob Fay, and Director of Administration Joyce Weller. These folks kept things moving smoothly (and they kept their heads cool and their smiles in place) as they handled the endless series of challenges and surprises which comprise any major trade show.

Chicago's weather held surprisingly warm for the Windy City in wintertime. Deliveries of equipment to the show floor came off pretty well; despite occasional glitches, most booths were largely ready for action by 5PM the day before exhibits opened. The waiting line at the elevators was less of a problem than it has been at past shows at this site — possibly because the piano bar was better attended than at past shows!

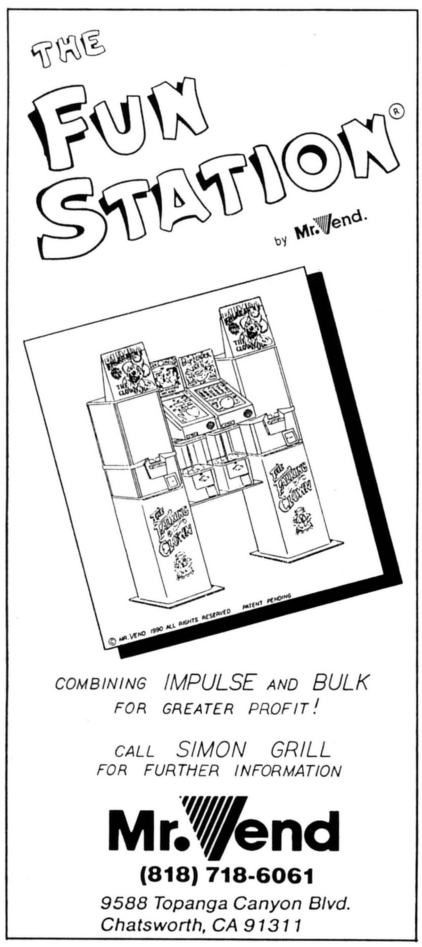
FUTURE ACME SITES

Chicago is seen by many as the heart of coinland, but it won't host another ACME for at least six years. "We've been lucky with Chicago weather three years in a row," one AAMA leader said as the show wrapped. "We don't plan to risk it again for a while." In addition, many exhibitors (and, in truth, the show managers) prefer to hold trade shows in right-to-work states where unions don't charge "$25 an hour to pound one nail into an exhibit booth."

Accordingly, future ACME shows will be held in Nevada every other year, with alternating excursions to the South. The 1991 ACME will take place March 22-24 (Friday through Sunday) at Bally's in Las Vegas. San Antonio, Texas is the site of 1992's ACME. It's back to Nevada for 1993 (city to be announced), with 1994 slated for New Orleans. In 1995 Nevada is the venue of choice once again. Obviously, the good attendance at recent Reno and Vegas trade shows has not been lost on ACME's organizers.

"Will we be coming back to Chicago after that?" an influential AAMA board member asked rhetorically. "We'll have to take that up in committee, but I think we get a better operator base in other cities. Operators want to travel."

Operators who did travel to Chicago for ACME 1990 are now back home. Many are getting ready for a spring season that will be bolstered by new games (and pleasant memories) from ACME 1990 . . . especially if they worked hard and played hard.





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INTAKE

ACME New Product Review

machine makers score an A for effort; sequels, systems, redemption & pinball stand tall

Before we get into a detailed product review, a few words on product trends seen at ACME. The two biggest trends can be summed up simply: sequels and a budding return to systems. Beyond that, we noticed that some of the most popular games at ACME were, in truth, released to the trade well before the show (more about this later). And we were delighted to note (along with super-operator Gene Cramm, of Showbiz Pizza) that ACME offered a good selection of non-violent video games. "ACME showed me videos I can buy, for the first time in years," Gene smiled.

THE SEQUEL SYNDROME

Sequels were the most all-pervasive trend at ACME 1990. If most of the new product shown at ACME 1990 had a familiar look to it, that's because much of it *was* familiar. That's not necessarily a criticism. As any movie fan can tell you, good sequels to popular titles can make big bucks if they are presented properly. Just as 1989 was the "year of the sequel" in Hollywood *(Star Trek V, Indiana Jones III,* etc., etc., etc.), judging by the product seen at ACME, this is shaping up as "the year of the sequel" in coinland — at least so far. That goes for videos, music and (we could argue) it even applies to categories like pins and redemption.

For example: players who liked Sega's *After Burner* will love their new *GLOC Air Battle.* Players who enjoyed *R-Type* will get into Irem's new *R-Type II.* If Capcom's *Street Fighter* was your cup of tea, their new sequel, *Final Fight,* is tea with sugar in it. And if you loved last year's hit kit *Ninja Gaiden,* you'll be happy about Nintendo's PlayChoice game pak sequel, *Ninja Gaiden II: The Dark Sword of Chaos.* Similarly, *Tetris* fans will enjoy Atari's *Klax* and Sega's new *Bloxeed.* Romstar's earlier *Sky Shark* has given birth to their new *Fire Shark.*

Pinball games at ACME also had an air of "it worked before, so let's do it again. . . even better this time." Data East followed up its series of licensed hit themes with a real winner called *Phantom of the Opera.* Midway bowed another attractive comedy pin, this one is called *Game Show.* Premier came up with a low-cost line of street pins (the sports-themed *Silver Slugger* is the first,

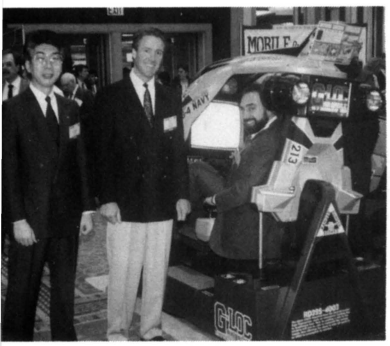


Clearly a hit was Grand Product's* Slick Shot *video pool game in which the player shoots a real cue ball to cause action on the screen. With it are Don Hesch, Stan Jarocki and Dick Konopa.





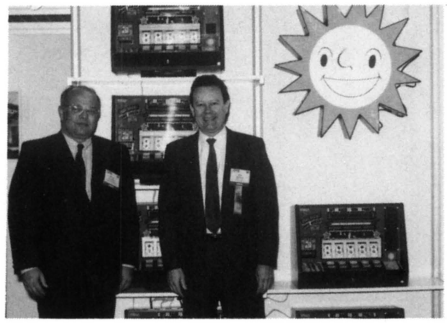
Left: *At the Taito booth with new* Battle Shark & Cadash *videos are Rick Rochetti, Ira Bettelman, Leah Bettelman, Sandy Bettelman and Jim Chapman (the firm also showed a motorcycle game called* WGP). ***Right:*** *To say that Bromley, Inc.'s* Little Pro *redemption game was one of the hits of the show, borders on understatement. Big smiles by Lauran and dad Marty Bromley were certainly in order (right is Stu Renner (formerly of Wedges/Ledges who's in the U.K. now).*





Left: *Sega's booth was full of new stuff —* G-LOC, Bloxeed, MVP, Alien Storm *and* Galaxy Force. *Pictured are Masahiro Nakagawa (Sr. Gen. Mgr. of USA & European Div.), Sega USA President Tom Petit and flying the* G-LOC *simulator, Vic Leslie (Managing Dir. of Sega Europe).* ***Right:*** *Arachnid's Marcio Bonilla points to the top monitor on their new* Top Of The League *dart game (which features their new target web, "Spider Writer" and more). At left, Bill Ward and Sam Zammuto.*





Left: *Exidy's Virginia and Pete Kauffman said they had a great show with the debut of their new* Croaker *rolldown game (plus they had a revamped* Twister *on display). The little girl at left, by the way, is Holly Erickson (Todd's daughter).* ***Right:*** *At the Stella booth are Bernd Donalies and Dynamo's Bill Rickett. The two firms have teamed up and on display were new products available — the 100-percent skill* Jolly Poker, Disco-Taifun *air hockey and* Backgammon *wall game.*





Left: *Williams' Marty Glazman, Ken Fedesna and Rus Landsberger (the firm's "efficiency expert") in front of the bank of* Whirlwind *pins (they also showed a new kit from Toaplan called* Zero Wing). ***Right:*** *Wurlitzer showed their brand new* One More Time CD *dedicated compact disc jukebox. With it are Jerry Reeves, Klaus Telgheder and George Seidel.*

Left: *Betson's John Margold, George Angermeyer and Bill Seibert with the Doyle-built and Betson-distributed* Dribbles Jr. Basketball. ***Right:*** *Konami had their new* Aliens *game at ACME, but were still pleased-as-punch to show their number one* TMNT. *Left to right are Mike Kubin, Steve Kaufman and Frank Pellegrini.*





with several "sequels" in this new line to follow). Market leader Williams followed its recent "disaster"-themed flipper *Earthshaker!* with still another winner of that same type: *Whirlwind.*

The redemption market, which has offered many hit basketball games in recent years, followed up that category this spring with "son of basketball": five or six companies bowed kiddie-sized skill toss games at ACME. Notable among them was Skip Doyle's *Dribbler,* which is being marketed by Betson.

Lauran Bromley's *Little Pro* was a very well-received remake of a 25-year-old game (at a very contemporary price). Was this really a sequel? Well, call Lauran's game a perennial! Leland followed up last fall's rotary merchandiser prototype, *King Arthur's Round Table,* with a finished, nicely-tweaked production model of the same name (also being marketed by Betson).

In the field of coin-op music, phonographs are almost always "sequels," especially at a spring show, where most manufacturers are presenting a product line which debuted the previous fall. ACME largely followed this rule of thumb. The news here was mostly Pioneer's new distributors, Seeburg's new financing and Wurlitzer's new American president. However, Coin Data will now import Sound Leisure CD jukeboxes into the States from the U.K., making one more CD line.

"MISSING" GAMES

ACME's appearance of being "heavy on sequels" was reinforced by the noticeable *lack* of some expected new titles on the show floor. Indeed, enough games were "absent" from the show that "missing games" almost comprised their own category. Two leading American video game factories had hoped to world-premiere major games at ACME. They didn't make it, due to chip shortages in one case, time pressures in the other. Another American firm's long-awaited "next generation" video game lingered in the firm's hotel suite for a second show in a row, instead of finally making it down to the exhibit floor. And a major Japanese subsidiary

COIN CONCEPTS BRINGS FUN TO KIDS... AND $$$ TO YOU!



JR. ALL AMERICAN

A pint size version of the ever popular basketball game, Coin Concepts presents the Jr. All American. Dimensions are 84" deep, 33" wide and 78" high. Some game features include digital readouts for time and score, ticket and free play optional settings, and selectable coinage. The heavy duty construction will withstand years of constant use.



TOSS EM

Coin Concepts' exciting new kiddie game that's not just for kids. A game that has no rules for playing! The dimensions of 60" deep, 34" wide and 74" high fit all space conscious locations. Features include a basic game presentation for immediate player recognition, attractive graphics and sound, multiple ticket award levels, winner strobe lights and four coinage levels including free play. An absolute winner.

STARBURST

THE OPERATORS AND PLAYERS FAVORITE

This colorful, eyecatching new one player coin pusher by the KW Systems is loaded with high earning bonus features. Players control the slide coin entry and playfield movement. The flexibility of the features make this game acceptable in most locals. Dimensions are 25" deep, 72-1/2" high and 29" wide. A special sized promotional token issued by an adjustable bonus feature makes Starburst a favorite for the players. Starburst's meters, tilt alarm, ticket and/or token capability, and wider play field design makes the Starburst a favorite for the operators.



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(which had hoped to show a new prototype at ACME) wound up displaying last fall's new game, solo. Against this backdrop of "missing games," the industry's trend toward sequels stood out even more strongly.

Beyond sequels and "missing" games, ACME had a healthy sprinkling of very promising brand new titles. Among them were Konami's *Aliens*, Fabtek's *Sports Match*, SNK's titles for its Neo-Geo system. *DJ Boy* from American Sammy and Taito's *Battle Shark* could also bring nice money into the industry's cashbox.

SYSTEM COMEBACK?

While we're talking trends, let's also note that video game systems are making a comeback. Capcom's CPS System is delivering steady quality; SNK's Neo-Geo offers a great cabinet and beautiful game graphics; and Nintendo is still supporting its PlayChoice system with a steady flow of new titles... including some famous licensed characters and (again) sequels to earlier arcade hits. Finally, Belam's Mark Haim says his firm is doing nicely with Sega's Mega-Tech System.

That said, here's a rundown of new titles seen at ACME, listed in alphabetical order by company.

ALTEC

Altec, makers of *Hold Um* poker, debuted a new sitdown version with chair. Gameplay will be familiar to tradesters who've seen the standard version of this game, but it's the trimmings that set this one apart. The gorgeous cabinet is made of quality materials: varnished oak with shiny brass trim. Obviously, Altec is in tune with the industry's upscale poker trends.

AMERI CORP.

Ameri Darts was first shown in a suite at last fall's show, started shipping back in December, but ACME was the game's first appearance on the exhibit floor of a national trade show. Frank and Joe Bundra said this horizontal/vertical kit is still doing quite well in tavern locations. No surprise to us, since the presentation and gameplay are both tops. Look for this one to be around at several more shows, deservedly so. (It actually was "kits and kids" at the Ameri booth, since the new *Ameri Darts* brochure featured five of Frank's six kids. Cute!)

AMERICAN SAMMY

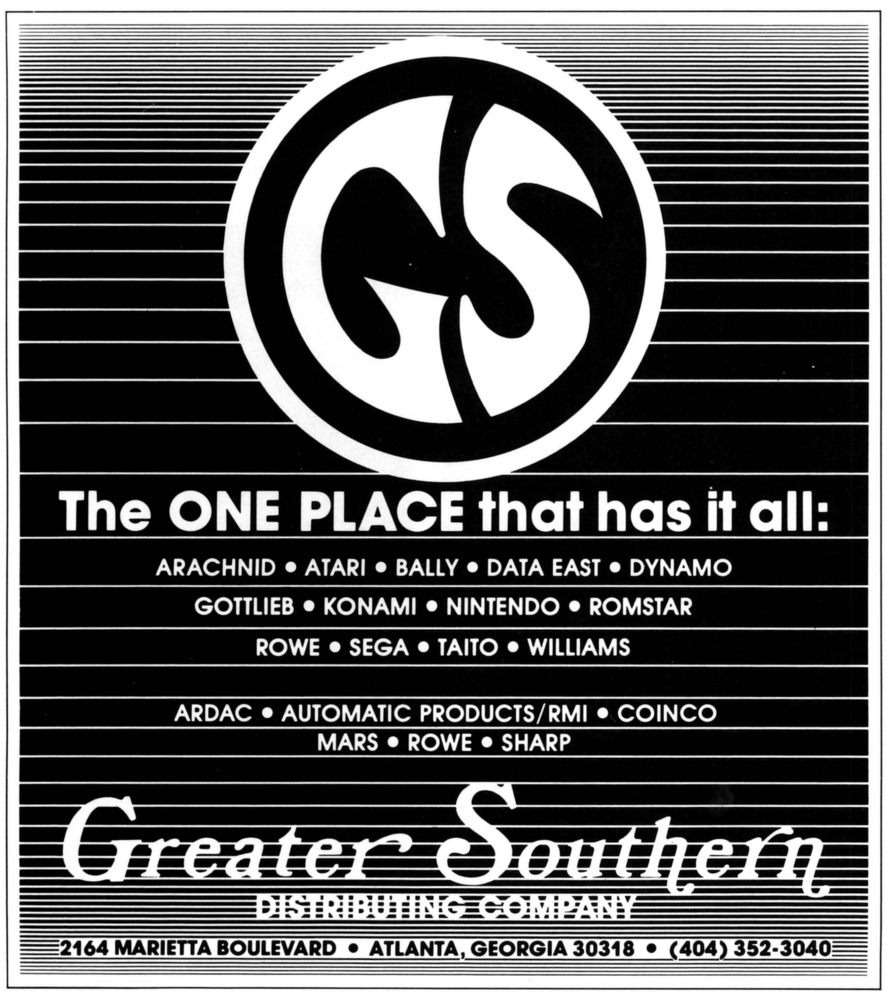
American Sammy bowed a nifty new horizontal kit at ACME. It's called *DJ Boy*, and it features the voice of famous radio disc jockey Wolfman Jack. Gameplay can best be described as a "Double Dragon on roller skates." Graphics are quite good with oversized characters, details such as moving shadows, and nicely rendered backdrops (the rumble begins on a subway car). It's available now, and we heard some operators mention this one as promising.

ARACHNID

Center stage at the broad spread of electronic darts at Arachnid's display was their brand new *Top of the League*, featuring all the great features of the *Model 6300* except that the video monitor is bigger and mounted at the top of the game. This makes play more visible for both league and tournament players, as well as spectators. The new unit also has Arachnid's new target web, with "80% more catching surface" and their *Spider Writer* for on-location promotion of leagues, tourneys and location specials. It offers all the popular dart games (including three versions of Cricket) and is dubbed the *Model 6300T*.

ATARI

Delays in delivery of custom chips precluded Atari from having brand new product at their ACME show booth, though they did have a new version of *Four Trax*, featuring a stationary seat. Also on show at the booth was *Badlands*, the industry's first two-player simultaneous driving game kit. Atari says it's getting a lot of reorders on that one. Also on hand was *Klax*, in kit form (housed in countertops to demonstrate its versatility), cabarets and uprights.





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Progress from CORSAIR Prep. Jet. to F-36 "SABRE" to FA-18 "HORNET" and earn increased fire power while avoiding a variety of assaults from all direction on your fighter plane

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Left: *At Romstar with their* Fire Shark *video are Audrey Smith, Rene Lopez, Tim Jackson, operator Charles Ross and Darryl Williams.* ***Right:*** *SMS's Jimmy Pietrangelo and Sal Mirando show off their new* Video Keno *casino-style game which features a Mars bill acceptor with stacker built right into the front of the all-steel cabinet.*





Left: *At Coin Concepts with* Starburst *and* Jr. All American *are Carl DeVenio, Rhonda Fletcher and Brady's Blair Norris.* ***Right:*** *American Sammy's Dave Peckels, Norman Evangelista and Ko Adachi with their neat new* DJ Boy *game.*





Left: *Rock-Ola had their* Laser 2000 *dedicated CD box at their ACME booth and welcomed new VP of Marketing & Sales Art Kareff (at left). With Kareff are Frank Schulz and Bob Hesch.* ***Right:*** *National Sports Games' Kim Cook with their new* Tot Shots *youth-size basketball game (the company was formerly called Intermark).*





Left: *SNK's Paul Jacobs gives a hearty handshake to Unpo Paik of 3 Koam, the fellow who builds those pretty* Neo•Geo *cabinets (which were designed by SNK's Neal Zook).* ***Right:*** *The L.A. East folks and customers gather for a show photo — among those pictured are Steve Devlin, Emery Kertesz, Eileen Schembri, Robert Wiles and Mary Carloss.*

Left: *At Capcom with* Mercs *are Linda Fernandez, Brian Duke, Warren Asing and Dale Draper.* ***Right:*** *Altec's Randy Sloan and Rene Louvat show their new sitdown cabinet with oak and brass for their* Hold Um *Poker.*





Puzzle games remain a strong subcategory of video, and *Klax* has an addictive appeal all its own.

BELAM

A number of interesting new items were on show at the Belam booth. Prominently displayed was a handsome English import novelty called *Cop Capers.* In this sitdown skill game, the player turns a driving wheel to control the slant of a series of shelves in a vertical cabinet. The object is to skillfully guide a ping-pong ball that rolls down the shelves. It's fun! Also new at Belam was a "Stealth Fighter"-themed kiddie ride from Bolwell called *BS4 Penetrator.* (This unit is also offered by American Simulators, by the way.)

Belam showed an intriguing German import, called *Quadro Games,* which offered a couple of new wrinkles in the multi-game universal cabinet concept. This two-player item features four overhead miniscreens to display the games players can choose from, and one full-sized gameplay screen at normal height. The full-sized monitor automatically rotates from vertical to horizontal at the touch of a button.

Belam is also the exclusive U.S. agent for the Sega Mega-Tech video game system. Company chief Mark Haim said it's moving right along and is backed by such system titles as *Shinobi, Altered Beast, Super Hang On,* etc. Cabinets are of American specs and an Ardac bill acceptor is available.

BETSON ENTERPRISES

John Margold, redemption chief at Betson, was smiling about the new Doyle basketball game for kiddies, called *Dribbles Jr.,* and about Leland's *King Arthur's Round Table,* a rotary merchandiser in a video-style cabinet. Why was John so proud of games made by two other firms? Because both are marketed exclusively by Betson . . . specifically, by John's redemption division! For full information on both games, see the Doyle and Leland entries below. John also said Betson's deluxe crane is still getting a lot of trade attention. Redemption is enjoying a rising tide, and Betson's boat was right on the crest of the wave at ACME.

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MVS®

MULTI VIDEO SYSTEM

SNK

TECHNICAL FEATURES

Fast 16 Bit Main Microprocessor
Allows game software to be executed up to four times faster than conventional video game hardware.

Expanded ROM Capacity
Up to 64 Megabytes of GAME ROM storage, allows for superior graphics and sounds, makes ordinary video games containing less than 10 Megabytes of GAME ROM look and sound weak by comparison!

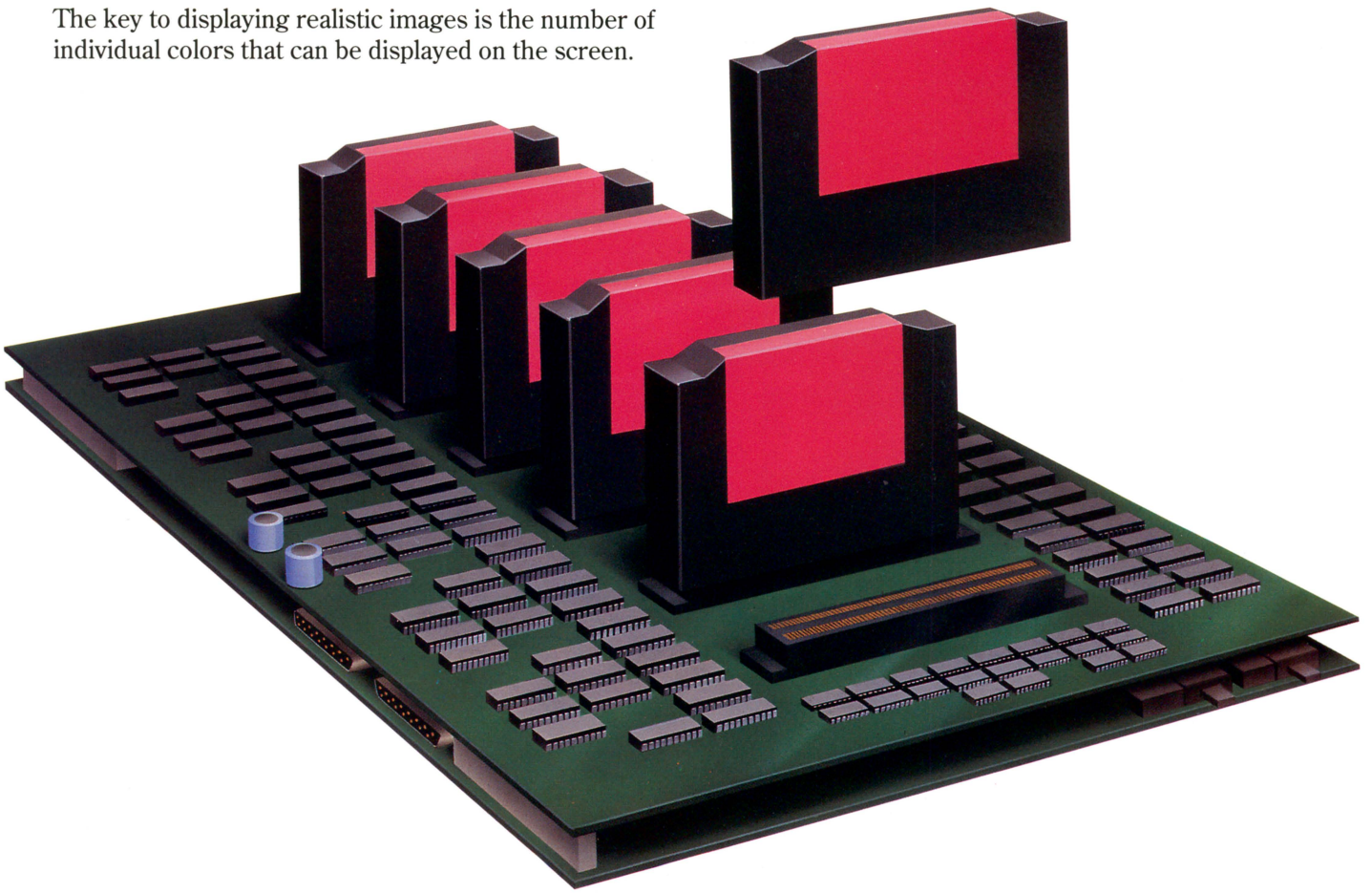
Incredible Sprite Generation
Sprites are groups of Pixels (screen dots) that can be moved around on the screen. They are used for displaying animated objects, such as the Main Characters. Typical coin-op game hardware can display less than 80 sprites on the screen. Neo-Geo can display and manipulate 380 Sprites simultaneously! Neo-Geo also has a unique hardware feature for enlarging and reducing Sprites smoothly!

Maximum Background Video
Neo-Geo's advanced hardware can display and independently scroll 3 unique Background Video scenes. This allows Neo-Geo to create realistic 3D effects! Neo-Geo can store up to 65,536 16x16 pixel Background Characters in its 8 Megabyte Character Roms!

Tremendous Color Palette
The key to displaying realistic images is the number of individual colors that can be displayed on the screen. Typical coin-op hardware can display from 64 to 512 different colors at the same time, Neo-Geo can display 4096 colors from a selection of 65,536 total colors! This allows the capability to display photo-quality graphics on a standard resolution monitor!

Compact Disk Quality Sound
3 channels of Programmable Sound Generation (PSG), 7 channels of Pulse Control Modulation (PCM), 2 channels of Frequency Modulation (FM), and a channel of Noise generation, combined with true Stereophonic Audio Output, allows Neo-Geo to deliver incredible, true to life audio effects. Each Neo-Geo system comes with a pair of Personal Stereo Headphone jacks on the front of the Control Panel for the ultimate in player enjoyment!

Advanced Hardware Test Program
The Neo-Geo hardware can diagnose potential hardware problems, such as a Rom or Ram failure, using its built-in Test Mode Program. The Main Volume control and Headphone Volume control can be easily accessed through the Control Panel.



CABINET FEATURES

- Extensive use of Plywood for maximum cabinet durability.
- Control Panel covered with Lexan for long lasting, easily maintained finish.
- Hinged Marquee Bezel for easy access to Game Title Cards.
- Hi-Tech Solid State Electro-illuminescence flat panel used for Title Card back-lighting!
- Convenient Game Cartridge access behind the Control Panel.
- Scratch-Resistant Tempered Monitor Glass.
- Headphone jacks allow the player to fully appreciate the stereo sound effects.
- IC Memory Card slot allows the player to save his current game progress to continue at a later time.

CABINET SPECIFICATIONS

HEIGHT:	WIDTH:
MVS-25-6 76.0″	*MVS-25-6* 31.8″
MVS-25-4 76.0″	*MVS-25-4* 25.25″
MVS-19-4 76.0″	*MVS-19-4* 25.25″

DEPTH:	CAPACITY:
MVS-25-6 36.36″	*MVS-25-6* 6 GAME PAKS
MVS-25-4 36.36″	*MVS-25-4* 4 GAME PAKS
MVS-19-4 36.36″	*MVS-19-4* 4 GAME PAKS

MONITOR:

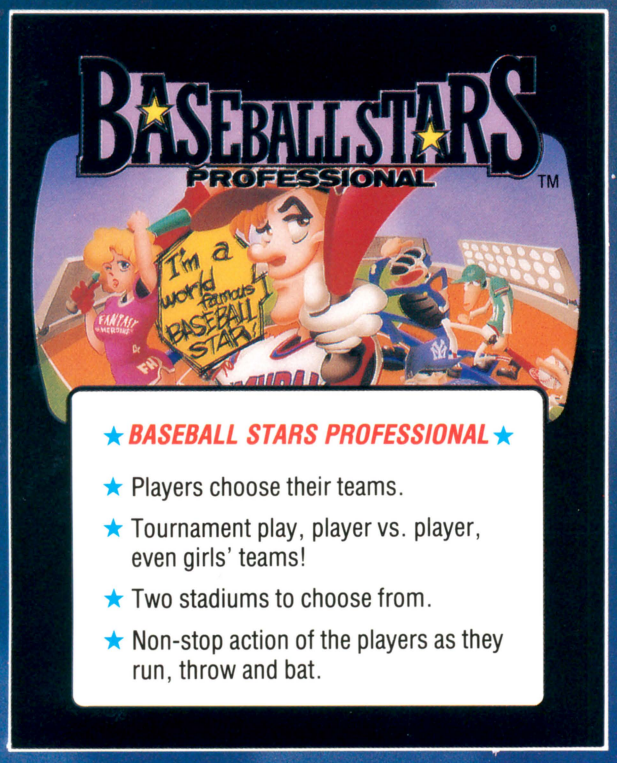
MVS-25-6
25″ HORIZONTAL

MVS-25-4
25″ HORIZONTAL

MVS-19-4
19″ HORIZONTAL

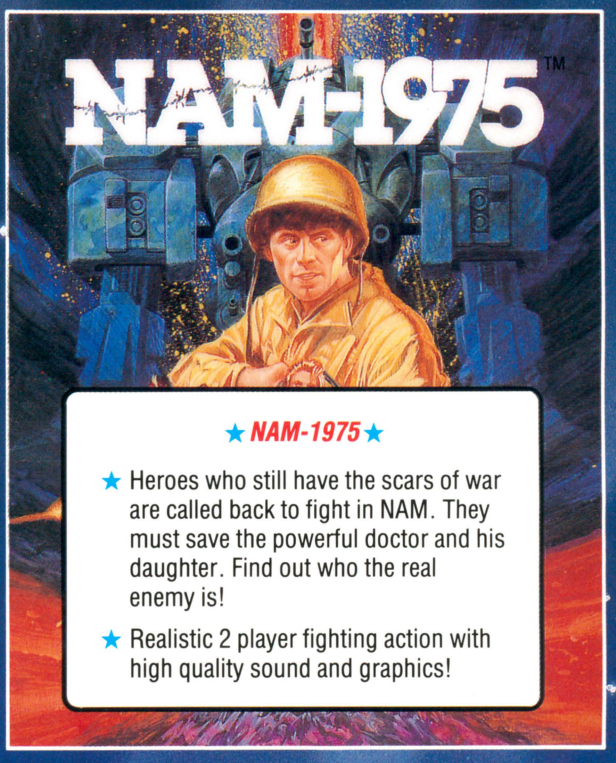


SNK BRINGS OUT THE STARS!



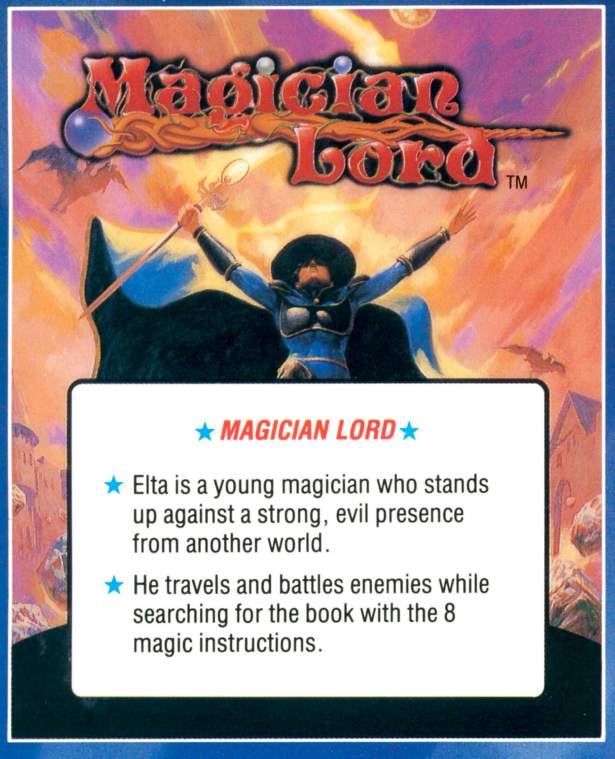
★ **BASEBALL STARS PROFESSIONAL** ★

- ★ Players choose their teams.
- ★ Tournament play, player vs. player, even girls' teams!
- ★ Two stadiums to choose from.
- ★ Non-stop action of the players as they run, throw and bat.



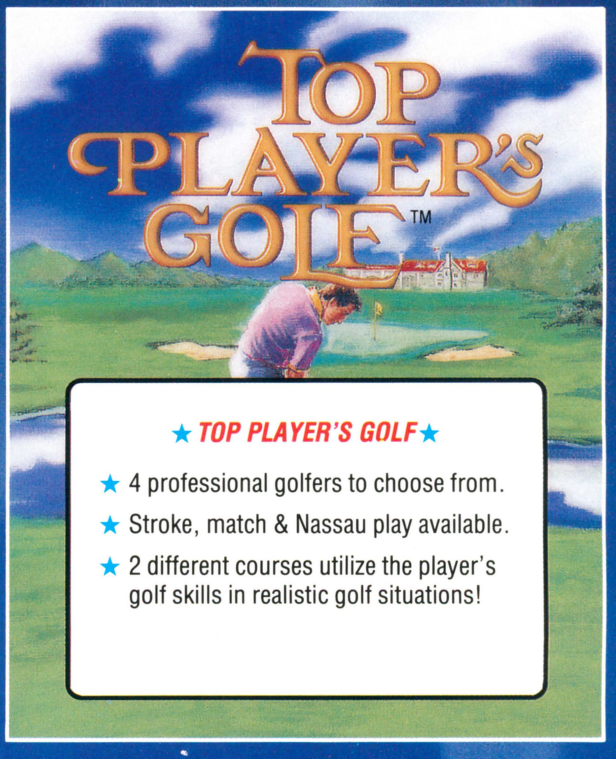
★ **NAM-1975** ★

- ★ Heroes who still have the scars of war are called back to fight in NAM. They must save the powerful doctor and his daughter. Find out who the real enemy is!
- ★ Realistic 2 player fighting action with high quality sound and graphics!



★ **MAGICIAN LORD** ★

- ★ Elta is a young magician who stands up against a strong, evil presence from another world.
- ★ He travels and battles enemies while searching for the book with the 8 magic instructions.



★ **TOP PLAYER'S GOLF** ★

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BIG TEN ELECTRONICS

One of the few exhibit booths dedicated to gaming-themed videos, Big Ten Electronics showed a new *Criss Cross Bingo.* It's a conversion kit. Also shown was their *Reno Classic* keno game, which the firm says is the first to have a speed control feature.

BOB'S SPACE RACERS

Long-lasting quality is the hallmark at Bob's, which specializes in midway and group race games. Their latest, known as *Redemption Water Race Game,* is snazzier than its bland title would indicate. Two players aim water cannons at a target. Hitting it makes fuzzy Beach Bears (real teddy bears in Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses) move along overhead race tracks. Recorded music is supplied by the Beach Boys. Neat!

Also at Bob's, *X-Tra Point* was a ticket-dispensing skill novelty for two alternating players. You knock the ball into holes for points; voice score and crowd roars add to the fun.

BROMLEY, INC.

Certainly one of the hits of the show was Bromley, Inc.'s *Little Pro* miniature golf-themed redemption skill game. It's housed in a pinball-type cabinet, but is smaller, shorter and lower — perfect for kids, although lots of moms and dads will enjoy the gameplay on this one. You control a "golfer" figure who putts a miniature pinball from a magnetized tee. Yellow arrows on the playfield show the true path to the cup in several cute miniature golf-type obstacle-course greens. (One even has a moving windmill.) Suggested vend is 11 shots for 50 cents, 6 extra shots for an extra quarter. The game is available now in the U.S. through Ameri Corp. (The firm's owner, Lauran Bromley, handles export.)

BUSH ELECTRONICS

Bush Electronics of Michigan showed a unique piece called *Claw Poker* which the firm says is not a "gambling device" nor is it a "crane." The player tries to drop a sponge ball from the claw into holes using a joystick. The object of the game is to make the best poker hand within the time allowed. Coupons dispensed by the game are redeemable by mail through a redemption center (not the location). This group is still fairly new to the trade, but the company toppers come from Florida, where they garnered lots of experience working for another, better-known company. One to keep an eye on!



Man of the hour. Capcom's genial Bill Cravens (center) not only produced some of ACME's social events but copped game honors with his* Mercs *and* Final Fight *videos. Ergo, the big smile. With him are (from left) Jeff Tarantelli, Gene Cramm, and Paula & Marty Shumsky.

CAPCOM

More than one major distributor pronounced Capcom's new CPS game *Mercs* "the hit of the show." Based on feedback from many other distributors and many operators (as well as the strong orders written up by the Capcom people), we'd have to agree. The three-player, wide-bib game is being sold in dedicated format; it should ship by the end of this month. Capcom's U.S. chief Bill Cravens confidently expects CPS to "dominate" coin-op for the next few years. "Last year I told everybody we spent lots of money on R&D to create the best, and we have," he said. Capcom is showcasing *Mercs* as "even stronger than *Final Fight,*" which charted at Number One on a recent software poll in this magazine.

Speaking of *Final Fight,* many showgoers rated it as the top kit of the show . . . even though it was first shown to distributors last November, and hit the top of our equipment chart prior to ACME. But who are we to argue with the majority? A hit is a hit, and Capcom certainly had a bell-ringer here.

Capcom's booth also featured a new baseball-themed two-player kit whose name had not been established at presstime. The company is working on a big promotion with a major soft drink maker whose logo, trademark, etc. would be incorporated into the title, marquee and gameplay. Referring to the present baseball strike, Capcom's Paul Wiederaenders joked, "We'll have it out by the time the major league baseball players decide to play ball!" Seriously, the game is expected to ship by the end of April.

CHEVALIER TRADING

Importer/exporter Mireille Chevalier had a new video on the floor, *Ballarena.* We saw it at the Dynamo booth in one of their new Signature Series cabinets. It's a one- or two-player kit from French manufacturer Sisteme, in which the player tries to knock out balls from different patterns. Graphics and gameplay were certainly eye-catching and cute, with various on-screen characters involved in the action. Don't let the somewhat confusing name of this game put you off. It means "ball arena," not ballerina, and the amusing action has nothing whatever to do with ballet. Worth a serious look!





Left: *Rowe's Joel Friedman with new Chairman and CEO Arnold Greenhut and their* LaserStar. ***Right:*** *Robert Betti and John Margold of Betson show the* King Arthur's Round Table *manufactured by Leland and exclusively distributed by Betson.*





Left: *Mireille Chevalier showed a new kit called* Ballarena *(for "ball arena"). **Right:** Design Plus' Mike and Diane Seibert had their new* Bozo Basketball *game at ACME. It's the first in a series of Bozo games to come from the company.*





Left: *Ameri Corp. showed their* Ameri Darts *horizontal or vertical dart kit for the first time at a national show. Pictured is the firm's Frank Bundra with Mexican distrib Ernesto Feliz-Diaz and wife Monica. **Right:** Meltec debuted their new* Lunar Golf *redemption skill game — left to right are John McEwan, Roy Nishi and Mike McEwan.*





Left: *Rowe's Jerry Maguire with their new* CBA-2 *bill changer. **Right:** Irem showed* R-Type II *and* Air Duel *kits at ACME — at their booth are Todd Erickson, Max Fujimoto, President Yuki Takashima, Frank Ballouz, Mr. Kato and Drew Maniscalco.*

Left: *The folks at Atari had their new stationary-seat model of* Four Trax at ACME, as well as Klax. ***Right:*** *Jean-Pierre Auclair and Playfair's Kelly Caudill at the latter's show booth.*





COIN CONCEPTS

Although the company toppers seem to have been in the redemption business for a hundred years, Artie Warner and Wylie Irwin's Coin Concepts, Inc. is a relatively new player as a company. Their ACME exhibit was full of fine product, looking for all the world like the senior firm they'll no doubt become one day.

Jr. All-American, a kid-sized basketball cage, is crammed with operator features and is one of the strongest new contenders in this type of redemption attraction. CCI's new *Toss 'Em* mini-ski alley is just the ticket for toddlers: just hard enough to give little ones the thrill their big brothers get on *Skee Ball.*

Also for youngsters, Coin Concepts had their egg vender, *The Monkey,* featuring 1,500 egg capacity and verbal jokes from the stuffed ape in the cage. (By the way, you can get this one with the character speaking in foreign languages, too.) CCI showed a compact pusher with ticket or token award, featuring directional skill entry and tilt alarm. Nice goods, guys!

COIN DATA

Jon Yarbrough, whose Coin Data is famous for cabinets and board supply, has been appointed by the U.K.'s Sound Leisure Ltd. to import their accepted line of CD jukeboxes. Jon showed these off the floor at a Hyatt suite and will begin with their *Route 66* box (offering 66 CD selections, plus four more for background music purposes). Other models could be forthcoming (Sound Leisure makes many), but now Coin Data goes about the business of securing distributors for this well-known line of British CD jukeboxes.

DATA EAST

The new flipper *Phantom of the Opera* won much favorable comment from operators and distributors at the show. "Data East's pins have always had good play appeal and great themes," stated one Midwestern dealer. "*Phantom* continues that tradition, but now they've also got their reliability and serviceability up to speed. Maybe it's unfair, but in order to compete, Data East must actually be *better* than

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Manufactured by the same Company who developed the highly successful SKILLCLAW® game.



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Based on one of the world's most fascinating card games and coupled with the popularity of cranes...Claw-Poker® is a winning combination.

Push the red action button and the Claw retrieves a soft, lively sponge ball to begin your turn... Your clock is ready with 60 seconds of play time... The robotic Claw rises to the top of the game-play area... Your clock starts and you use the joy stick to maneuver the robotic Claw into position. Dual movement along an axis and around a radius are made simultaneously. You get to your selected drop position quickly... and take your best shot. Once all players have completed their turns...call your best hand!

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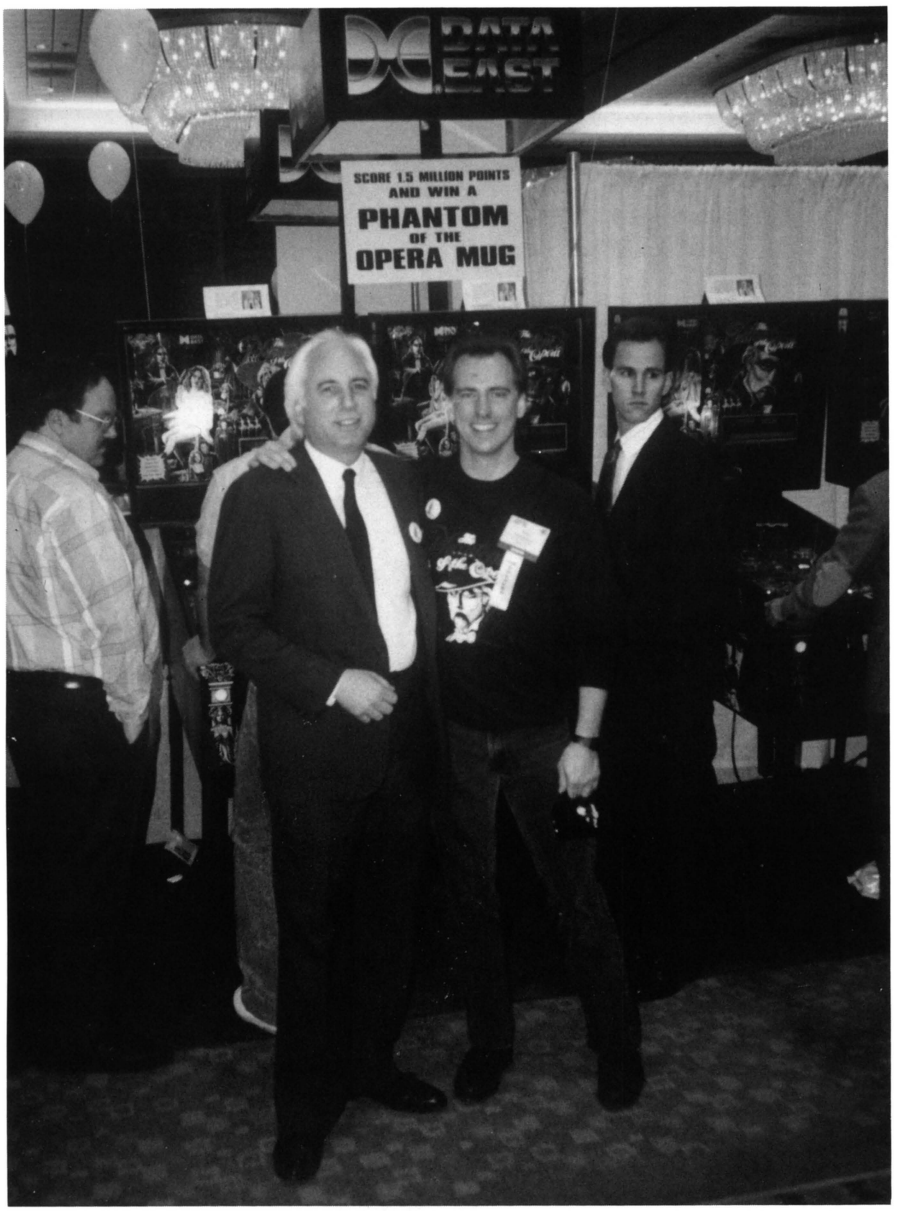

Pleased and proud of their* Phantom of the Opera *pin were Gary Stern and Pete Gustafson at their booth.

their competition. I think they understand that . . . and that's exactly what they're setting out to do."

This new Data East flipper features a dynamite sound track, including operatic singing, plus creepy organ music (that's the chilling signature phrase from Bach's famous *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor).* It's got gameplay that won't quit: underground dungeons, disappearing and reappearing balls, and dazzling artwork by former Bally flipper artist Paul Faris (skillful players can "unmask" the Phantom on the backglass). How good is this game? Our photographer couldn't get a shot of it at the show, because there were always too many people crowded around. That speaks for itself. (We used a studio shot provided by the factory, by the way.)

Data East's video division did themselves proud with *Vapor Trail,* a two-player vertical flying game available in kit or dedicated form. Execs said it is "very aggressively priced." Shipping now, the game shows a jet aircraft on screen in front of you as you slash through the skies. Vertical scrolling throws you against other planes, mechanical monsters, etc. Ron Malinowski said he enjoyed quite decent results with this one on test at the Aladdin's Castle arcade chain.

A second Data East video game called *Two Crude* is a street fighting game: it shops April 1. At presstime the company had not decided whether this one would ship as a kit or dedicated game. "The best part is that you can pick up things and throw them at the bad guys!" said one operator who played it and liked it.

DESIGN PLUS

Design Plus, the basketball skill game maker, debuted their new *Bozo Basketball* youth-size game featuring the "world's most famous clown." That fact alone ought to warm the hearts of children everywhere (and if you can't remember loving Bozo as a kid, shame on you!). The game will be the first in a series of Bozo-themed products from Design Plus, said the firm's Mike and Diane Seibert. *Bozo Basketball* is shipping now and is available in single- and two-hoop models. It's a bit longer than some other kiddie-sized basketball cages.

DYNAMO-STELLA

This new partnership between U.S. table game and cabinet maker Dynamo and the export arm of the Gauselmann Group, Stella Electronics, showed numerous new products to the American trade. The first of these, and the one that garnered the most interest at ACME, was *Jolly Poker,* a 100% skill poker countertop game.

Their *Disco-Taifun* air hockey table got comments from showgoers such as "hey, cool!" with its overhead blacklight and fluorescent puck. It also features a unique edge that keeps the puck from flying off the table, and it operates much more quietly than conventional hockeys, said Stella's Bernd Donalies.

Both *Jolly Poker* and *Disco-Taifun* are available now. The partners also showed a clever wall-mount backgammon game which will be available late April or early May. By the way, Lou Rudolph (previously with Data East) is Dynamo-Stella's new technical sales rep.

On their own, Dynamo showed its newly-styled Signature Series of universal cabinets, as well as the two most recent additions to its product line: their electronic, timed pool table and their *Deluxe Air Hock-*

The Industry at Work. . .























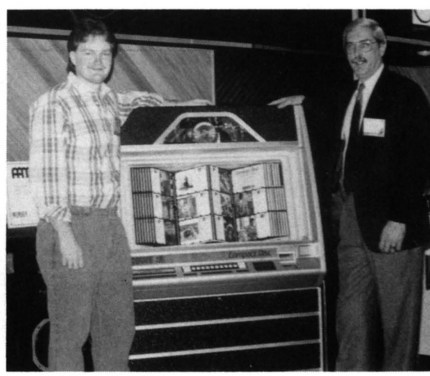

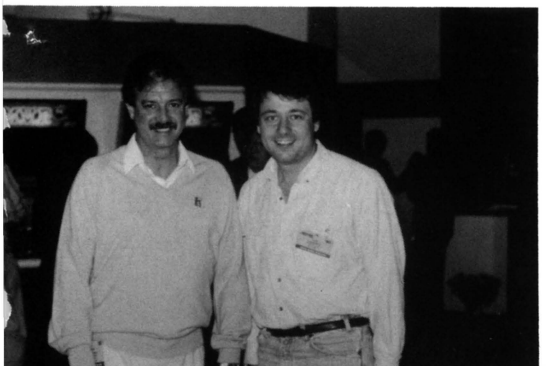







ShowBiz's Gene Cramm checks out the Doyle-made and Betson-distributed* Dribbles Jr. Basketball *game with the help of Sondra Doyle. About a half-dozen firms showed these new youth-sized basketball skill games.

ey, which features overhead scoring and arcade-type graphic design on the cabinet. As ever, quality was the watchword at this Texas firm.

DOYLE & ASSOCIATES

The "rajah of redemption," Skip Doyle, and wife Sondra added a new skill game to their famous lineup. It's called *Dribbles Jr. Basketball* and it's a basketball-toss game, down-sized for younger players. The mini-basketballs are 7" in diameter and operators can set gameplay on a countdown clock or not (those ticking seconds make some tots nervous, so you can give unlimited time for a fixed number of throws — smart thinking!).

The unit also features lights and sound (music and voices) and an optional ticket dispenser. Construction is solid and remarkably strong. "We've been able to incorporate everything we learned from our full-sized game, *Hoop Shot,* into this unit," said Sondra Doyle. "So in that sense, the operator is getting a proven and tested product! Response has been excellent." It's available in mid-April. Manufactured by Doyle in a joint venture with the redemption pros at Betson, *Dribbles* is marketed exclusively by Betson Enterprises.

EXIDY

This California-based company owned by inventor Pete Kauffman and marketing pro Virginia (his missus) was squarely in the middle of the redemption boomlet with *Croaker,* a new redemption ball rolling game with ticket dispenser. Available in mid-April, this appealing number has the player aim the ball for the frog's mouth. There are two talking "frogs" on the playfield with real voice audio. Get an early "jump" on this one! Also at Exidy was their updated, revamped *Twister,* also a ball rolling item. The new cabinet has additional features such as enhanced lighting. By the expo's end, Virginia declared that Exidy had enjoyed a great show.

FABTEK

Two new videos were offered by Frank Ballouz's company, Fabtek. *Sports Match* is an intriguing variation on the Japanese mah jong theme. If that's confusing, just think of it as another of those puzzle-type video games which have done so well of late. In this horizontal game, two players take turns matching on-screen "tiles" which show symbols of various sports. "It takes more thinking than most games," said Fabtek's service chief Todd Erickson. And what does Todd think of it? "It's one of the best kits at the show," he smiled, but he wasn't kidding.

Also at Fabtek, *Rai Den* is a vertical kit for two players (playing simultaneously). It sends spaceship-type vehicles out to do battle (over Earth-like terrain) against a nonstop assault of enemy vessels. This one ships in late April or early May.

GOTTLIEB/PREMIER

Premier debuted the most recent addition to its Gottlieb pinball family, a sports-themed item called *Silver Slugger.* The game is the first in the company's new low-priced "S.L." line, which is designed specifically for street locations. "We're going after the street market," announced Premier prexy Gil Pollock. "Pinball manufacturers have always designed one pin for all markets. That doesn't work any more."

Gameplay on *Silver Slugger* is straightforward, single-level stuff which somewhat replicates baseball strategy. All of this appeals to the older player who is found in tavern-type locations. It has an optional bill validator, too, since pub patrons don't mind spending a buck like kids in arcades do. "On the street we're getting $2 in bills for every $1 in change," Pollock explained. Also optional is a ticket dis-

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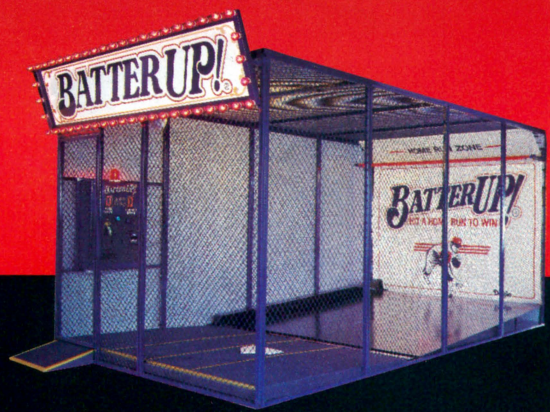

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Gottlieb's making pins just for the tavern set and* Silver Slugger *is the first. Surrounding it at ACME (from left) are: Harvey Fischer, Sharon Harris, Gil Pollock, Johnny Bilotta, Al & Mike Gottlieb.

penser, which proves that Premier is attuned to today's redemption trends (and, yes, some operators are ordering them that way). Cabinet color is screaming bright yellow, which shows up best in dim light. These guys thought of everything! Plenty of operators demonstrated serious interest in Premier's new low-priced, re-thought pinball line. We predict the trade will be hearing much more about *Silver Slugger* and its follow-ups in the months to come.



GRAND PRODUCTS

They said their *Slick Shot* would be the talk of the show, and it just about was. This unique pool-video hybrid was the outstanding novelty at ACME, not just because it was one of the few totally-new novelty pieces for taverns, but also because it has a grabby concept and . . . it works. The upright dedicated video cabinet has a partial miniature "pool table" added on front, with real green felt. You take a real cue ball and use short, real cue sticks to make your shot. The cue ball disappears under the monitor, and an animated cue ball appears on the monitor. The animated cue ball does exactly what your real cue ball would have done on a real pool table. You take the game from the first break to sinking that final shot, and the realism all the way through is simply amazing!

Ohio operator Don Hesch (A & H Entertainers) had one of these on test and said it's doing quite well for him. We're not surprised. "Acceptance has been very good," said GP's Stan Jarocki with a modest smile. "It proves video can still succeed, if you do it right." Stan, you did it right!

GRAYHOUND

Grayhound was touting its new *Super Skill Crane*, a jumbo with a low, wide playfield and a large claw. Also hot for them was *8-Liner*, the horizontal video strip-poker amusement game. And a new bill validator which accepts all currencies or bills, from $1 to $100, was prominently displayed at the Grayhound booth.

HOLLYWOOD MERCHANDISERS

Two new games from these redemption specialists bowed at the ACME show; both are shipping now. *Turbination* is an all-electronic crane in twin jumbo, single and "multi-vend" versions. The latter puts one spinning claw on 50 cent play for smaller prizes, another jumbo claw on $1 play for larger prizes. All versions of the game have 90% glass cabinets, eye-catching blue

The Industry at Work. . .



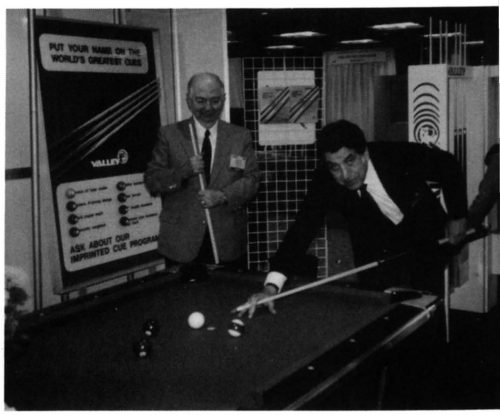








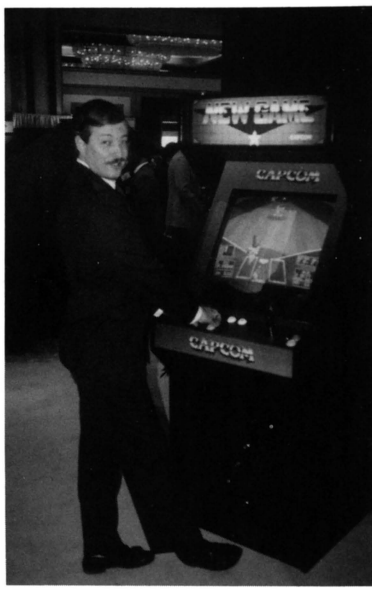


















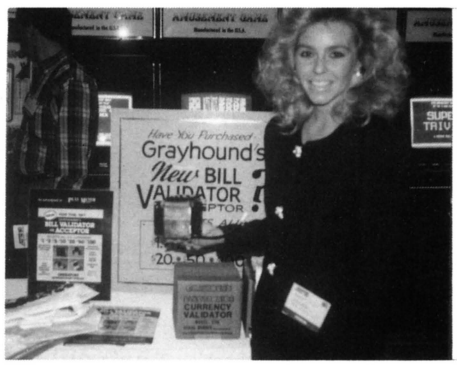



Left: *Oscar Robbins shows the Mayoni impulse line to Universal Innovations' Tom Semenuk. Mayoni had their brand new* Perfect Match *at the expo.* ***Right:*** *Part of the huge Grayhound exhibit was occupied by their huge new* Jumbo *crane (big prizes, big claw, big cabinet). With it are Agnes Ricci and Mel Erstling.*

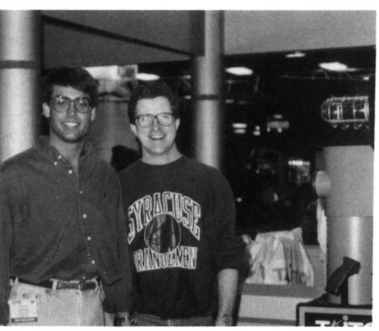



Left: *Sharp Image's Chris and Kelly Anderson with a bank of their Optima Series monitors showing their new* Air Buster *kit.* ***Right:*** *At Lazer-Tron are Mark Kelly and Sana Naser — they showed their new* Shuttle Launch *race game.*





Left: *Bush Electronics' Robert Bush, Major Leckie, Ron Mendyk and Dave McKissack showed their new* Claw Poker. ***Right:*** *Grayhound was highlighting their bill validator which takes every bill from $1 to $100.*




Left: *David Jackson and Justin Magee of Action Jackson in Boston checking out Taito's* Battleshark *submarine battle game.* ***Right:*** *Carousel's Brad Veatch, Ken Schaeffer and Dave Watt with their new* Turbo Z-327 *kiddie ride.*

Left: *Plateau showed a new skill redemption game called* Silver Struggle. *Left to right are: Tim Batson, Mickey Moore, Karen Morgan, Brett Radtke and Dave Leanna.* ***Right:*** *Tekbilt's Buzz Bruner proudly showed off new products and his new bride, Sue, at ACME '90. Congratulations!!!*




colors and chrome trim.

Free Fall from the same company has been modified: instead of batting prizes out of the playfield, you flip them off a pad as they tumble down from a vertical conveyer belt. It's pure skill and has some pay-out adjustments in the form of hopper openings which widen as you insert more coins.

INTERMARK/ NATIONAL SPORTS GAMES

Intermark is changing its name. The Arizona firm is now "National Sports Games, Inc." at the same address and phone. The people (Kim Cook, CEO) and philosophy (sports games!) are also unchanged.

New at ACME was their *Tot Shot,* a kiddie basketball game using 7" balls. At 6' deep by 30" wide by 64" tall, it's just the right size for kids and is backed by this experienced sports game specialist.

IREM OF AMERICA

Right next to Fabtek's ACME booth was the exhibit of yet another company run by Frank Ballouz: Irem of America. This Japanese subsidiary showed *R-Type II,* a horizontal kit which is a one-player sequel to the space-themed shoot-'em-up of an earlier year. It has performed (and earned) nicely in Japan and should find a home in the States as well. Aviation fans will appreciate Irem's *Air Duel,* a vertical kit for two players simultaneously. This aerial combat item lets players fly jets or choppers against an array of enemies. Shipping date had not been set at presstime.

I-VICS

This new American firm, which will specialize in licensing video games from Japan, started off with *Meta Fox,* a two-player vertical kit. Shipping now, the sounds and music on this one won favorable reviews, as did the good graphics and realistic backgrounds. Players fly through eight stages, moving up from a Corsair prop jet, to a Sabre jet fighter, to a Hornet. They pick up greater speed, firepower and maneuverability all along the way, too. Give this one a test flight, won't you?

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KONAMI

"Best new kit at the show" was *Aliens*, according to some savvy distributors we spoke to. Quite a few operators seemed to agree. Konami licensed the theme from the hit movie of the same name. The two-player horizontal unit features a female lead character (just like the movie) who must shoot her way through a space station infested with the hideous beasts.

Graphics are great, with oversized characters, realistic backgrounds and impressive effects animation (how many ways can you fry, sizzle, evaporate, or explode a monster? *Aliens* has the answer!). Gameplay goes through seven stages, with both vertical and horizontal scrolling and 3D effects of monsters coming right at you. As always, some tradesters brought their sons and daughters to the show. We saw one college coed play the game and walk away smiling. Her verdict: "Boy, that's really scary!" Shipping now, the game tested strongly prior to ACME. We assume dealers ordered accordingly.

Many showgoers said Konami's mega-hit *Turtles* was the best game on show at ACME. Indeed, the hard-shelled foursome once again topped our equipment chart for dedicated games in our showbook issue. While not new, this game remains hot and is still selling (for instance, some hold-out street operators are finally picking up this godzilla piece). Games of this strength only come along once in a blue moon, and the continued sales demonstrate an obvious fact about the trade: a national expo like ACME may provide "punctuation" in the industry's calendar, but it hardly stops action on the proven winners. And now the movie is coming out, so keep going, guys!

LAZER-TRON

Lazer-Tron showed their newest race game called *Shuttle Launch* at the show (they showed it for the first time at last fall's IAAPA). Players shoot their laser guns to advance their shuttle craft to the finish line. A neat feature is that it can go back and forth from coin to non-coin operation with the flip of a dip switch.

LELAND

Leland's dedicated three-player video game *Pig Out* was heavily publicized before the show, and they even brought t-shirts and a truckload of uprights to Chicago, anticipating that the game would win informal "best of show" honors. But at the last moment, the company decided the software just wasn't far enough along to display at ACME. Along with the no-shows at Atari and elsewhere, chalk it up as another "game that wasn't there."

Leland did have a very creditable entry into the surging redemption market, though. It's called *King Arthur's Round Table* and it's a rotary merchandiser in an upright video game-type cabinet. The self-filling playfield boasts a 300-capsule capacity. Betson is exclusively marketing this one. Betson also provided their invaluable expertise as

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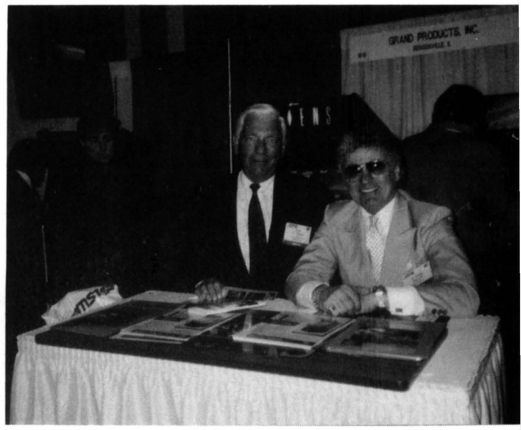





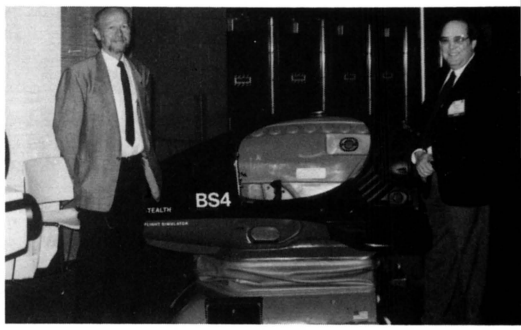





















Future tech? The closest anyone got to the MicroProse **F-15 Strike Eagle** *was at their suite in the Fairmont. But it's getting closer and if the waters don't rise, will be complete for the spring market. That's General Coin's Mark Chan at the controls with MP execs (like Bill Stealey and Gene Lipkin) rooting on.*

Leland was tweaking the game, so it's got all the features you need and want for redemption success.

Of course, Leland's earlier hit *Off Road* was also on show. A new two-player version with smaller cabinets for street locations featured the Track Pak gameplay update. Many operators were smiling over this one. They had requested exactly this down-sized version of 1989's top dedicated video, and were understandably happy to get it.

MAYONI

In the impulse novelty side of the business, Mayoni showed their latest addition to their line, *Perfect Match*. It's a match-making game that's available now in single units or banked in pedestals (or "carousel") with other Mayoni impulse items.

MELTEC

That family-run, American midway game and novelty maker, Meltec, had a nifty new skill novelty at ACME. Shipping now, *Lunar Golf* lets the player use a joystick to tilt the flat playfield. Object of the game is to roll several orange golf balls into the holes in this moving surface, which features goofy "lunar landscape" graphics. Fun extras include "moon tune" sound effects (a weird hum) and flashing lights. Ticket dispenser is standard; time, coinage and ticket vend can all be operator-adjusted. Fun stuff!

MERIT

In addition to showing their electronic dart games, Merit Industries debuted the new *Pit Boss Superstar* multi-game countertop. It features 15 different games in one (11-in-one was previously available). The firm also bowed their dart league materials package, which Merit's Howard Smoyer said "knocks down the barrier operators have had against dart leagues such as 'I don't have the time' or 'I don't have the experience.'" Available are the Player Recruiting Kit, League Operations Kit and Location Tournament Kit.

We also liked another new addition at Merit: Bernie Powers. This industry pro will bring creative flair to his top marketing post, reporting directly to Merit prexy Peter Feuer. (Pete was absent from ACME, recuperating from gall bladder surgery. Get well soon, Pete!)

MICROPROSE

When will we see the "next generation" of video games? Some saw the early dawn of that next generation in a suite at the Fairmont Hotel, next to the ACME Hyatt site. What they saw there was an unfinished version of *F-15 Strike Eagle* from MicroProse. This Maryland-based firm is still working on translating the appeal of its home computer hit (an ultra-realistic, "thinking man's" flight simulator) into coin-op terms. At showtime, they had completed only two of the game's projected seven "arenas" (phases), but what was finished, looked quite promising indeed. Only prospective distributors and select operators got to see it, though.

Does this game live up to its advance billing? Yes...in fact, the game is so "advanced" that some tradesters wondered if players would have the patience to work through the "learning curve" required to master this complex game. MicroProse says most players can master the basics after around six minutes. Others who saw the piece believe that's, shall we say, optimistic. But it's a dazzler, so when the unit finally "lands" at your distributor's showroom, don't be surprised if your mouth falls open and your eyes blink in sheer wonder.

MIDWAY MFG. CO.

Yes, in normal operator parlance, we're talking about "Bally/Midway." Midway had two new products to show to the trade at ACME, the *Trog* video and the *Game Show* pinball, both available now.

Trog, a dedicated upright using a new technique called "PLAYmation," features a prehistoric cast of caveman Trog and four loveable dinosaurs in different colors (Rex, Bloop, Spike and Gwen — she's pink). It's a one- to four-player game with buy-in. Gameplay reminds you a bit of *Pac Man*, as the characters waddle around a maze and grab various onscreen items. It's really cute and we heard several operators mention this as one of the show's clear hits.

Game Show, Midway's new pinball, is themed on — you guessed it — a TV game show. So "come on down" and see it, starring "Keith McTeeth" on the backglass as show host. Using all sorts of ramps and targets, the player tries to win "trips," "cars," etc. The zany comic feel of the game is enhanced by loopy graphics (there's even an "applause" sign on the backbox) and by plenty of fun sound effects and voices. Given Midway's pinball track record, this one's virtually a guaranteed winner right out of the box. It sure had lots of crowds around it.

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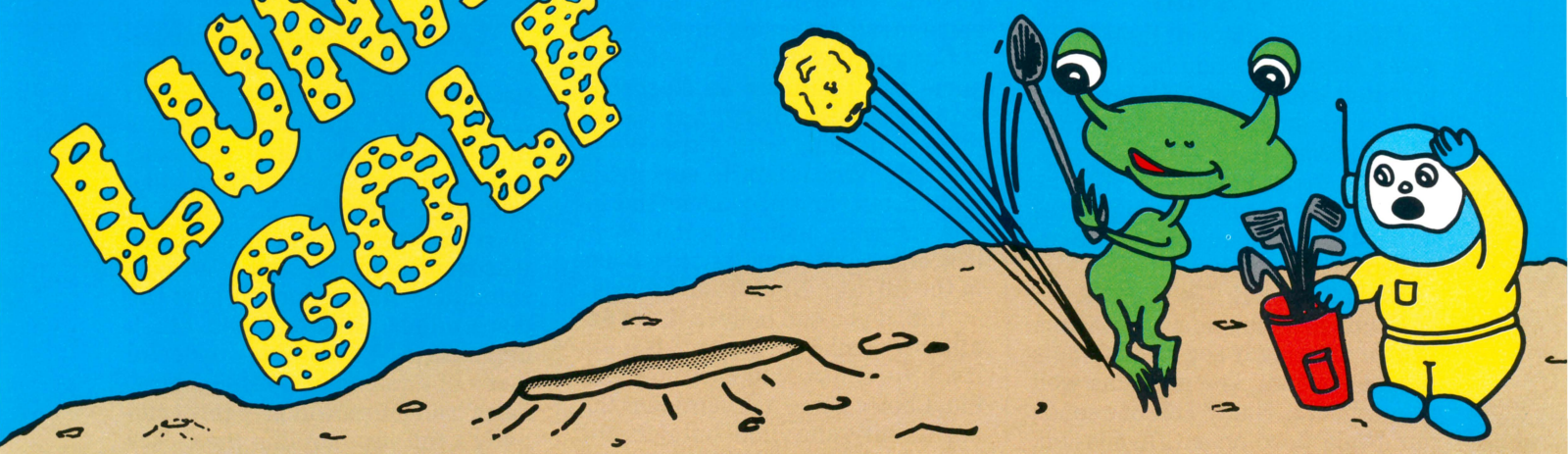

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NINTENDO

Taking advantage of their home game fame, Nintendo has now integrated its famous NES logo into their coin-op division. They also showed some rather promising new items for their versatile PlayChoice multigame system. Shipping dates on most of these had not been determined at presstime.

Ninja Gaiden II: The Dark Sword of Chaos is a long name, but when you're offering a sequel to 1989's number one kit, you might as well crow about it, right? This one sends our Ninja hero on a CIA mission, complete with multiple plot twists and nefarious double-crosses. Obviously, that means depth of play.

Nintendo also bowed *Rescue Rangers*, featuring those loveable Disney chipmunks, Chip and Dale. Nonviolent gameplay and cute character action highlights this one (the guys have to turn off running water faucets, etc.) in a title which should appeal to the younger set . . . especially if Disney goes ahead with a possible cartoon TV series of the same name, later this year.

Captain Skyhawk is a PlayChoice game pak featuring an on-screen F-15 fighter jet, flying over varied terrain, docking with a space station, etc. Animation is somewhat limited, but Nintendo turned this into a virtue by mimicking the visual look of computer guidance systems in the terrain. Neat trick, fellows.

And, if you can believe it, yet another sequel! Yes, *Super C* is a follow-up to *Contra*. Shipping now, this PlayChoice game pak continues the earlier hit's storyline, but puts our special forces guerrillas into a more urban setting.

Given this range of product (and the low software prices), is it time for operators who haven't gotten aboard yet, to take a second look at Nintendo's PlayChoice system? Could be . . . especially you holdouts who are still running ancient VS. System games. There are many types of conversion kits available from Nintendo, so how about it?

NSM

The German-based music company, world-famous for its precision products, showed off a new CD changer which zips through changes in seconds. How many seconds? During the demo we got from Mike Jablonski, we didn't have time to start our stopwatch before the task was done and the new disc was spinning. "And it doesn't hurt the discs, either," Mike grinned. Much applause to NSM for this wonderful piece of equipment. Perhaps now, more tradesters will give this company's full product line the closer look which it has long deserved? "They say if you want to get the market's attention, you have to hit 'em over the head with a hammer," Mike chuckled. "This CD changer is our hammer!"

NSM's wall-mount *CD Fire* jukebox continued to draw a lot of trade attention. The only problem is in getting enough of them built and shipped to the States. NSM's U.S. President Rus Strahan and execs in

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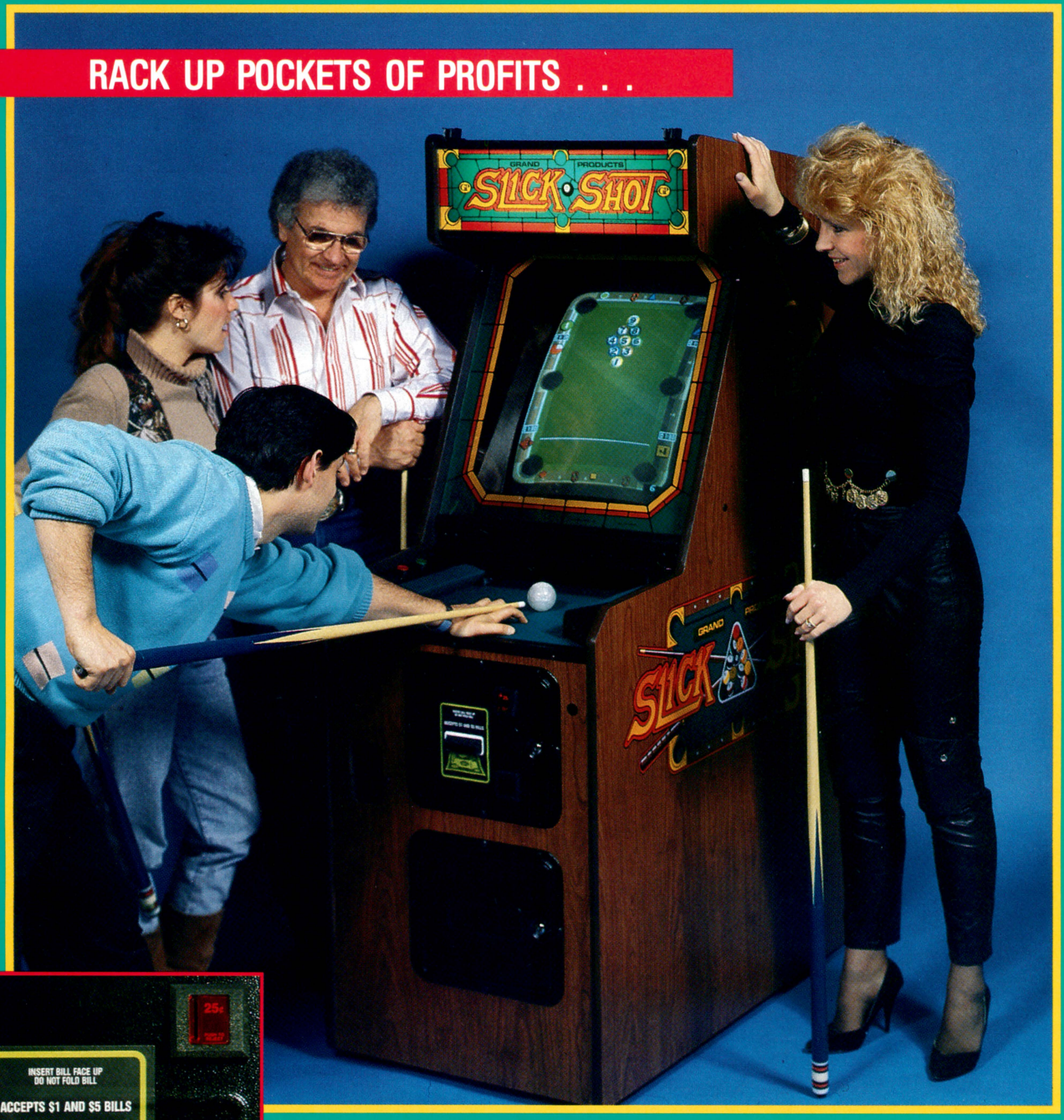



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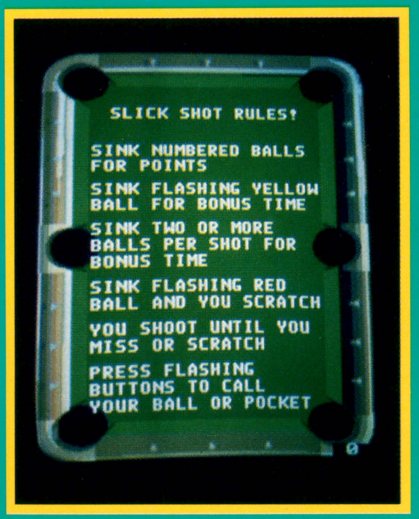

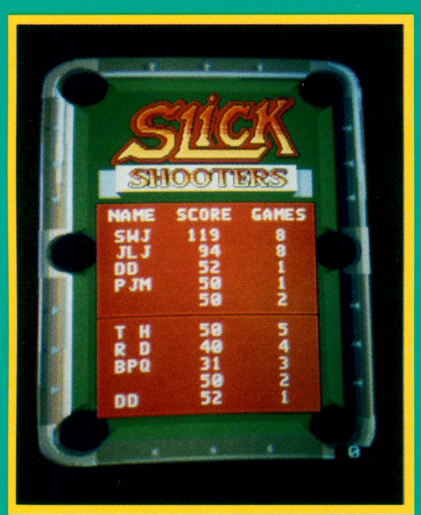

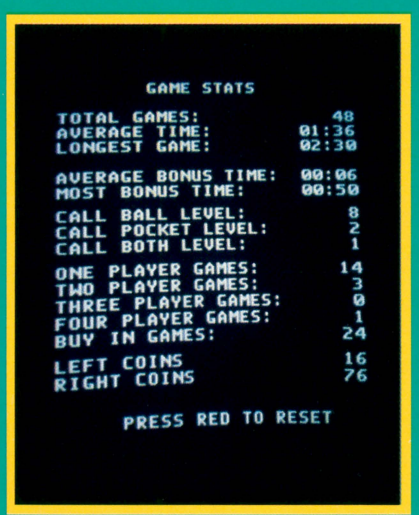

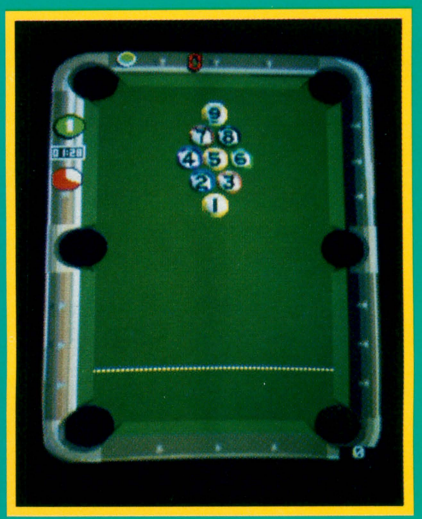

- Dollar Bill Acceptor for greater earnings, comes as standard equipment. Also 25 ¢ acceptor.
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- Exceptional levels of animation, diagnostics and bookkeeping functions
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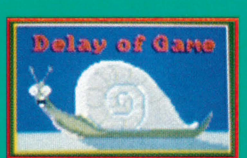







Software
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Patent No. 4872687
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Phone 708/766-8282 Fax 708/766-6688

Cabinet Specs:
Height: 70″
Width: 24½″
Depth: 43″
Weight: 295 lbs.

Germany are "hot" on the case.

Around the corner from NSM was the eye-stopping, operator-pleasing exhibit of Carson City Mfg. They are the folks who put out those unique jukes with classic Thunderbird tail cabinets and NSM mechs inside. Dominated by their new *Country Classic* (the front end of a vintage pickup truck), the firm continues with their *Songbird* (the T-bird) and *Skipper's Lounge* (stern of a cabin cruiser). They'll soon bow *Juke Jock,* with a jukebox housed inside a giant sneaker, ideal for sports bars. Very versatile stuff...and working well with the NSM hardware (45 or CD) inside.

PIONEER

ACME was Pioneer's official "coming out party" as a full-fledged member of the CD jukebox community. Their *Laser Juke* is shipping now and among the appointed distributors are Brady, CleCoin and NECO (plus eight others, and that list is growing). The machines are to be built at their Pomona, Calif. plant and not only shipped from there to North America and Europe, but also (get this) to Japan itself!

The firm also sported its first seven CD compilation discs, some with new tunes, others with oldies. Pioneer held a contest for a free machine, based on recognizing classic pop songs of the past. And they hosted a reporter and TV camera crew from the Fox Network for a televised interview. Pioneer is very serious about carving their slice from the healthy CD jukebox market, and their new distributor network buoys up that ambition considerably.

PLATEAU

Cabinet maker Plateau showed a new redemption skill game called *Silver Struggle.* The player tries to move a quarter of randomly-lighting targets by tilting the playfield (like the old labyrinth game). It's shipping now from their Tennessee facilities.

PROFITABLE GAMES

Profitable Games gave show attendees a sneak preview of their coming attraction, *Snappy Stickers.* The machine will let the customer print his own bumper sticker with any message (except ones containing expletives) and will be on the market in five months or so.



Pioneer had their "coming out party" at ACME '90 — Jukebox veep Paul Scribner is pictured with their Laser Juke, which is shipping now. Distributors already signed on with the line include Brady, CleCoin & NECO.

ROCK-OLA

Rock-Ola highlighted their *Laser 2000* dedicated CD phonograph which features similar classy styling to the rest of the jukeboxes in their line. The cabinet is covered in black, leather-grain vinyl with gold trim; the mechanism uses a Philips changer. Also at the Rock-Ola booth was the firm's new Executive Vice President Arthur Kareff, who came aboard in December. Hope you all got a chance to meet him!

ROMSTAR

Two new videos highlighted the Romstar booth. A really cute character game called *Snow Brothers* was a horizontal two-player kit. Shipping now, it's got a couple of loveable snowmen who throw snow at funny red devils, then roll the devils into giant snowballs!

For those who loved *Sky Shark,* you've now got *Fire Shark,* the sequel. Basically, it takes the two-player action of the World War I aviation hit, and expands it into a two-player simultaneous format. Ten scenes make it a longer journey to the end of the game, too.

ROWE

America's top jukebox maker exhibited in traditional Rowe fashion: the full "family of music" approach highlighted everything from hideaways to 45 units, combo units, CD video jukebox and their popular dedicated CD box. They're under new leadership these days: former Merrill Lynch man Arnold Greenhut is now Rowe's CEO and chairman.

In a booth just around the corner from the major Rowe exhibit, Antique Apparatus displayed its gorgeous line of expertly crafted, nos-

talgia-styled phonographs (all featuring Rowe 45 and CD mechanisms inside) and dazzling wall speakers. The new wrinkle was a *Coca-Cola Jukebox* which incorporated the Coke logo into the classic Wurlitzer styling.

SEGA

Boy, did Sega have a lot of new products at this show. Boy, did they cover all the bases . . . from top-of-the-line ride simulators, to moving cockpit simulators, to deluxe uprights, and even two attractive kits. We'll start from the lower end of the market and work our way up.

MVP stands for "most valuable player," but some operators and dealers were calling it "most valuable baseball-themed kit." Truly, the realistic gameplay (lets defensive players really move in on the ball, for example) won this two-player horizontal kit a lot of fans. How many? Let's just say we couldn't photograph it, because the crowds around it were always too thick. Game is shipping now. Grab one!

Showgoers also liked *Bloxeed,* which has won favorable review already in Europe. It's an inexpensive, two-player interactive puzzle game. The theme is block-stacking, with some cute characters included who move and demolish blocks as you go. On top, the "system 14" board is half the size of some earlier Sega "system" kit boards, said service manager Darl Davidson. What more could you ask for? It ships mid-April.

Sega's pride and joy is always their simulators. This time, it's *GLOC Air Battle.* "GLOC" stands for "gravity-induced loss of consciousness." It comes in three configurations. The moving cockpit version (ships in May) almost looks like a Navy jet fighter, with a silver canopy arcing over the player's head. The smaller, stationary sit-down version (ships end of May) doesn't move, but fits into more locations and still offers "you are there" excitement. The deluxe dedicated upright (ships late April or early May) puts it into a format that even C-stores will love.

Gameplay on *GLOC* is impressive. "It's got much more depth than *After Burner,* more dogfights and extra touches such as night flying scenes," noted execs. And the amount of on-screen information is also much greater . . . but by some miracle, all that data is not the least bit confusing. The price for the top-of-the-line model had an altitude all its own, but this is the kind of video game that shows why "Sega" is synonymous with "quality."

Galaxy Force, Sega's ultimate ride simulator, was also shown to our industry for the first time at ACME. With its moon-pod feet and suspended, swiveling cockpit and overhead rollbars, it really gives a great ride. Gameplay (a space journey) is somewhat secondary, by design. This high-end attraction piece piece has been updated with a new "hood kit" for an enclosed cockpit which reflects the sound and video more to the player.

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SNK did very well with their new **Neo•Geo** *system and its games. With the sharp looking hardware are the firm's Ed Alvarez, John Barone, Susan Jarocki, Tracy Tate and Vincent Gabriel.*

SEEBURG

The guys who brought the first CD jukebox to the United States showed their 1990 CD unit. It features a "Hot Hits" button. If pressed, the button causes the box to play the location's customized list of top 40 favorites, based on frequency of play on that specific box. A "smart clock" tells the juke when to shift from background to foreground music functions. A $1,000 bill stacker and industry-standard four-digit entry format for selected individual songs are also components of the package. Said Seeburg VP Joe Pankus, "It's user-friendly!" Production models are expected to ship this spring. The firm also has a Volume III of its Hot Hits compilation CD.

As many know, Seeburg has been "under-producing" machines in recent times, due to a financial situation they hope to clear up with fresh financing. The firm's first-of-them-all CD jukebox is still considered a solid unit by many, and it's hoped that this anticipated dollar input can help provide tradesters with the machines they ordered, reasonably soon. Joe Pankus said as much at ACME.

SEIDEL

Seidel's new rolldown game, *Quackers*, provides an amusing variation to this classic theme. Roll a soft, foam-type ball down the lanes, each marked with a number value. You try for a score of under 19, or over 23. The game talks to you: "What a lucky duck!" "Let's get quackin'!" Features include "duck" graphics, a light, winner bell and ticket dispenser.

SHARP IMAGE

In addition to their high-res monitors, Sharp Image showed a new horizontal kit game (also available as a dedicated upright) called *Air Buster*. Licensed from Namco/Kaneco, the single-player video features jets zooming off an aircraft carrier, battling all sorts of futuristic ships and targets. It ships April 1.

SMART INDUSTRIES

Smart Industries was another of the half-dozen game makers at ACME sporting a new kid-size basketball game. Their *Shoot To Win Jr.* one-player is available now. They also showed a new ski alley called *Smart Ball* in one- and four-player models in a choice of 10' or 13' lengths with $1 and $5 bill acceptor/stacker. (It's shipping now.) Also new at the Smart booth was a new rotary called *Jackpot* featuring an automatic prize loader system. And, of course, they showed their 1990 *Clean Sweep Classic Jumbo* crane.

SMS

At the SMS booth, the firm was marketing their latest version of *Pop-A-Ball*, which sports new graphics and software, as well as their *Top Draw* and *Poker Roll* games. (Please note that the *Poker Roll* ad that ran in the March issue of *RePlay* showed outdated cabinet graphics). The firm is now making a gaming version of *Pop-A-Ball* for the United Kingdom, which will be exclusively imported by Harry Levy in Kent, England.

The big news at SMS, however, was their *South Dakota Video Lottery* game which features a Mars $1-5-10-20 bill acceptor/stacker built right into the front of the all-steel, casino-style cabinet. The firm's Sal Mirando proudly boasted that this is an industry first. By the way, SMS has applied for patents on this. Lieberman is the exclusive distributor of the machine, which is also now available in poker and keno models.

In other SMS news, the firm has gaming licenses in three states with the addition of the most recent Louisiana electronic video bingo license (other states are So. Dakota and Montana). The "big little company" is still growing!

SNK

SNK premiered their *Neo•Geo* system to the American trade at ACME. The new multi-game hardware will be available in two configurations: one with a 25" monitor and up to six games, the other with a 19" and up to four games. This is a beautiful, functional cabinet (designed by Neil Zook) which could remain "state of the art" for years.

Software support for this new system should also last for years. In Osaka, SNK's new six story building is full of game designers, feverishly gearing up future games exclusively for Neo•Geo. (SNK also rents cartridges of these games for their Japanese home video system, which should also be coming later on in the U.S.)

Games shown at ACME were *Baseball Stars Professional, Nam-1975, Magician Lord* and *Top Player's Golf*. All of them featured very fine graphics and more "introductory" material than has been seen in many vidgames. The reason: give the player more background information about the game's fictional world and his mission, and the illu-

The Industry at Work. . .



















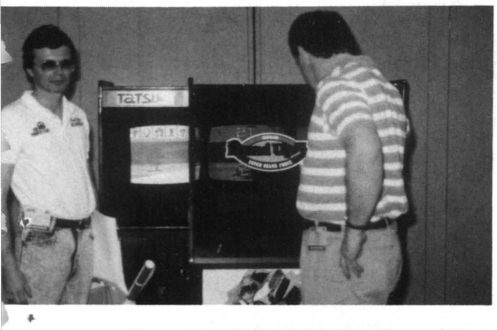

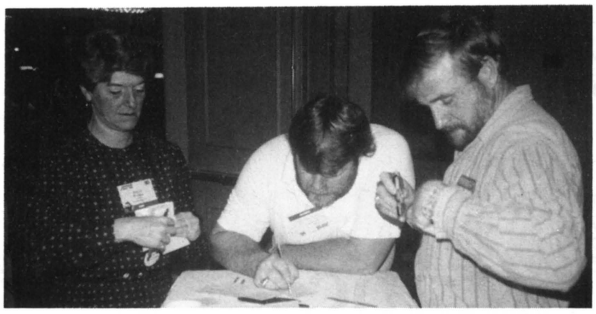











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sion of reality becomes more complete. Good move, SNK. "We believe this system is going to help define the next direction of the American game market," said U.S. President Paul Jacobs.

The company also showed its well-liked three-player dedicated gun game, *Beast Busters* and its modestly priced *Search And Rescue* dedicated upright.

TAITO

New at Taito's show booth were three debut video attractions. *Cadash* (available now), an adventure maze game (h-kit) that can be banked in pairs, providing four-player action via Taito's communication system. It's got fine graphics and an unusually detailed storyline and fictional "world," plus some "thoughtful" choices to make, in addition to a wide variety of climbing, punching, jumping, kicking, sword-fighting, swimming, and other forms of action.

Taito's *Battle Shark* is the first submarine themed game in a good while. This dedicated upright (available now) features 10 play levels and both horizontal and vertical scrolling. Graphics are also good on this one. A neat feature is that when you get hit, the scope vibrates and red lights at the top of each side of the unit go off.

Finally, Taito showed *WGP*, a motorcycle game available in a deluxe ride-on simulator (available mid-May) and upright (available mid-April). This one comes with eight race tracks patterned after real courses in Europe. The deluxe version sits you on a metal motorcycle which is quite realistic with life-like foot gear-shifter, handle action, etc.

TEKBILT

At Buzz Bruner's Tekbilt booth, not only did showgoers get to see new product, they also got to meet Buzz's new bride, Sue. (They wed Feb. 17 in Columbia, S.C. and honeymooned in Puerta Vallarta — congratulations!) New product included countertops, *American Pull Tabs*

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The union workers pack up exhibits and roll up the carpet on yet another expo at the Hyatt Hotel. ACME '91 will be held at Bally's Hotel in Las Vegas, March 22-24. See you there!

(shipping now) and *Zanadew*, a pull-tab dispenser available mid-month.

VARI-TECH

This arcade and midway game maker debuted two new race games at ACME. *Rough Rider Truck Race* features four-wheelers which race to the finish as the player rolls balls into scored target holes. *Water Race* features dolphin targets which the player must squirt, in order to advance his plush dolphin at top to the finish.

Also new at Vari-Tech was a "mole-smashing" game called *Animal Festival.* This piece does not require an air compressor. Its unique coil system also allows each animal to be hit numerous times while it's up for higher scoring.

New to the Vari-Tech line are impulse novelties. They showed three at the expo: *Speed Test, Reaktotest* and *Memory Test.* Like the other product mentioned here, it's available now.

WILLIAMS

It started shipping back in February, but Williams' *Whirlwind* pingame was the favorite of many operators we spoke to. Mobs of operators were always crowding around the game, playing it, smiling and having their hair blown back in the breeze.

Williams also showed a new kit licensed from Toaplan, called *Zero Wing.* It's a horizontal video game with a space battle theme, and according to Williams execs, is "priced right." A second new video (unfinished) was shown in Williams' suite. It received applause from dealers who are happily anticipating getting the production model in the not-too-distant future.

WURLITZER

Wurlitzer showed its brand new, dedicated CD unit *One More Time CD.* Like its 45-only brother, it's a beauty with all of the famous bubble tubes, glowing pilasters, etc. which made the original *1015* the "ultimate" jukebox. This unit holds 50 compact discs, with spots for 60 title cards. (Execs suggest the extra 10 be used for location advertising.) Options on the box are a bill validator and an additional changer for a 100-disc total. The new machine is shipping now.

Wurlitzer USA, under its new President Joe Tedeschi, is depoting boxes and parts at their new facility in Long Island City, N.Y. The American outlet for Deutsche Wurlitzer's line of CD and vinyl boxes intends to make more of an impact on the North American market than it has in recent years.

FINAL THOUGHTS; OTHER EQUIPMENT

Some of the above games had been tested before the show, others had not. That's the usual state of affairs, of course, though many distributors don't like being "pressured" to buy untested games.

Older games were also shown by many of the firms listed above; we've concentrated here on presenting "new machines only." But the normal manufacturer-to-dealer horse-trading did take place as factories offered deals on decent, if dated, goods. Savings on these not-brand-new items should filter down to price-sensitive operators as well.

Kiddie rides were a presence at ACME 1990. Carousel had a brand-new one at their booth called *Turbo Z-327,* a car ride. Other firms showing rides for tots were Kiddie Rides USA, American Simulators, the Amusement Equipment Exchange, and (as noted above) Belam. And that brand new organization, the American Kiddie Ride Assn., held its first-ever convention at the Allerton Hotel just prior to the show.

Numerous firms at ACME showed off a huge range of components and supplies. These firms included Dart World, D&R Industries, Great Lakes Dart, Penn-Ray, Mars, Wico, Dixie-Narco, Coin Acceptors, Coin Mechanisms, Coin Controls, Hantarex, Space Age Electronics, Cummins-Allison, Plateau, Happ Controls, Capitol Lighting, Deltronics, Lock America, L.A. East, Mobile Records, J-S Sales, Imperial International, Eagle Lift, East Coast Design, Roger Williams Mint, U.S. Amusement, National Ticket, Standard Change Makers, Sonic Reproductions, Scan Coin, Silent Partner, Patt Supply, and finally Eygo. Redemption prizes and merchandise suppliers also formed a major category; we have photos of them further along in our ACME coverage.

In all, ACME admirably represented the vast universe of product which comprises the amusement machine business. Now the show is over and it's time for the distributors and operators to sort out the winners from the also-rans. As always, the cash box has the final say. . . and in coming months we'll try to report on the results as they come in from the field!

Flush with Plush. . .

While the rest of the captioned photos in our ACME '90 coverage tell the story of what was new *in coin-op equipment, there is* always *something new at a redemption merchandise company. Here then are some photos snapped at those booths during the Chicago expo.*























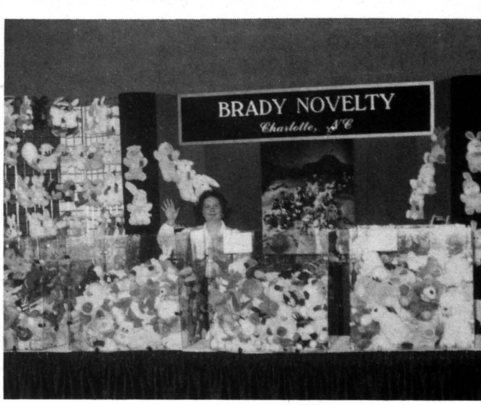

Flush with Plush. . .

More plush, jewelry and redemption merchandise exhibits at ACME '90. Some 24 firms exhibited their wares for cranes, rotaries and other redemption skill games during the expo.













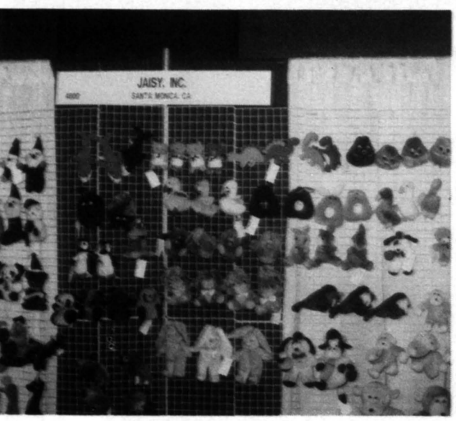











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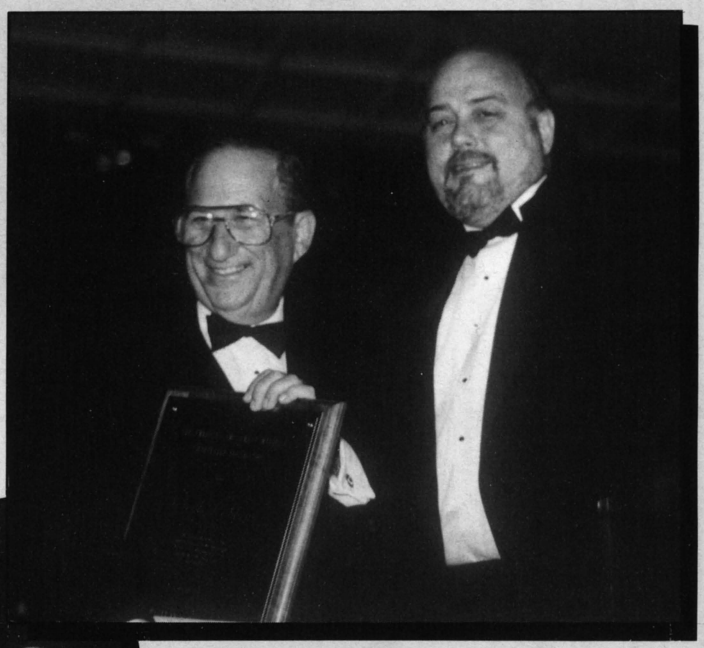
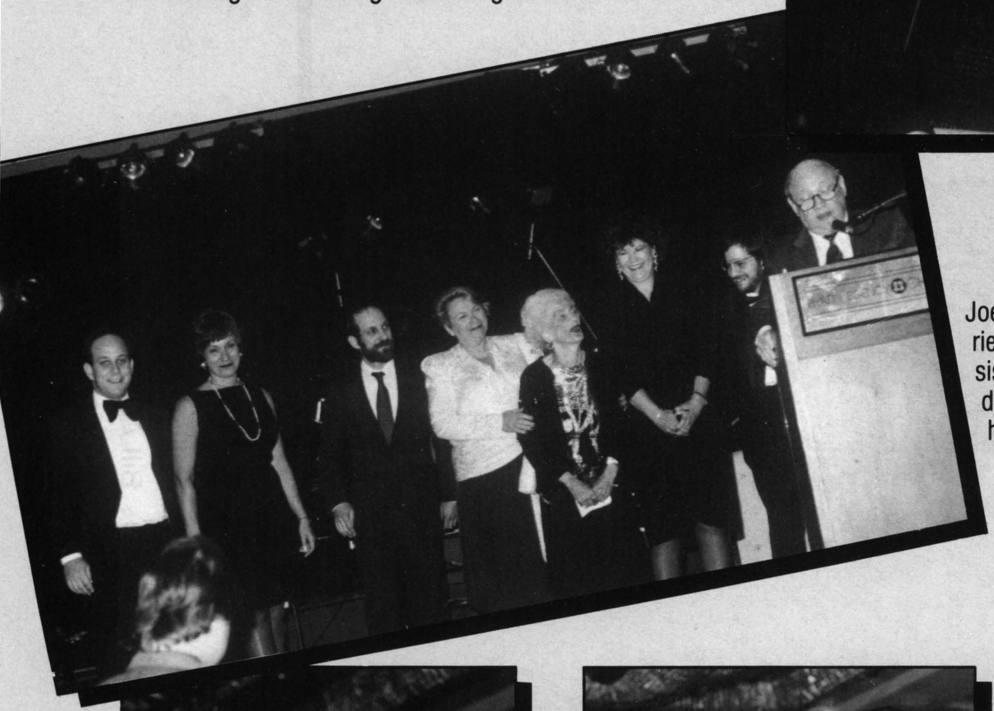
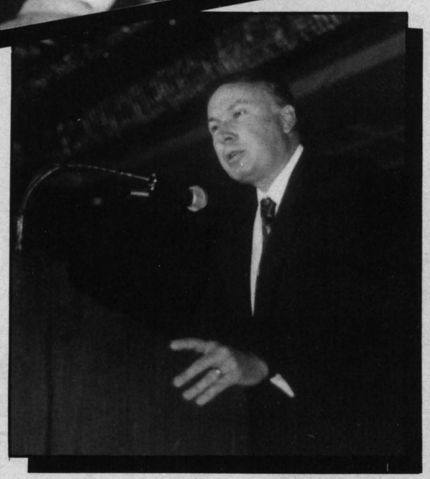
Industry Honors Joe Robbins

Industry maven Joe Robbins was honored at the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Appreciation Dinner during ACME '90. The Saturday evening affair was very well attended and was certainly entertaining as attendees enjoyed the pre-dinner cocktail party, the dinner itself, the Joe Robbins award presentation and the entertainment provided by Danny Gans and JP & The Cats. Pictured at right is Joe with AAMACF Chairman Bill Cravens who said of Joe: "I've never met a man like him. He never went back on his word. When he gave you a commitment, that was it. He was an honest distributor. . . and that's the highest compliment I can pay." Proceeds from the event went to "Starting Now," a program to help troubled teenagers suffering from drug and alcohol addiction.

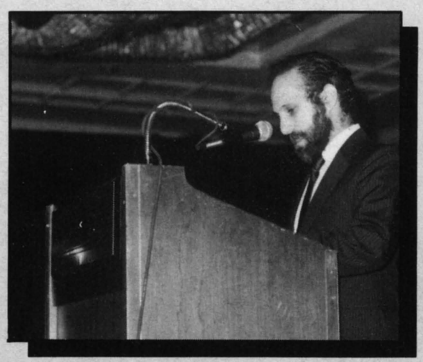




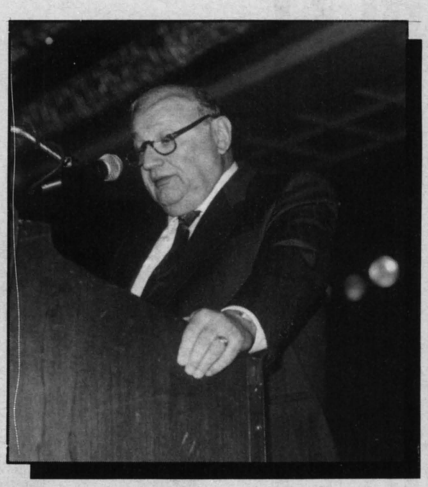
Joe's family on stage: wife Enid, mother Henrietta (who was celebrating her 90th birthday), sister Barbara Smith, son Mark, Joe's "son the doctor" Larry and his wife, and son Richard. Joe has been in the industry for over 50 years.



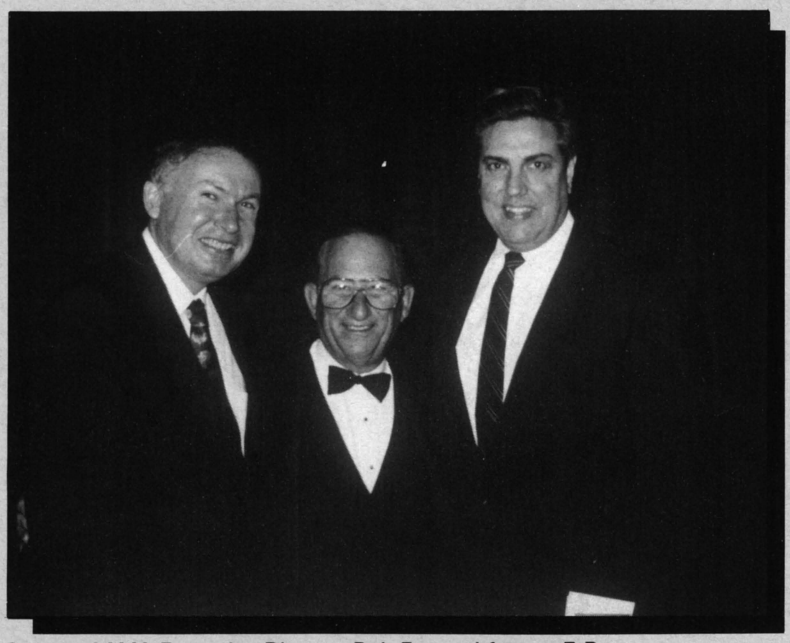
Bob Fay provided a mini-roast: "Some things you need to know," he said imitating Robbins. "I invented the coin. After that, we needed something to do with it, so I invented the coin machine industry!"



Son Mark told the crowd about the personal side of Joe Robbins: "The standards he set are honesty, integrity and respect for everyone he deals with. . . As a family man, my dad was very generous, very devoted and old-fashioned. Over the years, he's gained the affection, reverence and respect of everyone he's come into contact with."



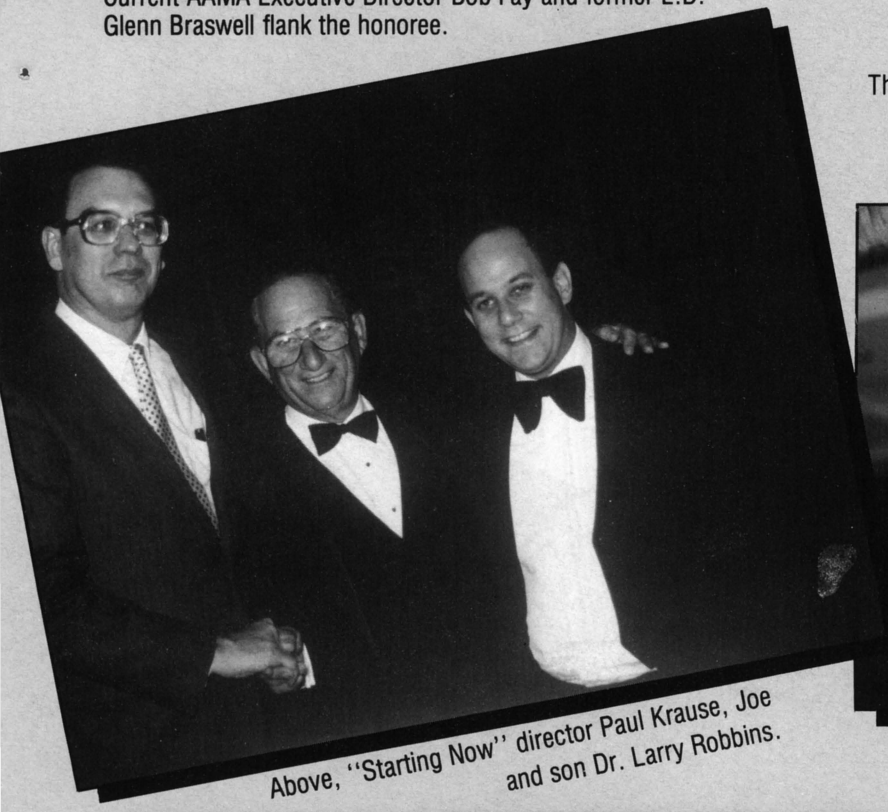
Norman Goldstein also helped introduce Joe and his family at the industry toast. Of Joe, he said: "My contribution to this dinner was to control Joe Robbins. . . with very little success!"



Current AAMA Executive Director Bob Fay and former E.D. Glenn Braswell flank the honoree.



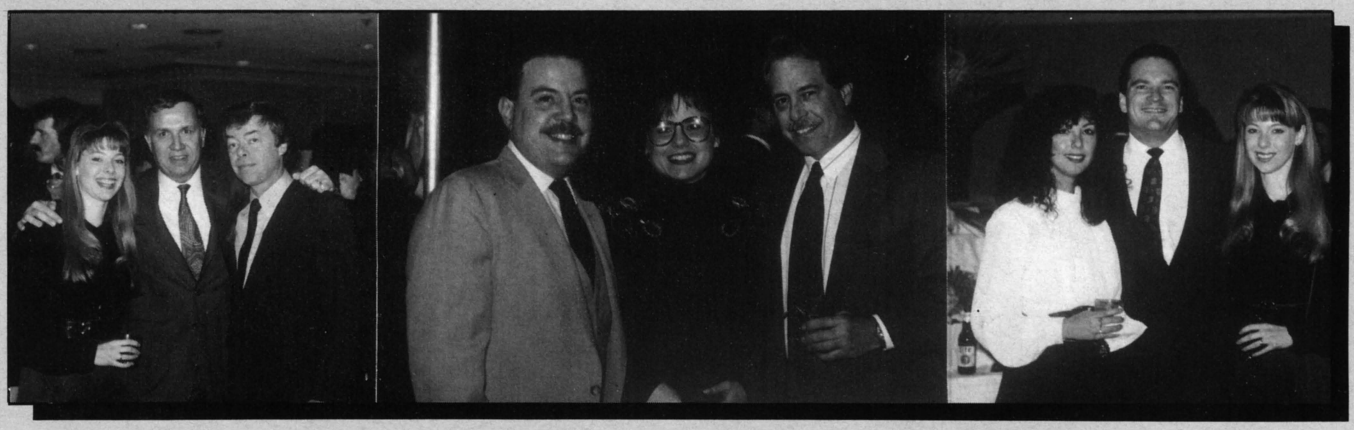
Joe and his wife Enid share a tender moment.



Above, "Starting Now" director Paul Krause, Joe and son Dr. Larry Robbins.

The versatile Danny Gans provided lots of entertaining fun. His impersonations of famous singers (such as Willie Nelson, Michael Jackson and Sinatra) were outstanding. Also providing music to dance by were JP & The Cats.





Just a few of the folks enjoying the AAMCF's cocktail party prior to the dinner honoring Joe Robbins on Saturday night.

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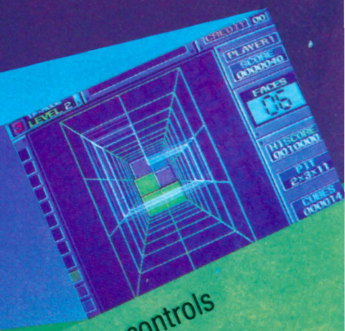

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ACME Awards



PLAY METER AWARDS —

Play Meter Magazine presented several awards at the "All-Show Complimentary Cocktail Party" on Friday night. Pictured is Jim Hayes, recipient of the Ralph C. Lally Award for Operator of the Year, with presenters Valerie Cognevich and Bonnie Theard. Other winners were Leland and Atari (tie) for dedicated videos, Sega for kits and Williams for pinballs. Best "Other Equipment" went to Valley.

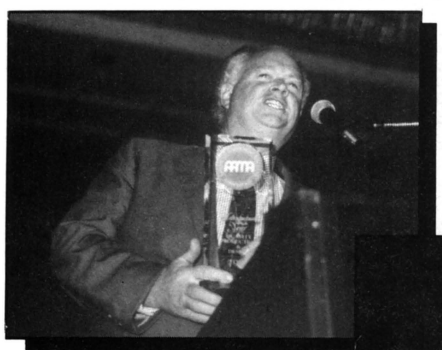


AAMA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Also during the Friday cocktail party, AAMA presented their first "Sales Achievement Awards" (which were given in four levels: Diamond, Platinum, Gold and Silver). Atari was awarded a Platinum award for their *Tetris* kit and a Diamond for *Hard Drivin'*. Fabtek received a Gold award for their *Cabal* kit. A Gold award was given to Konami for their *Crime Fighters* kit. Taito was the big winner with four awards: Gold awards for their *Chase HQ* and *Operation Thunderbolt* uprights and Silver for *Superman* and *U.S. Classic* kits. The gorgeous awards, by the way, were designed by Bonnie Srolovitz of New York.

MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Atari swept the AAMA's first "AAMY" awards for Manufacturer of the Year taking all three honors: "Quality, Production and Design," "Customer Satisfaction" and "Marketing & Promotion." In presenting the awards, AAMA prexy Gil Pollock told the crowd, "It is a wonderful distinction to be recognized as a leader in your field, especially by your peers, and these companies are truly deserving of their awards."





Above, Atari's Shane Breaks accepts the "AAMY" award for Manufacturer of the Year. Right, Mary Fujihara accepts their "AAMY" for top Marketing & Promotion.



DISTRIBUTOR OF THE YEAR

Above, the Bettelmans of C.A. Robinson & Co. in Los Angeles accept the "AAMY" award for Distributor of the Year. Pictured are Ira, Sandy, Adrea and Leah with presenter and AAMA President Gil Pollock. Qualities on which the distributorship was judged included: sales, enthusiasm for product, ingenuity in moving product, marketing support, customer support and strong parts & service departments.

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Upon arrival at LV426 Acheron, the magnitude of the threat sinks in. The settlement is overrun with aliens, and you are expected to eliminate every one of them. The mission takes you through airways, elevators, underground waterways, and tunnel systems within the space colony. Along the way, you will encounter a multitude of species of alien creatures.

The situation gets worse, so you must get tougher. In addition to fighting the existing aliens, there are also incubation rooms and hatching grounds everywhere. You must dodge fatal electric shock waves, barricades, steam blasts, and dripping doses of alien acid in pursuit of your goal. The task of blowing away the aliens is aided with the use of such power weapons as missiles, triple bullets, flamethrowers, three-way shots, and bombs.

You proceed into the mother alien's lair, where she is hatching her larvae. After destroying her, you believe the mission is accomplished, and settle into the space ship for the long journey home. However, you soon realize that there is one more alien—and it's in your ship. In the last, most desperate fight, the fate of the universe depends on you. Will the alien win, and come back to your colony to wipe out all human life, or can you emerge victorious, destroying the alien and blasting its remains into outer space?

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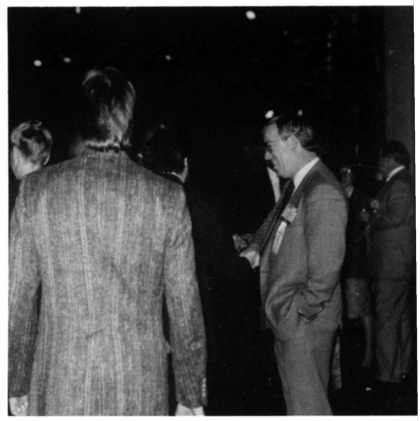
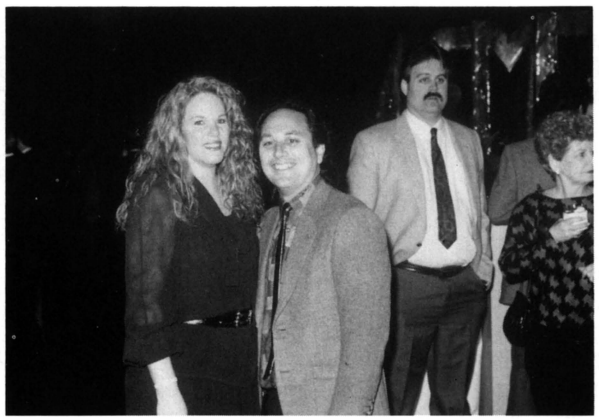
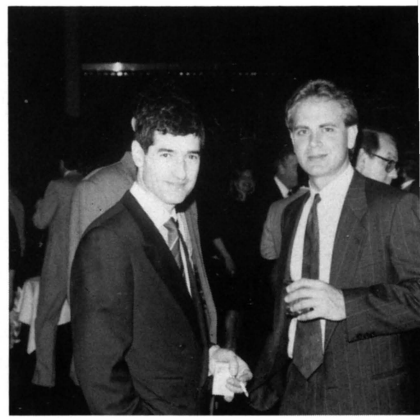
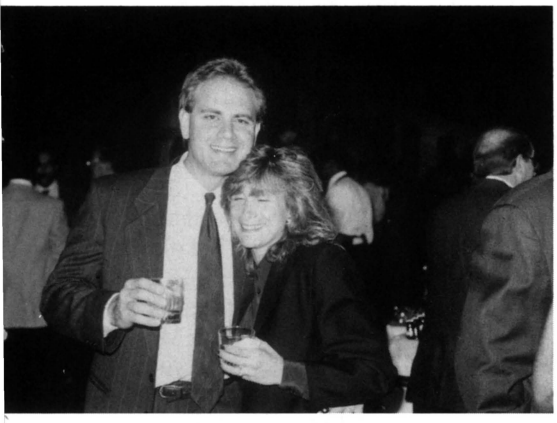
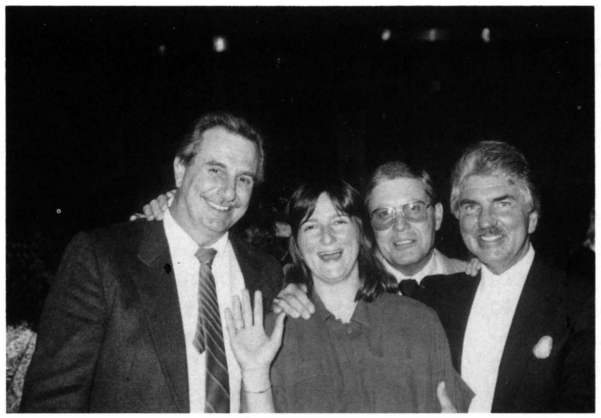
The Industry at Play. . .

photos from industry parties and hospitality suites during ACME '90









Gray Matter

industry deans plot future for Half Century Club

The fledgling Half Century Club International sported muscles during ACME as around two dozen senior veterans of this industry joined together in the Williams suite at the Hyatt and declared their intention to move the club forward.

Founded only a couple of years ago as a social venue for trade vets with 50 or more years of service in the industry by Al Rodstein and Steve Kordek, the Half Century Club summarily admitted "associate members" with a mere 40 or more years under their belts.

Meeting at suites during national trade shows, the HCCI gave out machine and personal awards to industry greats (e.g. Bill O'Donnell and *Pac-Man),* but generally wondered what more they could do other than provide a semi-annual setting for the telling of fun (and functional) war stories about the past.

Now under co-founder and President Steve Kordek, the HCCI has defined its mission. While basically a social organization, they will create one annual award for the "person or organization that contributed the most to advance the interests of the coin amusement & music industry" and (after proper voting) present that soon-to-be prestigious award to the winner during every AMOA Expo, beginning with the next outing in New Orleans.

Kordek and his members will also hold a club meeting in New Orleans, during which the shrimps, hurricanes and other creole commestibles will be offered. The setting should also offer the opportunity for the award winner to make an acceptance speech, after which questions, answers and war stories should flow.

Special lapel pins will be available at that meeting and will provide every HCCI member (full or associate) the "badge of honor" for having served his or her trade for the necessary decades. Of course, there are more than two dozen veterans who comply with HCCI longevity who didn't participate in the ACME gathering. Those wishing to join up have to have 40 years or more to their credit. They're urged to contact Kordek by writing to him at: Williams Electronics, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618.



The HCCI assembled, with President Steve Kordek seated. These industry deans had a fine time at their ACME gathering. Now, with added purpose to the club, they welcome all other eligible tradesters. HCCI "house mother" Val Cognevich & "house gofer" Ed Adlum were both offscreen taking pictures.

The HCCI meeting at ACME was swell. Chit chat, speeches and general fun was the order among the industry deans. When they next meet in New Orleans, the chatter will be even louder (e.g. "Did I tell you about the time me and Joe Munves . . ." etc., etc.). Here's a roster of the industry giants at the ACME Williams suite (their years of service to the industry are written after their names):

Steve Kordek (50+), Sol Lipkin (54), C.W. Hardwick (50+), Art Velasquez (52), Bob Breither (58), Jake Kremski (53), Paul Calamari (53), Johnny Bilotta (62), Sal DeBruno (51), Len Zeidman (60), Nick Fokakis (57), Bob Jones (53), Bert Betti (55), Hank Tronick (44), Alvin Gottlieb (43), Ernerst Barberio (44), Jim McNeely (45), Dick Valosek (44), Joel Kleiman (45), Nate Feinstein (40), Bob Nims (48) and Fred Skor (40+).

As you can see, membership crosses all boundaries from operator to distributor to manufacturer. And, some of the members are retired from the trade. It's to Kordek's credit that the flame has been kept burning. Now that it's burning hotter, the venerable pinball designer may have a tiger by the tail. If you're eligible but haven't been included, write to Steve and get on the list (and do it now).

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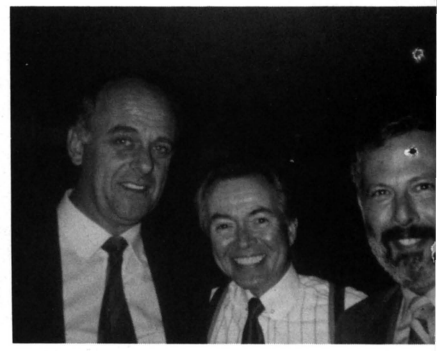

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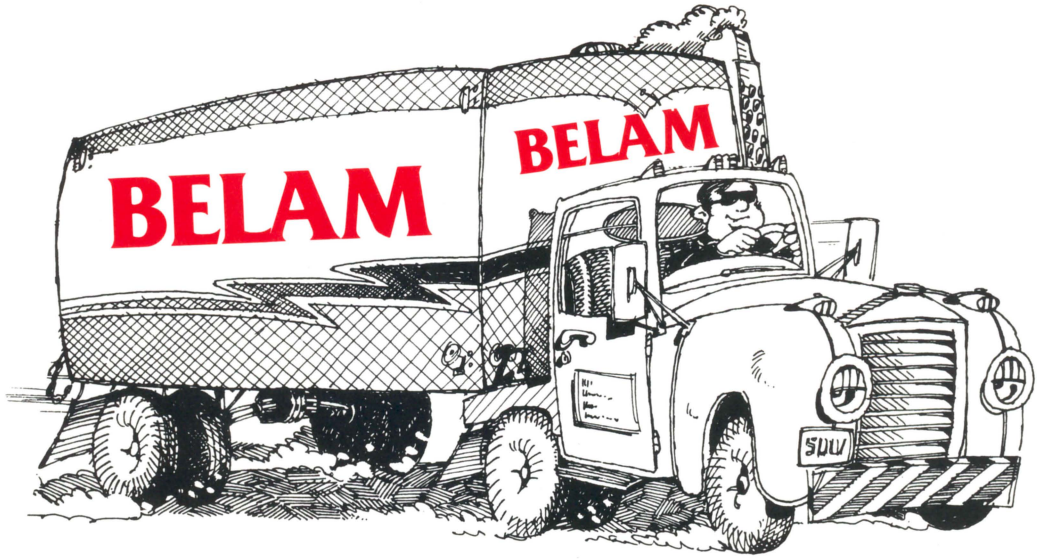

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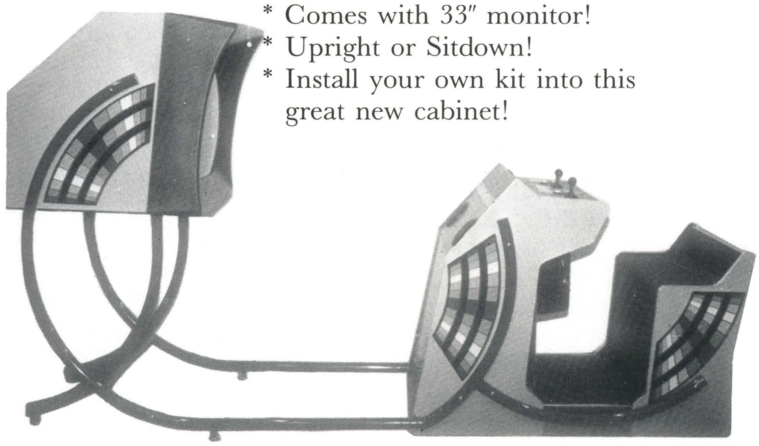

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WITH GENE LEWIN

My Best Game Picks from ACME '90

There were a lot of new games at the 1990 ACME show in Chicago. A few were different, with the bulk of them being the same themes we see all the time. The most innovative video game is named Trog, made by Bally/Midway, as well as probably the hit of the show. Sports Match by Fabtek is also a new theme for video games. For street locations, Slick Shot by Grand Products, is a new idea incorporating a cue ball on felt with a video screen.

F-15 Strike Eagle by MicroProse was in a suite, not on the show floor. It showed some new technology like you've never seen before. It is a flying game where you shoot at enemies by locking on and firing a missile or by lining them up in your sights. The graphics are somewhat similar to Hard Drivin'. To control it was very difficult. It could be named "Hard Flying." I think once players take the time to learn it, they will get used to it. The game was not finished at the show. It will be the most expensive upright video game I know of to date.

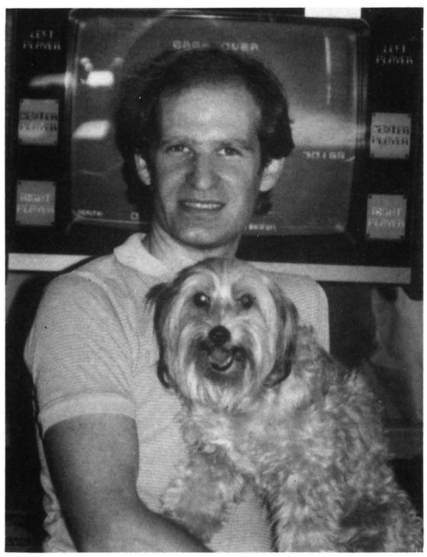
There were several dedicated games at the show, but they all had something special about them that would have made it difficult to make as a conversion. I wish one of them would have made a 3- or 4-player conversion. There are a lot of Gauntlet, Main Event and Rampage, Dark Adventure, and Power Drive cabinets ready for conversion.

I now give a brief summary of what I personally consider to have been the best games at the show separated by category of game.

DEDICATED GAMES

Trog — Bally/Midway

Trog will be available only as a dedicated game. It comes in a nice looking 4-player cabinet that is similar to Gauntlet in shape, with a 25" monitor and lighted marquee.



Gene Lewin and his pal Taffy.

Many said this was the hit of the show. It is certainly the most innovative of all the video games there. Trog features a different color dinosaur and bones for each player. The joystick controls a hand instead of the dino character. The hand places bones on the field and when the dinosaur runs into them, he changes direction. An interesting feature is that a bone of any color affects all players' dinos. This means one player can foul up another's moves. The object is to collect all your color of eggs and make it to your home base before the other players do. The first one gets bonus points for being first.

The graphics and sound effects are excellent. It is using what Bally calls PLAYmation. This process is done by modeling and digitizing each and every move. This game is using a scaled down version of the Narc computer system.

Since this game is so different, it is difficult to predict how well it will earn, but my feeling is that it will be a very good arcade game. My congratulations to Bally for having the nerve to try something different.

Mercs — Capcom

Mercs is available only as a dedicated upright in a 3-player cabinet with a 25" vertically mounted monitor. It's a shoot 'em up army themed game with soldiers, tanks, helicopters, etc. While the theme is nothing new, the game is very well done. It uses the Capcom CPS board system, giving it excellent graphics and sound effects. This game should prove to be a good earner and I predict it will make the top 5 on the RePlay dedicated chart. It would be helpful if they sold it as a 3-player conversion for those multi-player cabinets that aren't earning. I have to say Capcom has been very fair in offering operators kits in the past. Final Fight is a blockbuster earner and it is sold as a kit. In fact, I feel Final Fight is better than any kit at the show.

G-LOC — Sega

G-LOC is available in three configurations: 1. a regular upright, 2. a sitdown cabinet that does not move, 3. a simulator sitdown that moves. It is similar graphically to After Burner. The game play, however is significantly different. The player must align each enemy up and shoot it down one at a time. It takes a lot more thinking than just shooting continuously. The object is to blow up a certain number of enemies specified by the game in a timed period. Successfully doing this advances to the next level. This is a good game, but because of its similarity to After Burner, my feeling is that it will not earn as high or

[Gene Lewin owns and operates the Pinball Plus arcade in Glendale, Calif. and has reviewed games debuted at national trade shows for RePlay in the past. His impressions are both objective and subjective and we present them in that vein as one more view of the newly available amusements for U.S. game rooms. ed]

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as long as After Burner did when it came out. It also does not have the motor to shake the joystick on the upright or sitdown.

Battle Shark — Taito

Battle Shark is available as a dedicated upright in a cabinet with a periscope. It is a new submarine game where the player looks through a periscope to shoot other subs, missiles etc. I felt that the sights on the screen should have responded faster than they did since the controller uses pots as opposed to switches. This will be a high-priced dedicated game.

World Grand Prix — Taito

WGP is available as a moving simulator or as an upright with a seat. It is a motorcycle racing game from a different perspective than Sega's Hang-On. The player is looking through the windshield instead of seeing his rider on the screen. The game gives the player a choice of automatic or manual shifting. Whenever making a turn, the whole picture on the screen shifts to give a more realistic feeling. I found the game difficult to control and was always going off the road.

The simulator has a motorcycle that the player rides on. When steering, the game itself tilts the motorcycle. It also has a fan to simulate a breeze as you are driving.

The past two Taito driving games (Continental Circuit and Chase HQ) have had numerous control problems. I hope they have made the controls reliable, especially the cables for the accelerator and brake. How many problems have we had with cables on Hang-On? As with most driving games, this one has a very high price tag.

Four Trax — Atari

Four Trax is available as a dedicated double game with seats. Atari had a scaled down version of the Four Trax here as opposed to the one at the AMOA show. They took off all the parts that make the ATV seats move and reduced the price by several thousands. This is an excellent game, but the cost is still a 5 digit number, so it is limited to only the best arcades. A one-player upright at a reasonable price would be a good game if they come out with it that way. Atari are you listening?

Neo•Geo — SNK

This system will be available in three formats. 1. MVS-25-6: a system that can hold up to six games in a large cabinet with a 25" monitor, 2. MVS-25-4: a system that can hold up to four games in a regular size cabinet with a 25" monitor and 3. MVS-19-4: the same thing as 2 with a 19" monitor.

This is a new multi-game system that SNK put a lot of thought into. It features a powerful 16-bit base computer and the cartridges can hold more ROM memory than most games use today. Each game can be played on lives or time, it depends on the individual game. This is an advantage over Nintendo's PlayChoice, which can only use a timer. The marquee has spots for instruction cards for each individual game that

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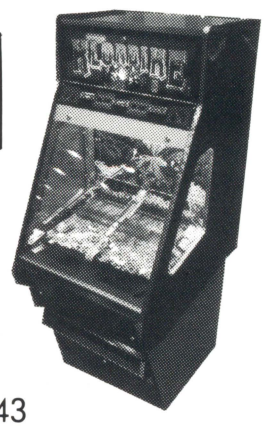

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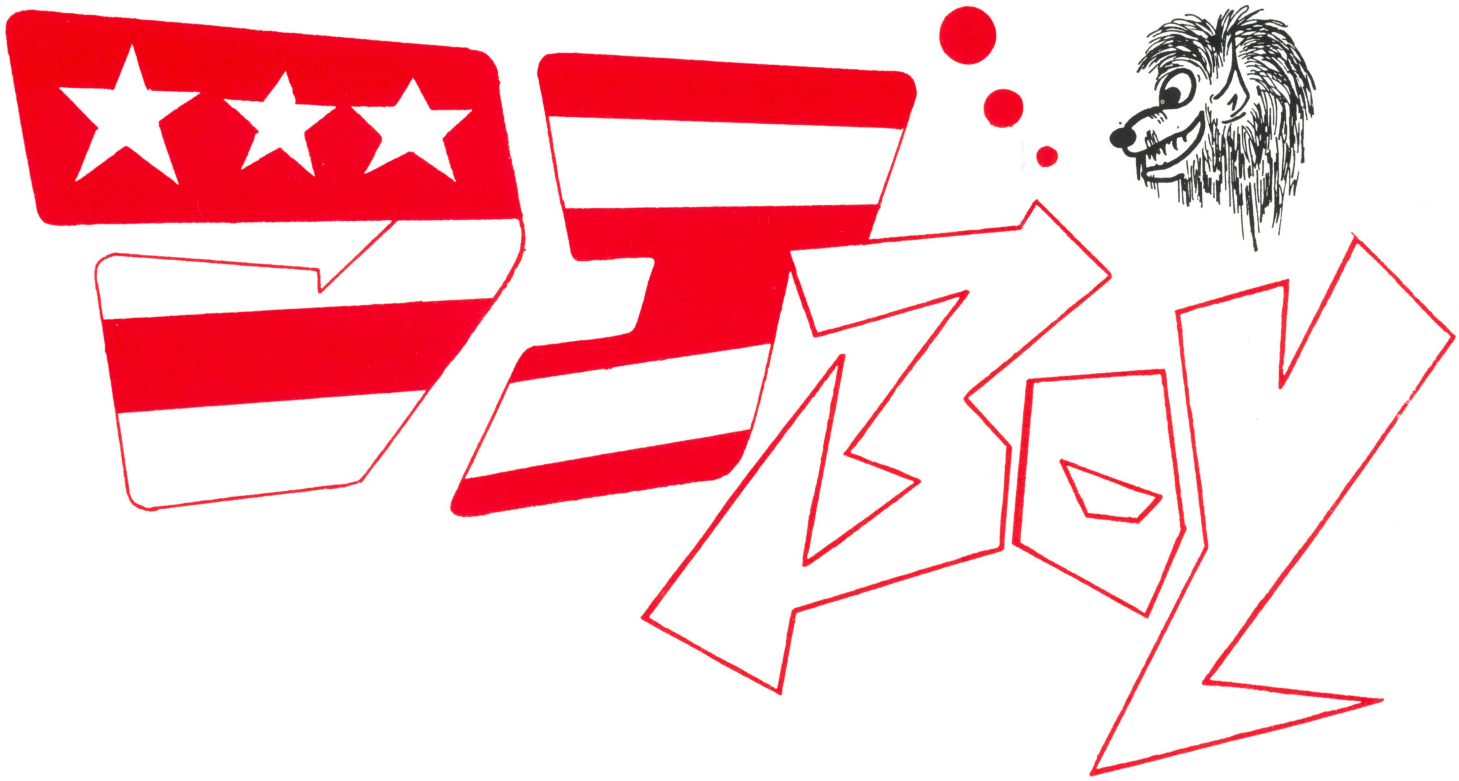

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is backlit when selected. All game settings can be done on screen for each game separately. The bookkeeping functions include a clock/calendar and give plays for each cartridge and average game time by week or by month. They did a real nice job with this part of the system. There were four games completed at the show. Baseball Stars is a well done baseball game with good graphics and sound. Nam-1975 is an army shoot 'em up game somewhat similar to Cabal. Magician Lord is a game where a magician travels and battles all kinds of enemies. Top Players Golf is another golf game. There was a motorcycle racing game that was not completed.

My recommendation with any system game is to base your buying decision on the earning power of the game that you are getting, not because it is a system. Nothing against SNK, but other manufacturers have come out with systems and not stood behind them. I think the idea of a system is the way to go for many games. Why should we have to buy a complete board every time we get a new game? It costs less for the manufacturer to produce only ROMs than a whole board. Why waste everyone's money? I'm not suggesting that every game be a ROM update, but often a new game is on the same board as an old one anyway. ROM kits are commonplace in Japan. A lot more games can be sold if the operator only has to invest $300 to $400 to update a useless board.

Slick Shot — Grand Products

It is available as a dedicated upright. Here is something different for the street operator for tavern locations. The cabinet has a pool table felt for the player to shoot a cue ball. A 2- or 4-foot cue stick is included with the game. The cue ball is carefully shot into a sensor area which detects the ball's speed and and direction, and translates its action on to the 25" monitor. It's a combination pool table and video game. It comes standard with a $1- and $5-bill acceptor.

REDEMPTION

Little Pro — Bromley

It is available as a complete game in a pinball-style cabinet with a ticket dispenser. Here's a cute new redemption game. It features miniature golf just like you would find at a miniature golf course. The shots are accomplished by a little man and the player can hit the ball soft, medium or hard by pressing buttons on the control panel. It has an alligator and a draw bridge that goes up and down, a dutch windmill that turns, and ramps to shoot the little ball up. This is a good new redemption game and I expect it to earn good in locations that have redemption.

CONVERSIONS

Klax — Atari

Klax is available as a dedicated upright, cabaret model, or soon as a conversion. It is Atari's newest thinking Tetris-style game. It is considerably different from Tetris. The object is to line up colored tiles in patterns. When only one player is playing, he gets the whole screen, and when two play simultaneously, the screen splits. This game should do well anywhere that Tetris earns good. It's good to see some new games that are not punch and kick or shoot 'em up.

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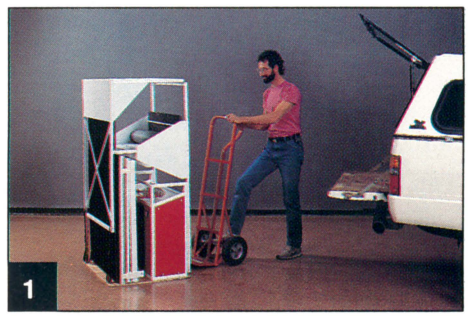



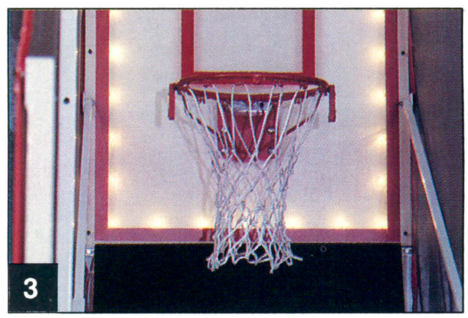

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Atari had an excellent 4-player Tournament Cyberball 2072 kit for VS dual cabinets. They quit making them and they may not still be available. It gives you a top earning game in an otherwise useless cabinet. They may make another run if demand is high enough.

Too Crude — Data East

Too Crude is available as a conversion for any horizontal game. It is another kick and punch game with cartoon like graphics. The game play is similar to Bad Dudes in some respects. I think this is a decent kit worth checking out.

Aliens — Konami

Aliens is available as a kit for any horizontal game. It is a 2-player interactive shoot 'em up game based on the movie Aliens. It features some of the scary looking creatures from the movie. The graphics are good, especially on a 25" monitor. This is one of the better kits at the show and it is worth seriously looking into.

Snow Bros. — Romstar

Available as a kit for any horizontal game, Snow Bros. is a cutsie game based on the Bubble Bobble theme. Its similarities are evident but it is more difficult and offers some new challenges. I think this game will never earn big money up front, but will be a steady earner for a long time, like Bubble Bobble still is. At the right price, this will be a good investment.

Cadash — Taito

Cadash is available as a kit for any horizontal game with the ability to link two together for 4-player simultaneous action. It is an adventure type of game where the player must go up to other travelers on the screen and gather hints. The player can select one of four characters, each with different powers and strengths. There is less action than most arcade games, and more emphasis on gathering clues and items. It reminded me of Thayer's Quest where the player had to find clues and figure out the right way to go. It is something different for the arcade industry, although games of this type are found in the home.

This is the first conversion game to have the link-up capability. I think this is an excellent idea to have an affordable game where two can be linked together. After all how many arcades can buy two of a $4000 game to link together. Just think if Final Fight or some other top earning kits had that ability. I hope, many other future conversions where it may be applicable, offer this as an option.

DJ Boy — Ammerican Sammy

DJ Boy is available as a kit for any horizontal game. It is a 2-player interactive kick, punch and jump game on roller skates. It features good music and dancing between the scenes. The graphics are good, especially on a big screen. This game



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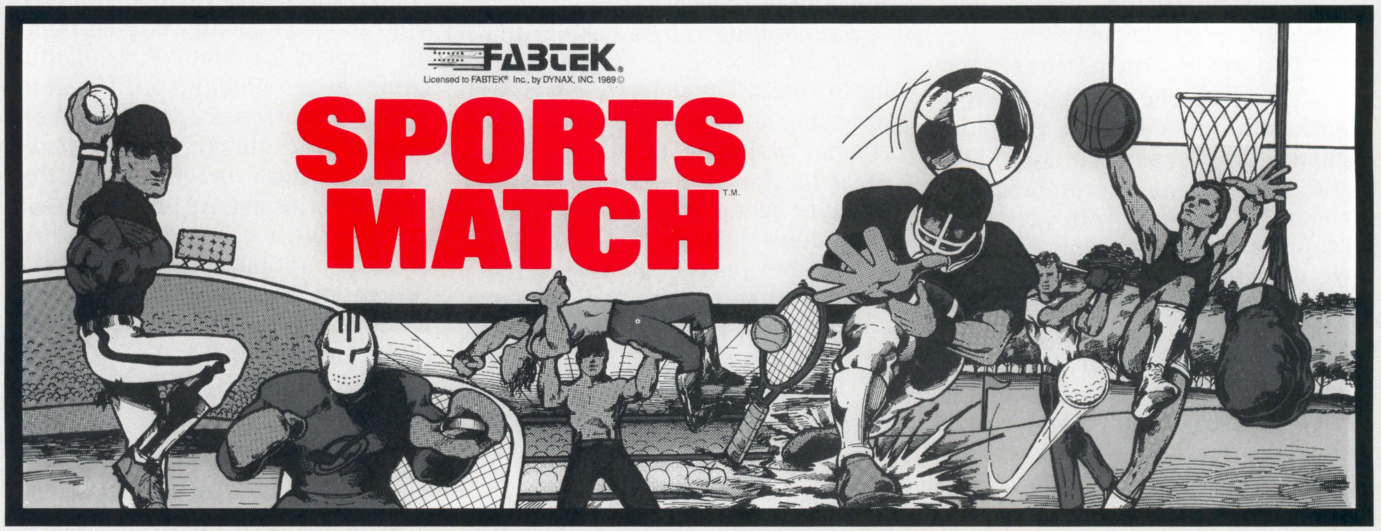

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will be a good earner, and is priced very right, less than $1000.

Air Busters — Sharp Image

It is available as a kit for any horizontal game or as a complete game in a Dynamo cabinet. This game is a 2-player interactive space shoot 'em up game with very good graphics. It features many different weapon powerups and has some unique scenes. In one such scene you are traveling at high speed through narrow tunnels, and unless you pick up a special weapon, it is very difficult. A new game worth checking out. I hear the test earnings are good.

Sports Match — Fabtek

Sports March is available as a kit for any horizontal game. It is a thinking game that is different from what we are used to. Two players can compete against each other, but they don't play at exactly the same time. The object is to match up tiles with the same picture. It is somewhat confusing at first, but as you learn the game, it is quite fun to play. This may not be a game for every location, but where it does catch on, it should earn good.

Bloxeed — Sega

Available as a kit for any horizontal game, Bloxeed is extremely similar to Tetris. The same shapes come down but now some blocks contain special weapons to add or take away blocks or other things. In the 2-player mode it plays much like Nintendo's hand-held Game Boy. When one player completes two lines at the same time, they appear on the other player's side on the bottom.

This is supposed to be a low- cost kit and should do as well as Tetris does. I wonder if it will earn more or not. Many arcades can do well with two Tetris games in one location, now you can have two different variations. I would not recommend replacing Tetris with this game, as there are diehard Tetris fans that could get upset.

OTHER KITS

There were a total of 6 shoot 'em up airplane games at the show. They are 1. Task Force Harrier by American Sammy, 2. Vapor Trail by Data East, 3. Fire Shark by Romstar, 4. Air Duel by Irem, 5. Raiden by Fabtek, and 6. Meta Fox by I-Vics. All the games are vertical 2-player interactive kits with weapons build up. Except for Meta Fox, all the games are so similar it is difficult to decide which ones are better than the others. Meta Fox is much slower paced and I feel that it's at the bottom of this list. As far as the rest go the price is going to have a very large impact on which is the best return on investment. Task Force Harrier is going to have a substantial price reduction soon, and I feel it is as good an earner as any of the others.

PINBALLS

Game Show — Bally/Midway

Ever since Williams switched Bally pinballs over to their system completely, the games have improved tremendously. The first game to be all Williams was Elvira. The theme of this new pinball is obviously a TV game show where you win prizes. You can win a car, trip, TV, and a trip. It's clever when you win a prize, the voice goes "you have won a $25,000 TV" or whatever. Overall it is an entertaining pinball and should earn quite well. The game show theme will give it a more universal appeal.

Phantom of the Opera — Data East

This new pinball is based on the show of the same name. A unique feature it has is the organ door that lifts up to allow the ball to be trapped for multi-ball. This game uses the solid state flipper which comes with a 1-year guarantee on the flipper coil against burnout. Are the electronics that drive the flipper guaranteed also? Sound effects are outstanding as with many of the Data East pinballs. The artist for the game graphics is Paul Faris who did many backglasses for Bally in the seventies.

Silver Slugger — Gottlieb/Premier

The latest from Gottlieb is a baseball themed game coming out at hopefully the start of baseball season. It keeps track of runs scored in addition to the regular score. Premier is addressing some of the operators' needs by offering this game at a price several hundred dollars less than Williams or Data East. They also have options that include a dollar-bill validator, ticket dispenser, and coin meter that are pre-wired in. R

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Pioneer's CD Juke & First Disc Compilations on Market; Distributors Now On Board Include Brady, CCME & Mondial

It's been about two years since the people at Pioneer in Japan first considered the idea of manufacturing a CD jukebox. The fruits of subsequent brain-storming, planning and design were presented to the operating industry at ACME as the electronics giant rolled out its first production model, the first seven of its song compilation discs and announced the names of its first eleven U.S. and Canadian distributors.

Since distribution is crucial to the success of a jukebox line, Pioneer's VP Paul Scribner was quite pleased to list the names of his first dealer network: Cleveland Coin Machine Exchange (including their Indianapolis office), Betson in Syracuse, Mondial, Roth Novelty, New England Coin-Op, World Wide, Moss, Weiner and Brady Distributing in the U.S.; Pacific Vend and Laniel (Canada) up in Canada. Some six other dealers were in negotiation with him as well, Scribner advised.

These distributors, by now, should have Pioneer product at their showrooms (shipping from Japan began during ACME itself). Besides selling the jukebox, the dealers will also encourage operators to purchase the hit and oldie compilation discs prepared for Pioneer by Diamond Time (7 discs are available now, 4 containing "current and pending singles hits," 3 containing evergreen oldies). An average of 15 songs is on each and covers all major musical categories (additional comp discs will be issued periodically).

Operators don't have to buy the compilations, but Scribner said although the discs will be "leased" for around $20 a pop, the cost per-song runs lower than, say, on a store disc containing only two favorite tunes. It's important to note that these discs are not "keepers" since Diamond Time only leases the rights to press them for a set amount of time (6 months to a year) after which, operators are to destroy them.



Some of Pioneer's new distributors join company execs during private meeting at ACME. From left: Roth Novelty's Howard Lucas & Phil Roth (behind Pioneer's U.S. chief Ted Karasawa shaking hands with World Wide's Fred Skor). After Pioneer's Paul Scribner come Laniel Canada's Ms. Laniel & Jean-Guy Laramee. Other dealers who took on the Pioneer line included Mondial, Moss, Betson-Syracuse & Pacific Vend.

Software is an important part of the Pioneer program, but the machine itself is what most operators will be interested in. The unit is called the *Laser Juke* and is taller and more slender than traditional jukeboxes. It can be purchased with one, two or three 18-disc "changers" inside for a maximum of 54 discs (each added changer costs more money, but in an inaugural program, Pioneer will give one extra changer free for the first jukebox an operator buys).

Scribner, proud of the workmanship in the production model, said Pioneer wants to go "one step beyond" to ensure that it works as well in the field as it does in the factory. He has contracted with an independent firm to run a field test with ten selected operating companies and report any problems back to the Pioneer U.S. headquarters in Carson, Calif. Scribner also wants his distributors to conduct the same test themselves with local customers.

Besides his announcement of the initial dealer network, Scribner also presented his newly-hired Western Regional Sales Manager Jerry Sheaks (in vending since 1983) and his Product Support Manager (distributor service liaison) Bob Sullivan. "We will provide conscientious marketing services to distributors and unparalleled service support besides," Scribner declared during a private meeting at ACME with the dealers.

He concluded the meeting with a most pleasant piece of news: beginning in April, Pioneer's Pomona, Calif. plant will begin tooling up to produce *Laser Jukes*. Rather than being built in Japan, the machines will be made in the U.S.A., and not only shipped from Pomona into the North American market and into Europe but (get this) right back to Japan itself! "I thought you'd get a kick out of that," smiled the Pioneer VP.

So, the homework is done, and the machine, the marketing and even the disc compilations are all well underway, all signaling the birth of another major contender for the CD jukebox sweepstakes. But as Marketing Manager Steve Rogers clearly hinted, this doesn't stop at audio CD: CD video and singalong karaoke are very much in the company's future product planning.

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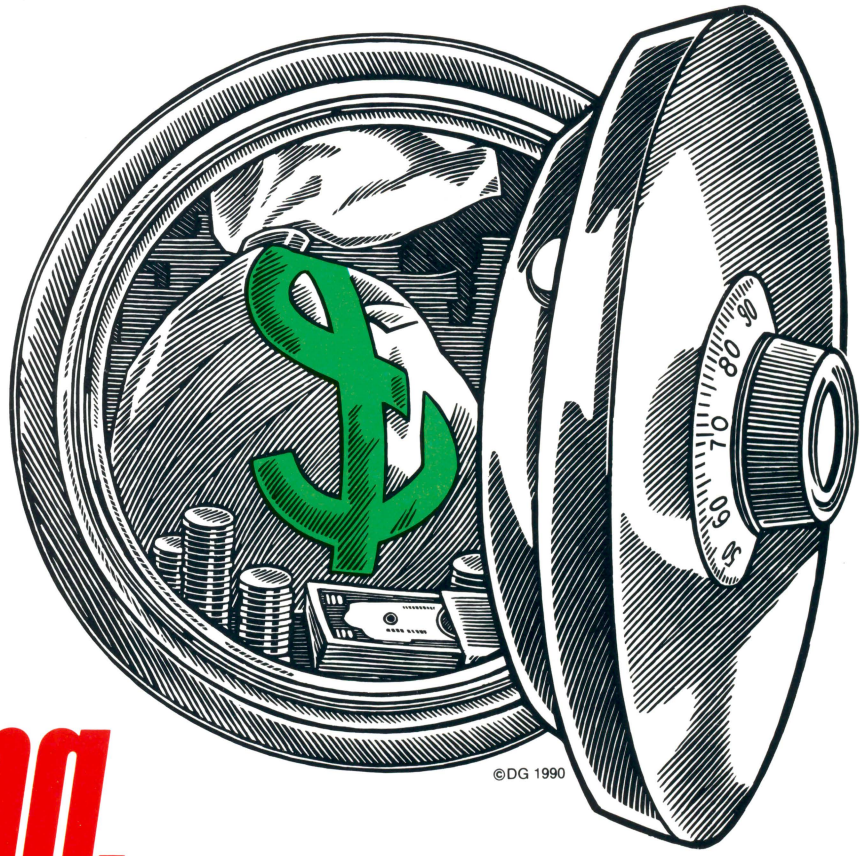


"Money costs too much," complained American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. At whatever cost, ready access to credit is a crucial need for those in the coin amusement business. Operators and distributors constantly need to finance the purchase of new machines, upgrades of plant and equipment, and expansion of their businesses.

This month, RePlay presents a special section on financing. First, our operators opinion page asks the question, "What is your experience with getting credit or bank loans?" Most operators said they wished the road to credit was smoother.

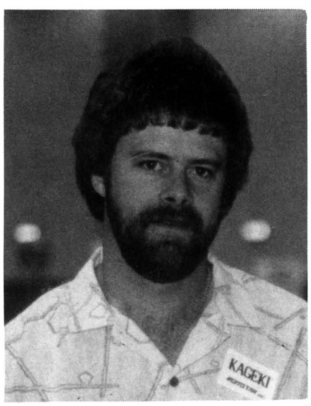
Next, a primer on getting along with your bank comes from operator and consultant Charley Ross. It's a clear, readable walk through the ABC's of applying for a loan. Don't miss Charley's 10-point program, "The Do's and Don'ts of Getting a Bank Loan."

A joint interview with operator Mike Leonard and his banker Mike Johnson explores the changing relationship between operators and bankers. Both men agreed a closer working partnership, with an emphasis on understanding operator cash flow, is beneficial to both parties.

Finally, a look a credit managers who work for coin machine manufacturers. These men and women supervise the credit lifeline used by many distributors. "We like to say yes," credit managers stressed. They also stressed that the industry as a whole needs more knowledge about the world of finance. We hope this special section helps some tradesters make a beginning toward of that goal.

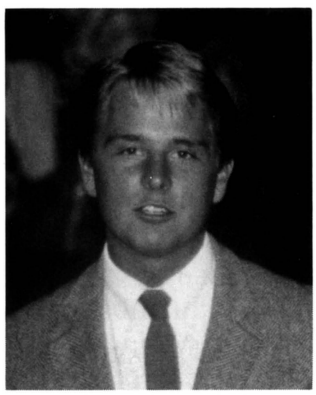
Operator Opinions

Q: *What's your experience with bank loans or other types of financing?*



ALAN CHAMBERS
Chambers Music Company
Ogden, Utah

We've run into the same problems with our bank that many operators have. The nature of our business is that you buy a video game and it earns money for a little while; then six months later, they're no good. Banks don't understand this. They'll max you out at 18 months at the most. Whether it's a pool table, a jukebox or whatever, they have a difficult time understanding our business. It make take you five, six or seven years to pay the games off, but the machine's earning power may be dead long before that, so you've still got it on your books all that time and it's really only the wood value. Banks will loan you money, but they won't take machines as collateral. We've tried to explain to some of these guys how it works, and some bank people have even been to our locations. But their hands are tied by the policy set by the higher-ups, so there's not a lot they can do, even if they understand our problems. Leasing is out there as an alternative, but that's often a bad deal, too. It would nice if AMOA would set up their own financing corporation, maybe. Then we'd have a financing source that understands that it's normal if some months are slow, so they'll let you ride two or three months. Banks don't!

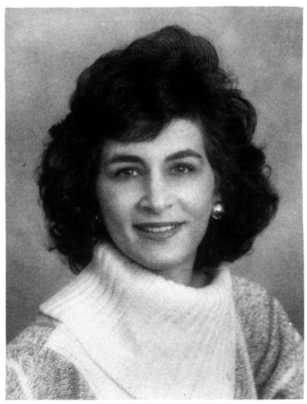


RON KRAMER
Video Bob's
Mill Valley

I do all my financing as trade credit through my distributor. They give me 30 days on a kit, or when I go for a dedicated piece I use Firestone Financial, which is the company my distributor has been dealing with for so many years. In fact, I'm getting ready to send off my second payment for *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* to Firestone! Back when Bally was in this area, we used GMAC, and I've also got some experience dealing with Security Pacific. Usually, my distributor asks for 25% down. The percentage of interest is fairly reasonable, although there is a much larger processing fee than a few years ago. It's gone up about $100 per contract. That's really adding to interest, but for a small businessman with cash coming in slowly all the time, it makes more sense to put the 25% down and pay the interest, rather than pay the entire purchase price up front. I can make that down payment back in a month in my arcade, if it's a really great game. By the time the contracts come through and I have to start making payments, I keep my fingers crossed that I've chosen wisely and that the game will make a good monthly contribution. Firestone Financial has a good understanding of the business and sometimes they will give you an option of six or nine months for payments. For me, it makes it seem like the machine is paying for itself, instead of me having to take the money out and invest it up front.

SHARON HARRIS
Stan Harris & Company
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We're fighting a lot with our bank lately. After all these years, I think we're going to dump them. As with anything else in corporate life, when there's a change of management, all bets are off. We did have a very, very good long-term relationship with a wonderful account rep. He was so wonderful that he was promoted



high up. So was our next account rep. Now the bank has merged with another firm whose philosophy and personnel are quite different. My father doesn't even like to talk to them. We're very unhappy with them and they know it. We have the usual problems with banks not wanting to take machines as collateral, not understanding our debt to assets ratio and so forth. Also, few banks will take large numbers of coins without big surcharges. Our original bank did, but now the new people don't. That's a big issue we're keeping in mind as we look around for a new bank. Can they service the account, not just with checks and dollar bills, but also will they work with you on your coin allotment? In addition, we want to be able to use lines of credit to make loans to customers. We want a banker that will let us take advantage of their good services for our location accounts. When you're selling your company to locations, all operators are running the same machines, so it's important to be able to call your

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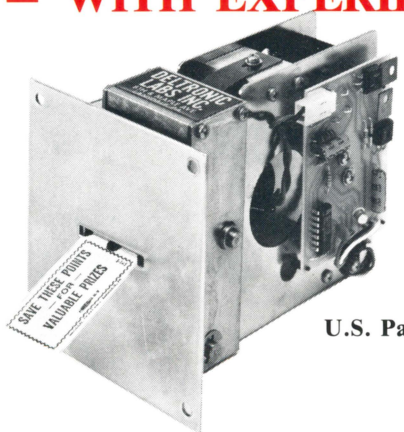

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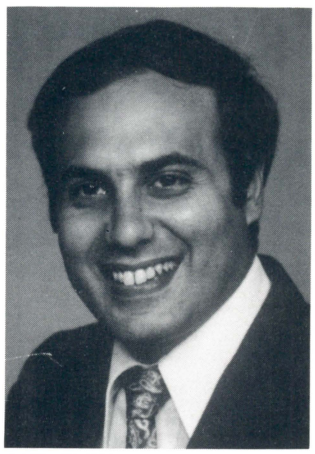
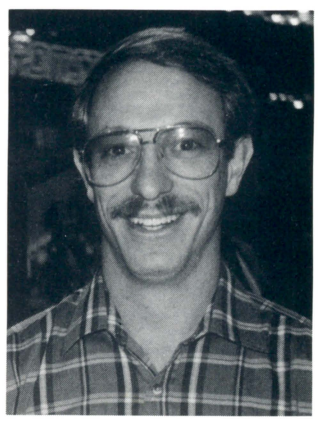
banker and get certain services for your customer. It gives you more credibility with the location.

In purchasing equipment, most banks want you to finance the equipment through them. That's got a certain amount of validity, because you don't over-extend yourself. But it also gives them absolute control of what you have, which is what they want. It takes away your ability to operate somewhat independently. If we've bought a game that's a dog, I may have to wait for the bank to give me permission to sell my equipment (even if I've already got a buyer lined up and waiting), because it's secured with a financing statement and security agreement. So we've always financed our purchases through our cash flow. You get more independence that way, as well as more respect from your banker.



PHIL ELUM
Elum Music Company
Massillion, Ohio

We might be a little more fortunate than the average operator. We've done business with the same bank for several years and we enjoy an excellent credit rating. So we've never had problem with a bank loan. Generally, we establish a line of credit and they go on our signatures for collateral, and they don't worry about attaching a lien on any of our equipment. But we very rarely use the bank, because we've been able to pay for new games out of operating cash flow. We try to do it within 30 to 90 days, so we don't have any debt. Many operators I talk to don't have much of a problem with banks, either. The banks seem to understand our business, perhaps because Ohio has many large operators. . .who, by the way, don't really need the bank. Small operators get credit from distributors. All we need in credit from a distributor is 60 to 90 days. We can pay that back, whereas smaller operators need years and only distributors can extend that kind of credit. I don't think it's a healthy relationship if the distributor is the sole source of financing for these small operators. You're only as strong as your customer or location is, and these customers aren't what they used to be. If a location sells or goes out of business in a year or 18 months, it doesn't matter that you have a contract for two years. So this kind of financing may not be healthy for distributors, and in my opinion the operator who has to borrow for every piece of equipment won't be in business very long.



ROBERT DUBOW
Active Coin Entertainment
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Banks don't understand our business. Right now, in order to qualify for a loan, they want businessmen to show a debt-to-asset ratio of two or three, to one. It's that low. In this business, that's tough to do. The key problem is that banks don't want our machines as collateral. It doesn't matter what value the games are appraised at; coin machines have no value to the bankers. We're not even listed

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Meltec inc.

in their national guidebook that assesses different types of businesses. This leaves us working on more of a personal basis than an asset basis; they're lending money based on character and our record in the community. I don't know if we coin machine operators ever do establish ourselves on the same level as other businesses. Does having an ongoing relationship with a particular banker help? Sure, but the problem I've got with individual bankers is that they move so fast, especially when you're dealing with a large, corporate bank. By the time you get one banker educated, he's been moved and another one comes in. We wind up going to distributors for financing more than we'd like to, because your interest rate is much higher from that source. Can operators, as a group, do anything to get the credit rating our industry deserves from banks? I don't know. I'd be curious to find out how other operators get a good credit line, without having been in business for 75 years!



CAROL FABER
M&C Vending
Teaneck, New Jersey

We don't work with banks. We pay cash for what we buy and I think a lot of operators do. Truthfully, it's a better business practice because you get a cash discount and you don't have to pay interest, so you're better off. Banks did understand our business when we dealt with them; they're very attuned to business in this area. We've been dealing with one bank for quite a while and we have established a personal relationship with individual bankers. Having your banker know you is an important element, and so is having a banker who understands New Jersey. There's one bank in New Jersey that tries to direct most of their loans and financing to New Jersey businesses. Maybe that's why they do well as a bank. If they understand their customers' business, they can help their customers more.



LARRIANNE SIMON
Pride Enterprises
Huntsville, Alabama

Like most operators, I still can't get the bank to accept video games as collateral, even though I have a substantial line of credit. We have to personally guarantee the loans based on our personal credit, our houses, cars or whatever property we have. It's a shame that banks are turning away from our industry's product, primarily because of the high risks. Those risks include the short earnings life of most games, and the difficulty banks would have in finding the games, if they ever needed to take possession. (Operators do rotate their equipment often.) The best recourse for many operators is probably getting financing through those distributors which have good relationships with banks, and which have good lines of credit. These distributors can make loans to operators.

Operators aren't alone in this problem, of course. Many small businessmen need short-term loans, but lack a viable piece of property (such as a house) to use as collateral. And most banks don't want to lend you $50,000 unless they know you can repay the loan out of your cash flow. If you're a small operator, your cash flow is reinvested into new equipment. It's a real Catch-22 situation for any person who's been in business for just a year and who has a start-up need. How can they jump over that hurdle?

Our mayor's "Vision 2000" steering committee, of which I'm a member, is trying to solve that problem on a local basis. We've proposed a revolving loan program which can make low-interest loans of $10,000 to $50,000 available to new businesses. Nine local banks and the city treasury will supply letters of credit for this program, with banks supplying 75% of the working capital and the city supplying 25%. This promotes the development of new businesses, yet spreads the risk among the various organizations. If approved, the fund should total several million dollars and will be administered by a board consisting of bankers, business people and city officials. Loan applications by people who've been turned down by the bank will be reviewed by this board. I'm chairman of the project, and one of the criteria I believe in very strongly is a good business plan with definite goals and well-thought-out steps to reach those goals. (This is something more coin machine operators need to do, by the way; too many operators try to run their businesses by the seat of their pants.) If the application is accepted, the loan will be made with no strings attached. As funds are repaid, the money will go back into the revolving loan program. It's a very exciting concept and I'm enormously pleased that the "Vision 2000" group and the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce are backing the proposal. We expect the program to be approved and begin working this year!

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Impressing Your Banker

operator/consultant Charley Ross tells you how to get a loan

"So... You Want to Impress Your Banker?" was the name of a copyrighted seminar given at the recent ACME show by Charles Ross of Harlingen, Texas. Charley has been an operator (Helix Enterprises, Inc.) for 15 years. He's given seminars since the first AOE shows in the early 1980s. His background includes university teaching (accounting, financing, management and economics). He also runs his own consulting firm, Innovative Management Consultants, offering low-end computer programs for operators and seminars for amusement operators at national and state shows.

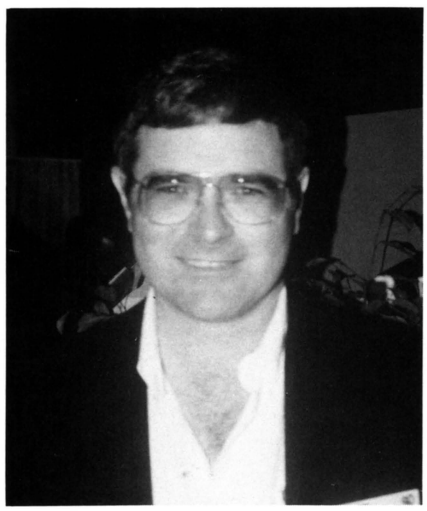
He's darned good at it, too. "I try to take the facts of the textbook and present it with the reality of the situation that operators actually face in the field," Charley explained.

With Charley's express permission, we adapted the following article from his seminar speaking text. It makes easy and informative reading, but don't kid yourself: there is nothing like hearing Charley Ross talk in person! His seminars offer more detail, more examples, Q&A sessions for your specific concerns, and the incomparable advantage of Charley's friendly personality. Check upcoming trade events (such as this fall's AMOA) to see if you can hear Charley. It's a five-star show!

— the editors

So, you want to impress your banker? Operators face many questions when it comes to dealing with banks. For instance — should you get a loan at all? How can you check your financial health, before considering a loan? What should you tell your banker about the amusement industry and your company?

Then there are those "other" issues — like, what your banker is looking for. Like, what *not* to tell your banker! The following article will consider all of these questions. It will give you some useful pointers on making your proposal and "the do's and don'ts of applying for a loan."



CHARLEY ROSS

SHOULD YOU GET A BANK LOAN?

The number one question to ask yourself is, "Why do I want to get a loan?" Some business needs and projects are reasonable justifications for a loan. Others aren't. For example, if the reason you want the loan is for expansion, new support equipment (trucks, etc.), replacing old equipment, or paying taxes, it makes sense to apply for a loan.

If your reason for wanting financing is to buy another route, buy a partner out, our buy a computer or other equipment to increase efficiency, then you *probably* should try for a loan.

If you want a loan because you're having problems paying the bills, forget it. Concentrate instead on boosting revenues, cutting costs and — if need be — stretching debt payments so you can pay the bills.

Now, if your reason for wanting a loan is sound, there are two more questions you should consider before going to your banker. Question number two is, "If I borrow the money, will (the thing I'm going to spend the money on) create enough cash flow to pay off the loan?"

Question number three is, "If I borrow the money at today's interest rate (say 13%), can I employ that money where it will make me more than a 13% return?"

If you don't have good answers to those questions, you shouldn't be shopping for a bank loan.

CHECKING YOUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

It's a good idea to "take your financial temperature" before your consider a loan. A responsible banker will certainly want to know your firm is in good financial shape, before he even thinks about lending you any of the bank's money.

First, study your present income statement. Do you have a healthy net income? Do you have a good percentage of gross income?

Second, study your present balance sheet...particularly your debt-to-assets ratio. Are all your payments current? Can you afford more payments? Is your ratio of debt to total assets less than 50%?

Third, study your present cash flows. What if your cash flow before the loan?

Fourth, make *projections* of cash flow *at least six months into the future.* Don't fudge. Be as accurate as possible. What will your cash flow be after the loan? Consider the new payment that you will have, as well as the new revenues (if any) from the new investment.

WHAT TO TELL YOUR BANKER ABOUT THE AMUSEMENT INDUSTRY

As many operators have learned the hard way, banks often don't understand our industry. If you want to establish a good, solid relationship with your bank (and get loans), it's your job to educate your banker about coin operated amusements.



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Remember, it may make sense to us . . . but then, we've been in it for a while. Outsiders often don't have the foggiest notion of how this business operates. Or, worse, they have negative preconceptions which must be cleared up.

Tell your banker only the positive points of the industry. If you can find positive news media articles, include them.

Tell him how old the industry is, and briefly describe its potential for the the future in your area.

Show your banker copies of *RePlay* and *Play Meter* so he can see the quality of the publications serving the industry.

You may also want to tell your banker about the positive benefits of the loan to the community, his bank, and your company. Benefits to the community include the people you employ (stress this factor), taxes you pay and entertainment you provide. Benefits to the bank include your average cash balance (stress this), your record of repaying past loans, customers you have recruited for the bank, etc. Benefits to your company will include enabling your company to grow and increase its position in the marketplace, etc.

What if you encounter an aggressive banker who proceeds to tell you all that is bad about this industry? Then I suggest you either be prepared for an uphill battle, or change bankers!

Do try to explain and make your banker understand what your business actually is. You understand it, but he may not. Tell him what your typical day is like. Tell him about relationships with locations, buying new equipment, moving machines, collecting, and so on.

Also, if you deem it necessary, tell the banker how you do business. Explain it in detail, right down to dollars and sense, cash box income for different types of equipment, location splits, salaries, gas and insurance expenses, etc.

WHAT NOT TO TELL YOUR BANKER

Don't tell him about the tremendous real depreciation in the amusement industry. He may know already. But if he doesn't, don't rock the boat.

Don't tell him that his collateral (amusement machines) may be valueless in 18 months.

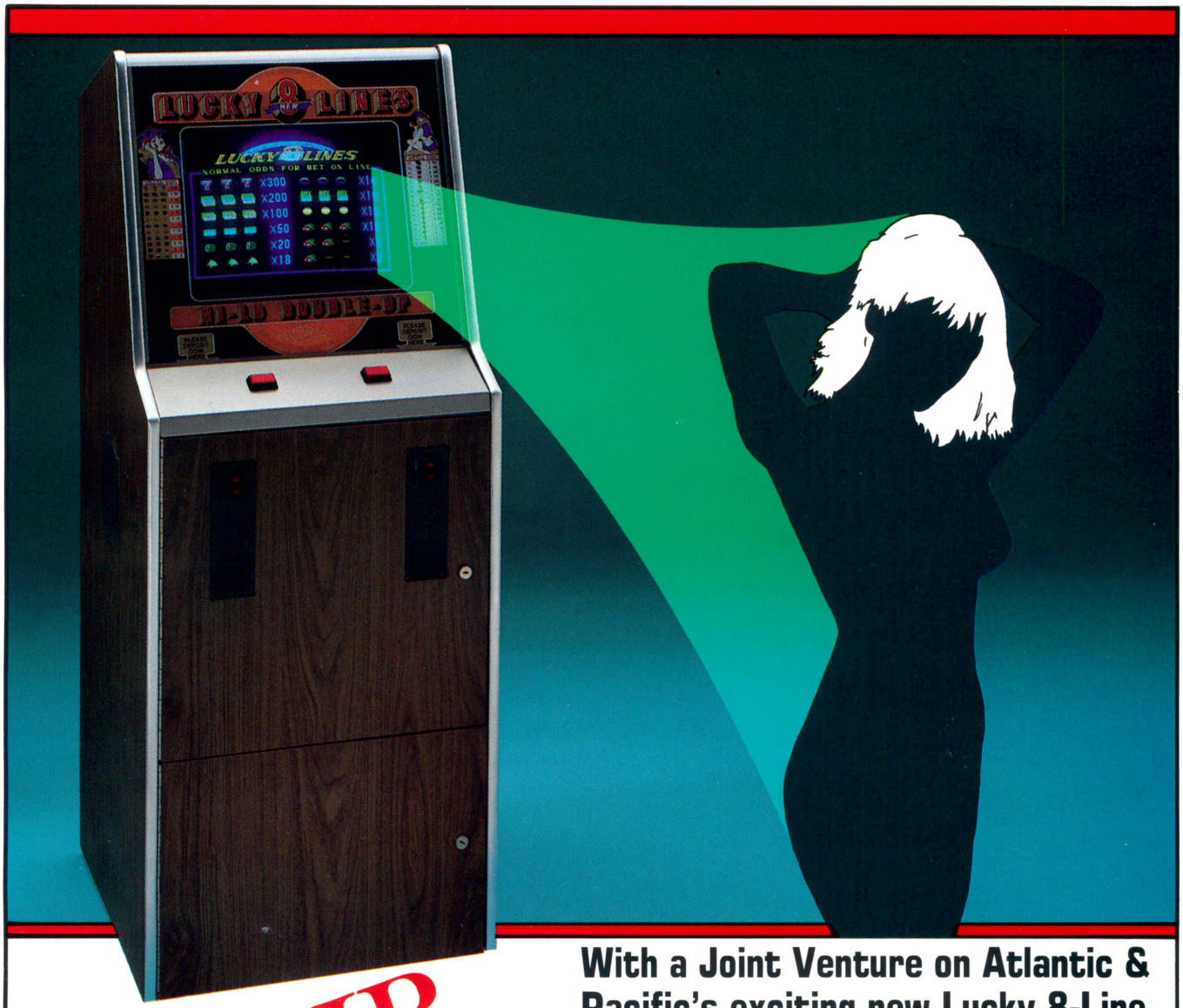
As a rule, don't use the word "arcade" or "gameroom" when talking to your banker. Use "family amusement center," or "family entertainment center." Remember, many bankers are of the "old school" and think video games are a "black mask" or immoral sort of business.

Don't be misled by any of the above rules and think that they imply you should lie to your banker. Don't lie to the banker.

WHAT YOUR BANKER IS REALLY LOOKING FOR

The relationship between you and your banker, in the simplest terms, is this. You are looking for a loan. What is your banker really





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Operator Charley Ross leads the ACME '90 Seminar titled "So. . . You Want to Impress Your Banker?"

looking for? He wants "The Three C's of Credit" — character, collateral and capacity. In other words, bankers ask themselves, "Who is this guy, how in the heck is he going to pay me back, and what can I sell if he goes belly up?" Here's how you can show him you've got the "Three C's" and are a good risk for that loan.

A GOOD ASSET: YOUR CHARACTER

One way to help a banker feel comfortable in making the loan is to show him that you are a person of good character. The objective of giving information on your character is to show the banker you are a person of quality who possesses the background and talents to make the loan *earn money*. Also, information about your character should help show you will be able to replay the loan.

When getting to know a banker, include the following information about yourself: trade organizations you are a member of (like AMOA). Your educational background. Seminars you have attended. Conventions you have attended. Civic organizations you are a member of. Experience in this industry (applies to you and your key employees). Also give the banker any other information you feel he needs to know about you, so you can show him you know what you're doing!

COLLATERAL

Banks want collateral when they make loans. The banker's objective is to have something to sell, in case you quit making the payments on the loan.

What constitutes acceptable collateral? The life of the collateral should be closely related to the term of the loan. Don't borrow on video games for five years; they don't live that long. The more liquid the collateral is (that is, the easier it is to sell for cash), the happier the banker will be.

"Percentage advance" is the amount of cash the banker will lend against any collateral. For video games, the percentage advance may be low, depending on your banker's attitude toward you and the industry.

Be prepared to give much more collateral if you plan to buy *used* video games. For example, I saw a banker turn down a $50,000 loan with $100,000 worth of video games for collateral.

Be prepared to give "substitute" collateral. If the banker is conservative, or if he's been burned by some other operator, you had best be prepared to offer real estate, automobiles, or something else of value, as collateral. Remember, the banker is looking for valuable property he can easily sell, in case you stop paying on the loan.



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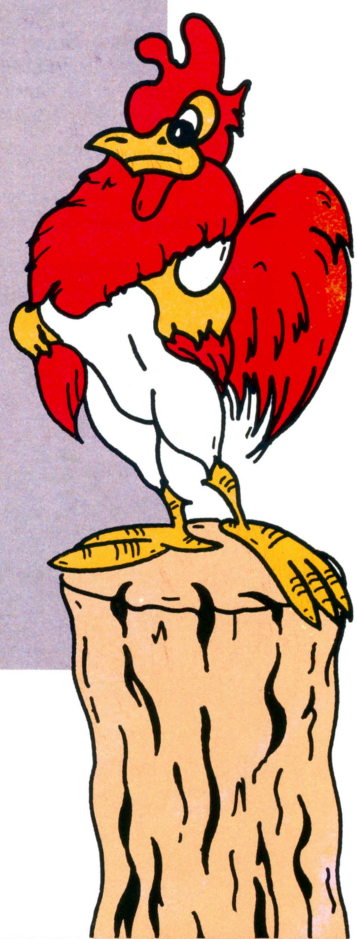

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CAPACITY

Before you apply for a loan, you must know the following: what is your capacity to pay? Can you make the loan payments? Here is where your cash flow analysis can save you the embarrassment of having the loan officer say "no" to your loan request.

Your loan payment should be no more than 50% of your net cash flow every month. The lower the percentage, the better. This may sound high, but remember, you are in a "volatile industry"!

That's a fancy way of saying your income can drop real fast, with no warning. Bankers who are educated about our industry, know this... and they also know it can cause your loan repayment figure to look a lot bigger all of a sudden.

Here's an example, and we'll work with a mere $100 figure for purposes of clarity. Suppose a company has suffered a 20% drop in cash flow income, from $100 to $80. The cash outflow might drop, too, but it will drop less, since overhead remains much the same... so let's say outflows fall from $70 to $60. This means net cash flow has fallen from $30 to $20. The loan payment, we'll say, was $15. That stays at the same level, obviously. So what is the net cash flow after the loan payment is made? Well, when cash flow income was $100, net cash flow was originally $15. But now that income has fallen 20%, the net cash flow is only $5! This company has a two to one loan payment coverage. Further drop in sales will cause serious problems.

That's the kind of possibility bankers think about when they consider loaning money to amusement machine operators. And that's why they like to see loan payments which are a small percentage of net cash flow.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Your banker wants to know many things about you and your company — especially financial information. When it comes to getting a loan, your financial information will do more to aid you (or kill you) than any other data you can provide. Key financial data includes your income statement, cash flow statement and balance sheet.

Income statement: this shows revenues the company brought in, less the expenses you incurred. The remainder is a net income or net loss. The income statement is for a period of time such as a year or a month. It should be presented in a simple one-page format. Don't list income tax if you can help it. (You may not know the current tax liability, due to extension, etc.) Another hint for dressing up your income statement: calculate net income divided by revenues. The higher this number is, the better.

Cash flow statement: this is an account of where the cash came from (collections, game sales, etc.) and where cash went (wages, equipment purchases, taxes, rents, etc.). This, too, should be on one sheet.

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Another sheet showing cash flow projection should be prepared for at least six months into the future. This is an excellent tool for picking up trends in cash deposits and checks written. This can easily be done with a computer spreadsheet program.

Balance sheet: this shows the assets, which are things the company owns; liabilities, which are things the company owes; equity, which is the claim to the assets by the owner. The balance sheet is always as of a specific date. Again, a one-page document should be possible.

OTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In addition to your financials, you should also include:

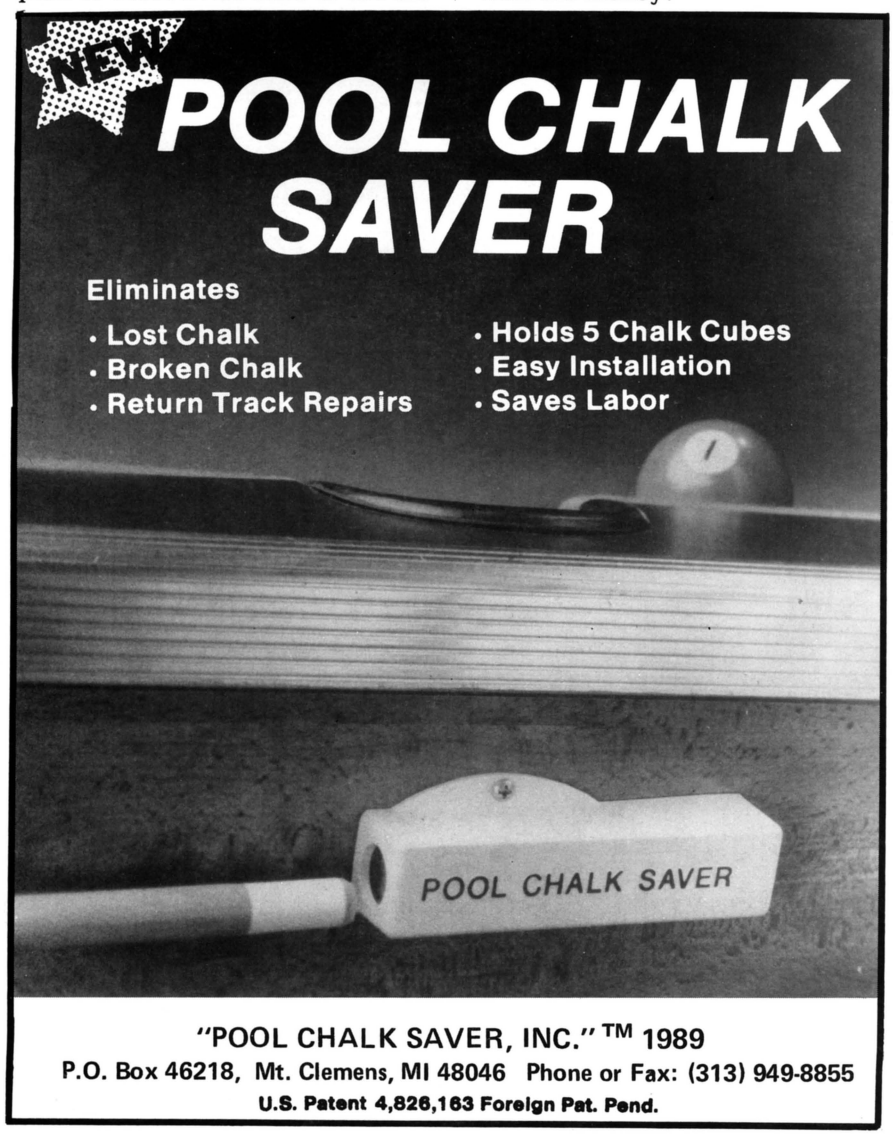
1. Exactly how much money you plan to borrow. Be sure to tell the banker how much you need, and make sure it's enough!

2. How is the money going to be paid back — monthly, quarterly or in a lump sum? If you want a good chance of getting another loan in the future, be sure you can actually deliver on your repayment promises.

3. How long do you plan to borrow the money? Remember, the quicker the repayment, the more valuable the loan is to the bank. Longer loans are higher risk for the bank, and come with higher interest rates.

4. A classic bank question: "How much of your own money do you have in the project?" That's particularly valid if you are presenting a new venture.

5. What are you planning to do with the money?



PRESENTATION OF YOUR PROPOSAL

Appearances count. Sometimes you get a loan (or don't get one) because of the suit you're wearing. I suggest you type your proposal and make it professional. Place each sheet in a glare-resistant page protector, then place all the pages in a notebook which is sized to the number of pages. Use press-on or rub-on letters on the front page of the notebook. If you think your proposal will go before a loan committee, have several copies prepared.

A proposed outline may include the following: company history; description of products and services offered; current financial information (see above); list of present debt obligations and times payment coverage before the new loan; proposed loan and its use; proposed payback period and method; proposed collateral; projected cash flow from the proposed loan (be sure to show ability to pay the loan back); credit references; personal data on the company principals. Include a table of contents. Try to have each of these items covered on a single page.

Notice how the "Three C's of Credit" have been covered? Notice how all the relevant questions have been answered? Bankers who get a proposal like this one should have just about all the information they need to make a decision about your loan.

PARTING ADVICE

Always go for a simple interest loan. Avoid add-on interest. Avoid credit life insurance.

The world of finances can be quite complex, but common sense and a step-by-step approach will help you succeed in this arena. The above information is designed to help you overcome the hurdles, real and imagined, regarding obtaining a bank loan.

Don't be surprised if it doesn't cover all the problems and questions you've encountered, or will encounter in the future. Every business is different, every situation is different and every banker is different. After all, you have to remember that bankers are people, too.

Good luck! R

The Ten-Point $ Plan

"Do's & Don'ts of Getting a Bank Loan" — a guideline by Charley Ross

1 Don't go into the bank to get a bank loan with nothing in your hands to present to the banker. Bring the proper papers: your company's financial information, an attractively-presented proposal, etc.

2 You may, however, go into the bank empty-handed if your purpose is simply to "test the water." That is, if you have a question such as, "Mr. Banker, would you be interested in the possibility of loaning my company money for. . ." If the banker says yes, then you can make an appointment and bring the paperwork at that time.

3 You may violate rule number one if you have a good and long-standing relationship with your banker.

4 Try to know your banker's "dollar loan limit of authority." All bankers have a loan limit. For example, he can loan up to $50,000 with no one else's approval. If you go over his "dollar loan limit" then he must take your proposal to the board or the loan committee. (Remember: if your loan proposal must go before the loan committee, then your personal banker is your representative at that meeting.)

5 Don't be intimidated by the bank and the banker. Remember that without lending money, the bank will have to close its doors. Money is their product, just as video games, pool, pins, jukeboxes, etc. are your products.

6 Don't hesitate to haggle or bargain over the interest rate. Remember that the interest rate is the price the banker is asking for his product (money). Also, don't hesitate to check with another bank to see what rate they would charge. After all, you shop prices when it comes to buying new equipment or a vehicle, don't you?

7 Don't take the negative position. There are two ways to view a loan. The wrong way: you are there with a beggar's bowl out. The right way: you are there to purchase the use of a commodity, in this case money.

8 Do be prepared to turn over your income tax returns to the banker, but **don't** offer them unless he asks.

9 Don't expect to have none of your own money in a project. Today, most bankers like for 25% to 35% of the money in a project to be yours.

10 Don't be cheap. If you aren't good with numbers, then hire an accountant to help. You may also hire someone to make the proposal look good.

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INTERVIEW

A Creative Partnership

"we work together," say operator Mike Leonard & his banker Mike Johnson

One operator who gets along swimmingly with his banker is Mike Leonard (Coin-Op Specialists, Adrian, Mich.). Of course, it helps if you are the second-generation operator to do business in town. (Mike took over the route his dad had originally started some time earlier.) It also helps if your banker is someone like Mike Johnson of Society Bank (headquartered in Cleveland, with a local branch in Adrian), who takes the time to learn about the coin machine business.

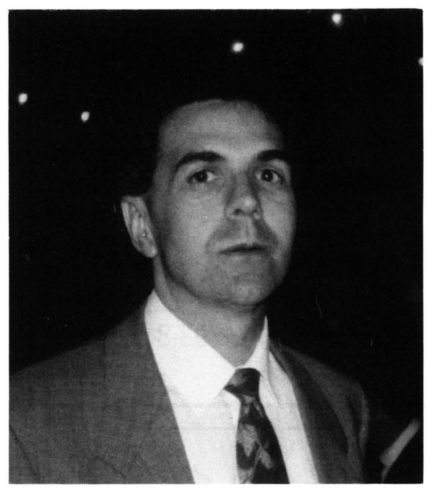
The two Mikes have developed a constructive relationship based on personal respect and mutual understanding of each other's industries, needs and concerns. We spoke to both fellows about operating, banking and how the two mix. Their remarks make for informative (and profitable!) reading. (By the way, if subjects like net cash flow, payment schedules, etc. are brand new to you, perhaps you should first read the essay by Charley Ross, "Impressing Your Banker." You can find it elsewhere in this issue's special section on coin-op finances.)

REPLAY: How long have you two been doing business together?

MIKE JOHNSON: My personal experience with Mr. Leonard started last year, but as an institution our bank has had a relationship with Mike since he took over Coin-Op Specialists in 1984.

REPLAY: Mike Leonard, when you first met Mike Johnson, what did you tell him about yourself and the coin machine business?

MIKE LEONARD: Mike Johnson replaced an earlier loan officer with whom I had enjoyed a good working relationship. It took a little adjustment for me to get a line on his needs and what he needed from me and my company. Those needs changed from what the previous loan officer thought he needed, in order to determine credit lines and so on. Mike Johnson took a more active role in learning the structure of the coin-op business.



MIKE LEONARD

REPLAY: Mike Johnson, as a banker, exactly what did you want to know about Coin-Op Specialists?

MIKE JOHNSON: We dug into the cash flow, assets versus liabilities, makeup of assets (on the basis of what Coin-op Specialists had in true market value versus book value). We also looked into what they were carrying on their books.

REPLAY: Why was that important?

MIKE JOHNSON: Any vending business such as Coin-Op Specialists has significant depreciation that's taken every month and every year, as a deduction against earnings. That depreciation number is taken, not just against earnings, but also against routes, inventory and against the whole ball of wax. In the coin machine business, the total depreciation figure is a fairly large number, as measured against the net profit number at the end of the year.

REPLAY: So depreciation figures affect the book value of a company's assets, versus the actual market value of assets.

MIKE JOHNSON: Yes. For an operator, the relationship between those two values is significantly different from what an ordinary retailer's situation would be. When I first met Mike Leonard and we evaluated his company, his CPA seemed to have a very good handle on all this.

REPLAY: Did the difference between the operating business and more "ordinary" types of small business, make you sit up and take notice?

MIKE JOHNSON: When I first got involved with Coin-Op Specialists, my understanding of what a banker gets involved in, regarding traditional cash flow, was different from how it's done with a more traditional business.

REPLAY: Let's get into that in a little more depth. Exactly how was it different?

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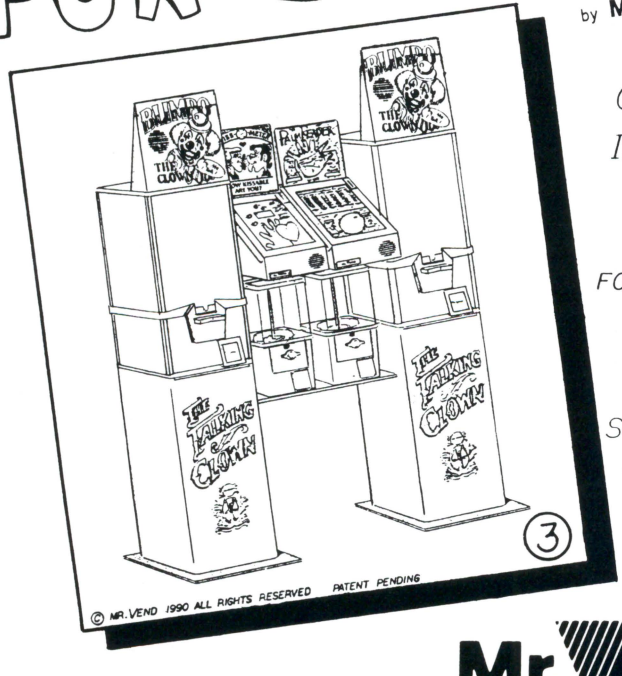

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MIKE JOHNSON: After an operator takes a large depreciation expenditure off net earnings, it typically doesn't leave as much as it might in other types of business. Looking at an operator's cash flow plus total depreciation or amortization, minus or plus if there's a profit or loss, determines the cash flow available to service debt. So I had to change my mind: a typical retailer will have some depreciation expense, but not to the same extent as a vending company like Coin-Op Specialists.

REPLAY: What kind of depreciation did your operation use, Mike Leonard?

MIKE LEONARD: We used the quickest depreciation and amortization schedule the government allows.

REPLAY: People phone us about this all the time and ask, "Can operators expense kits as parts?" Our information on this has been sketchy at best, but we've usually heard the answer is, "No," or "It's risky." Is that correct?

MIKE LEONARD: No. You can expense kits. People may be a little leery of this, because it may be an "up to the individual IRS agent" type of question. But my CPA says that's an allowable expense. It's not an amortized expense, because it's not a machine; it's a piece of software.

REPLAY: How do most operators handle this issue?

MIKE LEONARD: From my understanding, most operators continue to depreciate the existing machine, even though they put new components in to make it last longer and generate more income. It's similar to an automobile: you don't re-depreciate or create a new depreciation schedule for a car if you replace the engine. You just expense out the cost of the new engine. That's how I correlate that to our industry.

REPLAY: Mike Leonard, how

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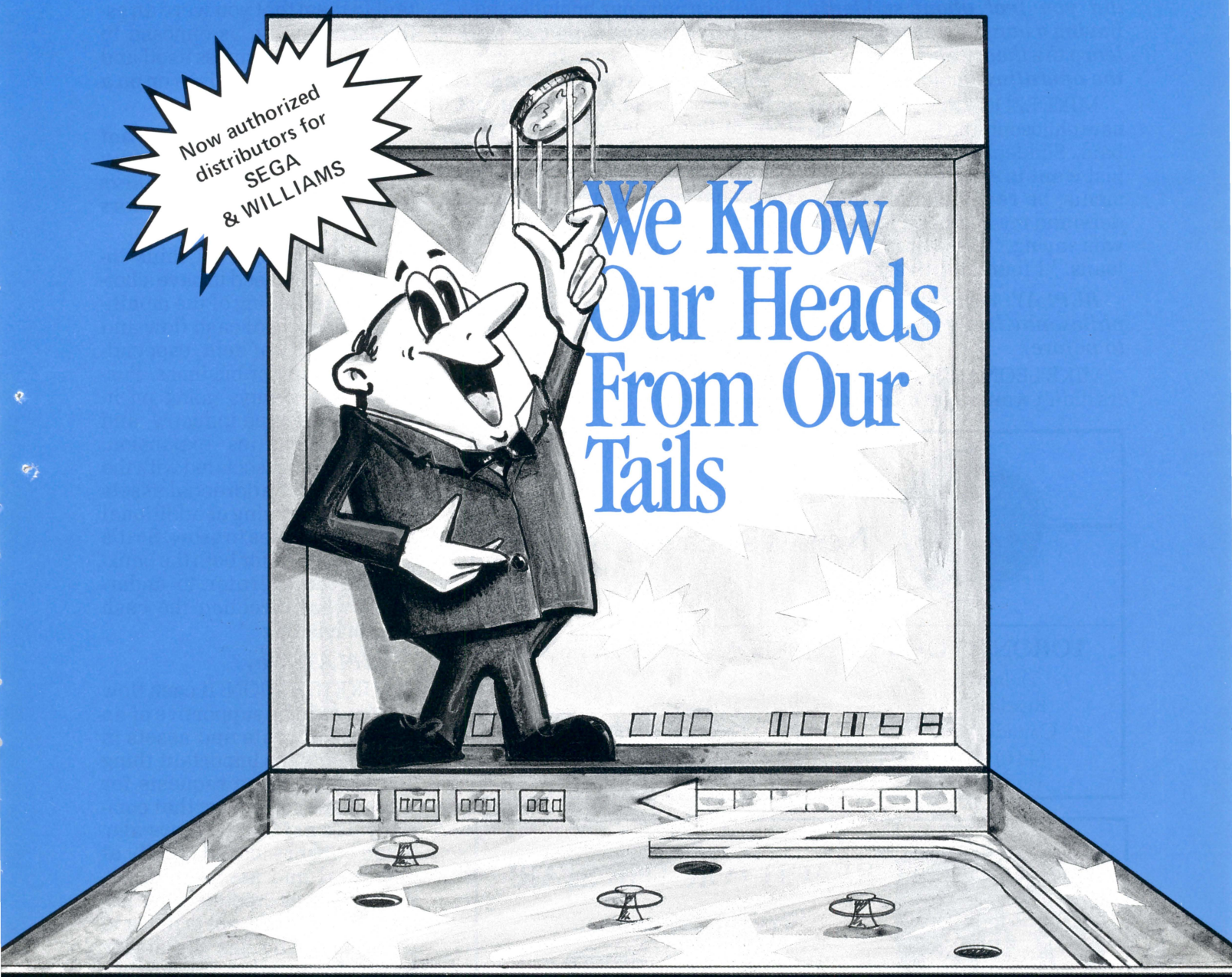

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did you feel about suddenly having a banker who wanted to learn the theory and practice of the operating business?

MIKE LEONARD: I saw it as a new philosophy on the part of the bank. Suddenly my banker didn't just want to see financial statements; he really wanted to understand my business. My bank was saying, "We *want* to make loans." I found it refreshing!

REPLAY: What kind of bank philosophy had you been used to before?

MIKE LEONARD: Most bankers didn't want to get involved in how you run your business, how your income and expenses work on a monthly basis. They didn't want to get involved in evaluating your business from a net cash flow point of view, or understanding how you service your debt to the bank. Their traditional view was more along the line of a real estate investment.

MIKE JOHNSON: Right.

MIKE LEONARD: Going along with that, the old-style bankers seemed to evaluate the person's stability within the community, and as a businessman in the community. It was more important to them that you were an established entity, as opposed to looking at the business itself and seeing that it was being run on a sound basis.

REPLAY: Mike Johnson, what are the principles of this "new philosophy"? What do bankers want to know about operators today?

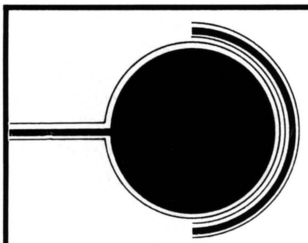
MIKE JOHNSON: I think today's bankers need to have a better understanding of the month-to-month cycle of cash flow and serviceability of debt, especially in this type of business. Purchasing is always going on in the coin machine industry, and growth mandates expansion. The leverage associated with the purchasing of additional assets and the borrowing of additional money continues to grow. So it's very important for both the banker and the operator to understand what direction the cash flow is heading.

REPLAY: Why?

MIKE JOHNSON: If cash flow continues to be supportive of an increase of route and assets in total, that's the important thing you look at, when requests for more loans come from that company. It's not like 10 years ago, when bankers looked chiefly at collateral and assets to determine who was credit-worthy. Today, we use different criteria to determine who has the ability to service existing and further debts. These debts come from purchasing more assets, inventory and equipment, and from funding route expansions.

REPLAY: So you use a set of criteria which is based more on business soundness than on character, and based more on a deep understanding of the individual business than on a superficial glance at the numbers. You may do that at Society Bank, but is this also a trend in the entire banking industry?

MIKE JOHNSON: Yes. Cash flow lending is the only way to be



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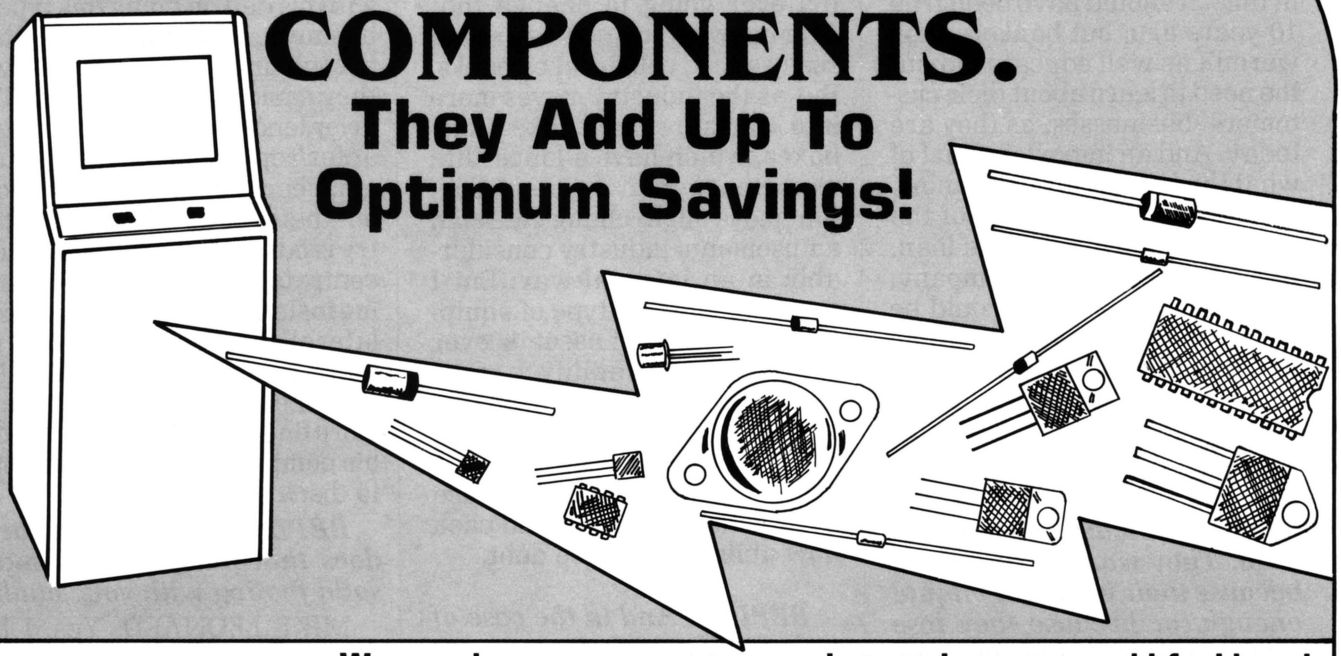

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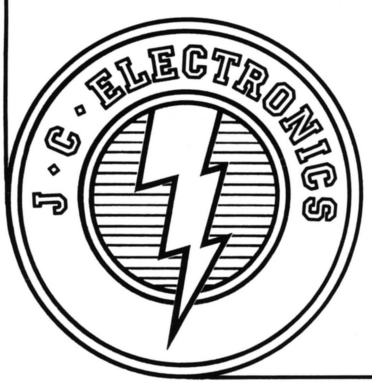

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a commercial lender at this point in time. It should have been true 10 years ago, but bankers then weren't as well educated about the need to learn about their customers' businesses, as they are today. And an important part of what the banker needs to know, is the cash flow makeup of the company applying for the loan. In the typical vending company, the type of assets that could be pledged would have little to no liquidation value to the banker.

REPLAY: Aha, now we come to a major headache experienced by many operators. They say, "My bank won't accept amusement machines as collateral. They won't accept them because their value isn't liquid enough, or because they lose value too fast, or because they are afraid if they have to take possession, they won't be able to find them." Is that changing? Should it change?

MIKE JOHNSON: I don't think it's ever going to change that coin-operated machines are not seen as good collateral by banks. But as the industry moves more into certain things like jukeboxes, which have a longer life expectancy than a video game, that move might change the coin amusements industry considerably in an internal way. But I don't believe that type of equipment, that type of asset, is ever going to have an ability to make a banker comfortable in lending against it. That's why it becomes very, very important to take a look at the business itself, to see what is its true worth and cash flow ability to service debt.

REPLAY: And in the case of Coin-Op Specialists, you see a company which clearly can handle that.

MIKE JOHNSON: Our bank has been very comfortable with Mike Leonard, and prior to that, with his dad, in doing this type of business. The reputation they brought in 10 years ago was why they could make loans then. The prior lender was more of a character/reputation lender than I am. There are still many of those out there, but the banking industry is educating members to concentrate more on cash flow lending instead of character and collateral lending. That does require a principle owner like Mike Leonard to disclose much more financial information about his company than he's ever had to disclose in the past.

REPLAY: Mike Leonard, does that put you on a more solid footing with your bank?

MIKE LEONARD: Yes. I believe that, as an operator, having the ability to understand your income statements and balance sheets, and being able to review those with your banker, having

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the ability to put yourself in a better financial position with them, and knowing the direction your business is actually heading, is something that's changed from the old days.

REPLAY: For the better?

MIKE LEONARD: Yes, for the better. As Mike Johnson said, the banking industry has changed considerably, too.

REPLAY: Mike Johnson has described how banking has changed from a banker's point of view. Could you tell us how it's changed from an operator's point of view?

MIKE LEONARD: Going back to when my father was in business, he knew all the local banks and their presidents personally. The "good old boy" days are somewhat gone inside the banking industry itself. Acquisitions are being made every day, as banks buy and merge with other banks. As institutions, banks are becoming very large. Not too many small banks are left. So trying to find the "good old cigar-smoking bank president" is a little more difficult! And his flexibility in making a "character reference" type of loan is also more limited.

REPLAY: What does that mean for you as an operator?

MIKE LEONARD: It means working with loan officers, and educating them about your industry, is a very important thing to do. Again, I feel it's a "check and balance" situation that can really help you as a business person to monitor how your business is doing.

REPLAY: So your banker is a resource. You have to go into much more financial detail than during the old days, but you also take advantage of his expert knowledge, and you come away from those encounters a better businessman.

MIKE LEONARD: Correct.

MIKE JOHNSON: It gives the banker a sense of comfort that we're dealing with another professional who's capable of managing his company professionally. Part of the checking that's done is on the operator's business abilities. Also, that's why I've told Mike that coin machine operators, not just bankers, need a real understanding of cash flow. Operators shouldn't simply work out of their checkbooks. Operators need to be able to support their ability to pay back when they borrow for new machines and route expansion. Cash flow is the key to that.

REPLAY: What's the importance of net equity in this "ability to pay" equation?

MIKE LEONARD: When the bank first looks at your statement and says, "You're running

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a highly leveraged operation," you have to get the bank to look at equity ratios. As long as your total structure is well-run, and this goes back to cash flow, that becomes more important than what your equity structure is.

MIKE JOHNSON: When the typical banker sees a net deficit in net equity, the first thought that crosses his mind is, "I can't lend to this company, because there's no equity cushion to fall back on, to recover any loans I might make." But in coin-op, the net equity position is somewhat distorted, because of the quick depreciation that's used by the industry.

REPLAY: Please explain.

MIKE JOHNSON: If the owner of the vending business sits down with his CPA to actually determine the market value of the business, such as Mike Leonard did for this bank a year or two ago, it's interesting to see the difference between what they're carrying expressed as book value (or their negative net equity position), in comparison to what the market value of these assets are. Market value really tells a truer story of what equity position the company really has, based on the owner's and CPA's evaluation of market value of each and every asset.

REPLAY: And what is that truer story?

MIKE JOHNSON: Market value is typically much higher than the book value on paper. It's usually on a positive basis, because you've constantly got new machines coming into the business.

MIKE LEONARD: Now I've got a question. Typically when you buy a route, you pay X amount of dollars for routes in general, non-compete, and goodwill above the cash generated by those machines. So you pay the market value plus a percentage of gross, or a percentage of so many months' worth of income. How does the bank feel about those numbers being considered?

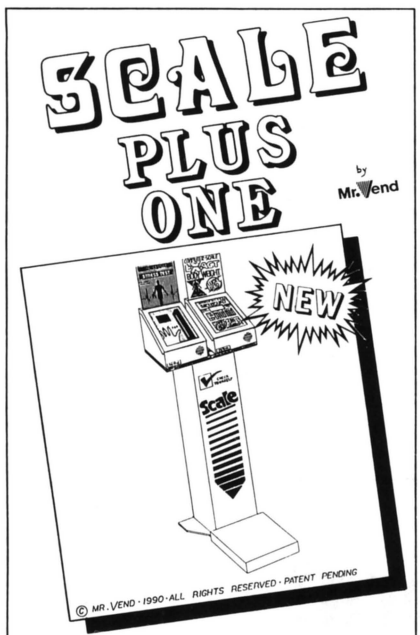
MIKE JOHNSON: If you do the market value study, we immediately deduct those other factors you just mentioned from what we call the market value of your total assets versus liabilities. Those factors are not included in what we call tangible net worth. They have a value to you, if you want to sell your business. But they don't have an absolute value to the bank. In effect, those considerations distort true net worth. If you've got $100,000 that falls under goodwill, routes and covenant not to compete, certainly those are an important part of why you purchased your business. They would also have an effect if someone wanted to buy your business. So they'd be taken into account when you want to sell, but not by a banker evaluating tangible net worth.

REPLAY: If an operator has good contracts with his locations, does that make him a better loan risk, in the eyes of the bank?

MIKE JOHNSON: It would certainly be good supportive information. I'm not sure how we'd interpret it regarding market versus tangible worth.

MIKE LEONARD: As it happens, I do have contracts. But it's interesting, because the bank has never asked me to show them my contracts. I've never needed to do that, and I don't believe the bank would ask me to do that. I've always felt I could show them, but the question never came up.

MIKE JOHNSON: The assumption here, knowing Mike Leonard and the position he's in, was that the market value of his routes was based on written contracts. For most bankers dealing with the average operator, it would be helpful to know he has the



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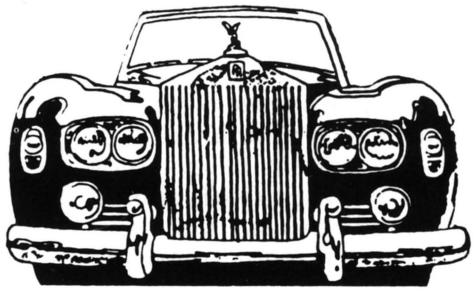

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REPLAY: Many operators still do business on a handshake, of course. In their hearts they might know they really should have contracts, but they continue without legal protection anyway.

MIKE JOHNSON: Good faith only goes so far. Doing business on a handshake in today's world doesn't go very far, if someone finds himself in a financially strapped position.

REPLAY: Sure. If a location owner needs cash quickly, he could be tempted by another operator who walks in and says, "I'll advance you $5,000 (or whatever) against future earnings, if you kick out your current operator and let my company put in our machines." So the present operator in that location is very vulnerable, unless he's got a contract. Let's turn now to credit lines. Many operators feel like second-class financial citizens when they deal with their banks. They wonder, "How do I establish a triple-A credit line, without having been in business for 75 years?"

MIKE JOHNSON: Businesses which qualify for a credit line don't need permanent operating capital; they need short-term operating monies which can be repaid in a period of one year or less. So any loan the bank disburses should be such that the borrower isn't dependent on that loan to become evergreen. The loan should not be used as permanent working capital. Many operators go in under-capitalized themselves, and they're looking for a bank to underwrite their growth on an operating line. I'm not in favor of using an operating line to provide long-term capitalization.

REPLAY: Many operators say, "I had to put up my house as collateral."

MIKE JOHNSON: That's the way many small business people seem to go. They put a home equity line together, and borrow from that as an operating line. Typically, that ends up being long-term capital. It will often be rolled into re-mortgaging the first mortgage at some future date...unless the business is very successful, or is able to be sold to pay off that kind of debt.

REPLAY: As a banker, did you have any negative preconceived notions about the coin machine business before starting to do business with Mike Leonard and Coin-Op Specialists?

MIKE JOHNSON: No, especially since Mike Leonard and his father had been in business locally for a long time. However, I've had young people come into the bank and say they want to borrow start-up capital to purchase machines. They think they will make a lot of money with a little amusement store, catering to other young people. Probably 99.9% of those people are not going to make it.

REPLAY: So the preconceived notion many people do have about coin machine operating is, it's a "get rich quick" business. We'll have to start poor-mouthing, so that nobody has that idea! Certainly it is well established, though, that amusement operating is a volatile industry. Money can be coming in fast one minute, but the next minute it's not coming in at all.

MIKE JOHNSON: If a bank is lending to an operator, it's pretty important that the operator has weathered some ups and downs and established a reputation for surviving economic downturns in the coin machine industry. The bank wants to know that the operator hasn't needed to be dependent upon the bank to provide short-term financing for long-term growth.

REPLAY: But start-up capital is exactly what many small operators and new businessmen are looking for. And if they can't get it from a bank, some get it from a distributor.

MIKE LEONARD: Yes.

REPLAY: One former sales rep from a major coin machine distributor told us that many small operators are so deeply in debt to the distributor, they think they're working for themselves, but they're really working for the distributor. These operators have gotten huge distributor financing which they really didn't deserve, and they are running hard as they can simply to stay in place and make those debt service payments. The sales rep said, "It reminded me of that old song, 'I owe my soul to the company store.'"

MIKE JOHNSON: That's typically the case.

REPLAY: It sure can be, especially when the operator really

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doesn't understand his own business. On the other hand, some very successful operators make a practice of getting loans through reputable, responsible distributors. Still other operators prefer to buy everything out of cash. But both of you seem to be saying: "The important question is, on what basis is the lender willing to work with the operator?"

MIKE LEONARD: Yes. This issue should help operators qualify the banker they're considering using. If the banker will show interest in getting up to speed in the operator's unique industry, then that banker is probably a good one for the operator to work with.

MIKE JOHNSON: The operator needs to approach the relationship with his banker in the same manner he would approach the relationship with his bookkeeper or his accountant. You're paying your banker, via an interest rate, and your banker needs to help you stay out of trouble. It's the mutual goal of both banker and operator that the operator's business succeed, that the debt is repaid, can be reborrowed, and repaid again.

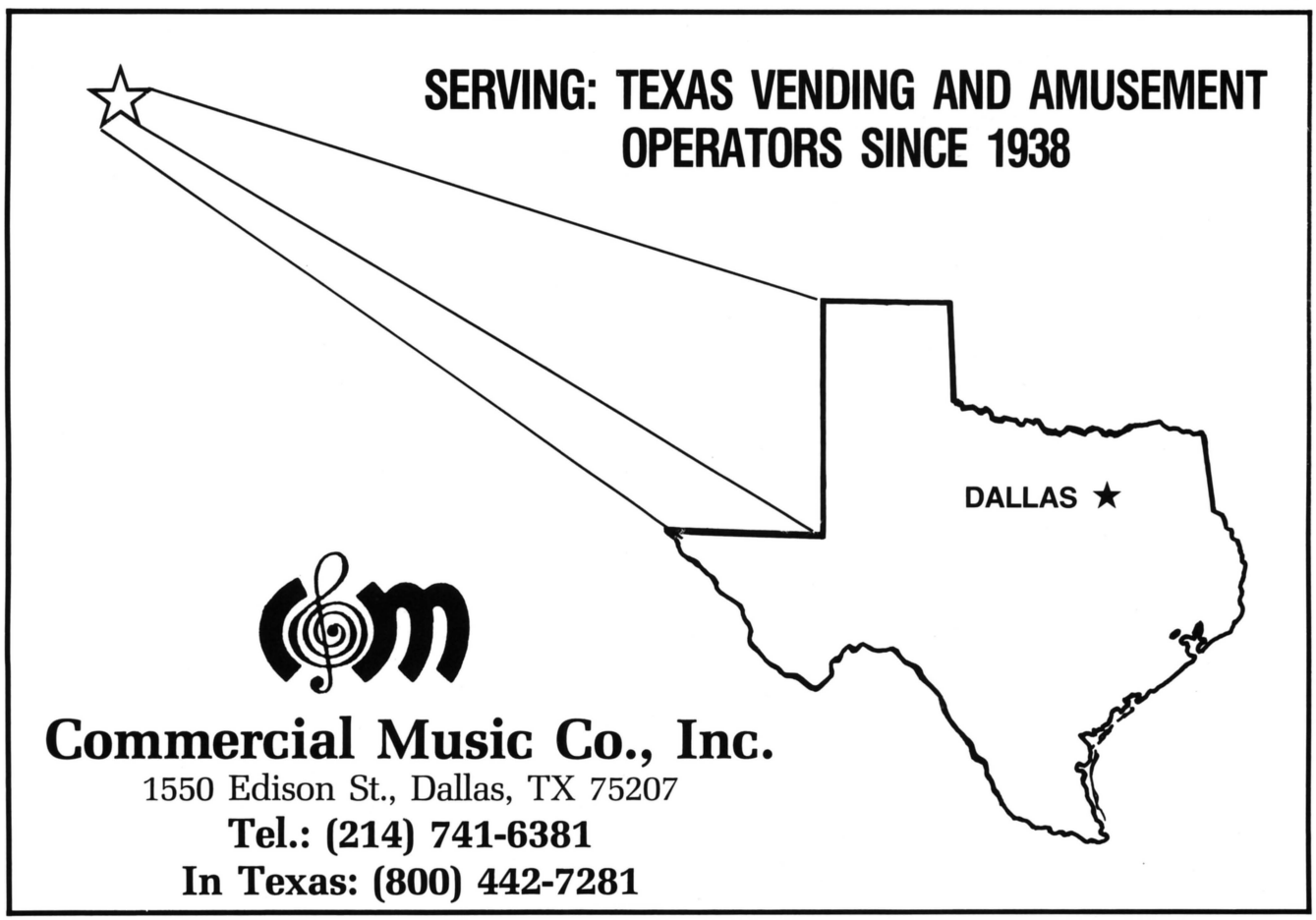
REPLAY: So the relationship between an operator and his lender isn't just a source and destination of money. Ideally, the relationship is a creative partnership for growth.

MIKE JOHNSON: You want to take advantage of the banker's services and borrow the money, but also take advantage of his expertise to structure each and every loan. That becomes part of your cost of doing business, just like working with your CPA. You are a professional, an entrepreneur who wants to benefit from every bit of professional expertise you possibly can.

REPLAY: It's a tough business, and operators can use all the help they can get!

MIKE JOHNSON: I have told Mike Leonard that I give a lot of credit to a guy who's in business for himself today. It's very difficult to be an expert in all the areas which play a part in the success of your business. The more expertise the operator can draw upon, the more successful he can be. The more he can make his banker and CPA aware of what the coin machine business is, how it operates, where his particular route is and where it's going, the more it will mean success for the operator.

REPLAY: We hope our readers make use of that advice! Thank you, operator Mike Leonard and banker Mike Johnson, for your time and thoughts. R





Credit Where It's Due

honest Injun, most manufacturers' credit managers like to say 'yes'

A well-known fact: if you want to become somebody's friend, lend him money.

If you want to become his enemy, ask him to pay you back.

This universal truth of human nature is the "agony and the ecstasy" of working as a credit manager in the coin amusement business. Credit managers are a vital link in the industry's cycle of prosperity. They're also some of the least understood people in the trade.

How does credit work in the coin-op world? Back in the heady years before World War II, Wurlitzer Phonograph Co. sales director Homer Capehart "shipped jukeboxes to practically anybody who could make a $50 down payment," recalled one employee. Naturally, this made "Cape" very popular with operators . . . but in some cases it was clearly a roll of the financial dice.

Today, of course, coin-op manufacturers handle credit very differently. For one thing, they deal chiefly with distributors, not operators. For another, they carefully qualify their distributor customers for credit allowances and limits. Collecting payments is normally very orderly and business-like. Larger manufacturers have professionals who specialize in performing these functions: the credit manager.

Qualifying distributors for credit is far less of a "seat of the pants" procedure than it used to be. Most dealers have a long, long track record of payment patterns, so credit managers know who's good for how much . . . and how fast they'll probably pay it back. Beyond first-hand experience, credit managers turn to Dunn & Bradstreet for a wealth of information: how distributors (or other customers) are paying debts to others in the trade, sales figures, net worth and much more. Credit managers also check references from banks and from others in the trade.

At times, the customer's credit history means that today's credit managers can't ship goods with the free and easy spirit of a Homer Capehart in the 1930s. As a result, a conscientious credit manager can be (unfairly) labeled as the manufacturer's "Abominable No-Man." But the friendly credit managers who work for the industry's amusement machine manufacturers want the rest of the trade to know they don't deserve the rap. "We're not the bad guys!" they insist. "We don't like to say no — we want to say yes! Our goal is to work out something with our customers that will make both parties happy."

Some credit managers feel mildly distressed that credit and finances rarely, if ever, surface as a topic of discussion in trade journals. On the whole, they're a bit dismayed that finance remains a somewhat murky subject about which many tradesters harbor misconceptions.

Yet this is hardly surprising. Even many credit managers admit they are far from publicity hounds. And if the trade seems to lack the "straight story" on credit and finance, well, credit managers themselves report extremely diverse opinions about several fundamental aspects of their relationship to the industry.

For example — some credit managers feel the industry doesn't know them or understand them very well, but others feel they're very well-known indeed (because they deal with distributor customers on a more of a day-to-day basis than many other manufacturing elements).

Some credit managers feel distributors and operators (and trade journals) pay too much attention to "glamour" subjects like the newest hot game, not enough attention to workaday subjects like finance. Other credit managers say operators and distributors keep a very sharp eye on finances indeed — "That's how they remain in business."

Most credit managers are anxious

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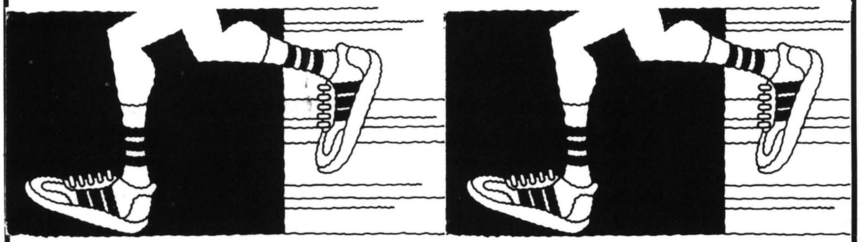

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to communicate an image of cooperation, friendliness and good will. At the same time, some of the same managers also admit their greatest feeling of professional satisfaction comes from "collecting a long-overdue account."

Some credit managers believe the trade press should cover them and their aspect of the business more...but they aren't exactly sure how this should be done. Other credit managers are extremely dubious about the value of the limelight; they feel very strongly that the glare of publicity shouldn't be shined onto their working methods. (Some credit managers talked to us freely; others declined to talk to us, period; others were willing to talk, but didn't want to be quoted.)

Credit managers also reported different notions about "what are the common credit practices in the industry." Some stated that it has become an industry-wide trend to offer cash rebates, a free game or warranty rebate to distributors, perhaps as a reward for ten-day cash payment or for volume buying of games. The intended effect, it is said by some, is to enable distributors to show "higher" invoice prices to their operator customers, which justifies a higher end cost to the operator.

Yet others deny that this practice is widespread, or they wash their hands of it, saying that such "deal-cutting" is the province of the sales department. And all of the credit managers we spoke to (and these are people at *very* major manufacturers) said firmly and sincerely that such "rebates" and other gimmicks to create the appearance of higher distributor prices are "bull" and that "the operators know what the real prices are."

Confusing? Perhaps. But as much as credit managers may disagree on, there's one subject about which they unanimously took the same position: finance is a crucial subject. Its principles affect every single person and company in the business. "Machines may come and machines may go," said one credit expert, "but at the end of the day, it's how much money you have in the bank that counts!" R

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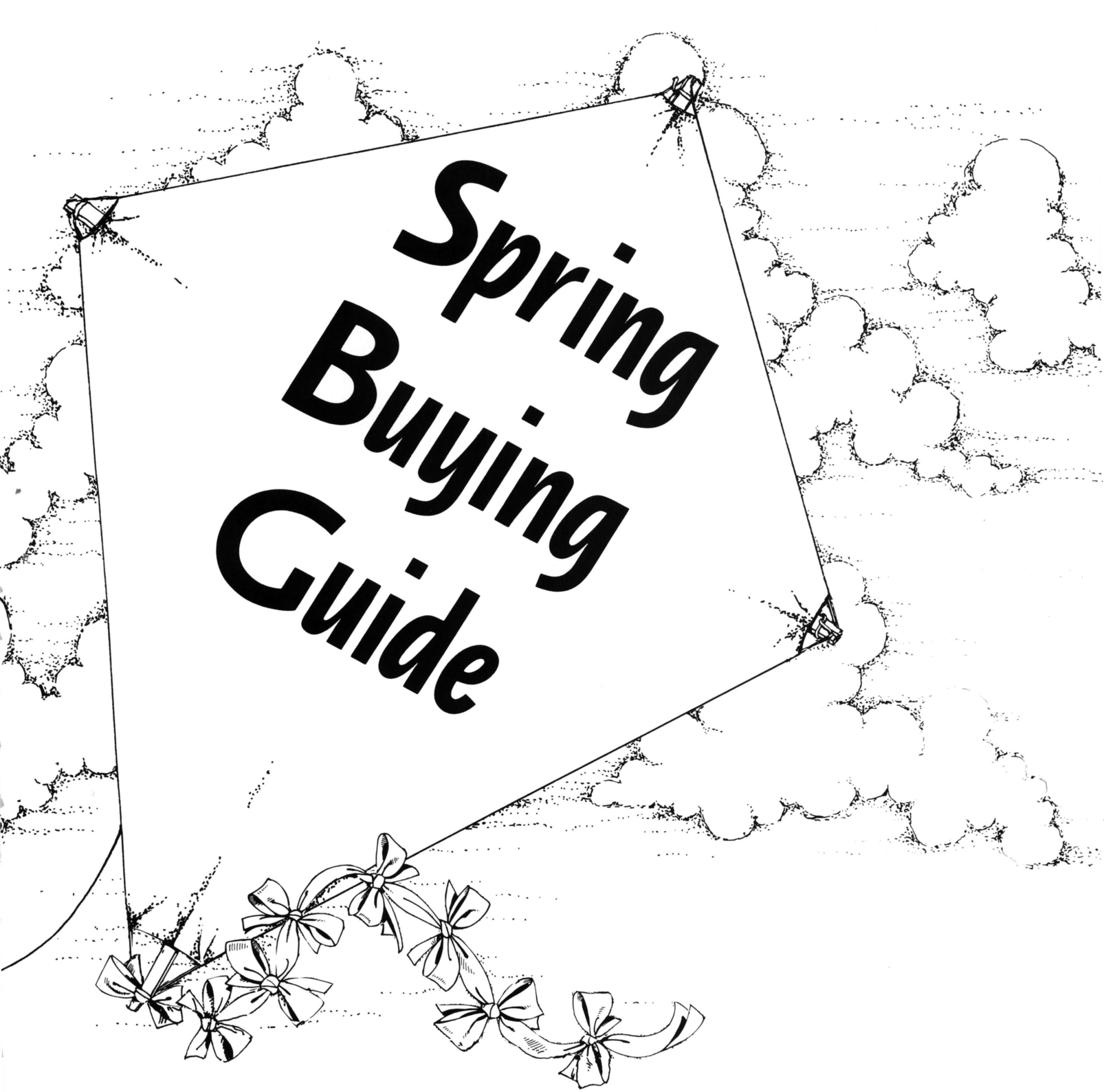

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VIDEO GAMES



BRAND NEW
DJ BOY
Maker: American Sammy
Phone: 213/320-7167
Theme: street fighting on roller skates; game features the voice of the famous radio DJ Wolfman Jack; large characters and lots of background details
Specs: horizontal kit



BRAND NEW
FOUR TRAX
(with stationary seat)
Maker: Atari
Phone: 408/434-3700
Theme: ATV racing for two players (can be linked with other units)
Specs: upright model with non-moving Seats (as opposed to simulator-style seats available on the deluxe model)

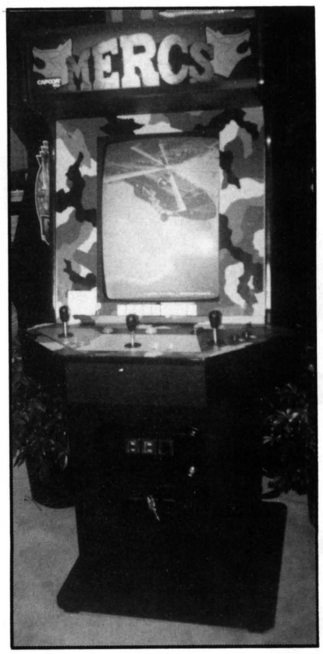


KLAX
Maker: Atari Games
Phone: 408/434-3700
Theme: stack the colored tiles in a line or diagonally to make a "Klax"; numerous skill levels; for one or two players
Specs: available in regular-sized uprights, cabarets and in universal kit form
Released: February 1990



BRAND NEW
Capcom's Baseball
Maker: Capcom
Phone: 408/727-0400
Theme: name of this new baseball video was not available at presstime
Specs: 2-pl. horizontal kit
Release: end of April

FINAL FIGHT
Maker: Capcom
Phone: 408/727-0400
Theme: street fighting game that picks up where the firm's previous *Street Fighter* video left off
Specs: universal horizontal kit and for Capcom's CPS system
Released: January 1990



BRAND NEW
MERCS
Maker: Capcom
Phone: 408/727-0400
Theme: three-player game in the firm's CPS line; mercenary battle game
Specs: dedicated
Release: end of April

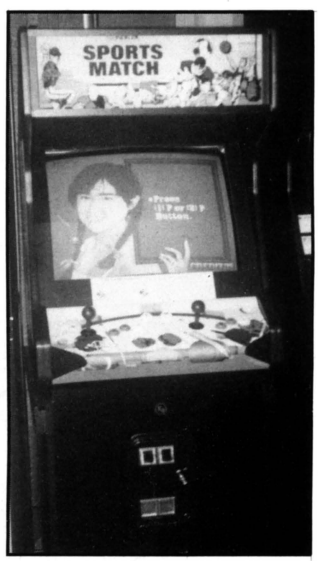
BRAND NEW
BALLARENA
Available from: Chevalier Trading
Phone: 408/298-4250
Theme: shoot away at balls in various arrangements and progress to the next level; eye-catching graphics and colors
Specs: 1- or 2-pl. horizontal kit



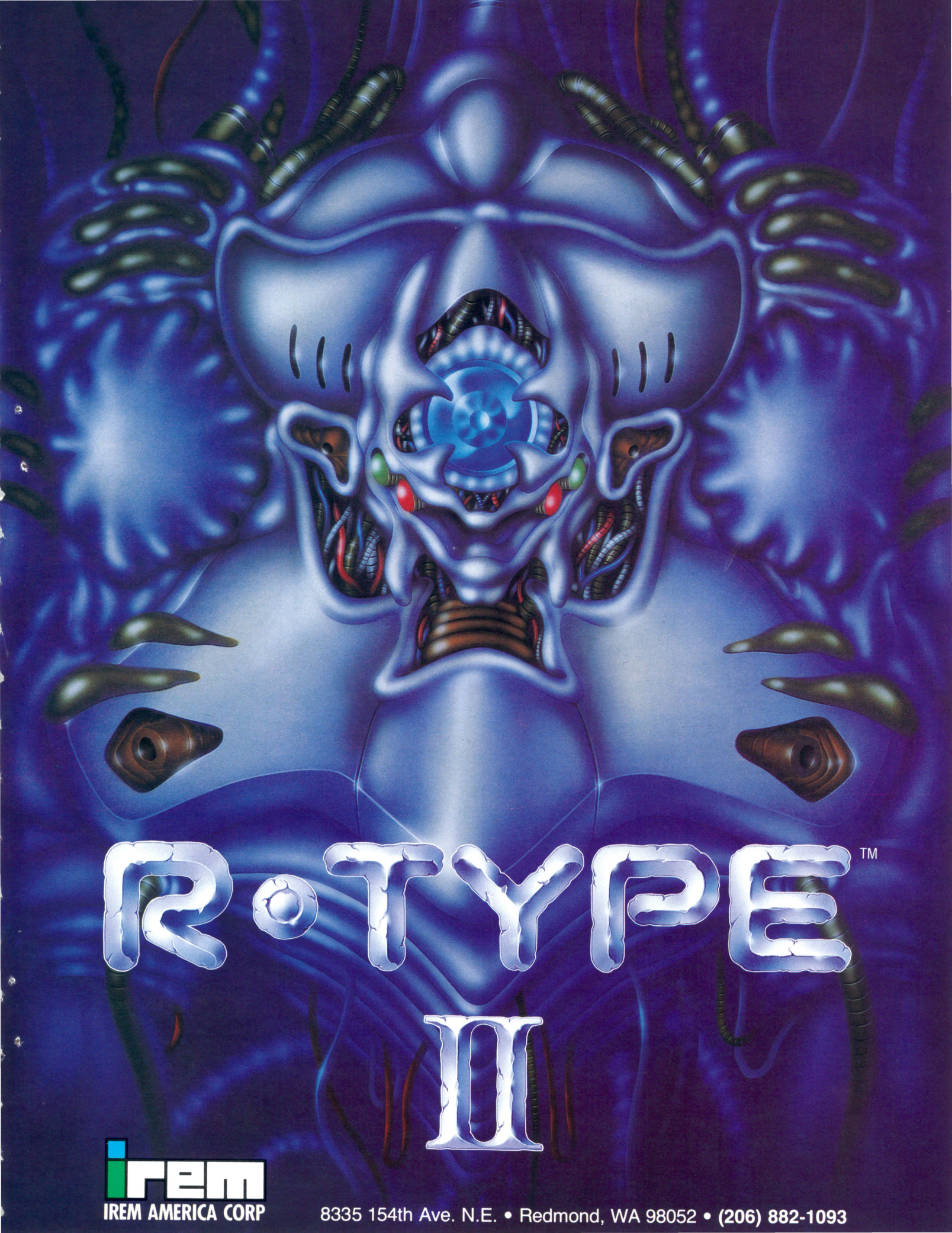
BRAND NEW
TWO CRUDE
Maker: Data East
Phone: 408/286-7074
Theme: street fighting game in which the player can pick up items and throw them at the bad guys
Specs: not available at presstime



BRAND NEW
VAPOR TRAIL
Maker: Data East
Phone: 408/286-7074
Theme: jet air battle game in which the player blasts mechanical monsters and other aircraft
Specs: 2-pl. vertical kit & upright



BRAND NEW
SPORTS MATCH
Maker: Fabtek
Phone: 206/882-1093
Theme: player tries to connect pairs of sports-themed tiles by moving in a straight line or with one 90-degree turn; progress to next level by clearing the screen of all pairs
Specs: 1- or 2-pl. horizontal kit



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BRAND NEW

RAIDEN
Maker: Fabtek
Phone: 206/882-1093
Theme: spaceship-type vehicle battles of Earth-like terrain against a non-stop assault of enemy vessels
Specs: 2-pl. (simultaneous) vertical kit
Release: late April/early May



BRAND NEW

SLICK SHOT
Maker: Grand Products
Phone: 708/766-8282
Theme: video pool game in which the player shoots a real cue ball (on a felt surface) with a short cue trying to sink balls shown on the tilted 25" monitor; authentic sound effects
Specs: dedicated, housed in a cabinet roughly the size of an upright video



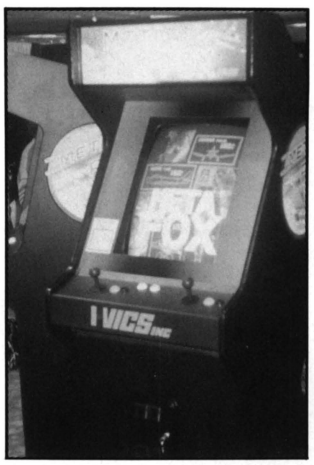
BRAND NEW

AIR DUEL
Maker: Irem of America
Phone: 206/882-1093
Theme: aerial combat game that lets players fly jets or choppers in battles against an array of enemies
Specs: 2-pl. (simultaneous) vertical
Release: date not available at presstime



BRAND NEW

R-TYPE II
Maker: Irem of America
Phone: 206/882-1093
Theme: 1-pl. sequel to the shoot-em-up game
Specs: horizontal kit
Release: mid-month



BRAND NEW

META FOX
Maker: I-Vics
Phone: 408/492-1296
Theme: player pilots a Corsair prep jet all the way up to a F-36 Sabre to a FA-18 Hornet as he progresses through air to air, air to land and air to sea battle
Specs: 2-pl. (interactive) vertical kit with continuation and buy-in feature



BRAND NEW

ALIENS
Maker: Konami
Phone: 312/215-5100
Theme: video based on the scary motion picture with crew members battling the hideously nasty alien life forms
Specs: 2-pl. (interactive) horizontal kit with buy-in and continuation features

BRAND NEW

OFF ROAD 2-Player
Maker: Leland
Phone: 619/562-7000
Theme: same off-road, 4WD racing action of the full-sized three-player game, but in standard size upright version for two players; also features "Track Pak"
Specs: dedicated



TRI-SPORTS
Maker: Midway Mfg.
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: video pool, bowling and miniature golf (there are 4 different pool games and 3 bowling)
Specs: vertical kit
Released: January 1990



BRAND NEW

TROG
Maker: Midway
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: 4-pl. game with a cute, prehistoric cast of "Trog" the caveman and four cute dinosaurs (the player builds a maze to guide his dino home while trying to keep from getting eaten by Trog)
Specs:dedicated

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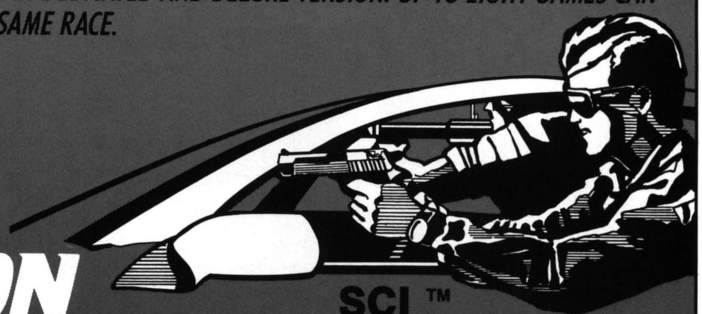

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BRAND NEW
CAPTAIN SKYHAWK
Maker: Nintendo
Phone: 800/633-3236 or 206/882-2040
Theme: player pilots an on-screen F-15 jet over varied, abstracted terrain (to simulate the look of computer guidance systems) and even docks with a space station
Specs: for PlayChoice

BRAND NEW
NINJA GAIDEN II
Maker: Nintendo
Phone: 800/633-3236 or 206/882-2040
Theme: sequel to the popular kit in which the ninja is on a CIA mission
Specs: for PlayChoice

BRAND NEW
RESCUE RANGERS
Maker: Nintendo
Phone: 800/633-3236 or 206/882-2040
Theme: cute, non-violent game featuring Disney's Chip and Dale chipmunk characters; action has them turning off water faucets, etc.; possible cartoon series of the same name may come this year
Specs: for PlayChoice

BRAND NEW
SUPER C
Maker: Nintendo
Phone: 800/633-3236 or 206/882-2040
Theme: follow-up to *Contra* with all sorts of battle action
Specs: for PlayChoice



BRAND NEW
FIRE SHARK
Maker: Romstar (licensed from Toaplan)
Phone: 213/539-2744
Theme: sequel to *Sky Shark;* action is WWI flying with 10 different scenes
Specs: 2-pl. (simultaneous) vertical kit



RAMBO III
Maker: Romstar
Phone: 213/539-2470
Theme: action and adventure based on the movie
Specs: universal horizontal kit
Released: January 1990

BRAND NEW
SNOW BROS.
Maker: Romstar
Phone: 213/539-2744
Theme: loveable snowmen throw snowballs at funny red devils and then roll the devils up into giant snowballs
Specs: 2-pl. horizontal



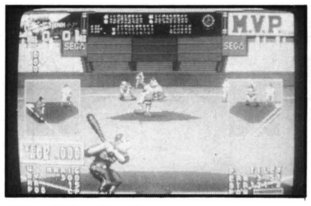
BRAND NEW
ALIEN STORM
Maker: Sega USA
Phone: 408/435-0201
Theme: three employees of a hot dog stand take on 9 rounds of alien-busting in the streets and inside the alien's body
Specs: 3-pl. dedicated game with 25" monitor



BRAND NEW
BLOXEED
Maker: Sega USA
Phone: 408/435-0201
Theme: one or two players (interactive) stack blocks in this puzzle game with an added twist — cute characters come along and move & demolish blocks as you go
Specs: vertical
Release: mid-month



BRAND NEW
G-LOC
Maker: Sega USA
Phone: 408/435-0201
Theme: a jet-flying game that really puts the "pilot" through the paces ("G-LOC" stands for "gravity-induced loss of consciousness") with dogfights, night flying, etc.
Specs: dedicated game available in three configurations: deluxe moving simulator, stationary sitdown and regular upright
Release: uprights in late April/ early May; moving and stationary cockpits in May

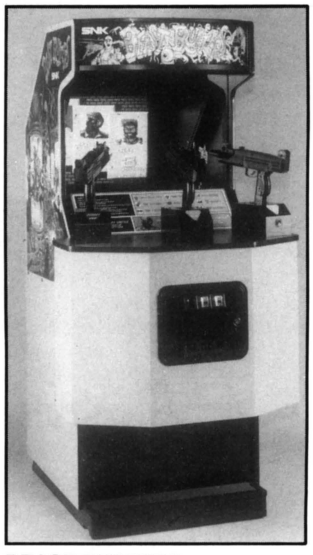


BRAND NEW
MVP
Maker: Sega USA
Phone: 408/435-0201
Theme: realistic baseball action for one or two players progressing from regular season play, to championship series, world series and all-star; detailed action and lots of plays (such as bunting, stealing)
Specs: horizontal

BRAND NEW
LINE OF FIRE
Maker: Sega USA
Phone: 408/435-0201
Theme: sitdown game of jungle battle from within a jeep with front- and back-of jeep perspectives; for 2 players with turret-mounted machine guns and seats for each
Specs: cockpit dedicated game



BRAND NEW
AIR BUSTER
Maker: Sharp Image (licensed from Namco)
Phone: 800/448-8100 ext. 272 or 818/767-8855
Notes: 1-pl. video in which the player pilots a jet that zooms off an aircraft carrier, battling all sorts of futuristic ships and targets
Specs: horizontal kit



BEAST BUSTERS
Maker: SNK Corp.
Phone: 408/736-8844
Theme: 3-pl. (simultaneous) gun game in which players shoot at zombies and other supernatural beasties; features 50-cent vend to start, 25 cents to continue play (can be set at 50 cents); red blood or optional green
Specs: dedicated
Release: January 1990

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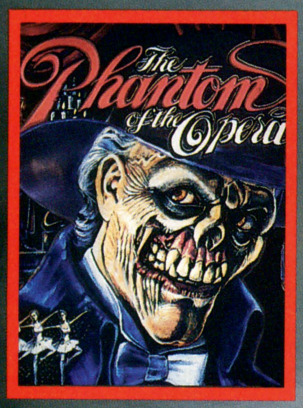

See the Phantom unmasked and true face revealed.



Ball vanishes into Magic Mirror and advances bonus multiplier.





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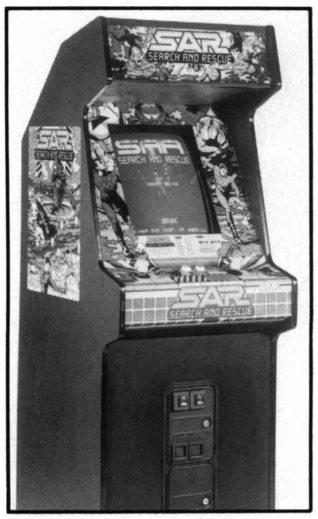
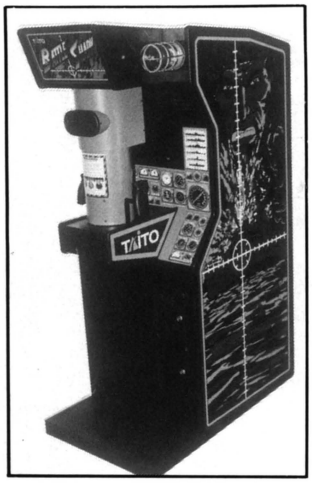
BRAND NEW
NEO•GEO
Maker: SNK Corp.
Phone: 408/736-8844
Specs: multi-game system available in two configurations; 25" monitor version can hold up to six games, 19" monitor version up to four; all games play out on lives, not time, and are for two players
Games: software is available in the form of cartridges roughly twice the size of a VHS tape which snap in place on the CPU; current game titles are 'Baseball Stars Professional,' 'Nam-1975,' 'Magician Lord' and 'Top Player's Golf' (coming in June is 'Riding Hero')



SEARCH AND RESCUE
Maker: SNK Corp.
Phone: 408/736-8844
Theme: the player goes out on a search and rescue mission when an interplanetary exploration vehicle is found wrecked
Specs: moderately-priced upright
Release: February 1990

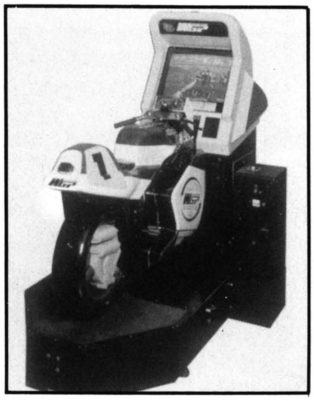


BRAND NEW
BATTLE SHARK
Maker: Taito
Phone: 708/520-9820
Theme: submarine battle with vibrating scope and flashing red lights
Specs: dedicated



BRAND NEW
CADASH
Maker: Taito
Phone: 708/520-9280
Theme: adventure maze game for 1-2 players; can be banked with another unit via Taito's communication system to create a 4-player game
Specs: horizontal kit

VIOLENCE FIGHT
Maker: Taito
Phone: 708/520-9820
Theme: street fighting
Specs: horizontal kit
Released: January 1990





BRAND NEW
WGP
Maker: Taito
Phone: 708/520-9820
Theme: motorcycle racing with courses based on 8 real race tracks in Europe
Specs: deluxe, ride-on simulator plus upright with seat; 8 units can be linked together for multi-player race action
Release: upright, mid-April; simulator, mid-May

DUX
Maker: Two Bit Score
Phone: 512/282-9369
Theme: player shoots at flocks of ducks flying over his apple orchard
Specs: chip conversion for 'Centipede' and 'Millipede' games

BRAND NEW
ZERO WING
Maker: Williams (licensed from Toaplan)
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: moderately-priced space battle action game
Specs: horizontal

PINBALLS



BRAND NEW
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Maker: Data East Pinball
Phone: 800/542-5377 or 708/345-7700
Theme: pingame based on the 1911 novel with numerous play features such as organ door that uncovers the Phantom's secret hiding place; skilled players can "unmask" the Phantom on the backglass; patented solid state flipper

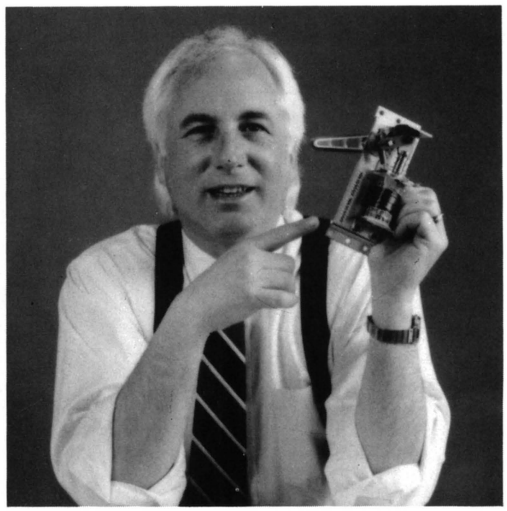
ROBOCOP PINBALL
Maker: Data East Pinball
Phone: 800/542-5377 or 708/345-7700
Theme: pinball based on the popular movie complete with jump ramps, authentic digitized voice track, etc.
Released: January 1990



BRAND NEW
SILVER SLUGGER
Maker: Gottlieb/Premier
Phone: 800/444-0761 or 312/350-0400
Theme: baseball pinball; first in the firm's "SL" line designed specifically for the street player and location; features include multiball play, dual game scoring and low price; optional bill validator

I gave you a better Flipper -- a Solid-State Electronic Flipper™ which is a tremendous success. I guarantee no coil burn out for 1 Year, or I'll replace it FREE!* Future games will have this feature as well as Kryptonite™ playfield hard coat, the world's hardest surface - harder than a diamond - tough, strong, scratch-proof and easy to clean. You'll never need mylar - ever! You can rely on us for the latest in quality and innovations.

Gary Stern
General Manager



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Patent No. 4,895,369



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*See your Distributor for details.



BRAND NEW
GAME SHOW
Maker: Midway Mfg.
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: pinball poking fun at game shows; features host Keith McTeeth on the backglass

MOUSIN' AROUND
Maker: Midway Mfg.
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: whimsical pinball themed around some madcap mice; numerous skill shots, ramps, etc.
Released: January 1990

BAD CATS
Maker: Williams Electronics
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: misbehaving cats prowl the house trying to eat the fish in the fishbowl; features an industry first — "Linear Target" (the harder you hit it, the higher the "fish bone-us")
Released: January 1990



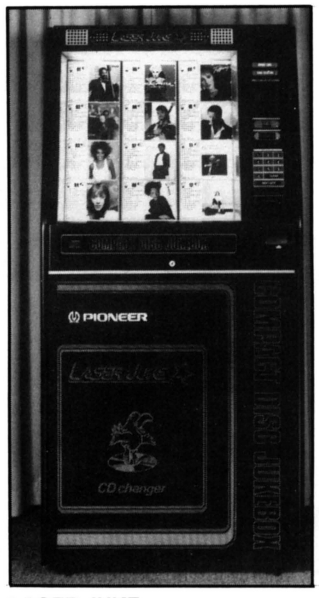
WHIRLWIND
Maker: Williams Electronics
Phone: 312/267-2240
Theme: a cyclone rips through pinland in this game; features spinners on the playfield that wreak havoc with ball direction plus a fan atop backglass that blows in the player's face
Released: February 1990

JUKEBOXES



BRAND NEW
ONE MORE TIME CD
Maker: Deutsche Wurlitzer
Phone: 407/843-4302
Specs: Wurlitzer took their beautiful nostalgia machine with bubble tubes, etc. and brought it right up to date with a CD mech; the dedicated box holds 50 CDs with title cards for 60 (the extra 10 for location advertising); optional additional player for 100 CDs total

BRAND NEW
ROUTE 66
Maker: Sound Leisure
Available from: Micro Mfg.
Phone: 800/227-6136 or 615/793-5510
Specs: dedicated CD jukebox offering 66 selections plus four more for background music



LASER JUKE
Maker: Pioneer
Phone: 213/518-4531
Specs: features 18-, 36- or 54-disc capability; attractive, modern cabinet; 4-way, eight speaker system; software keeps track of most-played songs, etc.

DART GAMES



BRAND NEW
TOP OF THE LEAGUE Model 6300T
Maker: Arachnid
Phone: 800/435-8319 or 815/654-0212
Notes: features are the same as on the firm's *Model 6300* except this unit features a large monitor at top (making play and scoring more visible to players and spectators alike); also features 'Spider Writer'

PUB TIME II PLUS 2 KITS
Maker: Merit Industries
Phone: 800/523-2760 or 215/639-4700 (Penn.)
Notes: dart game that features in-line Cricket scoring, alternating colors for quick, easy comparisons of players' marks, graphic display of darts remaining and more
Specs: conversion kit includes overhead scoring, CPU board, interconnect cables, decals, etc.; fits *Pub Time* standard and deluxe models, *Bull Buster* standard and deluxe models and *Model 4500 and 5000* dart games from Arachnid
Released: January 1990

MISCELLANEOUS



BRAND NEW
BACKGAMMON
Maker: Dynamo-Stella
Phone: 800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699
Notes: wall-mount unit based on the board game; spinners create roll of dice while lighted buttons help players make their moves
Release: late April/early May

KIDDIE RIDES



BRAND NEW
TURBO Z-327
Maker: Carousel
Phone: 800/325-3353 or 314/392-7122
Notes: bright yellow car

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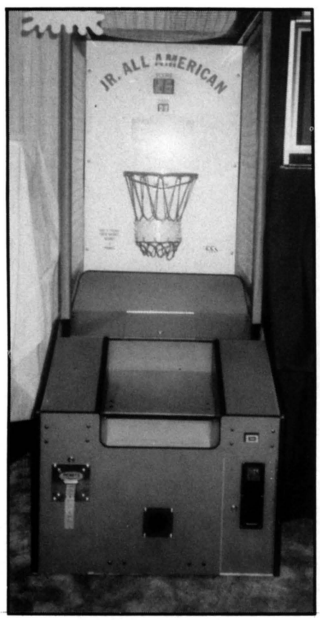
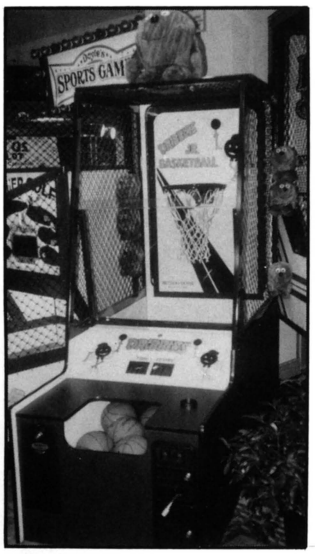
KID-SIZED BASKETBALLS

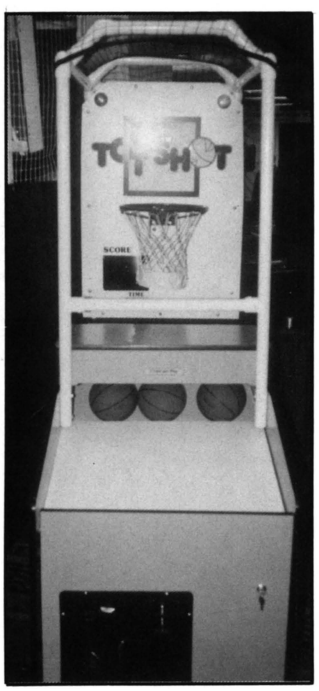


JR. ALL AMERICAN
Available from: Coin Concepts
Phone: 800/462-2646 or 201/390-9009
Notes: basketball toss novelty redemption game sized for young kids
Released: January 1990

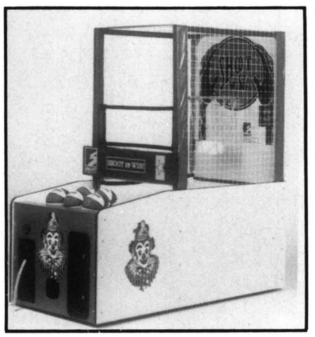
BRAND NEW
BOZO BASKETBALL
Maker: Design Plus
Phone: 800/541-1288 or 309/682-9359
Notes: kid-sized basketball game featuring Bozo, "the world's most famous clown," graphics and sound; available in single- and two-hoop models; first in a series of Bozo games for kids from Design Plus



BRAND NEW
DRIBBLES JR. BASKETBALL
Maker: Doyle & Associates
Available from: Betson Ent.
Phone: 800/524-2343 or 201/440-2200
Notes: youth-sized basketball game with smaller (7") balls; attract mode with speech and two modes of play (timed or specified number of shots per game); has many of the features of Doyle's full-sized *Hoop Shot,* too

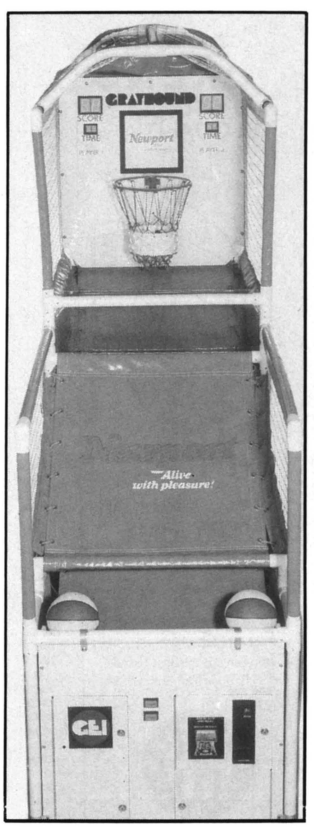


BRAND NEW
TOT SHOT
Maker: National Sports Games (formerly called Intermark)
Phone: 602/780-0112
Notes: kid-sized basketball skill game featuring 7" basketballs; measures 6' deep x 30" wide x 64" tall



BRAND NEW
SHOOT TO WIN JR.
Maker: Smart Industries
Phone: 800/553-2442 or 515/265-9900
Notes: youth-sized basketball game allowing five basketballs for five chances to win six tickets automatically dispensed plus chance for additional ticket with each hoop shot; numerous features

FULL-SIZED BASKETBALL GAMES



BRAND NEW
NEWPORT BASKETBALL
Maker: Grayhound Electronics
Phone: 800/222-0491 or 201/341-5200 (N.J.)
Notes: new version of their basketball game with Newport cigarette logo, slogan and colors

NOVELTIES & ATTRACTIONS

(small & large novelties for arcades, plus some pieces just-right for street locations, too)



BRAND NEW
CLOWN ROLLDOWN
Maker: Bay-Tek
Phone: 414/822-3951
Notes: roll-down game with clown and balloon graphics in which the player rolls six balls with intent to make either a high or low score; numerous features such as lighting, voice and sound effects, and options



BRAND NEW
FIELDER'S CHOICE
Maker: Bay-Tek
Phone: 414/822-3951
Notes: baseball-themed roll-down game in which players try for a high score (scoring is in baseball terms); lots of other features

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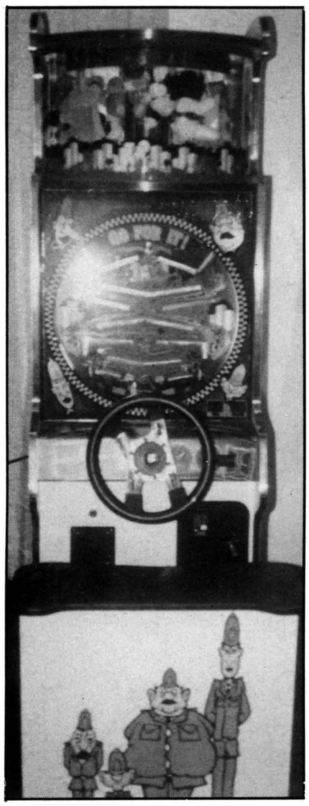
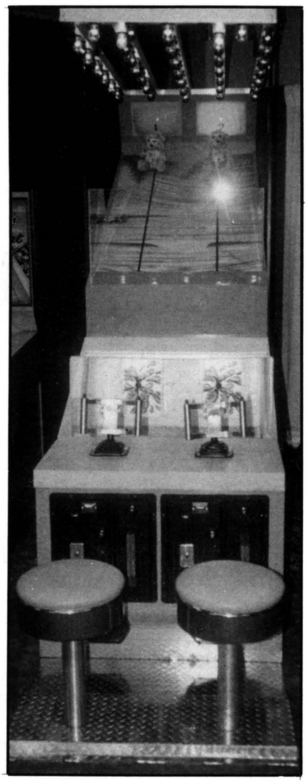
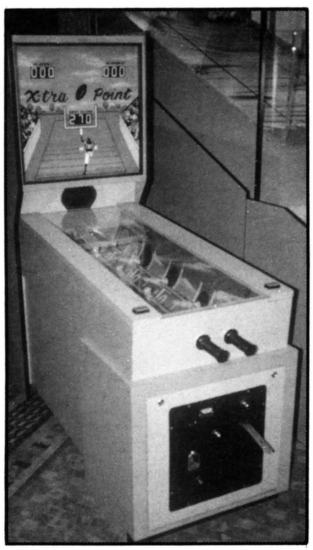


BRAND NEW
COP CAPERS
Available from: R.H. Belam Co.
Phone: 9516/292-2670
Notes: sitdown skill game in which the player turns a steering wheel to control the slant of a series of horizontal shelves inside the vertical cabinet; the object of the game is to skillfully guide a ping pong ball



BRAND NEW
WATER RACE
Maker: Bob's Space Racers
Phone: 904/677-0761
Notes: players aim their water guns at targets to advance their plush beach bear to the finish line; features Beach Boys music; ticket dispenser



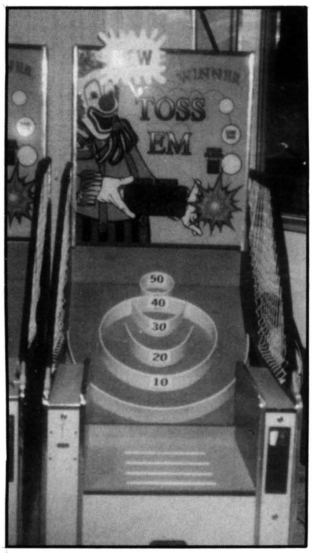
BRAND NEW
X-TRA POINT
Maker: Bob's Space Racers
Phone: 904/677-0761
Notes: redemption skill game for two alternating players in which they try to throw the ball into holes for points; features roaring crowd and voice score



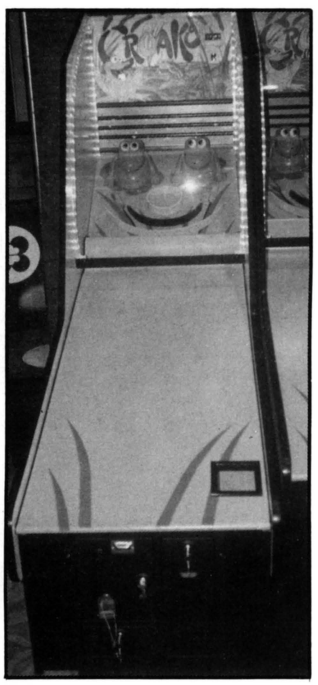
BRAND NEW
LITTLE PRO
Maker: Bromley Inc.
Phone: 312/267-6030
Available in the U.S. from:
Ameri Corp.
Phone: 708/934-0661
Notes: miniature golf themed redemption skill game in a pinball-style cabinet; even features a rotating Dutch windmill; suggested vend is 11 shots for 50 cents



BRAND NEW
CLAW POKER
Maker: Bush Electronics
Phone: 517/777-8490
Notes: redemption game that looks like a crane but actually isn't; players try to drop a sponge ball from the claw into holes labeled like playing cards for the best hand within the allotted time; player wins coupons dispensed by the machine that are redeemable by mail



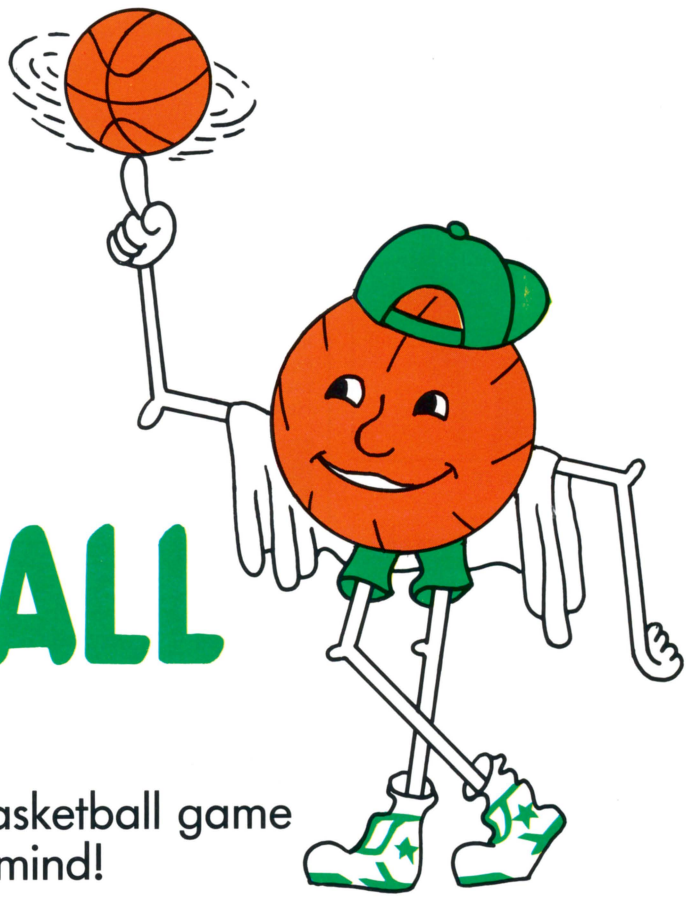
TOSS 'EM
Available from: Coin Concepts
Phone: 800/462-2646 or
201/390-9009
Notes: child's roll-down game aimed at players from 18 months to 10 years old with ticket dispenser
Released: January 1990



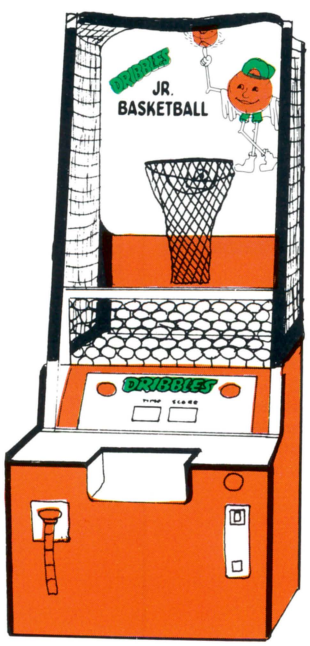
BRAND NEW
CROAKER
Maker: Exidy
Phone: 415/325-5814
Notes: neat frog-themed roll-down game in which the player tries to get the balls into scored rings or into the opening frog mouths (the frogs also talk)
Release: mid-month

Hey kids! Want to shoot some hoops?

DRIBBLES JR. BASKETBALL



Coin-operated ticket redemption basketball game designed with children in mind!



Dribbles offers

- Vibrant Graphics
- Attract Mode Including Speech and Two Modes of Play
  1) Traditional timed game
  2) Optional specified number of shots per game

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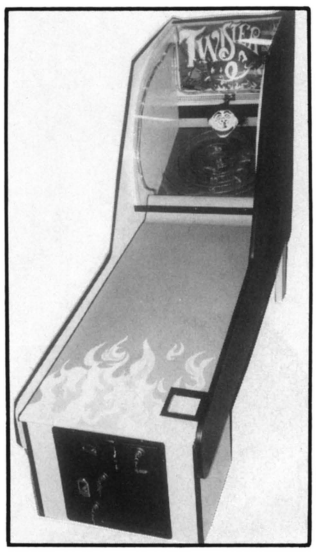
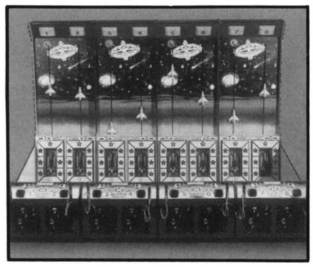


TWISTER UPDATE
Maker: Exidy
Phone: 415/325-5814
Notes: new features have been added to the firm's roll-down game such as enhanced lighting, a plex "top hood," optically-coupled scoring sensor switches and combined unit with coin mech, ticket dispenser and security coin box all in one
Released: February 1990



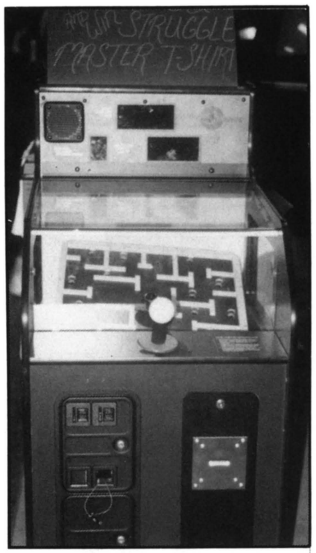
BRAND NEW
ACTION LOTTO
Maker: GaMCO
Phone: 800/642-7263 or 813/366-1133
Notes: redemption game in which the player uses air to blast ping pong balls into numbered holes on the playfield (as the numbers randomly light); complete operator-programmability; ticket dispenser (coin or token dispensing models available for markets where legal)



SHUTTLE LAUNCH
Maker: Lazer-Tron
Phone: 415/460-0873
Notes: skill game with ticket dispenser in which players shoot their lazer guns in a race to dock their shuttle craft at the space station; can be either coin-op or midway style with the flip of a dip switch
Released: February 1990



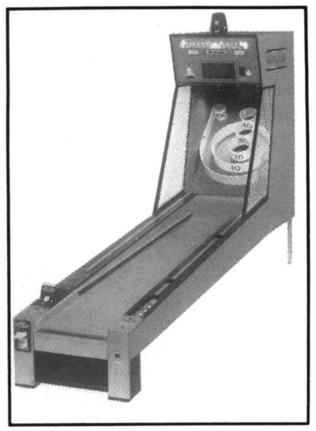
BRAND NEW
LUNAR GOLF
Maker: Meltec
Phone: 800/356-4777 or 408/923-1302 (in Calif.)
Notes: kids use joystick to tilt the playfield trying to sink real golf balls in lunar craters before time runs out; ticket dispenser and operator adjustable features



BRAND NEW
SILVER STRUGGLE
Maker: Plateau
Phone: 800/228-8974 or 615/592-2000
Notes: player tilts the playfield to guide a quarter over randomly-lighting spots; with ticket dispenser



BRAND NEW
QUACKERS
Maker: Seidel
Phone: 505/298-6994
Notes: roll-down redemption skill game themed on whacky ducks; optional themed graphics and special sounds for foreign language programming



BRAND NEW
SMART BALL
Maker: Smart Industries
Phone: 800/553-2442 or 515/265-9900
Notes: ticket-dispensing ski alley available in 10' or 13' lengths and in 1- or 4-player models; numerous features such as cork carpet alley, LED readouts, etc. and options such as bill acceptor and low ticket warning light



BRAND NEW
ANIMAL FESTIVAL
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: mole-smashing game that operates by use of a unique coil system (rather that air compressor) allowing for multiple hits of the target for higher points

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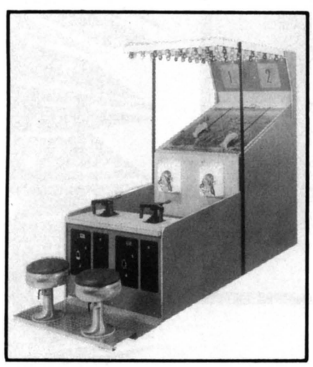
BRAND NEW
ROUGH RIDER TRUCK RACE
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: players roll balls into scored rings to advance their 4WD vehicle to the finish line



BRAND NEW
DOLPHIN WATER RACE
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: players aim water guns at targets to race their plush dolphin to the finish before the others

CRANES, ROTARIES & PUSHERS

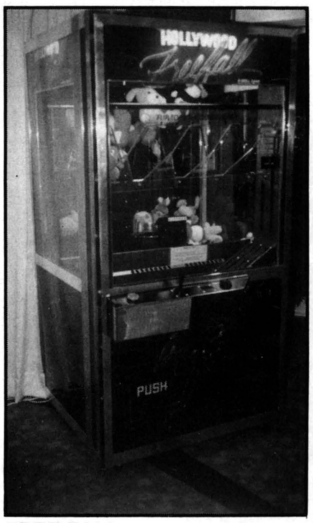
Cranes



BRAND NEW
SUPER SKILL CRANE
Maker: Grayhound Electronics
Phone: 800/222-0491 or 201/341-5200 (N.J.)
Notes: jumbo crane with a low, wide playfield and large claw (to accommodate larger prizes)



BRAND NEW
TURBINATION
Maker: Hollywood Merchandisers
Phone: 800/992-2274 or 818/767-0981
Notes: all-electronic jumbo crane in twin and single "multi-vend" versions; the single puts one spinning claw on 50-cent play for smaller prizes, the jumbo on 1 play for larger prizes; both models feature the new look for Hollywood's cranes with 90-percent glass cabinets, translucent blue signage and chrome trim

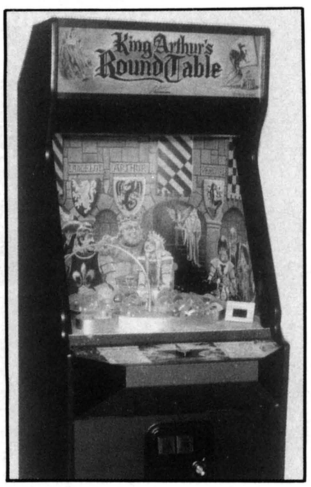


FREE FALL
Maker: Hollywood Merchandisers
Phone: 800/992-2274 or 818/767-0981
Notes: the firm has modified this redemption game so that instead of batting the prizes out of the playfield area, the player now flips them off a pad as they tumble down from a vertical conveyor belt

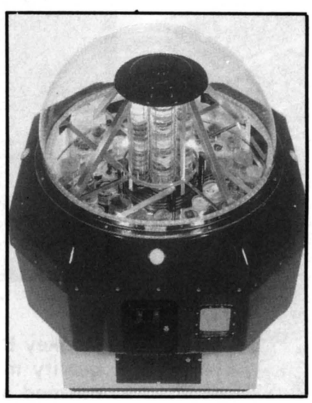


BRAND NEW
SUPER CRANE
Maker: Imaginomics
Phone: 800/828-8730 or 919/596-4543
Notes: crane in Super and Jumbo Super models featuring "AdMarq" advertising marquee, attention-getting music generator, tilt alarm. Mars bill acceptor

Rotaries



BRAND NEW
KING ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE
Maker: Leland
Phone: 619/562-7000
Available through Betson Ent.; Phone: 800/524-2343 or 201/440-2200
Notes: 300-capsule-capacity, self-filling rotary merchandiser in a video upright-style cabinet; operator-adjustable timer



BRAND NEW
JACKPOT
Maker: Smart Industries
Phone: 800/553-2442 or 515/265-9900
Notes: 4-pl.rotary merchandiser which features and automatic prize loader (dispenser "rotation"is set on a timer that is operator-adjustable to dispense 2 small and 1 large container every 8 coins or up to every 600 coins);bright red and yellow cabinet; double coin mech, tamper alarm and other features

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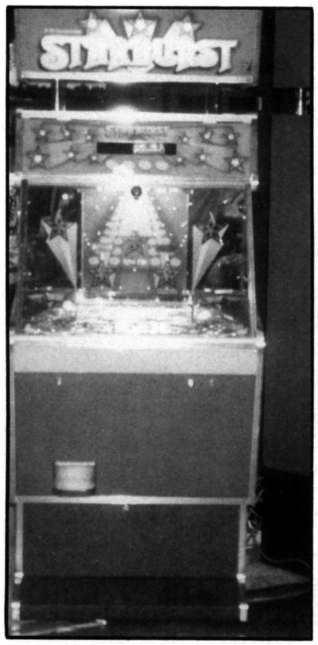
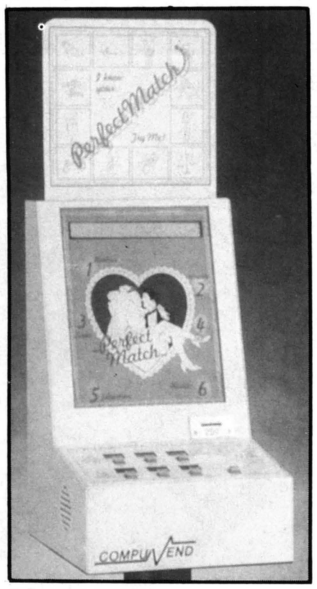
Pushers



STARBURST
Available from: Coin Concepts
Phone: 800/462-2646 or 201/390-9009
Notes: 1-pl. pusher with regular shelf play and typical pusher playfield plus unique bonus payout (game can dispense a special promotional token for greater prize redemption value or special bonus gift)
Released: January 1990

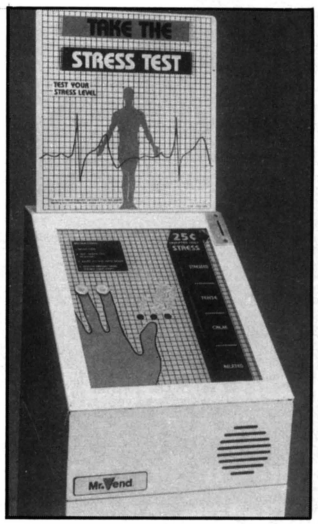
IMPULSE NOVELTIES



BRAND NEW
PERFECT MATCH
Maker: Mayoni Enterprises
Phone: 800/345-1183 or 818/899-2488
Notes: the firm's latest impulse novelty with a match-making theme; available in single units or in multi-unit pedestals (options even include a gumball machine in pedestal) or carousel



BRAND NEW
FUN STATION
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: a new concept from Mr. Vend for putting impulse items with bulk vendors, creating a "fun station"; many configurations are available



BRAND NEW
STRESS TEST
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: a dedicated stress rate impulse (previously available was a heartrate/stress combination); it's available in all the Mr. Vend impulse machine configurations: dedicated, kit, multi-unit pedestals, combinations with the Mr. Vend scale and the new *Fun Station;* available with English or Spanish graphics



BRAND NEW
CONFUCIUS THE FORTUNE TELLER
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: fortune-telling novelty in English and Spanish versions (sound and graphics); available in a dedicated unit or can convert *Zoltar The Palm Reader* or *The Talking Matchmaker* with installation of a custom chip and graphics; available in all the Mr. Vend configurations including the versatile *Fun Station* (can also be single unit with two bulk vendors on the sides)

BRAND NEW
THE TALKING MATCHMAKER
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: matchmaking impulse unit in dedicated and kit versions (converts *Confucius* and *Zoltar*); comes in English or Spanish and is available in all the standard Mr. Vend product configurations



BRAND NEW
ZOLTAR THE PALM READER
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: Zoltar reads your palm for a quarter; English and Spanish versions; dedicated or conversion for either *Confucius* or *Match Maker* available in all the Mr. Vend configurations

TABLE GAMES



BRAND NEW
DISCO-TAIFUN
Maker: Dynamo-Stella
Phone: 800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699
Notes: quiet air hockey game with overhead blacklight, fluorescent puck and unique rim that keeps pucks from flying off table

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- ★ Modem option available for remote money, toy count and diagnostics



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Jumbo Super Crane
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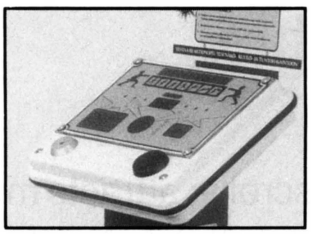
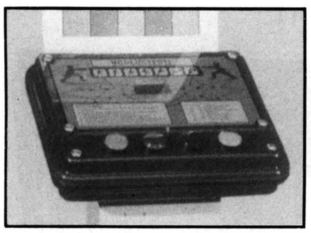
BRAND NEW
MEMORY TEST
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: a memory-testing impulse machine



BRAND NEW
REAKTOTEST
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: an impulse unit that tests the player's reaction time



BRAND NEW
SPEED TEST
Maker: Vari-Tech
Phone: 800/245-2737 or 616/538-4088
Notes: impulse novelty

WEIGHT SCALES

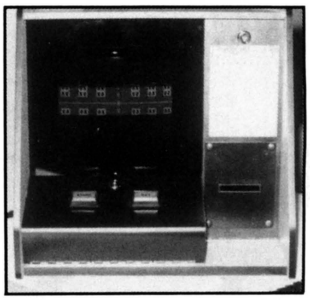


BRAND NEW
TALKING COMPUTER SCALE
Maker: Mr. Vend
Phone: 818/718-6061
Notes: the firm has added voice chips to its scale; custom messages and greetings are available, as well as English and Spanish versions; available by itself or in combination with Mr. Vend impulse units

COUNTERTOP GAMES



PIT BOSS SUPERSTAR
Maker: Merit Industries
Phone: 800/523-2760 or 215/639-4700 (Penn.)
Notes: countertop unit housing 15 different games; features include diagnostics, bookkeeping, automatic game rotation, custom advertising
Released: January 1990



BRAND NEW
Countertops
Maker: Tekbilt
Phone: 800/666-7776 or 215/322-3232
Notes: countertop versions of the firm's machines (such as *American Pull Tabs, 8-Liners* and pokers



BRAND NEW
JOLLY POKER
Maker: Dynamo-Stella
Phone: 800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699
Notes: 100 percent skill poker game in which the player presses a button to stop spinning cards for best hand

POKERS, ETC.



BRAND NEW
HOLD UM SITDOWN
Maker: Altec
Phone: 800/423-8779 or 702/323-2900
Notes: new sitdown version of this firm's poker game; oak and brass cabinet with chair attached

BRAND NEW
CRISS CROSS BINGO
Maker: Big Ten Electronics
Phone: 406/452-7361
Notes: conversion kit to turn pokers into video bingos

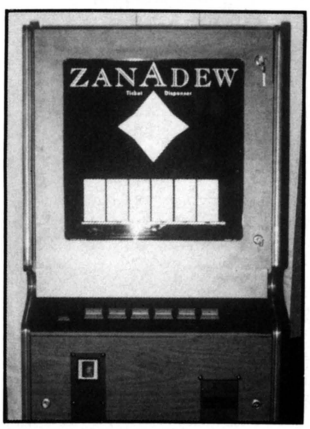
Combination Games
Maker: Grayhound Electronics
Phone: 800/222-0491 or 201/341-5200 (N.J.)
Notes: upright that combines their *Super Trivia* with *Lucky 8 Liner;* 19" monitor and bill acceptor
Released: February 1990

BRAND NEW
8 LINER KITS
Maker: Grayhound Electronics
Phone: 800/222-0491 or 201/341-5200 (N.J.)
Specs: universal horizontal kits

BRAND NEW
SOUTH DAKOTA LOTTERY
Maker: SMS Mfg.
Phone: 800/221-0138 (outside N.J.) or 201/370-3030
Notes: casino-style cabinet with and industry first, says the firm — a bill acceptor/stacker built right into the front door; firm also makes *Poker* and *Keno* in the same configurations; exclusively available through Lieberman Music (Minneapolis)



BRAND NEW
AMERICAN PULL TABS
Maker: Tekbilt
Phone: 800/666-7776 or 215/322-3232
Notes: a video pull-tab game with 10 ways to win



BRAND NEW
ZANADEW
Maker: Tekbilt
Phone: 800/666-7776 or 215/322-3232
Notes: pull-tab ticket dispenser that dispenses those break-open tickets

The 75¢ Success Story



Roger Rasmussen

this Midwest operator is succeeding with higher play prices

Operator Roger Rasmussen says his Music Service, Inc. (Marshall, Minn.) is succeeding with 75 cent play on certain types of equipment, mainly pool. As a matter of fact, Music Service went to 50 cent play on pool tables a decade ago, with the full support of their players. Today the company is also doing fine with CD jukeboxes set on three songs for a dollar, and with dart machines priced at 50 cents for certain types of gameplay. Does the success of Music Services hold a lesson for others in the trade? We think so, and we asked Roger to tell us about it.



Operator Roger Rasmussen and some of his pool league participants. Roger successfully went to 50-cent play on pool a decade ago and is now getting 75 cents on pool and other certain types of equipment.

REPLAY: Roger, please tell us about your experiences with higher price per play.

RASMUSSEN: Most of Minnesota is on 75 cent pool as of last year.

REPLAY: At this point, many readers will instantly assume: "This guy must be a big-city operator with a constant stream of players who have nothing but money."

RASMUSSEN: Actually, our route covers maybe 15 counties in Minnesota, with a few more amusement accounts in Iowa. It's a very, very rural area. Probably most metropolitan operators would not even look at one of our locations; we just don't have that much traffic.

REPLAY: How did you start raising play prices?

RASMUSSEN: It really boiled down to economics. We went from a quarter to 35 cents between 1974 to 1979. Then in 1979 we started our league systems. That was one of the things that enabled us to go uniformly to 50 cents starting that same year.

REPLAY: And more recently?

RASMUSSEN: Leagues also helped us go from 50 to 75 cents last year. In fact, leagues were a reason for increasing play pricing, as well as a tool for doing it. We explained that we needed more of a return, to recoup the expense and effort of promoting our league program.

REPLAY: How did you first introduce the higher, 75 cent price?

RASMUSSEN: The thing that made it possible was league organization meetings with our players last fall. Players accepted the higher prices much more readily than location owners. We talked to the players about the inflation rate, and we discussed our rising costs of equipment, trucks, gas, and we related that to our 1979 costs, back when the 50 cent price per play was set. We showed players, step by step, that the play-price increase was just playing catch-up. It really was just bare economics.

REPLAY: What did players say in response to all of this?

RASMUSSEN: When we first walked into the meetings, there was general resistance against it, completely. But when you sit down and go over the program, the attitude changes. They agreed it would be reasonable. We asked the players, if you're honest with yourself about what your income was in 1979 vs.

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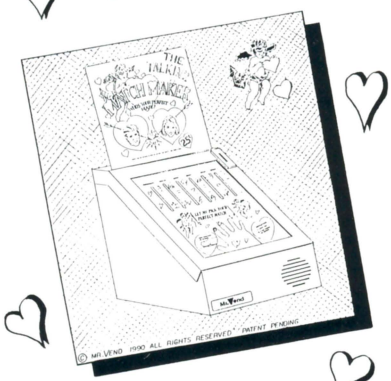

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1989, what does that tell you? The players said, we see your point. They said, let's not get hung up talking about prices. We agree you need the increase, 75 cents is fine and now let's get back to playing pool!

REPLAY: Armed with that agreement, did you then go to the location owners and say, "See, the players will accept the price hike"?

RASMUSSEN: Well, the location owners are involved in the league meetings too. But the majority of resistance was from them.

REPLAY: What objections did location owners bring up?

RASMUSSEN: They said going from 50 cents to 75 cents in one jump was an 'exorbitant' price increase. It was 50% at a time. But I pointed out that we have to do it that way because of our pricing structure. If we could have gone up 2 cents a year, we would have. . . but that's not feasible. I related it to pricing in 1979 vs. today; everything is up from one to two and half times. Labor costs have doubled. All your prices have doubled. So a 50% increase was just a catch-up. Not even that, really.

REPLAY: And with that, you got the increase. What has been the economic result?

RASMUSSEN: I looked at our numbers a while ago. Video is way, way down compared to a couple of years ago. I'd say it's down from 70% of our gross to around 40% or even less. Pool is way up as a percentage of revenues. Pool play itself is considerably down from three years ago, but that's due in large part to the stronger DWI laws (driving while under the influence of alcohol) and the higher drinking age, which has gone from 19 to

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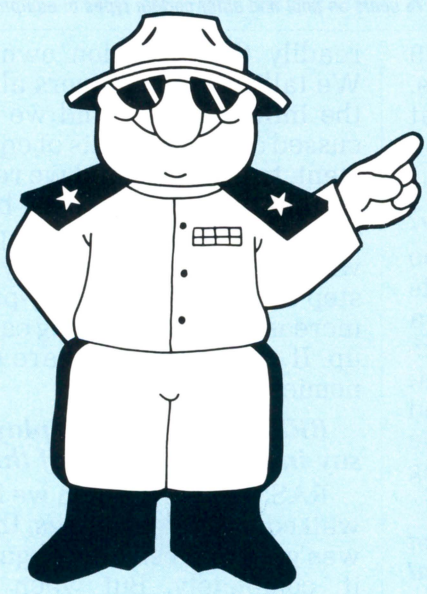

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21. People don't linger in bars as much as they used to, and when they are in the bars they drink less because they simply can't afford a DWI conviction. So we have a smaller volume of people in our taverns. Actually, without our league structure, I'd hate to be in the business right now. It's the one thing that makes our business feasible.

REPLAY: You mentioned that video revenues are down. Any chance of raising prices on that category of equipment, to make up your losses?

RASMUSSEN: Not in our market. Again, we're in a very, very rural area. I think home games have fundamentally destroyed the street video business, certainly in this market. I don't have any mall arcade experience, so I can't speak for those people.

REPLAY: But your experiments with videos at 50 cents all failed.

RASMUSSEN: Yes. We've tried 50 cent play on videos many times, clear back to the boom when they were shipping a few that way. We tried it for as long as three months, and we would never lower the pricing on that game as long as it was in the same location. And it seems like, invariably, our revenues weren't good. . . until we moved it and put it on a quarter. Then revenues would go up! That told me it was not yet the time for 50 cent play on video games.

REPLAY: Why do your players resist paying 50 cents for a video game, but willingly put 75 cents into a pool table?

RASMUSSEN: I can only speculate, but this may be due to the fact that video games last such a short time.

REPLAY: Let's talk about music pricing. Do you operate CD jukes?

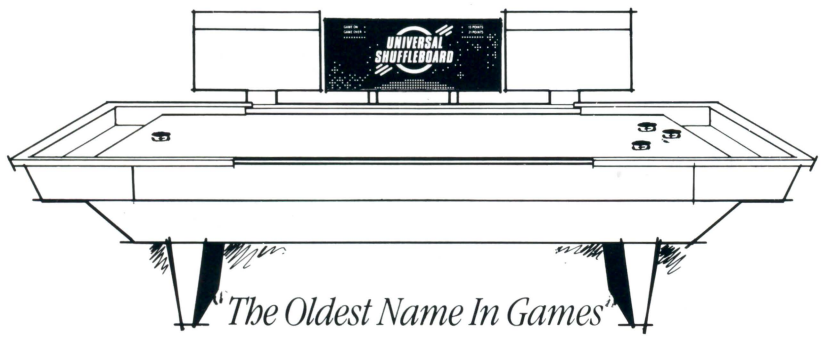
RASMUSSEN: Yes, and we definitely have increased our music prices. It's a little tougher, because you're back to street operating and what the market will bear. But with our CD boxes, we're mostly at three songs for a dollar. The customer gets more selections per dollar if he puts in a $5 bill.

REPLAY: So your customers accept the higher pricing in this area, because they're getting more for their money: CD music quality.

RASMUSSEN: We've always been strong in the music business. We've always wired in remote speakers with good sound. We always zone our music for the location at their request. We pay strong attention to programming for individual locations. Music has always been one of the backbones of the business. It's not a large, fast return, but it's steady. . . like milking cows, which anyone who grew up on a farm knows about!

REPLAY: What about redemption? Any price hike successes there?

RASMUSSEN: We do have some redemption equipment, but we're running most of it on 25 cent play. We might have a few jumbo cranes on 50 cent play, but we run most of our cranes



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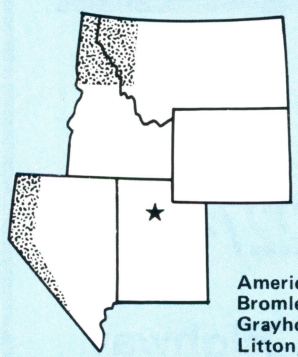

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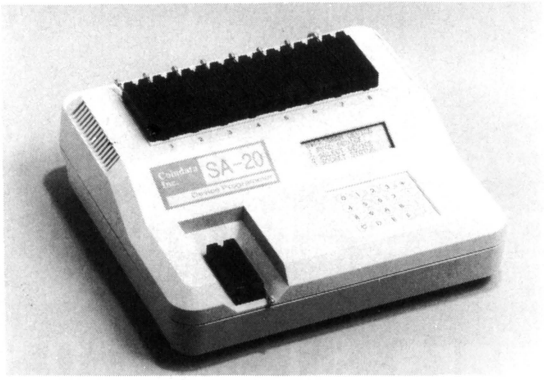

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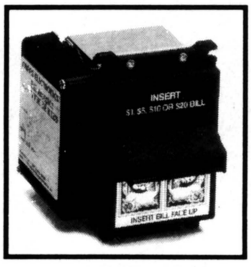

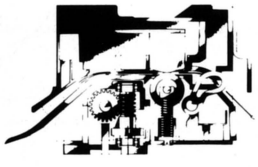

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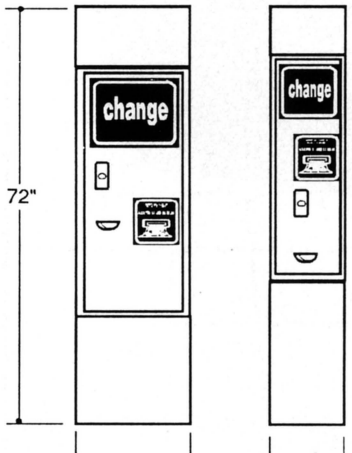
Micro Bill Changers



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with tickets, which allow you to regulate pricing.

REPLAY: For example, you can charge a certain number of tickets for the plush at a prize counter. Now we come to that great Midwestern staple, darts. How do they fare with charging more than a quarter?

RASMUSSEN: Manufacturers are doing a fabulous job with darts, giving you a chance to price darts in several different ways because of the capabilities of the machines. It's very helpful. Some of the games you play on the machines are a quarter, that's true. But some, like Cricket, are set on 50 cents.

REPLAY: What's your experience with bill validators?

RASMUSSEN: We've always been big on dollar bill validators. We have run dollar bill validators on all our jukes for many years. It gives you flexibility in pricing to let you sell more plays at a time. Your costs are basically the same whether a jukebox is sitting quietly or playing, so you want to keep it playing!

REPLAY: How does this affect revenues?

RASMUSSEN: When we first went with validators, we were giving two songs for a quarter, 12 for a dollar. True, when the player puts in that dollar, we make less money per song than if he just inserts a quarter . . . but I'd rather give the customer the additional plays and get that dollar. Using this philosophy with bill validators definitely increases play on any type of equipment.

REPLAY: Would you like to see validators on other types of equipment?

RASMUSSEN: We've tested the market with a few validators on certain pins, cranes and basketballs, but it's a complex situation and we're still getting results.

REPLAY: When you talk to operators around the U.S. and tell them you've been successful with higher play-pricing on pool and darts, what do they say?

RASMUSSEN: Most say "I just can't do it." My personal feeling is, on a day-to-day basis, they're not promoting and marketing their program properly.

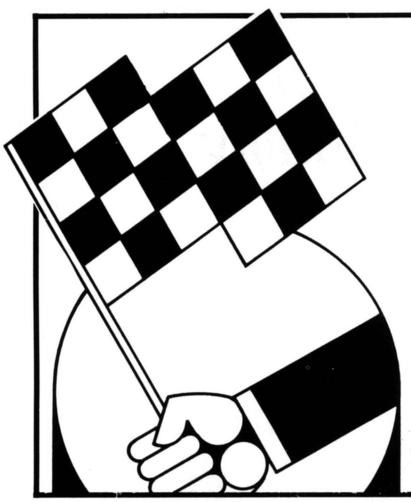
REPLAY: What about the problem many operators cite: "I can't raise play pricing, because my competition will undercut me"?

RASMUSSEN: That's a problem. I've had a little of that too. It's one of those things you just have to continue to work on. It takes some creative operating. One of the things that helps us is, we've probably got the best league systems in the country. You know, I really can't imagine how operators without leagues are getting by today.

REPLAY: What's the outlook for raising play pricing? Can you keep extending it?

RASMUSSEN: We're pretty well on the cutting edge of the country as far as play-pricing on our later model equipment. We are willing to try anything. Despite today's softer market, it's still a good business. We're still making money and hanging on. It's the third time in my 13 years at Music Services that I've seen the business like this. But I'm sure better times will come around again; they always do!

REPLAY: Thanks for your thoughts.



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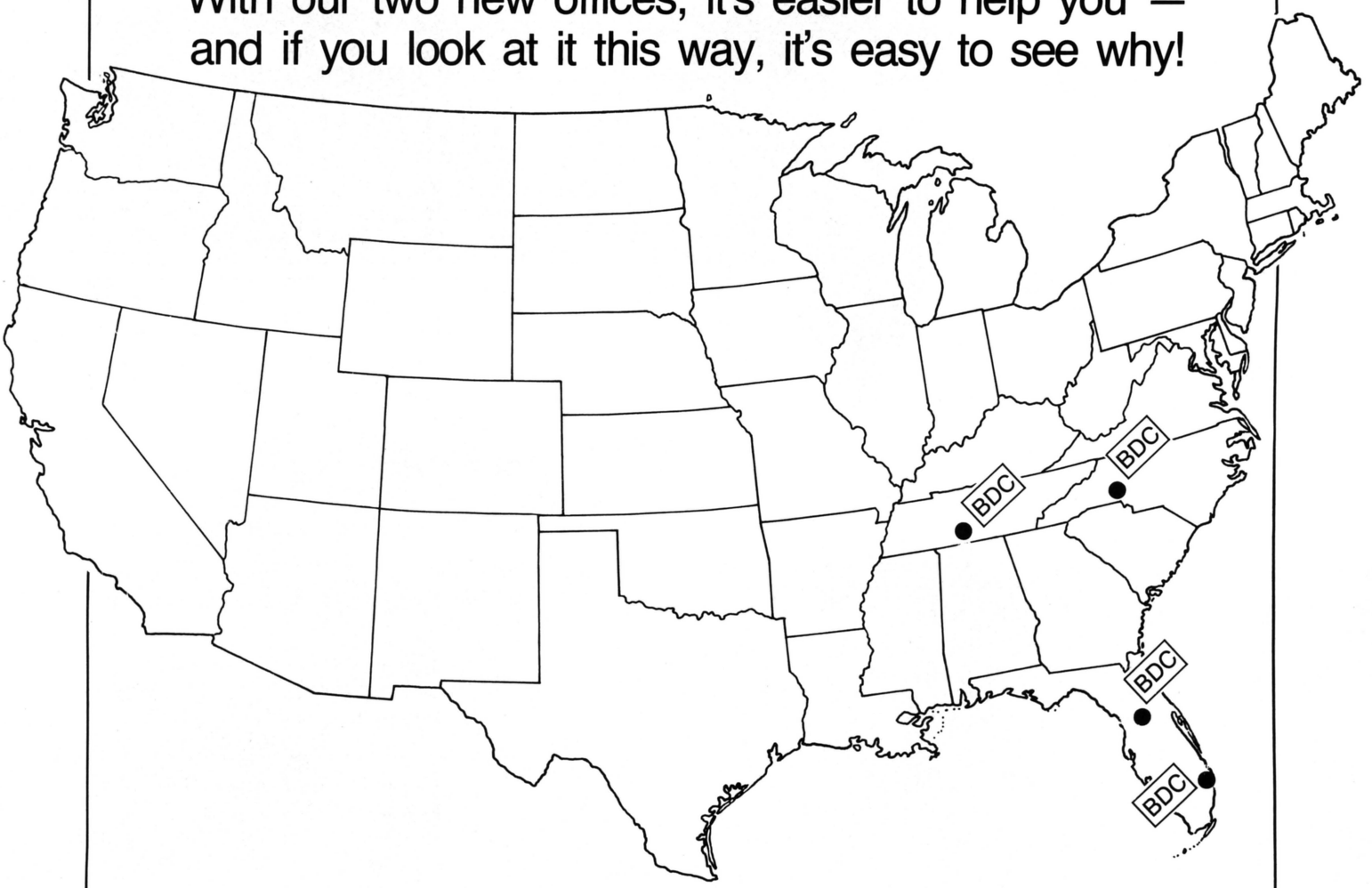

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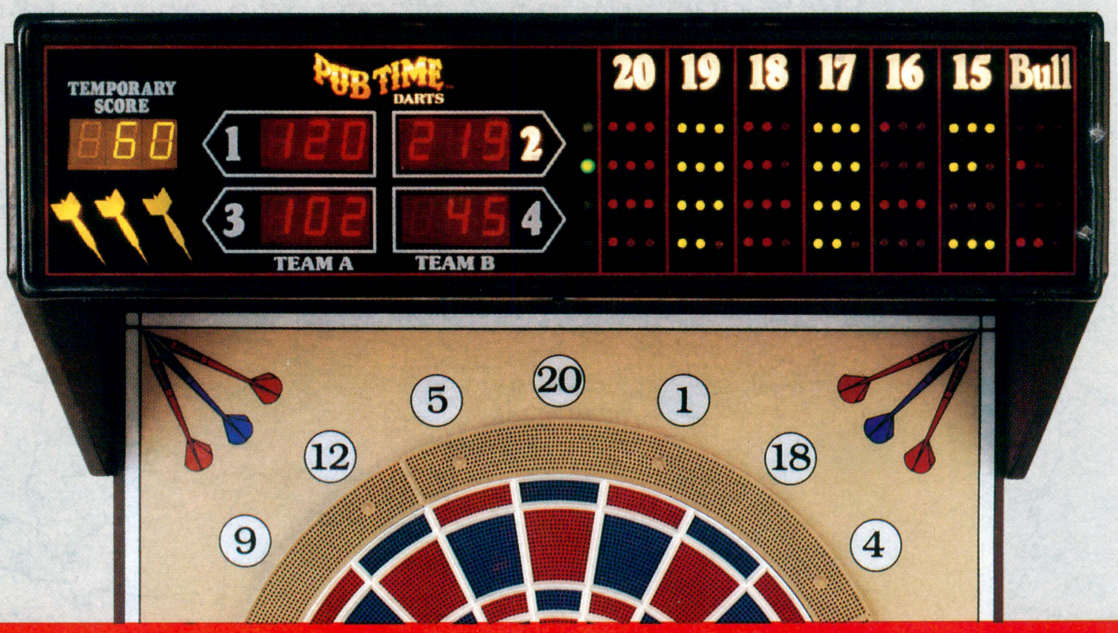

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Tournament Highlights



MERIT TO GREAT LAKES — Merit's "World Series of Darts" continued in Southgate, Mich. on Feb. 25 with their "3rd Annual Great Lakes Open" tournament. Tremendous growth in area darting resulted in moving the event to the greater Detroit region. Hosts were Cartel Distributing and operator Pat Benson of Michigan Nickel Co. (who said Merit's dart program tripled his league size in two seasons). A raging blizzard kept many players away, but those who came were in high spirits and happy to be there. Seen in the photo are winners in Men's Doubles, Adam Bycraft and Dave Nowakowski.



DYNAMO TO TEXAS — Feb. 3-4 saw the $2,000 Texas state championships in air hockey, held at Peewee's Pizza in Missouri City. Sponsors included Dynamo, Coin-Op Video Games Inc. (Dave Slavin, operator), along with Peewee's, All Prime Amusements and other local businesses. The U.S. Air Table Hockey Assn.'s Connie Rector organized the event with help from operator Dave. Seen here, Tim Weissman (at left) cops first place while Dynamo's Mark Robbins takes second in a closely fought contest. For information on tourneys, promos and tables, contact Mark at Dynamo (800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699).

VALLEY DARTS — Valley Recreation, its operators and dart distribs mounted regional dart tourneys across the USA which ran through the opening months of this year. Players strived for the chance to compete in the North American Championships, which were played against the German national team in Orlando, Fla. on March 23. At stake: the prestigious Valley Cup. That event fell right after deadline for this issue; we hope to report results next month. But we do have two regional results. The $4,000 "Mad City Classic" drew 317 players to a Wisconsin regional held by Madison City Coin. Also, Colorado regionals sponsored by High Country Pool & Darts (Fort Collins) drew several flights of players to a well-organized event. In all, it's been another strong season for Valley darts!



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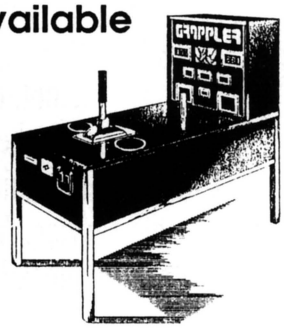

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TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

APRIL 1-4

Coors Light World Series of Bar Games/Regional Tournament, Trump Castle Hotel, Atlantic City, N.J. For more information, contact Sports Tournaments of America at 800/327-5566.

APRIL 10-14

Coors Light World Series of Bar Games/Regional Tournament, Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans, La. For more information, contact Sports Tournaments of America at 800/327-5566.

APRIL 13-15

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

APRIL 18-22

Coors Light World Series of Bar Games/Regional Tournament, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact Sports Tournaments of America at 800/327-5566.



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 3-6

OCMA/VNEA Pool League State Championship, Clark County Fairgrounds, Springfield. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/486-8677.

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 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 2-3

Air Hockey $8,000 Nationals, Loveland, Colo. For more information, contact Mark Robbins at Dynamo: 800/527-6054 or 817/589-7699

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 5-10

Coors Light World Series of Bar Games/National Championship, Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact Sports Tournaments of America at 800/327-5566.

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.

cover story

"This Is the Good Time"

Capcom's CPS system brings success to the firm... and offers direction for a troubled video market

How sweet it is.

How sweet to have a top video hit (heck, a whole *series* of top video hits).

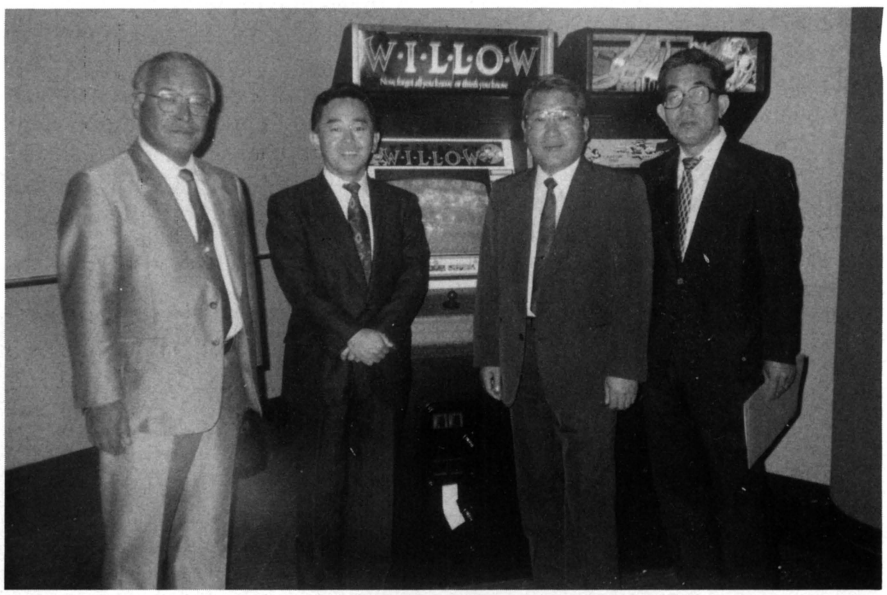
How sweet to have accurately forecast the market, and provided operators and distributors what they need to make money.

How sweet to have converted the skeptics into supporters. How sweet to hear the people who said, "We don't want to hear about systems," changing their tune to "What's your latest system title?"

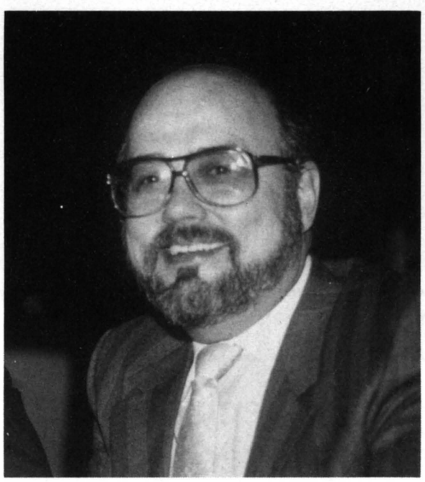
At Capcom, they're savoring the sweet taste of success these days. "Looks like we're sold out on *Mercs* and we haven't even started making them," smiled VP of Sales & Marketing Bill Cravens. "*Final Fight* is a monster. *U.N. Squadron* and *Willow* were major hits. Things can't get much better than this! For Capcom, this is the good time."

The heart of the Capcom success story is their CPS System. It's a board-based exchange program offering top titles with in-depth play and excellent graphics...plus a hefty operator rebate/trade-in program. "I know many other manufacturers are complaining about a soft market, but the CPS System has been phenomenal for us," Cravens said.

The success of CPS is no accident. "It all goes back to four years ago," Cravens explained. "When I first joined this company, our President Kenzo Tsujimoto foresaw the success of the Nintendo home system. He said, 'The only way we can make money is to give people twice what they can get at home.' And he was right: home game competition did explode, and it did take some serious dollars from the coin machine side. It meant coin-op video games had to bring more excitement



***Capcom's M. Nakamura (executive assistant to Mr. Tsujimoto), President George Nakayama, Chairman Kenzo Tsujimoto and export heavy Ryuichi Hirata during the distributor meeting that intro'd* Willow.**



VP of Sales & Marketing Bill Cravens

to the streets and arcades than kids could get by playing their 8-bit Atari or Nintendo system at home.

"That's what we offer with CPS," Cravens continued, "a much more powerful engine and graphics chips. Game after game, nobody can touch us. And on top of that, after operators run our CPS games for a couple of years, we give them $500 back when they trade in the board on a new game (or in the case of *Mercs*, $400 back)."

When Capcom first announced, a few years back, that it was going forward with the development of a brand new system concept, some tradesters were openly skeptical. "We didn't even call it a system at times, because people don't like to hear that word," Bill Cravens said. "And when we first started the trade-in/rebate program, people said: 'You're holding our $500; why not give it to us now?' But now that we're getting strong games, like *Final Fight, U.N. Squadron,* and *Mercs,* they see it makes sense."

Capcom's U.S. sales topper is a long-time believer in the kit/system concept. Bill's experience with kits started with *Mr. Do!,* the industry's first kit. In the early '80s, Bill was responsible for getting Universal to market the game in that format.

Later, at Nintendo, he was a leading force while the firm conceived and marketed its very successful VS System. And, he says today, the VS experience demonstrated some important truths for the industry.

"People made money on VS," Bill recalled. "With 65,000 units sold, they had to. But the technology only lasts so long. And you have to make a major investment of money, time and energy to bring that successful concept to the next level."

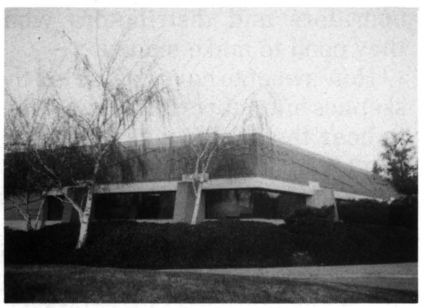
Obviously, the folks at Capcom feel they've made that investment. "It's taken Capcom a year and a half to get where we are today with CPS, pushing and pushing and pushing," Cravens said. "Mr. Tsujimoto is not taking any money out, he just plows it back in. What we've committed to R&D is absolutely incredible. But our commitment has paid off. The people who were the biggest critics at first, now are starting to see that it makes sense."

The economics of a good system, Cravens says, are irresistible. "In Japan today, operators are only running system games, because it makes sense in terms of ROI," he asserted. "Taito, SNK, all of them have their own systems. Well, the case for a good system is equally compelling here in the U.S."

Capcom's latest CPS title is *Mercs*. A three-player, wide-bib game, it's being sold in dedicated format "and we'll have a couple of others in that format, only because the game requires a unique cabinet that doesn't go well into kits," Cravens stated. "People still get $500 off, even if they're trading in *Forgotten World*."

Once the boards are traded in, the bottom boards go back to Japan, are run through the shop and then brought out again with new games on them. The "shop" is a state-of-the art facility in Osaka. How high is the quality? Let's just say that Capcom also does work for IBM and Panasonic.





Above: ***the October 1989 addition to the growing Capcom plant in Osaka.*** *Below:* ***Capcom USA's headquarters on Scott Road in Santa Clara, Calif.***

"Our Osaka plant is a manufacturing Never-Never Land," Bill smiled. "It's so clean they won't even let you walk in there with your shoes on. They have a 3D microscope so they can check for solder. They have gadgets most people wouldn't even have names for. It's like they were building heart and lung machines."

While Capcom enjoys their sweet success of early 1990, they're already planning for additional triumphs in the months and years to come. Future CPS games are already in development or on test. One, called *Magic Sword*, will offer 50 levels of gameplay. It's testing extremely well in Japan. Another forthcoming CPS title, called *Mega-Twins*, is also expected to rise on the U.S. charts.

And this fall, Capcom hopes to pull the curtains off a video game

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The true ham of Capcom, Brian Duke, sits on top of the **Final Fight** *world during ACME '90.*



Chairman Tsujimoto woks veggies for the gang (including Pat Walton, Bill Cravens and Paul Wiederaenders) during a visit to the states that coincided with the opening of their new digs in February 1989.

which will help provide that "next-generation" kick which operators and distributors have been looking for. "We have a big game that we hope will come out with a 33" monitor and a dollar bill acceptor only — no coins," said Cravens.

And that's not all. For 1991, Capcom is already working on CPS 2, a new system which is slated to debut in 18 months. "It will be a monster," Cravens promised. "CPS 2 will provide many times the computing power we have now, and even true 3D graphics."

Meantime, to support sales of current product, Capcom is streamlining its U.S. distributor network. "We find we get better response from our distributors when they have the line exclusively," Bill said. "We're returning to pre 1980s-type distribution: one territory, one distributor. The CPS system allows us to do that, and it's worked very well where we've tried it so far."

Long-term, what sets Capcom apart from the manufacturing "also-rans" is not a hit game, or even a string of hits. It's not marketing savvy, financial wisdom or distributor discipline, although all these things play a part in the company's success.

No, what sets Capcom apart is what George Bush calls "the vision thing." The company works hard at developing a clear, steady sense of direction . . . a goal for the future of the industry . . . and a plan for how to take the industry there. "Kenzo Tsujimoto is really trying to be the new guru of the coin amusements industry," smiled Bill Cravens. "A guru, in its original sense, is 'one who points the way.'"

With the success of its CPS System, Capcom feels it is "pointing the way" for the industry in 1990 . . . and the Capcom crew is fully confident the industry will be *profitably* following their direction for a long, long time to come.

The BONDEAL CHART

Top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending March 10, 1990

TOP KITS	Mar. 10	Mar. 3	Feb 24	Weeks on Location
Roulette	1	1	1	67
1941	2	—	—1	
Final Fight	3	2	2	6
Chequered Flag	4	4	4	88
Klax	5	5	10	3
R Type II	6	6	5	4
Vapor Trail	7	3	3	4
Gigandes	8	8	6	6
Passing Shot	9	—	—	41
Bloxeed	10	7	—	8
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
Big Run	1	1	1	6
Hard Drivin'	2	2	3	47
Ninja Turtles	3	3	2	14
Super Hang On	4	4	—	133
Monaco GP	5	—	—	28

Those Legal Questions

by LAURENCE MERRITT & DAVID HAGEN

Attorney Compensation: Before Hiring a Lawyer, Know How He's Paid

The payment of attorneys' fees is often a sore subject with clients. Many clients believe that the fees charged by their attorneys are too large. Additionally, clients often do not understand how the charges are calculated. On the other hand, attorneys often feel that the clients do not appreciate the escalating costs associated with operating a legal firm.

We believe it is important for clients to understand in advance how attorneys charge for their services. Additionally, clients should be aware that attorneys' fees are negotiable and there are different ways to pay for legal services.

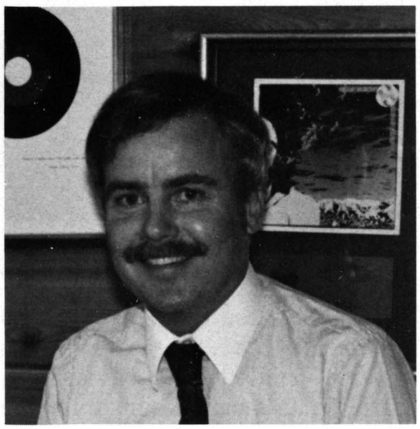
Here are some suggestions for you to consider when retaining the services of an attorney.

1. Hourly Fees: most attorneys charge for their services based upon an hourly rate plus costs incurred. Attorneys charge for all time assisting the clients, including telephone calls, conferences, drafting correspondence, and preparing court documents. Clients should also be aware that they will be billed when they call to speak with their attorneys. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "an attorney's stock in trade is his time."

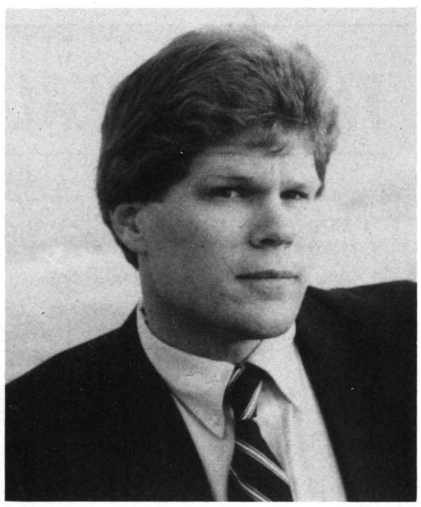
The types of cases appropriately handled on an hourly fee basis include the drafting of business contracts, business litigation, and business legal advice.

2. Flat Fees: attorneys may offer to charge a flat fee for specific work. Most clients prefer a flat fee, because they then know the total in advance. However, a flat fee is normally inappropriate for litigation, because it is impossible to calculate in advance the amount of time and services required to handle litigation to completion.

The types of services appropriately handled on a flat fee basis includes services for the preparation of one document, such as a will or trust, and incorporating a business.



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.

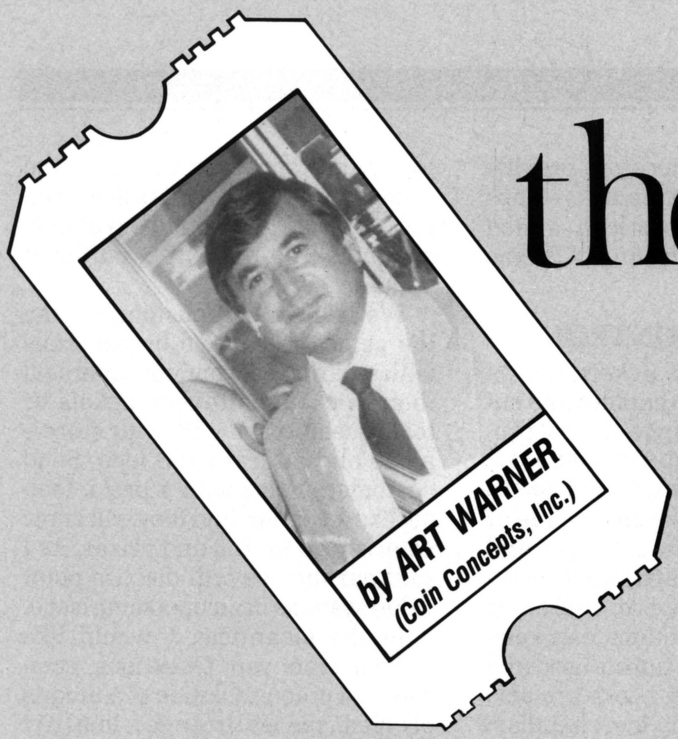
3. Contingency Fees: a contingency fee provides the attorneys with a percentage of the amount recovered from the opposing party. Normally, attorneys do not receive any compensation unless they are successful in obtaining a settlement or judgment. The percentage that the attorney will recover varies, depending upon the complexity of the case and the amount in controversy. The attorney will receive a larger portion of the proceeds when a trial or appeal is required.

The types of cases where contingency fee agreements are appropriate include personal injury cases (such as automobile accidents and slip-and-fall cases), as well as simple collection cases. Most business litigation is not handled on a contingency basis.

A contingency fee agreement may not be in the best interest of the clients. A contingency fee agreement may cause some attorneys to seek a quick settlement without vigorously litigating the case. Consequently, clients may obtain a more favorable result by paying the attorneys an hourly rate.

4. Combination Hourly Fees and Contingency Fees: some attorneys will handle cases on a reduced hourly fee rate, in exchange for a percentage of the settlement. This can benefit clients by permitting a lower hourly charge. Additionally, the contingency fee provision may act as a bonus to motivate the attorneys to obtain a larger settlement.

At Merritt & Hagen, we are proud of the fact that the vast majority of our clients pay our statements promptly. We believe this is the result of fully advising our clients about our billing methods. Clients do not mind paying attorneys' fees, when they believe the attorneys are charging reasonable fees.



the Big Ticket

The ACME show has come and gone. Those of you who were there probably noticed (and those of you who were not there should know) that redemption games were shown in greater number and variety than ever before. If you hope to purchase (or have already ordered), the next important step is selecting and ordering tickets and/or tokens.

Many games — usually the adult-oriented games — are designed to offer you, the operator, the option of tickets or tokens. In some areas, local laws require a particular type of payout, either tickets, tokens or both, so you should consider this question *before* you order equipment. Most manufacturers can give you what you want at the time of purchase much faster and less expensively than changing the equipment later.

Some machines — such as *Skeeball, Boomball,* basketball and most children's games — are designed for tickets only. In other machines where you have the option, tickets should be your first choice. Tickets are less expensive and can be used in a greater variety of games.

ORDERING TICKETS

Make sure you allow time for your ticket order. Manufacturing time, from placing the order, through proof-approval, press time and delivery, may take from three to eight weeks. Each game room should have its own ticket. When designing your tickets, be sure to include:

1. The name, address and logo: This may cost a little extra at first, but establishing the game room's identity will promote repeat business.

2. The ticket value: The most popular ticket value is "one point" and should be the base for your value system. Your one point can be worth *any* amount in actual cash value. Many operators use what we call the "New Jersey Theory" and set the games to issue reams of tickets with little individual value. As most machines announce a payout with either bells, buzzers or lights, bit awards generate player excitement and player excitement generates repeat plays.

3. The ticket color: Tickets are available in a variety of colors at no extra cost. Different colors may also indicate different ticket values, although we recommend no more than two colors for two values, such as one point and five points.

Tickets are supplied in a fanfold and usually fit 1,000 or more per payout bin. "Low level" ticket lights on most games alert the operator when it is time to refill. However, it is up to the operator to keep track of the inventory of tickets and allow time for re-ordering.

ORDERING TOKENS

A good rule of thumb is to order a minimum of 2,000 tokens for each token game you operate. Like tickets, tokens should display the name, address and logo of the game room as well as a point value. When ordering the standard aluminum bright tokens, allow approximately four weeks for the die development, followed by three to eight weeks for manufacture. You need to double the time — *and the expense* — for anodizing, the addition of color to your tokens.

Because of this significant expense, you should give some thought to token point value. The relative payout of various machines in your game room will determine the token values. With careful consideration, you should be able to set only two token values to serve your purposes. The most popular token values are ten points and twenty-five points. We will discuss point value systems and how they work in an upcoming issue.

Another consideration when ordering tokens is size. Your tokens are meant for redemption exchange only and should not fit into the machine coin slot. You do not want to find tokens in your coin chutes or have neighboring merchants complaining about your tokens. We recommend 1" to 1-1/8" tokens. They cannot be replayed and they will fit well in the common hoppers used in today's machines. Note here that many different systems are in use around the country, each designed for greater profitability in that location. Investigate other payout systems in your area.

Tokens are faster and easier to count than tickets. Special delicate

scales or hoppers set up with count meters can make token control simple. And tokens, unlike tickets, are re-useable . . . with one major drawback. Many locations are high-traffic areas where players often walk away with tokens as souvenirs. This may be very expensive. One solution to slow the loss of tokens is to issue an official receipt. Most often, these receipts look like a check. Many operators use check-writing machines to validate receipts. Others simply use pre-printed tamper-proof checks that show the value of the exchanged tokens. If you issue receipts, we recommend that you keep a duplicate copy. Analyze your location for the amount of "walk-away" tokens you should expect.

One undeniable benefit of tokens is the sound they make at payout. The sound of the tokens dropping into the win tray provides more excitement and more attraction to play. Some locations capitalize on this casino-style atmosphere, drawing repeat adult customers who accumulate tokens or receipts for larger prizes. Many operators provide large cups for the winnings — cups displaying the store's logo — and try to give the full feeling of casino games.

PAYOUT CONTROL

Whether you use tickets, tokens or both, you need to explain and enforce a clear exchange control procedure. Every member of your staff must realize that tickets and tokens are equivalent to the cash value of the prizes. Therefore tickets and tokens must be handled and accounted for as if they *were* cash. Log books with transactions can keep track of tokens and tickets used and redeemed. Such log books are also valuable in tracking merchandise.

After tokens are redeemed or exchanged for receipts, they can be dropped through a chute into locked containers. Tickets should be torn in half *lengthwise* before disposal, eliminating any reuse or customer complaint that "I tore them accidentally." An efficient way of handling redeemed tickets is to run them into a paper shredder set up at the redemption counter; this allows you to count even large numbers of tickets and shred them in a matter of minutes.

We believe that customers play the games to *win*, so be generous with awards. Let your customers fill their pockets with your tickets or tokens, embossed with your store's name and address and logo. Send customers home with a prize, feeling like a winner, and they will know where to go for fun and prizes. As I said earlier, we will discuss point value systems in an upcoming issue.

In the meantime, I would like to hear from you. Questions, comments, a unique solution to a unique problem, please drop me a line (Art Warner, Coin Concepts, Inc., 12 Edgeboro Rd., Unit 4, E. Brunswick, NJ 08116; 201/390-9009 or 800/462-2646). As president of Coin Concepts, I am excited by the many opportunities and successes that I see every day in the redemption game industry. Until next time, good luck in redemption games. R

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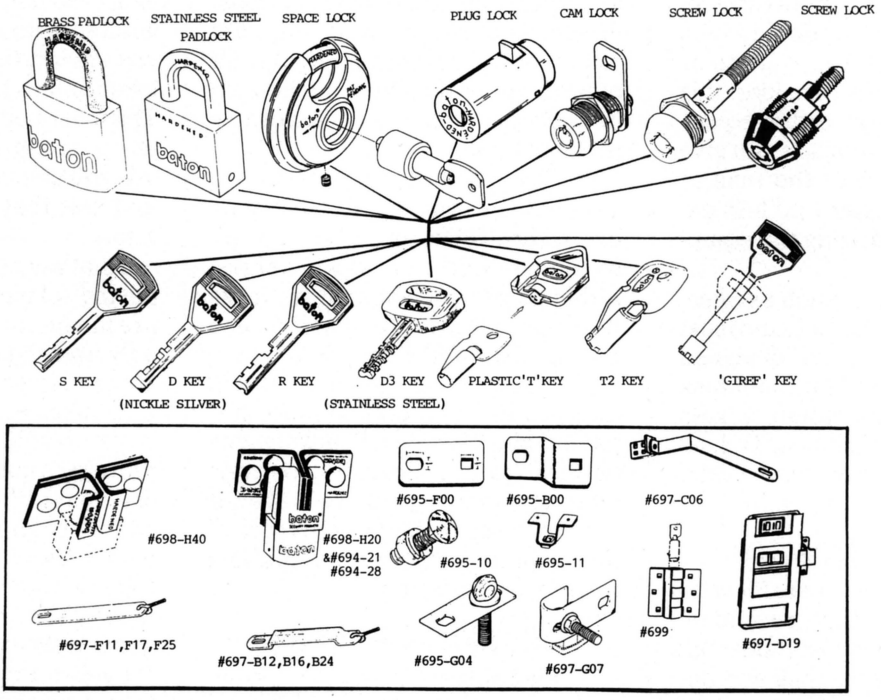

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FRANK TALK



by Frank "the Crank" Seninsky

Three Winners: Nat'l. PR, Technical Fixes & Regional Cooperation

Want to know three powerful ways to make the industry better? 1. Come to Washington, D.C. to take part in coin-op's lobbying campaign for the dollar coin. 2. Support AMOA's efforts to standardize parts and solve operators' technical problems. 3. Participate in your state and regional conventions and trade shows.

Exciting developments are happening in all three areas these days. Let me give you a report from a 'front row seat!' (These are the events that I spend my spare time with.)

If you haven't come to Washington, D.C. to attend the industry's Government Affairs Conference in the last four years, you've missed a lot of excitement. You've also missed some great opportunities to make friends with powerful people who can deeply affect your business. But don't worry — this year's conference runs April 29-May 1, and you now have two extra-special reasons to join the fun.

Two special events run by AMOA and AAMA will give you ample opportunity to socialize with your congressmen, their families, their top staff... even top people from the Bush Administration. As one who has participated in and enjoyed these conferences in years past, I can tell you: many operators who've made the trip can pick up the phone today and get their Senator or Representative on the line when they have a problem. They can walk into their congressman's office and deal with the "powers that be," sometimes on a first-name basis. What more could you ask?

CARNIVAL FOR LIFE

As stated, this year's Washington, D.C. trip offers two special events. [Editor's note: Frank is too modest to say so, but he's better qualified than almost anybody else to tell you about these events, since he is a key player in organizing them both.]

The first event, called "Carnival for Life," is co-sponsored by AMOA and AAMA, and takes place Monday, April 30. At this affair, the industry will toss a glittering "Cinderella Ball" for special groups of local Washington area children. Awarding thousands of dollars in scholarships, coin machine people will convey the message that "education, not drugs, is the answer." And we'll have many of our family amusement machines set up in a carnival-style atmosphere to entertain the kids and the city's powerful leaders. Some world-famous sports idols, local TV celebrities and other famous faces will be on hand to sign autographs and help the kids, government officials and their families play our games!

This sensational event has been engineered with one purpose in mind: to introduce our industry to the Executive Branch of the U.S. government. We have hand-delivered splashy invitations to some 150 top Bush Administration officials (cake boxes which, once opened, pop out with a helium balloon

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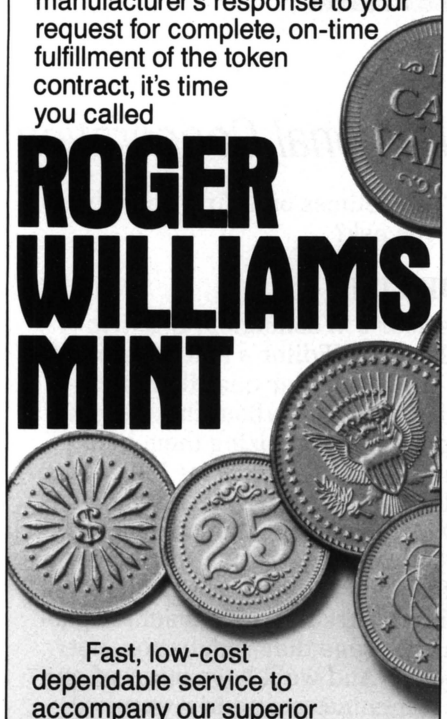

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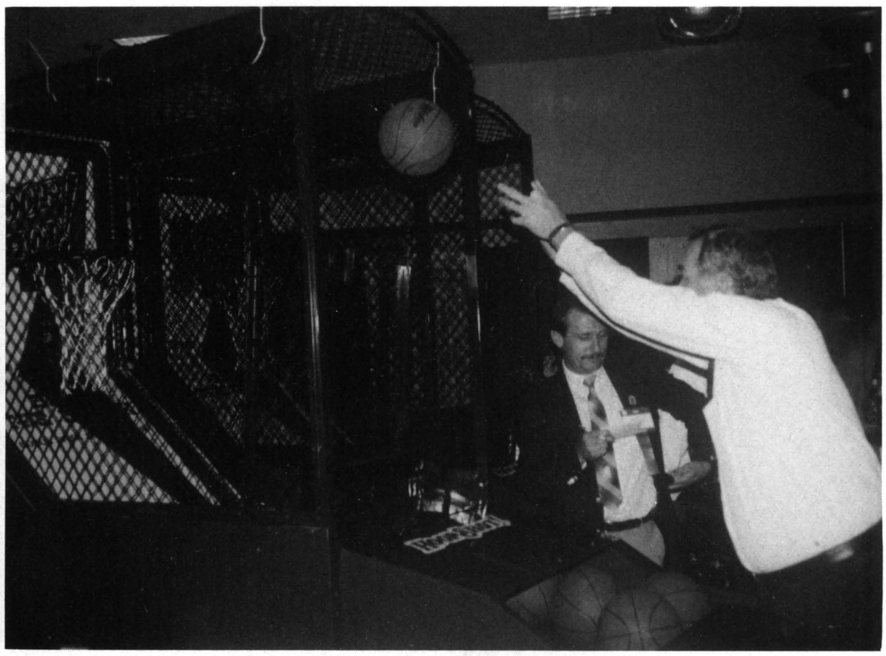
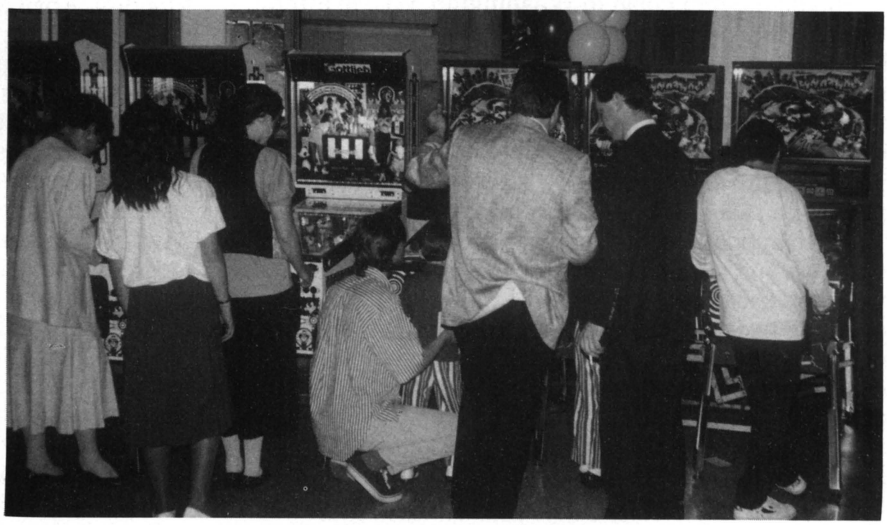


David Goudeau looks on as a congressman shoots in the basketball tournament last year.

invitation). We're hoping to draw White House officials (hopefully starting with the President himself), Cabinet secretaries, leaders from the Office of National Drug Policy and other federal agencies, to this memorable reception.

Our "Carnival for Life" should be a real winner. AMOA and AAMA are expecting around 600 people to attend. We're putting our best foot forward and throwing all that's positive about this industry into the affair: our anti-drug crusade, our gleaming and fun machines, our campaign to prevent child abuse, our strong belief in education, and more. We will highlight the good work of our industry and of the Washington community. And we're going to honor some of the President's favorite youth organizations, such as Champ Cookies (provides business skills to low-income youth), Border Babies, Youth for Tomorrow (a rehabilitation center for disadvantaged boys formed by Joe Gibbs), Heinz Jr. High School, and others.

We'll hand out "goodie bags" (made from manufacturer donations like t-shirts, hats, etc.) to 150 kids. And all the Executive Branch members who attend will later have a plush elephant (or donkey) hand-



One of the few moments at last year's Congressional Reception Democrat vs. Republican pinball tournament that four-deep crowds didn't block the view of the pinball games.

delivered to their desks, as a memento of our industry's valiant efforts.

CONGRESSIONAL TOURNAMENTS

It will be hard to top the "Carnival for Life," but the next night (Tuesday, May 1) we'll sure try as we shift our attention to our friends in the U.S. Congress. We're holding our traditional Congressional Reception, featuring Democrat vs. Republican tournaments on pinball, basketball and (for the first time this year) electronic darts. Over $10,000 will be awarded to the charities selected by tournament winners.

Congress just loves this event. Last year we had over 600 participants from over 100 congressional offices. Excitement is already building for this year's reception. . . and as the word spreads, we anticipate an even bigger turn-out than last year's jam-packed jamboree.

As of this writing, the following firms have donated equipment, prizes, or huge donations for this worthy event. The "honor roll" includes Williams, Midway, Premier, Merit, Smart and Nancy Sales. Like last year, we'll give out plush elephants and donkeys (symbols of the two political parties) for free; kids and grown-ups can win them by playing the cranes, which are set on free play. Steve Koenigsberg (State Sales) will, for the fourth year, take care of setting up all the games for both receptions.

Never been to Washington? The industry's 1990 visit will be better than ever. The more operators who participate, the more clout we'll have. Sign up now!

STANDARDIZATION MOVES ON

The AMOA Standardization Committee wants to broaden its scope to gather technical information and act as a "hands-on problem-solving unit" for the industry. We've got the talent and the manufacturer representation on the committee now to do just that, and if the AMOA board agrees, we'll take this new approach. Why? It's easier to solve technical problems on an individual, machine-by-machine basis, than it is for the committee to find a majority consensus to create a standard. However, the committee will continue to recommend a half-dozen new standards each year. . . and operators will see improved quality in game components.

This new philosophy grew out of a meeting of the Standardization Committee on Thursday, March 8 at the ACME show in Chicago. Our current roster is 33 people (including many presidents and VPs of most major makers of games, cabinets and parts). Thanks to the ACME show, turnout was quite good (21 people) and it was probably the first time all of these folks have been brought together for any purpose.

How will the Standardization Committee go about its proposed problem-solving role? At the suggestion of Don Shimel (J-S Sales), we formed a new subcommittee to gather information on products that operators are having problems with. It's called the "Technical Information Committee." They'll print up survey cards for operators to fill out at trade shows. They'll gather information through *Star*Tech Journal's* computer bulletin board and oth-

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine magazine, March 15, 1990

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Final Fight (Capcom)
2	Vapor Trail (Data East)
3	1941 (Capcom)
4	Tetris (Sega)
5	Air Buster (Kaneko/Namco)
6	Capcom World (Capcom)
7	World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
8	Marvel Land (Namco)
9	Ultimate Othelo (Success/Sega)
10	Bloxeed (Sega)
11	Block Out (Technos)
12	Super Masters (Sega)
13	S.A.R. (SNK)
14	Super Formula (Video Sys./Taito)
15	Meta Fox (Seta/Visco)
16	Toki (TAD/Taito)
17	Super Volley Ball (Vid. Sys./Nam.)
18	Task Force Harrier (UPL)
19	Gradius III (Konami)
20	Champion Wrestler (Taito)
21	Volfied (Taito)
22	World Stadium '89 (Namco)
23	WWF Super Stars (Tech)
24	Violence Fight (Taito)
25	R-Type II (Irem)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

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

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Mon. Night Football (Data East)
2	Earthshaker (Williams)
3	Banzai Run (Williams)
4	Jokerz! (Williams)
5	Cyclone (Williams)



The Standardization Committee at its meeting held during ACME '90 in Chicago.

er trade journals where possible. Chairing the new sub-committee is Don Shimel. Members include Bill Rickett, Ken Hoffman, Susan Silver, Bob Hayskar, Tom Cahill and Randy Fromm.

Seen in the photograph are (seated, l-r) AAMA Executive VP Bob Fay, Dynamo President Bill Rickett and James Industries President John Blouin. Standing (l-r) are Taito America director of engineering Bob Hayskar, Hantarex Corp. production and development manager Ray Fontana, J-S Sales President Don Shimel, Standardization Committee co-chairman David Goudeau, behind him is Happ Controls President Frank Happ, Atari's Engineering VP Rich Moore, Wells Gardner VP and sales manager Larry Brady, Sega's customer service chief Darl Davidson, Coin Controls marketing manager Ellen Evans, Premier R&D VP Adolph Seitz, Williams' customer service chief Tom Cahill, Coin Acceptors division manager Ken Hoffman, Mars Electronics product marketer Susan Silver, Wico merchandise manager Dick Geerling, and Mars salesman Jerry Carr. At the far right is committee co-chair Frank Seninsky. Not pictured are operators Todd Erickson and Randy Fromm, who both attended the March 8 meeting.

Not attending due to conflicting time requirements were the following active committee members: Capcom's Dennis Sable, operator Ross Todaro, AAMA President Gil Pollock, American Vending Sales' Frank Gumma Jr., Data East's Ray Musci, Joel Mfg.'s Gary BuBoff, Atari's Dan Van Elderen, Williams/Bally's Linda Schooley, MicroProse's Frank Becker, *Star*Tech Journal's* Jim Calore, SunBelt's Dave Patterson, and AMOA secretary Craig Johnson.

Also, in response to potential problems with UL testing of games, the Standardization Committee is developing a comprehensive list of all UL-approved components which are presently used in coin amusement machines. The data will be presented to the AAMA Standardization Subcommittee (including



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AAMA President Gil Pollock, Exec VP Bob Fay and board member Frank Gumma Jr.). This group is working with local authorities to develop a workable set of standards and practices for the industry nationwide.

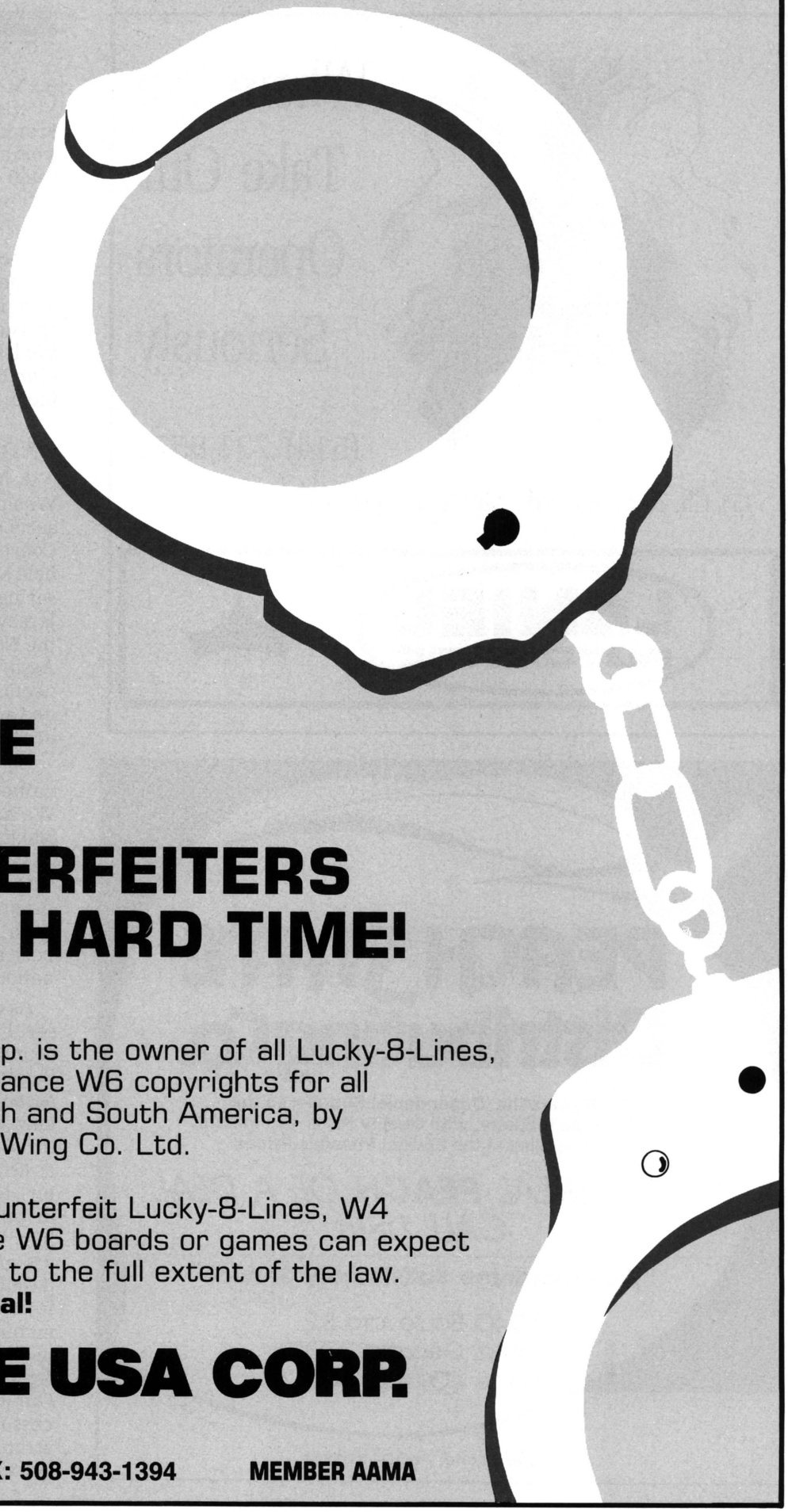
The March 8 meeting of the committee also resulted in three brand-new proposed standards, plus two revisions of existing standards. We'll report on these at a later date, after the AMOA board has acted on them.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL

A few days after the industry's Washington, D.C. conference, the second annual Northeast Regional Convention and Trade Show will be held May 4-6 in Atlantic City. Sponsoring the event are AMOA-New Jersey, AMOA-New York City, and the New York State Coin Machine Assn. A formal invitation to the Connecticut association has been sent and accepted. This unifies all of the area's operator associations.

The different groups have been unified by some common interests. We had unanimous agreement on making Mondial's Tony Yula Sr. our "Man of the Year." Legalization of video pokers is also a draw for all the groups and will be discussed as each state tries to determine the best approach for its unique situation.

As president of AMOA-New Jersey, I'm enjoying working with my counterparts Bobby Herman and Ralph Ceraldi of the two New York associations. Curtis Matterson is now the executive director of all three associations. He, along with assistant Sue Matterson (his daughter), have played an important role in pulling the three associations into a well-coordinated regional group. Thanks also to Tony Yula Jr. (Mondial) and Bobby Boals (Betson) for doing a super job of soliciting manufacturer donations which are used by our three associations to fight for better business conditions. Our joint convention was a big success last year and looks to be even stronger this year...especially since it's going to be in Atlantic City!



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MEMBER AAMA

As Mark Twain said, "*The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated. Don't believe the obituary column.*"

■ ■ ■

Some persons have been informing the video game trade that Yamate's copyright in the Lucky 8-Line W-4 game has been invalidated by a court decision. That is simply not true.

A federal district court in New Jersey denied Yamate's application for extraordinary interlocutory relief at a preliminary hearing. This is a preliminary ruling. It is not final. There has not yet been a full evidentiary trial of the facts. The ruling is subject to revision and/or total reversal after a full trial before the court with live witnesses. The ruling is also subject to appeal.

Yamate disagrees strongly with the court's preliminary impressions. We believe that once Yamate has the chance to develop the full story before the court, on the basis of the testimony of live witnesses and thorough cross-examination of them, the court will be persuaded that Yamate is fully entitled to enforce the Lucky 8-Line W-4 copyright to the maximum extent allowed by law.

In the meantime, do not believe exaggerated obituary reports spread by self-interested parties.

Yamate will continue to enforce its legal rights to the full extent permitted by law.

★

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PINBALL CORNER



TRADE MAY FORM PERMANENT "PINBALL ASSOCIATION"

The industry's Pinball Promo Committee met Feb. 22 in Chicago. Chaired by operator John Bell, the committee is considering the formation of an "international flipper pinball association" which would be modeled largely after AMOA's National Dart Assn. with a permanent director, annual tournament program, etc. It's envisioned that the proposed association would sanction players, sponsor regional and/or national tournaments, and otherwise promote and publicize pinball.

The Pinball Promotion Committee continues to meet monthly in Chicago. Pictured here at the January meeting of the group are (left to right): Williams' Ken Fedesna, AMOA's Wally Bohrer, Williams' Roger Sharpe, AMOA's Gene Urso, Premier's Gil Pollock, AMOA's Sharon Harris, committee chairman John Bell, Williams' Marty Glazman, AMOA's Clyde Knupp and Data East Pinball's Shelly Sax.

WILLIAMS OFFERS VIDEO INSTRUCTION



"A Basic Introduction to Pinball" is the title of a 29-minute VHS video tape, produced by Williams Bally/Midway. The tape features Tom Cahill discussing topics which include set-up, testing, diagnostics, operation, trouble-shooting, etc. Operators can buy a copy of the tape from their authorized Williams Bally/Midway distributors for a reasonably small cost.

"We plan a series of these tapes, and they'll become increasingly more technically detailed," said Larry Kesselman, VP of Business Development. "We feel our tapes can help train technicians who work at operating and distributing firms. They can also help the small operator who might be reluctant to get into operating pins, by showing him that pinball can be fairly simple and easy."

The basic idea for the series of video tapes was suggested to Williams by "super-operators" Dave and Harry Peck (Family Amusement Corp., Los Angeles). And how are operators responding to the first tape? "It's been very well received," said our columnist Todd Erickson (Summit Amusement, St. Paul, Minn.). Todd added: "This new instructional program represents a very positive move for the whole industry."

DATA EAST PINBALL NEWS

Data East Pinball has contracted artist Frank Linder to create "new and novel artwork" for an upcoming flipper. Linder is best known for unique airbrush artwork which has often appeared in Playboy Magazine, *as well as in some murals which decorate popular Chicago night spots.*

The company has also added a new Final Inspection Manager to the team. His name is Wally Sa'd, who brings extensive experience in factory inspection and quality control. Wally has also been an operator, shop and field repairman, etc. so he has a good grasp of the realities of the street location. He'll oversee all playfield inspection and complete game inspection, working closely with Director of Quality Control George Saxinger.

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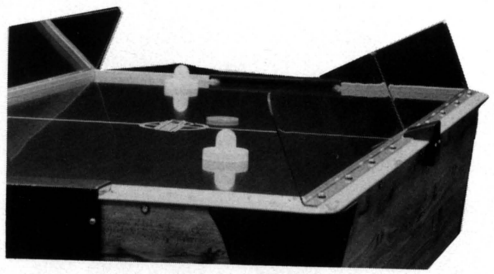

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Associations in Action

Super Show!

South Carolina Coin Operators Assn. holds successful 27th anny convention

South Carolinians look upon their state with a great sense of pride. It was, after all, one of our nation's original 13 states and its capital, Columbia, was one of the first planned cities in our country. It seems entirely natural then that the coin machine tradesters in the state are incredibly proud of their industry and their association, now in its 27th year.

The South Carolina Coin Operators Assn. assembled in Columbia Feb. 23-25 for their annual convention and trade show. Over 20 distributors and suppliers exhibited their wares to an attentive and down-to-business crowd and the association provided lots of good fun, food and fellowship in the evenings.

The convention got underway Friday with a golf tournament, a service school (sponsored by Rowe International), exhibit set-up and and a really fun "Pig Pickin'" barbecue (which was sponsored by Green Coin Machine and Rosemary Coin Machine). Drews Distributing and York Amusement sponsored the evening's entertainment which kept folks' feet tapping past midnight.

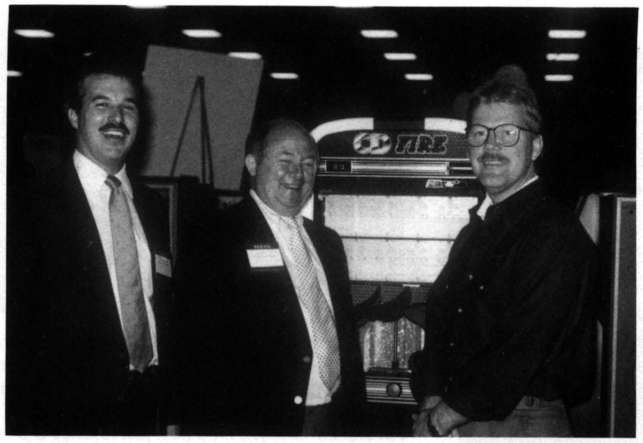
Saturday was the big show day with the heaviest attendance (some 350 had registered by Saturday afternoon). Exhibits opened at 9:30 with coffee and danish supplied by Rowe International in Columbia. Other activities that day included the SCCOA board meeting and a ladies luncheon. The exhibits shut down around 5:30, sending the members and their families off to get ready for the big event — their



SCCOA President Bill Martin addresses the membership during their Sunday meeting.



NCCOA President Bob Hauser, Fred Britt, Jim & Beth Trucano and Fred Collins at the Feb. 23-25



Palmetto's Leo Bouknight and Bob Hamilton flank Ron Spence of American Amusement (Columbia) beside the very hot NSM **CD Fire** *wall-mounted jukebox.*



Operators Distributors Dick McCannel with Whit Miller (Amusement Co., Inc., Seneca) by a Micro Mfg. **Classic Joker Poker** *game.*



A hardworking duo — Helen Sikes and Nita Byers at the pre-banquet cocktail party.



Pretty ladies Chana Fletcher, Mary Anne Armstrong and Beth Trucano enjoy the cocktail party.



Having fun on banquet night are Joe & Vicki Maxheimer, Graham Cooper and Dickey Martin.

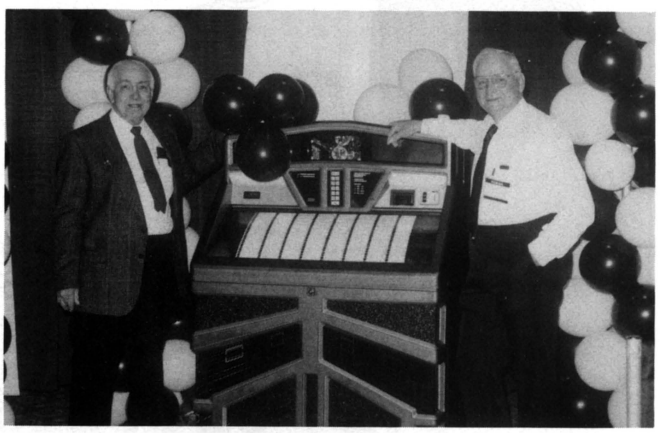




At the banquet Saturday evening, the band plays on! At right, a group of SCCOAers (including president Bill Martin) enjoy the banquet's sumptuous buffet.

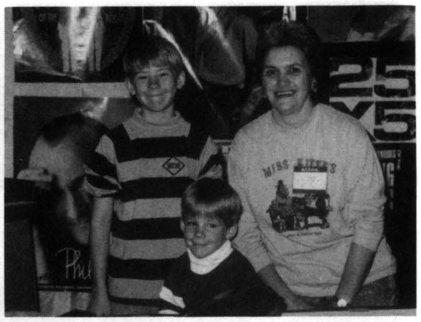


J.B. and Virginia Reaves.



SCCOA's Jeff Sikes with North Carolina's Fred Britt and the new Rowe jukebox Fred won. (The **ComboStar** *was donated by Rowe International in Columbia.)*





At left: ***At the Brady Distributing booth are Data East's Steve Walton, Nintendo's Pete Walton, Operators Distributors Dick McCannell, Brady's Tom Keil, Dynamo's Damone Paramore and Capcom's Pat Walton. Brady, by the way, just recently signed on as a distributor of the new Pioneer Laser Juke.***

Above: ***One-Stop Record House's Judy Bracknell with two of R.A. Green's boys — Royce IV & Mikkel.***

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annual banquet. While the SCCOA-ers were enjoying the music, the group also was drumming up higher bids during their silent auction (which benefits the group's legal fund). And it was also during the banquet that neighbor Fred Britt of North Carolina won his second jukebox within a year's time, a *R-94 ComboStar* Rowe jukebox donated by Rowe's Columbia office. (Fred won a jukebox during his state's show in '89 from Island Records.)

On Sunday the SCCOA members got another chance to look over the new products plus chat with their distributors and suppliers until the close of exhibits just before noon. They closed their annual event with a membership brunch and the General Membership Meeting, the latter featuring a presentation by AMOA's Executive Director John Schumacher.

During the three-day event, the association's Convention Chairman Helen Sikes and her helpers were as busy as beavers keeping the ball rolling and increasing membership. (AMOA's Schumacher also signed a few new members for his organization.) And, of course, they're already working on their Summer Meeting which will be held at The Swamp Fox in Myrtle Beach Aug. 24-26.

For those South Carolinians who haven't yet joined up with this active bunch, contact the association's Helen Sikes at 3117 Gadsen St., Columbia, SC 29201; 803/345-2048 or 803/779-2498.

More photos can be found on the next 3 pages...



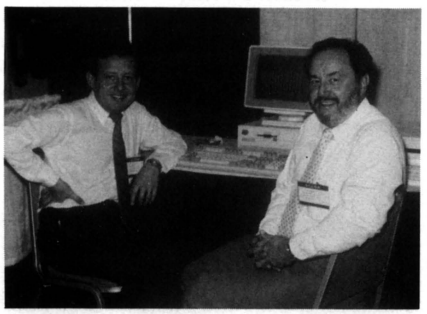
Mars Electronics took a booth to show their bill handling equipment. From left to right are the firm's Steve Kindler, Kira Burdick and Jerry Carr.



Stan Pearson and Monroe Bourne happily man their A-1 Products booth full of security and other wares.



Upstate Games' J.W. Millwood and David Gray. The firm distributes Kramer among other product.



Len Smikun and Ted Furkin of Allstar Music with their **Silent Partner** *computer program for ops.*



Laramie's John Sullivan and Greg Gaffney with just two of the cute plush items the firm distributes.



Here's a nice father-and-son shot — Earl and Steve (Rosemary Coin) Powers at the Brady booth.



Four generations of Greens — Royce Jr., Mikkel, "Big Mama" Mary Lee (widow of SCCOA founder Royce Sr.), Royce IV and R.A. at their show booth.



A nice family picture taken during the association's Sunday brunch of Mikkel, R.A., Royce IV, Carol and Royce and "Big Mama" Mary Lee Green.



And even more Greens! Loyd C. Morris Jr., "Big Mama," and Joan & Lloyd Morris at the show.





At left: ***Wico's Effrin Grice and Fred Britt with Rowe International's L.A. Wriston and Dan Jackson.***

Above: ***Gemini Distributing's Betty Bales (second from right) says hello and talks records to Southern (Orangeburg, SC) Music's Mark Stevenson, Tricia Vaughn and Patricia Blackmon.***



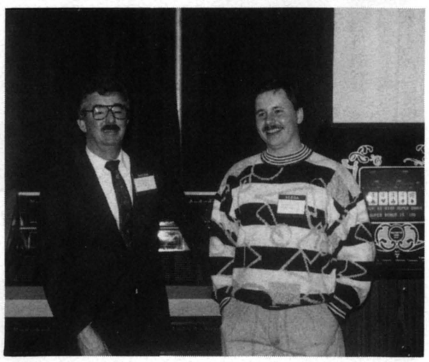


At left: ***AMOA Exec. Dir. John Schumacher addresses the membership during their Sunday meeting.***

Above: ***Also at the meeting, father and son pose for a photo — Greenwood Music Company's Randy and Ken Flowe (both are past SCCOA presidents).***



Rowe's Carl Copley with Bruce Morse (All American Amuse., Burlington, N.C.) and Jim III & J.B. Reaves of Jim III Amusements (Whiteville, N.C.)



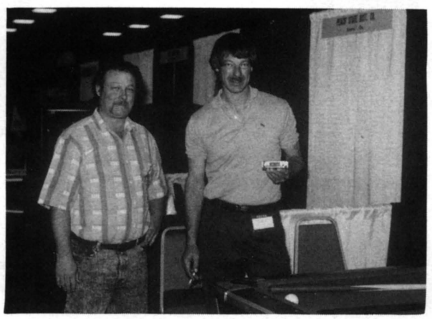
SMS distributors Rick Shillinglaw and Paul Stephenson of Rick's Game Sales (N. Myrtle Beach).



Sega's John Hill and Atari's Jim Newlander found a spot at the Brady booth where they could both be photographed with their own game!



At the Rowe International booth with Capcom's* Final Fight *are Donny Blackmon and Tony Parker of Parkridge Amusements (Lancaster, S.C.)



Tim's Amusement showed their* Mr. Cue *chalk holder. Pictured are Don Phillips & Myron Johnson.



Imaginomics' Tommy Stroud & Paul Bassett with their brand new crane (they're from Durham, N.C.).

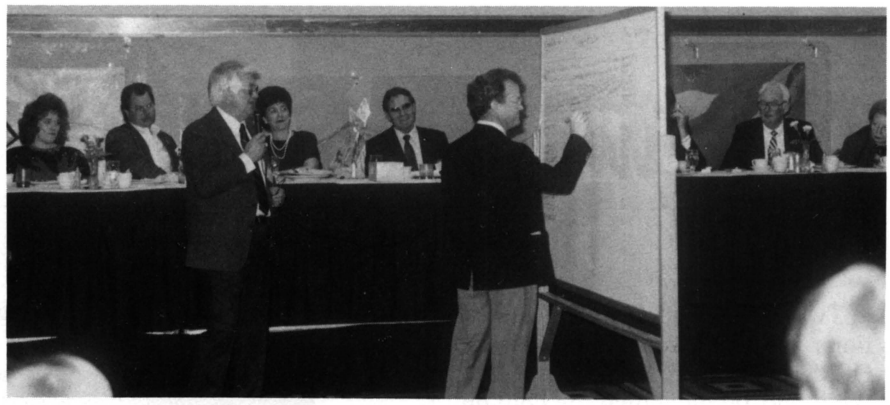


Data East's Steve Walton and daughter Ashley.



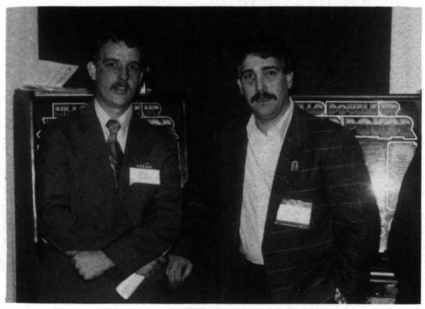
Merit's Bob Whitehead and Mort Ansky with their dart game.





At right: ***Royce Green and Hugh Andrews work the silent auction board during the group's membership meeting on Sunday.***

Above: ***A.L.D. Services' Allen and Sharon Justice.***



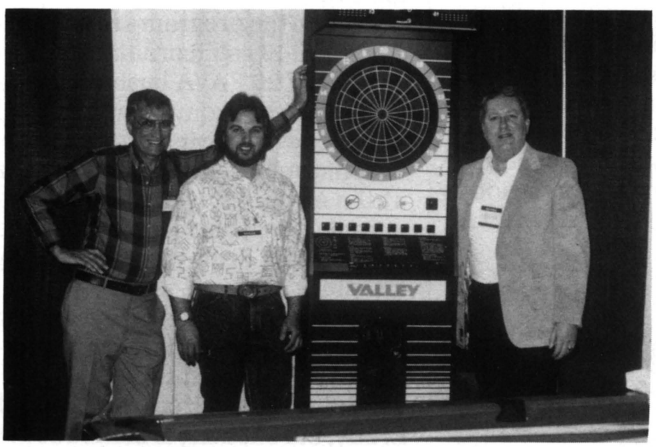
Ruppe Amusements' Jimmy Hicks with Kico Amusements' Danny Kinard (Walterboro).



Ace Novelty's Arlene Morgenthal and Thomas Capodarco show off their cute plush toys.



John & Dickey Martin visit with Brady's Raleigh Rossow and Tom Keil next to the bank of new videos.



Valley's Alan Schafer was on hand to talk about their dart games and pool tables. He's pictured with Pedro Conklin and Chuck Gates (AAA Amusements).



Brady Novelty's Lee Anne Bullard shows off her new TMNT goodies. Pictured with her are Tom Keil, Angus McDonald and Mike Kubin (Konami).





At left: ***Drews Distributing's Van Giddings and Tim Caldwell with Wurlitzer's Jerry Reeves and J&J Vending's Jimmy and Dickey Martin.***

Above: ***Lo Winn and Tommy Story of Story House Vending (Harlem, Georgia) say hello to Peach State's Dick Sershon at the latter's show booth.***

One-Two Punch

Florida & Ohio plan major regional trade shows in April & May

Two of the biggest state associations — Florida's FAVA and Ohio's OCMA — hold their 1990 conventions and trade shows for coin-op amusements this month and next. These affairs are always super successful. Why? One reason is that the two associations in question are "regional" players in the industry's power structure: they draw many tradesters from all over the nation to their shows.

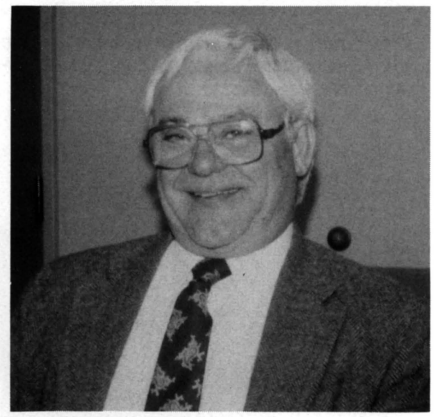
You get to be a "regional" player when you have dynamic leaders like OCMA's Paul Corey and FAVA's Bob Rhinehart and their professional staffs taking care of your logistics. You stay that way, when you have fine elected leadership setting the direction in both states. The result is, FAVA and OCMA can flex the kind of political and organizational muscles which other organizations can only dream about.

Here's a preview of the upcoming Florida and Ohio events.



FAVA APRIL 19-21

The Florida Amusement & Vending Assn. holds its Annual Music & Games Convention and Trade Show at the Omni Hotel in Orlando. Manufacturers, distributors and suppliers throughout the U.S. will show their goods at what could be the premier regional trade show in the country. Show hours are Friday from 1-7 PM, Saturday from Noon to 7 PM.



FAVA's BOB RHINEHART

Also on the program are a Thursday, April 19 golf tournament; a Friday, April 20 FAVA business meeting; and a Saturday evening, April 21 banquet featuring French Quarter atmosphere and Dixieland jazz at the elegant Royal Orleans restaurant. Two technical seminars are also on tap Friday and Saturday mornings.

For spouses, Brady Distributing has arranged lunch and a performance of an award-winning Broadway play. It's all compliments of Brady, but capacity is limited so get in touch with FAVA quickly.

Registration: anybody who is a FAVA member prior to April 15 can get two free tickets per $100 of dues paid and can buy additional tickets for $10 each. If you join or renew your FAVA membership after April 15, you pay a $5 processing fee per ticket of $100 dues paid; extra tickets cost $20 each. Non-members pay $75 per person. New members may join for $125, get two free tickets, and pay extra ticket fees as applicable above.

The registration fee includes admission to Friday and Saturday seminars.

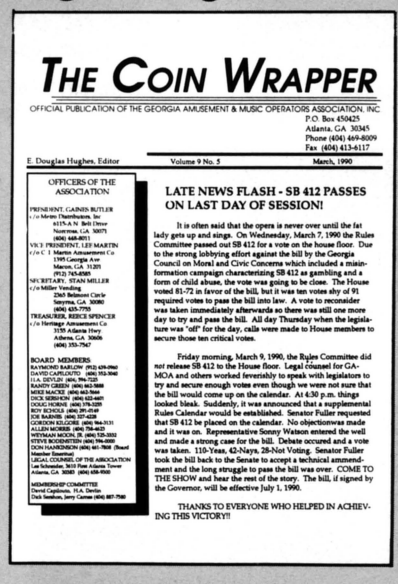
Make hotel accommodations directly with the Omni Hotel, 400 W.

New Georgia Redemption Law Shows GAMOA's Growing Strength

The Georgia AMOA is stepping up in class. They've hired a new full-time director (Doug Hughes). They're putting out a classy newsletter each month (seen here). And they just held their second successful trade show at the end of March.

Oh, and GAMOA succeeded in getting a redemption bill through the state legislature on March 9. Congratulations! If signed by the governor, it will become effective July 1.

We hope to present a full report on the GAMOA convention and trade show next issue. Meantime, for more information about this dynamic association, contact Douglas Hughes, Director, GAMOA, P.O. Box 450425, Atlanta, GA 30345; 404/469-8009. (Doug also edits their newsletter, by the way).



THE COIN WRAPPER

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E. Douglas Hughes, Editor — Volume 9 No. 5 — March, 1990

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LATE NEWS FLASH - SB 412 PASSES ON LAST DAY OF SESSION!

It is often said that the opera is never over until the fat lady gets up and sings. On Wednesday, March 7, 1990 the Rules Committee passed out SB 412 for a vote on the house floor. Due to the strong lobbying effort against the bill by the Georgia Council on Moral and Civic Concerns which included a misinformation campaign characterizing SB 412 as gambling and a form of child abuse, the vote was going to be close. The House voted 81-72 in favor of the bill, but it was ten votes shy of 91 required votes to pass the bill into law. A vote to reconsider was taken immediately afterwards so there was still one more day to try and pass the bill. All day Thursday when the legislature was "off" for the day, calls were made to House members to secure those ten critical votes.

Friday morning, March 9, 1990, the Rules Committee did not release SB 412 to the House floor. Legal counsel for GAMOA and others worked feverishly to speak with legislators to try and secure enough votes even though we were not sure that the bill would come up on the calendar. At 4:30 p.m. things looked bleak. Suddenly, it was announced that a supplemental Rules Calendar would be established. Senator Fuller requested that SB 412 be placed on the calendar. No objectionwas made and it was on. Representative Sonny Watson entered the well and made a strong case for the bill. Debate occured and a vote was taken. 110-Yeas, 42-Nays, 28-Not Voting. Senator Fuller took the bill back to the Senate to accept a technical ammendment and the long struggle to pass the bill was over. COME TO THE SHOW and hear the rest of the story. The bill, if signed by the Governor, will be effective July 1, 1990.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED IN ACHIEVING THIS VICTORY!!

Livingston St., Orlando, FL 32801; 407/843-6664. Be sure to tell them you've come for the FAVA convention, so you get the discount price of $81 for single or double! (Special rate available on space availability basis only after March 21.)

For discount air fares, you or your travel agent may contact Delta at 800/221-1212.

For registration or more information, contact FAVA at P.O. Box 13089, Tallahassee, FL 32317; 904/878-3134.



OCMA MAY 18-19

"Expo '90 — On Target" takes place at the Ohio State Expositions Center (Rhodes Bldg., Columbus). Showgoers will stay at the Ramada Inn North, 1213 E. Dublin Granville Rd. (A free shuttle runs between the hotel and the expo site.) This is the 16th annual expo to be sponsored by the Ohio Coin Machine Assn.

Many in the industry regard the annual OCMA affair as coin-op's finest all-around state-sponsored show. It attracts top national manufacturers and suppliers, plus operators and distributors from Ohio and the surrounding region. Expo chairman Ron Rentz (R&Z Vending, Dayton) promises this year's show will be bigger than ever, with over 15,000 sq. ft. of exhibits.

OCMA will sponsor a state dart tournament in conjunction with the show, a first for the group. Over 120 players are expected to compete for $3,000 in cash and prizes, plus the OCMA state champ title.

Educational seminars will be a major expo focus. A lengthy Friday, May 18 session called "CD and 45 Jukeboxes: Now and the Future" will be moderated by *RePlay Magazine* publisher Ed Adlum. Panelists will include major record label execs and jukebox makers. The session will run from 9:45 AM to 2 PM, with lunch included. It's free, but space is limited so register for this one now!

Saturday, May 19 will offer a management seminar, plus a pinball technical session featuring folks from Williams/Midway, Premier and Data East.

Entertainment includes a Thursday, May 17 golf tourney, played on one of the nation's top 10 golf courses. Friday evening entertainment will include a reception at the Ramada Inn, plus a evening at Ohio's glitzy harness racing track, Scoito Downs. Supervised child care (with food and fun including pizza, soft drinks and machines on free play) is available.

Registration costs the same for OCMA members and for out-of-staters, so contact the association now for details on convention sign-up and hotel reservations. That's OCMA, 2011 Riverside Dr., Ste. 450, Columbus, OH 43221-4025; 614/486-8677.



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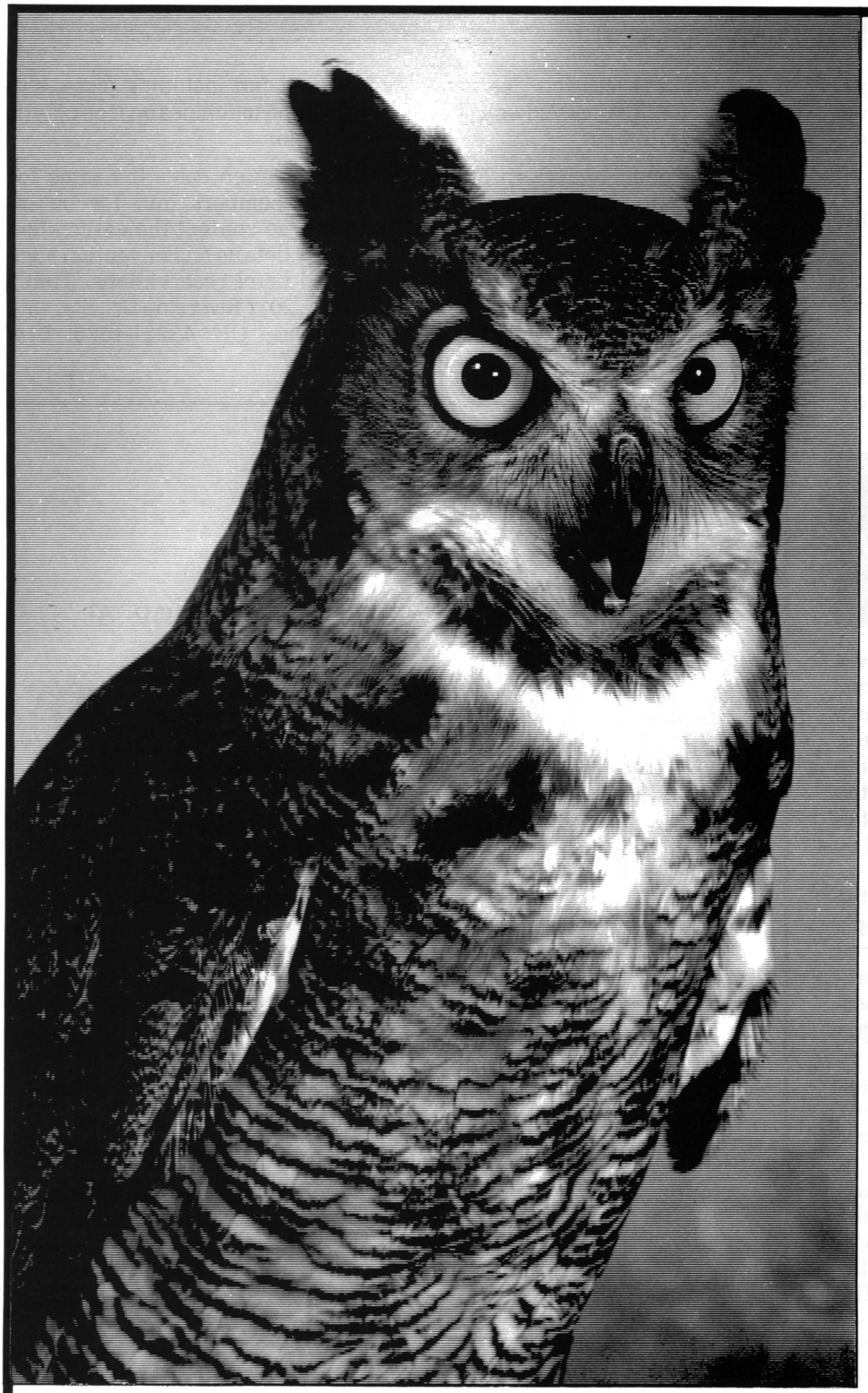

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RePlay magazine

monitor on VIDEO GAMES on the street

If a "civilian" read that headline, he'd think our industry's videos were shoved out of the bars, C-stores, pizza parlors and bowling centers onto the sidewalk. Well, judging by some of the remarks we've all heard about coin-op video this last year and a half, maybe some operators thought the same thing as well.

But let's state a "given": video is a staple in the coin machine industry as fixed in the scheme now as jukeboxes, pinballs and pool tables. Yes, it surely is a "good times, bad times"-type of machine which can reach giddying heights in the collection box with things like *Pac-Man* and the current *TMNT Turtles,* as well as the depths with an expensive game that craps out early and is only good enough for a conversion to some other game.

Operating video is the "chess game" of the coin machine industry. Just about every other type of machine, certainly every vending machine, makes reasonably steady money. Video can shoot through the sky on one game and take a powder on the next. While pool is like rock (heck, the top is even made from rock), video is like music. Come up with the right formula for a hit in either the record or the video game business and you'll never have to work another day in your life.

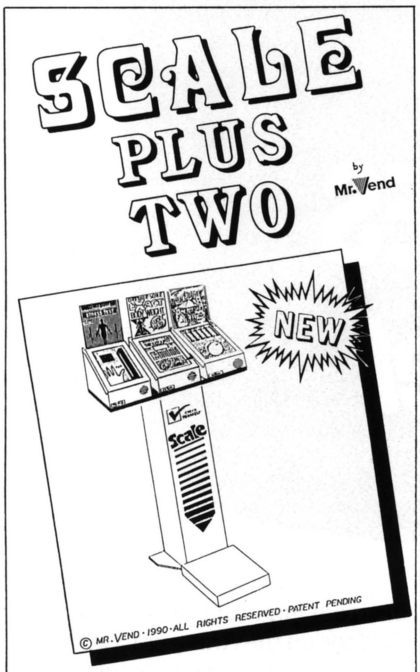
Operators, naturally enough, have the formula: a "different game that appeals to both sexes and all ages that costs under $500 in a kit." However, if the manufacturers could come up with that magic theme, they'd put the circuit boards into a dedicated cabinet and charge over $3,000 for it. As everybody with at least 100 I.Q. points knows by now, video is a "you get what you pay for"-type of a game. The question is: have the operators been getting what they've paid for in order to avoid the most horrific question of 1982 which went, "Have the operators paid for what they've already got?"

Our last issue focused on the state of the jukebox business as the trend toward CD machinery and software continues to define (and improve) that neck of the trade. This month we examine the state of the video amusement game (no pokers) in street locations. The subject was "videos on the American route" and the data came via a questionnaire to street operators around the country.

Operators who participated in this survey concentrate their businesses in classic street locations like taverns, convenience stores and restaurants, but a good number also ply the "sports centre" (which is an umbrella for bowling alleys, skating rinks, pool halls, etc.). Some may call the latter places "arcades," others don't. In either case, these places belong on the roster of route customers for America's street man these days and figures from that sector are injected into the research.

The video game is a serious machine to our surveyed crowd. Fully, 45 out of every hundred machines of all types they operate are videos (split half and half between dedicated games and converted games; they are very light on system games). Just about 43% of their total route income comes from video, although slightly more than half of the operators said their video income has dropped compared to last year's figures at this time.

Only around one in any given ten of our respondents enjoyed an overall increase in video collections these times compared to last, and more than one mentioned that this was greatly due to the windfall from *TMNT Turtles*. Why did it drop for so many others? According to them, home video competition as well as the "sameness" of video



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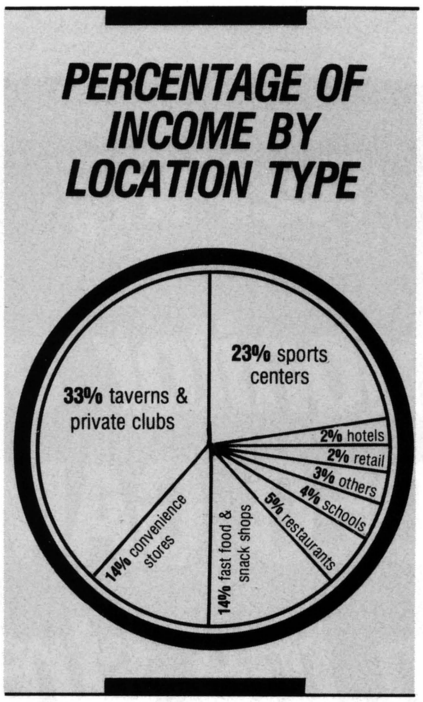

game themes were the chief culprits.

This translates into game buying (or the lack of it), and only one out of five video operators considers himself to be as "active" as ever in the showroom (or actually **increasing** his video equipment buying). Most say they've put it on the "back buying burner" and some don't even want to talk about buying videos, period!

While some speculate on the wonders a new dollar coin may grant, almost half of our polled operators already have some games on 50¢ play. A significant minority, however, just doesn't see 50¢ video being realistic yet. This is a highly competitive industry and they know that no wholesale move into half-buck play can happen unless most or all of the other operators in the locale do it at the same time (or, as more than one mentioned, that the manufacturers **force** it onto the market by making it impossible to change good new games down to a quarter). As Al Bershad says in the concluding "essay" section, "We are our own worst enemies."

Is there one single standout subject in the world of video that street operators rise to? Of course, and it's equipment prices. Only 10% of them think kit prices, for example, are "fair" and this is counter-balanced by a group that thinks today's prices are "preposterous." The rest think kits are priced too high, and some familiar with prices on home video cartridges continue to wonder why the price differential between "theirs and ours" is as wide as the Grand Canyon.

The survey talks about a bunch of other matters, lists gross weekly video averages (not bad), finds the 25" monitor a welcome collection booster and (in the case of some) wants to see more plywood and less particle board used in cabinets.

A wise man once said, "Show me someone with no problems and I'll show you a person with a flat life." Well, operating video is anything but flat. Some operators' collections may have been flat, but the yin and yang of operating the industry's most romantic, most fickle, most exciting/or/devastating type of machine keeps everybody's blood running with the valves wide open. And now, the survey results.

Where does the video collection dollar come from? We asked the operators for the percentage of their combined video-only income that came from the classic types of street locations and the returns display these figures:

taverns & private clubs . . . 33%
sports centers 23%
convenience stores 14%
fast food & snack stops . . . 14%
full restaurants 5%
schools & colleges 4%
hotels & motels 2%
retail stores 2%
others (laundromats, etc.) . . 3%

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Here's the "universe" of video hardware type:

48% are dedicated
48% are converted
4% are systems

And now the "universe" of cabinets used in conversions:

88% are in old game cabinets
12% are in universal cabinets

(While 32% say they're presently suffering a shortage of old cabinets for conversion purposes, the other 68% say they have enough old wood on hand for that purpose.)

And now the "universe" of cabinet styles (i.e. the physical stature of their machines on the route):

93% are in upright cabinets
5% are in cocktail cabinets
2% are in sitdown cabinets

(The paucity of sitdowns is understandable since this is a street location data bank. However, it's still curious that this industry, which gains so much of its video income from taverns, doesn't make greater use of the cocktail cabinet. Manufacturers have a lot to do with this, of course, but it shows an enormous cultural gulf between America and other brother operators in Japan where the cocktail table reigns supreme.)

The average weekly gross collection per game these days was reported by our polled operators to be:

new dedicated.....$158.50
older dedicated videos..50.50
new kits.....109.00
older conversion kits....41.00
video **systems**.....46.75

How did these numbers compare with those earned by these operators last year?

Dedicated video: 14% higher; 36% the same; 50% lower.

Conversions: 11% higher; 35½% the same; 53½% lower.

Systems: none higher; 37% the same; 63% lower.

Quite a few operators reported a drop in video revenues. Why did it happen? Here are their own reasons, listed in the order of frequency mentioned on the questionnaires:

1. the sameness of video game themes
2. home video competition
3. competition from other forms of entertainment
4. poor local economic conditions

How will this impact their buying new games and kits? Here's how the operators describe their attitudes toward buying videos these days:

7% say they're **increasing** their game buying.

14% simply say they're as **active as ever.**

67% say they've **backburned** video buying a lot.

12% don't even want to talk about buying video games right now.

Half-buck video play is happening. Asked if they've been setting any videos on 50¢ vend, here's how they responded:

3% have a **lot** of games out on 50¢ play.

40% have **a few** on that vend.

57% don't have **any** on half-buck play.



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But, are they in favor of the idea of 50¢ video?

52% say they're **in favor.**

39% frankly **don't see it** happening yet.

9% say they're **"just watching."**

We received a bunch of marginal comments on this subject and pass along a few to you here. Says a San Diego operator: "It will have to be initiated by the manufacturers just as pinball was." A Mass. operator agrees, saying, "Manufacturers should take the first step." Another fellow thinks: "The high dollar games cost too much for the street stop." A Bakersfield, Calif. vendor says, "I don't think my market will accept it." A Kansas city operator is in favor of 50¢ video "but I see it undercut by my competitors."

A New Jersey operator believes "you must have a dollar coin or a dollar bill validator on the game to accomplish this pricing." Another California vendor advises that he "had success with 50¢ play on basketball and some pinballs but not on videos." A Pennsylvania operator thinks "the smaller vendors will always keep them at 25¢ and underprice us off the street if we charge 50¢." A South Carolina brother doesn't think today's video games "are appealing enough to the public to pull this off." A Minnesota operator agrees, saying, "It won't work unless there's something different from what's there now."

Two voiced the most common thought: "I can't do it alone; I tried and it doesn't work" (New Hampshire) and "it will be very tough to do unless everyone does it" (from Phoenix). Finally, this brighter thought from Toledo: "All new games go out on 50¢ play, no exceptions. Our policy is 'no 50¢. . . no new game'!"

We've all heard operators complain that too many kick & punch games were in the general video mix, so we asked them for their favorite themes. Here's the popularity "chart" according to frequency of theme mention":

1. (a genuine tie between) driving- and strategy *(Tetris)*- type games
3. sports games
4. kick, punch & jump
5. trivia video

Let's talk prices, the number one subject on the video operator's mind, according to the essay responses following the poll. We wanted to know what the operators thought about today's prices on new conversion kits. Here's the response:

11% think the prices are **fair.**

61% feel they're **too high.**

18% say they're **much too high.**

12% think they're **preposterous.**

There are lots of places to buy kits from, considering the ease of freight shipping. We asked the operators where they purchase their kits and the response may please you:

75% are bought from local distributors.

12% come from out-of-territory distributors.

10% are bought from national kit dealers.

3% are picked up from other operators.

(No one on this survey said he buys his kits from a foreign supplier.)

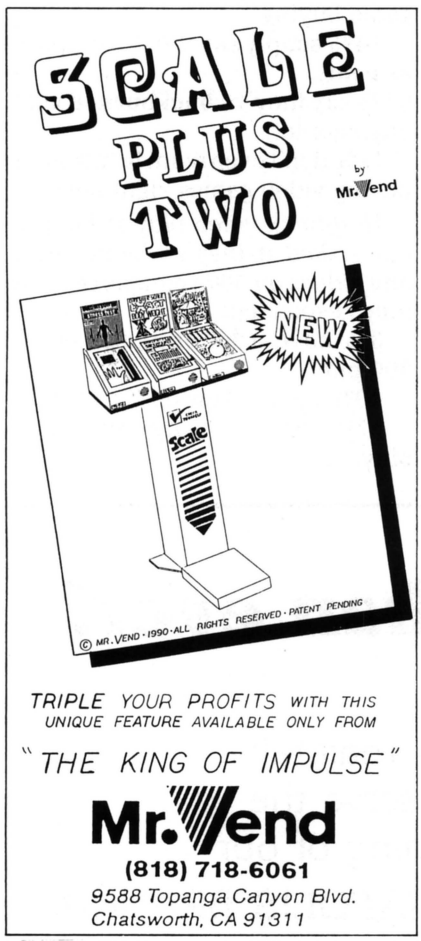
Now, does the 25" monitor (as some say) have a positive impact on video collections? We asked and here are the responses:

7% said they've seen a **good rise** with the large tube.

39% deem it a **fair rise** but a rise nonetheless.

54% said they saw **no rise** (or perhaps don't have any videos with the larger tube).

That's the survey, brief and hopefully useful. Now comes the verbage from our favorite authors apart from Tom Clancy and Sidney Sheldon, the operators themselves. We are speaking about the "essay answers" tagged onto the end of our survey sheets. These street comments appear in the story immediately following.



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the operators speak out

A number of poll respondents favored us (and readers) with closing statements on their questionnaires. Higher play pricing was on the minds of some but more were concerned with that "other price"... the cost of the new goods. These subjects, as well as technical and aesthetic thoughts, follow and include some interesting testaments on the future of the coin-operated video game in general.

Read them, agree or disagree with them, but harken to the word from the street as seen by folks who wear suits and ties all the way to the majority wearing jeans and lugging tool kits. For here is the voice of the industry where it's "really at."

from Joe Costantino
New Jersey

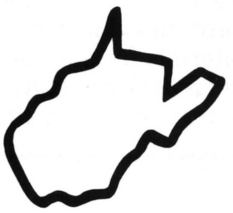
Distributors continue to discuss the video game situation as a normal cyclical slowdown, saying things like, "It will come back, you'll see." However, the business has several problems today that didn't exist in the "old days."

I refer to such things as state and local game licensing, the copyright license on jukeboxes, competition from home video systems that are as powerful as our games and competition (for me) from the New Jersey casinos. These factors have forever changed the nature of our business along with the astronomical cost of health and auto insurance. For these reasons, the end is in sight for business as we know it today.

from Scott Field
The Lendell Company

As primarily adult location street operators, our videos tend to be only marginally profitable. As a result, we buy kits and used, late-model dedicated games. Though new pieces might earn 10% to 20% more, the R.O.I. is far better on kits and proven old cash box winners.

Not being one to look in another man's wallet, I neither care about nor resent the profit margin made by any other segment of the industry. I'm certain most manufacturers are already aware that their games



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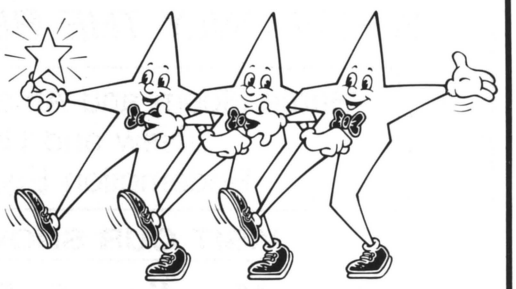

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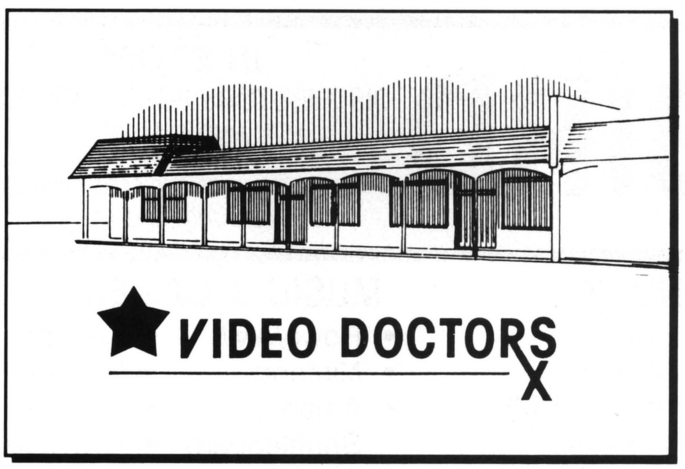

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are "great" and "worth" what they charge. But at the same time, they are not profitable for us to buy. I don't have a solution to the dedicated game situation but strongly feel that most joystick/button-type games should be offered as kits and not only as an afterthought.

Some of the used dedicated videos we buy are the source of a major problem, however. Poorly-made cabinets often need significant reinforcement to absorb the effects of route rotation and street operation. Pressboard and glue are not sufficient materials for our needs. Our other beef is the long return time on many factory board repairs.

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It's understandable that distributors can no longer offer local service on everything they sell. But we operators fail our customers (the locations) when a hot game is out for three weeks for lack of a working board. Advance replacement boards through the distributor would solve this problem easily. This is called "cooperation."

from Chris Warren
Montana

I feel that the video game manufacturers are slowing down their production to prevent the market from being flooded. This is good for the operator.

from St. Paul

I've lost interest in video and my business is still very good right now due to our heavy involvement in pool and dart leagues and to other back-to-basic machines that were here before video was.

from Anthony Neri
Middlebury Vending, Vermont

Although a majority of our business is devoted to vending and food service, we started in amusements back in the 1960's. I personally feel that 1989 was by far one of the best years for new games since the craze days. The only reason I said my dedicated and converted videos were "higher" on your survey was due to the performance of *Turtles* and *WWF*. The real test of this end of the business will be if research & development can continue bringing out product on a level that will keep our customers excited.

On another point: while it's obvious we have lost a great deal of our market to home video games, the money generated from the sale of home software by manufacturers has directly increased the development of new games for us. It would almost be fair to compare our industry to the movie business. We get three or four months to introduce a game and make our money before the home market steals it away.

All things considered, there's still good money in coin-op video, just that a great deal of work and hustling is involved. The days of dropping a *Pac-Man* off on every corner and not worrying about paying for the game are long gone.

from Columbia, South Carolina

I think the player base for video is too small to support the large number of manufacturers we have. They are still trying to force a class of machine onto operators that's overpriced and not that much in demand by the playing public. Therefore, it's not a good investment to make. Video may not be "dead," but it sure ain't what it used to be.

from Jim Giarrusso
Diamond Music, New Hampshire

My father started in this business 43 years ago and I joined him in 1969. I've seen the advent of solid state technology and it was and is a boon for operators as far as pinball repairs and earnings go. But when it comes to video, the manufacturers dropped the ball.

I am a computer buff who's seen memory and displays take quantum leaps since 1978 when I bought my first computer. But when it comes to my bread and butter video games, they seem to lag far behind. While home systems are spreading everywhere, the street video game operator is stuck in the same track seeing little innovation.

What the street games should have are cutting-edge graphics and controls that add to the game's appeal. However, unless you buy a $9,000 *Hard Drivin'* cockpit (which is truly awesome), you are relegated to a myriad number of uninspiring kick and punch kung-fu machines. If I had all the answers I'd be a manufacturer. They are the ones with the high prices and hopefully they will spend some of that profit on R&D.

from Don Rizek
Big City Family Amusements
Columbus, Ohio

We need new video game themes. *Tetris* was good but too hard for some locations. We're missing out on the women players. There are plenty of females that would play videos if we had something that would appeal to them. Come on, find out what they want and put it into a video game.

I also think prices on new games are too high. At first, I believed it was because of R&D. But, how come when you see a hot kit in demand, the price is always higher!!

We need *automatic* difficulty level adjustments. That's the only way to let the novice players have a chance while also giving the experienced players a challenge. And, we keep hearing about keeping the average game time between two and three minutes. But how do I do this on games that have very limited bookkeeping features where the game can't keep track of game times for me?

from California

The video game market is saturated with bang-bang-type games. We are truly in need of a new *Pac-Man*.

from K. Miller
Arizona

Over the past few years, video game themes have been a rehash of previous ones. Imagination isn't there and home video units have as



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good a selection of games as does our industry. The collections generally don't justify the investment in new equipment. For that reason, our kit purchases are way up over our dedicated game buys.

Good pinballs still justify buying because of their long life and steadier income. I also notice that both the ACME and AMOA shows can be easily covered in one day whereas a few years ago, it took a few days to see everything.

from Art Palter
Woburn Vending, Massachusetts

We've been trying to place equipment on 50¢ play for over a year now. Most of the time, it has had limited success. The reasons were either that the game was a 90-day wonder or because other operators were too shortsighted and put the same game out on 25¢ play. This is not an easy problem to solve.

So, what's the answer? What if the manufacturers only produced games that were thoroughly tested to produce stable earnings for at least three months and we got games like *Cabal, Heavy Barrel, WWF, Arch Rivals, Out Run, Operation Thunderbolt,* etc. What if video games couldn't operate at less than three credits for $1.00? Pinballs would be tested with the same scrutiny and would only be available at three balls for 50¢, two games for 75¢ and three games for a dollar.

I feel if we wait for the operators in this country to finally take a strong stance on 50¢ play or for the manufacturers to justify the prices they charge us for their equipment, we may never be able to make the profits we deserve. Therefore, we need quality games on 50¢ play, or higher options only. How can we continue to operate in the '90s if today's dollar is only worth 25¢ at best?

The only other salvation we have is to get working on the legislation to create a new dollar coin while eliminating the dollar bill. This new coin will give us the opportunity to operate with the pricing structure we need to make a decent profit in this industry. Contact your congressman and ask him to sponsor H.1068. Contact your senators and ask them to sponsor S.814. The time is now!

from Alan Bershad
Penn Triple S., Pennsylvania

I feel the only way to increase the video gross is to raise the vend price on a new game to 50¢. If the customer wants a new game, it will have to be set on 50¢ play. I'm sure the manufacturers can find a way to set the games that way so they **cannot** be changed by the operator as we are our own worst enemies.

from Solano Vending
Fairfield, California

The quality of video games is rising. Unfortunately, so are the prices. The operator is forced to choose between going into debt to procure new games and kits or losing locations to bigger, more aggressive operators.

also from California

I think that video prices are going to have to come down on dedicated games and conversion kits. It seems every time a new game comes out, the price goes up a little. I know about inflation and all that, but why can't they stay the same? One other thing: I don't like sending stuff to the distributor to get it serviced and have them add money to the bill when all they do is send it to the factory and with the time involved in shipping and all that, it makes service really stink. I wish the manufacturers would let us send the stuff directly to them.

from Scott Edmunds
Great Scott Amusements

Kit prices are too high . . . so high in fact that I have completely discontinued using them in my operation for two years now.

from Al Marsh
Washington

The video manufacturers should bring the same system to this country they have in Japan (i.e. change the board for a $400 cost, and the routeman switches it during his normal collection routine). The manufacturers also need to delay the introduction of the home version of our games for at least one year after they're released to us.

from Wisconsin

We can't make money on video unless we can buy them in the $500 to $600 range.

from North Carolina

Why do home videos come out at the same time in competition with dedicated games and also at such low prices compared to what the operator has to pay for the same game? Huh, huh, huh?

On another note, many manufacturers of the cabinets used in machines use the particle board which is sawdust glued together. Should it get wet or if you operate it a couple of years, it falls apart. It would be much better to use a good grade of plywood (and charge a small additional cost, if any).

from South Carolina

Manufacturers should make cabinets with plywood. Presswood will not stand moisture and the cabinets made from it tend to fall apart before you can get them paid for.

from Kay Vass
Vass Vending, West Virginia

Why don't the manufacturers offer video-taped instructions to the operator so he can access the information at his convenience? The tapes could cover monitors, power supplies, set-up, pricing, maintenance, pinball repair, jukebox repair, etc. When you have a mom & pop operation, the video tape would help a lot.

That's a decent cross-section of route operator thinking these days. Yes, some have a "me first" aspect, but their overall agenda bears upon the commonweal of all three levels of the trade. *RePlay* thanks all who participated in this brief survey and urges all manufacturers to harken to their words (and their worries) for there's no arguing the fact that nobody knows the "true skinny" about the coin machine business as well as the operator who works the streets, the hollows and the highways of America. R

HOTHITS PLAY LIST

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

POP

★ 1. **OPPOSITES ATTRACT,** *Paula Abdul (duet with The Wild Pair), Virgin 99158*
★ 2. **I WISH IT WOULD RAIN,** *Phil Collins, Atlantic 88774*
3. **BLACK VELVET,** *Alannah Miles, Atantic 88742*
4. **DOWNTOWN TRAIN,** *Rod Stewart, Warner Bros. 22685*
★ 5. **ESCAPADE,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1490*
6. **ROAM,** *The B-52's, Reprise 22667*
7. **ALL MY LIFE,** *Linda Ronstadt (featuring Aaron Neville), Elektra 64987*
8. **NO MYTH,** *Michael Penn, RCA 9111*
9. **FREE FALLIN',** *Tom Petty, MCA 53748*
10. **I GO TO EXTREMES,** *Billy Joel, Columbia 73091*

CW

1. **HARD ROCK BOTTOM OF YOUR HEART,** *Randy Travis, Warner Bros. 19935*
2. **AIN'T NOBODY'S BUSINESS,** *Hank Williams Jr., Warner/Curb 19957*
3. **STATUE OF A FOOL,** *Ricky Van Shelton, Colubmia 73077*
4. **FIVE MINUTES,** *Lorrie Morgan, RCA 9118*
5. **LITTLE GIRL,** *Reba McEntire, MCA 53763*
6. **FAST MOVIN' TRAIN,** *Restless Heart, RCA 9115*
7. **CHAINS,** *Patty Loveless, MCA 53764*
8. **NOBODY'S HOME,** *Clint Black, RCA 9078*
9. **STRANGER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED,** *Ronnie Milsap, RCA 9120*
10. **SOUTHERN STAR,** *Alabama, RCA 9083*

R&B

★ 1. **THE SECRET GARDEN,** *Quincy Jones with El Debarge & Barry White, Qwest/W.B. 19992*
★ 2. **ESCAPADE,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1490*
★ 3. **WHIP APPEAL,** *Babyface, Solar/Epic 74007*
★ 4. **OPPOSITES ATTRACT,** *Paula Abdul (duet with The Wild Pair), Virgin 99158*
★ 5. **TREAT YOU RIGHT,** *Luther Vandross, Epic 73258*
6. **ALL AROUND THE WORLD,** *Lisa Stansfield, Arista 9928*
★ 7. **RHYTHM NATION,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1445*
8. **COMFORT OF A MAN,** *Stephanie Mills, MCA 53769*
9. **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE,** *Stacy Lattisaw with Johnny Gill, Motown 1982*
10. **SOUL TO SOUL,** *The Temptations, Motown 2023*

CDs

GIRL YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE, *Milli Vanilli, Arista 8592*
STORM FRONT, *Billy Joel, Columbia 44366*
NICK OF TIME, *Bonnie Raitt, Capitol 91268*
FOREVER YOUR GIRL, *Paula Abdul, Virgin 90943*
JANET JACKSON'S RHYTHM NATION 1814, *Janet Jackson, A&M 3920*
SOUL PROVIDER, *Michael Bolton, Columbia 45012*
ALANNAH MILES, *Alannah Miles, Atlantic 81956*
. . . BUT SERIOUSLY, *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82050*
CRY LIKE A RAINSTORM. . ., *Linda Ronstadt (featuring Aaron Neville), Elektra 60872*
THE JOURNEYMAN, *Eric Clapton, Duck/Reprise 26074*

HOTHITS BEST NEW

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

POP

HOW CAN WE BE LOVERS
Michael Bolton - Columbia 73318

★ ***WHIP APPEAL***
Baby Face - Solar/Epic 74007

WHAT IT TAKES
Aerosmith - Geffen 19944

ROOM AT THE TOP
Adam Ant - MCA 53679

WITHOUT YOU
Motley Crue - Elektra 64985

ALL I WANNA DO IS MAKE LOVE TO YOU
Heart - Capitol 44507

DON'T WANNA FALL IN LOVE
Jane Child - Warner Bros. 19933

HEART OF STONE
Cher - Geffen 19953

I'LL BE YOUR EVERYTHING
Tommy Page - Sire/Warner Bros. 19959

YOU'RE THE ONLY WOMAN
The Brat Pack - Vendetta/A&M 1447

TRUE BLUE LOVE
Lou Gramm - Atlantic 88768

YOUR BABY NEVER LOOKED GOOD IN BLUE
Expose - Arista 2011

LOVE CHILD
Sweet Sensation - Atco 98983

HEARTBEAT
Seduction - Vendetta/A&M 1473

CW

★ ***BLACK VELVET***
Alannah Miles - Atlantic 87979

DUMAS WALKER
The Kentucky Headhunters - Mercury 876536

WALKIN' AWAY
Clint Black - RCA 2520

LOVE ON ARRIVAL
Dan Seals - Capitol 44435

SEE IF I CARE
Shenandoah - Columbia 73237

MAYBE
Kenny Rogers (with Holly Dunn) - Reprise/W.B. 3904

I'M OVER YOU
Keith Whitley - RCA 9122

SILVER STALION
Waylon, Willie, Johnny & Kris - Columbia 73233

I'VE CRIED MY LAST TEAR FOR YOU
Ricky Van Shelton - Columbia 73263

THE DOMINO THEORY
Steve Wariner - MCA 53733

I'D BE BETTER OFF (IN A PINE BOX)
Doug Stone - Epic 73246

DID IT FOR LOVE
Sawyer Brown - Capitol/Curb 44483

HELP ME HOLD ON
Travis Tritt - Warner Bros. 19918

BRING BACK YOUR LOVE TO ME
Earl Thomas Conley - RCA 9121

R&B

POISON
Bell Biv Devoe - MVA 53772

ALL OVER YOU (from "Def By Temptation")
Freddie Jackson - Orpheus/EMI 72277

WHAT GOES AROUND
Regina Belle - Columbia 73201

SHOW ME
Howard Hewitt - Elektra 64978

PRECIOUS LOVE
Jody Watley - MCA 53790

LOVE IS LIKE AN ITCHING IN MY HEART
The Good Girls - Motown 2013

I WANNA DO IT TO YOU
Barry White - A&M 12327

FOOTSTEPS IN THE DARK
Body - MCA 53768

DO YOU REMEMBER
By All Means - Island 98992

RUB YOU THE RIGHT WAY
Johnny Gill - Motown 1982

I WANT YOU — YOU WANT ME
Starpoint - Elektra 64979

AIN'T NO WOMAN (LIKE THE ONE I GOT)
Kashif - Arista 9926

I WANT YOU
Billy Davis - GOT 2002

SAY U LOVE ME
Def Con 4 - Reprise 11965

GRAPEVINE

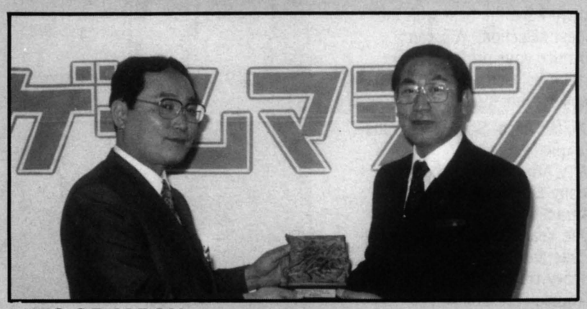
international



THANKS, CANADA — Our northern neighbors seem to have a knack for getting positive coin-op publicity, especially on TV. New-Way Sales Co. (Rexdale, Ontario), a major North American distributor, sponsored a tournament on Sega vidgames in March (their Wizard's Castle operating division co-sponsored). Their "Mr. Wizard" character went on the popular children's TV show "Switchback" (CBC-TV), where he lent his expertise showing how to play Sega's *Out Run* (game supplied by New-Way). The show was seen throughout Canada and the States. Nice going!



BALLARENA — It's a new game of skill and reflexes. The name means "ball arena" and it's a brick-busting video game with cute monsters and grabby graphics. We talk about it more in our ACME New Product Review (front of this issue), but here, let us note that it's been very well received at the Frankfurt, Paris and London shows. Mireille Chevalier International Trading Services rep's the game for the U.S. (that's the lady herself seen with the game in the photo). You can reach her at 1088 Merle Ave., San Jose, CA 95125; 408/298-4250.



HITS OF JAPAN — It's called *Game Machine* magazine and it's a first-class Japanese trade journal. At the AOU trade show in Osaka Feb. 25-27, our Oriental counterparts presented beautiful awards to various manufacturers honoring the "Video Games of the Year," based on their performances on the magazine's rating chart. Seen here is Taito Corp.'s President Keisuke Hasegawa, receiving his plaque for best dedicated video game *(Chase H.Q.)* from the magazine's editor and publisher Masumi Akagi. Also honored was Sega President Hayao Nakayama, for best conversion kit *(Tetris).*



AMOA PREXY JACK KERNER and his lovely wife Shirley attended Japan's AOU show in February. The invitation was tendered by Taito America's Joe Dillon. Notably, Jack was the first AMOA topper to make this trip. Seen here are (from left) Taito's Mr. Naganishi, Shirley Kerner, Jack, and Capcom's Kenzo Tsujimoto.

THE EAST BLOC — the Iron Curtain may be coming down but the "paper curtain" remains. As international businessmen well know, a major problem dealing with the East Bloc is their money, or rather, the fact that it's nearly worthless in the West, coupled with the fact that it's next to impossible to get it across the border due to their laws. (Example: the giant singing group Abba often played East Bloc countries but often as not, took payment in barges of coal or sugar beets rather than money.) This obviously is the key problem for coin machine dealers itching to crack into Poland, Hungary, etc. As Mondial's Dick Sarkisian (an expert on the matter) told us: "A lot of industry people are jockeying for position right now but thoughts of a boom are premature. Eastern Europe has to sort out its currency problems first, and that's going to take some time."

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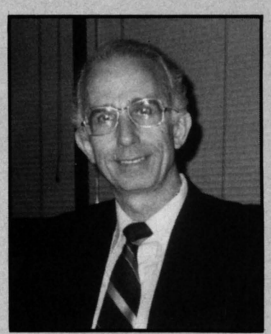
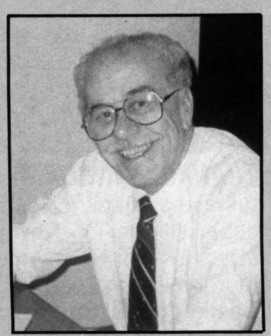
northeast

TOGETHER AGAIN — Dave Gilfor and Richard Sukinik were partners years ago in a small Philly area distributorship (one of their lines was the old Irving Kaye pool tables). Each went his separate way, with Richard opening Americade Amusements in Cherry Hill and Dave, of course, going on to buy Active's dealership on Broad St. with his partner Paul Russell. Now we're delighted to report that Richard has rejoined Dave as the latter's parts department manager. This is a feather for operators since Richard not only knows his way around the nuts and bolts that make this industry run but is also one of the sharpest electronic techs in the trade.

IMPRESSARIO — Doug Wilson (Hilltop Distributing) and his wife sponsored their traditional block party in Pittsburgh, drawing around one thousand fun seekers to a festival that began St. Paddy's Day (March 17) and ran well into the next day. The food, refreshment, etc. cost the Wilsons around $2,500 which was offset by admission fees. "We broke even and everybody had a swell time," says this coinbiz version of Malcolm Forbes.





MERIT has appointed Louis Bonatelli and George Del Casale to key posts. Lou, formerly in production and quality control of military electronics, is now Merit's manufacturing manager. His goal is to increase production efficiency, raise reliability to new heights, and improve quality to even higher levels. Dealers will see better delivery time in completion of their orders and operators will find most field problems have been eliminated, Merit said. Welcome to the industry!

As for George, he's the new quality assurance manager. His electrical engineering degree and 30 years' electronics industry experience with Fortune 500 firms like Unysis and GE will stand Merit in good stead. His goal is to help "banish complacency and establish quality as the number one concern of every member of our company," stated Merit execs. George will ensure that manufacturing lives up to engineering design specs, and will final-test all games to see that they meet Merit's standards for excellence. Congratulations!

SINGLES, ANYONE? With all the talk about the problems getting 45s you'd think they were going the way of the dodo. Well, if you've got needs going unfulfilled, Harvey Campbell at the Mobile Record Service one-stop in Pittsburgh invites you to write or call and get on their available singles list. The current brochure (which he passed out at ACME) lists a broad selection of 45s in the pop, country and R&B categories (fast

moving singles are printed in red for reference). The back sheet lists a collection of available CDs, so Mobile's got you comin' and goin'. If you want to get on the mailing list, write: Mobile Record Service, 2716 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Matter of fact, maybe you should be on all one-stop mailing lists (see current Directory for addresses and spend the stamps).



FRANK & JIM'S SEMINARS — Congratulations to operators who attended a Feb. 24-25 seminar given by our columnist, Frank "The Crank" Seninsky, at Shaffer Distributing (Columbus, Ohio). Some of the "students" are seen around the conference table in the accompanying photo. Attendees came from all over Ohio, of course, plus Michigan, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania & Canada. "Excellent, informative, great for the bottom line," were just some of the comments. "I felt like I made a lot of money this weekend," said another operator. "Gave me the shot of enthusiasm I needed," cheered a third.

Running parallel to Frank's seminar was a two-day, in-depth *Star*Tech Journal* technical session, taught by James Beck. This event drew a great turnout of over 35 technicians. No surprise, since the same seminar pulled in 20 techs at Brady (Charlotte, N.C.) and 25 techs at American Vending Sales (Chicago area) earlier.

Seminar organizers Frank Seninsky and Jim Calore thanked Steve Shaffer and Bill Kraft for donating their time, facilities and staff to make the event a success. (Shaffer's Paul Westbrock, Bob Davis and Bob Francis took care of all the details.) "They kept us going all weekend, even though there was blizzard through most of the state!" smiled Frank.

FUTURE DATES and sites for the Seninsky/Calore-Beck two day seminars are as follows. April 21-22, New England Coin-Op (Norwood, Mass.). May 5-6, General Coin (Seattle, Wash.). May 19-20, Betson Pacific (San Francisco, Calif.). Advance registration is $250 per person. Contact Frank Seninsky for the management track at 201/287-4990 or Jim Calore for the technical track at 609/662-1080.

RECUPERATING — Both Pete Feuer (Merit supremo) and Kathy Gatens (wife of Southgate's Johnny Gatens) recently underwent gall bladder surgery. Both are mending, but it's no easy task to recover from this operation which can create a lot of discomfort if you cough, laugh or even move (not that they're exactly laughing). But we're confident they'll both be 100% before too long and just hope these things don't come in three's.

N.Y. GOLF — AMOA New York will hold its second annual golf outing April 23, 1990 at the Bonnie Briar Country Club (Larchmont, N.Y.). It's a fund-raiser ($200 registration fee) to combat anti-industry laws and is dedicated to the memory of the late, great Nat Ury, who was president of the group until his untimely death last year. The $200

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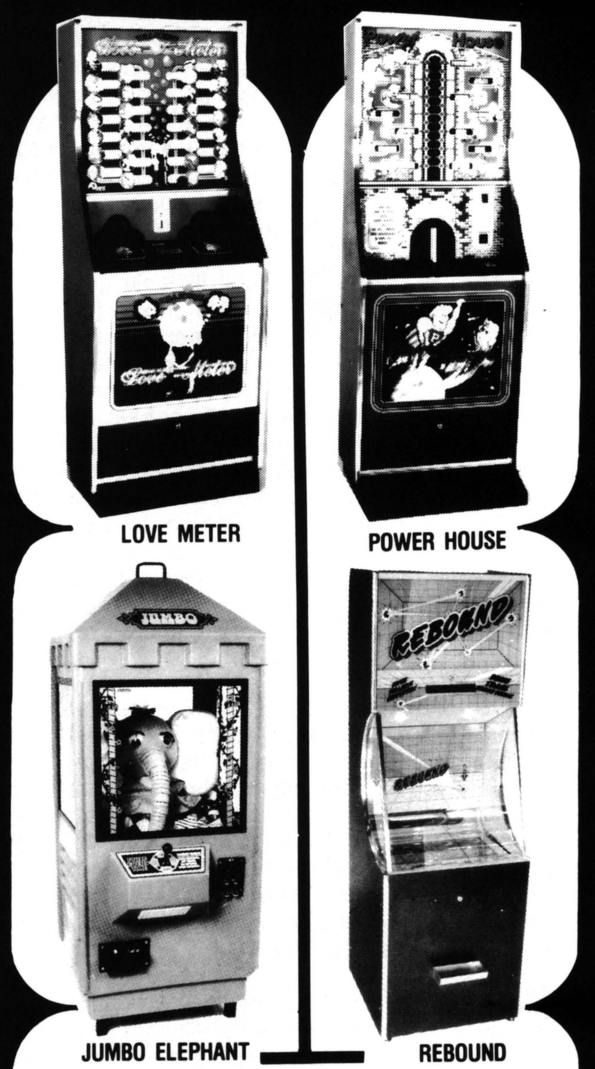

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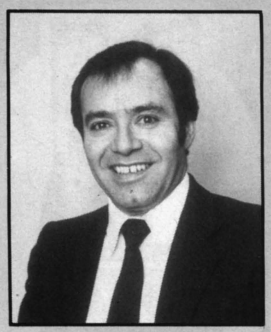
midwest



MARCIO BONILLA (Arachnid's VP of Sales) is spending nights at home with his family, and is spending days at the St. Anthony's hospital in Rockford, Ill. for extensive tests on his heart. At least, that was the situation when we went to press. One of the most likeable guys in the biz, Marcio was getting ready to board a plane on a recent Friday night (March 16) when he began to experience chest pains. A trip to the hospital confirmed a slow heartbeat. When we spoke to Arachnid's Marketing VP Sam Zammuto a week later, he said it was unclear to the folks at the "A Team" whether Marcio had actually suffered a heart attack or not. Marcio's heart rate was very slow, Sam said, leaving Marcio feeling dizzy and weak. Doctors may be able to solve this with medication, Sam added hopefully. And Marcio? "I'll be in the office next week," he smiled. You're a tiger, Marcio, and we're keeping our fingers crossed for you!

IT'S HAPPENING — If the "real" votes on any new machine come from the collection can, it seems Data East's new *Phantom* flipper is heading quickly into "high office." Factory test reports are one thing; now we hear from the street that initial numbers are solid (even topping the $200 range in some cases). And, it seems to be a cross-location item, doing well in both the arcade and on the street. Clearly, Data East may have the best pin since *Monday Night Football* (which is a solid bar piece, by the way).

AKRA GROWING — The American Kiddie Ride Assn. held its first-ever meeting at the Allerton Hotel in Chicago on Saturday, March 10 in conjunction with the ACME show. "It was a great success," reported the group's prexy Tom Theisen. "We've already got 41 members!" Call 800/633-3436 for more information.

ON THE MEND — Friends of Eddie & Wendy Pellegrini know by now that their brand new baby girl Kimberly suffered a most serious viral infection shortly after her birth in late February. The infant (clearly the apple of Eddie's eye) was moved into Lutheran General in Park Ridge, Ill. where she got 'round-the-clock attention. Ed and Wendy actually lived in the hospital during the ordeal (the reason you didn't see him at ACME). Now we hear, and hope it's true, that Kimberly may be over the worst of it and might actually be home by the time you read this.

WELL SAID — Whether printed or spoken, the thousands of words analyzing the recent ACME show were quite neatly summed up by Bird Distributing's Lou Ptacek. Cutting right through the fog, the venerable Kansas dealer & operator stated: "There was no blockbusting game there, but there were quite a few very good pieces. The show itself was very nicely presented and the attendance looked good to me. All things added up to a fine show."

SONS OF THE PIONEERS — Al Kress's son A.J. came to ACME to meet friends and let folks know he's absolutely loving his job as a sales rep for National Vendors. A.J. works out of Lombard, Ill. and was a sight for sore eyeballs (his enthusiasm was also a lift to the spirit) . . . Sol Lipkin's son Bruce (Gene's brother as well) spent umpteen years working for the huge Runyon route in Jersey and is now with Nationwide Vending Services helping the Upland, Calif. firm work with affiliate operators for their national vending/amusement operation. Bruce still makes his office at Runyon in Springfield where he has many friends. "Time for a change and happy to be with Fred, Dan and F.J. at Nationwide," said the always buoyant Bruce. . . Then there's a guy who may be a real "son of the pioneers." Mel Harp, who "retired" from Jack's in Lubbock last year, was at ACME allowing that he's been spending time with Bob Jordan's route in the same city as a consultant. Some retirement, old buddy. Sure you're not Italian?

NOT WELL — We hate to have to print this but it seems that Roger Harvey's recent stroke may leave him partially paralyzed. The Cartel Distributing rep is one of the Michigan trade's favorite people and everyone just feels so bad about the tragedy. Cartel chief Hank Heiser said family and friends are pitching in to do whatever they can and that there just might be a special trade affair to be held for Roger's benefit.

HE'S HAPPY — Rollie Beach (Beach Dist., Minneapolis) enthusiastically reports that the U.S. Games lottery poker machine has been approved for operation in South Dakota and further that the first shipment drove into the state late March. Beach is the exclusive rep for the U.S. line for S.D. Rollie also advises that U.S. Games' *Line Up* machine has been delivered to the South Dakota testing lab for their operational approval. "Mike Pace and his people make great equipment," said Rollie, referring to the U.S. Games chief.

ARCADE VISION — That's the name of a nifty new innovation in game presentation from KD Industries (Todd Erickson and Andy Berglund). It's a second monitor atop the upright video cabinet, which allows people in an arcade or showroom to see the screen even from across the room or in a crowded situation. Vertical or horizontal 19" rotating monitors are offered; cost is just $395. Some top manufacturers at ACME used them, and we can see why! By the way, Todd predicted that 26" multi-synched monitors which can show regular or high-resolution images are the "coming thing."

PINBALL (and the 60th anniversary thereof) was front-page news for *USA Today* on Friday, March 9 as the ACME show opened in Chicago. The story in the Gannett newspaper highlighted pinball earnings, promotions, technology and themes. Noted with a certain lack of enthusiasm: the industry's campaign to raise price per play.

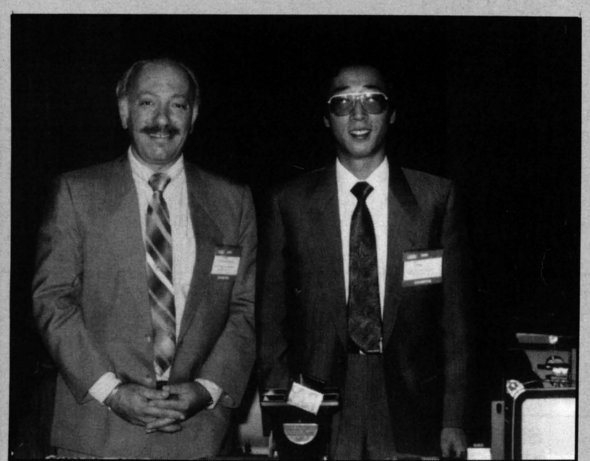
STANDARD CHANGE-MAKERS held its 35th annual sales meeting at its home city (Indianapolis, Ind.) in early February. The firm's new national sales manager,

Barry O'Brien, ran the show and announced several new and improved products. Among them: Series SC100 Changer for vending operators and a new pedestal for the firm's wall-mount changers. A new ticket vender and Universal Interface Module (for tickets, coded cards, etc.) are expected to help the firm enter new markets. O'Brien's old regional office in Philly got the firm's 1989 top sales performance award, presented by President James McNutt. And VP Jim McNutt Jr. announced that the company's new Plant 3 production facility had allowed the firm to register its largest sales volume ever, in 1989. Congrats to all!

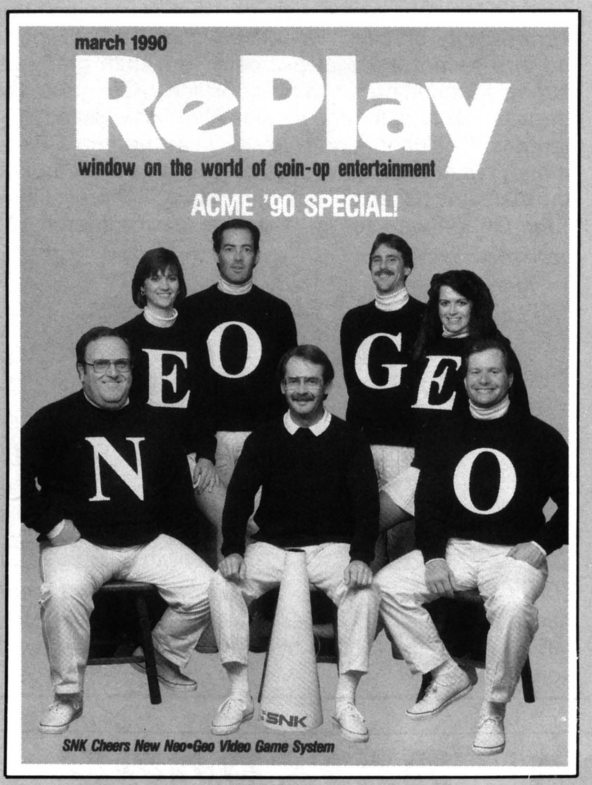
southwest

PERSONALS — Ray Musci, Senior VP at Data East and one of the most popular guys in the manufacturer set, is going to leave the company after four years that included a lot of 12- to 14-hour days. "Boy, are we gonna miss him," said Steve Walton during Data East's ACME dealer meeting. Does Ray have plans? "I'm leaving for personal reasons," he said, turned, half smiled and then went back to work. And we thought the "Sphinx" worked at another video company.

JIM HILL, R.I.P. — Los Angeles area music man Jim Hill passed away in March. He had been hospitalized and friends knew his condition was not strong, but his passing still came as a shock. "I can't believe it," said friend and fellow music operator Don Muller. "Jim was a great fellow and a long-time industry fixture around here. He was a quiet sort who kept a low profile and never went to trade shows," Don added, "but he was everything that's good about jukebox operators. I'll miss him." Jim's Santa Monica based company was originally called Hill's Music; some time back it was changed to Fun Rentals. *RePlay* offers deepest sympathy to Mrs. Hill (Jane) and to Jim's family and friends.



CARL FLEISCHMAN had a handsome, fully-stocked booth at ACME '90 in Chicago March 9-11. On display were the wares of his Space Age Electronics (Saugus, Calif.), featuring a full line of parts and supplies for video games and pinballs. Highlighting the spread of goods were the Orion brand 13" & 19" color monitors for video games. These units are "higher resolution than normal," Carl said proudly, "and they meet AMOA standards."



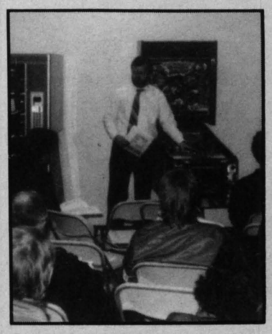
NEAL ZOOK (Director of Operations at SNK) is one of the good guys. (That must be why he's wearing a big "G" on his sweater in this shot which appeared on our cover last month.) Somehow his name got eliminated from the caption, much to our chagrin. Sorry, Neal! By the way, when you're admiring that beautiful, state-of-the-art cabinet which houses SNK's Neo•Geo System, just remember that Neal did all of the mechanical design, component selection and specs. (John Barone created the basic shape of this attractive piece of hardware.) Nice going!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH — You may have read this elsewhere, but it bears repeating. A West Coast route operator summed up the present tempo of the business in one clipped sentence: "Business is good; if you don't make it on the gross alone you make it up by what you don't buy."

northwest

NINTENDO FLEXES MUSCLE — Yes, Nintendo, you can sue retailers who sell unauthorized game cartridges made by Atari-Tengen for use with Nintendo's NES home game system. That was the recent ruling of a U.S. appeals court, Nintendo reported on March 14. The ruling vacates a "no suing the retailers" preliminary injunction (previously granted to Atari) by a lower court. There will, no doubt, be more developments as this case continues to rumble on. For instance, Nintendo's trying to alter a pending copyright bill in Congress, so as to extend copyright protection of computer floppy disks to Nintendo's video games. Idea is to keep retailers from renting NES games to players. Senators Brock Adams and Slade Gorton (both of Washington State, where Nin-

tendo's U.S. offices are) admitted that "reversing" the current rental practice "would be difficult," it was reported in a recent issue of *Billboard.* But both men are strongly supporting Nintendo's position in Congress. By the way, Sen. Adams and his aide Alan Osaki visited Nintendo's President Minoru Arakawa at the firm's Redmond, Wash., plant on Jan. 18. They enjoyed a tour of the plant and talked politics with "Mr. A." At presstime, Sen. Gorton was set for a similar tour on March 13.





GARY & PETE were the "professors" during recent service schools held at General Coin's offices in Portland and Seattle. That's Midway's Gary McKay, who talked up the firm's *Mousin' Around,* and Data East Pinball's Pete Gustafson who demo'd *RoboCop.*



CHEESECAKE SHOT — Just what Jeanne Ballouz always wanted: a cheesecake shot in our magazine. That's brother Tom (Sega) Petit in the elegant trench coat, delivering the luscious dessert from a fancy Chicago eatery, directly to his sister Jeanne (Mrs. Frank) Ballouz on the show floor at ACME. A sweet guy always indulges his sister's sweet tooth.

DATEBOOK

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 3-6
California Coin Machine Assn. anual convention, Hyatt Grand Champions Resort, Indian Wells. For more information, contact Cindy Urcan or Kathy Waldie at 916/441-5451.

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 18-19
OCMA Expo '90, Ramada Inn North, Columbus, Ohio. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/221-8600.

JUNE 7-10
WAMO Spring Convention, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point. For more data, call 414/529-4704.

JUNE 15-17
ICMOA Annual Meeting, Clarion Inn at Eagle Creek, Findley, Ill. For more information, contact ICMOA at 708/369-2406.

JULY 10-11
Latin American amusement machine exposition, U.S. Trade Center/Maria Isabella Sheraton Hotel, Mexico City, Mexico. For more information, contact AAMA at 703/494-2758.

AUGUST 10-12
AMOT (Tennessee) Annual General Membership Meeting & Trade Show. Vanderbilt Plaza, Nashville. For more information, contact Jan Green at 901/521-1234 or 601/371-1000.

AUGUST 17-18
AMOV 32nd Annual Convention & Trade Show, Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, Va. For more information, contact Charles Rowland at 804/262-9283.

SEPTEMBER 13-15
Michigan Coin Machine Operators Assn. annual convention and trade show. Clarion Hotel & Conference Center, Lansing. For more information, contact MCMOA at 517/372-2323.

OCTOBER 25-27
AMOA Expo '90. Hyatt Regency (and two other hotels), New Orleans. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/644-6610.

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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Las Vegas, NV . . . . . June 18-23
Chicago, IL . . . . . Sept. 17-22
New Orleans, LA . . . . Oct. 29-Nov. 3

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LELAND CORP.: Pig Out
MERIT: Countertops, Pub Time Darts

CONVERSION KITS

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AMERICAN SAMMY: DJ Boy, Task Force Harrier
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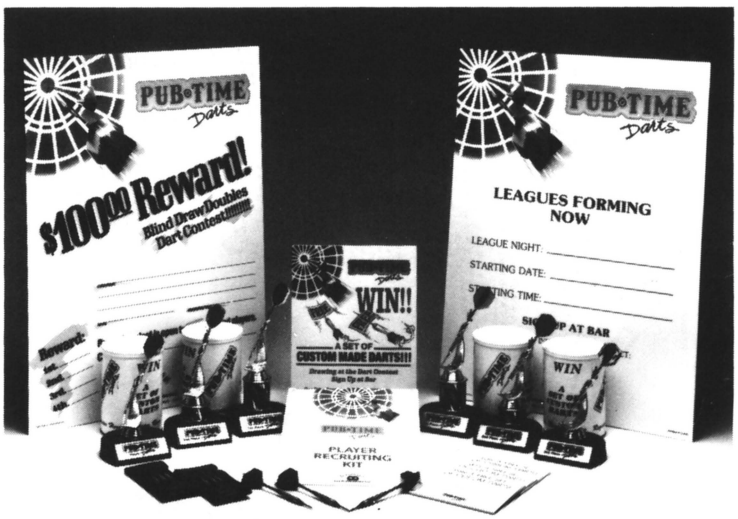

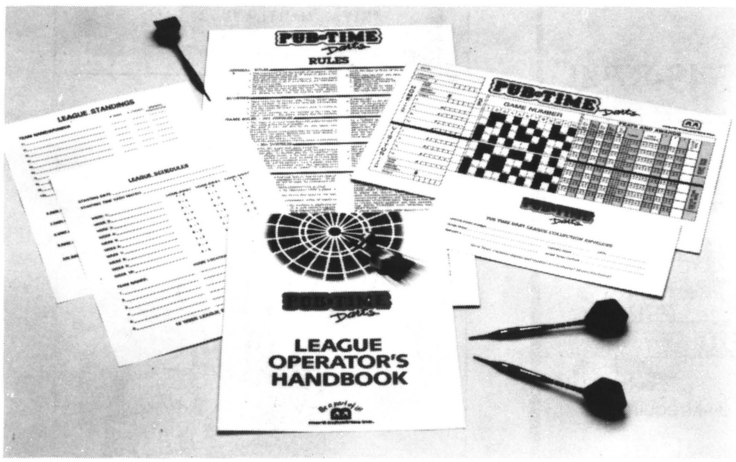

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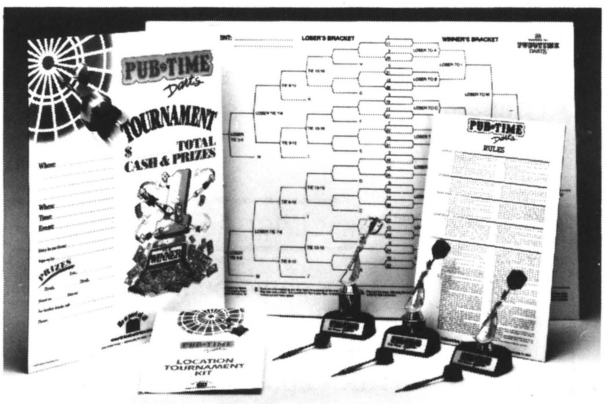

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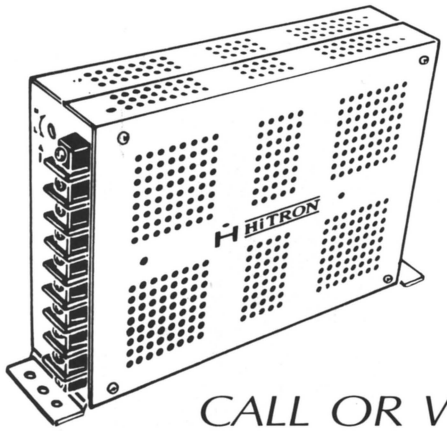

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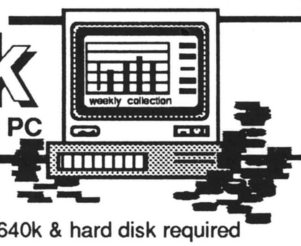

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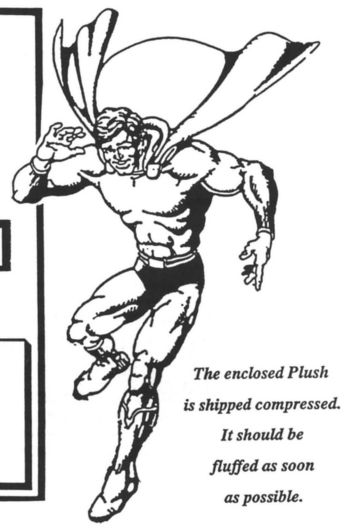

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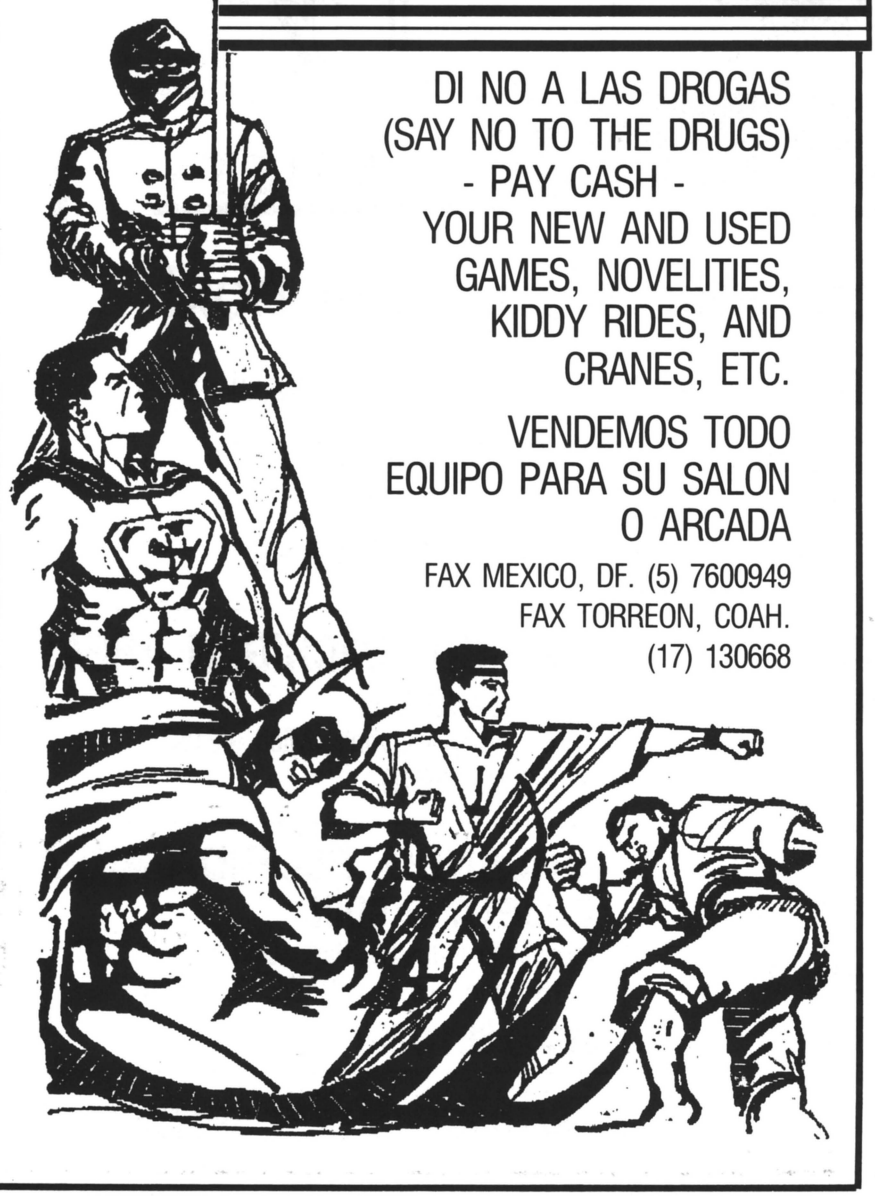

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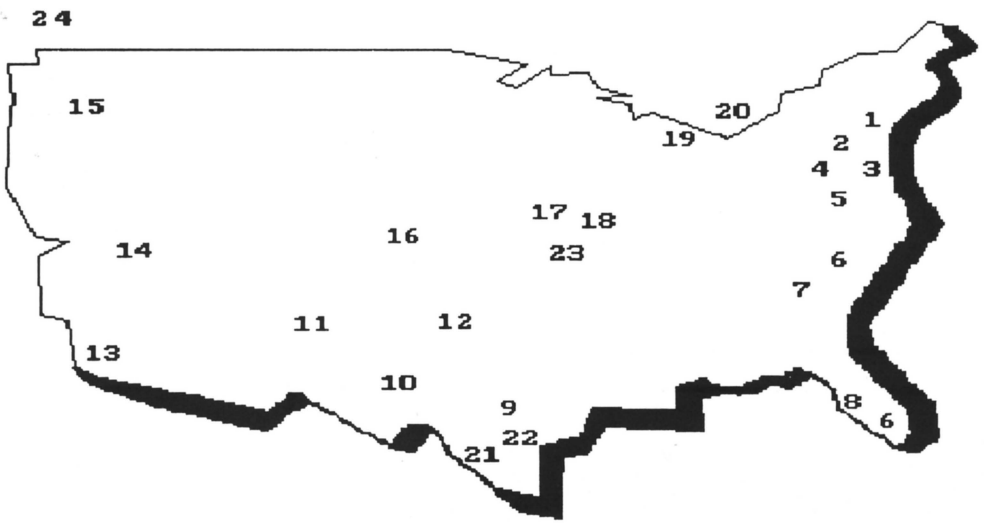

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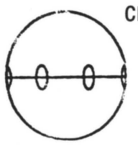



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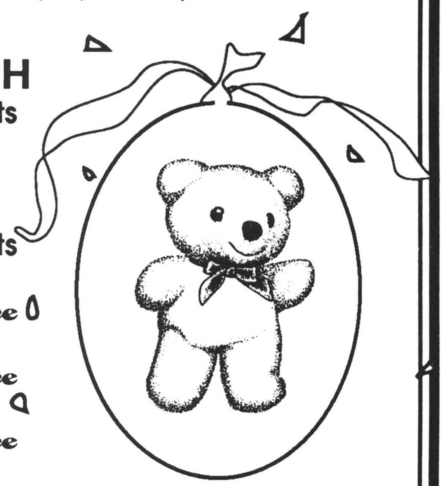

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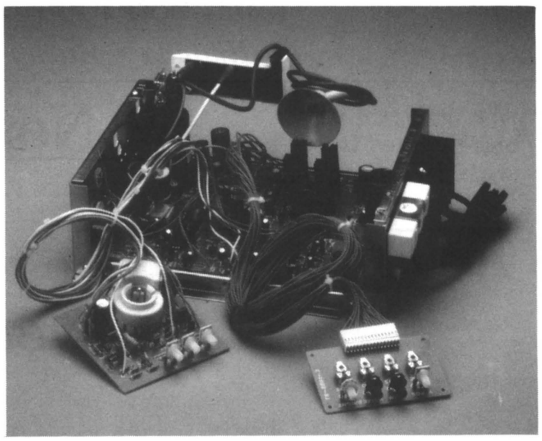

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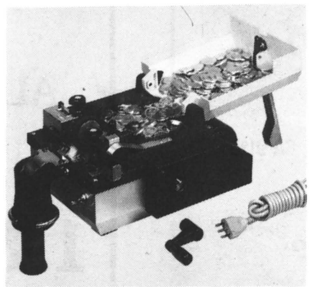

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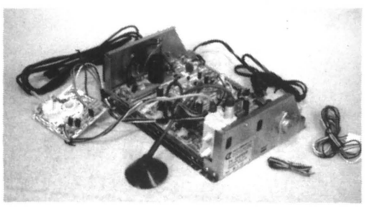

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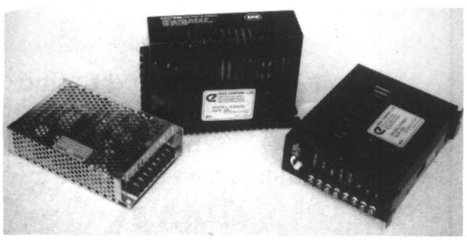

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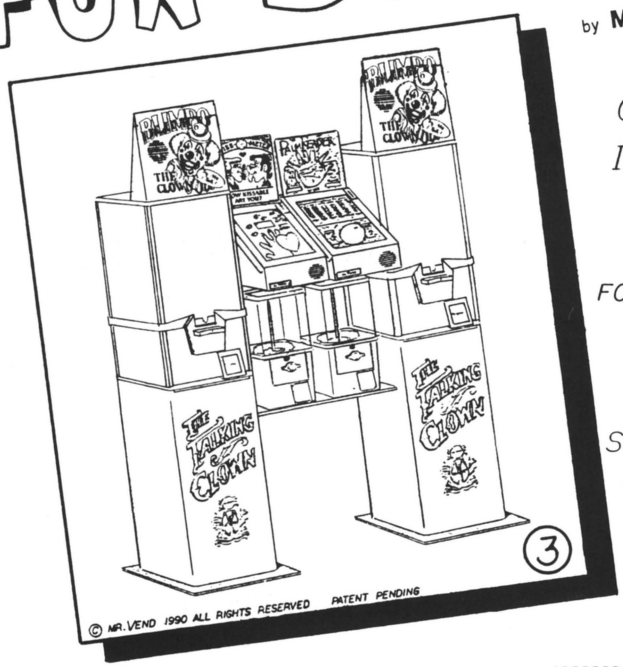

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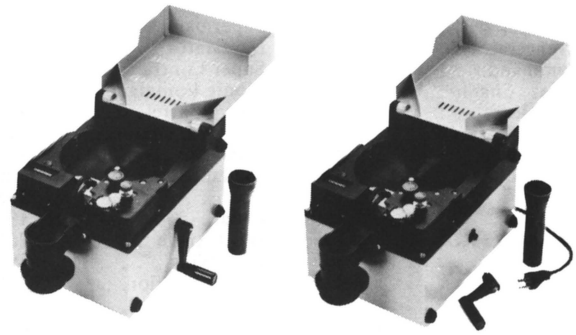

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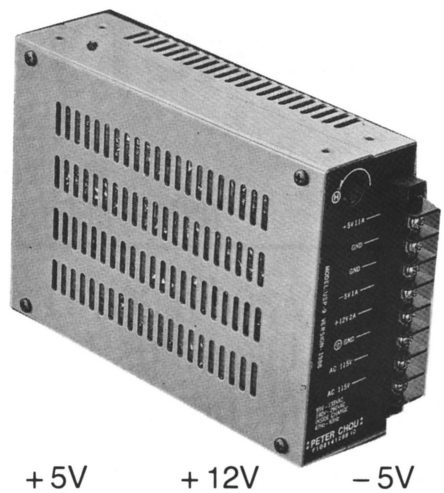

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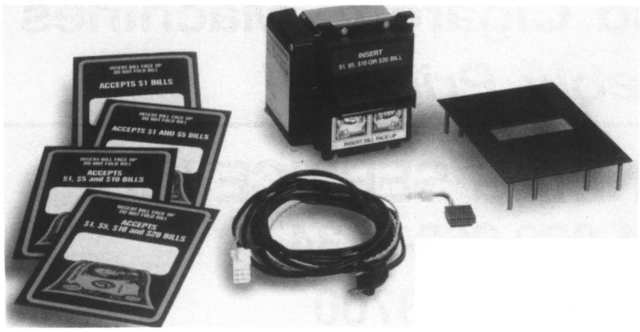

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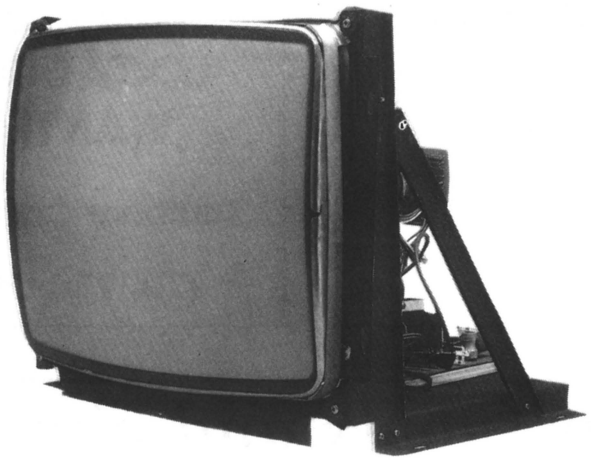

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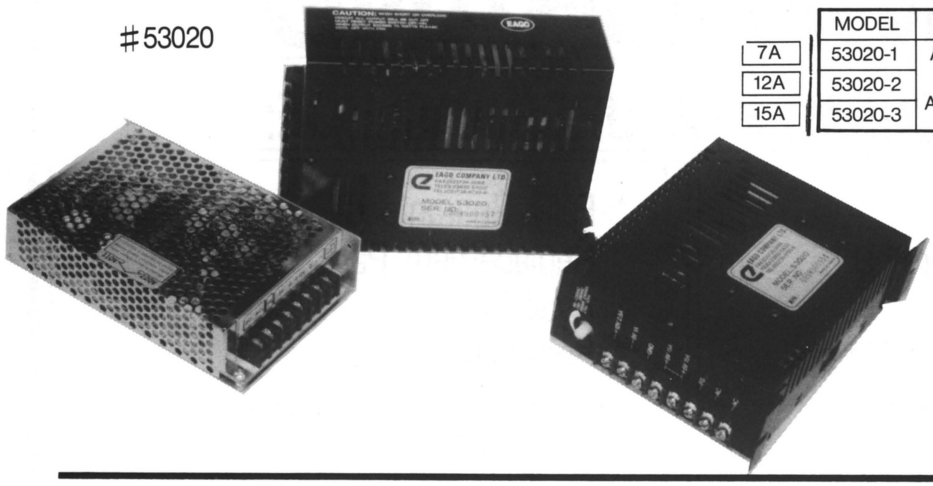

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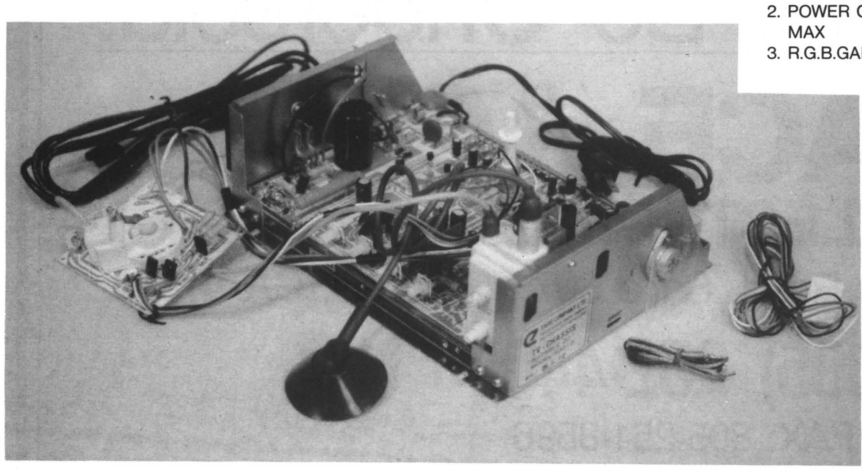

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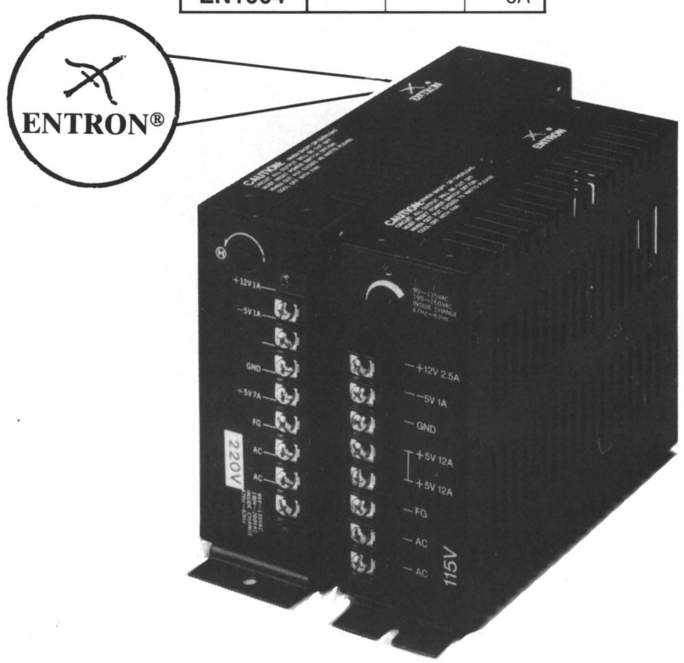

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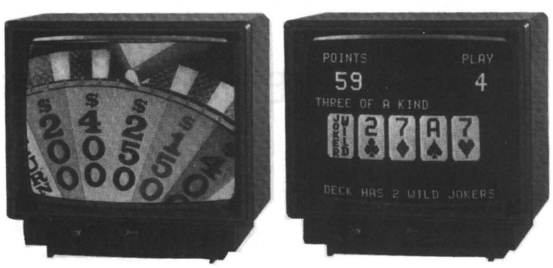

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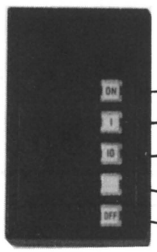
SUPERVISOR REMOTE



- SWITCHES TELEVISION TO POKER GAME
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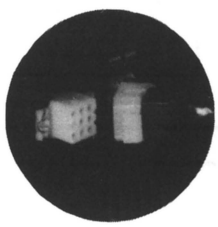
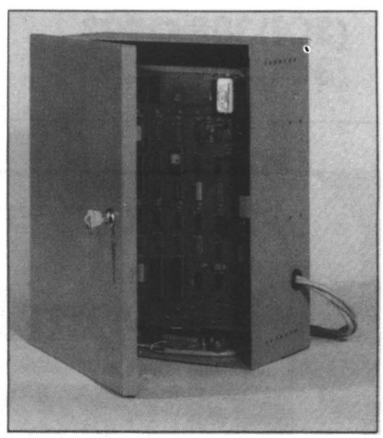


ONE WIRE
TV HOOKUP



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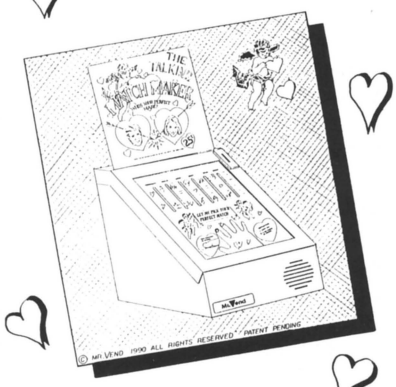

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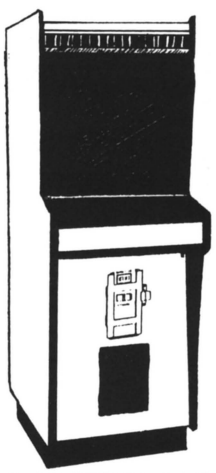

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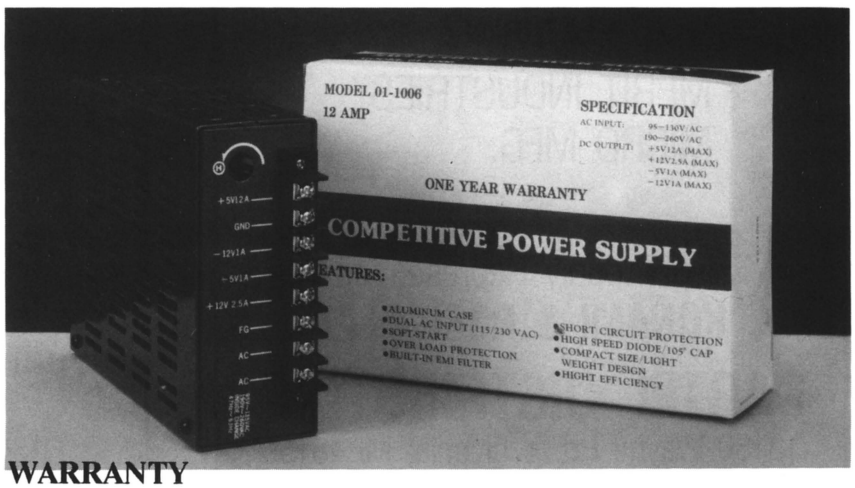

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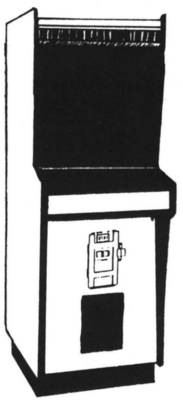

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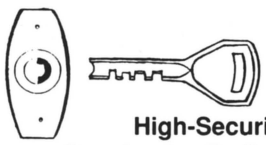

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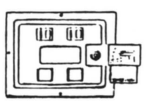

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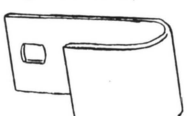

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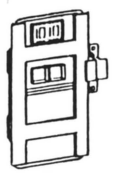

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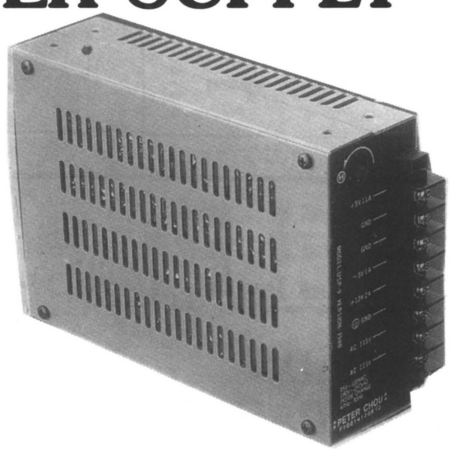

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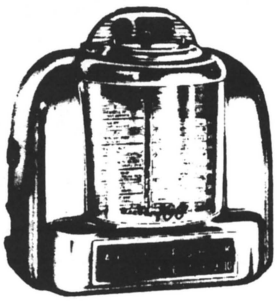

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

A.L.D. Inc. 113-114
A.M.A. Distributors 136
A.M.O.A. 132
Acme Premium Supply 117
Active Amusement & Vending 134
Adastra 107
All Coin Equipment 212
Ameri Corporation 21-22
American Sammy 105
American Technos 92-93
American Vending Sales 135
Amusement Equipment Exchange 181
Mickey Anderson Inc. 142
Arachnid 99
Asahi Seiko U.S.A. 81
Atari ..... cover 4, 31, 47
Atlantic & Pacific 125
Atlas/Eastern Distributing 35
Atlas (Chicago) Distributing 211
Bally Midway ..... cover 3, 159
Baton Lock 188
Beach Distributors 184
R.H. Belam Company, Inc. 101
Betson Enterprises 104, 163
Bird Distributors 214
Birmingham Vending 161
Bob's Space Racers 84
Bonita Marie 103
Brady Distributing 179
Bush Electronics 63
Capcom U.S.A. 7
Central Distributing 17
Century Vending 214
Coastal Amusement 127
Coin Concepts 53, 165, 221
Colorado Game Exchange 36
Commercial Music Co. 143
Data East 5, 155, 157
Deltronic Labs 118
Design Plus Industries 13
Deutsche Wurlitzer 37
Dilley Distributing 202
Doyle & Associates 67
Drews Distributing Co. 89
Dunis Distributing 207
Dynamo Corp. 39-40
Eastern/Atlas Distributing 35
En'sco Company Ltd. 120
F.A.V.A. 220
Fabtek 109
Franco Distributing 30
H.A. Franz 126
GaMCO 14
General Coin Distributing 172
T.W. Gilchrist Vending Ltd. 176
Grand Products 77-78
Greater Southern Distributing 54
Happ Controls 108
Hilltop Distributing 213
Hoffman & Hoffman 41
Imaginomics 169
Impressment Plus 146
Irem 151
I-VICS 55
Jack's Amusement Company 118
J.C. Electronics 137
J-S Sales Company 140
KD Industries 145
Kentucky Coin 146
Konami 95-96
Laniel Automatic 193
Laramie Interests 10
Leland Corp. 19
Loewen-America/NSM-Lions 71
Henry W.T. Mali 16
Master Sales 192
Mayoni 220
Meltec 75, 119
Merit Industries 33, 180
Micro Manufacturing 173-175
Mondial International 138
Mondial Distributing 139
Monroe Distributing 72
Moss Distributing 106
Mountain Coin 215
Mr. Vend 48, 68, 134, 140, 172, 210, 212
Music-Vend Distributing 207
New England Coin-Op 124
New Way Sales 136
Nintendo of America 147-148
Oasis Amusements 199
O'Connor Distributing 184
Operator's Distributing 84
Pacific-Vend Distributors 36
Peach State Distributing 193
Pioneer Sales & Service 128
Playfair Shuffleboard 181
Plush-4-Play 129
PMI 129
Pool Chalk Saver 130
Pop-a-Shot 34
Premier Technology ..... cover 2
Progressive Game Distributors 76
C.A. Robinson & Co. 27
Romstar 29
Rosette 177
Roth Novelty 178
Rowe-Dedham 38
Rowe International 49
Royal Distributing 210
Seidel Amusement 128
Sega Enterprises 9
Shaffer Distributing 182
Sharp Image Electronics 15
Skee-Ball 20
Smart Industries 24-25
SNK 57-60
Southgate Amusement 202
State Sales & Service 80
Strata 123
Struve Distributing 176
SunBelt Amusement 208
Taito America 153
T.O.P. Distributing 141
Van Brook of Lexington 106
Video Doctors 213
Wedges/Ledges of CA 167
Weiner Distributing 178
Williams Electronics 85
Roger Williams Mint 190
World Wide Distributing 110
Yamate U.S.A. 194-195
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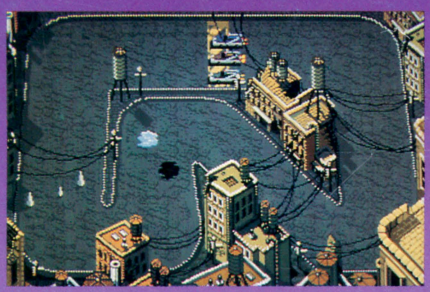

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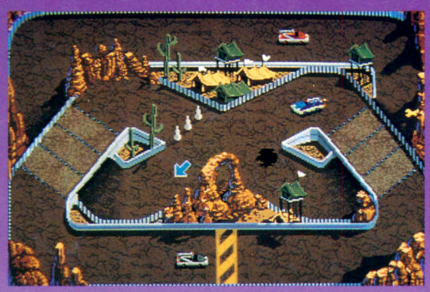

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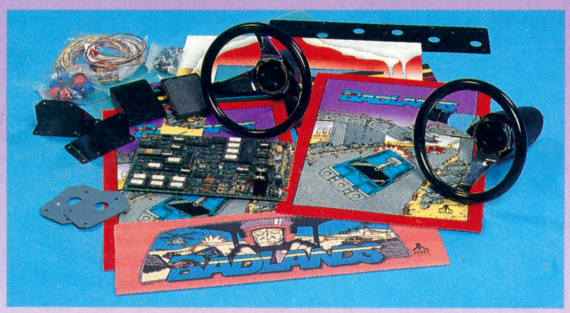

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