may 1990

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

IS HOME VIDEO OFF ITS COLOR? From what we've begun to hear, the home video market has started looking sort of like coin-op with respect to choosey buyers (i.e. games are either hits or forgetits). Some suppliers have unsold cartridges backing up in warehouses and some retail stores are seeing some titles gathering dust on their shelves. The pipeline seems to be backing up with some insiders predicting that 1990 will be a "buyer's market" in home software. This could force price discounts for all but super hit titles. Now, if consumer sales are sliding, will coin-op automatically rebound? Not necessarily (says one insider). "You have to do something to deserve it."

TRANSITION AT TAITO AMERICA — Machine selling was the activity in the sales department but the real drama during the latter part of April at Taito America's Wheeling, Ill. facility took place in the executive offices. The results: **Joe Dillon,** Taito's U.S. President, along with their domestic board infringement "cop" **Pete O'Neill** and ad promotion chief **Nancy Goodwin,** have all left the company. Taito Japan's International Sales Director **Minoru Suzuki** has assumed the Taito America presidency. It was impossible to get an official statement about the transition from the company by presstime (they were closeted in end-of-fiscal meetings with **Mr. Hasagawa** and other Japanese heavies) but they said they'd release a statement "within days."

Marketing people like **Rick Rochetti, Jim Chapman** and **Natalie Kulig** remain in place interfacing with equipment distributors here. Many of those distributors, however, were buzzing about the executive transition, especially since Dillon is one of the factory icons in the business. When reached for comment, Dillon himself said: "There was a conflict in management philosophies. The new incoming management wants to be in complete control as Taito works to become a publicly listed corporation in Japan. In other words, they want to apply the 'successful Japanese business philosophy' here. I continue to have the utmost respect for the Kogan family and their representative G.W. Moseley and will retain that respect in whatever new post I'll be taking in our industry."

JUKE LICENSE UPDATE — Most operators who registered their boxes in 1988 and 1989 received 1990 application forms by April 23; these were mailed out by a new Jukebox Administration Committee (based in ASCAP's new York offices). AMOA has further asked Committee to send registration forms to 19 state operator associations (representing over 2,000 people). AMOA also requested 2,000 forms to send to its own membership, as well as coin-op distributors and manufacturers (AMOA hopes to mail these in early May). Also, magazines which service locations will be notified of the new agreement by AMOA (i.e.: locations which own their own jukebox will be able to read about the new agreement).

TEST IS ON — Pioneer has begun a field test of its new *Laser Juke* (CD phonograph) through a company called Zenith Industries. The 10-city independent survey is measuring the machine's earning potential, as well as mechanical durability, at 20 locations. Now, we don't know if the following was part of that test or not, but Audio Visual Amusements (St. Louis distribs) tested one (offering 18 discs, including Pioneer's seven hit compilations) for three weeks ending April 4. AVA's **Doug Allebach** told *RePlay* the Pioneer did 15% to 20% better in the cash pan than the previous CD machine they had at a Pizza Hut. AVA was enthused, signed aboard as a Pioneer distributor and placed a substantial initial order (they will continue to offer Seeburg CD as well). In addition to the St. Louis dealership, Viking Vending (Menomonee Falls, Wisc.), Hilltop (W. Va.) and Weiner (Baltimore) have also swelled Pioneer's distributing network since last report. (By the way, final results of the Zenith test will be announced this summer.)

INCOMING — Be sure to check out Williams' brand new ***Smash TV*** video (their first in a long time) when it hits your distributor. We've heard good things about it. . . Also coming: a new 4-pl. upright from Leland themed on soccer. "We actually made it for Europe but it tested well here so we're releasing distributor samples beginning this month," said **Ken Anderson** (the game's name is coming). By the way, their ***Pig Out*** video is still being tweaked and should be completed around the end of May, Ken advised.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

MAY 1990

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

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (5)**	**9.50**	**97%**
➡	2	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (13)	8.69	46%
	3	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (5)	8.54	34%
➡	4	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (3)	8.19	17%
	5	FINAL LAP (Atari) (18)	7.94	29%
	6	OFF ROAD (Leland) (14)	7.89	80%
	7	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (13)	7.79	52%
➡	8	S.C.I. (Taito) (4)	7.65	19%
	9	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (10)	7.63	45%
➡	10	KLAX+ (Atari) (2)	7.50	30%
	11	MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE+ (D.E.) (5)	7.41	34%
	12	CHASE H.Q. (Taito) (17)	7.39	59%
	13	S.T.U.N. RUNNER (Atari) (6)	7.26	32%
	14	OUTRUN (Sega) (41)	7.23	70%
	15	ALL AMER. FOOTBALL (Leland) (6)	7.14	31%
	16	NARC (Williams) (15)	7.13	45%
	17	SUPER HANG-ON (Sega) (34)	7.04	57%
	18	TEAM QUARTERBACK (Leland) (18)	7.04	46%
➡	19	MECHANIZED ATTACK (SNK) (11)	6.97	28%
	20	BIG RUN (Jaleco) (1)	6.92	11%
	21	TOP SPEED (Romstar) (19)	6.86	17%
	22	CRIME FIGHTERS+ (Konami) (9)	6.84	62%
	23	AFTER BURNER (Sega) (31)	6.83	58%
	24	SUPER MONACO GP (Sega) (8)	6.76	28%
	25	CYBERBALL (Atari) (14)	6.74	36%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

best new videos

➡	1	MERCS [u/r] (Capcom)	9.10
➡	2	SLICK SHOT [u/r] (Grand Products)	8.22
➡	3	FOUR TRAX [u/r + s/d] (Atari)	8.00

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
➡	1	**DJ BOY [H] (American Sammy) (1)**	**9.13**	**7%**
➡	2	FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (3)	9.09	67%
➡	3	ALIENS [H] (Konami) (1)	8.37	25%
➡	4	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (10)	8.20	80%
➡	5	BADLANDS [H] (Atari) (3)	7.80	29%
	6	GOLDEN AXE [H] (Sega) (11)	7.66	77%
➡	7	TASK FORCE [V] (Amer. Sammy) (4)	7.64	9%
➡	8	CADASH [H] (Taito) (1)	7.45	9%
➡	9	BUSTER BROS. [H] (Capcom) (4)	7.44	34%
	10	VS. CRIME FIGHTERS [S] (Konami) (6)	7.42	36%
➡	11	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (2)	7.42	10%
➡	12	MVP [H] (Sega) (1)	7.33	7%
➡	13	50 CALIBRE [V] (Romstar) (6)	7.29	23%
➡	14	TOKI [H] (Fabtek) (5)	7.18	37%
	15	ARCH RIVALS [H] (Midway) (11)	7.17	72%
	16	U.N. SQUADRON [S] (Capcom) (7)	7.15	40%
➡	17	BLOCKOUT [H] (Amer. Technos) (2)	7.10	8%
	18	TETRIS [H] (Atari) (13)	7.04	74%
➡	19	AMERI DARTS [H/V] (Ameri Corp.) (2)	6.95	17%
	20	ROADBLASTERS [S] (Atari) (32)	6.88	55%

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

flippers

➡	1	**WHIRLWIND (Williams) (3)**	**9.07**	**68%**
➡	2	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (D.E.) (2)	8.88	22%
	3	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (13)	8.33	61%
	4	ELVIRA (Midway) (7)	8.31	54%
➡	5	GAME SHOW (Midway) (1)	8.28	23%
	6	POLICE FORCE (Williams) (8)	8.23	57%
➡	7	MOUSIN' AROUND (Midway) (4)	7.78	41%
	8	MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL (D. E.) (6)	7.55	28%
➡	9	SILVER SLUGGER (Gottl./Premier) (1)	7.55	10%
	10	TAXI (Williams) (18)	7.41	69%

➡ *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

This month's cover features 'Dribbles Jr.', the kiddie basketball game that's "jointly designed and marketed" by two of coin-op's finest: Doyle & Associates (Sarasota, Fla.) and Betson Enterprises (Moonachie, N.J.). Kneeling at left is D&A's prexy Skip Doyle; behind him is New England Coin-Op Distributor's service manager David Tucker (NECO is owned by Betson). Together, Skip and David coordinated the complete design of 'Dribbles.'

Kneeling at right is Betson VP of Operations Robert Betti. The lovely lady is D&A's veep Sondra Doyle; behind Sondra is her son Jay Doyle, D&A's Idaho-based manufacturing manager.

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EDITORIAL

In less than two years, the amusement industry will "celebrate" the tenth anniversary of that dark day in the early '80s when the video bubble burst. Like remembering Pearl Harbor or the day President Kennedy got shot, many people still talk about the time when the honey disappeared from the video hive, recalling that brief but tantalizing period when "every game built was bought, when every game built made money, when every conceivable location wanted as many as they could get."

That period was called the "video boom" and it lasted less than three years. Why do some people (like us) still talk about it, as if this single "spike" in the broad history of the jukebox and games business was its finest hour (did we forget the jukebox boom of the late '40s or the solid state pinball boom of the late '70s)? Why? Because like Camelot, it was that one shining spot when it seemed you could actually do nothing more than plug a machine into a wall and make money merely by staying alive.

Video is still the most important class of machine on the map, even with all the work on redemption in arcades and the back-to-basics move on the street. And that shows it still has shoulders, but not the "padded shoulders" which lulled more than one into a false sense of wealth during the boom. It's important, though it's really only one of many types of machines in the general attraction mix today.

Music, pool, pinball, darts, ticket redemption and some other types of machines are reasonably steady earners. Their ups and downs are never too dramatic. In that sense, they are truly wonderful. Video is dynamic . . . some do beautifully, others drop dead. The great ones (like Pac-Man *and* Dragon, *like* Gauntlet *and now* Turtles*) came out after the boom and for good or bad, remind many of the halcyon days. The bad ones (not enough space here to begin mentioning them), diminish that video glory. But, by proper buying, the operator with smarts still comes out ahead.*

To dream of coming out ***more*** *than "ahead" is okay, but reality cautions everyone to keep his eyes open wide . . . to buy the best new video while also putting as much attention into the other types of machines. The coin amusement business is a "salad" rather than one single entre. For those who know that, and gratefully most do, broad buying (backed by hard work and clear thinking) makes for its own boom.*

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INSIDE

MAY 1990

SPECIAL ARTICLES

JUKEBOX UPDATE

We answer your questions about the new Jukebox Licensing Agreement, which was announced in late March. We also answer the question: "What if I don't license my jukebox....and get caught?".....pg. 27

ARCADES IN 1990

From the huge indoor "family entertainment centers" to "mom and pop arcades" and everything in between, this special section offers a variety of insights into one of the most dynamic sectors in coinbiz today. Topics include family appeal, budgeting, redemption trends, publicity, security, community relations, a poll focusing on street arcades, and much, much more. Your spring (and summer) reading festival begins on.....pg. 73

***PHANTOM* IS HOT**

Data East's *Phantom of the Opera* is getting rave reviews from operators. The Chicago factory feels they've really come into their own with this one (and rightfully so).....pg. 41

***G-LOC* TAKES OFF**

Sega's calling it "the arcade hit of the ACME show," and they just could be right. Their latest aviation simulator comes in three versions and it's even hotter, thanks to three new sequences that let you land your jet on the deck of an aircraft carrier.....pg. 66

***TURTLES* IN PERSPECTIVE**

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is one of the industry's all-time hits and we examine the past, present and future of this mega-hit video from Konami — including an assessment of its impact on the rest of coin-op today.....pg. 146

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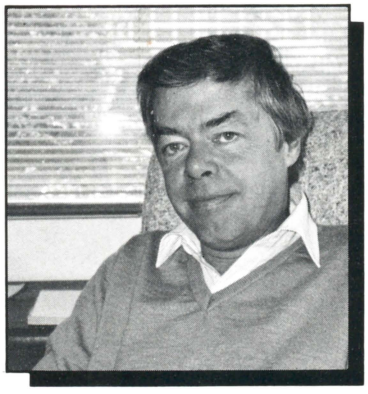

Despite all the negative talk we've heard about coin-op video these past few years, survey after survey continues to show that the bulk of the industry's general income stems from that single class of machine. Yet, survey after survey carries that common operator plea: "Give us something different." Apart from a number of notable exceptions, most of the best-earning videos in memory were designed in Japan. But again with a few notable exceptions, most everything they create is either a fighting or a driving game.

The Japanese agenda is often summed up in one word: business. They read the plea for "something different," yet they know that American players spend much of their attention on things like Turtles, Final Fight *and* Hard Drivin' *...hits based on the "same old themes." So, who's right? Everybody. Who's wrong? Again, everybody.*

If this makes no sense, remember that this is an entertainment industry and like all other forms of "showbiz," it's wrong to approach it from a purely commercial standpoint. It's natural to follow "trends," but really the only way to satisfy everyone in the marketing chain (from manufacturer all the way through the location owner to the player) is to make games with "legs," even if they're rehashed versions of old themes. I know it's not as simple as all that, but that ***is*** *the name of the showbiz game.*

To recapture the old excitement in video, players have to get challenged by things they've never been able to do before. The industry's primary motivation may be money, but players are not interested in that (many have spent 50¢ to play the better videos, and pins, and are quite likely to drop dollar coins, if we ever get them). But if motivations in the design department stem solely from dollars, the drive for a higher vend will fall flat.

I hear rumblings that the home video pipe is backing up with unsold cartridges. If true, the Japanese designers should really get motivated to make up that lost income from the coin-op side. But they must meld that need with that of the player, who may sit at the bottom of the marketing ladder, but who really calls the final shots. If the game has legs, as many Japanese games have, the player money always follows. And that's another trade magazine theme always worth rehashing.

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VIEWPOINTS

Dear RePlay:

Having worked with manufacturers, we realize both the costs and the risks involved in starting a new line or promotion. As a distributor, we can only recommend the manufacturers we currently have an opportunity to work with. However, I would like to call special attention to Grayhound Electronics and their popular *Newport* basketball promotion. For those unfamiliar with the promotion, Newport not only runs tournaments (which include gifts and prizes), but also picks up $700 off the cost of the Grayhound *Newport* basketball game.

It actually would have been quite easy for Grayhound to keep that $700, offering only the free tournaments as a perk. Instead, Grayhound decided to exercise that rare gift of passing the $700 savings back to the operator. We realize *RePlay* does not print prices (except in advertisements), so let's simply say that Grayhound can thus charge an "extremely" reasonable price for their *Newport* basketball games.

Accordingly, let us be the first to tip our hats to Grayhound Electronics, for unselfishly putting that much-needed money back in the operators' pockets!

Sincerely,
Patti A. Novak
Vice President
Coast to Coast Amusement Game Dist.
Roseville, California

◆

Dear RePlay:

When we started out in CD, we operated over one hundred combo's on our route. We experienced a big increase in the gross sales by going from 25¢ a play up to 3/$1.00. But as we upgraded to newer combo's, the gross stayed relatively the same. Now we've changed from the combo to the all-CD box, again with little increase in sales. Unless we change pricing, I believe we have hit our sales peak.

When going to CD, we experience trouble with the customers in two ways. First, they're concerned that they won't be able to get request songs as easily as we supply them now. Secondly and most important is their reluctance to the 3/$1.00 pricing and we will not put CDs out unless we get 3/$1.00 pay.

◆

Dear Ed:

I ran across a couple of stories in the *Des Moines Register* that outlined some of the legal moves being taken either by state legislatures or parent groups opposed to song lyrics that encourage sex, violence, the use of drugs, alcohol and some other things. One story said an Alabama record retailer was convicted of selling "recorded obscenity" but was fighting back. My question: can an operator be sued?

Clyde Knupp
Fort Dodge, Iowa

[Clyde: as you know, there's been a movement to label certain "socially objectionable" record albums much the same way the movie industry labels its products and the obvious reason is to preclude teenagers 18 and under from listening to that stuff. But while anybody can actually be sued for any reason, it's extremely unlikely that a jukebox operator could get hurt unless he had the misfortune of programming one of these singles on a box that was installed in a kiddie-accessed location and an angry mother happened to hear the obscene lyrics (assuming she could understand the "rap"). Since most boxes are in taverns, the danger is largely one of imagination. However, it does pay to listen to the records before putting them onto boxes going into stops frequented by minors. It's sort of like vending cigarettes, no? Ed]

◆

Dear Ed,

In my opinion, the cost of a CD jukebox plus the CDs themselves are high for the amount of income they make in our area. When discussing the installation of a CD machine with our better locations, their answer is to put it on a fifty, fifty basis or else leave the present 45 jukebox there. (Most locations want a loan rather than a CD jukebox, by the way.) However, I run a risk of losing the games in the location by denying or pulling a CD box due to insuf-

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ficient music income. It's a tough call.

Collections on all of our coin-operated equipment are down, actually. The state lottery takes millions of dollars a week out of circulation and now the taverns are doing less business since the state raised the drinking age from 18 to 21. Gotta look at things very carefully today.

a friend in Ohio

◆

As I see it, it's a matter of time before the 45s are discontinued. This could take two years or ten (if you ask eight different "experts," you get ten different answers). My concern is what do I do with 400 wallboxes in diners when the 45s become extinct. Since the jukebox is the backstone of my business, I am very concerned about the future for 45s.

Another big concern is the dollar coin. Operating in the Philadelphia area, 90% of our collections come from $1.00 bills, so I hope the manufacturers will come out with an adaptor for the dollar coin, if and when it appears. But with all the problems and concerns, I'm still happier with jukeboxes than I am with video and pinball.

Alan Bershad
Penn Triple S

◆

Dear RePlay:

Due to the higher price of CD jukeboxes and discs, we at Glades Music feel we'll be losing a lot of good locations, including some that have been the lifeblood of our company for a lot of years. It seems that someone out there could make a lot of money pressing 45s in place of the record companies that have gotten too rich to do this any longer.

After the millions of 45s that small operators like myself have bought, now the record companies are willing to dump on us for the CD business. Personally, I think it stinks.

Bill Bird, Florida

[Bill: Yes, it stinks. But as they say, business is business and "they" will go further and say the record labels have kept the singles on the pressing machine this long, principally to supply the operating business. As one record label owner told us mid-April, "why should we work three times harder to make half the amount of money?" referring to 45s vs. other recording configurations. Now, will "somebody" come along and fill the gap? This is America and the answer is yes. Already, Record Source International has a program to supply operators with 45s. And if we have any "gypsy blood," we're sure that some others will hop in if the gap is wide enough. Just keep close with your favorite one-stop and if he's not up to speed, switch gears to one that is. Ed]

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

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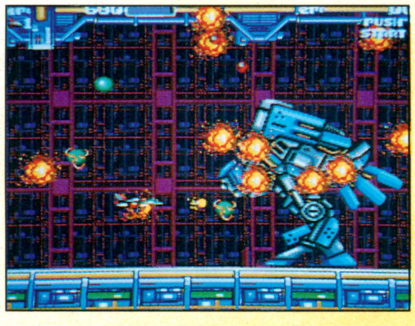

Air Buster™, the world's most innovative shooting game, breaths new life into the genre of high action shoot-em-ups, with 8 of the most original and refreshingly creative action scenes ever incorporated into a video game.

Your players will welcome the experience of trying to master each, seemingly unmasterable round of play, in hopes of achieving fame and fortune from saving the world from a certain demise. And **you** will welcome the coin-box returns in this location proven conversion kit that has consistently outearned all competition.

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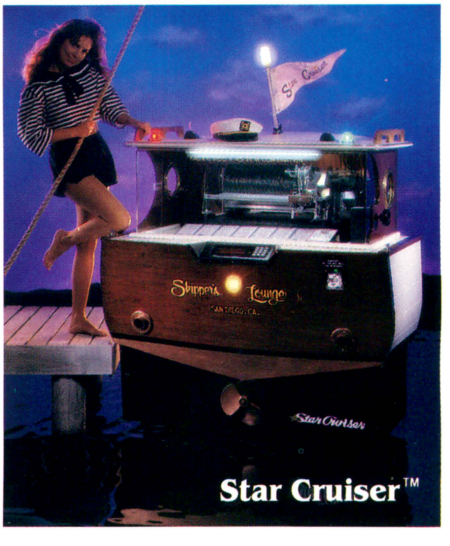

If you were a bar owner, would you choose a Seeburg Jukebox, a Rowe, Rock-ola...or one of these?

And, if you were a bar patron, which manufacturer's jukebox would you find the most compelling to play?

We're really not asking you to guess. What we are asking you to do is *try* one of our jukeboxes. Then judge for yourself.

Our jukeboxes are not the cheapest. But they'll entice location owners and patrons like no other. And their impecably clear, thunderously powerful, NSM HyperBeam compact disc system will impress them like no other. It's the most dependable, fastest changing, full-featured music system ever engineered.

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NEWS DIGEST

GIANT INDOOR "FAMILY AMUSEMENT CENTERS" EXPANDING

Industry sources have noted a growing national trend toward large indoor "family entertainment centers." We're talking about facilities 5,000 sq. ft. and up, stocked with videos, pins, redemption, midway games . . . and, in many cases, carousels, kiddie rides, miniature golf and "fun food." Often, these centers are linked with other entertainment like movies, bowling, skating, etc. in a giant indoor complex.



Such sites have proven super-profitable; over $1,000,000 annual gross is projected for one new Midwestern site under 10,000 sq. ft. Operators of such facilities are aggressively shopping for mall space to build more sites across the country. For example, J.R. Minick & Associates says it's been contracted to design five more huge "Time Out on the Court" arcades. Other entertainment center entrepreneurs have even bolder plans for many more centers of a similar type, according to several sources familiar with this side of the industry.

Multiple sources have told *RePlay:* "It's becoming ***very*** big business and is being marketed quite professionally. We're seeing the use of contracting middlemen who work with major developers of malls and other large indoor public sites; extensive use of professional architects and designers; national listings of major arcade chains as potential tenants for new malls and indoor centers; major rides and attractions costing many thousands of dollars; etc." It's a lively sector in a 1990 market that's otherwise characterized as largely "soft."

One fly in the ointment: some contractors and/or design firms reportedly demand "commissions" from manufacturers of games, rides and attractions before including them in design plans. Site developers may not even be aware of the practice. "Since we can't pass on that cost to the customer, these unscrupulous middlemen are basically absorbing our profit," complained two leading manufacturers who specialize in indoor family entertainment centers. Arcade trends are explored in our special section starting on **page 73.**

POST-ACME DEALER SHOWS DRAW NICE CROWDS

About 14 distributors held open house parties after the ACME show. ACME's loss (low street operator attendance) was many distributors' gain. Quite a few distributor parties were crammed full, and — according to several happy dealers — "the guys were in a buying mood." Products which enjoyed "the buzz" from the dealer shows included pins from Data East, Premier, Williams and Bally; videos from Sega, Capcom and Konami; NSM's and Rowe's CD jukeboxes; and redemption games of all sorts. We have lots of photo coverage of open houses North, South, East and West starting on **page 38.**

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COIN-OP VET JOE KEENAN IS NEW PREXY OF DATA EAST

Joe Keenan is the new president of Data East, the firm announced in late March. He's an industry veteran whose coin-op roots go back to being prexy and CEO of Atari in the early 1980s. Keenan helped Atari build Pizza Time Theaters into a powerhouse chain, later returning to lead the firm's restructure and sale to Brock Hotel Corp. Most recently, he served as CEO of Wilkes Bashford Co.



Data East USA Chairman **Tetsuo Fukuda** said Keenan was hired after a lengthy process of seeking, screening and interviewing candidates. Mr. Fukuda added that Keenan met his requirements: someone who understands the coin-op and home entertainment industries; someone who can foresee the future and analyze changing conditions in a volatile industry; and someone who can lead American R&D to meet future needs. Keenan himself stated: "I plan to combine my product development expertise, particularly in the coin-op area, with Data East's sales and marketing successes to set Data East apart in both the arcade and home markets." Keenan replaces former prexy **Bob Lloyd,** whose plans from his new Hawaii home base are unknown.

U.S. SENATE HOLDS HEARINGS ON PARALLEL IMPORTS

Parallel imports were the subject on April 4 in Washington, D.C., when the U.S. Senate judiciary subcommittee on patents, rights and trademarks heard testimony on S.626, the Hatch bill which would explicitly prohibit all gray market goods. Sen. **Dennis DeConcini** chaired the 90-minute session; senators **Orrin Hatch** and **Charles Grassley** sat in. Testifying for the Hatch bill was **Christopher Edley** (president of COPIAT, the Coalition to Preserve the Integrity of American Trademarks). Also testifying in favor were spokesmen from the Consumer League and the AFL/CIO spokesman (the union has passed a resolution against gray market goods), plus an economic consultant. Testifying against the Hatch bill (in favor of parallels) were Sen. **Warren Rudman,** spokesmen from K-mart and from the Consumer's Union, and economic professor from the University of California.

"If you need an excuse to go to 50¢ play, 'Elvira' on 3 balls was an answer. Thank you, Bally, for the best machine of the decade."
— from a Players' Choice reporting operator



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SESAC President Vincent Candilora, ASCAP Director of Licensing Barry Knittel, BMI VP and Counsel Marvin Berenson and AMOA Music Licensing Committe Chairman Dock Ringo at the conclusion of jukebox copyright license negotiations. Ringo was the first operator to sign the new license. RePlay reported on the new fee structure in last month's "Hot Off The Press" and continues coverage in this issue beginning on page 27.

CIGARETTE-BASHING TV ADS AIR IN CALIFORNIA

California is spending nearly $29 million to produce and broadcast a series of **anti-smoking TV commercials** over the state's airwaves. The message of this "first of its kind" campaign is that tobacco firms are duping smokers. One of the ads was such a blatant slam against the firms that KABC-TV in Los Angeles refused to air it. The anti-smoking TV campaign is just part of a $220 million war on tobacco, funded by a huge cigarette tax hike approved last year by California voters (Proposition 99). Tobacco companies



see it as part of a "new Prohibition" mentality; vending operators are worried about the climate this creates for a proposed new state law that would totally ban cigarette machines in California. Public reaction? Mixed. Some love it. Others (in letters to the editor, printed in California newspapers) think the money could be better spent on overworked police and courts, not to mention deteriorating schools, roads and libraries. But as one respected Midwestern cigarette operator said recently: "We're fighting a losing battle here. We face powerful enemies and we lack credible allies. It's just a question of how soon and how gracefully we're defeated."

AMOA MAKING PLANS FOR BIG 1990 EXPO IN NEW ORLEANS

AMOA's going full steam ahead with planning for its 1990 Expo, which takes place **Oct. 25-27** at the **New Orleans Convention Center.** Over 650 booths should be sold and some involved with seminar planning smilingly admit they're looking for "hot-button" issues. By the way, the association has reserved rooms in three nearby hotels, so accommodations should be no problem. AMOA First VP **Jim Trucano** is the expo chairman.



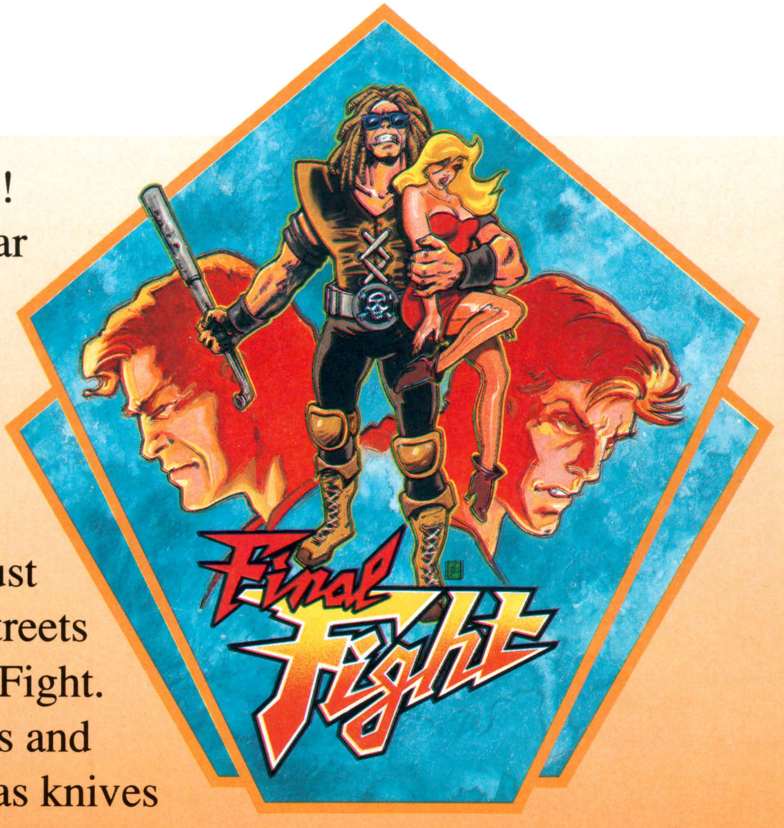
TRADE SEEKS "UL APPROVED" COMPROMISE

Industry leaders are running a "pilot program" to get amusement coin machines approved by testing laboratories as required by the City of Chicago. The worst-case scenario could have games shut down in the city if not approved by June 1, but this is extremely unlikely to happen, AAMA said. Tradesters are working on many different alternatives and hoping for an extension on the deadline. Industry leaders met with representatives of the **Underwriters' Laboratory** and a similar Miami-based regulatory group in Chicago on March 26 and April 16-17. Present at one or both meetings were AAMA President **Gil Pollock,** AAMA Exec VP **Bob Fay,** Williams President **Ken Fedesna,** Williams' **Herb Foss,** Sega VP **Howell Ivy,** SNK's **Neal Zook,** Data East's **Tom Wieske,** Atlas Distributing's **Jerry Marcus,** Aladdin's Castle's **Ron Malinowski,** World Wide Distributing's **Doug Skor,** ICMOA President **Eddie Velasquez,** and two AMOA attorneys from Chicago. AAMA is in the process of getting letters from insurance firms who cover manufacturers; the letters will show no claims due to fire or electrical problems. Once the Chicago situation is resolved, AAMA hopes it may be able to apply the same solutions to similar UL problems in other cities and states.

MONDIAL'S 800 JERSEY NUMBER

In an advertisement in our April issue, two transposed digits appeared in the toll-free New Jersey phone number of the Mondial distributing outfit. The correct number is 800/672-1906.

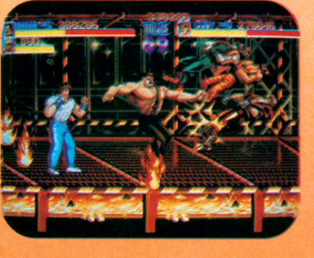
In Final Fight™, They're Serving Cocktails. Molotov Cocktails.



Those creeps! The Mad Gear Gang has kidnapped Haggar's daughter, Jessica. Now, you must head to the streets for the Final Fight. Use your fists and feet, as well as knives and Molotov Cocktails to beat the gang. Trust no one. Even the cops have gone bad!







Players will welcome the return of Haggar, the original Street Fighter

Two-player interactive

Spectacular graphics, thanks to Capcom's CPS super chip

Final Fight has "the cool Factor." Players will love the non-stop action!

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OKAY, NOW IT'S "PINBALL POWER"

PINBALL POWER

We're re-naming our pinball page: from now on it's "Pinball Power." The new feature was initially called "Pinball Corner" but, as it turns out, that's a copyrighted name of a column written by flipper expert Bill Kurtz which appears in *Gameroom Magazine*. Bill dropped us a very cordial note to let us know our same-name feature was creating confusion among readers — sorry, Bill!

WANNA BUY A BOWLING ALLEY? JEFF WALKER'S GEOFFCO HAS 'BOWLINGO' LINE

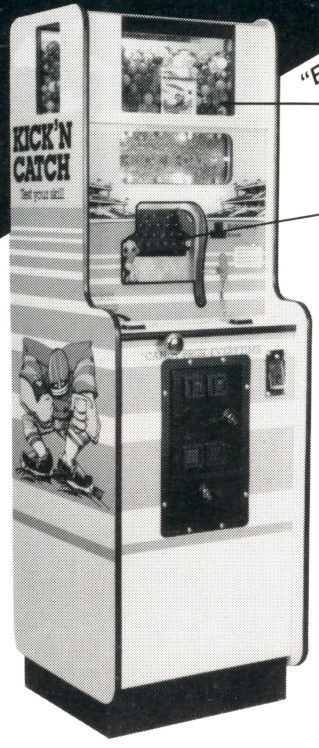
No foolin', that's what **Jeff Walker** (Geoffco) is selling to the U.S. trade. The latest refinement in the Mendez **Bowlingo** line of alleys fits the arcade and route owner, not only in size but in price as well. The alley can be ordered in lengths from 20' up to 36' and pins are hung from nylon cords. When struck by the ball, they rattle around just like in real bowling, are picked up into a pin spotter and then placed back down on the grid at the end of the frame. The alley itself is mica-covered; scoring is automatic and the cost to play a full bowling line is $2 via bill acceptor.

The alley was too large to show "in person" at C.A. Robinson's late March open house in L.A., but Jeff had a videotape of the attraction for interested operators (see photo). Cost begins at $50,000 for two alleys (you can't buy just one) and that includes installation, warranty and service. Some of the operator's helpers will be required during setup. It's about as close to "real" bowling as you can get, and certainly much cheaper. Plus, smaller-sized versions open all sorts of possibilities like malls, most arcades and even some bistros. Interested? Call Jeff Walker at 408/867-4622 for more particulars and mailed literature. Overseas buyers should contact **Hank Grant** at Belgian Amusements. Mendez handles the alleys themselves in Canada.



JUST FOR KICKS!

"Experts in combining amusement games with prize vendors..."



- Vends prize of candy, gumball, rubber superballs or toy capsules
- Catch the bouncing balls as they fall through the pins - (very tricky)

PLUS

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NINTENDO FINALLY WINS *DONKEY KONG* CONVICTIONS IN JAPAN

The legal fight got started back in 1983, but the "long arm of Nintendo" has finally won. At issue: 12,000 *Donkey Kong* coin-op video games shipped from Japan by the Falcon Company. On March 29, Falcon's **Haruo Inoue,** Kyoei Co.'s **Genji Abiru** and Dream Co. Ltd.'s **Hiroshi Endos** were convicted of counterfeiting, fined and sentenced to a couple of months in prison by a Japanese judge in Osaka. The Falcon games kicked up a big fuss in the U.S. several years back; Nintendo and some American operators settled out of court and are still under a gag order on the subject.

From an article on vintage records quoting prices: $16,000 for a 45 single (mint condition) of the Hornets singing 'Lonesome Baby' produced by States Records in the 1950s; $15,000 for a stereo copy of the Beatles 1966 LP 'Yesterday and Today.' Mint copies of Elvis hits like 'I Forgot to Remember to Forget' and 'Mystery Train' on Sun sell for up to $1,000. — Bob Rondeau

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AKRA (KIDDIE RIDE ASSN.) IS OFF & RUNNING



The first-ever meeting of the **American Kiddie Ride Assn.** (March 9 at the Allerton Hotel in Chicago) was "a huge success," said Exec Director **Anita Bennett.** Attendance was double the original estimates; 62 folks participated. AKRA had to book a bigger banquet hall at the last minute, in fact! Effective immediately, members were offered a great insurance package which gives $1 million liability coverage at starting annual rates of $19 per ride (major accounts are also covered). Up to $5 million liability is available, too; contact Horizon Agency's Rick Rockeford at 612/944-2929. Firestone Financial's **Mike Guidi** chatted up special leasing and financing packages for AKRA members. AKRA says it's growing fast and you'll hear more about this much-needed group. Plan on attending their next meeting on Oct. 27 in New Orleans! Call AKRA in Minneapolis at 612/827-5588.

AAMA PRINTS MORE "FUN ZONE" BROCHURES

AAMA's **public relations brochure,** "Now Entering . . . Family Fun Zone" is into its second printing. The handsome illustrated pamphlet contains just a few brief pages which introduce our industry in a positive light. The brochure explains how coin amusements offer wholesome family entertainment and highlights coinbiz involvement in socially worthwhile and charitable causes. It also points up the documented value of video games, the all-American fun of pinball, the historic role of the jukebox in American culture, and more. Last year's initial printing of the brochure disappeared quickly, so an even slicker version is now being made available for $1 per copy to anyone in the trade. Said AAMA Exec VP **Bob Fay:** "We're getting a lot of calls from operators who say they're having a hard time getting approvals for new sites, especially arcades." Contact AAMA's Kerry Sharman at 703/494-2758.

From an Ann Landers: "This was framed in a small hotel. Dogs are Welcome. We never had a dog that smoked in bed and set fire to blankets. We never had a dog who stole our towels, played the TV too loud or had a noisy fight with his traveling companion. We never had a dog that got drunk and broke up the furniture. So, if your dog can vouch for you, you're welcome, too."

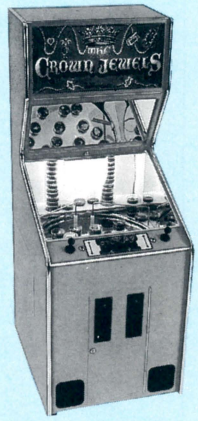
TOP SELLING GAMES



ACTION LOTTO



QUICK SILVER II



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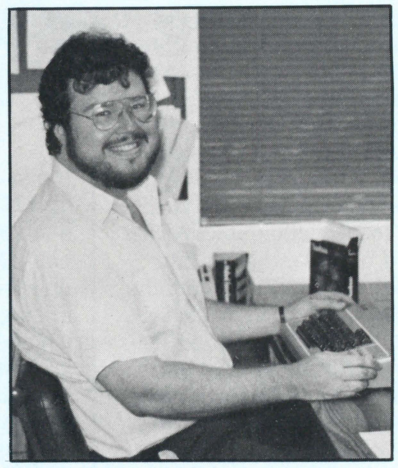
by Marcus Webb



100 years ago Louis Glass, the world's first jukebox operator, begged his colleagues "don't let [the jukebox] out of our hands." Well, if Louis Glass were around today, he'd be a happy man. The new Jukebox Licensing Agreement (signed March 1 by AMOA and the performing rights societies) means three things for our industry.

1. For the next 10 years, when the operator buys his music licenses, he will get a fair shake from song writers and publishers. 2. If the operator doesn't buy licenses, he will get the harsh justice he deserves. 3. Most important, the jukebox can survive and prosper.

Five men worked long and hard to make this happen. Dock Ringo, Dick Hawkins, John Estridge, Wally Bohrer and Bob Nims made up the AMOA negotiating team. All are past AMOA presidents.

AMOA is to be saluted for its wisdom in choosing these gifted negotiators to represent the music operators of America in the most important negotiations in jukebox history. It's also to AMOA's credit that, as one board member said, "We had enough confidence in our team to leave the guys alone and let them do their job without interference from us."

The entire jukebox industry owes a debt of gratitude to these operators which can never adequately be paid. It's no exaggeration to say that these five men saved the American jukebox from what could have been near-total extinction. . . and they have guaranteed that "pay-for-play musical entertainment" will remain firmly embedded in American popular culture into the 21st Century.

On a more personal level, you can't imagine what the AMOA team went through to get this new agreement. Meetings. Strategy sessions. Travel. Endless phone conferences. Thousands of man-hours. More than 20 negotiating sessions were held over 18 months in Chicago, New York, Washington D.C., Nashville, New Orleans, etc.

Many of the sessions were grueling. Others were stormy and emotional. A couple were shockingly short, and came to an abrupt end. (It's difficult, in more ways than one, to leave your own business "on hold" for a couple of days, fly all the way to another city, check into an expensive hotel for an important meeting — then, after just 30 minutes, get up and walk out.)

Certain behind-the-scenes stories of what happened during those negotiations will remain unprintable for many years. But to operators everywhere, we can say this: if you knew the full story, you'd be even prouder of your negotiating team.

Dock, Wally, Dick, John and Bob: on behalf of the industry, we salute you for your dedication, hard work and sacrifice. We honor you for your loyalty to your fellow coin machine tradesters. And we thank you for your visionary faith in the future of the jukebox.

Somewhere, Louis Glass is smiling.

Takin' it to the streets:
SNK unveils the NEO·GEO MVS25-4

Features up to 4 games in one cabinet!

Hinged Marquee Bezel for easy changing of title cards.

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Unique electro-illuminescent lighting highlights featured game.

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Player Headphone Jacks and Memory Card

Change Games in Seconds. Easy accessibility to all electronic components thru front panel.



MVS25-6 features up to six games in one cabinet.



- Extensive use of plywood throughout.
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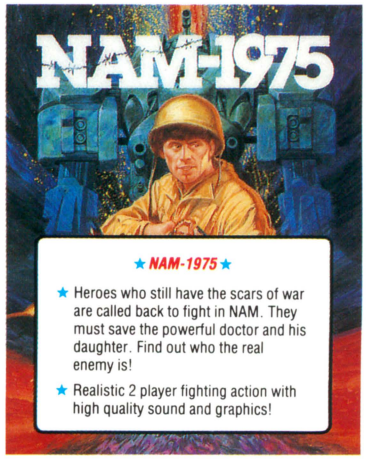
Included with every MVS purchased!*



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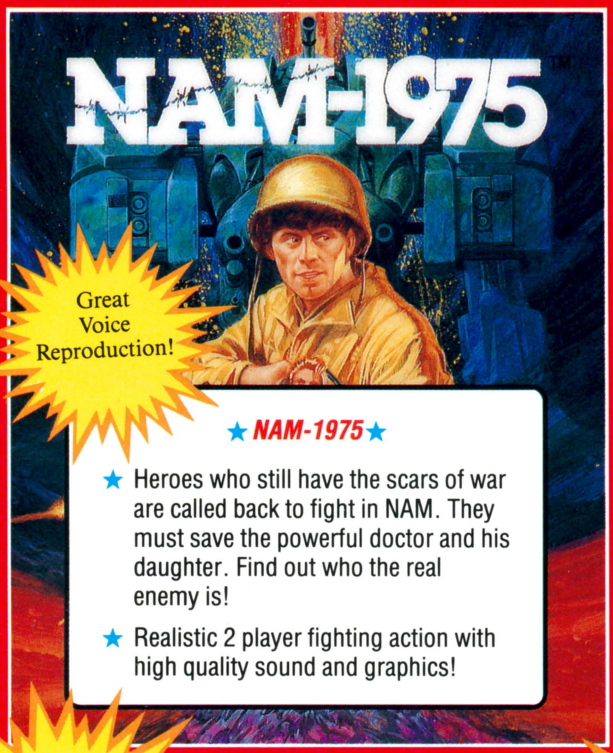

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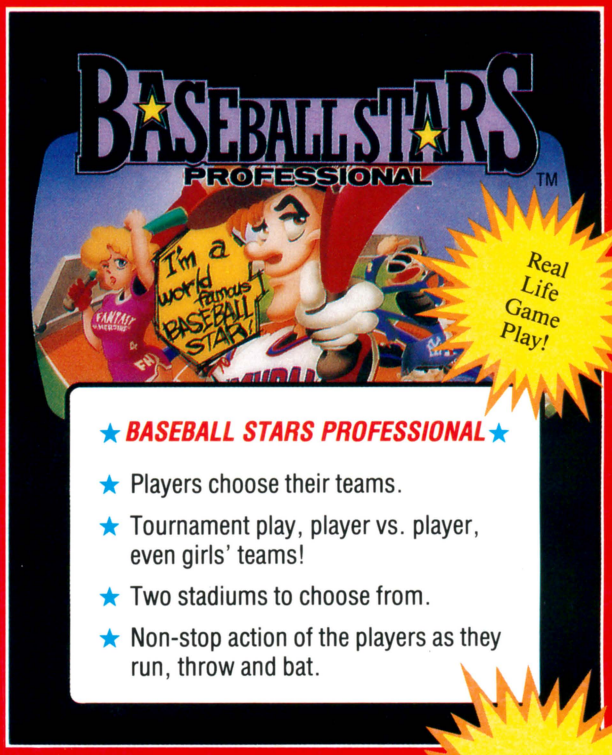
- ★ Realistic 2 player fighting action with high quality sound and graphics!



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- ★ Players choose their teams.
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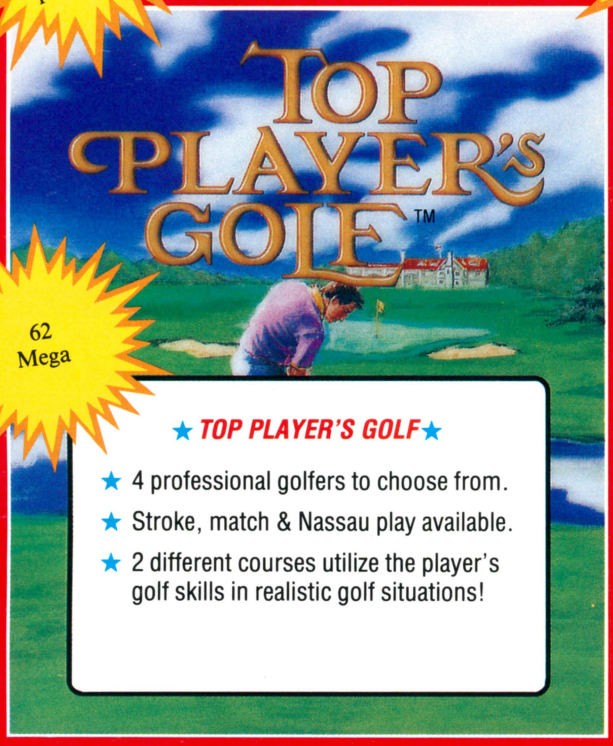
- ★ Non-stop action of the players as they run, throw and bat.

The most advanced game technology ever produced!

20 games available by May '91!

Spectacular earnings!



62 Mega

★ TOP PLAYER'S GOLF ★

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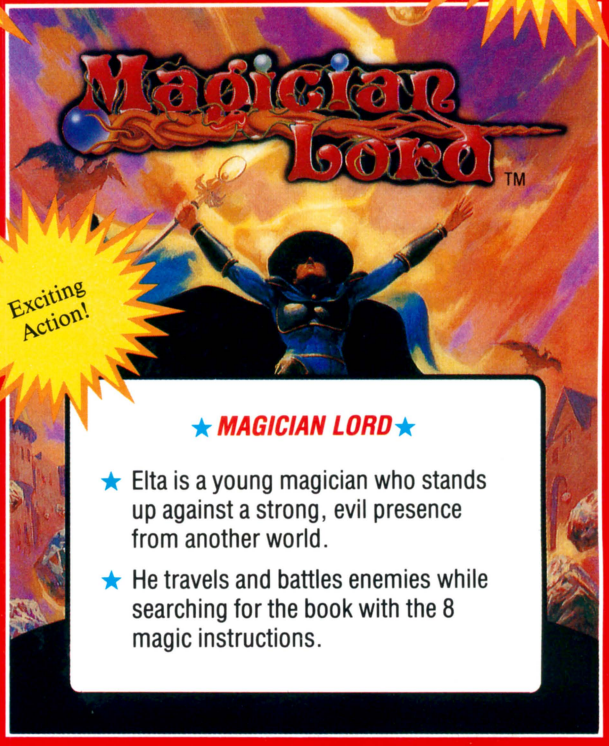
- ★ 2 different courses utilize the player's golf skills in realistic golf situations!



Exciting Action!

★ 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.

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Unfinished Symphony

operators seek to understand new jukebox license arrangement

A new "Voluntary Jukebox License" agreement was announced in late March by AMOA, ASCAP, BMI and SESAC. Many in the trade are confused about the meaning and impact of the new agreement. Here's what *RePlay* has been able to learn.

Q: I have heard about the new "Voluntary Jukebox License Agreement" and I want to sign up. Where do I get registration forms?

A: If you registered any jukeboxes with the U.S. Copyright Office in the past, you are on their mailing list and will receive registration forms in the mail. The new agreement will be administered by a group called the Jukebox Administration Committee, which is comprised of six representatives in total: three from AMOA, and three from ASCAP, BMI and SESAC. This new committee was printing up the registration forms at presstime (late April). Also, AMOA will mail registration forms (as soon as they get their hands on some copies) to all association members.

Q: What if I did not pay any license fees in earlier years, and I decide to do so starting now? Will I be punished for my past sins?

A: Not if you act now. Under the new agreement, you've got an amnesty till June 1, 1990 to "get with the program" without being penalized for past non-compliance. (That is, you qualify for amnesty if you don't already have litigation pending against you for past music copyright infringement.)

Q: Fine, I'll join up. But since I didn't register in past years, I'm not on the U.S. Copyright Office mailing list. I'm also not an AMOA member. Whom do I contact for registration forms?

A: Write to the Jukebox License Office, P.O. Box 5458, New York, New York 10185. They didn't have a phone at presstime, but since the Licensing Office is basically headquartered in ASCAP's offices this year, you can try calling ASCAP at 212/870-7578. They'll answer "Licensing Office." Ask for Bill Lee, Projects Manager for General Licensing, or Barry Knittel, Director of Licensing.

Q: What period of time does the new license cover?

A: The license you pay for this spring or summer will cover you retroactively to Jan. 1, 1990 and forward through Dec. 31. Then you'll need to renew your license with a new payment for 1991 and every year thereafter.

Q: How much will the new voluntary license cost?

A: The first jukebox costs $275. The second through 10th box costs $55 each. All jukeboxes from number 11 to infinity cost $48 each. So the more boxes you have, the lower your average cost goes, approaching $48 per box.

Q: That seems high.

*A: It's a heck of a lot less than the music copyright protection groups (ASCAP, BMI and SESAC) originally wanted! Their first idea was to get **hundreds** of dollars per box. . . for **every single jukebox.***

Q: But I'm still paying nearly $300 for the first jukebox.

A: Right. And if you were a location owner with only one jukebox, would you stay in the jukebox business under those circumstances?

Q: Hmm, maybe not. So if competition from locations decreases, that's fine with me. Still, the new fee scale still seems higher than what I'm used to paying. After all, the 1989 fee was only $63 per box.

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If you registered any jukeboxes with the U.S. Copyright Royalty Office in the past, you are on their mailing list and will receive registration forms in the mail.

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Under the new agreement, you've got amnesty til June 1, 1990 to "get with the program" without being penalized for past non-compliance. (You qualify for amnesty if you don't already have litigation pending against you for past music copyright infringement.)

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A: You break even if you license 10 jukeboxes. After that, you're into savings.

Q: Okay, maybe when you consider the overall structure, with the sliding scale and everything, the cost per box is not so bad after all. But is there anything we can do to reduce the cost?

A: Yes. If, in the next two years, the industry licenses 90% of the 225,000 jukeboxes on location, the bottom rate (for jukebox number 11 and beyond) could drop to $30 per jukebox.

Q: Any other way I can comply and still save money?

A: Yes! The new agreement also sets a goal (called a "benchmark") of $6 million in license fees. If the jukebox industry pays that much, then 30% of any monies collected over $6 million will be rebated to the operators who licensed their boxes.

Q: Nice promise, but $6 million is a lot of money.

A: We can do it. As a matter of fact, the industry paid more than that in license fees last year. The jukebox industry paid $6.4 million in license fees in 1989.

Q: Okay, that rebate idea benefits individual operators. What's the jukebox industry as a whole getting out of all this? After all, our phonographs promote the music industry. What are they doing to help promote us?

A: The performing rights societies have agreed to pass $75,000 from collected 1990 license fees to AMOA. This sum will be used for the sole purpose of promoting the jukebox. Similar contributions will be made to AMOA for the next three years.

Q: If I buy a new jukebox several months into the year, can I buy a half-year license?

A: No. But if you buy a new jukebox after Dec. 1 of any given year, you don't need to apply for a license for that box, that year.

Q: What if I decide not to license any of my jukeboxes at all?

A: You'll get caught.

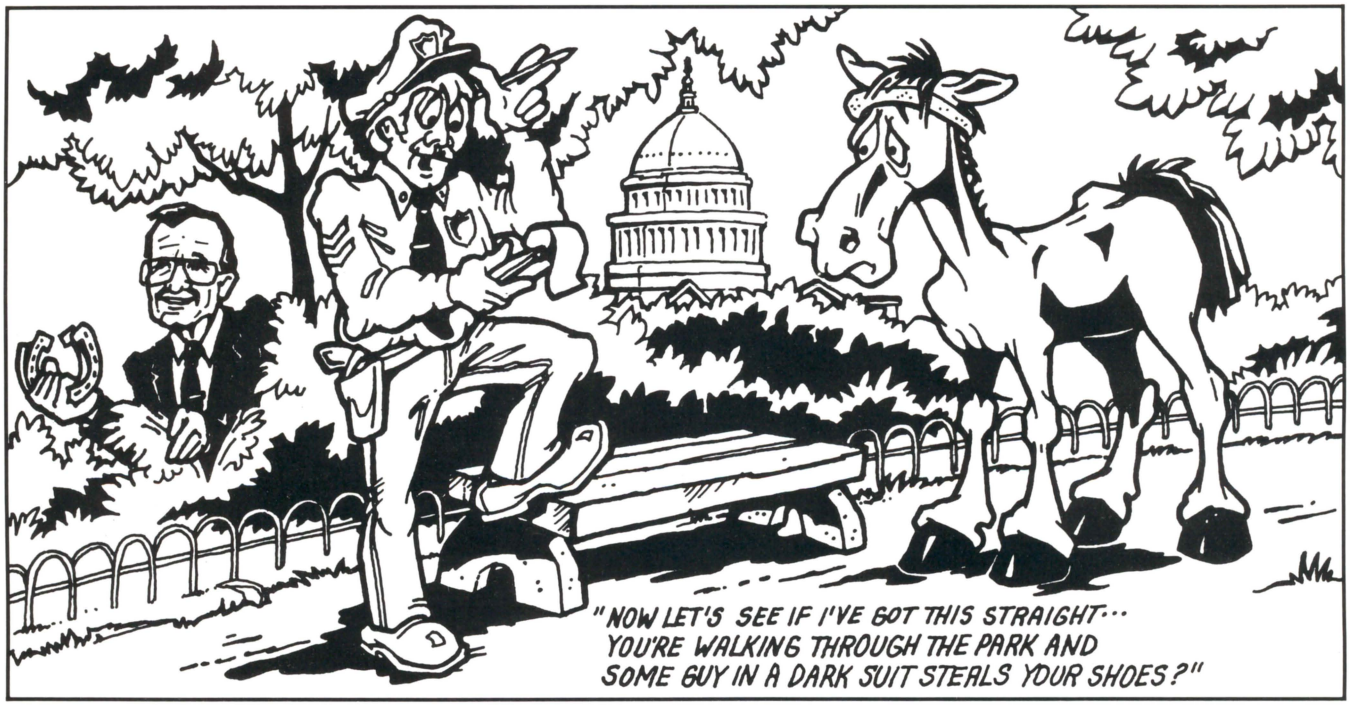
Q: You sure about that?

A: Yes. Under the new agreement, the performing rights societies have some powerful incentives to go after every unlicensed jukebox.

Q: So what? If I'm caught, I'll pay a few bucks and that will be it, right?

A: Wrong. You'll probably be run out of the jukebox business, at least for a couple of years. For more information on this, see our special feature, "What If I Don't License My Jukebox, and Get Caught?" It's included in this news section.

In 1978, vinyl records accounted for 58% of all recorded music sales. A decade later, the precentage fell to 10% and was still falling. Collectors of golden oldies shouldn't be happier.



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"We Made History"

the future of the jukebox is secure, AMOA's five negotiators say proudly

"We made history," AMOA's negotiating team said with justifiable pride after the new Jukebox Licensing Agreement was signed. "This represents the first time in history," said the team, "that the copyright societies settled for a lower rate from any music user than they were already getting."



Wally Bohrer was Dock's "relief spokesman" when the AMOA team met with the societies. He played "bad cop" to Dock Ringo's "good cop," delivering the "bad" news that a certain proposal was unacceptable. When needed, Wally also brought up unpleasant alternatives (such as the possibility of Congress writing a new copyright law which strongly favored operators).

Behind the scenes, Wally brought matchless political acumen to the process. He orchestrated legislative pressure on the negotiators. Thanks to Wally, key congressmen, regulatory groups and bureaucracies were strongly and openly sympathetic to the operators' point of view. When the Copyright Royalty Tribunal held hearings on jukebox royalties, they asked some very tough questions. Said Wally: "We couldn't have written better questions ourselves."



John Estridge was a master of tactics for the AMOA team. Described his fellow AMOA negotiators as "a profound and meticulous thinker," John did an excellent job of "war gaming" throughout every stage of the negotiations. John's thoughtful evaluations and savvy predictions of possible events and scenarios, helped the AMOA team anticipate twists and turns of the negotiating process. John's careful, extremely detailed planning of possible reactions and alternatives gave the AMOA team a great advantage in formulating its responses and counter-proposals.



Dick Hawkins played a dual role in the negotiations: in the actual meetings with the societies, he was the "unpredictable element." Dick could listen with stone-faced calm, or speak pleasantly and even tell a joke. Or, he could suddenly explode in a forceful expression of displeasure.

Behind the scenes, Dick kept the AMOA team focused on the future. He asked strategic questions like, where does the latest proposal take us five years from now? Is it good for us long-term? Said Dick, "I was constantly concerned with avoiding a licensing rate that would kill the industry, and with creating a system that would assure the success of the industry."



Kindly, soft-spoken Dock Ringo was the AMOA team's lead spokesman during the actual negotiating sessions with ASCAP, BMI and SESAC. His fellow team members selected Dock for this role. Why? Because Dock knows music. Because Dock is a walking definition of "sincere." Because Dock can express the most controversial ideas in a quiet, soothing way, so that people don't get excited or riled up.

But make no mistake: Dock's disarming manner goes with a sharp, energetic mind. For instance, Dock devised a unique computer program which helped the AMOA team immeasurably during negotiations. Dock's computer was right there in the negotiating room, and every time the societies suggested some complex figures, Dock punched them into his computer. In 30 seconds, AMOA knew if the proposal was good or bad for operators.



Bob Nims provided priceless continuity. He is the only member of the AMOA negotiating team who had participated in the original Jukebox Compulsory License negotiations 12 years ago. As such, Bob could explain the reasons behind each part of the prior agreement.

In this way, Bob shed invaluable light on the needs and concerns, possibilities and pitfalls inherent in the latest process. Fellow AMOA negotiators hailed Bob as "a genius" for his ability to recall intricate events and details from over a decade ago.

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"What If I Don't License My Jukebox...And Get Caught?"

The new jukebox license setup, they say, is "voluntary." But then, so is getting an inoculation shot against the measles. In both cases, deciding to "go without" could be fatal.

The new jukebox license setup, they say, is "voluntary." But then, so is getting an inoculation shot against the measles. In both cases, deciding to "go without" could be fatal.

What if you have a jukebox (or several of them), don't sign up for the AMOA-type license, and get caught by a field agent for ASCAP, BMI or SESAC?

Simple. You then have to "cut your own deal" with these three performing rights societies which represent the musicians, composers and music publishers. Each of the societies will charge you on a per-jukebox basis, using their own "formula" to determine the price per box. Their "formula" usually takes into account the size of the location, number of seats, number of speakers, how many nights it's open, etc. (This is the same basic method used to assess other license fees for other forms of musical entertainment in locations.)

How much will your "personally negotiated" jukebox license cost? You could easily wind up paying as much as $600 per jukebox, instead of the (average) $40 per box you *could* have paid, under the AMOA deal. (That's assuming you operate a 50-jukebox music route.)

You can't afford $600 per box, of course. Most jukeboxes don't make that kind of money. So you'll wind up pulling your boxes off the route. And you'll be disqualified from buying the cheaper AMOA-type licenses for two years.

Oh, one more thing: if you're caught without an AMOA-type license, you'll also be subject to copyright infringement fines, because you have broken the law. You publicly performed copyrighted music without permission. That could add up to $10,000 per play, per song.

The way it usually works is this. A performing rights society field agent sits in the location long enough to document that three or four songs were played on your unlicensed jukebox. Now you're liable for $40,000 in fines alone. The societies threaten to take you to court.

Or, they offer to settle out of court, for a percentage of the $40,000 — say, one third. But you have to agree to certain conditions. For instance, providing the societies with a complete list of all your locations. Otherwise, see you in court.

So, friends, if you don't sign up for the new Voluntary Jukebox License, three things will happen: 1. You'll probably be driven out of the jukebox business for two years by the high cost of a "non-voluntary" license. 2. You'll have to pay a big fat settlement cost, plus your attorney's fees. 3. You'll have to give the performing rights societies a complete list of all your jukebox locations.

Now, are you really likely to get caught? Sure you are. Your competitors will turn you in, for one thing. They'll be doing the right thing for the industry, as well as themselves.

"The performing rights societies are waiting for the phones to ring, and they will act," stated AMOA's Dick Hawkins, who helped negotiate the new voluntary agreement. "The societies' field agents weren't very eager to pursue $63 licenses last year, because the financial incentive for each agent was low. But they will be extremely eager to pursue a $600 license."

Hawkins concluded with a grim smile: "Anybody who doesn't license his jukebox is dead in the water. It's a form of rough justice. *Very* rough!"

"Anybody who doesn't license his jukebox is dead in the water. It's a form of rough justice. Very rough."
— Dick Hawkins



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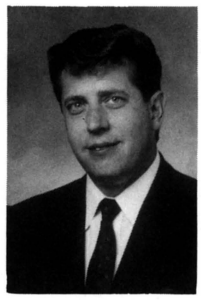
Call it "Golden"

Premier's 'Silver Slugger': lower pricing, simpler play earns its keep for this pin maker

Going out on a limb with a bold new approach to pinball games, Premier Technologies (Bensenville, Ill.) is chalking up some big success stories for its new *Silver Slugger* flipper these days. Premier's new approach is two-fold: first, they offer a simpler, old-fashioned playfield which appeals to grown-ups (especially in street locations). Second, they offer 25% lower pricing.

"We've already sold more of these games in the U.S. than any other game in the past two years," said Premier President Gil Pollock. "We believe this level of success makes a major statement: Premier is in the right place with the right product at the right time."

The company is happy to share its success stories. One Southern California distributor reported that a *Silver Slugger* in a 24-hour postal

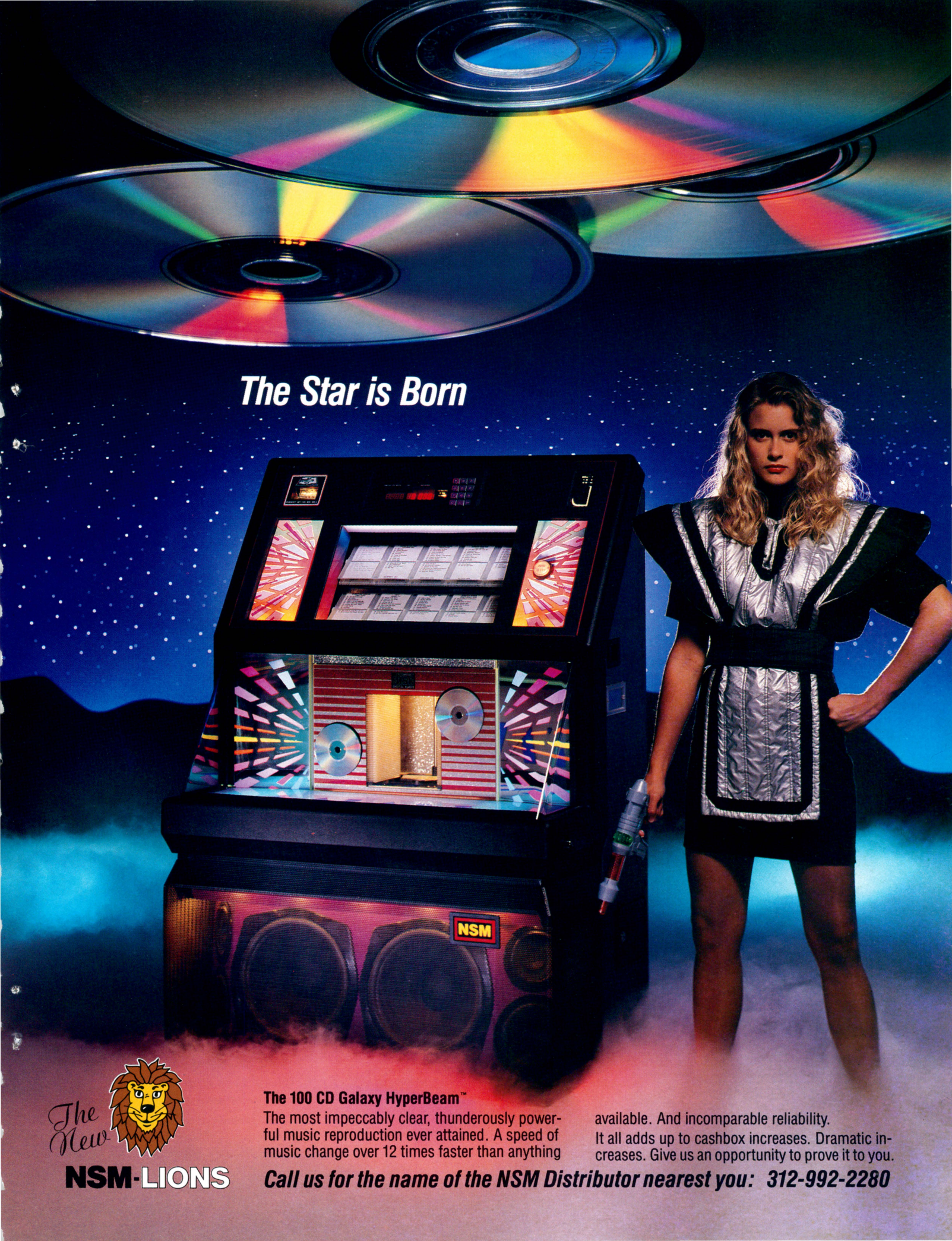


GIL POLLOCK

"Adults who walk up to many contemporary pinball games may be a bit put off by them. They say, 'this isn't what I remember playing in college.' But 'Silver Slugger' is a game you and a buddy can walk up to, perhaps in a bar, and it's not threatening.'
— Gil Pollock



Premier's latest Gottlieb pinball, Silver Slugger,' was designed specifically for the street location. "We've already sold more of these games in the U.S. than any other game in the last two years," prexy Gil Pollock said. " We believe this level of success makes a major statement: Premier is in the right place with the right product at the right time."



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store is earning a weekly coin drop which can only be described as "huge." We don't print numbers in this magazine, but let's just say the figures are well into the "hot video game" range. In fact, the flipper in question is "posting" the highest numbers the location has ever had for a pinball. In this 10-game site, Premier's pin accounted for 45% of the location's total collection!

Likewise, Premier has a major southern dealer who has never ordered more than seven units of any previous Premier pinball. But that very dealer ordered 31 *Silver Sluggers* within three weeks after the ACME show, said Premier. At press-time, 27 of those games were on the street, earning good money for operators. "We listened to what the market was asking for," Premier's East Coast sales rep Dan Clarton stated simply. "Is the market listening? Yes!"

Silver Slugger is the first in a projected series of pins which Premier calls its "S.L." games (stands for "street line"). It features an almost "nostalgic" design: a single-level playfield, no ramps, and (deliberately) less noise, lights and hoopla. "Adults who walk up to many contemporary pinball games may be a bit put off by them," Gil Pollock explained. "They say, 'this isn't what I remember playing in college.' But *Silver Slugger* is a game you and a buddy can walk up to, perhaps in a bar, and it's not threatening," Pollock continued. "You can understand it instantly. You can play for drinks or whatever and have a great time. That's the picture we had in mind when we designed the game, and it's working."

It's working in places other than taverns, too. Walking through the Chicago O'Hare Airport recently, Pollock dropped in on the airport's game room "to see how we're doing." A young lady was playing the *Silver Slugger,* and another young man was playing *Eight Ball.* More complex pins were standing idle. "You see?" Pollock grinned. "The classic approach. It works!"

There's more to learn about the success of *Silver Slugger:* how Premier ships some units with bill acceptors on them. How some units include ticket venders (yes, pinball can be part of the redemption trend, too!). For more information, contact your authorized Premier dealer today!

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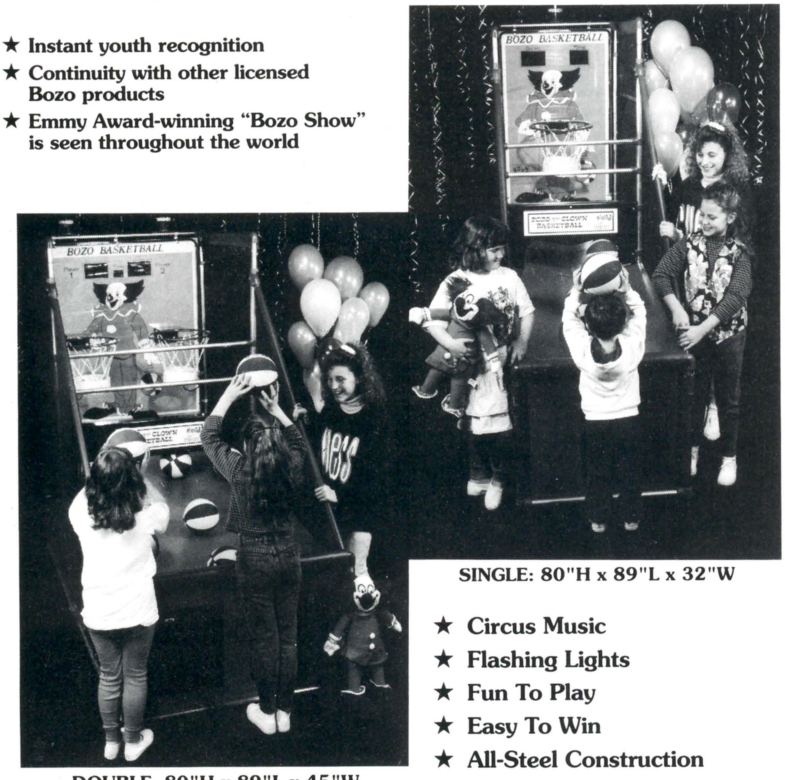

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Your Host: Music-Vend

operators enjoy games, people, food & fun at Seattle party

Salmon were running, operators were buying and Music-Vend was smiling and hosting the party as the dealer's Seattle, Wash. branch held its post-ACME open house on Friday, March 23. Operators began pouring in at 4PM to see a complete display of the latest games, explained by a full squad of manufacturer's representatives.

Visitors enjoyed a buffet dinner with prime rib and (yes) that delicious Northwestern seafood specialty, salmon. "With door prizes and a magician on hand for entertainment," said M-V's Steven Levy, "the evening was a complete success!"

The photos shown here bear that out.



Romstar's Tim Jackson (left) and Dynamo's Damon Paramore (right) say hello to Vance West of Amusement Enterprises at the Music-Vend open house.



Dynamo's Damon Paramore and Chuck Michael of Nelson & Michael in front of the M-V parts counter.



Dunis Distributing's Michael Damtew and Romstar's Timmy Jackson during the post-ACME event.



LeRoy Hancuff of I-Vics shows off his firm's 'Meta Fox' vertical conversion kit to Don Rausch of SRO.





Left, Fabtek's Frank Ballouz, his 'Sports Match,' Don Dapcavich (CJ Ent.) & Kevin Rudolph (Advanced Amuse.). Right, SNK's Tracy Tate and Tom Timm (Timm Ent.) with 'Neo-Geo.' Below, Nintendo's Linda Weber gives some play hints to a young player on her 'PlayChoice.'





Tim Jackson shows his new 'Snow Bros.' game to Dale Walker (SCA).



Williams' Marty Glazman talks 'Whirlwind' with Clay Dubofsky.

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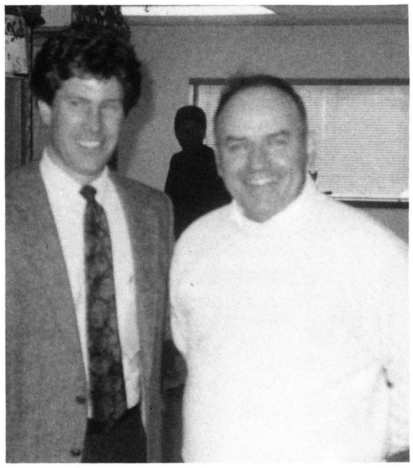
Neat-O at NECO

"big thumbs up" for machines, attendance at New England Coin-Op party

"A tremendous success — as usual!" That's how NECO (New England Coin-Op Distributing) characterized their fourth annual post-ACME open house product showing, held Sunday March 18 in their Norwood, Mass. headquarters. Over 300 operators and their families came out to preview the new equipment "and feast on our famous barbecued chicken," said NECO's service chief Richard Donlan.

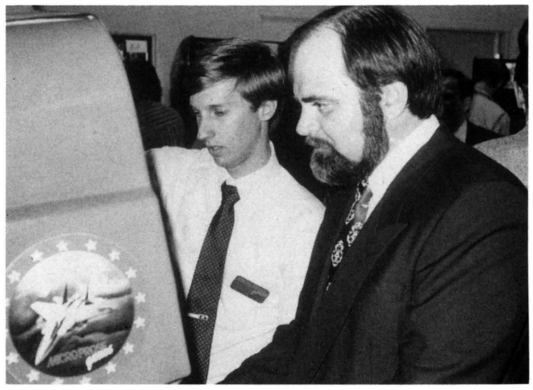
Company topper Rick Kirby gave a big "thumbs-up" to both the turnout and the operators' response to the variety of street, arcade and redemption equipment which was displayed. In addition to the excellent goods (on the showroom floor and the buffet table), operators also enjoyed winning prizes which ranged from free kits to equipment discounts. Visitors also got a kick out of shooting darts with Arachnid's Herb Healy!

NECO sent along these photos of their successful event.

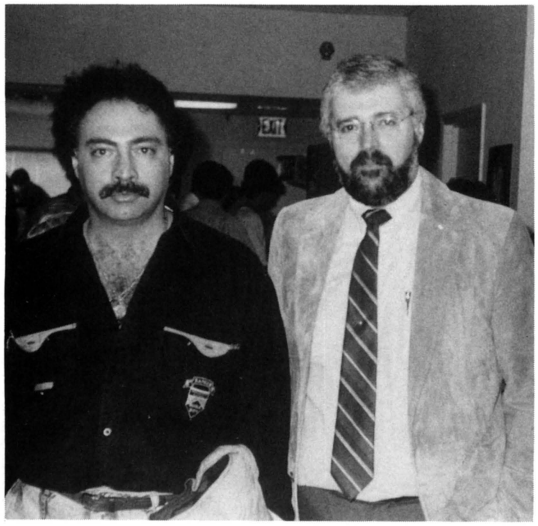


NECO Sales Manager Bob Donnelly with Bob Kilmore of Starland at the post-ACME open house.





Left, Midway's Steve Blattspieler, NECO's Rick Kirby, Williams' Lesley Ross & Konami's Mary Richardson. At right, Bob Radville of Tewksbury Grand Prix flies Microprose's 'F-15 Strike Eagle.'





Left, George Adbulla (State Line Amuse.) and NECO Service Mgr. Richard Donlan. Right, a glimpse at the NECO showroom & Sega's 'G-Loc.'

Take a Bow, *Phantom*

romantic masked hero ushers Data East Pinball into a proud new era

The mysterious "Phantom" isn't hiding in the dungeon of the Paris Opera House any more. *Phantom of the Opera,* the pinball, has made a splashy entrance into the public arena: arcades, C-stores, taverns . . . and the top of the weekly earnings statistics, say several respected operators.

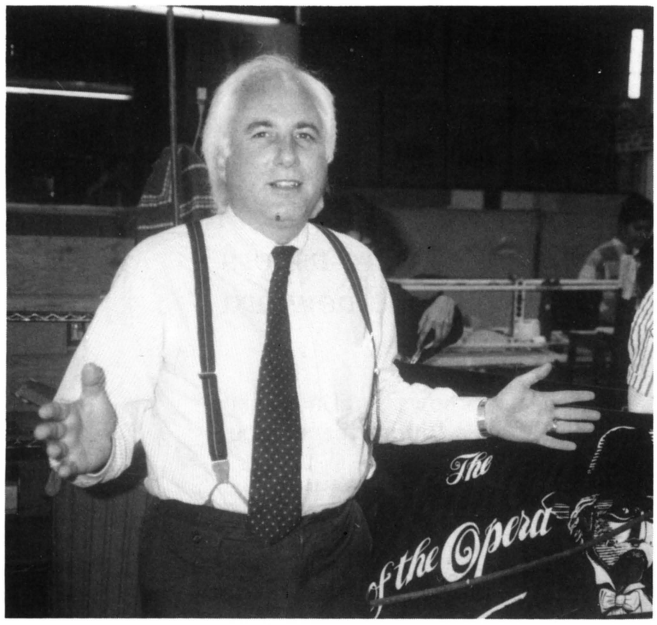
For the folks at Data East Pinball, who designed and built the game, *Phantom* marks a new era of respectability in the pinball market. The trade now knows that Data East Pinball is now a flipper force to be reckoned with!

"Operators have found that we have the best pinball machine of the decade!" trumpeted the ever-enthusiastic Gary Stern, general manager of Data East Pinball. His estimate might be a bit optimistic, since we were only four months into the 1990s at presstime.

But Stern did say with justification that "*Phantom of the Opera* is definitely Data East's very best pin-



Data East's 'Phantom of the Opera' pinball. General Manager of D.E. Pinball Gary Stern enthusiastically states, "Operators have found that we have the best pinball machine of the decade!" He adds that the game is "definitely Data East's very best pinball game ever."



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"'Phantom' is out-earning every other flipper game, in every location earnings report we've seen...Yes, it's a winner in the arcades, but it's also performing well in the main pinball market, which is the tavern and the street location."
— Gary Stern

◆

ball game ever. It works great, we've continued our quality control program and the game's earnings are fantastic."

Just how fantastic, you ask? "*Phantom* is out-earning every other flipper game, in every location earnings report we've seen," Gary Stern said flatly. (If you've seen earnings reports where another company's flipper comes out on top, please don't show them to Gary.) "Our pin doesn't take away from the other games in the location," Stern continued. "Yes, it's a winner in the arcades, but it's also performing in the main pinball market, which is the tavern and the street location."

Phantom has caught fire for three basic reasons. One, it's got a great execution of a great theme. Two, it's a heck of a lot of fun to play. Three, it's reliable, thanks to a tough program of quality control at Data East.

Let's start with the theme. The classic "Phantom" story appeals to a cross-section of the American audience, as hit plays in New York and L.A. have amply demonstrated. Further proof came from a major movie starring the actor who plays "Freddy Krueger," and from a recent ABC TV-movie.

Said designer Joe Kaminkow: "I've been a 'Phantom' fan for a long time. I remember reading the book in college and just loved it. We started working on the project in November of 1988. The great pinball artist Paul Faris came in and he was a 'Phantom' freak, too. Everyone has the feeling for the Phantom appearing on this organ, which kind of elevates. Women love the romantic elements of the Phantom story, such as the Phantom appearing in the diva's dressing room. We've managed to capture that feeling on the playfield, along with other key plot elements. For instance, at the end of the story, the Phantom asks the beautiful opera singer, named Christine, to choose between freedom and death. These choices are symbolized by the grasshopper and the scorpion... and those two creatures are on the right and left bank of our playfield!"

Gameplay and design bring this theme straight to the player. For starters, the attractive cabinet and the oustanding Paul Faris artwork are attention-getters which somehow contribute to gamplay. Even the backglass art with its patented "magic mirror" effect of unmasking the Phantom is built into the gameplay.

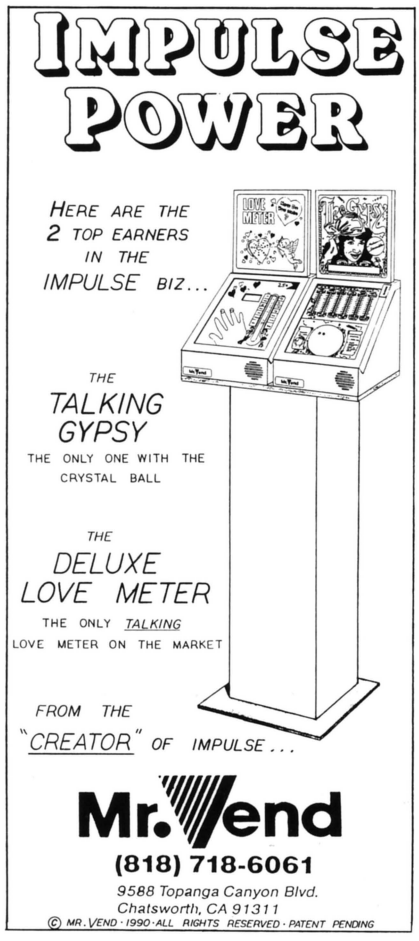
Music is a particularly important element for a flipper themed around the opera. The game's sound track was specially recorded in a Chicago studio and features operatic singing, sound effects, and the chilling signature phrase from Bach's famous organ piece "Tocatta and Fuge in D Minor." Lighting and display effects "draw you toward the organ" for a vital shot, in latter phases of the game.

Once the theme and its impressive artistic execution bring players to the game, the flipper shots and the challenging gameplay do the rest. Multi-ball play appeals to good players; older, "slower" players can shoot for the organ, whose trap door opens and "swallows" the ball. This single shot may define the ultimate "repeat appeal" of the game, in fact.

"You've got this big, juicy shot which you know you can make," commented Joe Kaminkow, who invented it. "Everybody loves to try it. It's that magic combination of 'easy to learn, difficult to master,' which always spells success."

Players agree. "That one feature of the organ trap door is simply charming," said one pinball lover. "You want to play again and again, to see it happen over and over." Added Gary Stern: "The game's appeal in this regard contributes to earnings in a subtle way, too. The time per ball is short, but you don't realize that as a player, because it's so exciting."

From the operator's point of view,



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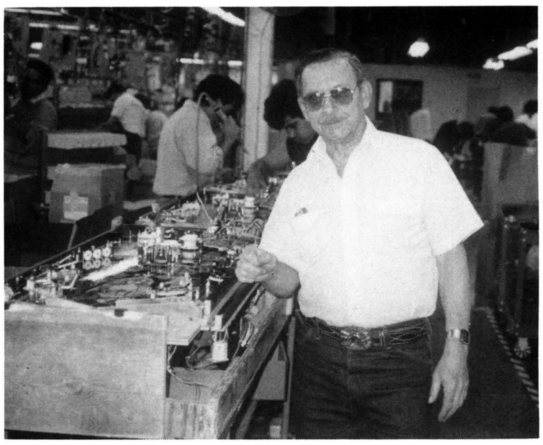

'Phantom of the Opera's' designers Joey Kaminkow (left) and Ed Cebula (right).

the best news of all about *Phantom of the Opera* may be the factory's new level of reliabilty. Data East still does its rigorous quality control program of inspecting a game, playing it for 30 minutes, then re-inspecting. (This one program accounts for 20% of the total labor cost at the Chicago flipper factory.)

Beyond that, the company's patented solid state flipper now has a microswitch (without dirt-attracting tungsten points). The mechanism has no end-of-stroke switch, so the all-too-frequent associated problems of coil burnout, etc. are totally erased. "You can't burn the coil up," Gary Stern said. "We're continuing to guarantee the coil for a year. We've made a number of improvements, the most important of which is the addition of a microswitch on the game. No sparking, no arcing, no burning, no pitting, and no dirt!"

Altogether, it's quite a package. No wonder the game is lighting up dealer showrooms and operator routes all over the United States. "Our problem right now," Stern admitted cheerfully, "is how to deliver enough games to our customers, fast enough. We're doing the best we can, though we're also being careful not to over-build and to continue our dedication to quality and reliability."

How is the game selling in Europe, where flippers are favored by many players? The question elicits a happy chuckle form Gary Stern. "Response in Europe is great," he said. "Remember, the game is based on a French book, which was translated into a hit London play, which recently opened in Germany. Reports are wonderful and so are the orders."

Wonderful as the game's widely-noted success is on its own, *Phantom* has another claim to "benchmark" status: it marks a significant turning point in the life of Data East Pinball. The firm is reaching a stage of true maturity. Considering the size of the challenge, and the fact that *Phantom* is only the company's ninth flipper game ever, Data East's pinball learning curve has been rocket-paced.

"Few people in the trade probably understand just how complex and demanding the pinball manufacturing process is," reflected Joe Kaminkow. "We started from scratch. Our main advantage was the absolute passion we bring to the task of creating great pinball games.

"I appreciate the unwavering support of Bob Lloyd, when he was here, and of Mr. Fukuda," Joe continued. "We ran into some tough times in the beginning, but now we are really starting to hit our stride. I hope they both enjoyed being a 'rasin in the sun'! We licked the basics by the time we came out with *Time Machine*. Since then, we've caught our breath and have been able to concentrate on innovation. *Phantom* does have some truly new things, such as the 'magic mirror' backglass and the trap door organ, both of which deserve their patents. The final meaning of all this is, we're maturing . . . and you're going to hear great things from us in the future."

Meantime, expect to keep hearing great things about *Phantom of the Opera*. Data East confidently expects this piece to go down in history as one of the all-time pinball classics. "One of the ways I judge a really good game," Joe Kaminkow explained, "is when a guy calls you and says, 'I've got to buy one, but I won't operate it too long, because it's going into my basement one day.' That's happening with *Phantom*. This is one of those special games which only comes along once in a few years."

Taking the bows for *Phantom* is the entire design and support staff. "Everybody in the factory contributed his utmost," Gary Stern said. That includes Joe Kaminkow and Ed Cebula, the co-designers; Sarah Bagnolia, who handled building materials and white woods; Nick Wade, who did electrical cabling; and of course the famous Paul Faris, who created the art. John Lund handled mechanical reliability while Rehman Merchant crafted software and most lighting. Service pros Arnie Aarstadt and Pete Gustafson pitched in with engineering, too, so it truly was a total "team effort."

Drop by your authorized Data East Pinball dealer soon, and catch the Phantom fever!

"We operate only in bowling centers and are adding more pins because games like 'Elvira' have been doing so well. 'Secret Service' was a winner for us, too."
— Players' Choice reporter Dave

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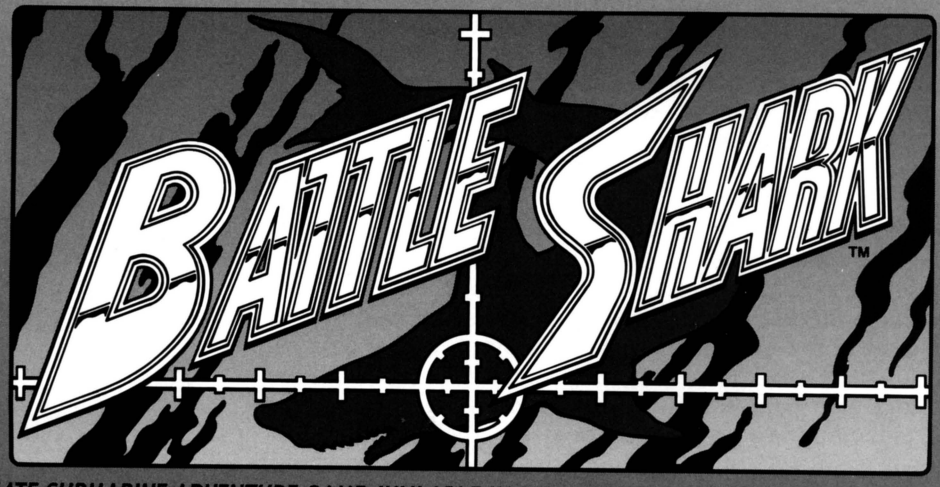

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SunBelt Goes Irish

"Dave O'Patterson" sees many smiling eyes at post-ACME open house

Over 500 people representing 200 companies attended as SunBelt Distributing (Oklahoma City, Okla. and Irving, Texas) held its fourth annual "Spring Spectacular" open house product show, shortly after the ACME show.

Distributor Dave Patterson served up a St. Patrick's Day theme with drinks at "O'Patterson's Pub." Lots of Irish decor brightened up the showroom, including a 30' balloon rainbow in the center of the warehouse.

Visiting operators also enjoyed picking horses in videotaped races which were shown on a 42" big screen TV. The biggest race of the afternoon was titled the "SunBelt Sweepstakes" and operators who picked the winners walked off with prizes which were donated by various manufacturers. (For purposes of Dave's party, the ponies were renamed after coin-op games, by the way!)

Equipment which was "well received," said Dave, included Sega's *G-Loc Deluxe* and their *MVP Baseball;* NSM's CD phonograph (a service school was held for this machine after the party); Dynamo's universal cabinets (operators liked the wide range of cabinet prices) and their *Air Hockey;* Williams and Midway pinballs (a morning service school was held for these); and Atari's *Four Trax.* "Arcade operators bought a lot of redemption equipment," Dave added.

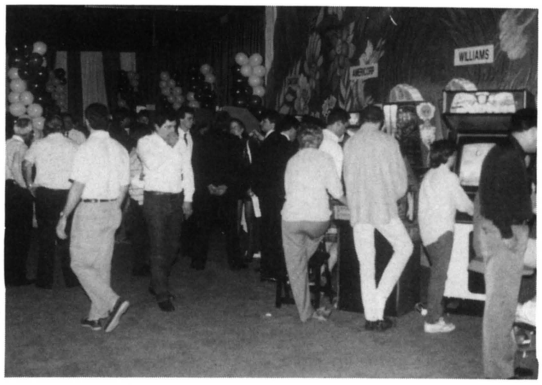


SunBelt customers (including Jerry Hilterbrand above) flocked to the firm's Spring Spectacular which featured a St. Patrick's Day theme. Drinks were served from "O'Patterson's Pub" during the fun show.





Left, folks play Dynamo's arcadey 'Air Hockey' at the event (Mark Struhs is at left). At right, a group of SunBelt customers checks out the wares.





SunBelt-ers at the Spring Spectacular, which was held shortly after the ACME show.



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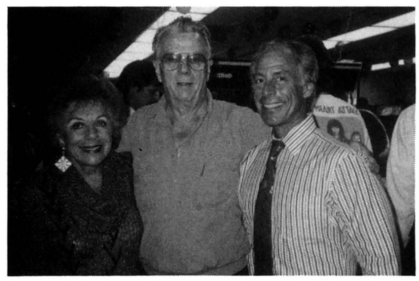


C.A. matriarch Lea Bettelman and Ira Bettelman welcome L.A. operating patriarch Roy Jones to their Pico showroom

California's venerable dealership, C.A. Robinson & Co., with around 55 years of service on its ledger, boasts that it has never had a "bad show" referring to the many open house affairs they've hosted after national trade conventions. They may continue that boast, after two successful post-ACME showings held March 28 at their San Francisco branch and March 30 at their Los Angeles headquarters.

Company VP Sandy Bettelman said around 600 tradesters turned out at both offices, including swarms of operators (many of whom didn't make the ACME itself) to inspect the newer games. "We were really pleased to see the turnout at each of the events," said Sandy. "Some of the folks came in with a show-me attitude, not unlike some people we saw at the ACME in Chicago. But when they checked out the variety of good new machines on display, the ginger rose up, the smiles appeared and we did business."

Orders came from many directions and on many types of machines. Music (like NSM's new CD units) stood out. Darts moved and, according to Sandy, pinballs did excellently (they've sold out their first shipment of Gottlieb's new *Silver Slugger* tavern pin). Video kits did well on the order books: "Some of the better ones were *Klax, Vapor Trail, Snow Bros., DJ Boy, Bloxeed, Cadash* with its linkage and *MVP,*" Sandy offered. "Konami's new *Alien* moved like crazy. A lot of the kits are rather non-violent, so perhaps the operators glommed onto them for that reason," he added.

Sandy Bettelman and the rest of the C.A. staff at both offices were pleased on all counts with their post-ACME outings. Attitudes (most anyway) among operators were positive. Orders were good and while the tradesters still search for the next *Pac-Man* "magic bullet," Sandy said the "one from column A-, two from column B"-type buying from among the wide variety of goods offered is the tempo of today's industry.

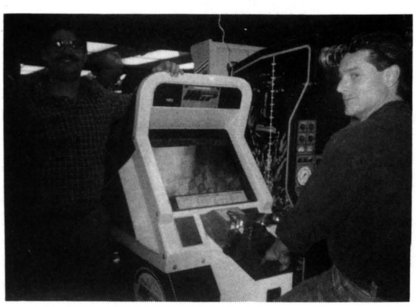
"Listen, we did well and the customers were really happy they had these shows to bring new products right there in front of them. We had many of the manufacturer reps on hand to explain the finer points of the machines and that alone is an asset to these things. It takes a lot of time and resources to put these shows together, but we're happy to have done our part to invigorate the excitement out there in the field. We really feel we're doing our job with these shows," he added.

To put sizzle on the steak, C.A. provided a groaning board of food and refreshments at both open houses. Visitors enjoyed (let's put it this way: a lot more comestibles came in from the caterers than went back in leftovers). The more important result was that product took off on the backs of pickups those two days. Here's a bunch of snaps taken at their L.A. affair.









Top left, the Romstar crowd gathers around their 'Snow Bros.' video — Tony Gonzales, Audrey Smidt, Rene Lopez, a player and Timmy Jackson.

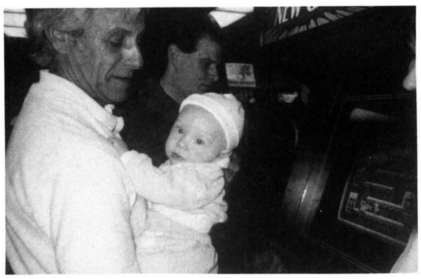
Top right, Premier/Gottlieb's 'Silver Slugger' with Orange County ops Dan Wilton & Billy Woodward (center) with the maker's Duane Miller and prexy Gil Pollock.

Center left, Adrea Bettelman and Jeanne Ballouz present Fabtek's new "mahjong" kit 'Sports Match.'

Bottom, Jeff Scheer with Mike (Career Strategies) Bourdon at the helm of Taito's new 'WGP' sitdown.



At left, Coin Concepts' Wylie Irwin shows his 'Toss Em' and 'Jr. All American' to Knott's Berry Farms' Bob & Dave McLeod. At right, it's new baby by new game — Gary Eller with dad Jack (ACU, Woodland Hills) makes his first open house. Wonder what's in his mind?





Steve Brooks (Hot Rockets, Orange) works out on Grand's new 'Slick Shot' video/pool combo. Test income seems to show this is a serious machine.



The C.A. courtyard in L.A. was decked out & chairs for lunch, and business confabs. Here we see Romstar's Takahito Yasuki & Rene Lopez with Sammy's Ko Adachi



Konami's new 'Aliens' horizontal kit is one of the hottest on the current market. Company rep Frank Pellegrini (right) joins Thor's Dave Bizub (at the controls) for a photo.

















A glimpse at some of the fun during C.A. Robinson's supplier dinner party held the Thursday in between the San Francisco & L.A. shows. It was a lovely evening.

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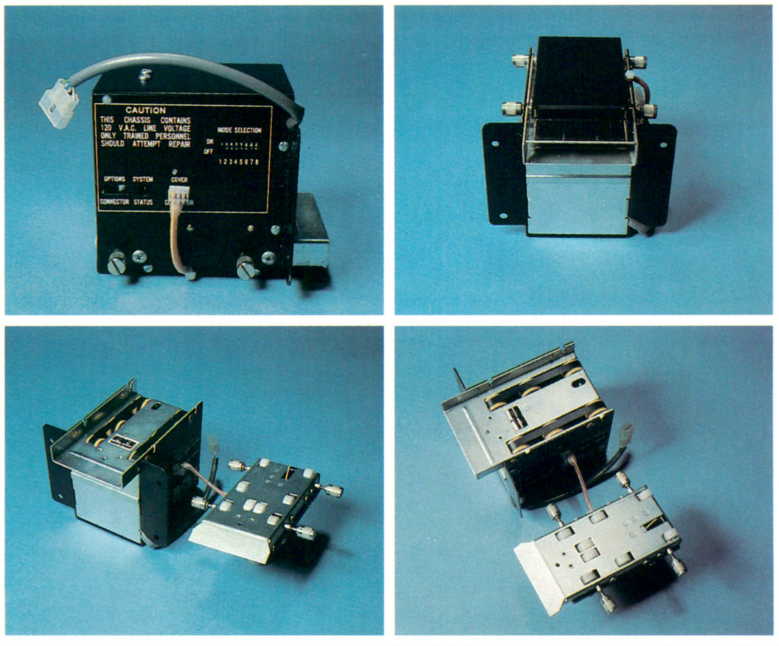

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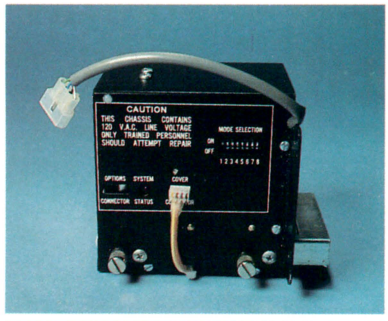

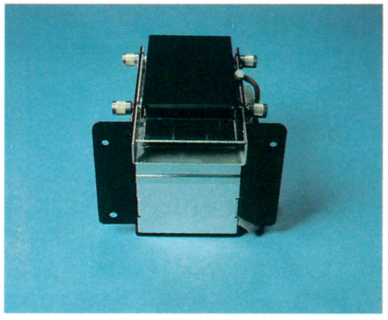

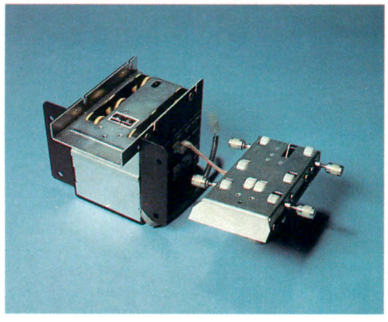

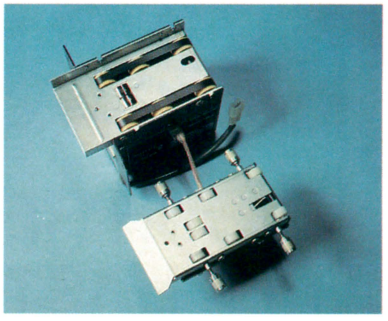

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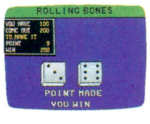

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Family-Oriented

Exidy team makes bridge from video to redemption



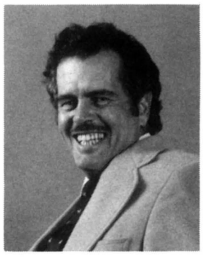
VIRGINIA KAUFFMAN

Exidy, Inc., one of the authentic pioneers in the video game industry, took a serious leap into the non-video redemption game manufacturing business several years back with its *Whirly Bucket* alley. And while some of its oldie but goodie videos (most specifically the evergreen *Cheyenne Gun)* are still on stage at many American arcades, these days you'll also see some of Exidy's newer redemption pieces in some of those very same places.

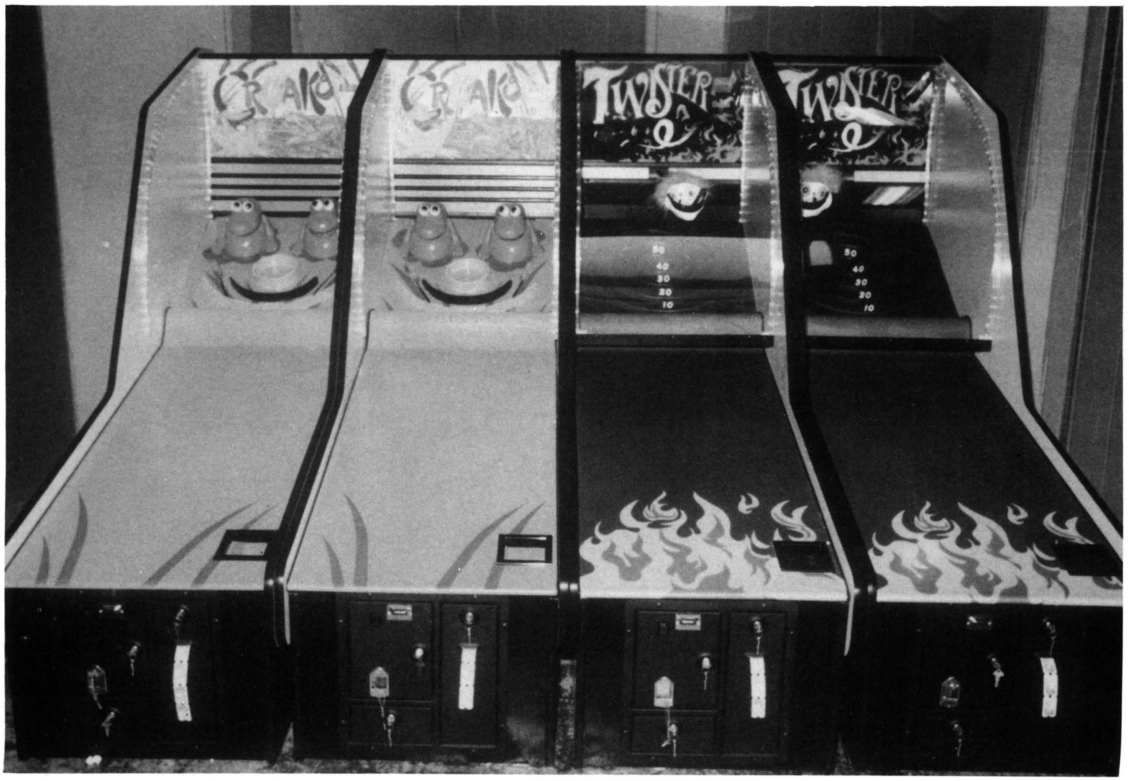
Exidy continues video gun systems and software, but the accent at their Redding, Cal. plant is now on redemption where they turn out both the *Twister* and *Croaker* ball alleys. On the first, players attempt to land the ball in the shifting target cup; on the second, in the frog's mouth. Skillful players are awarded redeemable tickets.

Sales chief Virginia Kauffman says arcade orders have been steady on both games and the results from the field gratifying. "Norman Pink from AAA Vending (Minneapolis) has reported excellent earnings and realiability equal to some other ball alley games," she advised. "Norm likes the smaller square footage the games require as well.

"Ron Malinowski (Aladdin's) and John Warner add these games to every site they can because they like the longevity factor. Barry Watkins at the Boardwalk up in Santa Cruz just placed a large 'banking' order of *Twisters* for his summer traffic. Banking these games obviously offers in-depth earning power," she added.



PETE KAUFFMAN



Exidy — an authentic family-oriented game factory making family-oriented equipment — made a jump from video to redemption. Pictured are the firm's 'Croaker' and 'Twister' ball alleys.

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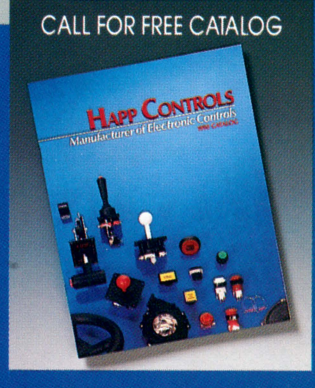

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Both alleys are played by people of all ages, but the bigger demographic is the younger set. "Steve Koenigsberg (State Sales) encourages his operator customers to devote special areas to the younger players at their arcades and these products fit in quite nicely. And for those who want to offer full-family appeal, how can you beat product like this?"

The cabinets on both *Twister* and *Croaker* measure 7'x2' and are delivered fully assembled. (If you order sufficient multiples, Exidy will put your custom company logo onto the attract art for a one-time charge). Each has audio effects, infrared optic sensor switches and comes with a Deltronic ticket dispenser.

Exidy itself is family-oriented. Founder (and President) Pete Kauffman pilots game design and manufacturing, wife Virginia heads up marketing, oldest son Jeff is knee-deep in operations and quality control, daughter Amber applies creative skills to new designs (and quite nicely helps out at Exidy trade show exhibits) and even young son Ryan spent his last week of spring break painting and assembling product (and, of course, playing the games for "market research").

Pete himself is proud of the family effort, and who wouldn't be. With roots in video and two arms in redemption, he ought to be proud of himself as well. He's a man for the times who's flexible and still very much the toy maker back in the design shop where he's presently working extra hours on the Exidy redemption item to come. ®

"We have two problems facing us today: ignorance and apathy. I asked an individual what he thought was worse and he said 'I don't know and I don't care.'
— Bob Rondeau

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Golden Moments

Cal. staters check it out at Betson's westerns

While their sister distributing company, Betson Enterprises, was showing new spring equipment to operators in the Northeast Corridor, Betson Pacific held two open houses at its offices in both San Francisco and Los Angeles shortly after the recent ACME expo. As at so many post-show fetes, the Betson bangers hosted quite the crowds.

Food and drink were plentiful, but the reason for the "guys with the keys" to hit the showrooms was a looksee at the new video, pinball and other attractions the dealer represents in the Golden State (among which are Capcom's videos, which Betson handles exclusively in California). They also have Atari, Data East, and many other lines including MicroProse (the *F-15 Strike Eagle* made one of its first operator debuts at the Betson L.A. opener).

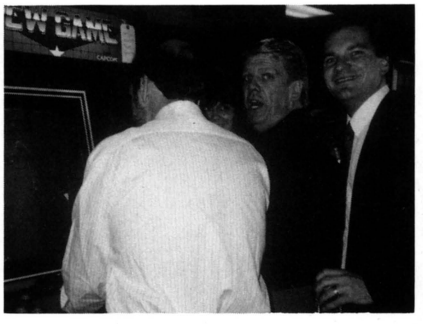
Here's a bunch of photos snapped at the Los Angeles party.



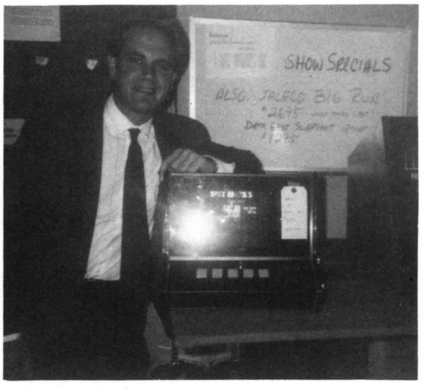
Betson supremo Peter Betti (left) & son Jon with MicroProse coin topper Gene Lipkin and 'F-15 Strike Eagle' in the background.



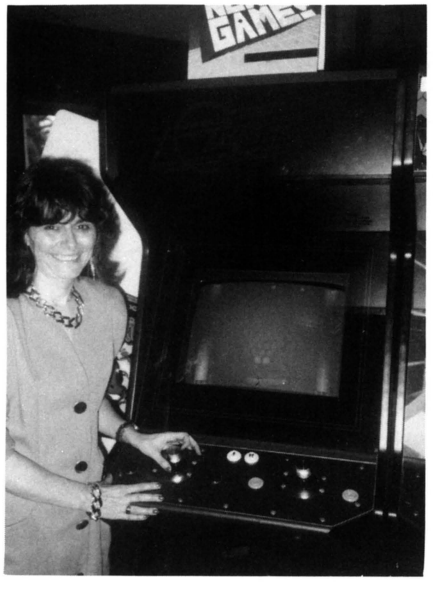
L.A. distributing vet John Scarvada and Sharp's Chris Anderson show off the latter's 'Air Buster' kit.



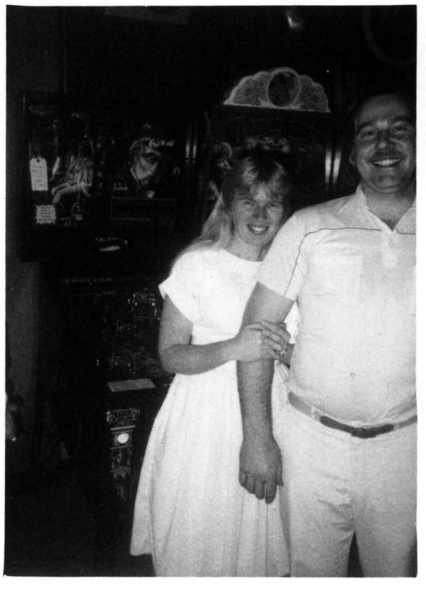
"Hey, this ain't my party," shouts SunBelt's Dave Patterson (center), into L.A. just for an informal chat with Peter Betti. Capcom's Brian Duke and Gene Lipkin try out 'Mercs.'



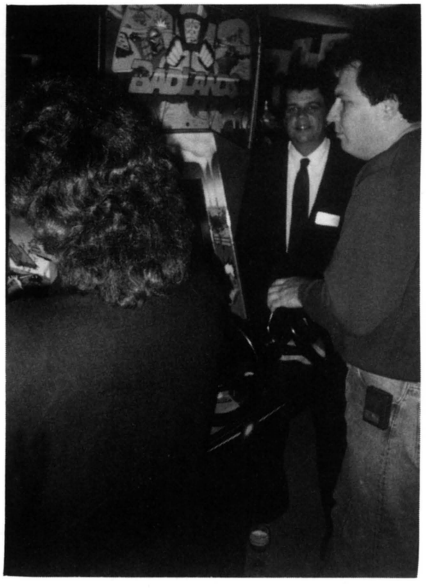
David Rubinstein showed off Merit's line, including the countertop 'Pit Boss,' down at the Betson L.A. party.



Mireille Chevalier (Chevalier Trading) had her 'Ballarena' strategy game on show. It's made in France.



Doris & Vern Vine (Inland Empire Video) mug it up by the D.E. Pinball 'Phantom of the Opera.'



Atari's Field Service Manager Mark Sherman (in tie) with his 'Badlands' driver kit and a Betson customer.

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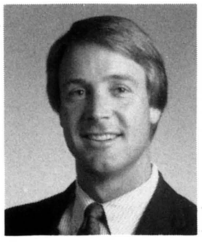
Sega's 'G-Loc'

trade may crown air combat simulator "arcade hit" of the season



TOM PETIT

Sega's razzle-dazzle video simulator *G-Loc Deluxe:* was it "the arcade hit of the ACME show"? Some people think so. At distributor open houses held in the latter half of March, more than one dealer reported that operators are definitely buying.

"We're writing a lot of orders on G-Loc," confirmed Sega USA President Tom Petit. "I think it was the best-received arcade-type piece at the ACME show. We've had some tremendous response to it. We've just finished fine-tuning the software, adding a final sequence where the game talks to you and guides you in, as you bring the jet in for a landing on the deck of an aircraft carrier. It's a sensational final kick for a game whose gameplay characteristics were already outstanding."

Sega's got a fine track record to build on with aviation simulators. Their earlier *After Burner* is still one of the top 10 earners for quite a few arcades around the nation. But don't be fooled: *G-Loc* represents a giant step beyond its predecessor, with markedly superior graphics, precisely timed motion simulation, and far more depth of play.

With 36 stages and three levels of difficulty (trainee, rookie, ace), *G-Loc* has achieved Mach 3 performance. Night flying, many new



Sega's 'G-Loc Air Battle' deluxe model has been named by some the "arcade hit of the ACME show." "G-Loc" stands for "gravity-induced loss of consciousness; it also stands for "awesome flying simulator!" Said Sega USA prexy Tom Petit: "We're writing a lot of orders on 'G-Loc'... We've had tremendous response to it."

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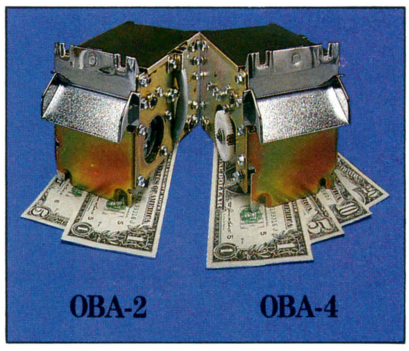

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At left is the cockpit version of 'G-Loc,' above is the upright. Below left are Masahiro Nakagawa (Sr. Gen. Mgr. of both Sega USA and the firm's European Division), Sega USA President Tom Petit and (flying 'G-Loc') Vic Leslie (Managing Dir. of Sega Europe Ltd. at the ACME show.

scenes and actual dogfights add to the excitement.

"Really, *After Burner* was just a straight on-line sequence," explained Petit. "This game allows the player to choose the level of skill at which he enters and participates. There's also a map at the end of each stage which shows the player how far into the game sequence he got."

Dogfights with enemy aircraft are featured as you change from a first-person perspective (looking through the cockpit) to third-person perspective (your entire aircraft shown on screen as an enemy closes in behind you).

"To evade your enemy, you can do what I call the classic 'Top Gun' maneuver," smiled Tom Petit. "Get him to follow you, suddenly slow down and throw your nose up, causing the enemy to undershoot you. Then you drop the nose down, go after him, lock on and destroy him!"

New scenes include night flying, zooming through canyons, aerial flight through clouds and atmospheric conditions, and strafing and bombing ground-based targets.



"One other significant addition is that at the beginning of each stage, no matter which level of difficulty you come in on, the game tells you visually and verbally the goal of shooting down a certain number of targets," Petit said. "That is your mission. You either go through the scenes in that sequence, or you accomplish the mission and continue into the next mission."

Graphics are simply superb (the designer "pushed the limits of the envelope" with a new-generation hardware system, Sega said). Players can do 360 degree rollovers with the horizon in full view at times. On-screen indicators display altitude and attitude at all times so players can return to straight and level. Also, an illuminated outline of the plane is shown on the bottom of the screen, displaying the level of damage sustained by your plane, and where it occurred. If you're hit too hard, too often, your aircraft is destroyed.

In the deluxe version, the entire cabinet rolls and pitches in synch with onscreen action. Sega has taken this feature to new "heights" as well. "Motion and player action are correlated in a smooth, real-time, one-to-one manner," Tom Petit said. "Altogether, the level of pictorial realism, coupled with the simulation experience of the new cabinet, means we're presenting probably the finest simulator we've ever done. Many people complimented our game for this high-grade level of realism."

G-Loc is available in three configurations: the deluxe simulator, a smaller stationary cockpit and an upright. All three configurations use 19" monitors. For additional information, contact your authorized distributor.

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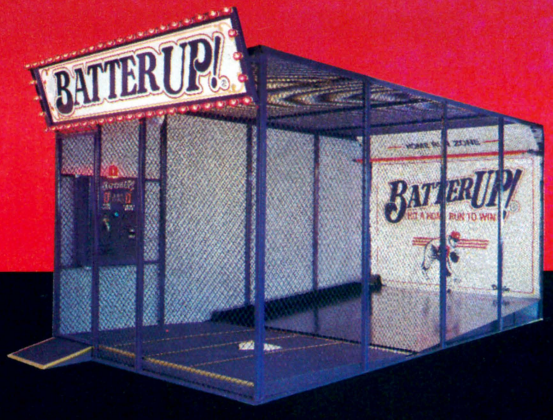

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"Warehouse" Roars

new facility & games enjoy lion's share of approval

March reversed its usual procedures and "went out like a lion" at Warehouse of Games (St. Louis, Mo.). The firm's Barry Schraier and Larry Potashnick hosted their post-ACME open house at their brand new Westport area facility on March 23. The party began around 4PM and "roared" into the late evening.

Strong operator attendance resulted in lots of product being demonstrated by representatives from such as Premier, Williams, NSM, Atari, Romstar, Arachnid, Merit, Capcom, Grayhound, Tecmo, Tornado and Dixie-Narco. "We socialized, of course, but the true purpose of the party was to allow our customers to share in our company's continuous growth," said Barry and Larry. They expressed thanks to all and reaffirmed their commitment to customer service. Here are some pictures snapped at the successful affair.



Above, Barry & Susan Goldenberg with W.O.G.'s Larry & Bobbi Potashnik at the Warehouse open house.

Below, Barb Hampton, Rusty Devore and Shirley Devore of Vend-O-Matic at the post-ACME event.





Left, P&M Amusement's Marie & Paul Hoffmeister.

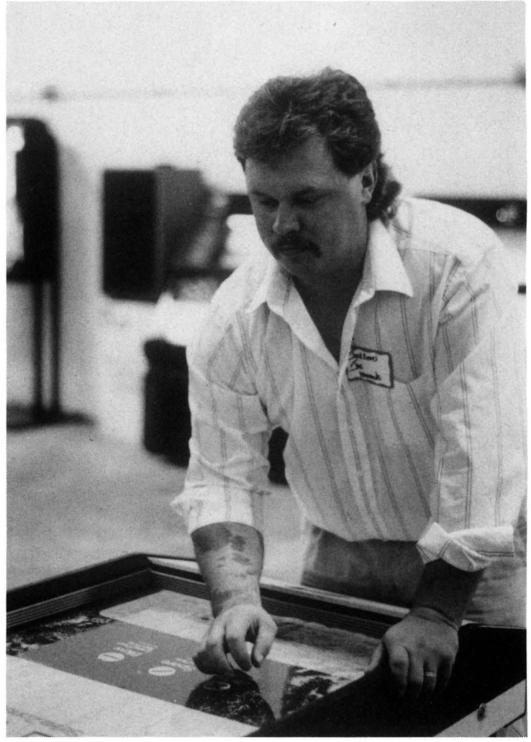
Right, Romstar's Rene Lopez, Atari's Frank Cosentino and W.O.G.'s Barry Schraier by 'Klax.'





Left, Dave Clark of C&H Amusement takes a shot on Grand Product's 'Slick Shot' video/pool game.

Right, Jax Amusement's Jack Reeves plays on the Williams shuffle alley game.



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RePlay SPECIAL SECTION

· Arcades 1990 ·

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FAMILY AMUSEMENT CENTERS

That's the buzz word in arcades these days, and Jerry Kroos of the Game Exchange in Ohio has a dandy. It's called Laser One.

MOVIE MAGIC

Wayne Fromm operates only one arcade, but when he talks about movie promotion tie-ins, the big studios listen.





BUDGET BONUS

Should small game rooms hire an architect? Only if you want to make more money, says operator Randy Chilton.

THE DOYLE REVOLUTION

Skip Doyle has a dream: to bring the outdoor amusement park indoors, and put a coin mech on it. Guess what? He's succeeding.





BETSON REDEMPTION

Quality and service are the watchwords for Betson Enterprises, whose redemption division is riding the crest of a popular wave.

ARCADE BRIEFS

Updates on arcade site negotiator Kathi Wheeler, redemption game maker Bay-Tek, and the man who will make Times Square into a big arcade.





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When it's time to design a huge theme park or a small gem of a game room, phone J.R. Minick & Associates.

THE CLASSICS

If the Midwest is defined by homespun devotion to enduring values, then Iowa's Smart Industries is in the right (market)place.





ARCADE DE PARIS

Our overseas correspondent Mary Openshaw profiles a tres chic arcade in the heart of Paris. This could be the future of French operating.

GOLD DUST

Game maker Ron Yaffe (GaMCO) and restaurateur Marshall Fey provide a glimpse of redemption's golden past.





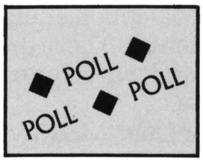
A GALAXY OF FUN

Betson's John Margold says Galaxy World is one of the top U.S. redemption centers. He's right. It's also a model arcade.

A TOKEN FOR YOUR THOUGHTS?

Larry Stearn operates his arcades on cash, not tokens, but his thoughtful views are worth the price of admission in any currency.





OUR READERS SPEAK

We sent out detailed questionnaires to operators of game rooms and small arcade chains. A peek at this market in words and numbers.

THE BIG TICKET

Tickets and tokens, how do you use them? Coin Concepts president Art Warner has "pointed" answers.



Laser One

family entertainment center in giant entertainment complex earns big dollars

The big-money trend in arcades these days is the explosion of family entertainment centers, which are part of multi-store, indoor entertainment complexes. The Game Exchange opened their family amusement center — a spectacular 8,000-sq.-ft. facility called "Laser One" — on April 1 in the River Valley Mall, in Ohio. Laser One is a vital part of what the developer (the Glimcher Co.) calls "the Midway," a 100,000-sq.-ft. entertainment and food complex. (Other stores in the Midway complex include a 10-screen movie theater, a food court and a "fun food, big bar" restaurant called Rugsby's.)

And boy, is Laser One pulling in big dollars. "Our new family amusement center is grossing, on average, 400% more per week than our previous amusement center in the same mall, which was all videos," said managing partner Jerry Kroos. Most of Laser One's income is being generated as paper currency, too. "Paper currency accounts for well over 70%," Kroos smiled.

Laser One boasts a unique layout: 25% of the floorspace is devoted to a huge, old-fashioned carousel fitted with electrical lights. Talk about an attraction! Another 25% houses video and pinball games. The balance of the store contains a mix of assorted redemption equipment and a prize center. There are also a few games and two rides especially for kiddies.

Why is the Laser One "Midway" family amusement center so much more profitable than their earlier amusement center? Because — as makers of redemption machines and kiddie rides love to point out — this 'full-service" concept allows the operator to *expand his customer base*. "For the first time," Kroos explained, "our customer base has been expanded to include entire families, young adult couples without kids, little kids, and much more female traffic of all ages."

Yes, that's right: more girls and women are coming in, playing and spending. "Females used to be approximately 5% of our customer base in our previous amusement center," Kroos stated. "We were still very successful. But now, with our emphasis on redemption, females make up 25% of our customer base. I had expected us to draw new traffic, but this is just amazing. We've got the all-American family crowd. It's very exciting!"

As for the larger trend toward gargantuan entertainment complexes, Kroos says it's great for operators and other entertainment venders, but could prove a mixed bag for retail stores and other "typical" mall tenants.

"The mall community is closely studying the impact of these extremely large entertainment complexes," Kroos said. "The final results aren't in yet, but a lot of pros and cons are clearly being discussed. We've found, and I think the mall developers are finding, that the 100,000-sq.-ft. entertainment complexes are drawing their own crowd . . . and there may not be a lot of cross-overs generating business for the regular retail stores."

But Kroos feels that there is no "down side" to a smaller (6,000- to 10,000-sq.-ft.) complex. "It does draw family traffic and create cross-overs to other retail tenants," he stated. "Our research tells us that an amusement complex such as ours may be more synergistic with the rest of the mall. It draws families, and Mom and Dad go shopping, too."

◆

Laser One may cost more money, but it also makes more money . . . a lot more. As for its earnings this year, "there's no way of knowing," said Jerry Kroos with a smile. "We don't know for sure what will happen this summer, but with so many families going on vacation, we're hoping for an even more sensational bottom line!"

◆

Laser One is a new 8,000-square-foot family entertainment center in Ohio's River Valley Mall. Here's the extensive redemption area.





One-fourth of Laser One's floorspace is devoted to pins and videos. ("Midway" is the name of the mall's multi-store entertainment complex.)

Laser One's beautiful, old-fashioned carousel brings back memories of the State Fair, where families played together in grandad's day.



Hooray for Hollywood!

arcades and movies can cross-promote each other, says Canadian operator Wayne Fromm

"Movie's are a great industry to tie into, because our players are generally film buffs, too," explained Wayne. "The studios are looking for new ways to reach audiences, something beyond just radio listeners."

How would you like to have the excitement of "the third-biggest box office opening in motion picture history" working for your arcade?

Operator Wayne Fromm did. The movie version of "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" enjoyed a record opening-weekend success (right after "Batman" and "Ghostbusters II")...and lucky players at his Video Invasion arcade (Toronto, Ontario) received specially-marked green tokens from the arcade's changer machines. A green token could be exchanged for a movie poster and double movie pass to the "Turtles" film.

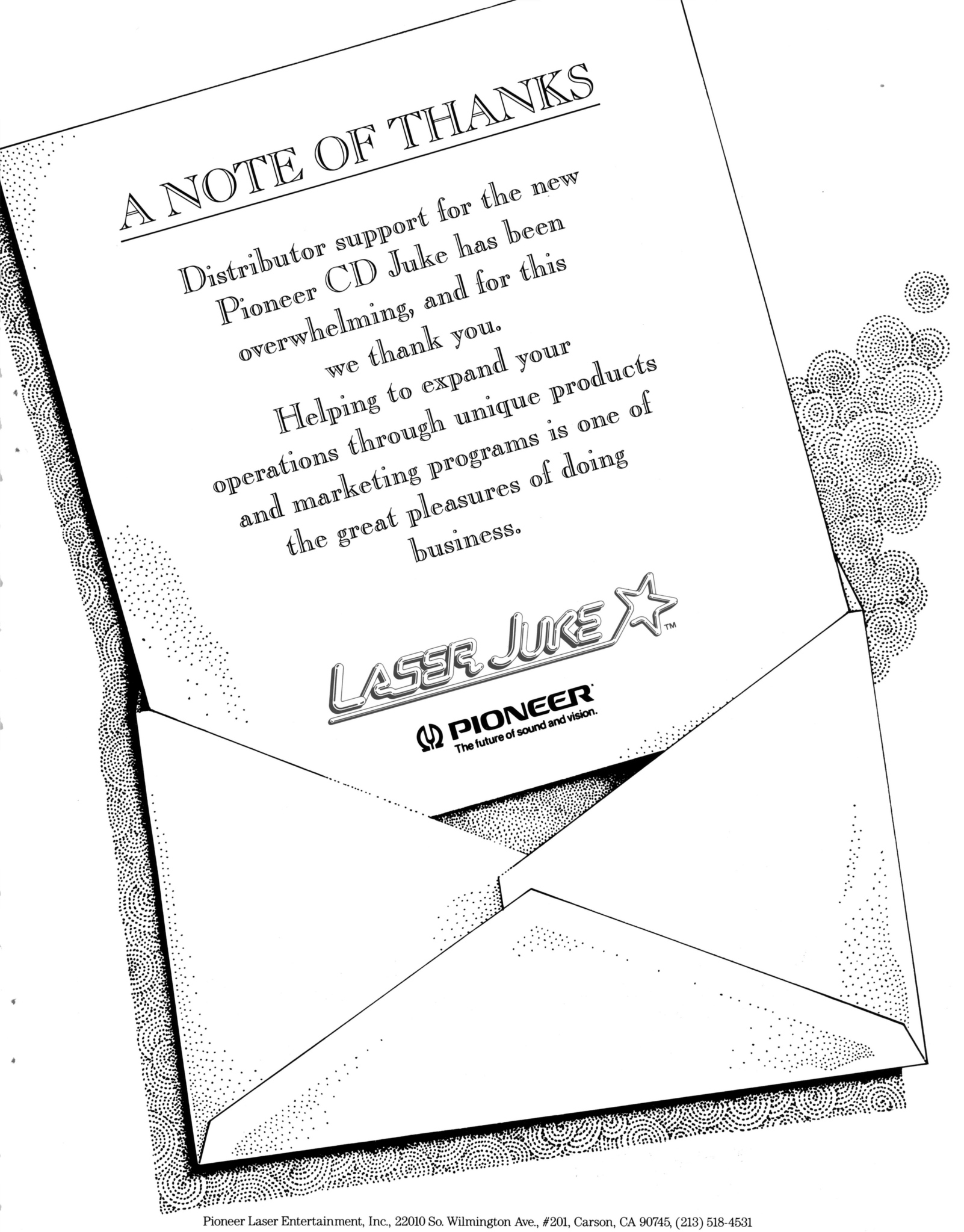
"The response to this film far surpassed any of the previous tie-ins that have taken place at Video Invasion," Wayne reported. "We couldn't keep the movie posters in stock, and Konami's *Turtles* continues to be our highest-grossing game."

The "Turtles" promo is typical of Wayne's beautifully-run family amusement center. As *RePlay's* readers probably know, Wayne is the "Pied Piper of Arcade Promotions"...particularly when it comes to movie tie-ins. In fact, his approach has been so successful (for movie studios, as well as for Video Invasion) that MGM is using Wayne's approach as a model for film publicity in other large cities.

"Movies are a great industry to tie into, because our players are generally film buffs, too," Wayne explained. "The studios are looking for new ways to reach audiences, something beyond just radio listeners. Special screenings are held every week in most cities, and studio publicity directors are anxious to explore new promotional meth-



Having fun with the "Nuns On The Run" mock wanted poster are Wendy James and Heather MacGillivary with Wayne Fromm (as Sister Inviolata). For the advance screening of the 20th Century Fox film, Wayne arranged for Video Invasion customers to pose and get a Polaroid photo, a double movie pass and a poster. A donation of $2 was made by each participant to the Children's Dream Foundation.



Pioneer Laser Entertainment, Inc., 22010 So. Wilmington Ave., #201, Carson, CA 90745, (213) 518-4531

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As for the "Turtles" screening, Wayne Fromm said, "The response to this film far surpassed any of the previous tie-ins that have taken place at Video Invasion. We couldn't keep the movie posters in stock and Konami's 'Turtles' continues to be our highest-grossing game."

ods to distribute the limited numbers of available advance screening tickets. Most seem to welcome any new, interesting outlet...and there's a greater acceptance than ever of our industry today. We're perceived as more 'family-oriented,' especially because of the proliferation of home video games."

How does Video Invasion set up a movie tie-in? First, avid film buff Wayne sees "at least one first-run movie each week." He watches the previews with an eye toward something useful for the industry. It doesn't have to be a video game of the exact same name as the film, as in the case of Turtles. It could be a coincidence of titles (Wayne tied Williams' pinball *Big Guns* to the Tom Hanks film "Big"). It could be a character in the movie playing a real-life game (Matthew Broderick playing *Galaga* in "War Games").

Regardless of what the connection may be, if Wayne sees a preview for a film which presents a possible tie-in, he contacts the distribution company's public relations coordinator. They discuss crafting a dual PR event. Often, Wayne runs a contest on a game in his arcade, which is tied to a special screening of the movie. Players who score highly on the game, win free passes to the showing.

In addition, Video Invasion may provide souvenir photo opportunities, and often passes out free movie-themed trinkets. Said Wayne: "The studio will provide you with posters, t-shirts, keychains, buttons, you name it."

"The tie-in with a movie debut



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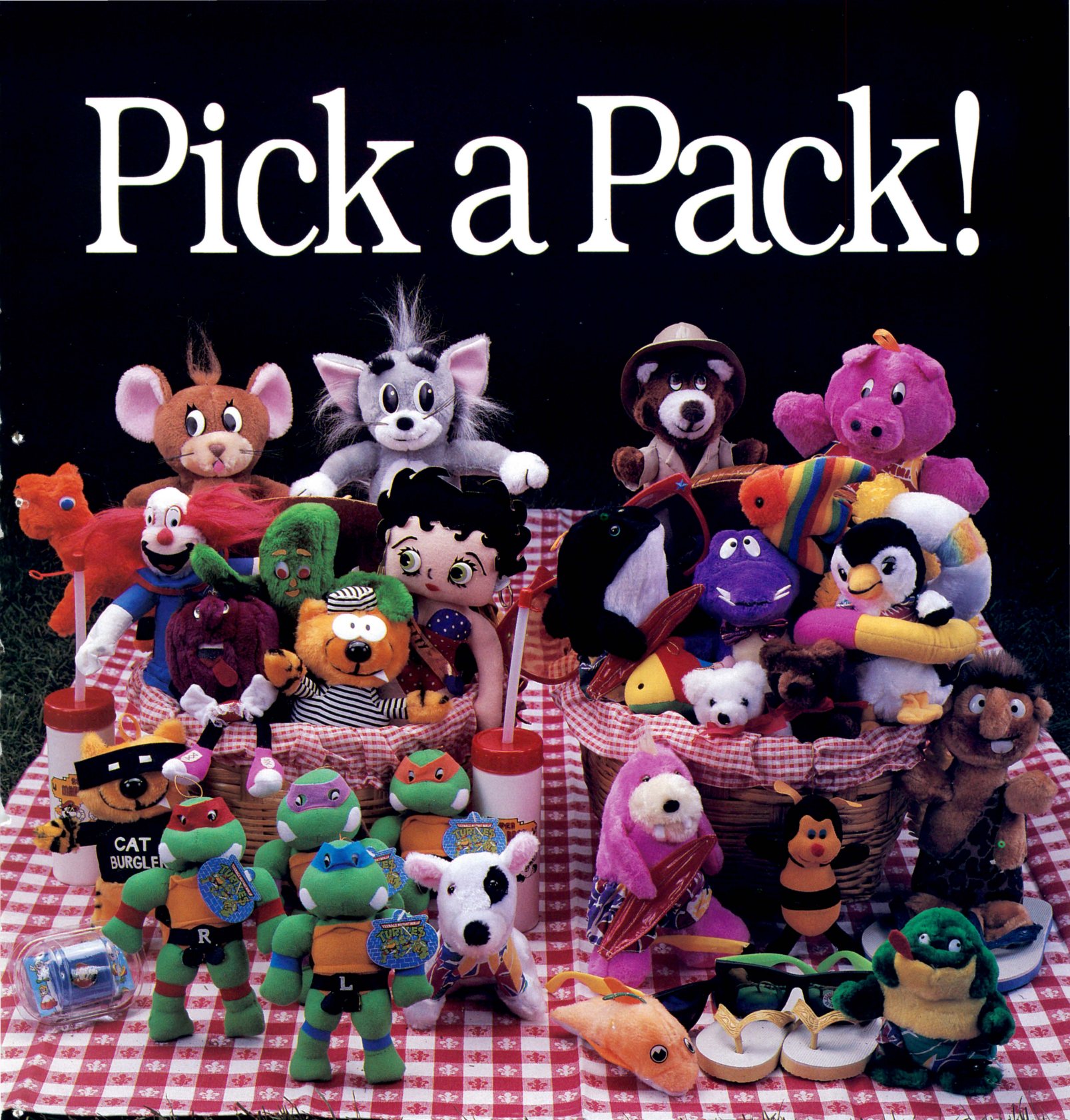

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ACE ACE NOVELTY



◆

At the Alliance Films "TMNT" screening are Odette Spitzer, Mary-Pat Gleason, Joe Brown, Jennifer Stark and Wayne Fromm. Below is a montage from Fromm's "All Dogs Go To Heaven" advance screening.

◆



and an arcade was a hard sell at the beginning," Wayne recalled (he started doing this with "Tron," the movie and video game, in the early 1980s). But since then, Video Invasion has staged successful tie-in promos for around 20 hit films — including "War Games," "D.A.R.Y.L.", "Big," "The Last Starfighter," "License to Drive," "Leviathan," "All Dogs Go to Heaven," "License to Kill," "Lock-Up," "The Wizard," "Nuns on the Run," "TMN Turtles," and several others.

These films were produced and/or distributed by major studios such as 20th Century Fox, MGM-United Artists, Disney/Buena Vista, Columbia Pictures, and Universal Studios. Indeed, Video Invasion's promotions have been so successful that now the movie distributor's PR directors call Wayne! "It's now working in reverse," he said happily. "Achieving that has taken several years."

One problem Wayne has in crafting his promotions is that video games with hit movie themes often lag far, far behind the release of the film. "Our industry should learn a lesson from Konami's jumping on *Turtles* so early," Wayne said.

His advice for operators who wish to emulate his success is simple: showmanship. "You have to believe in your entertainment center and in the games," he stated. "You have to be proud of what you're selling. Your store should sparkle. Your promotional artwork — flyers, posters, etc. — should be professionally printed. We have an in-house poster machine and we also receive posters and cardboard standups from the studios.

"Basically," Wayne concluded, "you have to remember that we're not just competing with other game centers; we're competing with all other forms of entertainment."

When it comes to motion picture tie-ins, arcade operator Wayne Fromm isn't competing with anybody. He's in a class by himself.

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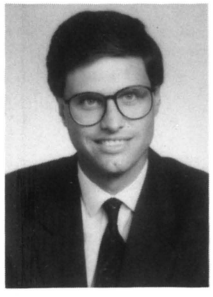
Dollars by Design

small game rooms can profit (big!) from an architect's services



RANDY CHILTON

Does it make sense for smaller game rooms and arcades to work with architects and designers? Kansas operator Randy Chilton (Chilton Vending, Wichita) says yes.

"A sharply designed game area will earn more money than the typical game room we used to see," Randy stated. "And the higher earnings will more than offset the cost. You simply include the remodel costs in your total budget for the location. Spend $3,000 and pretend you bought an extra game. It's like investing in equipment — except that it pays you back long after a game stops earning."

One objective to keep in mind, Randy added with a smile, is "to have the location owner pay for as much of remodeling work as possible. After all, it is his building."

Randy learned the value of game room design about 18 months ago, when he had the chance to work with a location owner's architect. The location owner was already in the process of designing a brand new complex. Randy worked with both fellows in designing the game room.

"I had never done this before," Randy recalled, "and I wasn't sure how enthusiastic I was about the idea, because of the additional expense. But as we got into it, the thing looks terrific and it earns fantastic. Darned if it wasn't one of the best things that ever happened to our company !"

The experience had another happy side effect, said Randy. "The architect fell in love with our industry...because, he said, you can throw as many wild colors into a



A look at the Palace Theatre game room in Wichita. It really shows off the benefits of working with an architect and a designer. From flashy carpets to neon to the best in games (of course), the room has that "come play" look. And, it works — the projected earnings of a place like this is $100,00 per year.

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◆

These photos show the attractive game room and redemption center at Northrock Lanes, another Chilton Vending location. It also features neon, appropriate carpet, etc.

◆





game room as you want, and it still works. So a very profitable relationship was born between our company and an interior design architect."

Mankato Lanes
Proposed Game Room Design Budget

1)	Carpet	128 yards x $22	=	2,816
		Install @ $2.25 ft.	=	288
				$ 3,104
2)	Neon	291 feet @ $12/LF	=	$ 3,500
3)	Mirrors	416 sq.ft. x $12/sq.ft.	=	$ 5,000
4)	Architecture/Design	10%	=	$ 1,160
		TOTAL		$12,764
	Less: Existing Budget Estimate ($5 per sq.ft.)			(5,750)
				$ 7,014
	Additional Expenses:			
	Mankato Lanes Share			$ 3,507
	Chilton Vending Share			$ 3,507

Projected gross income for this location:

$100,000 per year times a three year contract =

$300,000. This is costing slightly more than 1%.

The cost involved, Randy said, may be less than many operators might expect. A 1,200-sq.-ft. room costs the location owner $5,750 (which is $5 per square foot for cheap paint, lights and carpet). The room's budget has been upgraded: an additional $7,014 was spent (of which Chilton Vending and the location each paid half). For that sum, the game room got high-quality carpet, attractive neon lighting, mirrors for the walls, and architectural design services. (See budget.)

Chilton Vending is the general contractor for these design services. They commission the design work, coordinate selections of colors and materials with the architect, and supervise the installation. The location owner does nothing.

The improved game room pays for itself . . . many times over. The projected gross income for the 1,200-sq.-ft. game room discussed above, is $100,000 per year. That's a total earnings of $300,000 over the life of a three-year contract, which means, the cost of the game room upgrade is only slightly more than 1% of the three year gross.

"Every location wants improved facilities and many, perhaps most, are willing to pay the nominal expense involved," Randy explained. "The locations simply don't have the time or knowledge to know how to go about the upgrade. The operator can do it and have a ball in the process, providing the location with a 'turn-key operation.'

"Best of all," said Randy, "by helping a location with game room design, the operator goes beyond just rotating games. He becomes a one-stop source for the location's total entertainment needs."

cover story

The Doyle Revolution

Skip Doyle & allies bring amusement park games and approach to coin-op

Skip Doyle is a revolutionary.

This fact may come as a surprise to most people in the trade. What's revolutionary about Doyle & Associates (Sarasota, Fla.)? They're a leading manufacturer of sports-themed redemption games, right? No insurrections there.

And what about the company's toppers, Skip and Sondra Doyle? If you've met them for just five minutes at a trade show, you know they are pleasant, down-to-earth folks . . . and dedicated professionals. Could these nice people really be revolutionaries?

You bet your *pistolero*. Skip Doyle devotes almost every waking hour to an ambitious agenda which, if realized, would revolutionize the face of the coin-op amusements industry. His plan is not to overthrow the "coin-op establishment," but to per-

'I am convinced that continuing to bring amusement park philosophy and equipment indoors, is where coin-op's future lies for the next 10 years."
— Skip Doyle



Skip and Sondra Doyle with their 'Pro Pitch' game during a visit to Magic Place Entertainment Centers in Monterrey Mexico. The Doyles, in addition to some members of the "Doyle Group" visited Magic Place as part of the on-site consulting portion of their business.



A group photo of those who visited Magic Place in Monterrey, Mexico. Back row: Dennis Keeney and Joe Sladek of SkeeBall, Betson's Robert Betti and Brady's Blair Norris. Seated: Magic Place's Ramiro Cantu, J.R. Minick & Associates' Bob Minick, Magic Place's Emilio Porte, Skip Doyle, Jack Mendez of Bob's Space Racers and Magic Place's Rodolfo Cantu.

suade this establishment to join his "Doyle Revolution."

What, exactly, is the Doyle Revolution? To put it simply, Skip Doyle and a growing collection of respected allies want to bring coin-op all the benefits of the outdoor amusements industry. That includes a more cooperative spirit, a retail-oriented marketing philosophy, and long-lived products. Yes, the Doyle Revolution includes the trade's growing trend toward "redemption" games, but it's even bigger than that. The Doyle Revolution is an ongoing, wholesale redefinition of coin-op.

"I am convinced," said Skip Doyle, "that continuing to bring amusement park philosophy and equipment indoors, is where coin-op's future lies for the next 10 years."

Doyle & Associates is not alone in its revolutionary dreams and schemes. More and more key manufacturers, distributors and service firms have begun working closely with Doyle in recent years and months. Their common goal: to promote "amusement park" concept and equipment to the trade. Doyle's allies include Bob's Space Racers, Skee-Ball, Clever Devices, Bay-Tek, Meltec, Alter Enterprises, J.R. Minick & Associates, Sound System Devices, Seidel and Chance Mfg. (makers of elaborate, giant carousels and other big-ticket amusement attraction items). Moving into the distribution level of the industry, Betson Enterprises, the respected distribution empire, has also joined forces with Doyle & Associates for joint development and marketing of new products.

This diverse and growing alliance has no formal name, but let's call it the "Doyle Group." Many members of the Group go to all the national entertainment-oriented trade shows together, and that includes coin-op shows, carnival shows, amusement park shows, and location shows — both domestic and international. Group members often book space as a block, or try to.

"Our purpose is to show the operator an example of what a redemption center should look like. We collectively want to educate the operator and help him understand how to reach his maximum potential." — Skip Doyle

At future shows, the Doyle Group hopes to pool members' space, games and talents to create a single "Redemption Row" at upcoming AMOAs, ATEIs, IMAs, IAAPAs, ACMEs, etc., which will knock your eyes out. "Our purpose," explained Skip Doyle, "is to show the operator an example of what a redemption center should look like. We collectively want to educate the operator and help him understand how to reach his maximum potential."

Meantime, elements of the Doyle Group routinely work together, under the direction of Doyle & Associates, to promote each other's businesses. One example is an elaborate "coin-op midway" at a major amusement park, Sea World of Ohio. Doyle & Associates manages this section, and many Group members are part of the complex. "Our group offers this service to any other park or facility that wishes to use it," Skip said.

Some elements of the Doyle Group also perform world-wide, on-site consulting for new amusement centers such as the Magic Place amusement chain in Mexico. "We go in together, meet the parties and see what we can figure out to help them," Skip explained.

Finally, the Group members give each other advice, leads and support. "If I have a good idea for Skee-

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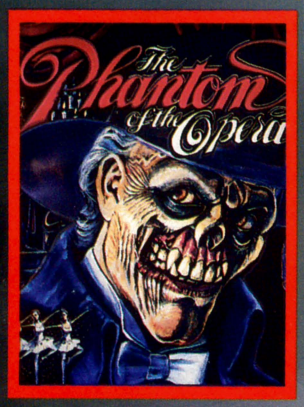

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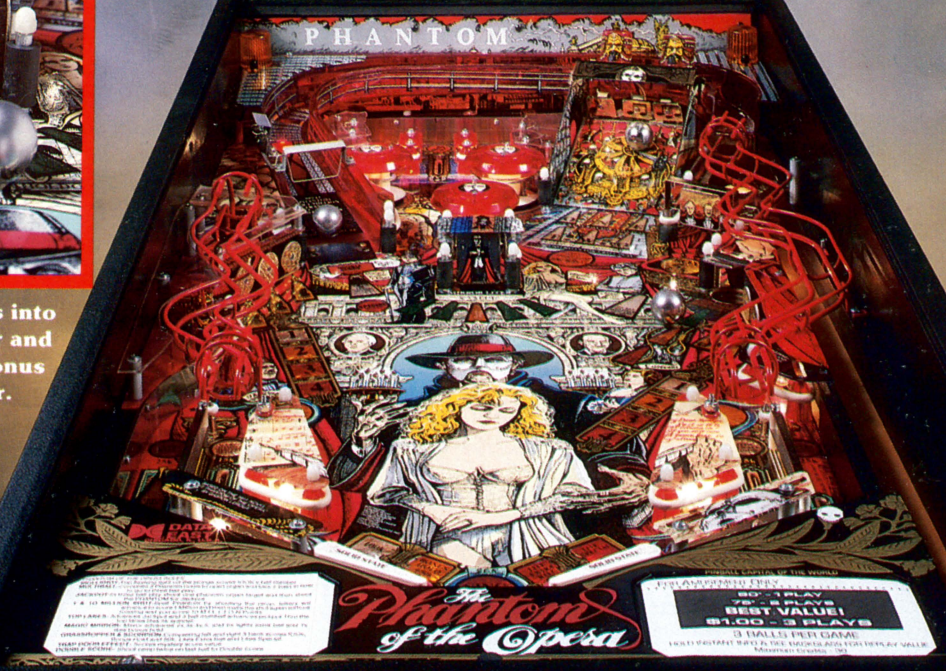

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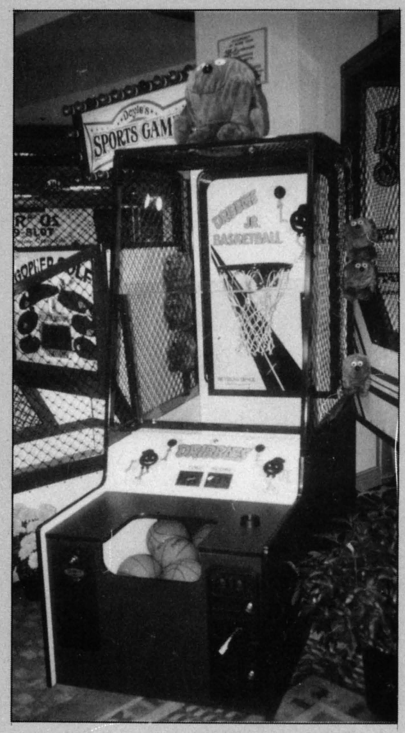
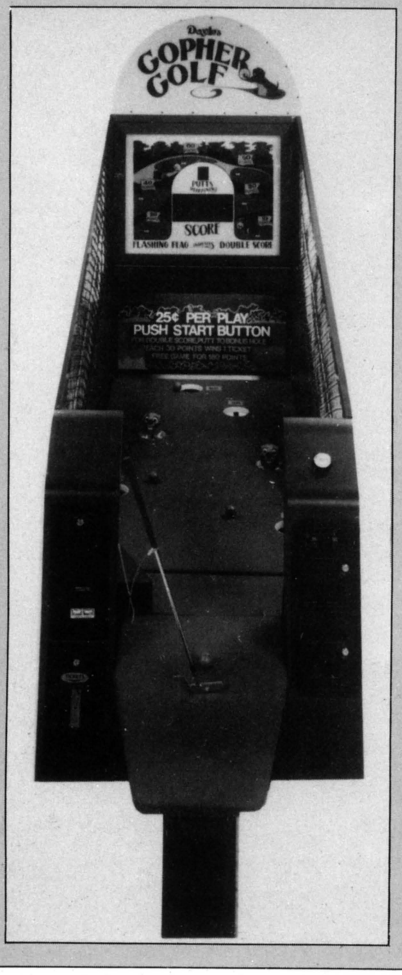
Coin-Op Basketball: Still Plenty of Bounce

Doyle & Associates (Sarasota, Fla.) first burst upon the coin-op scene in 1985 with *Hoop Shot,* their "Cadillac" coin-op basketball skill-toss game. Within a year, around two dozen competitors were making similar products — many of them cheap imitations. Today, said Skip, only five or six firms still make coin-op basketball games, but their market is chugging along handsomely.

"We're piloting a replacement market for basketball games of lesser quality whose manufacturers have disappeared," Skip stated bluntly. "Presently our basketball production is still increasing at a rate of 50% to 75% over the previous year. To my amazement, 1990 is still producing those statistics!"

Today, Doyle has a new basketball star: *Dribbles Jr.* a kiddie-sized basketball game. Jointly marketed by Doyle and by Betson Enterprises, the game allows operators to choose between a set number of shots, or a set number of seconds to play.





Gopher Golf has tavern potential

Gopher Golf is a golf putting game with animated obstacles (gophers pop up and tease and taunt the player via pre-recorded voices). The game was released for production in April, after a year's development. "It's one of the most fun amusement games I've ever played," said Skip Doyle. "We've added more challenge to the gameplay. It's challenging, fun and funny. It could become a good tavern piece."

Ball, I give it to them," Skip explained. "If Skee-Ball has a good idea for Bob's, they pass it on. And so on. It's a spirit of cooperation we learned in the outdoor amusement park business, and now we're applying it to coin-op where it's working extremely well. We're trying to work together for the good of the industry, to help the industry grow."

Is the Doyle Revolution succeeding? Clearly, the answer is yes. As mentioned, influential allies have already joined the cause . . . and one by one, the old barriers are falling. For example —

Coin-op basketball, Doyle's opening wedge into the coin-op market, has become a permanent fixture in many locations. This game refuses to fade away or to become the "fad item" which many tradesters originally expected it to be.

Arcade and street operators are learning the value of redemption games. They see that redemption brings in family business, repeat business and volume business. ShowBiz Pizza led the way: this Dallas-based nationwide chain was one of the first major customers for Doyle's and others' coin-op skill games. Many more operators are following suit, from the biggest (such as the 50,000-sq.-ft. (and up) indoor entertainment centers) to the smallest (such as operators who've placed a single coin-op basketball toss game in a sports tavern).

Coin-op distributors are slowly coming aboard the redemption bandwagon. More dealers are selling redemption games, educating their operators about redemption philosophy, and carrying redemption lines. "At this point," said Skip, "the distributors are coming to us and they're becoming authorities for the operators. They've still got a long way to go, but it's encouraging to see dealers becoming part of the pro-redemption educational effort. We confidently expect this trend to continue."

The trade as a whole has gained a new respect for the redemption concept. Many tradesters labeled each of the last two national expos as "a redemption show." Makers of redemption products, both inside and outside the Doyle Group, enjoy

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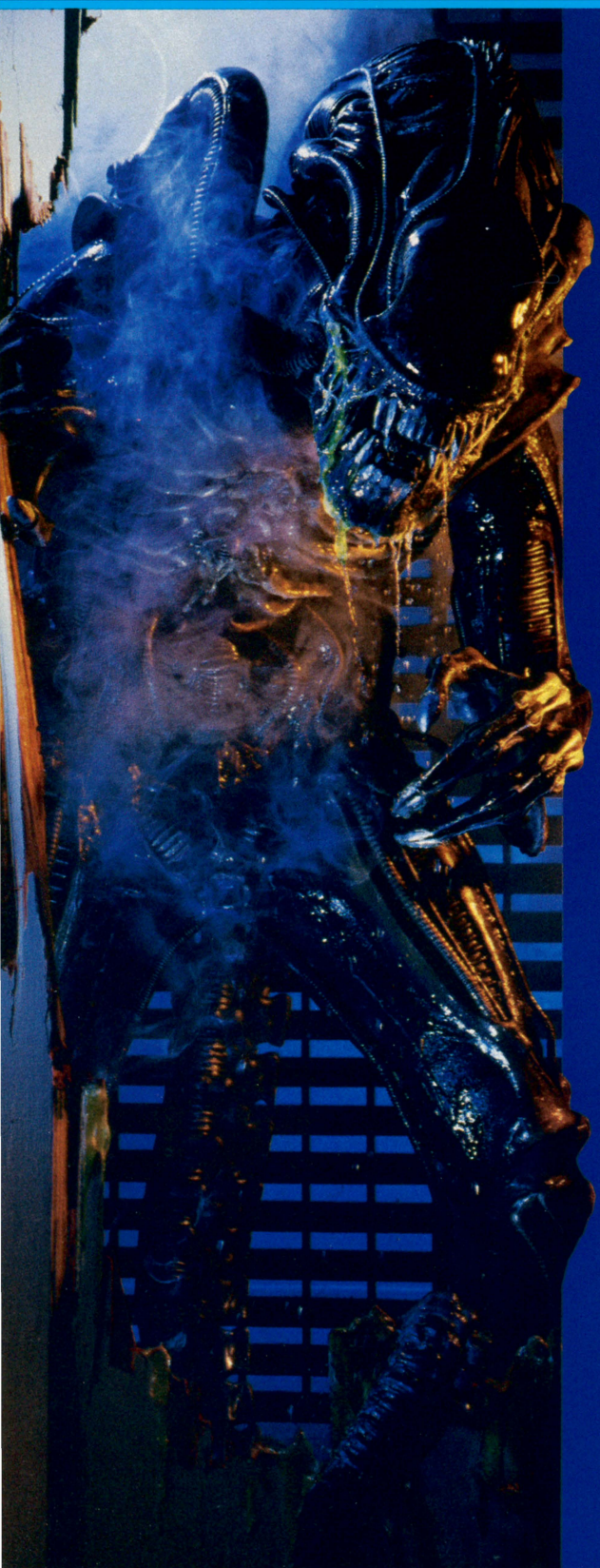
ALIENS™



2-Player Interactive
Horizontal Monitor
Buy-in & Continuation Features

Player's Controls Are:

1 8-way Joystick
2 Buttons: Shoot 1 Shoot 2

From the silver screen to the playing screen comes ALIENS, the spine-tingling space adventure. Join the crew as they battle menacing alien life forms in yet another daring rescue mission.

Fifty-seven years have passed since the last confrontation with the aliens. The universe was safe—at least everyone thought so. However, the nightmare is just about to begin . . . again. At the abandoned space settlement on LV426 Acheron, an alien breeding ground has been detected. You are sent as part of the special task force to destroy this deadly alien haven before it gets too far out of control. This time it's war!

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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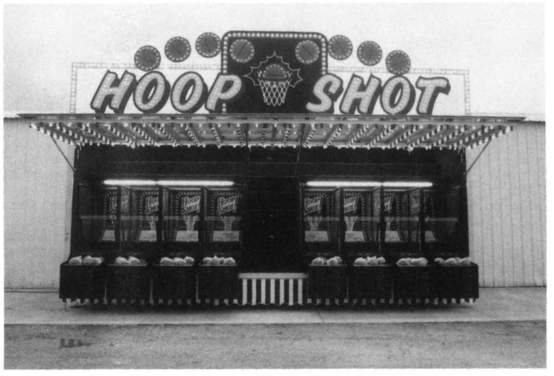


Doyle's 'Hoop Shot' games on the production line in Idaho and in a trailer setup for midways.

serious attention and sales.

"The idea is for street operators to go beyond rotating games," Skip Doyle explained, "and for arcade operators to go beyond small 2,000-3,000-sq.-ft. arcades. We've seen that progress in the past three years so that 8,000-12,000-sq.-ft. sites are much more common, and major operators are exploring the 50,000-75,000-sq.-ft. facilities."

Size isn't the only consideration. The look, the feel and the fun of the amusement park is also being increasingly duplicated by coin machine operators. "The future," said Skip, "lies in these indoor family amusement centers which emphasize a full spectrum of entertainment choices including food, miniature golf, rides, entertainment-only games such as video and pinball, as well as redemption games which are operated with a retailing philosophy."

Obviously, part of Skip's vision of "bringing the amusement park indoors" involves top-flight design and eye-catching attractions. That's why two key players in the Doyle Group are J.R. Minick & Associates (see separate story elsewhere in this special section) and Chance Manufacturing (Wichita, Kansas). "Chance is the largest and oldest amusement ride manufacturer in North America," Skip stated. "Their primary product is the carousel. They have relationships with every major amusement park in the world, and now as part of the Doyle Group they're getting more involved with coin-op. They entered the indoor entertainment center when the malls started the 40,000 and 50,000-sq.-ft. entertainment centers as anchors, and needed major attractions. Chance and Doyle are working on a joint venture which the coin-op industry will hear more about this fall."

So the view from Sarasota, Fla. is clear and bold: coin-op's future lies in bringing the amusement park concept indoors. How big is this future, in Skip Doyle's view?

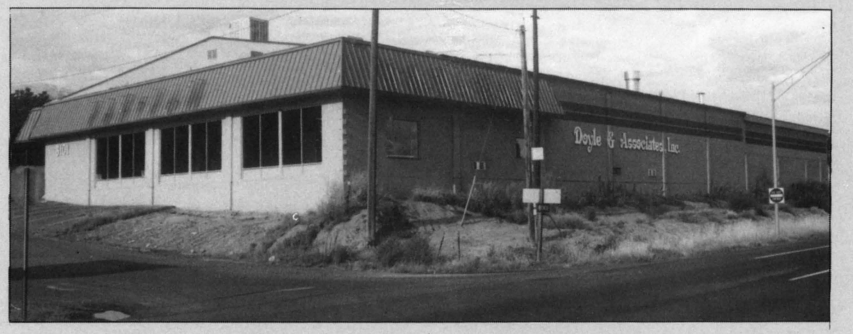
"The market is not just North America, it's worldwide," he said emphatically. "Europe is super successful. Doyle games are being sold in England at the rate of one container-load a month by our exclusive distributor, Crompton's. We're also doing great in Germany. Beyond Europe," Doyle continued, "we're developing markets or shipping games into Central America, South America, the South Pacific and the Orient.

"The feedback we have from each of these markets," Doyle continued "is that it's a family entertainment marketplace. It's totally acceptable. And it's spreading."

Skip Doyle has seen the future, and it is good. "The family entertainment industry, the indoor market, is just beginning in terms of development," he stated. "In reviewing what's occurred in the past three years, I feel we've got another solid ten years of development ahead of us."

The Doyle Revolution continues!

Doyle & Associates to grow 50% in 1990



Beyond their famed basketball games, Doyle & Associates makes a full line of sports-themed, midway-style redemption games, including *Speed Pitch, Pro Pitch! Panda Pitch!, Bull Pen!, Batter Up! & Gopher Golf.* Some upcoming products will be developed jointly with Betson Enterprises, and others will be developed jointly with Chance Manufacturing, said company President Skip Doyle.

Doyle & Associates does sales and administration out of Sarasota, Fla. while R&D and manufacturing are performed in Idaho. The company has enjoyed phenomenal growth in recent years, doubling its sales during the mid-'80s and continuing to climb in double figures since. Doyle expects to increase business by 50% again this year.

As of Jan. 1 this year, Skip and Sondra's son Jay, age 26, assumed the responsibility of plant manager at the Doyle facility in Idaho. "He's running our entire manufacturing facility," Skip said proudly. "I personally travel to Idaho one week per month to work with Jay in the manufacturing process, and primarily to work with my R&D group and Jay to develop new product."

Skip Doyle, Rajah of Redemption, explains the how and why of "amusement park" operating

by SKIP DOYLE

At Doyle & Associates, we're trying — with help from many manufacturers, distributors and operators — to bring "amusement park operating" to the coin machine industry. A lot of what we're trying to accomplish has to do with philosophy. The attitude of an operator in an amusement park is 180 degrees different from that of a street operator who just wants to collect what's in the cashbox.

The main difference is this: the operator becomes a merchant. The idea is to encourage the player to play a redemption game, win a few tickets, and perhaps redeem the tickets for a prize that day. Or, in a resort area, the player might play for a week, accumulate many tickets, and eventually take home a radio or something. In a mall, players could come in every week for a year and save their tickets toward a high-ticket item such as a bicycle or TV. Midway-type game makers pioneered this idea and today many coin machine operators are picking up on it.

If an operator is willing to do the work to become a true merchandiser, he can achieve a vastly higher gross and net profit than with non-merchandise games. The rule of thumb we see is that redemption games typically achieve 300-plus percent of what non-redemption games do. Because of the entertainment value of playing the game, there is good mark-up on the merchandise for the operator. For example — let's say you buy a piece of merchandise for a dollar. By the time the player wins it, your cashbox should have $4 in it. At a retail establishment, the best you can do is double the price to $2. So a redemption operator gets paid both for the normal mark-up and for the entertainment.

There are other major differences between redemption operating and entertainment game operating.



◆

Skip Doyle putts on his 'Gopher Golf' ticket-dispensing skill game at a recent coin biz trade show.

◆

Take the longevity of equipment. When a redemption game is purchased for a location, it stays there for many moons — if the operator supports it properly. A crane can stay there for five years. A ski alley game can stay there for 30 years. And the operator will not be rolling all of his profit back into more games which have a very short lifespan. The ROI for a good redemption game, over a non-redemption game, is many, many times higher.

In order to develop a redemptive game room properly, you have to give players enough redemption games to make it exciting and appealing. We've determined that the best mix is about 75% redemption games and 25% entertainment-only games. Due to the size of redemption games, the square footage per play station will average much larger than for straight entertainment-only games. So in a 5,000-sq.-ft. facility, you'll have fewer play stations. But the games will draw families and repeat play. The players will enjoy playing the same machines over and over, forever. So even with fewer play stations, the operator makes more money.



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The Pathfinders

Betson blazes the redemption trail across the coin machine industry's map

"These guys are all over the map." That's the only conclusion you can possibly reach after examining the varied activities of Betson Enterprises, the manufacturers and distributors headquartered in Moonachie, New Jersey.

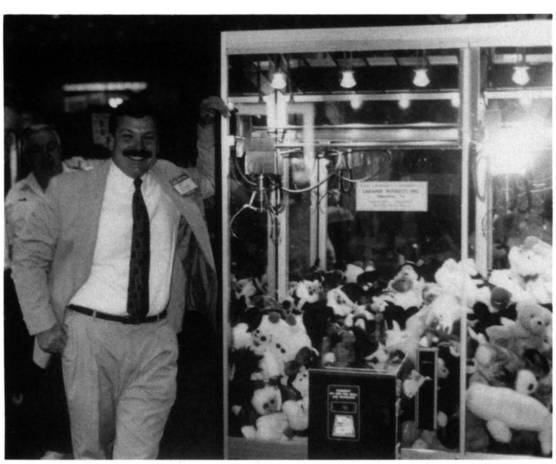
Betson is all over the national map with distribution offices in New Jersey, New York, California and Arizona. They're all over the manufacturing "map" as well (and that's a world map) as the exclusive U.S. importers, marketers or (in some cases) co-developers of various lines of quality product. These lines include Belgian cranes, certain British pushers and card-themed amusements, a growing number of American-made redemption games, and generic support products like bill changers.

For those who don't know, Betson has been in business since 1934. They are now in their sixth decade of service to the coin-op industry. The company was founded by Umberto Betti Sr. and is headed today by famed chairman of the board Bert Betti. Company president is Hugh Betti (Bert's younger brother). Other toppers include Joe Cirillo (executive VP), Bob Geschine (treasurer) and Robert Betti (VP of operations).

When Betson wears its "manufacturing hat," the firm concentrates on redemption products. As stated, these cover quite a range of games. For example, Betson introduced the "Belgian crane" to America over five years ago. Called *Big Choice*, it's available in one-, two- and three-player models. Recently, said the firm, the crane market has gotten excited about larger prizes and jumbo cranes. Betson's right there with *Top Choice* and *Big Choice Limited Edition* cranes, whose larger claws vend bigger, more attractive prizes at 50¢ or $1 per play.

In the field of pushers, Betson sells exclusively the Crompton product line. Manufactured in England since 1963, Crompton's games have built a well-deserved, world-wide reputation for quality and reliability. Some arcades are still operating 18-year-old *Splash Down* games made by Crompton's, noted Betson execs.

Betson's biggest-selling pusher of late has been the one-player *Klondike*. It can vend tickets or tokens — and it can be outfitted to give a ticket every other play. This spring, a new Betson one-player pusher called *Rock 'N' Roll* is coming from Betson, offering the player a choice of three plexi chutes which zig-zag down to the play area. The object of





At left, Robert Betti with the firm's beautiful deluxe crane. At right, John Margold, George Angermeyer and Bill Seibert show off Doyle's 'Dribbles Jr. Basketball,' a basketball skill game for younger players.

The New Standard

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the game is to place your coin in a chute with the idea of having it eventually land on selected spots on the playfield. Multi-player pushers from Crompton's include *Riviera* (four or six players) and *New Wave* (hexagon-shaped, six players).

Card-themed redemption games from Betson offer true non-gaming amusement. *Reel Poker,* built in England by Barcrest, Ltd. successfully entered Betson's line last year; it continues to sell well. Vending tickets or tokens (75% are sold with ticket venders), the game gives away a 100% ticket vend minimum. (That means one ticket vended per coin inserted.) Operators can adjust the vend up to 355%. "Since most redemption centers use lower values on tickets than tokens," explained Betson execs, "a *Reel Poker* awarding tickets can be set to offer prizes more liberally . . . and players love to win!"

Betson will soon offer a self-loading rotary merchandiser which is built by Leland Corp. (the California manufacturer best known for their video games). Called *King Arthur's Round Table,* it's housed in a video upright-type cabinet. "We looked at several self-loading rotaries during the past few years," said Robert Betti, "but it wasn't until we saw *King Arthur's Round Table* that we felt we'd found one which was acceptable for the street operator." The game holds 300 capsules, so even the busiest locations should require service only once per week.



New 'Rock 'n' Roll'

Betson's latest foray into redemption is the result of a joint venture with the highly respected Florida-based manufacturers, Doyle & Associates. Doyle has developed a kiddie basketball game called *Dribbles Jr.,* which is jointly marketed by Doyle and Betson. It began shipping in mid-April.

The arrangement is partly the result of a happy accident: during the carnival trade show in Gibson, Robert Betti and Skip Doyle were discussing the market for kiddie basketball games and discovered they were both designing one. They decided to pool their efforts and combine their strengths.

Doyle's admiration for Betson is high indeed. "They're aggressive in marketing and manufacturing, and they enjoy great contacts with street operators," said company President Skip Doyle. "They are also a group with the highest integrity. That's flawlessly true of every individual in the Betson organization we've had the pleasure to do business with. Sondra [Doyle] has enjoyed tremendously working with Betson's redemption chief John Margold," he continued, "and I look forward to Robert Betti's and Betson's continued participation in our efforts."

Betson's newest products for the kiddie redemption market also include *Skee-Toss.* This one is a children's toss game, featuring Betson's reliable electronics along with Skee-Ball, Inc.'s quality construction. Offering attract mode, electronic speech, and exciting graphics, the game will be available (marketed exclusively by Betson) by the end of the month.

If Betson's product line is impressive, so is their commitment to their customers. Betson's founding principle is strong service — "and that continues to be our watchword," stated redemption chief John Margold. "Our redemption service crew, headed by Billy Seibert and his right-hand man George Angermeyer, is what makes our redemption department so strong. Those two guys do a great job of helping customers on the phone. Our 800 number rings non-stop as operators call up for answers and advice. Redemption games are complex and we — and our customers — would be lost without these fellows."

John Margold handles the national accounts, and their (relatively) new man Bill Treger has "hit the ground running," John said. "He's brought us a lot of new business and, thanks to his background as a state regulator in New Jersey, he has a lot of credibility." Neal Rosenberg handles and expedites all incoming and outgoing shipments, trade shows, etc. "I'll promise somebody an impossible delivery date," John Margold smiled, "then Neal finds a way to make it happen."

If you're wandering all over the coin-op map yourself these days, without a clue or a compass, rely on the pathfinders at Betson Enterprises to show you the way. They'll guide you straight toward the redemption profits you've been seeking — and keep you heading in the right direction, after the sale!

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ARCADE NEWS BRIEFS



GOOD CLEAN FUN — Consultant Kathi Wheeler was introduced to the trade in 1989 as "The Negotiator" by this publication. She can help operators win battles with city hall, landlords, reluctant neighbors, law enforcement, and community opinion. This very professional businesswoman is now president and CEO of "Good Clean Fun," a specialty consulting firm located in Newport Beach, Calif. She's still fighting the good fight "and I'm batting a thousand," Kathi said with a smile. "I've assisted operators from New York to San Francisco in securing sites for profitable new arcades." She's also fielding calls for advice and assistance from people inside and out of the industry. (Even AMOA and AAMA have begun referring people to her). Kathi can be reached at 714/645-8183. (Pictured is Kathi and son Drew.)



BAY-TEK introduced "themed" rolldown games which can sure brighten up an arcade or sports-themed street location. Both feature classic gameplay: you roll six balls down the playfield, one at a time, trying to aim for certain openings in the backboard which represent different point values. *Clown Rolldown* enhances this basic concept with flashing winner light and colorful artwork of clowns, hearts and balloons. *Fielder's Choice* takes you out to the baseball park, with a batting helmet on top of the backboard and handsome depictions of pitchers and base runners. All games feature digital scoring, optional ticket venders and optional attached stools. Seen here is the Onedia, Wisc. firm's Lori Treankler with both games, which fit right in with today's hot trend toward redemption family fun.



BATTLE TECH CENTER is the name of an exciting new concept in arcades. Conceived by Jordon Wiesman (youthful president of FASA Corp., a leading role-playing board game company), the 4,000 sq. ft. arcade will feature eight totally interactive video game sitdown simulators. (Two sets of the eight-game system will be on site for a total of 16 units.) Working on paper vend (perhaps $6.00 for a total 30-minute experience), the center will guide players through a "mission briefing theater," then split players into teams of four who interact on various games. Afterwards, players will file past a strategically placed merchandise counter which offers themed toys, games, jackets, patches, etc. Games will simulate futuristic desert vehicle warfare, aerial warfare, naval combat, space flight, or whatever that week's software has to offer. Hardware creation and initial software programming is being done by Incredible Technologies; an adapted prototype enjoyed a successful "test run" at the Detroit Auto Show earlier this year. Battle Tech Center is slated to open at Chicago's North Pier Terminal in June, said Weisman's new firm ESP (Environmental Simulation Projects). Franchise rights for U.S. territories for additional Battle Tech Centers will eventually be available, Weisman said; the Japanese franchise has already been sold. Shown here are early prototypes of the video simulator cockpits.

The Draftsman

Minick's arcade drafting board makes dreams come true

If you have kept up at all with the world of amusement arcades, you've heard of Sega's "Time-Out on the Court" family entertainment center. It's a new 38,000 sq.-ft. "family entertainment center." This little universe of amusements houses 200 player stations and prize games, a highly-themed miniature golf course, an antique carousel, several amusement rides, and more.

Even if you're not keeping up with arcade trends, you still might have heard about this one, because the massive facility (which anchors the 1.4 million-sq.-ft. Forest Fair Mall in Cincinnati, Ohio) is earning megabucks. After about three months in operation, the store has "exceeded all expectations," say observers.

Oh, one more thing: the center was designed by J.R. Minick & Associates, Inc. (Dallas, Tex.). This super-professional firm is the one the "big boys" turn to, when they want to create a knock-your-eyes out entertainment complex. A very small sampling of their recent client list sounds like a "Who's Who in Family Entertainment." Minick has worked with Disney Development Co. (Orlando, Fla.); Fame City (Houston, Tex.); Expo '92 (Seville, Spain); King's Dominion (Doswell, Va.); Pier One (Sydney, Australia); Sea World of Ohio; and numerous others.

Even a quick scan of that list shows that J.R. Minick & Associates is truly a world-class outfit . . . but they're frequently happy to come down off Mt. Olympus to work with the cream of U.S. coin-op firms, as well. They've worked with coin-op denizens like Doyle & Associates, Showbiz Pizza, Bob's Space Racers, Time-Out Family Amusement Centers, UA Theaters and others.



This artists rendering shows the enormous amusement park in Seville, Spain, the Expo '92 Parque de Atracciones. The Dallas, Texas-based firm has also done work for such clients as Disney Development (Orlando, Fla.), See World and Pier One (Sydney, Australia).

In the super-arcade department, the design firm has been commissioned by Time-Out to go forward with five more facilities similar to the one at Forest Fair Mall. These entertainment complexes will be part of five other malls being developed by the L.J. Hooker Corp.

Company topper J.R. Minick himself can be seen at many national coin-op trade shows. He's a very relaxed, approachable fellow with distinguished graying hair, who wears his sports jacket and open collar with more class than most men can muster in a three-piece Brooks Brothers suit.

Like all real pros, he aims to please. "Typically, when we can establish accurately the scope of work desired by the client, we can offer our services on a 'flat fee' basis,"

◆

Sega's "Time-Out on the Court" family entertainment center at the Forest Fair Mall in Cincinnati was designed by J.R. Minick & Associates. In addition to this gorgeous carousel, the center also features gobs of games.

◆

Minick said. "However in many cases, the client may be unsure of what design elements are to be included, and we provide our services on an 'hourly' basis."

On an hourly basis, Minick said, those fees run from $75 for a company principal, to $50 for an artist/designer, $38 per hour for design drafting, $25 to $35 an hour for regular drafting, and $20 an hour for research.

If nothing but the best will suit, give J.R. Minick & Associates a call. Their forte is not necessarily size . . . it's quality. Contact the firm at 3308 Oak Grove, Dallas, TX 75204; 214/880-0330.



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The Classics

at Smart Industries, redmeption and sports games mean long-term earnings



GORDON SMART

"The redemption business, whether it's sports games, ticket-vending games, cranes or whatever, is becoming more sophisticated." So says Gordon Smart, president of Smart Industries (Des Moines, Iowa) — and he's got plenty of evidence to back up his claims.

"Operators are becoming specialists," Smart explained. "They're really learning how to enhance the revenue from the machines — much more than the guy who bought a crane in 1985 and just threw a bunch of teddy bears into it. Distributors are becoming more serious about redemption and sports games, too. Like the operators, distributors are seeking new sources of revenue and they're finding it in the redemption market."

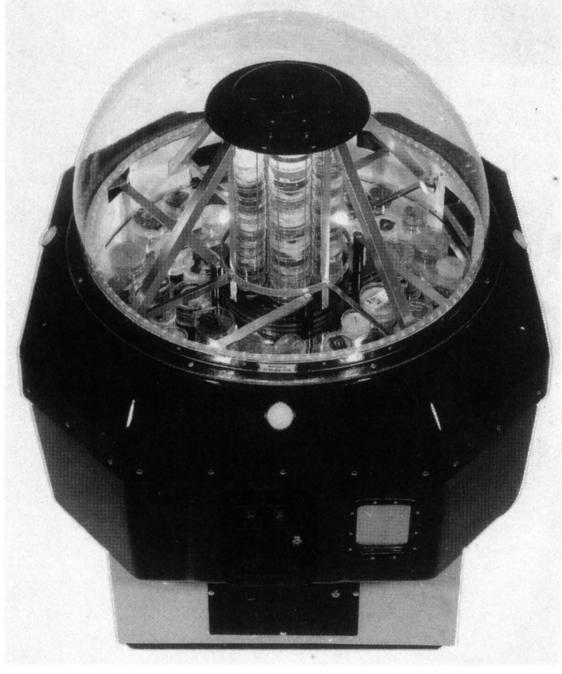
Smart's firm has manufactured coin-op cranes since 1975 and has built coin-op basketball games since the mid-'80s. Smart is one of the few proud survivors of those two volatile markets, still selling and servicing their products after at least 40 other basketball and crane firms have come and gone. No wonder they like to say "Buying from Smart is the smart thing to do!"

Smart's latest products, launched at this spring's ACME, are a rotary merchandiser and a ski alley, two types of machine which can be called upon for long-term earning power.

Remember how much fun it was to watch a jukebox deploy a 45 rpm disk on the turntable? Smart's *Jackpot* brings that entertaining concept into the world of rotary merchandisers. The game features a transparent, column-shaped prize dispenser in the center of the mirrored playfield. Players can see the prizes move into position and watch them being dispensed onto the playfield.



JEFF SMART





Two of Smart Industries newest products, the 'Jackpot' rotary merchandiser (players can watch as the prizes move into position and are dispensed onto the playfield) and the 'Smart Ball' ski alley (available in numerous lengths plus single- and four-player models).

Four player stations give this unit plenty of chances to earn. The unit holds two different sizes of prize capsules (2.5" and 3.5"), and also offers 12 musical tunes in the attract mode, as well as an "action" sound system and many other features. High earnings have been reported on location tests and industry response at ACME, said the firm, was "tremendous."

Smartball is the company's other new game. Sleek cabinet design, lively characters on the signage, and a bold blue, red and yellow color scheme all combine to bring an exciting new look to the enduring popularity of the ski alley. Available in one or four player models, the game comes in a choice of 10' or 13' alleys. A bill acceptor/stacker which takes $1 or $5 bills is optional.

Other features include Smart's "action" sound system, coin counter meter, separate locked coin box, dependable microprocessor game boards, adjustable winner levels and total front service access.

When you deal with Smart Industries, you're in touch with an old-fashioned manufacturer which does virtually everything in-house: from sewing the nets for basketball games, to manufacturing crane parts, to final painting. About 130 people (including seven mechanical engineers and three electrical engineers) make up the Smart team, working out of a 50,500-sq.-ft. building. It's also a family business: Gordon's son Jeff Smart is the company's energetic and forward-looking VP, while Gordon's daughter Nancy Sing acts as assistant to the president. "She's my right arm," her father smiled.

"We're looking at this industry long-term," Gordon Smart stated. "The buyer of redemption games is looking for long-term investment, too. If the industry can continue coming up with good, creative redemption ideas — and if manufacturers are willing to spend the money to build a quality product — then the future of redemption and sports equipment is unlimited. As long as the operator is willing to think like a merchandiser, he can take the redemption concept as far as he wants."



At the ACME '90 show where several new Smart Industries products debuted are Smart's Gordon Smart with Harriet and Lou (Central Distributing) Singer.



Smart is one of the half-dozen firms making a basketball skill game for the younger player. In much the same style as their full-sized 'Shoot To Win,' the firm offers 'Shoot To Win Junior' (pictured at right).

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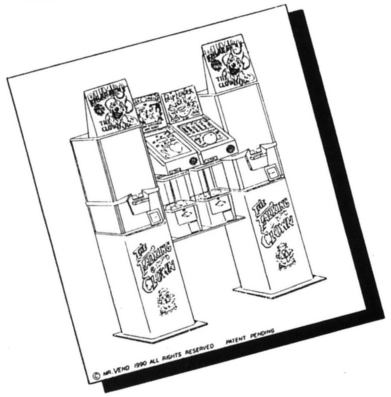

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Paris' Largest Arcade

fine center may symbolize Europe's future

by MARY OPENSHAW

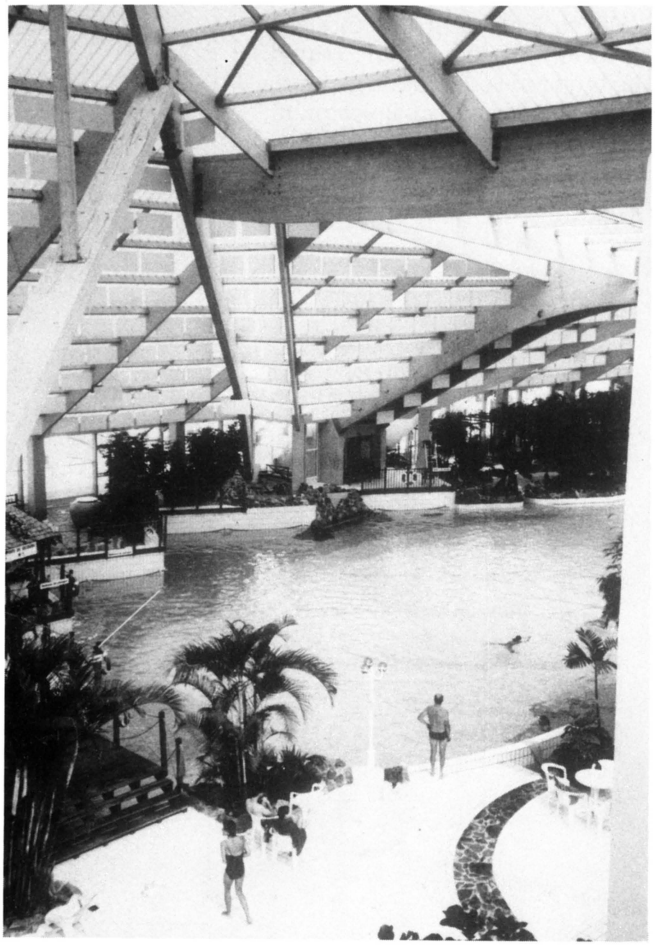
Tradesters have been saying for some time now that coin-op has "reached a new level of sophistication and maturity." Sounds good, but you know it's really true when an arcade, a billiards hall and a kiddie ride emporium are integrated into a giant indoor entertainment complex . . . in one of the snootiest neighborhoods in Paris.

That's right, Paris, *France*. We are not talking Paris, Texas here, folks. While you pick up your dropped jaw, we'll explain that these three coin-op amusement stores are included under the roof of Europe's largest indoor water sports center: the Aquaboulevard de Paris. It's located near the Forest Hill Hotel in the city's smart-set central district. The Aquaboulevard features splendid swimming pools (they're linked with running "canals"), other sports facilities, and the above-mentioned coin-op fun centers.

The Aquaboulevard's coin-op centers are run by British-owned Associated Leisure France. Known as ALL, they're a lodestar in Europe's coin-op constellation. ALL's Arcades Video is one the largest in all of France, holding 62 of the industry's latest games. (Most French game rooms are quite small.) Simulators are a big draw; pins are popu-



"Welcome to the Aquaboulevard de Paris."



A section of the vast swimming pool in the rear of the Aquaboulevard de Paris. In addition to the pool, the enormous entertainment complex features an arcade, billiards hall and kiddie ride emporium.

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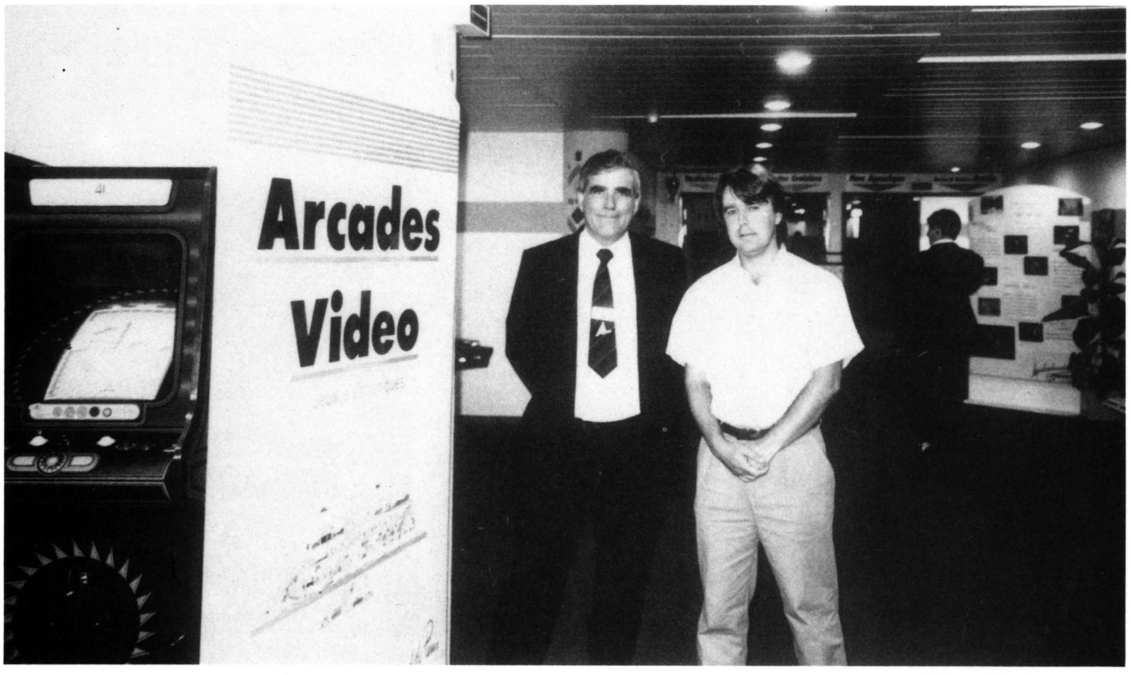

Ken Kennedy, Managing Director of Associated Leisure France (left) with Yannick Mennard, the Operations Manager.

lar, too, explained ALL managing director Ken Kennedy.

In the kiddie ride center, called Fantasy Land, children can enjoy all kinds of cartoon cabins, rides and other features for the younger set. It's a chic spot for birthday parties and other promotions which American readers would find familiar.

The pool and snooker hall creates plenty of space for these popular French pastimes. Players will also find some tables for a European game called Carambol. A 12-lane Brunswick bowling center (not operated by ALL) rounds out the amusements side of the Aquaboulevard.

Associated Leisure's Paris complex may present a picture of the future of coin-op for all France: larger, more professional, more international. The British-owned firm plans to expand its French coin-op activities — indeed, they're already doing so, with another arcade in a major leisure center in the provincial French town of Metz. Also, a depot has been established at St. Raphael on the Cote d'Azur, where a route will probably be established. Said Ken Kennedy: "A lot of the established operators in France are getting older, nearing retirement. We want to expand our operation in France and become the first national operators in the country."

How do the intensely patriotic French feel about a British firm aggressively expanding in their back yard? Well, the idea is "not very popular," Kennedy admitted. But he insisted that ALL is "helping the industry in France" by purchasing games locally, and by staffing ALL operations with French personnel only, such as operations manager Yannick Mennard. (Kennedy himself is the sole exception to this.)

The French expansion project, in turn, is only ALL's first stage as it looks forward to eventually operating on a more Continental scope. This will be possible trade barriers fall in the Common Market countries, starting in 1992. A new EEC agreement will make it much easier for a firm in one nation to open up shop in all the other nations of the European Economic Community.

Despite the opportunities represented by this anticipated shift, ALL (and other firms with international ambitions) will still have to cope with laws which vary from nation to nation — at least at first. Maybe that's why Kennedy talks so much about the need for uniform regulations, certainly within a single country. That's something France still lacks.

As one long-time observer of the European coin-op market stated: "We live in an exciting and stimulating era in Europe just now. We don't know exactly, as yet, what 1992 will bring . . . but we are learning." One thing is certain: there are economic opportunities in Europe, and enterprising companies such as ALL in Britain are looking for them.

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Gold Rush

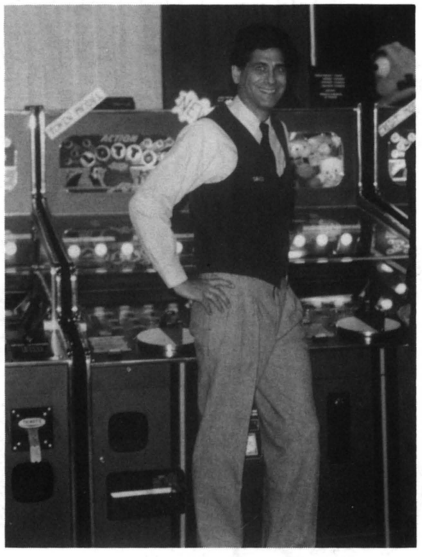
redemption's got a golden past and a glowing future, says Ron Yaffe

Ron Yaffe, the creative spark at GaMCO International Inc. (Sarasota, Fla.), says he's "still amazed at the number of operators who still do not have any redemption games. We specialists in the field take it for granted that everyone knows about redemption, but to many it is still very new and 'scary.'"

In this guest essay, Ron de-mystifies the subject of redemption. He begins by describing "one of the most memorable evenings that I have had since entering the amusement business."

Last year while attending the ACME trade show in Reno, Nev., I had the pleasure of dining at the Liberty Belle Restaurant — home of the largest collection of antique novelty games (and slot machines) in the world.

The restaurant's owner, Marshall Fey, was quick to point out that his grandfather, Charles Fey, was the inventor of the first three-reel slot machine. The Liberty Belle Restaurant publicly displays hundreds of antique slots on site, including the very first slot machine.



GaMCO's Ron Yaffe and his 'Action Lotto' at the ACME show. Ron says he's amazed at the number of operators who still haven't gotten into redemption.

After a sensational dinner of barbecued ribs, Marshall offered to take our group on a private tour. We accepted on the spot, of course! To our delight, Marshall led us into the Liberty Belle's attic — a treasure trove which houses hundreds of antique games. Most customers never get a chance to view this fabulous collection.

The games in the Liberty Belle's attic are randomly shelved, and cov-



The Liberty Belle Restaurant in Reno with it's horse-drawn carriage collection (on rooftop) and lots of antique slots and novelty games on display inside. They also serve up some of the tastiest "grub" in town (wonderful barbecued ribs, etc.)

ered with years of dust and dirt. But under the grime, you can still see the glitter and sense the excitement. Many of the games were types I'd never seen before, and Marshall had to explain how they were played.

Most intriguing of all were the 100-year-old redemption games. Yes, businessmen in this country ran redemption games nearly a century ago... and, Marshall told us, the operators of these games faced many of the same legal problems that today's operators do!

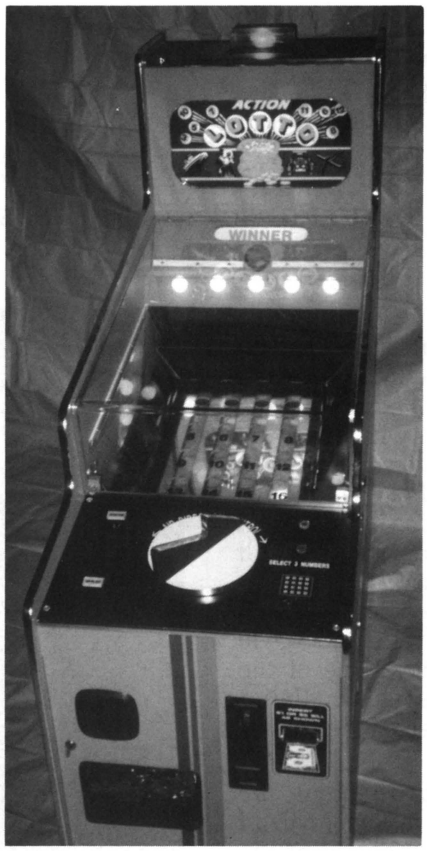
These antique redemption games had different skill levels, and when you won, a gumball or some hard fruit candy was vended. Countertops for gaming were extremely heavy (so they couldn't be "tilted" easily). I recognized some antique "redemption pinball" games (they vended candy). Some of the really strange-looking games, I never could figure out.

The point is that redemption games, not just gaming devices, have been around for a long, long time ...and the cycle is bringing them back again in a new electronic format. I'm sure our grandfathers and great-grandfathers faced the same legal questions about redemption games in their day, that we face today. There's one big difference: today's manufacturers are keenly aware of legality problems facing operators in some states. Today's redemption game manufacturers are responsible members of the community who have made "including skill features" their top priority.

The modern trend toward coin-op redemption has enjoyed a sharp rise in the past 8 months to a year. At the industry's fall, 1989 national trade show (the AMOA), many operators complained about the relative lack of truly new games. No such complaints were heard at this spring's ACME — at least not in the redemption department! Redemption is growing fast. Arcade chains are getting into the act in a major way. Most game rooms enlarge their redemption centers every year.

In fact, a new kind of entertainment facility has come into existence recently: the dedicated redemption center. The Haunted Trails amusement arcade, just outside Chicago, has one large building just for redemption games. Owner-operator Richard Oltmann gives away many prizes every single day. He also gives away a new car, once per year. He told me that redemption is a major part of his business, and that Haunted Trails' redemption center goes through millions and millions of tickets each year.

What's the lesson of all this? Redemption is here to stay. *Many vending operators and street operators say they're considering entering this new market, but are afraid to change. "Isn't redemption just a trend...a fad that's not going to*



GaMCO's 'Action Lotto' game is Ron Yaffe's latest redemption creation, designed to be completely operator-programmable. Players select three numbered pockets and then try to maneuver balls via air blasts, one into each lit numbered pocket.

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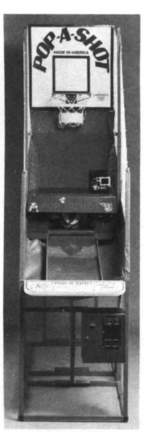

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last?" these operators ask.

The answer is a great big "no!" Think of those 100-year-old redemption games, sitting in the attic of the Liberty Belle Restaurant in Reno. This is no flash-in-the-pan!

Second, redemption should be the area of your business which you concentrate on most for the 1990s. Many operators who formerly ran only pure entertainment-type games have discovered that redemption draws a broader customer base: moms and dads, girls as well as boys, little kids as well as teenagers. Redemption operators have discovered that running classic and modern skill games, with a chance to win valuable prizes, builds repeat business. That's why adding good redemption games to your route or arcade simply makes good business sense.

If you're considering redemption games for your gamerooms or route, the best advice I can offer is: "Go for it!" I talk to people every day from all over the country, and all over the world, about redemption. What works for them. What players like. What the trends are. How to display and market the games. How to increase profitability.

Speaking on behalf of all redemption manufacturers, I can tell you we are happy to share this information with new redemption "retailers." We want to help you succeed. We regularly refer new customers to more experienced operators who can share "success stories" and give useful pointers.

Redemption games can give you and your company the boost that you have been looking for, to be successful in the 1990s.

◆

Ed Fey's 'K-O Fighters' game from 1926 (Ed is Marshall's grandfather.) The Liberty Belle is home to many of these beautiful old novelty games. As Ron Yaffe says about redemption, "this is no flash -in-the-pan!"

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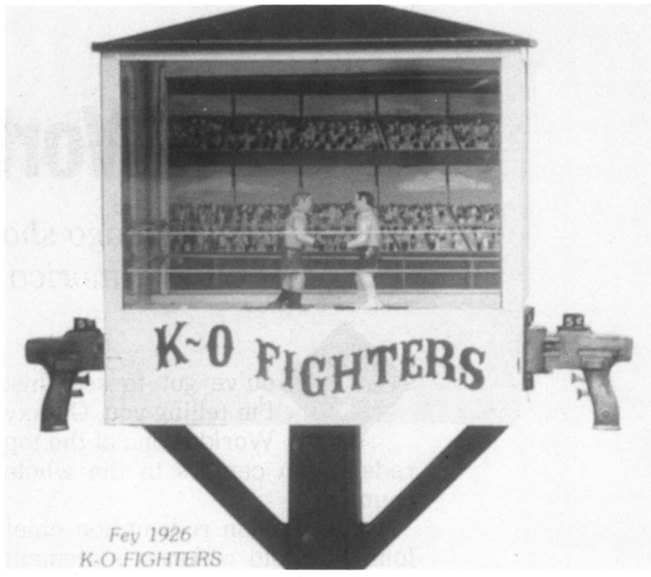

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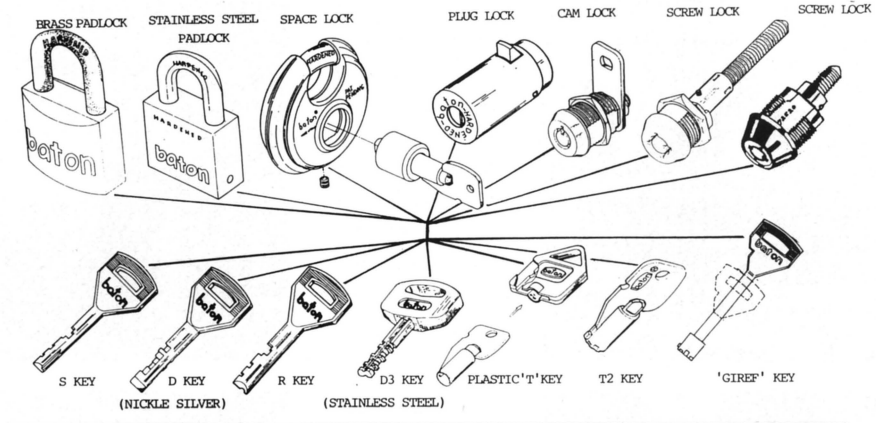

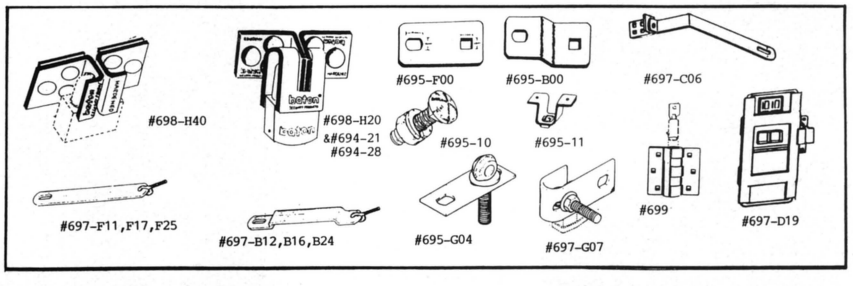

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Galaxy World

Chicago showcase arcade called "one of America's finest redemption centers"

"You've got to see this. I'm telling you, Galaxy World is one of the top redemption centers in the whole country!"

When Betson redemption chief John Margold makes a statement like that, the *RePlay* reporter listens closely, then follows along. And behold! The man from Betson spake truly.

If anything, John understated the case. Not only is Galaxy World one of the finest arcades and redemption centers we've ever seen; the Gala Lanes bowling and recreation center (of which Galaxy World is a part) also boasts one of the most attractive billiard rooms and sports bars we've ever seen. . . not to mention around 40 bowling lanes with state-of-the-art, overhead, automated, electronic scoring displays.

Gala Lanes (Naperville, Ill.) is located just 45 minutes outside of Chicago. One of three recreation centers owned by Recreation Services Ltd., the Naperville facility is run by VP and General Manager Don Cress. (More about Don and his dedicated crew later.)

ARCHITECTURE

To convey the charm of this particular site, let's start from the beginning. The Galaxy World arcade is spacious and well-designed inside. Over your head, you'll see vaulted, wooden-beamed cathedral ceilings designed by Gala's own pair of full-time carpenters and architects. Under your feet, you'll find





Left, VP & General Mgr. Don Cress at the dazzling prize counter of Galaxy World, a top-flight arcade located outside of Chicago. Right, senior assistant manager Carl Perkins and merchandise director Jim Murley.





Left, pushers and rotary merchandisers invitingly grouped together in one section say, "Come play me!" Right, beamed wooden ceilings over the video and redemption section give the arcade the feeling of a resort.





Left, living up to its name, Galaxy World displays a selection of video games against a space mural backdrop. Right, a bank of 'Skee-Balls' with bicycles displayed overhead.

thick, luxurious wall-to-wall carpet in a marbled red and black pattern, which complements the red brick walls.

The arcade is huge, but it's not an endless "warehouse" feeling with a flat, boring floor and row after predictable row of machines. Instead, the arcade is divided into several different sections: adult-themed games, redemption, pins, videos, and a small diner.

These sections are set at slightly different heights (you transverse a gentle slope, or else walk up or down a couple of carpeted steps, to change sections). Sections are also visually separated by occasional red brick spacer walls and square brick columns.

Finally, the ceiling style varies from section to section. The wooden cathedral ceiling looms over the video section, while drop ceilings rest comfortably over the diner, pinball and grown-up game section. Even in the sections with drop ceiling, a varied use of red brick columns and wall paneling breaks up the visual elements.

The result of the different wall, floor and ceiling patterns is a refreshing sense of variety and texture. You don't get tired of being here. (Those in-house architects and carpenters really earned their money.)

The arcade contains a total of 180 games of all types. The carpeted floors are vacuumed daily — and they look it. No dirt, no trash, no muddy footprints. The machines are shiny and clean. The glass is clean. The chrome is polished. The place sparkles. It looks clean enough to eat off the floors. Dr. Kildare could probably perform open-heart surgery on any one of the games.

REDEMPTION GAMES

As you enter Galaxy World, you first see a single, small section (perhaps 40 square feet) which features games for grown-ups. These are arranged in a square on a slightly





Above, in a special corner of its own is Konami's 'TMNT,' surrounded by eager kids even at 2PM on a weekday. Right, Jim Murley designed this handsome floor-to-ceiling prize showcase, which is set into a red brick wall. Prizes displayed change with the seasons and holidays.



◆

Kids love this bank of Meltec redemption games at Galaxy World.

◆

elevated section of the arcade floor. Prominent here is Betson's lotto- and card-themed redemption games, *Lotto Fun* and *Reel Fun*. Both vend tickets.

Galaxy World puts a major emphasis on a generous selection of family-style ticket-vending redemption games, too. A little ways past the grown-up games, you'll find Doyle's *Hoop Shot* basketball cage; 11 banked *Skee-Balls;* six Meltec *Boom Balls* or *Big Mouths;* plus a healthy sprinkling of cranes, pushers and rotaries like *Big Choice, Rebound, Silver Ski* and others from such as Coin Concepts, Yankee Games, etc.

REDEMPTION PRIZES

Redemption prizes are displayed everywhere. As you first enter the redemption area, you pass an eye-catching, glass-front showcase which is built right into one of the red brick walls. Approximately 6 x 6 feet, the showcase goes from the floor almost to the ceiling of that particular spacer wall. (There's an 8' high drop ceiling at this point.) The showcase features oak trim and glass shelves which display attractively-arranged merchandise which is regularly changed and updated to reflect the season. During our visit, around St. Patrick's Day, the showcase featured such Irish-themed items as green teddy bears wearing Leprechaun caps, pots of "gold," Shamrocks, etc.

Continuing into the redemption area, you pass a bank of cranes, each well-stocked with plush toys. A few feet further on, three bicycles sparkle atop the bank of ski alleys. The bikes are lighted in their own showcase by recessed bulbs.

THE PRIZE COUNTER

The center of the redemption area is the arcade's real showpiece, and the heart of the Galaxy World: the redemption prize counter. The whole thing looks vaguely like the bridge from the "Starship Enterprise." It's a gleaming, glittering, glass-and-chrome hexagon with a silvery mesh hexagonal drop ceiling suspended above it. Waist-high glass counters on each of the six sides contain prizes from the low-end (trinkets and plush) to the high end (TV sets, VCRs, telephones, electronics, appliances, etc.). Behind the counters, in the center of the hexagon, stands a floor-to-ceiling glass-encased prize showcase containing everything from tiny teddy bears to giant plush animals.



At left, the man with the big smile is John Sisson is Director of Overseas Sales for Barcrest, the British firm which makes the ticket-vending 'Reel Poker' games seen here. Center is Galaxy World's Don Cress, while Betson redemption topper John Margold stands at right.

VIDEO AND PINS

The video game section intersects the redemption area and includes a full mix of the latest uprights and sitdowns. Games are spaced far enough apart to give a feeling of ease and luxury. No frenetic bang-bang, zap-zap here; Galaxy World is a place to settle in, relax, have fun . . . and spend some serious time and money.

Illustrating the "galaxy" theme, a painted wall mural in the video game section portrays a sweeping vista of planets, meteors and starry skies with a cratered moonscape in the foreground. Recessed lighting brings out the colors superbly. A long mirrored wall surrounds and offsets the mural.

Pins have a section to themselves, in the opposite corner from the video area and elevated to a slightly different height. It's an appealing area where the pinball fanatic can move from flipper to flipper, concentrating on new games and classics as he bats the silver ball around the playfields.

GALAXY WORLD'S PEOPLE

Don Cress runs a tight ship, but it's a happy ship. The customers are happy. The staff is happy. (They smile even when you're not looking.) For his part, Don leads by example and enthusiasm. Neatly dressed and barbered himself, his uniformed, smiling crew of young men and women look like the cast of a hypothetical TV show which should be called "What's Right with America."

When Don walks past a cigarette butt or piece of paper, he stops. He bends down. He picks it up and throws it away. So does everybody else who works there.

"I believe in the team concept," said Don. "Everybody contributes."

Everybody else at the place believes in the team concept, too. Carl Perkins, the senior assistant manager. Jim Murley, the director of merchandising. And a host of others. Galaxy World is staffed with one or two attendants during the day, and up to five or six on weekend nights.

That is, five or six *officially*. Unofficially, that number can go higher. "We staff members come here sometimes for fun in our off-hours," explained Jim. "We like to play the games, too. But if it's extra-busy, we put in voluntary overtime to help each other out."

Translation: sometimes these amazing folks work those overtime hours without pay. Figure that one out in this age of Donald Trump and hospital strikes! When Galaxy World staffers do perform voluntary overtime work, or render some other assistance "above and beyond the call of duty," Don Cress finds a way to reward them. He confers some special privilege or recognition that lets people know how much he appreciates their contribution.

As for Don himself . . . well, he's here from opening till closing. Every day.

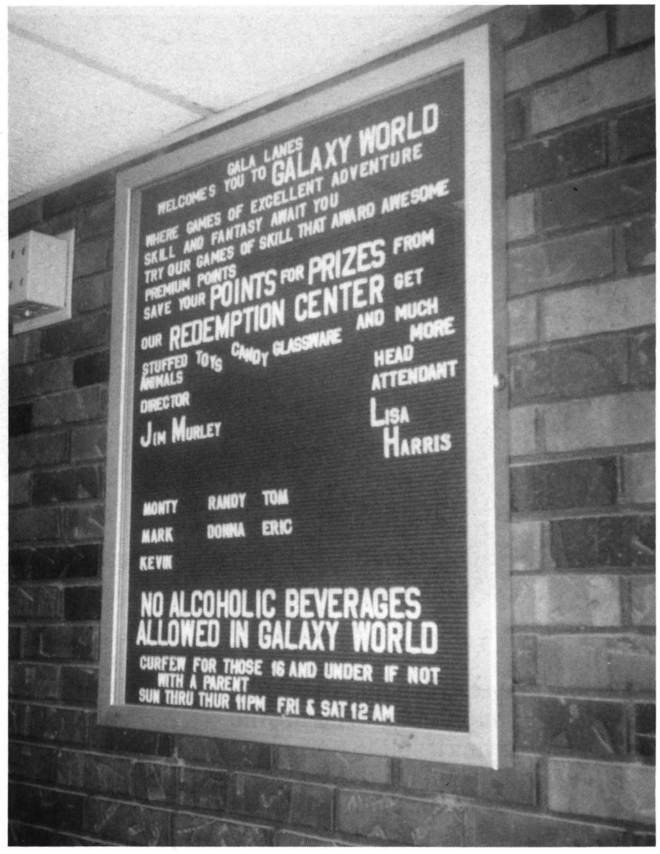
Team spirit, he calls it.

Leadership, we call it.

REDEMPTION PHILOSOPHY

But to get to the reason why Betson's John Margold called our attention to Galaxy World in the first place, here's what Don Cress has to say about redemption.

"We've been into redemption for years. It's the way the country is going now," stated the Gala Lanes VP. "Our philosophy is to entertain the players with the games, and to encourage them by giving away plenty of tickets and tokens. We set our machines to give out tickets at a ratio of at least 35% (one ticket vended every third play, or better) and we monitor them weekly. That means we're giving players a real chance to win some very nice prizes, if they play long enough. You can drop the win percentage down to 20% or 12%," Don explained, "but it has a detrimental effect on the business.



This sign tells you who Galaxy World is and what they're all about: nice folks, helping players have fun!

"We have nine differently colored tickets, each with a different point value," Don continued. "We also use three different types of tokens. The signs at the prize counter, and more signs next to various games, show the number of points needed to win each prize. We use differently-valued tickets to save on overhead costs on buying and awarding tickets. For instance, instead of awarding 15 blue tickets worth one point each, you can save by awarding five yellow tickets worth three points each.

"We stock items of every price, from a penny up to $400," Don stated. "When we find we're overstocked with certain prizes, we lower the point values required to win that particular merchandise. We also run regular promotions, such as giving 10% extra value for each ticket on Tuesday nights. This gives you three advantages: it brings in extra people, and it makes them extra happy because they're getting a bargain. Also, you get back a lot



Action is going on at the prize counter and on the Capcom video game.



A spanking-clean diner of almost geometric design is located in one corner of the arcade. Fast food and soft drinks are served.

of the tokens you gave out over earlier!"

Some players, like the little kids, get a thrill simply out of winning the game and having it spit 15 tickets out at them, while bells and buzzers go off and lights flash. These tots may march right up to the prize counter and trade their tickets in for a comb or trinket that very minute.

Other players — perhaps members of the older, family crowd — are more conscious of "value." Some of them have learned to save up their tickets over extremely long periods of time, aiming for a really top-quality prize.

"We had a young couple in here not too long ago," Don recalled, "who won a TV and a VCR with a year's worth of tickets. They were just as happy as they could be. They thanked us, not only for the prizes, but mostly for the year's worth of fun. The TV and the VCR, they said, were an extra reward."

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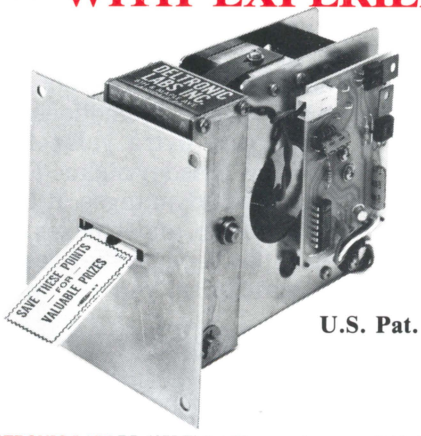

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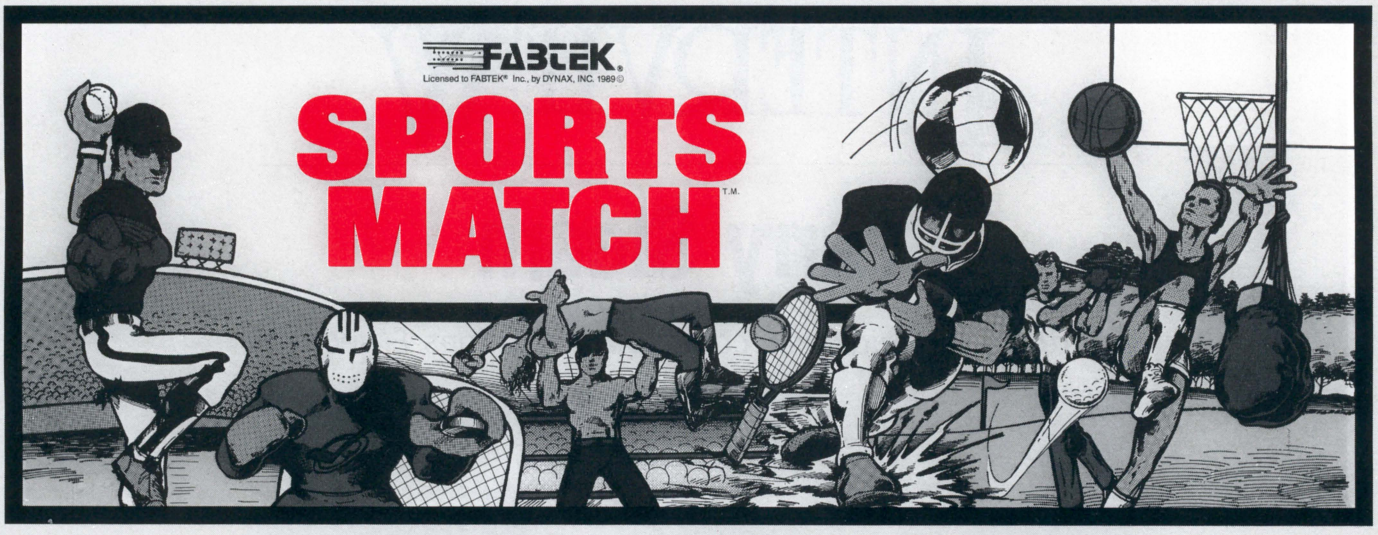

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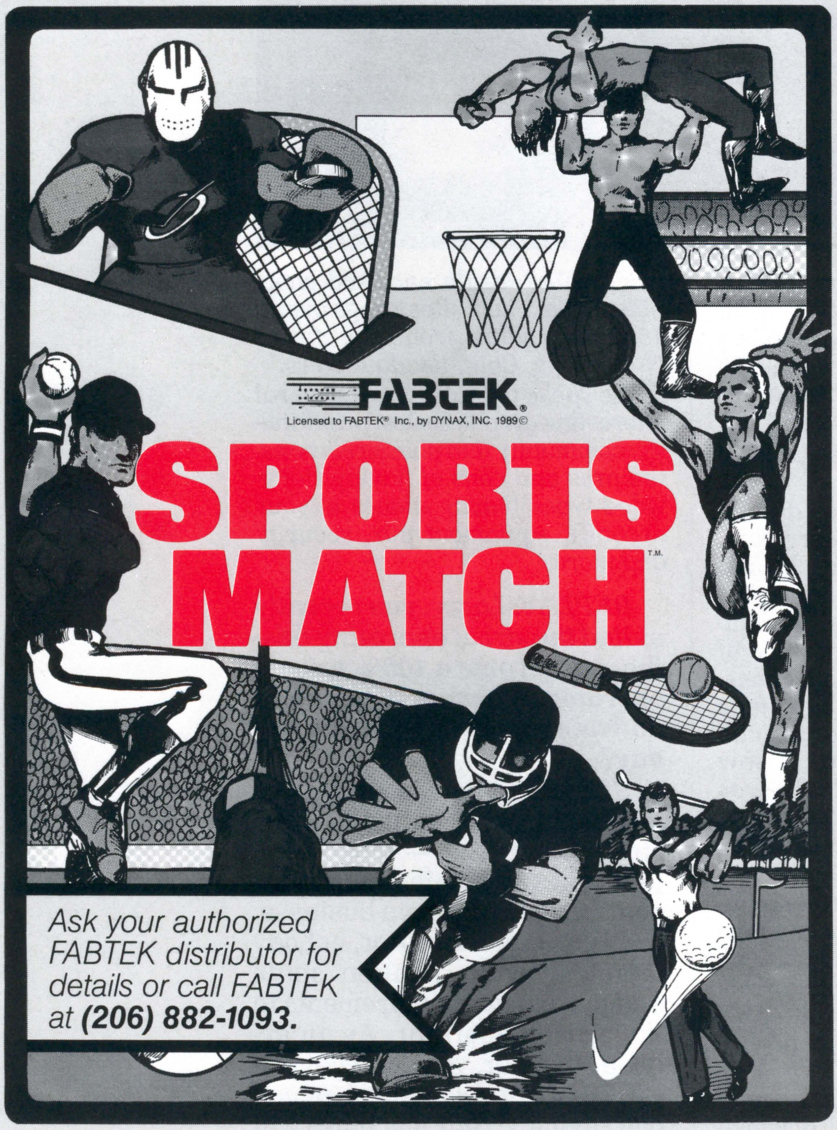

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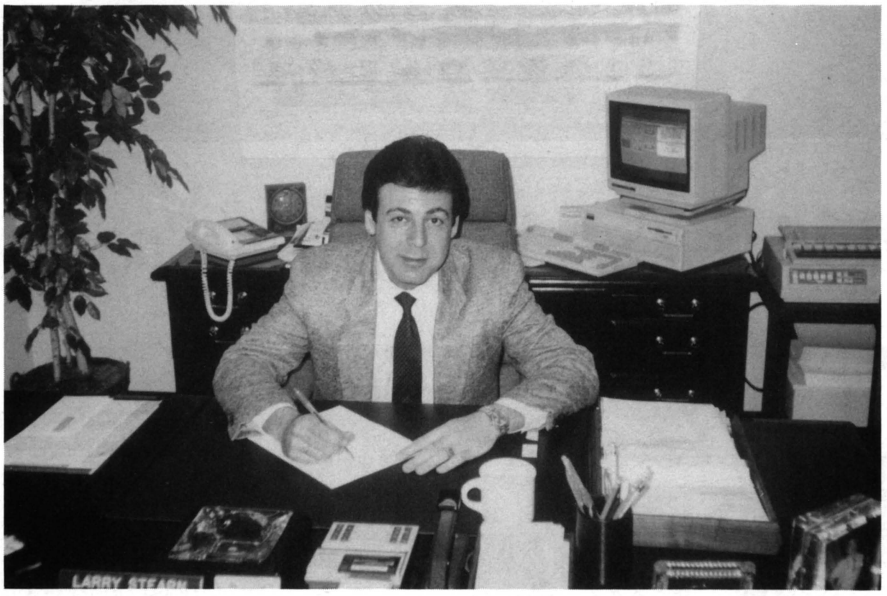
INTERVIEW

Larry Stearn

handling financial risk, community relations & security



Arcade operator Larry Stearn brings a unique perspective to the arcade business. He first entered the coin machine industry in 1979, when he went to work for the great Al Bettelman (C.A. Robinson & Co. distributors in Los Angles) until 1984.

"I learned the business at C.A. from the ground up," Larry said. "I began by unloading trucks and shopping out machines, under the guidance of Sal Giannone." Gradually he moved up to the position of sales and receivable collections. "That job brought me face to face with every kind of operator you can imagine," Larry recalled. "I saw who was successful and who was not. This taught me what to do as an operator . . . and more importantly, what not to do!"

Larry started his own street route several years ago, then opened arcades. He began operating full-time in 1984. Last year, he sold off his street business to concentrate on arcades exclusively. Today, as proprietor of L.A. Amusement Corp., Larry owns and manages eight Southern California arcades, all of which are located inside enclosed shopping malls. Their sites range over a 180-mile radius from the firm's Northridge, Calif. headquarters.

We spoke to Larry about several interesting arcade issues: profitability, community and police relations, the pros and cons of having Hollywood types filming scenes in your arcades, equipment mix, security and more.

REPLAY: Larry, you recently exited the street operating business to become a 100% arcade operator. What are the ups and downs of operating arcades today?

STEARN: Arcade operators enjoy many advantages over street operators — mostly the fact that you retain much more control over your own business. Unlike a street operator, nobody dictates costly location splits and purchasing requirements to the arcade operator. As an arcade operator, you don't have to worry about receiving a phone call saying, "Your machines will

be out in the street if I don't get an additional 5% commission . . . which is what the new guy on the street is offering." Also, cosmetic and mechanical wear and tear (not to mention vandalism) are kept at a bare minimum.

REPLAY: Do any special problems go along with running a purely-arcade business which has no street route to support it?

STEARN: One challenge is that it's a difficult industry for employee recruitment. The compensation and benefits are lower than those offered by other types of retailers, so a smaller labor pool is attracted to our industry. Fortunately, our company enjoys the services of two key people: my father Gil (our VP), and our service manager Corey Metcalf. My dad is the person I value most in my business for advice and integrity. By the way, his industry experience dates back to the 1970s, when he ran a restaurant which included vending machines! Corey, my other most trusted team member, is also a seasoned veteran who has worked in the industry for almost a decade.

REPLAY: Beyond pros and cons which are unique to arcades, what's your take on operating in general today?

STEARN: If you're talking about arcade operators as a whole, we have three distinct advantages: one, we're a cash business, not accounts receivable. Second, once you hit your break-even point, all revenue coming in above that is profit. (In other retail businesses, you still have additional product cost after reaching your break-even point.) Third, the day after Christmas, you don't have customers with any sales returns!

REPLAY: Since you're located in shopping malls, you must feel enormous relief every post-Christmas season, as you watch all those retail stores making refunds on sweaters that didn't fit, etc. — and knowing you don't have that headache!



In front of Northridge, California's Space Station arcade are L.A. Amusement's arcade supervisor Mark Robinson, President Larry Stearn and (his dad) VP Gil Stearn.

STEARN: As far as disadvantages, I think all amusement operators — whether in arcades or street routes — face a couple of chronic economic problems. One is rising costs which aren't offset by rising revenues. Comparing your balance sheet year to year, you'll see a continual rise in the costs of insurance, rents, labor, utilities and equipment (whether dedicated or conversion). We're one of the few industries which lacks a way to pass these rising costs onto our customers.

REPLAY: So achieving that necessary return on your investment is getting harder.

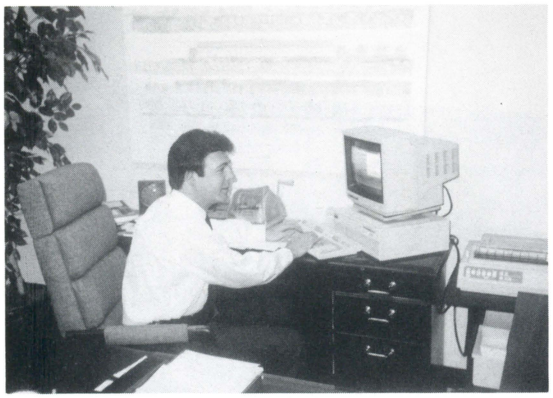
STEARN: Yes. Also, when you weigh the negatives of our industry (such as often-hostile public opinion, difficulty of conventional bank financing, and the overall volatility of our business), the rate of return should be much higher. The classic economic theory is that the higher the risk, the higher the return should be. (Smiles) Makes sense, doesn't it?

REPLAY: Does the arcade business become less risky, if you operate a bigger chain of stores? Or is it simply the same risk, with larger consequences for failure?

STEARN: It probably depends on two key factors. First, type of location. Second, expertise in management. Any giant company can make a huge profit in dollars, even if they're working with a fairly slim profit margin. Smaller firms don't have that luxury.

REPLAY: But on the whole, you feel it's the management skills of the operator, not the size of the operation, that makes the difference?

STEARN: Yes. In this industry, you must be well-capitalized to keep operating. Many operators, I feel, have never sat down and pencilled out what it actually costs to operate their business.





Left, Larry Stearn's operation management is completely computerized. Right, Service Manager Corey Metcalf at work.

REPLAY: The old story: lots of cash flow, masking little real profit. You have said that your own management style is a "hands-on approach." How does that apply to service?

STEARN: We have constant maintenance. It's rare that we have machines out of order for any length of time. Our service manager trains store managers to do the minor repairs and maintenance on machines.

REPLAY: You're also "hands on" in the sense of having plenty of staff present in each store, right?

STEARN: Our stores are fully staffed at all times. The amount of staff depends on the size of the store, the time of day, day of the week and time of year.

REPLAY: Does your "hands-on approach" mean being highly image-conscious?

STEARN: Very much so. We pride ourselves on presenting clean, functioning machines which are constantly maintained, both cosmeticly and mechanically.

REPLAY: We noticed that the *Ms. Pac-Man* in this particular arcade looks like new.

STEARN: Store cleanliness is as important to us as machine upkeep. Carpeting on floors and walls, with the addition of our track lighting, offer a showroom appearance. Our lighting level is very carefully controlled: it's bright enough to be safe, but

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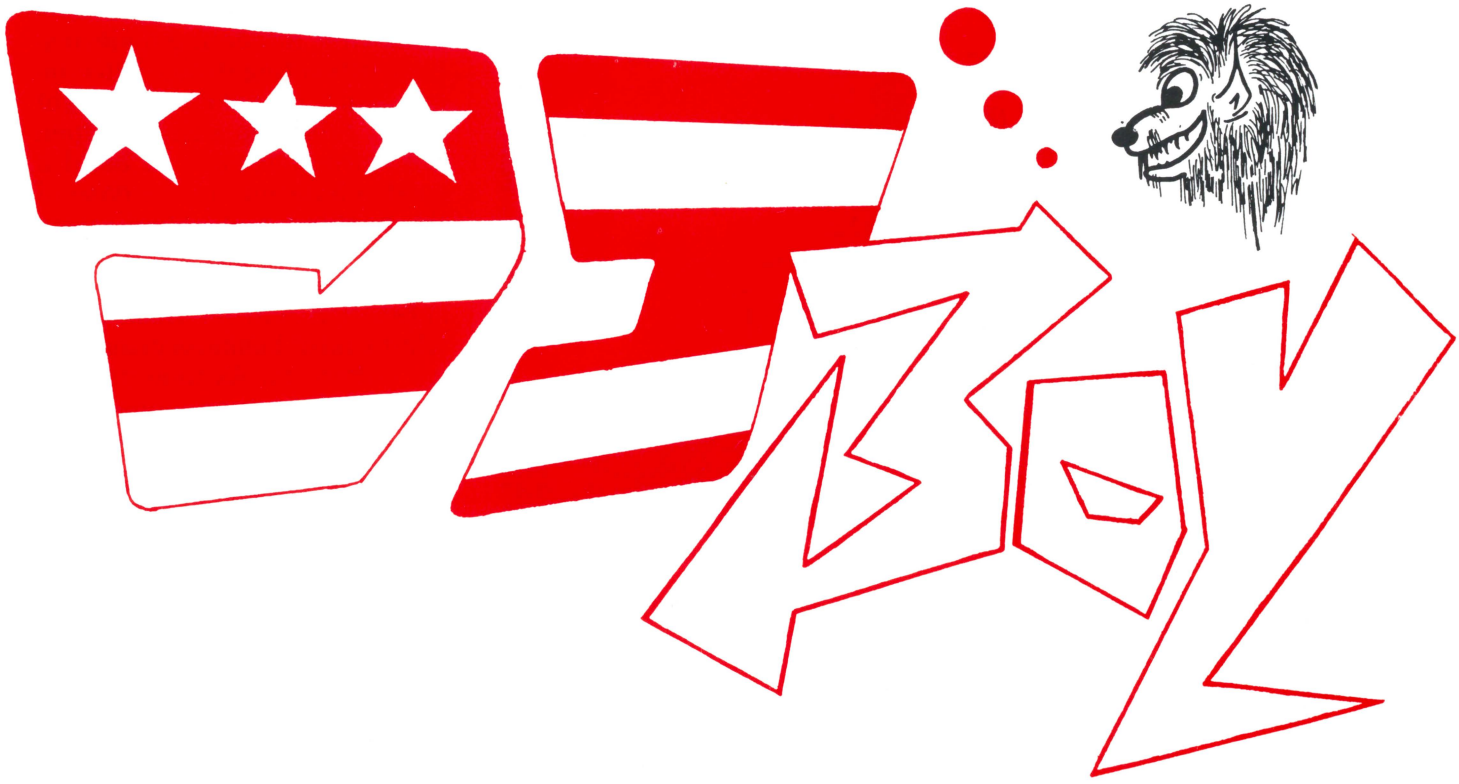

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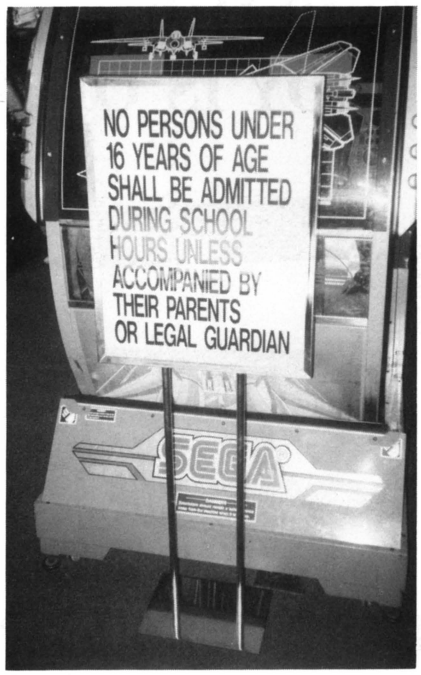
dark enough so players can see the screens.

REPLAY: Have you always done these things, or has this approach evolved over time?

STEARN: We've always done them. Being involved from the distributor end, and seeing the appearance of other operations, we tried to initiate things which would be more positive. We want all walks of the community to feel comfortable coming into our stores.

REPLAY: Ah, yes — the arcade's relationship with the community. It can be a blessing or a curse. How do you handle this potentially thorny issue?

STEARN: For one thing, I'm actively involved with mall administration and other community groups. This helps to build rapport with the other merchants. They realize I'm a businessman just like they are.



REPLAY: Are there any other things you do with your fellow mall tenants?

STEARN: We've done joint promotions with other stores in the mall, in cases where our customers would be roughly the same or compatible, such as fast food stores, records stores, and toy stores.

REPLAY: Any way to measure increase in mall traffic, when a good arcade comes in?

STEARN: If the mall management does its homework and places compatible businesses in neighboring stores, the arcade and the nearby stores do feed off each other. But if you have an arcade next to a jewelry store, I doubt you're helping each other!

REPLAY: Also in the area of community relations, you're very friendly with the Los Angeles Police Department.

STEARN: Yes. Our main office in the Northridge Mall has an L.A.P.D. substation inside the mall, so it was important for myself personally and for our business to establish a "comfort level," knowing the type of business we run.

REPLAY: Did you run into any negative cliches about arcades at first?

STEARN: The usual misconceptions about gamerooms being hang-outs, attracting undesirables, attracting drugs. This image can't be overturned right away. From the time you open the store, you have to build a good reputation. In the case of this particular site, I took the initiative to introduce myself to the law enforcement officers at the substation and let them know what kind of business principles we adhere to. As time passed, they saw from our actions — not just our words — that we were and are responsible members of the business community. In fact, after closing hours, our game room has hosted the "Police Explorers." This is a group for teens (under L.A.P.D. supervision) who want to learn about law enforcement.

REPLAY: Since you're headquartered 20 miles from Hollywood, do many TV shows ask to use your arcades as a backdrop for filming?

STEARN: This has happened on several occasions, but we only allow crews to film here when the event would create a positive impression of the industry. If it's a question of using our arcade as the site for a criminal element in a police show, we turn them down.

REPLAY: What filming requests have you granted?

STEARN: Most recently, we allowed CBS Evening News to use our store to film a report on flight simulators. It was broadcast nationally, anchored by Dan Rather. Another report, filmed for PBS three years ago, showed how games can help autistic children improve hand-eye coordination.

REPLAY: Let's turn now to the nitty-gritty of arcade management. What kind of game

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mix do you offer?

STEARN: We try to offer a variety so that every type of customer who comes in will find something they want to play. Our basic mix is videos and pins. We do have some small toy vending machines. We re-invest substantially so we can offer new items on a steady basis, bringing us a high repeat business.

REPLAY: What's your impression of the games on the market today?

STEARN: Like most operators, I feel that far too many of the videos are punch-and-kick games. If manufacturers keep going the way they have been, with excessive numbers of repetitive themes, there's got to be player burnout. On the other hand, if a game is good, it doesn't matter whether it's a pinball, a driver, or a fighting game: it's going to earn.

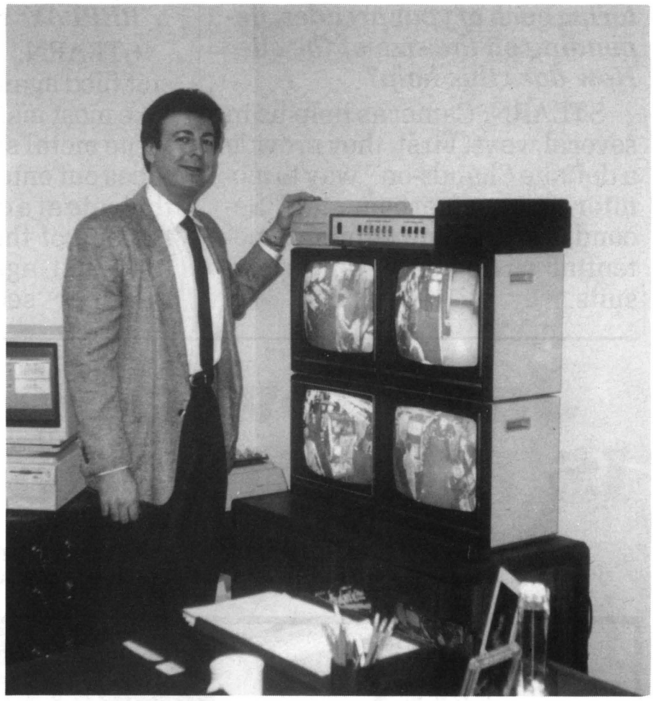
REPLAY: The obvious example here is Konami's* Turtles: *it's "another fighting game," but what a fighting game!

STEARN: If the factories would put more time, energy and dollars into R&D, and would come out with machines on a steady basis that attract people, operators would be in a position to charge higher play-prices for our form of entertainment.

REPLAY: Would you be willing to pay higher prices to support the R&D needed to create better-earning games?

STEARN: I'll answer that by way of example. Sega's *After Burner* deluxe, the moving sit-down cabinet, was a costly game. But it still earns well and still deserves — and gets — a higher price per play than you can get for many new games. Ours are still getting 50 cents when many newer videos don't justify that price. I haven't yet seen Sega's new aviation simulator, by the way.

REPLAY: What's your feeling about redemption games?



Larry Stearn has from one to four cameras monitoring each of his arcades, depending upon their size. They've already helped in a customer liability case and are also helpful in supervision of gameroom staff.

STEARN: We have not been aggressive toward redemption equipment, due to the negative attitude that local law enforcement has taken toward crane machines.

REPLAY: You're computerized. How do you decide it's time to rotate or sell old units?

STEARN: That decision is derived from two points: weekly earning trends, and potential resale value. Unless a game is a top hit like *Turtles,* we normally don't buy one for each store. That way, we do get more longevity from a particular piece of equipment by rotating it among our various arcades. Also, since there are fewer people in the industry than in the early 1980s, and since the factories are building much smaller production runs today than they did in the days of *Pac-Man,* a product which might be three or four months old is new to a customer, when it is rotated into a different store.

REPLAY: Security is an issue you're very concerned about. You've said that game coin doors and cabinets should be more like those found on Las Vegas slot machines.

STEARN: With the exception of a coin changer, most games or machines in our industry can be broken into, in about 30 seconds by anyone with a screwdriver and a little knowledge. And if you compare a new video game to a new slot machine, the security in the comparably-priced slot machine is far superior.

REPLAY: What about game alarms, locks, bars and other security products?

STEARN: You don't need alarms on arcade games if you have good employee supervision of the store. As far as putting security hasps on all your machines, it definitely undermines the appearance you want to create of an inviting, friendly arcade atmosphere.

REPLAY: What kind of problems have you had with vandalism and break-ins?

STEARN: Very limited. We've exercised good supervision. But I'd still like to see better security on machines, such as tamper-proof meters! In other words, a machine would not function if a meter is disconnected.

REPLAY: You have one to four video tape cameras moni-

toring each of your arcades, depending on the size of the site. How does this help?

STEARN: Cameras help us in several ways. First, they provide a definite "hands-on" way to monitor your gameroom staff. Second, they help to eliminate potential customer liability lawsuits.

REPLAY: For example?

STEARN: We had a liability suit filed against us a while back. Like most mall stores, we have a large metal security gate which faces out onto the mall. We close this gate at a certain time toward the end of the day. A customer filed suit against us, claiming that our security gate came down on his head, giving him a concussion. We reviewed our video tapes for that day, and saw that the customer actually received only a glancing blow on the hand, not on the head. The contact clearly wasn't serious, because the tape showed that after the gate closed, the customer remained in the store and continued to play games.

REPLAY: What happened?

STEARN: We sent a copy of the tape to his attorney. The case still hasn't been settled, but the plaintiff is now on his third attorney and we're quite confident the matter eventually will be settled in our favor!

REPLAY: To conclude, let's look at trends and directions for the American arcade of tomorrow. Many tradesters note a trend toward larger and larger stores, the indoor entertainment complex with food, golf, bowling, arcades, etc. Is this the wave of the future?

STEARN: I think it would depend on the demographics of the area. Possibly where you have more inclement weather, that philosophy would work better. In areas such as Southern California, you have good outdoor weather for the mountains and beaches most of the year, as well as other choices for entertainment such as Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Magic Mountain and Universal Studios. Given the high price of space rental and build-out, the very large size entertainment complex could be cost-prohibitive in certain areas.

REPLAY: So how do you feel about the future?

STEARN: Considering the long-term history of our industry, I feel that as long as there are adolescents and games with good play appeal, presented in the proper atmosphere, there will always be a necessity for our form of entertainment.

REPLAY: Thank you for your time and your thoughts.

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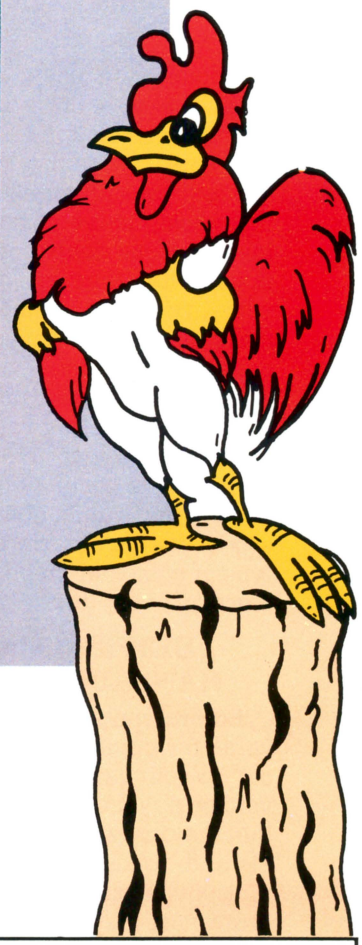

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Pricing is a basic principle to every business. Price merchandise too high and customers will not be interested; price merchandise too low and you can't make a profit. In the redemption game business, pricing decisions center on the token/ticket value that *you* establish. In your arcade or gameroom, customers view prizes by point value, not dollars and cents.

Because you set the payout for your machines and you assign the point value to your prizes, the value of a point is completely up to you. Setting that value, giving the point a book value, determines both the type of customer you'll see and the worth of every item in your arcade.

DETERMINING & HANDLING PAYOUT

Before you assign an exchange value for points, consider the payout for your games. If you set a high volume payout, customers will feel that they are winning "tons" of tickets and "buckets" of tokens. Winning such treasures will often generate more play and encourage new players. But handling volumes of paper and tokens is not always convenient. Reducing the volume of payout may cut down on the number of players and the amount of traffic, but may attract the adult player or invite extended play.

Particularly if you set a high volume of payout, different value points should be different colors. This allows redemption attendants to distinguish point values easily. It also avoids disagreements between your players and employees.

Tickets can be quickly counted by using a measured counter surface. Mark on the counter top the length of a five- or ten-ticket strip. Stretch strips of tickets across this length repeatedly, counting 10, 20, 30 tickets and so on. This method saves a lot of time at a busy counter. Short strips or loose tickets can then be counted separately.

We advise employees to announce the total to the customer before disposing of the tickets or mixing them in with other used tickets. This allows them to recount if necessary. After your count and the customer's count agree, destroy or dispose of the tickets.

Tokens can be counted either by a counting hopper, a counting machine, or by a scale. Whichever method is used, remember to keep each customer's tokens separate until you agree on the count.

VALUE IS THE POINT

Giving the point an exchange value is the heart of your business. Many systems have been used over the years for valuing the point and pricing merchandise, but those systems may not have accounted for your needs at your locations. You must design a system that fits the needs of your location, your customer type and your business style.

Any system for pricing must strike a balance between the number of tokens or tickets dispensed per coin played and the dollar value of the prize. If you want low point values for your prizes, then you will have to set your games to pay fewer points. If you want lots of points pouring out of your machines, then you will have to live with high point values for your prizes. For each dollar played in a machine, an appropriate value of points must be dispensed. If you want a 30% payout, for each dollar played, 30¢ in point value will be awarded. We will discuss setting the payout in a future article.

Basically, there are two approaches to valuing the point:

Focus on the point value of the prize: You may want the point value stickers on your prizes to be lower than the competition's; you may want customers to think that the prizes are very easily won. Begin by designing an appropriate pricing system for your prizes. Usually, if you have a high-traffic location with high-volume turnover of merchandise, the point value for prizes can be higher. Locations with few games and less traffic often keep the point value low.

For instance, in a high-traffic location with many machines and many types of games, an $8 prize can be priced at 800 points. In a smaller, quieter location, that same $8 prize may be priced at 240 points. For a customer in the busy location, 800 points may not seem like too much; in the quiet, smaller location 240 may also seem "just right." You can avoid what we call "sticker shock" — the shock the customer feels on seeing the enormous point values on the more expensive prizes. If you focus on the point value for your prizes, then you must adjust the payout of your machines.

Focus on the payout of the games: You may be more concerned that the machines pour out tickets and the activity and excitement of your gameroom overwhelm the customer. Ringing bells and flashing lights and the jingle of tokens dropping into the bin can create a carnival atmosphere. Customers may enter your lively arcade thinking that "everyone's a winner" and not pay much attention to the sticker prices. If you set your machines to pay out liberally, then the pricing of your prizes will be higher. Each point may only be worth ½¢, ¼¢ or less. An $8 prize may require a 1600- or even a 2400-point price sticker .

All retail stores survive on what is commonly called "mark-up," the difference between the wholesale price and the retail price. Because a redemption center is fundamentally a retail store, the prizes — your merchandise — should be priced with a mark-up. When thinking of the price of a prize, you should consider both the purchase price and your overhead: rent, labor, freight, equipment, taxes, etc. Prize pricing may be as important to success as equipment, location and other factors.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, problems or solutions, we would like to hear from you. As president of Coin Concepts, I enjoy hearing about and exploring new challenges in the redemption game industry. Until next time, good luck in redemption games.

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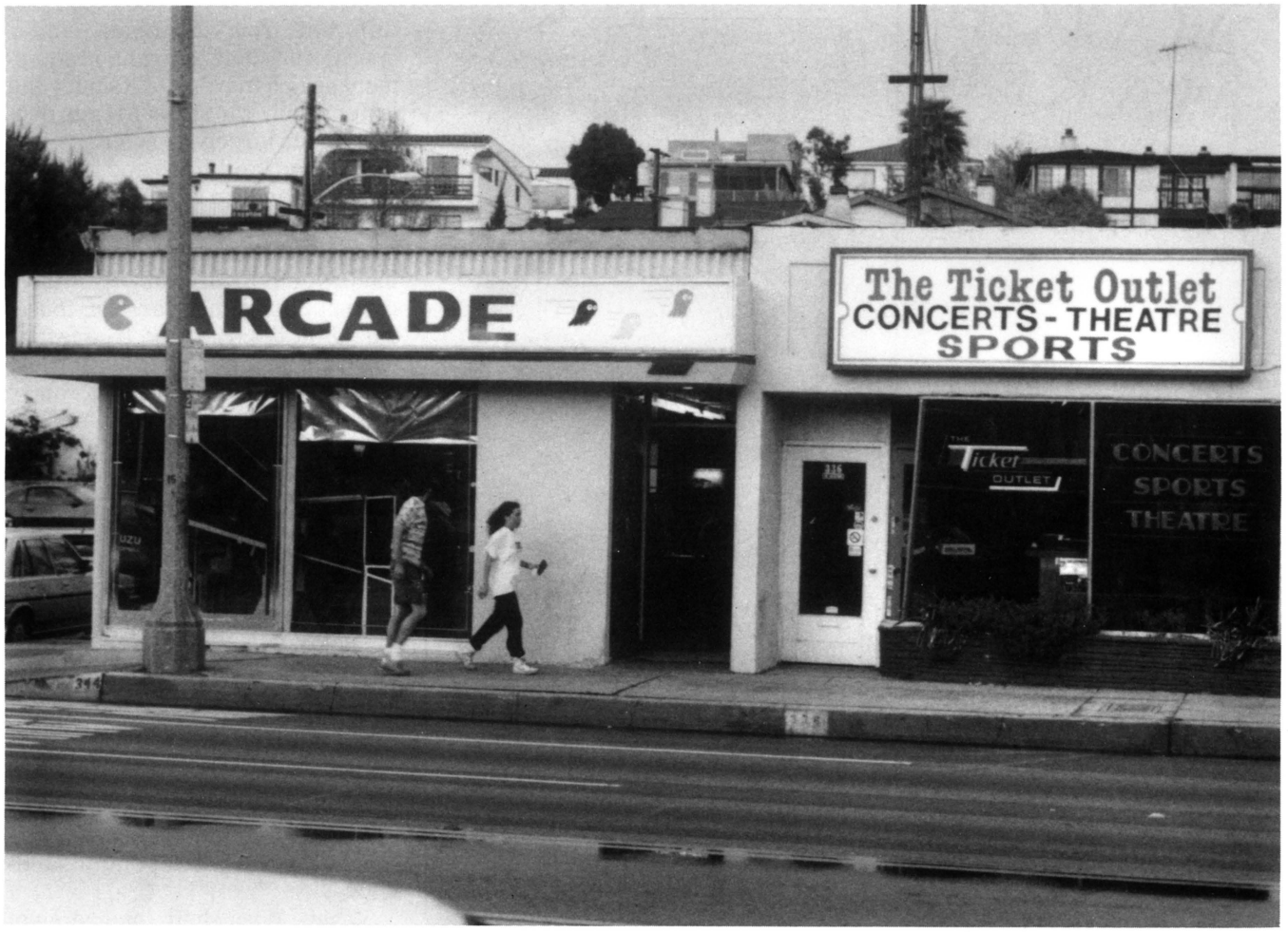

Straw Poll

income and buying about even-steven at street centers polled by RePlay, but optimism remains generally high

ame centers at shopping malls, theme parks, pizza chains and sports centers often get the attention of trade pundits these days. However, the older public perception of the "arcade" is the single site store on the street.

Be it called a Fun Factory or a Tilt or any combination of the buzz phrases that spun from the original "penny arcade" label, one of the oldest cottage industries within the amusement machine business has been the independent game room . . . often owned by a mom and pop, pretty much the same way the Italian immigrants ran grocery stores in the cities and towns across America, before the supermarket chains put so many of them out to pasture.

RePlay zeroed in on the independent operators of America's street arcades for a straw poll in this special issue. The very phrase "street arcade" may sound like a contradiction of terms (since the first word has been associated with route operations and the second with game centers). But trade people know exactly what the phrase means and it was to a selection of these street arcade owners that the magazine went with its latest questionnaire. If some data from one or more off-street arcades snuck into the research, we hope it's inconsequential.

The chief concerns of street arcade operators are largely the same as for their brothers who run routes. Actually, some of the people who responded to the poll probably operate a route of sorts, apart from their one or more gamerooms. Thoughts today gravitate toward equipment prices and sameness of game themes, and the corresponding thoughts about raising play pricing and finding ways to bring players back to the coin slot with "something more imaginative than we've seen in recent times."

Of course, arcade operators have

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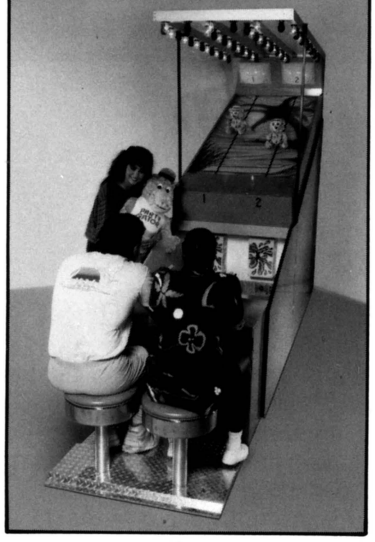

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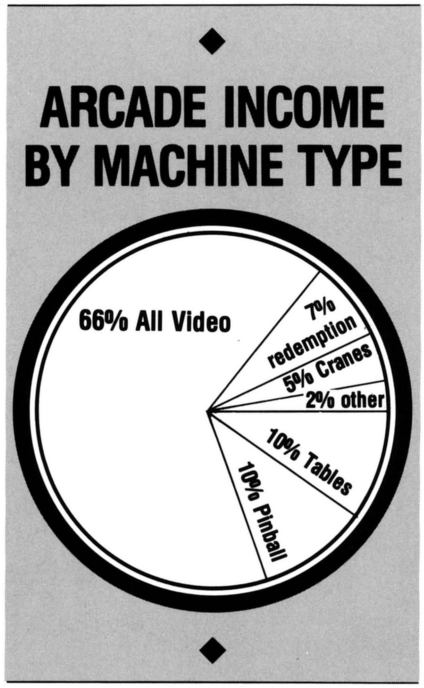

their unique problems, like rent increases and the heartbreaking poison of gangs (and druggies) who can claim the game center as their "turf" and rip the cloth on any attempt to create a family fun center environment. Be these places on city streets, in strip centers in small towns or in open air shopping centers, the glare of the lights and romance of amusement machines attracts some very different people for some very different reasons.

The focus group of game center owners we approached finds overall business generally flat. Compared to this time last year, 30% say their business is **up;** 30% think it's just about the **same;** while 40% find it **off.** One way to spark up the place is to inject some fresh, new games and while many believe spring to be the hottest buying season for arcade people, the truth today is that summer is stronger (according to operators polled in this survey, summer is the hottest buying season and fall is the slowest).

Only 15% of the polled operators think they'll be buying **more** new equipment this season compared to spring of 1989. While 45% say they intend to buy about the **same** amount as last spring, 40% predict they'll end up buying **less.** But, what will they buy?

This group of tradesters is quite different from the chain center operators. While redemption equipment seems to be a hot item for the latter group, the street arcade people remain largely a meat and potatoes crowd (i.e., video and pinball). To give readers a quick look at their game mix, every one who responded to the poll has videos and pins, but fewer than three out of ten have redemption games (and of those, *Skee-Ball* the tried and true father of redemption, is their favorite). Just over 28% have cranes and/or rotary prize machines on location. They are twice as heavy on table games like pool, air hockey and soccer.

As such, it then comes as no surprise that their number one equipment buy this spring will be in video — first kits, then dedicated machines. Their third class on the buying list will be pinball, followed by sitdown videos (when the money and expected earnings are there) and in fifth place comes redemption. The popular newspaper sobriquet "video arcade" is quite accurate when describing street centers, although pinball seems to be the jelly in this peanut butter sandwich.

Where does their income stem from? Again, that's obvious, predominately from video. But we asked them to be specific and here's how the earnings pie breaks down for this industry group.

All video 66%
Pinball machines 10%
Table games 10%
Redemption games 7%
Cranes/rotaries 5%
All others 2%

("Others" includes kiddie rides and a surprising but logical "jukeboxes").

As mentioned, fewer than one third of our polled operators have redemption equipment on stage. Nevertheless, we asked them to "guesstimate" the value in prizes they give out for winning tickets or tokens; the averaged-out number came to 26.5% of the cash box on these games. (By the way, the overwhelming number of operators strictly vend tickets on redemption, rather than redeemable tokens.) The biggest prizes they remember



◆

Fewer than three out of ten of our respondents have redemption games. Of those, the tried & true 'Skee-Ball' is their favorite. Just over 28% have cranes and/or rotary prize machines on location, and are twice as heavy on table games.

◆

awarding included radios and TVs and "a large Gumby."

How about the prize machines? According to this report, just about 30% of the cash box intake is given back in crane and rotary awards.

This was a "quick read" of a "brief poll" and hardly an in-depth looksee into the minds of the people who responded. However, as with all *RePlay* questionnaires, this included the chance to get personal opinions into print for the benefit of all. And that's where we go now. While the thoughts on public image, play pricing and competition may seem redundant to many, we don't believe the operators' ideas can ever be stressed enough.

The arcade business is currently stable, but I don't see it improving unless some new and different games come out that will give players continual and renewed interest in amusement machines, as well as attract new players. There are a lot of great jump, kick, punch games out, but this concept is getting old. I can see a trend towards game players wanting new-style games, but very few manufacturers seem interested and would rather stick with a "sure thing" by making another new kick, punch, jump game.

We have done quite well with such games as Tetris, Buster Bros., Klax, Hard Drivin', World Cup '90 *and other uniquely styled games which, most important of all, bring in new players. Pinballs continue to improve steadily (Williams-Bally/Midway is doing an excellent job).*

Most dedicated games continue to get too expensive to justify purchasing, even if they're really good. And so, it's of extreme importance to get the price of play up on all games, by whatever means possible (we've had success just reducing the number of "lives" per coin on new games before the player ever sees the game, so he doesn't expect more).

We also have to deal with operators who feel the best way to increase collections is not to raise the play prices, [but to] discount game tokens . . . in some cases, as low as 8 cents per token. If we're going to get the collections we deserve, everyone should work together toward a goal that will benefit all of us. Trade magazines like yours always do a good job of encouraging this, and I hope you keep it up.

a San Antonio operator

◆

I've been with coin-op for approximately 18 years. During this time, I've moved, serviced, owned, purchased and operated. For the past two years, I've owned an arcade with 40-plus pieces and business has never been so good. It takes a lot of work and hours, but this is a great business and I really enjoy it.

For the past three months, I've been trying to open more family fun centers (don't even say the word "arcade" when it comes to city council members). This industry really should try to clean up its image. Years ago, operators would wear shirts and ties to the convention. Now we look like a bunch of plumbers. If we want our profession to be taken seriously, let's start by being a lot more professional. If you want the big accounts, you have to look the part.

William Smiddy
William's Amusement, Michigan

◆

Business has been good, thanks to Turtles *and* Final Fight. *Good games are good for business. But, even they are punch and kick. The 50 cents to start and the quarter to continue should be standard. My rent just went up 5%.*

Dave Morgan
Supercade, Stockton, Calif.

◆

As in all business, expenses rise and inflation is inevitable. Consequently, our industry as a whole needs to raise prices and change the general public's point of view that gameplay should be priced at a quarter or less.

Real estate and lease rentals go up, and so does the price of equipment. Without a play price increase, the operator will do less expansion, own less equipment and earn fewer net dollars. We can't make it on volume!

Linda Fernandez
Fun Factory, Hawaii

Things are slow so far this year. We have a mall near us that opened last year and is now open late Saturday. There's a big gameroom in it, so a lot of our customers go there now. Games are expensive and the distributor always seems to be our competitor. They have just taken over a route business, so there goes more business. They always put the hot new games in there first, and we have to wait for ours. I wish they would just sell games and stop competing with us all the time.

Tacoma, Washington

◆

Gamerooms in our area are really bringing out the wrong type of people. By that, I mean the environment created by an element of people who are not considered "family-oriented." This tends to hinder the better money-spenders from playing the games. Part of this change is because pool tables have come on strong, and this invites all types of people.

Video games are average (about $40 a week gross) except for TMNT. *Pinballs are getting played again... 50 cents for one game, 3/$1 is the only way to go. Enough BS about kids not playing because of this price. They will and they do play them!*

CD music on the route at 60/40 split is also holding up well. No complaints. Looking forward to a better 1990.

Rick Williamson
8-Ball Amusement, Arkansas

◆

One of the biggest concerns we have is the growing "popularity" of gangs in our region. I'm sure that places like New York and L.A. and probably Chicago are very familiar with dealing with them. If a gang decides to "control" your arcade, it really gets sticky.

Also, it really scares me to see how much our youth considers drugs the "norm" instead of the opposite. Unfortunately, I think video game manufacturers aren't helping the gang problem with games that lend themselves to the gang appearance. Take Crime Fighters, *for instance. It looks like one gang against another. So did* Double Dragon. Granted, these games do have the good persons against the bad, but look at the general feeling of the game. Of course, if this is all I'm concerned with, I don't have many problems, do I?

Louisville, Kentucky

◆

Give us new ideas, baby! New ideas! We need distributors or manufacturers to come up with something new, so kids will come and play. The kids today don't have to come to the arcade. They can rent the game from a video store, or buy Sega and Nintendo systems. We need something they can't get at home!!!

George Grande
Funtime, Mass.

◆

Well, that's a good closing note to this essay portion. With the exception of South Florida and some other sunbelt spots, summer is the season to make money for so many arcade operators. So here's a toast in a recyclable paper cup to good weather, energetic clientele (including toddlers and grown-ups), a good number of the better new machines in the mix, and a wish that the riff raff finds a community center to hang out in.

All good fortune comes the way of those who care about their businesses, then pull up their sleeves and get the job done. Ⓡ

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Those Legal Questions

by LAURENCE MERRITT & DAVID HAGEN

Not Paying Withholding Tax is Playing With Fire!

One of the first indications that a business is not doing well is when the withholding taxes are not paid in a timely manner. Time and time again, my partner and I find that the first place business people try to cut corners, is with the withholding tax. Warning: non-payment of this tax is probably the most dangerous thing a business can do!

The IRS is *extremely* aggressive in collecting these taxes from businesses and from those who own them. Many businesses have been shut down by the IRS for failure to pay withholding tax.

Withholding taxes are referred to as "trust fund" taxes by the IRS. These taxes consist of those portions of an employee's paycheck which must be withheld by the employer. It includes state and federal income tax, as well as the employee's portion of the Social Security tax of "FICA."

The IRS takes the position that the employer collects and holds this money "in trust" for the federal government. Accordingly, once the employee is paid, the Tax Code views the withholding of these funds almost as fraud. That is why the tax law is so severe.

One of the stiff provisions of the Code is the way in which *personal liability* can arise from non-payment of these funds. Obviously, if a business is a sole proprietorship, the sole proprietor is personally responsible for the payment of taxes. But if the business is a corporation, personal liability can still attach to the principles, and even the bookkeeper, of the corporation! If the taxes are not paid, the IRS will assess against any of these individuals what they call the "100% penalty assessment."

There is a constitutional problem with assessing corporate tax obligations against principles and employees of a corporation without a hearing and due process. However, the IRS gets around this by assessing



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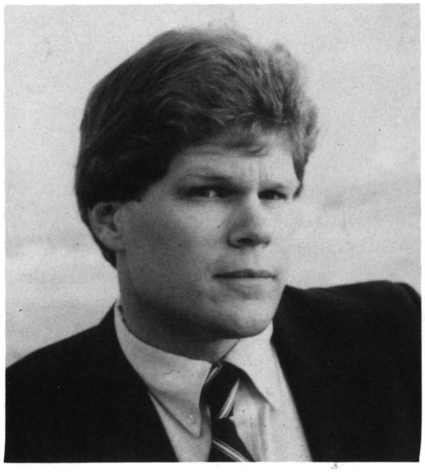


HAGEN

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.

the 100% penalty, in an amount equal to the tax due, against anyone affiliated with the corporation who was responsible for the withholding of these taxes. This can even include those persons whose signatures appear on the signature card at the bank! This is usually the first place the IRS will look to find responsible persons. It is also the first place where bookkeepers, accountants and "silent partners" usually get brought into the picture.

The IRS takes the position that it can assess the 100% penalty against as many responsible persons as it can identify. Thus, the IRS can collect this tax a number of times. However, most IRS employees will tell you that it is their *policy* to collect the tax only once.

In light of the above risks, what can be done to protect oneself? The most obvious answer is that businesses need to ensure that the employee withholding taxes are current at all times. Business people should receive some assurance from their accountants on a monthly basis that these taxes are current.

Further, if a business feels it must, at some point, choose between payment of withholding taxes, or payment of some other business debt, it is usually best to pay the taxes first.

In addition, you may want to discuss with your accountant the option of opening a withholding tax account. Here's how it works: when payroll checks are made, a check is made out to each employee for the net amount of each payroll check. In addition, sums are automatically transferred from the general account, to the tax withholding account, at the end of each pay period. This procedure is a bit more cumbersome than most businesses like, but it's the best way to ensure that withholding taxes are always up to date.

The issue of withholding taxes is not one that you would necessarily discuss with your attorney. It's a tax issue which is generally discussed with your accountant. If you have any doubts at all, you should consult your accountant immediately. Remember, the very last thing you want to do is get behind on your withholding taxes.

Dunis Deluxe

newly remodeled facilities highlight post-ACME party

"One of the most successful open houses we've ever had." So said VP Mike Damtew after Music-Vend/Dunis Distributing caught their breath, in the wake of a smashing Portland, Ore. party for operators and their families. Plenty of manufacturer reps were on hand to show off their fine games, and of course the hospitality was up to Dunis standards: first class all the way. Dunis personnel were especially proud of their newly remodeled showroom, and the spiffy new parts and service departments — for good reason!

Here are some photos taken at the Dunis affair.



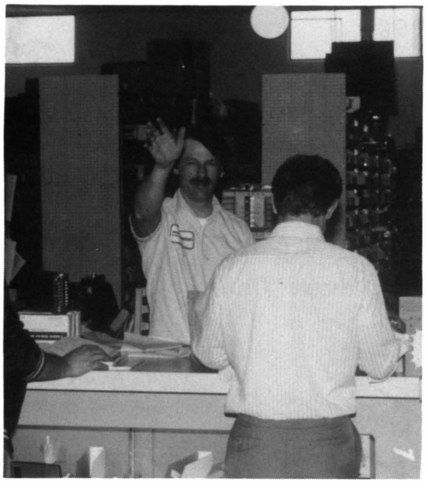
At the Dunis post-ACME product show, Dynamo's Damon Paramore, Dunis Sales Rep. Lynn Shearer, Konami's Mary Hermanson and Capcom's Brian Duke.



Dunis' Michael Damtew, Music-Vend's Credit Manager Ed Stearns, Amusement Unlimited's Al Lindley & Jerry Johnston and I-Vics' Leroy Hancuff at the Portland distributorship's open house.



Lon McKee, Gary Kilgore and Derric Melbourne (Dunis Service Manager) at the buffet table.



Dunis' Doug Melbourne waves hello from the new parts desk at the remodeled dealership.



Enjoying the food are Jerry Johnston (back to camera), Ed Stearns, Al Lindley, SNK's Tracy Tate, Sega's Jim Vanderhoof, Konami's Mary Hermanson and Atari's Anne Hayes.

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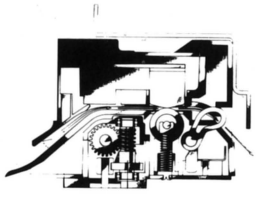

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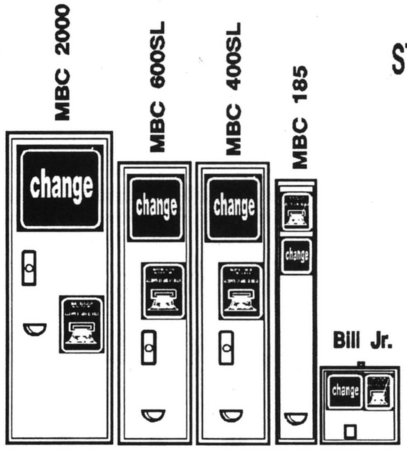

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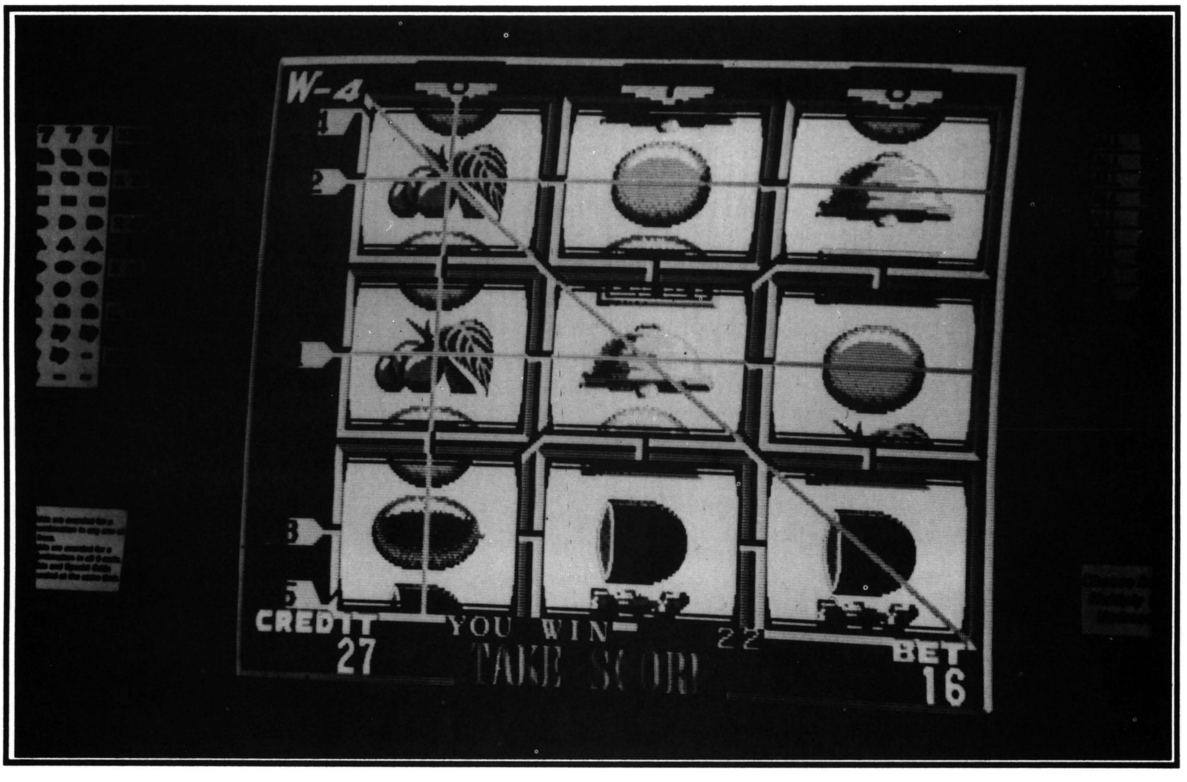

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Awesome at Active

ops flock to Active Amusement for post-ACME party

Snow started falling Saturday morning, but the reception was warm and the crowds were big at the new facilities of Active Amusement Distributing (Philadelphia, Pa.), which held its post-ACME open house on Saturday, March 24. "We probably had about 250 people throughout the day," smiled partners David Gilfor and Paul Russell. "Operators came from all over our territory — Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware."

About a dozen manufacturer's reps demonstrated video, darts, music, redemption equipment and more. "The biggest excitement was probably generated by the NSM *Fire* jukebox," David said. "Capcom product got high marks, and the Bally and Premier pinballs also got a lot of activity."

As you can see from the photos, lots of food was served up to the happy crowds. An open bar and many door prizes (ranging from watches to color TVs) added to the festive atmosphere. "Overall, it was very upbeat and very exciting!"



Above, NSM's Rus Strahan talks about the features of his 'CD Fire' wall-mount jukebox with Steve Devlin (LA East/Lansdale Amusement). Below, preparing the food table are Kim Vecchione (wife of Active's Chris) and Sherri Williams (wife of Active's Jim).



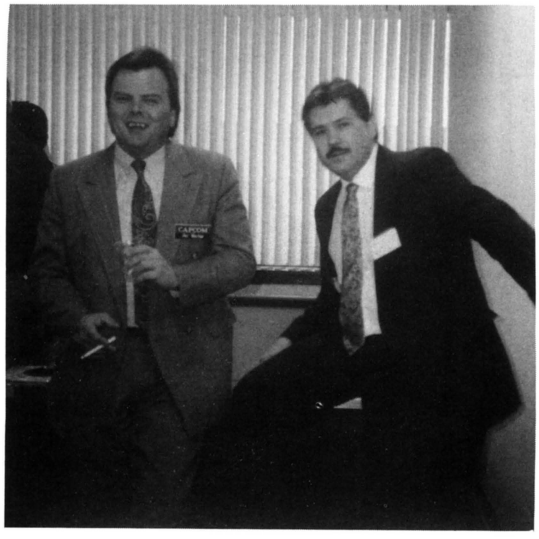


Left, operator Allen Fishman (Four Star Amusements) with Bally's Bob Lentz and Active's Chris Vecchione. Right, Irma Delgado, Amy Zelonis and Dave Gilfor.





Left, operators Charlie & David Boyer with Premier's Dan Clarton and his 'Silver Slugger.' Right, Capcom's Pat Walton and Konami's Mike Kubin take a breather at the Active open house.



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FRANK TALK



by Frank "the Crank" Seninsky

"Front-Line" Employees Can Make or Break Your Company's Image

With the worsening labor shortage in many parts of this country, amusement operators are finding it even more important to "work with the people you have" — and make them the best they can be. Training your employees to look, act and be professional is a must. . . but it's often overlooked.

From my perspective as an operator, I'm finding myself relying more and more on my employees to interact with locations. Why? Because I personally am spending most of my time in the office, handling all the governmental paper work, some contract work, and talking on the phone to locations who have problems (is there any other kind?) — problems which our employees did not (or cannot) take care of. When was the last time you got a blind call from one of your customers, telling you how great your machines look, and how thrilled they are with the money they're earning?

All that most locations know about your company (before they demand to speak to the owner) is what they learn from contacts with your three "front line" people: the collector and/or technician, the telephone receptionist, and the dispatcher or whoever handles incoming service calls. The professionalism of these people, and how they pay attention to details and follow-up, is what separates your company from the rest.

Here are some pointers for each of these positions, with examples of what your employees should strive for (and what they should avoid).

THE COLLECTOR, ROUTE MAN OR SERVICE MAN

The collector must appear neat and clean. His clothing should be free of coffee stains and wrinkles. Some companies like collectors to wear uniforms, and that's fine if you're into it. The point is that the collector must appear professional. Collections should be done at a time when the location is not busy (if possible).

The collector should carry a small tool-case with a minimum of tools and parts to quickly repair 90% of the most common problems. He should have all his paperwork for the location neatly organized on a clipboard when he walks into their store. He should have everything he needs from windex to paper clips and rubber bands, to paper towels.

He should **not** have collection sheets from other locations on his clipboard, where the location owner can see them.

If you are the collector, you should not simply walk into a location, perform your duties, and leave. You should *talk* to the location owner or personnel! Tell them your name! There's no reason a location should not know your name. As an employer, it drives me crazy when a location calls and says, "Your collector was here — I don't know his name, the guy with the mustache."

Make small talk with the location owner. Collection men should keep a card file on all locations. Each card should have many personal facts such as the location owner's name, names of the owner's spouse and kids, etc. — and you should review the card just before you go into the location.

Friendliness with locations should only go so far, however. In my company, I don't want my collectors and technicians to accept a drink if a tavern location offers them one. Tell them it's company policy (and say, "Thanks, I may be back later, after work.")

While speaking to the location owner, let him know that you're working hard, that you know the problems with the machines in his place, and that you're doing your best to solve them.

Things a collector should not do: you should not kick or punch a machine, out of frustration because it's 6PM Friday and you can't get the game working (we lost a location because one of our people did this).

You should not tell a location owner, "I, the route man, don't get many new machines on my route, because my locations aren't good enough. The owner's son's customers get the new games."

You should never say: "As far as I know, you're not scheduled for a rotation for the next six months."

A good rule of thumb is to listen to what the location wants, and if it's a major request or problem that you can't solve on the spot, write it down. Then instruct the location: "If you don't hear from the office within 24 hours, please call." Nine times out of ten, the location gives the route man a message to bring back to the office, but the message is never delivered, or is mis-communicated. Result: the location owner sits there, steaming . . . never realizing that management doesn't know about his request or problem. (That's why it's a good idea for management to call or visit each of your locations periodically.)

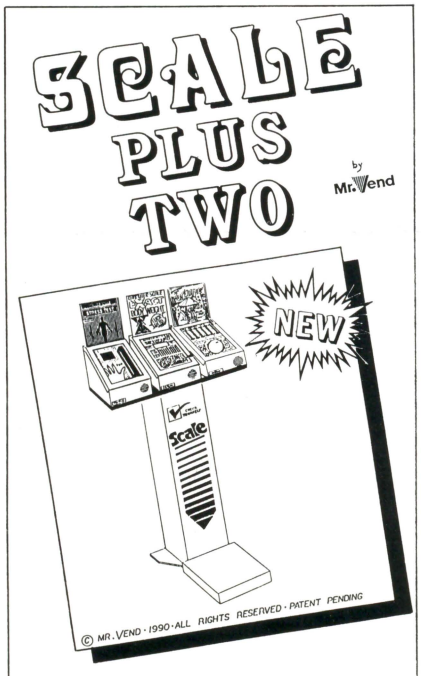
The most important thing for a collector to do is follow up on details. If you can't solve a problem right away, make a note and let the location know that you will follow up and solve the problem within a definite, acceptable time period. Then do it. And make sure that the location knows you've done it!

Don't ever make promises that you can't keep. Never tell a location you'll be back tomorrow with a part to fix a game, then fail to show up. Don't make promises for the office or the rest of the company, especially if you don't know what the rotation and service schedules are. Don't tell a location about all the new machines that other locations are getting from your company.

I always tell my employees, make a positive impact on the location every time you visit. Do something that stands out. Do something above and beyond what you were actually sent there to do — and let the location know it. Maybe it's not part of your responsibility, but you do it anyway. "I'm not supposed to clean up machines, I'm just supposed to collect the money. But I'm going to clean it up anyway, because I want it to earn more for us and for you."

In other words, think like a location owner: if you have a machine that's not completely broken, and the route man comes in and fixes it so it works perfectly, the route man feels he's solved the problem 100%. But the location owner doesn't feel that way. Do something extra. Tell the owner: "I've got a lot of calls to make today and I'm very busy, but I will take 15 minutes to do something extra for you." Then he'll feel he's been taken care of properly.

We're always trying to show locations that we'll do anything we can for them — within reason, and within time constraints. We always make an effort. Sometimes you have to tell a location, "It will take time to honor this request, but we'll de-



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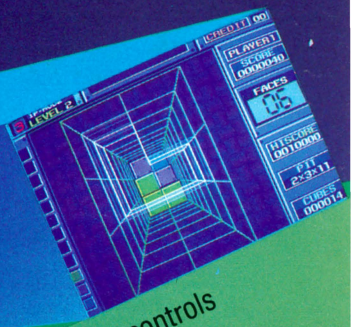

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finitely get to it within three weeks." Then follow through. I also strongly believe in saying "No" to location requests we can't honor, but then say, "Yes, there is something else we can do." Don't let your conversation end on a "No, we can't."

DISPATCHER

The dispatcher (or whoever takes the service calls) should give the location some type of idea when the service will be done. If it changes, call them back and tell them.

For example, if a location calls at 7 PM about two machines which are down, the dispatcher could say: "Our people will be there first thing in the morning." If, in reality, the service man can't get there till afternoon — in that case, say: "He'll be there between 1 and 3 PM."

A dispatcher should gather as much information from a location as the company needs, but the dispatcher should explain why he's doing it — so the technician can bring the proper tools and supplies to complete the job on the first trip. Location people can then be trained to give you more information (like, "The screen is blank, but I can hear the game sounds when I tested it") if they understand why you need this information.

A dispatcher should call a day in advance, to notify locations that rotations, deliveries or pick-ups will be done. This means the location gets no surprises, and it prevents you from pulling out a machine that the location doesn't want pulled out. (Maybe they have a high score tournament going on that game that week.) Sometimes you can change the rotation schedule and maybe you can't, but at least you give the owner a chance to talk about it before the fact, when it's much easier to convince them that you know what you're doing.

If you really want to be professional, try this at least once every so often with each location: call them back after a service visit and ask if the job was completed to their satisfaction. You'll be surprised that some of your constant complainers will be caught off-guard. They may actually say something nice! (Keep dreaming.)

The dispatcher shouldn't simply make excuses. "The part is on order" is probably used the most. Give the location an option: "Do you want us to wait 48 hours until the part arrives to fix the problem, or would you like us to put another machine in its place, until the part comes in?" Let them make the decision; don't make it for them! If they decide to wait for the part, then at least they can't blame you completely when the game is down 24 hours or longer.

RECEPTIONIST

The person who answers incoming phone calls could be the most important person in your company. That's your link to the outside world. They provide the first impression anyone gets of your company.

The receptionist should say the name of your company *slowly and clearly*. Don't assume the caller already knows the name. Maybe it's a new client who has the phone number but not the company name. Maybe it's somebody making a long series of calls, and doing many things at the same time, and by the time you answer they need a reminder of who it is they've just reached.

Next, announce your own name. Say: "Alpha-Omega Amusement,

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine magazine, May 1, 1990

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

Model (manufacturer)
1 Cadash (Taito)
2 Mercs (Capcom)
3 Aliens (Konami)
4 Final Fight (Capcom)
5 Success Joe (Taito)
6 Tetris (Sega)
7 Columns (Sega)
8 M.V.P. (Sega)
9 Adventure Quiz II (Capcom)
10 Rough Racer (Sega)
11 Quiz Detective Story (Taito)
12 Two Crude (Data East)
13 Capcom World (Capcom)
14 World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
15 1941 (Capcom)
16 Major Title (Irem)
17 Super Formula (Vid.Sys./Taito)
18 Champion Wrestler (Taito)
19 Super Masters (Sega)
20 Vapor Trail (Data East)
21 Bloxeed (Sega)
22 Klax (Atari/Namco)
23 Super Volley Ball (Vid.Sys./Nam.)
24 Block Out (Technos)
25 Ultimate Othelo (Success/Sega)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

Model (manufacturer)
1 WGP [deluxe] (Taito)
2 Racing Hero (Sega)
3 Final Lap [Deluxe] (Namco)
4 Line of Fire (Sega)
5 Beast Busters (SNK)
6 Battle Shark (Taito)
7 Hard Drivin' (Atari/Namco)
8 Big Run (Jaleco)
9 Super Monaco GP [dlx.] (Sega)
10 Final Lap [standard] (Namco)
11 Four Trax (Namco)
12 Operation Thunderbolt (Taito)
13 S.C.I. (Taito)
14 Winning Run/Suzuka GP (Nam.)
15 Out Run [deluxe](Sega)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

Model (manufacturer)
1 Mon. Night Football (Data East)
2 Earthshaker (Williams)
3 Jokerz! (Williams)
4 Cyclone (Williams)
5 Laser War (Data East)

this is Jane." When speaking to others in your company, callers shouldn't have to refer to you as "the person who answered the phone."

What not to do: One of the most annoying things that can ever happen to a caller, is to have a receptionist pick up the phone and blurt out, "Please hold!" — then put the caller on hold before he or she can say a word. Some callers would prefer a busy signal, or no answer at all, to this kind of treatment. Find a way to avoid "please hold" (click). Of course, many times it is absolutely necessary to put someone on hold. When this is the case, just use good courtesy. Say, "I'm sorry, but I have to put your call on hold a moment. Can you hold?" Give the caller a chance to say yes or no. Maybe he'd rather call back later. In any case, the caller wants to know his call is important.

The receptionist should make a log of service calls. But that doesn't mean that making the log entry is the end of handling the call. After logging the call, offer to connect the caller with the service manager or whoever. Most callers say, no thanks... but others enjoy the courtesy and do wish to speak to someone else, especially if the problem is complex or on-going. This will be your chance to soothe this location, just by being courteous.

Never say that the boss is busy or "in a meeting"! Take a message and assure them that the boss will call them back as soon as he returns his calls. This gives the owner of your operating firm a chance to pull the location's file and brush up on the account. When the owner-operator calls the location back, he can then sound like he knows what's going on... thanks to his efficient receptionist.

Sometimes a location calls to tell you that the same machine has broken down for a second time. In this situation, the location will usually assume that the same problem caused both breakdowns. This can be devastating for the level of respect a location has for your company's technicians. Tell the location, "We're aware that this is the second or third service call for this machine in the last two weeks, and we will look into it very deeply to see if it's caused by the same problem or a different problem. Once we find out, we'll let you know." Then do it... and let them know!

The suggestions given above for the operator's "front line" personnel all have one common thread: ongoing communication with your locations. It's a vital part of running an operating company, and that goes for the onwer-operator himself as well. Always look forward to talking with your locations — even the "complainers." I find it an interesting challenge to figure out what is really bothering someone who is always on your company and your people. Often, their real problem has little or nothing to do with you... but if you can help them solve it, your company looks great.

Satisfying as it is for the operator to make his company look great, he can't be everywhere at once. Unless you are your own route man, dispatcher and receptionist, there are many, many times a day when your employees — not you — deal with your locations. It's to your advantage to have your employees be as professional as possible in appearance, word and deed. ®

●

Far more males play amusement games than females. However, operators of both cigarettes & games may find it interesting that more high school female seniors smoke than high school males (according to the Office on Smoking & Health as reported in the L.A. Times). The paper also said 18% of female college students smoke while only 10% of their male counterparts do.

●

The BONDEAL CHART

top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending Apr. 14, 1990

TOP KITS	Apr. 14	Apr. 7	Mar. 31	Weeks on Location
Crude Buster	1	2	1	3
Chequered Flag	2	4	3	93
Final Fight	3	1	2	11
Columns	4	8	8	3
R-Type II	5	—	4	9
Pang	6	7	9	24
1941	7	3	7	6
Golden Tee Golf	8	—	—	17
Bloxeed	9	5	—	13
Aliens	10	6	—	2
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
Big Run	1	2	2	11
Hard Drivin'	2	1	1	52
Ninja Turtles	3	3	3	19
Super Hang-On	4	4	4	138
Champion Sprint	5	5	—	116

Cowabunga!

game production continues on TMNT powerhouse



STEVE KAUFMAN

Michaelangelo and his brother Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have been kicking up superior collections for game operators ever since their dedicated Konami 4-player was released in mid-November. It hit the top spot on the *RePlay* chart in January and has been riding herd as the industry's hottest video attraction ever since.

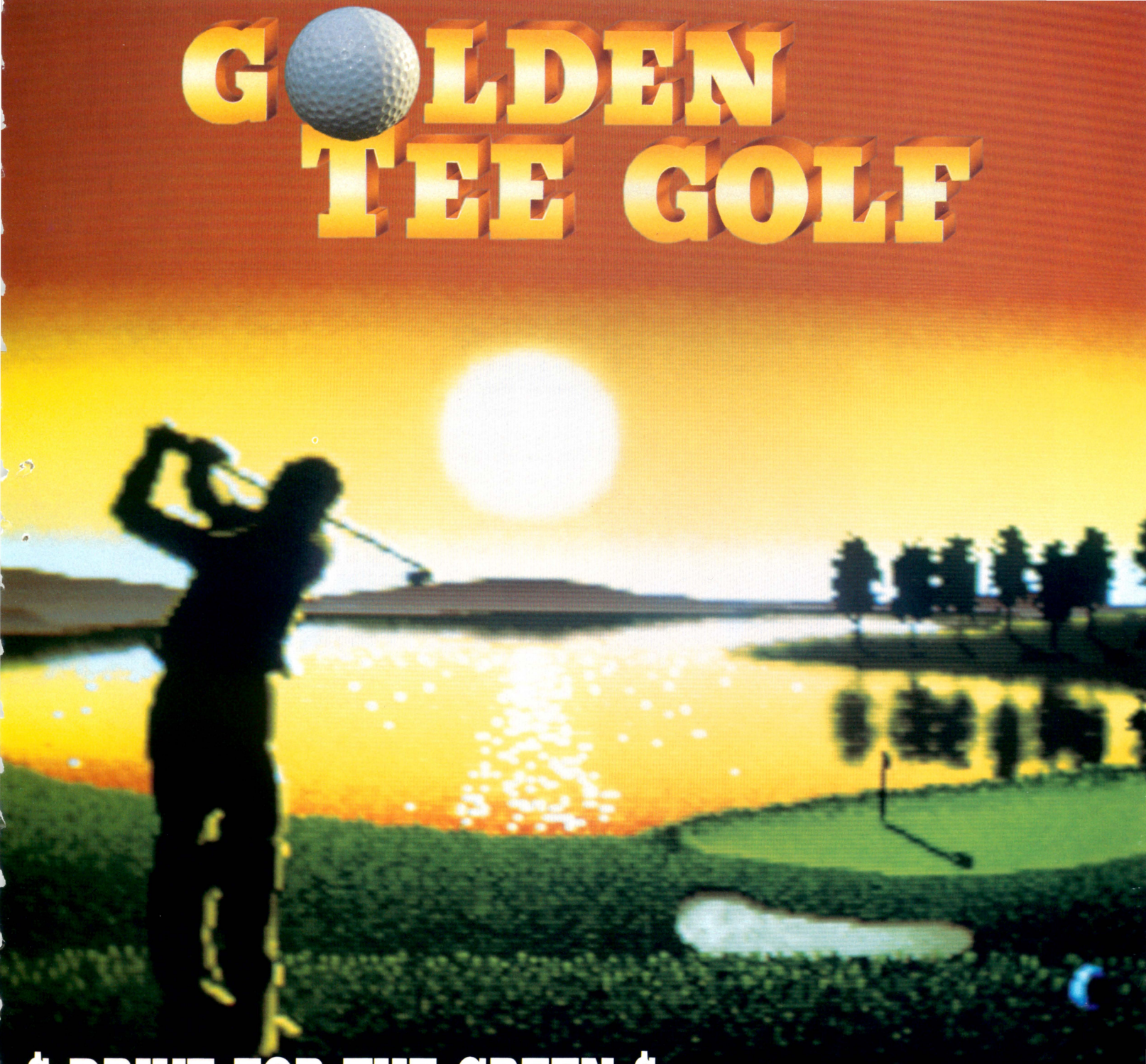
In addition to superior operator collections, the game has been equally good for its developer/manufacturer Konami, Inc., as well as for Komani's distributors. Unit sales topped the 14,000 mark by early April (excellent by today's standards) and, prompted by continuing distributor orders, another production run began late last month.

Most *Turtles* games have been assembled for Konami by Chicago's Electronic Sound Corp. (the company that also does some assembly work for Williams and Premier), while an additional production run was completed by Dynamo last December. All *Turtles,* housing the original Konami PCB and dressed in the unique "heroes on a halfshell" artwork, have been sold in dedicated form throughout the world. But operators will be surprised to learn that this hot game (in any form) has yet to be released in Japan itself.

Yes, America's hottest video piece won't be available in its country-of-origin until June when PC board versions will be released to the Japanese trade. Even though over 20,000 games have hit locations around the globe by now, Japanese release has been delayed to preclude any possible problems with parallel shipments interfering with



The biggest 'Turtles' coin-op fans run between 10 and 16 years of age, as this group of afficianados at the Galaxy World Arcade in Naperville, Ill. proves.



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The lower price for a hot dedicated 4-player was tasty, but the cash box was the main allure. The 'Turtles' characters caught initial interest; the game play kept the quarters coming. It was a perfect marriage of promotion and play appeal.

legitimate markets.

In the words of Konami, Inc. chief Steve Kaufman: "We didn't want the American operator to run into a parallel version sold to a competitor down the street. We wanted the program totally fair and equal... everyone paying the same price for the same quality game." No counterfeit versions have ever been available either, adding to the stability of the piece.

When Konami began testing *Turtles* last fall, it became quickly obvious that they had a hit on their hands. But, rather than price the game to exploit expected market demand, both Japanese and American Konami executives agreed to keep the lid on the tag. As Kaufman said at the time: "Maybe we can give the whole industry a boost that way."

Price, however, was hardly the chief reason the American operators embraced the game as heavily as they did. The cashbox spoke loudest. First came the big test collection reports, then field earnings, with production models shared by operator to operator, then the "rush" as the operating industry sensed it had the biggest hit since *Double Dragon* on its plate. It has been one of the best sellers since the video heyday and best earners since *Dragons, Gauntlet* and the *Pac-Man* series. And just like these other powerhouse pieces, the collections seem to be continuing.

Those collections recently got a boost with the release of the TMNT movie. This live-action version of the popular TV cartoon series grossed around $25 million during its three-day opening the end of March (a record for the film industry only topped by the opening of *Batman).* While many adult critics roasted the movie, the kids loved it. After all, kids are the main constituents of these heroes on a halfshell.

"The movie definitely gave the game earnings a boost," said Kaufman, who obviously watched the box office action with more interest than your average moviegoer. And, yes, both movie and coin-op game are kiddie-oriented. Said Konami's marketing chief Frank Pellegrini:

"The biggest player demographic has obviously been the 10- to 16-year-old kids. That's where most of the quarters come from. But, *Turtles* is more than an extension of the TMNT phenomenon. Regardless of the characters on the screen or the artwork on the cabinet, *Turtles* is a game!"

Pellegrini said the machine gets lots of play from people up to the age of 20. He admits, however, that the majority of locations housing the game are C-stores, hot dog places, movie theaters and all the other stops frequented by youngsters.

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"It's not really geared for the bars," he advised.

Kaufman caught the spirit of the TMNT coin-op game in one sentence: "The characters in the artwork and in the attract mode capture the interest of the player and then the game itself keeps the interest going. There's a gerat game in there, lots of hooks, great sounds, and that's a tribute to designers both in Japan as well as from Konami here in the USA. It was a joint design effort in many respects."

As many readers know, *Turtles* came out as a Nintendo home cartridge (on Konami's Ultra label) before the coin-op version was released. However, the home version is an entirely different game ("the only commonality is the game's name," said Pellegrini). That Nintendo outing was also used on their coin-op PlayChoice system.

While Konami has done (and is still doing) well with *Turtles* on the coin market, their numbers on home video cartridges have passed the million unit sales mark (Konami Ultra is one of the most successful home video software suppliers in business today).

The whole *Turtles* phenomenon is your classic marriage of good gameplay to celebrity promotion tie-in. Of course, Konami has paid a decent royalty to license the name and the likeness of the characters (according to *Newsweek,* around 300 companies have already licensed TMNT for a variety of products ranging from breakfast cereal to baseball caps from the people who represent creators Laird and Eastman . . . two guys who never have to work another day in their lives).

For operators who work nearly every day of their lives, Konami's *Turtles* has invigorated the video game spirit to an extent and made many think "this is the way it should be." While *Turtles'* better-than-average collections should continue well along for the months, perhaps many months, to come, rumor that Konami has plans for *Turtles Part II* were confirmed by Kaufman:

"Yes, we're going to make a sequel but it's coming significantly downstream. And please remember that Konami is not just the 'house of the *Turtles*'," he smiled. "Our new *Aliens* has taken off very nicely and operators can expect a lot of good product from our company in the months and years to come."

◆

Kaufman on why 'TMNT' has yet to be released to Japan: "We didn't want the American operator to run into a parallel version sold to a competitor down the street. We wanted the program totally fair and equal . . . everyone paying the same price for the same quality game."

◆



Turtles: the Redemption Version

Of the 300-odd licensees of the *Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles* name and character likeness, add one more: Yankee Games. The Ed Pellegrini game works (famous for *Bozo the Clown* and *Capcom Bowling)* is about to launch a redemption game graced by the halfshell set's artwork and "cowabunga" sound effects.

Called *TMNT Pizza Drop,* the machine is best described as a large pachinko for kids that vends prize tickets when they get a ball in the scoring holes. Simple as that, but what a package (it was too early to get a photo for this issue, sorry).

The unit was field-tested at Wright's Barnyard in Illinois where, without *Turtles* artwork, it did around $800 a week in quarters for quite a few weeks straight. After putting the *Turtles* art and sounds onto it, the machine was tested at a ShowBiz Pizza place in Arlington Heights, Ill. where it reportedly did a whopping $1,500 in six days. "The kids were lined up five deep at times," said Yankee Games chief Pellegrini.

Production in Chicago should begin this month with distributor samples expected to ship mid-month. Refinements have been tweaked up, based on test performance, and the final package could be one of spring/summer's hottest redemption buys for the arcade sector.

Jeff Walker will pilot the sales campaign for Yankee Games on this piece, Pellegrini advised. Hey, dude . . . sounds like a slam, dunk! (PS: Yankee Games released yet another thousand PC boards for *Capcom Bowling* mid-April. This game, turning into an evergreen video attraction, has been booking solid earnings on location over two years by now and is one of the few to stay in production for such a long length of time.

Wisconsin Poker

enforce the law or legalize the games!

by BOB RONDEAU



BOB & BEV RONDEAU

The Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators are supporting a bill in their state legislature which would legalize pay-off video pokers in the same basic manner which has been done in South Dakota. The bill (S. 299) is not expected to pass this year, but WAMO officers and directors believe the political groundwork they have laid will have a "positive carry-over effect in the next session."

Meantime, the state's attorney general ruled on Feb. 5 that video poker games and casino-type gambling are illegal everywhere in the state, despite his earlier approval of such games for Indian reservations. Governor Thompson, who had previously been neutral on the issue, said he agreed with his attorney general's opinion. Both men added that vidpokers and casinos could be legalized by the legislature without amending the state constitution.

Law enforcement on the poker issue, however, has been "spotty" at best, in the eyes of some. In light of these developments, here is a personal essay by trade veteran Bob Rondeau with his reflections on the video poker scene in Wisconsin.

I was over at the Lions Club some weeks ago, playing poker with some fellows (for toothpicks, of course). We enjoyed the game, but we were also thinking about the words we'd heard earlier that night from an undercover drug enforcement agent that really scared us. One statistic stayed in my mind: while the U.S. only has 5% of the world's population, it consumes 50% to 60% of the world's drugs. He also said the U.S. produces 25% of the world's marijuana.

When I got home, I picked up the paper and read a headline shouting "55 Gambling Machines Seized Over Weekend." The story referred to a couple of well-planned seizures of poker games from locations in a couple of towns in Wisconsin. I had a rush of mixed emotions. On one hand, I remembered the drug agent telling us how hard it was to police that horrifying crime. On the other, I looked at poker, and thought that if it's possibly legalized and money from it is sent to drug enforcement, maybe we'd do better in the drug war, while letting some other people enjoy a legalized form of something that's now under a cloud.

For the record, the poker game is illegal in Wisconsin, unless it's sterile (i.e., no recording devices whatsoever), which obviously is not the case with certain machines out in the field here or elsewhere. The suspect machines on the street weren't bothered by anyone for about two years, and they may not be bothered again. But this on-again, off-again style of law enforcement makes the good operator feel like he is going through menopause.

He feels damned if he puts pokers out, and damned if he doesn't. If a location wants one and he refuses, he runs the risk of losing out to a competitor. Same goes for the distributor. If the operator can't get one from him, he'll get one someplace else (and they can). Every operator and distributor I've talked to wants the game to be made either legal or illegal, and the law strictly enforced.

Now, I spent over three months last summer in Montana and can tell you that the partnership between the state and the operators regarding legalized gaming is working! It is not all roses in Montana. They constantly have to work with the legislature, keep smoothing the rough edges, keep educating the state, the locations and themselves. People like Buzz Hyer and Phil Benson sat down with legislators and showed how an economically depressed state could benefit.

The Montana operators did their homework, worked together as a team and brought legislation that is a benefit for the industry, the state and the various communities. Not only that, but they are still working together, making improvements, correcting errors and learning things. I'm not a bean counter, but I feel you should have some figures at hand on Montana if you want to talk to your own state legislator or state operator association about this subject.

By my reckoning, there are 800,000 people in that state and 8,687 gaming machines serving them. In the fiscal year of 1988-89, there were $88.6 million worth of profits to split among the operators, locations, cities and the state itself. This was big money to an economically depressed state with less than a million population.

From the 15% tax on the net profits, $8,851,140 was returned to the cities, counties and communities to do what they wanted with, and $4,438,860 went to the state's general fund. And as important, when you drive through Billings, Missoula, Outlook, Circle, Rexford, Red Lodge and all those other towns and cities sharing the profits from this enterprise, you're also seeing people entertained!

Gaming machines may not be a part of every operator's future, for we do sell entertainment and that comes in many forms... and who knows what sophisticated new idea may come along in the amusement arena down the road that has nothing whatever to do with gaming. But, right now, I just want the State of Wisconsin (at least) to either enforce whatever anti-poker laws they have in a uniform way (and thereby take the pressure off a lot of confused vendors), or consider legalizing the devices and let our people do the work and share in the proceeds.

The Professionals

MOMA stages 19th successful annual meeting & show

Who are the most professional operators in the country? Well, MOMA (the Minnesota Operators of Music & Amusements) would certainly have to tie — at least — for first place. The group held its 19th annual convention and trade show March 23-25 at the Sheraton Park Place in Minneapolis.

What happened? Plenty. The members of MOMA worked. They played. They talked coinbiz. They elected new officers. They kidded around. They inspected new machines and supplies. They celebrated Linda Winstead's birthday. They awarded their first-ever MOMA scholarship to a deserving college student. They won prizes in their patented "casino night." They heard speeches from AAMA President Gil Pollock and AMOA Treasurer Gene Urso. They picked up some redemption pointers in a seminar given by AMOA VP Randy Chilton.



That big grin could only belong to one man: MOMA legislative counsel Bob Latz. He's the wit who applauded from the audience when a speaker said something about "spending all our money on lawyers." Everybody turned around to see who it was... then the room broke up with laughter.

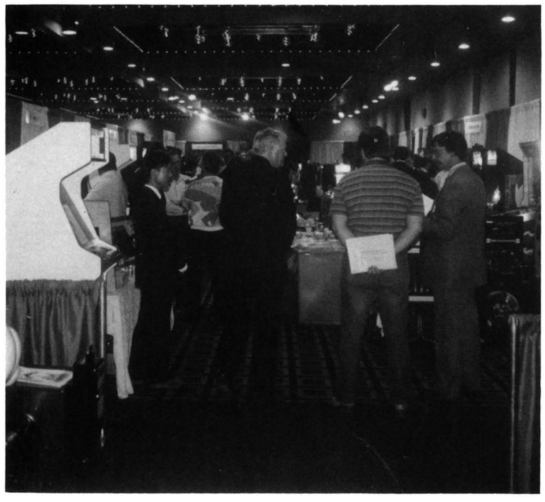
Most of all, they reinforced their reputation as the state operator association which is "second to none."

Here are a few snapshots from the meeting and trade show. (Not all of our photos came out, so we apologize to those folks who don't appear!)

P.S.: Thanks again to the good folks of MOMA for making the *RePlay* reporter feel so welcome.



As MOMA president Tami Norberg-Paulsen concludes her second term, immediate past president Gene Winstead presents her with a plaque signifying the association's gratitude for her outstanding leadership. Tami's husband Brian Paulsen looks on at right.



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MOMA's trade show filled a large ballroom at the Sheraton Park Place. At right, MOMA's Gene Winstead with Lieberman Music Co.'s Glen Charney.

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◆

Left, Fabtek's Drew Maniscalco with the company's 'Sports Match' video game. Right, Minnesota's own jukebox maker: Carson City's Paul Harmon with his 'Country Classic.'

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Left, looking spiffy was WAMO prexy Jim Stansfield who visited the MOMA show. He fits right in next to this classic jukebox in his two-tone shoes (neat-o, daddy-o). Right, Dynamo's Mark Robbins gets ready to zing the hockey puck past operator Todd Erickson.

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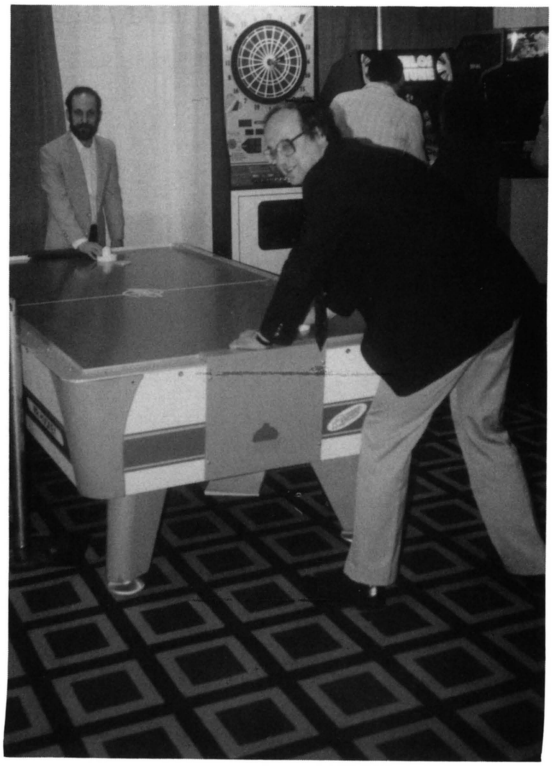



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Above, "Casino de Fantasia" is MOMA's traditional entertainment, with tickets used instead of money for gaming-style fun with blackjack, a roulette wheel, craps and video-taped horse races. Finally, players use their tickets to bid on prizes at auction. Right, MOMA's smoothly-run conventions (and healthy bank balance) are to the credit of Executive Director Hy Sandler, pictured with Gene and Tami.

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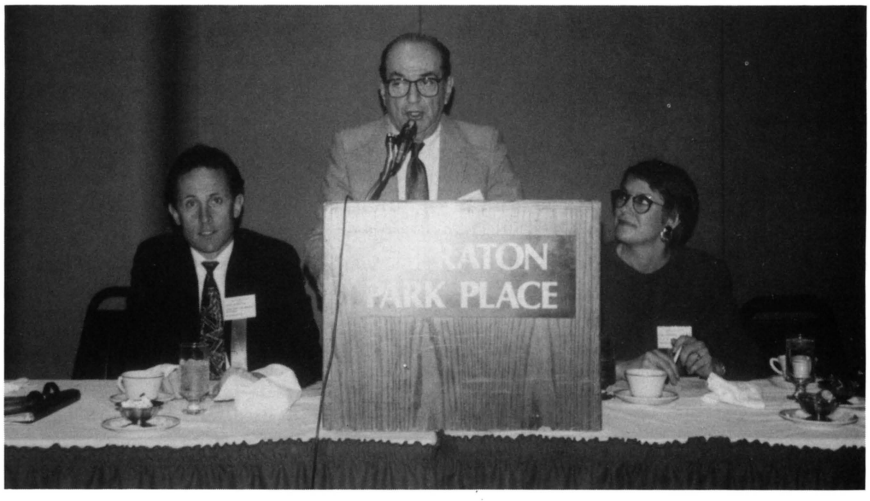



■

Left, AMOA Treasurer Gene Urso chats about industry national affairs. Right, a spectacular balloon bouquet and a beautiful jukebox-shaped birthday cake greet Linda Winstead of Lieberman Music Co.

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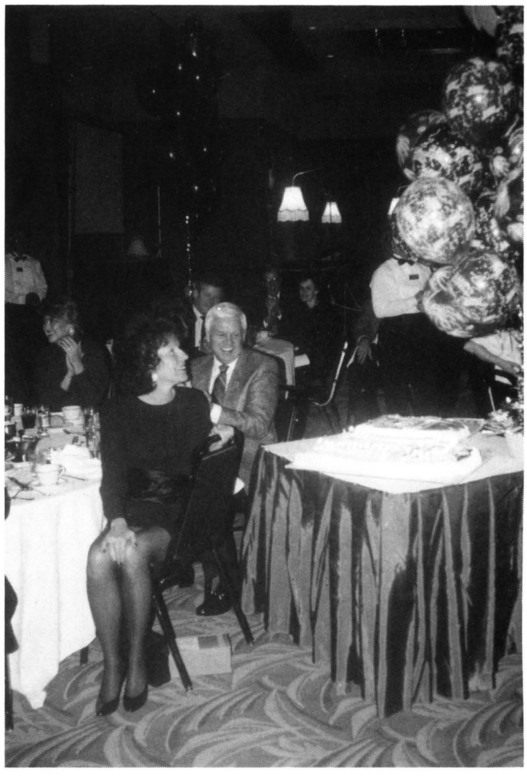
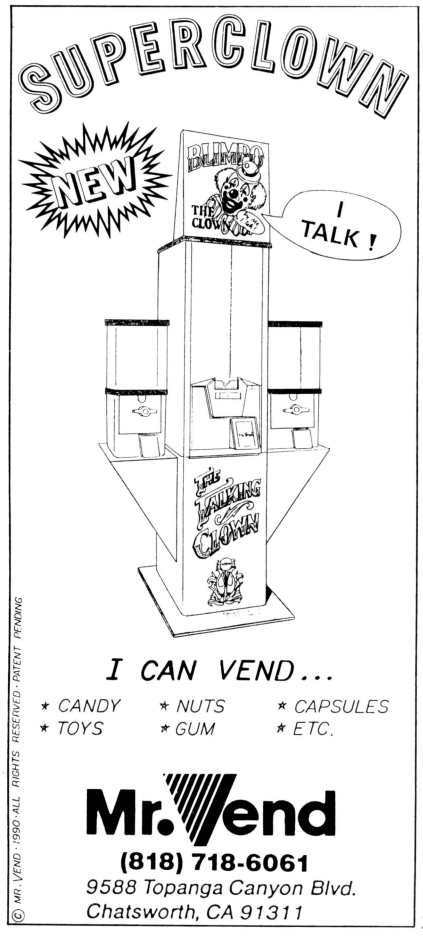


State Association Meetings

planned line-up for Ohio, Idaho, Pennsylvania & North Dakota

Upcoming state operator association meetings in Ohio, Idaho, Pennsylvania and North Dakota offer information, comradeship and a chance for tradesters to help chart their futures.

Ohio: the OCMA Expo '90 takes place May 17-19 at the Ohio Expositions Center (Rhodes Building) in Columbus. Tradesters will stay at the nearby Ramada Inn North. The expo, themed "On Target," opens Thursday with a golf tourney at the Bent Tree club. Friday kicks off with a lengthy and in-depth seminar on the future of music software at the Ramada Inn (9:45 AM to 2 PM, lunch included), emceed by *RePlay* publisher Eddie Adlum and featuring many prominent experts. Exhibits are open that afternoon at the Rhodes Building. Evening brings a reception at the hotel, then dinner and a night at the racetrack. Saturday offers morning seminars in management and pinball basics, all-day exhibits, and the membership meeting and luncheon. A dart tournament co-sponsored by Arachnid and OCMA runs all day Saturday, too. Registration costs $50 for an OCMA member and spouse or one staffer. Each additional guest is $10; nonmembers pay $100 for one entry plus $10 per additional entry. Friday night's dinner and entertainment, Friday's youth party and Saturday's luncheon must all be paid for separately. Hotel rooms range from $58 to $64.

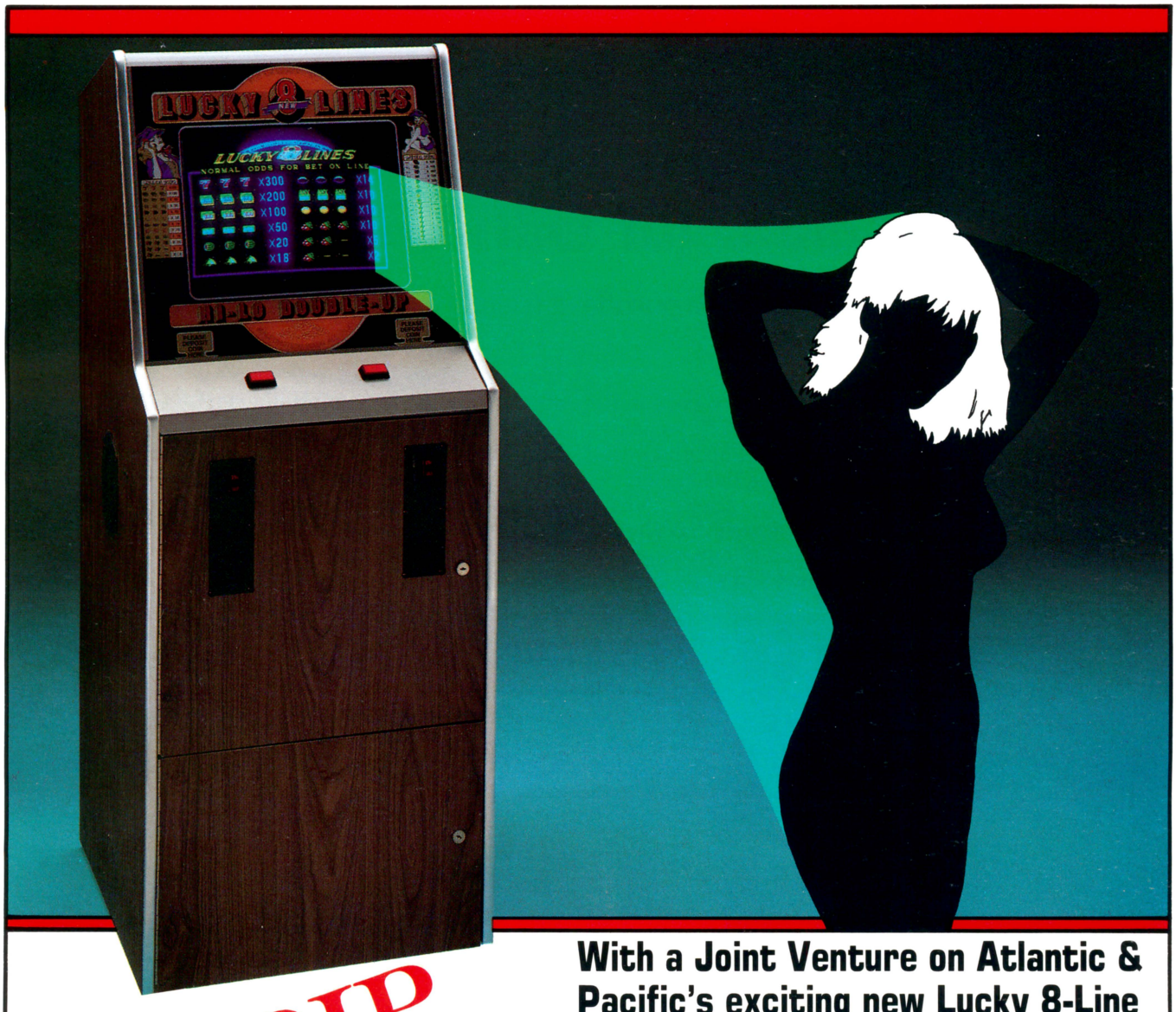


Idaho: AMOI's annual operator meeting takes place June 16-17 at Kimberland Meadows. Saturday kicks off with a golf tournament ($20 per person includes golf cart). Starting at 1 PM Saturday, visitors can also enjoy a half-day "float trip" on the Salmon River ($30 per person). A barbecue dinner starts at 7 PM. Sunday morning gets down to business with an operator meeting (held over a champagne brunch). Cost of $80 per person includes room for two nights, Saturday's barbecue and Sunday's brunch. Contact Kimberland Meadows at 208/347-2163 for reservations; make activity deposits to AMOI's Steve Gregory by May 10 (AMOI, P.O. Box 3694, Boise, ID 83703-0694).

Pennsylvania: PAMMA holds its annual convention and trade show July 20-21 at the Lancaster-Sheraton Resort. Friday brings an afternoon board meeting and evening exhibit hours, followed by a party with dancing and open bar. Saturday begins with a breakfast buffet and "industry firing line" seminar. Show exhibits are open all day; a general membership meeting falls in early afternoon followed by a seminar on efforts to legalize video poker. Evening brings a cocktail reception, the PAMMA auction and the PAMMA banquet ($40 extra charge) with raffle, entertainment, awards, etc. Registration is $30 for members and $50 for non-members before June 29; after that it goes up $10. Room rates are $95 per person, per day for single occupancy or $52.50 per person, per day for double occupancy, plus sales tax. An extra $12 per additional person in each room is charged for those 18 and up; 17 and younger stays free in parents' room. Contact the reservations desk at 717/299-5500.

North Dakota: the NDCMOA annual meeting and trade show takes place Friday through Sunday, Aug. 10-12, at the Radisson Hotel in Fargo. AMOA President Jack Kerner will address the Friday luncheon and exhibits will be open Friday afternoon. Saturday kicks off with meetings of the state's pool and dart associations, followed by lunch with speeches from AAMA President Gil Pollock and an address by a local government representative. Exhibits are open again that afternoon, while Saturday night brings showgoers to the Hjemskimost center for dinner and entertainment. Sunday concludes with a continental breakfast and meeting overview. Room rates are $54 for a single, $59 for a double. Registration fees are $50 per person for the entire convention, $25 for wives, children or other guests (includes snacks and lunch both days, "City Lights" buffet, coffee and pastries).

"'Final Fight' is the best game to come out in the last twelve months."
— Players' Choice reporter "Mikie"



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A Salute for General Coin

the "General" was on parade at friendly post-ACME event

General Coin's Portland and Seattle offices held post-ACME openhouses in late March and, as these photos amply demonstrate, these folks know how to have a party. "We had an excellent turnout of 'buy'-minded operators," smiled Sales and Operations Manager Mike McWilliams. The firm also enjoyed a more than healthy turnout of manufacturers' reps from companies which produce the full line of coin-op product: pins, darts, videos, music, you name it!





Left, Doug Shaver of Inter City Vending (Seattle) tries out Taito's 'WGP' cycle race game. Right, Seattle area operators challenge each other on Bally's 'Game Show' pin to win t-shirts.



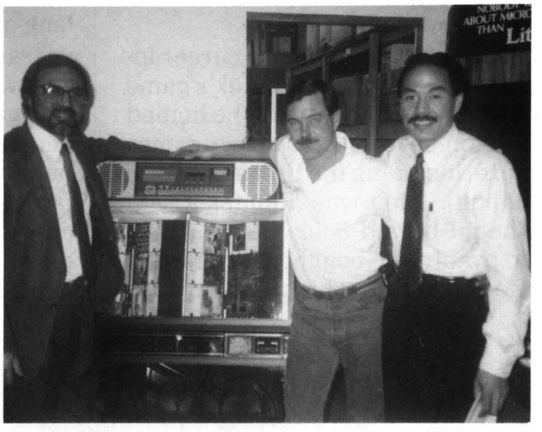
Arachnid's Rick Lynch, General Coin's Lonnie Desmarteau and Arachnid's Bill Ward at General Coin's post-ACME show in Seattle.

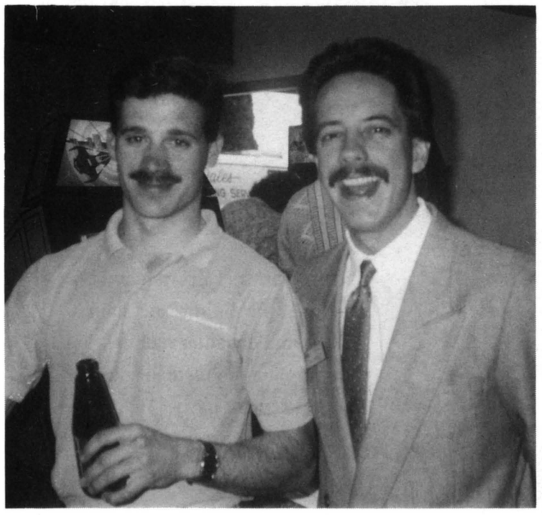


At General Coin's Portland event are: Rock-Ola's Shuja Hague, I-Vics' Leroy Hancuff, Arachnid's Rick Lynch, Data East's Jolly Backer, G.C.'s Mike & Faye McWilliams, Romstar's Tim Jackson, G.C.'s Mark Chan, Taito's Jim Chapman, Sega's Jim Vanderhoof, Atari's Anne Hayes and Midway's Bob Lentz.

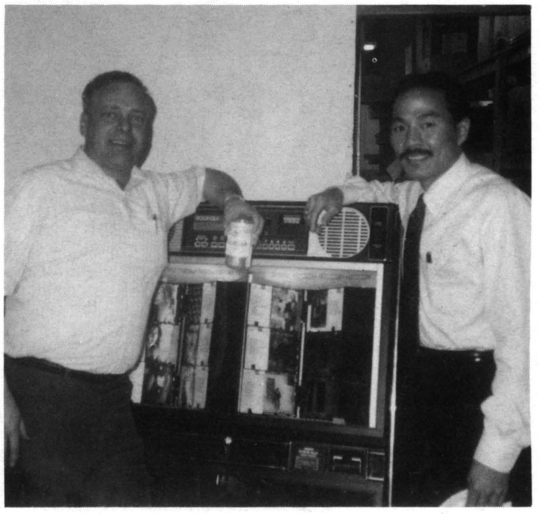


At left are Doug Gemma (Dosh Amusement), Mark Chan, Jim Chapman, G.C.'s Bob Woynowskie and G.C.'s Keith Flemming. Right, Rock-Ola's Shuja Hague shows his CD jukebox to Tim Harris (Auto. Cigarette Service) & Mark Chan.





Left, Mike Smith of Wizard Entertaiment says hello to Jim Chapman at the Portland event. Right, Ken Hague of Hit Parade Music with the Rock-Ola CD unit and Mark Chan.



Ah. . . retirement

Meltec's Mel McEwan sets out for painting & golfing

Mel McEwan is retiring. Well, it's really a semi-retirement. The ever-smiling prexy of Meltec, Inc. (San Jose, Calif.) says he's going to "remain semi-active" in the redemption midway-type game manufacturing company which bears his name.

Sons John and Mike, along with daughter Natalie, are very much in charge on a day-to-day basis, though, while Mel and the missus shuttle back and forth between their San Jose home and a cabin in Lake Tahoe. Mel says he plans to spend a lot more time golfing and painting watercolors (he's got a one-man show coming up).

Mel's 17-year industry career includes a fast rise in Ramtek's game division starting in 1973 (he helped develop several innovative games there, including the first solid state pinball). Mel was Ramtek's GM when it bowed *Boom Ball* in 1977. He eventually bought that product line and hung out his own shingle in 1980, re-engineering the game with his sons and introducing subsequent hits *Knock Down* and *Big Mouth* in 1986 and 1988, respectively.

Meltec was on the May, 1989 cover of this magazine as a sterling example of the family-oriented, redemption game trend which is becoming so important to the industry. This year saw Meltec's latest — and possibly greatest — game, *Lunar Golf,* hit the market.

"Through the years," stated Mel, "my philosophy has been for Meltec to stress the long term. We pride ourselves on quality products which are easily playable by all ages, on excellent service, and on making long-earning games which last for years on location and offer high resale value."

Right on, Mel. Congratulations and thank you for your many contributions to the industry. Enjoy the fairways and the watercolors. . . and we hope to see you at the national trade shows, with a tan!











Pictured are Mel McEwan and his family — wife Albina, sons John & Mike and daughter Natalie — sharing some fun moments during Mel's retirement party. (Yep, that's Mel on the drums above!)

TECHNICAL TIPS

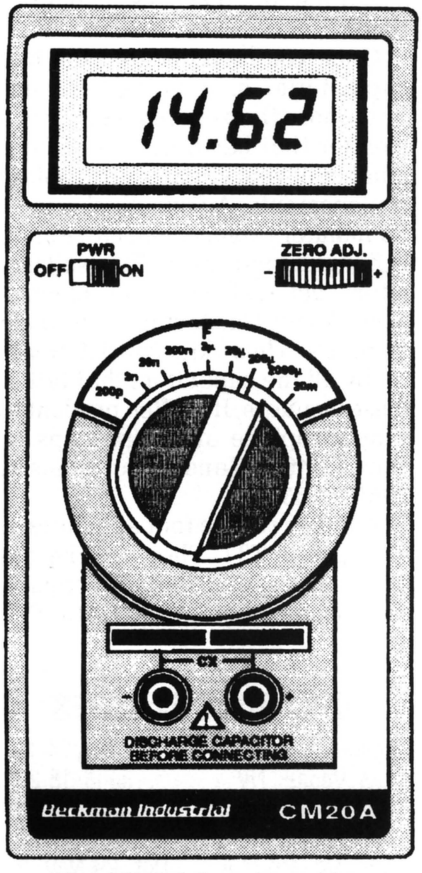
Testing Capacitors

why struggle along without a capacitor meter?

by RANDY FROMM

The ability to test discrete components is essential for a technician. Whether you're a beginning tech or a "hot shot," you must have a way to check parts like transistors, diodes, resistors and capacitors.

Just about everyone has a digital multimeter that they use for measuring voltages and checking fuses. Fortunately, most components also can be tested with a digital multimeter. Unfortunately, capacitors cannot be adequately tested with the DMM. Although many technicians claim that capacitors can be tested by using the resistance (ohms) setting of the meter and watching the resistance change as the capacitor charges, I have found this test to be extremely misleading at times. Capacitors that appear to pass the "charge" test have actually been defective.



Model CM20A Capacitance Meter

The proper way to test capacitors is with a capacitance meter. Unlike the direct current "charge test" provided by the digital multimeter, the capacitance meter tests capacitors by passing a 400 Hertz (400 cycles per second) alternating current signal through the capacitor. The meter then measures the voltage that is dropped across the capacitor. Smaller value capacitors (those possessing less capacitance) will have a higher voltage drop than those with a greater value. Technically speaking, the meter is measuring the "capacitive reactance" or AC resistance of the capacitor under test.

USING THE METER

Fortunately, using the capacitance meter is much easier than understanding how it works. All you have to do is connect the capacitor to the meter (be sure to observe the polarity) and read the display. If the displayed value is considerably less than the value that is printed on the component itself, the capacitor is bad.

Capacitors will often have a fairly wide tolerance (plus or minus 20%). Don't be surprised if some capacitors have a tested value that is considerably higher than they're supposed to have. This is okay. When capacitors fail, their capacitance will test much lower than normal.

The capacitance meter can be enormously helpful when working on monitors and power supplies. It takes only a minute to unsolder the two leads of the capacitor, remove it from the board (a capacitor must be removed from the circuit to test properly) and test it with the meter. During a recent Arcade School class in Baltimore, students brought in over a dozen monitors to repair

UNDERSTANDING CAPACITOR VALUES

The unit of capacitance is called the "farad" (named after Michael Faraday, 1791-1867, English physicist and chemist). It is the capacitance of a capacitor that when charged with one "couloumb" of electricity (6,280,000,000,000,000,000 electrons) has an electric potential of one volt. The farad is such a large value that it is never used in the coin-op industry. We use capacitors that are rated in thousandths of a farad, called "millifarads" or millionths of a farad called "microfarads". We also use capacitors that are rated in millionths of a millionth of a farad. The term for these capacitors is micromicrofarads or "picofarads." Halfway in-between picofarads and microfarads is the "nanofarad." A nanofarad is one-thousandth of a microfarad. Here is a breakdown of the capacitor values. . .

MILLIFARAD = 1/1000 OF A FARAD
MICROFARAD = 1/1,000,000 OF A FARAD
NANOFARAD = 1/1,000,000,000 OF A FARAD
PICOFARAD = 1/1,000,000,000,000 OF A FARAD

during our "hands-on" lab sessions. These monitors were from various types of poker games. Problems ranged from screens that were bright on one side and dark on the other to pictures that were severely "keystoned" (pulled in on the sides). These symptoms can generally be attributed to capacitor failures. Although we did not have schematic diagrams, it was pretty simple to pull the electrolytic capacitors and test them with the capacitance meter. We found a number of bad caps and replaced them. Our success rate was 100%!

CHEAP PLUGS

I have only recently purchased a capacitance meter. Before that, I simply replaced any capacitors that I thought might be bad. This is okay if you have a large supply of replacement capacitors, but not so good if you don't. When I think of the time I have spent running to the parts house to obtain replacement capacitors, only to discover that my original component was good after all, I could kick myself for not getting a capacitance meter sooner. I have to admit that it has been "love at first sight!"

You know the shaver commercial where the guy liked the shaver so much that he bought company? Well, I haven't gone quite that far, but I have purchased capacitance meters for my Arcade School students. (Here comes the cheap plug.) If you would like to obtain a capacitance meter of your very own, send $149.95 (California residents add 6.75% sales tax for a total of $160.07) plus $5.00 shipping and handling and I'll send you one. Company or personal checks are okay, but not plastic! I know it's a lot of money; perhaps that's why I have held off getting one myself for so long. It really has been a great investment however and having the capacitance meter has already saved me an enormous amount of time.

Once you have located the bad capacitor(s) in a unit (there are often more than one, especially in a monitor that has been in use for a number of years) you need to obtain replacements. An excellent source for monitor replacement capacitors is Zanen Electronics. They sell monitor "get well kits" for Electrohome, Wells-Gardner and Nintendo monitors. These kits consist of virtually all the capacitors that fail in these monitors. It is often prudent to simply replace all of the caps at once. Contact Zanen Electronics at 806/793-6337.

Another source for capacitors of all types is TTI. They are the nation's largest distributor of capacitors. Contact them at 800/CALL TTI.

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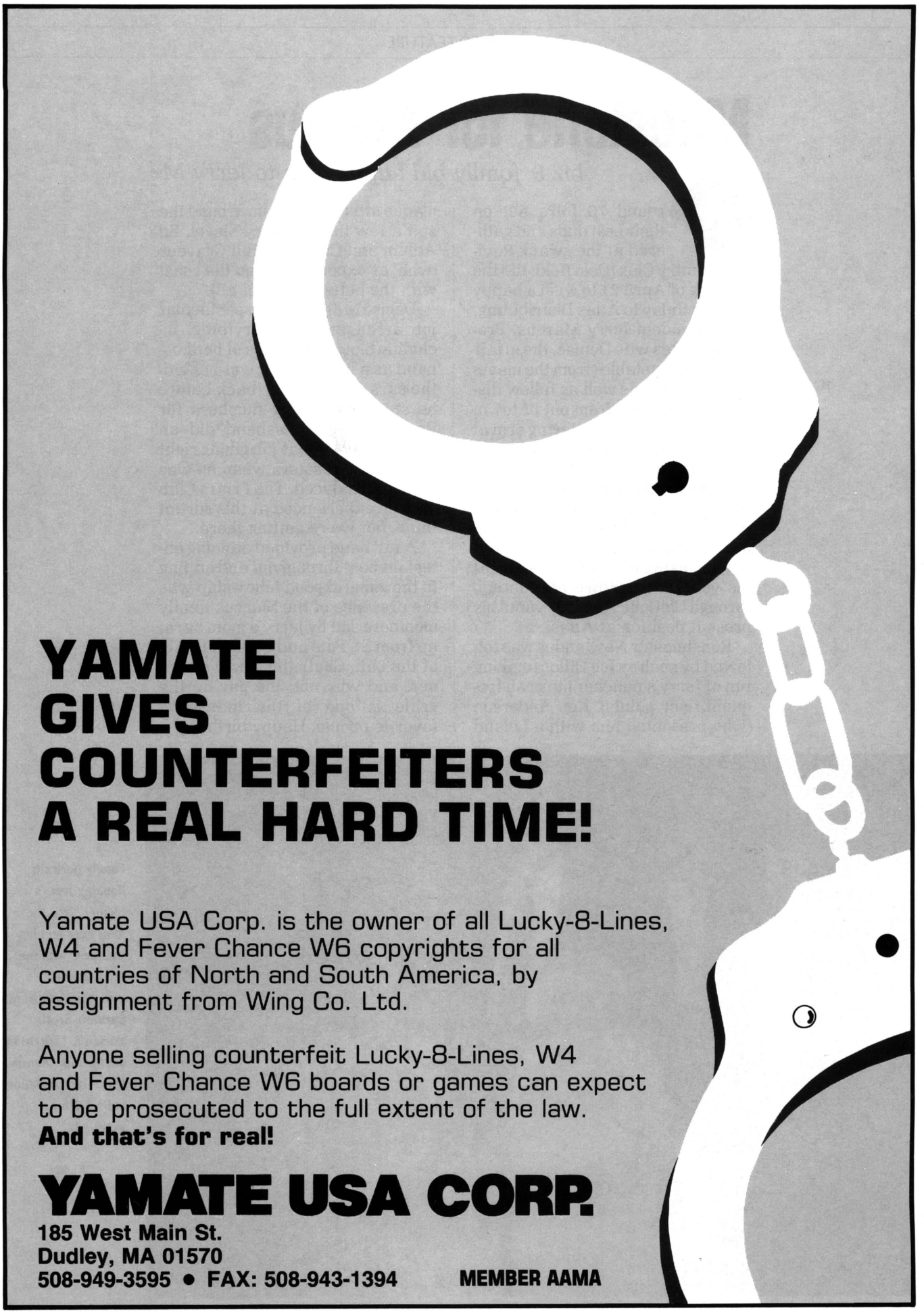
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Milestone for Marcus

biz & family bid happy 60th to Jerry M

Around 70 folks put on their best duds and gathered at the swank Ravinia Country Club (Deerfield, Ill.) the evening of April 21 to wish a happy 60th birthday to Atlas Distributing, Inc. President Jerry Marcus. Produced by his wife Denise, the affair drew trade notables from the manufacturing set, as well as fellow distributing friends from out of town. Added up, it was a glittering crowd in a glittering setting, but it had a "twinkle" in its eye.

After cocktails and a sitdown dinner, the coinbiz set (led by Atari's Jim Newlander) took the microphone one by one to "roast" the guest of honor, taking affectionate shots at his years from Rowe accounting, through ChiCoin, Atari, etc. until his present position at Atlas.

Roastmaster Newlander was followed by such as Joe Dillon (making fun of Jerry's penchant to grab frequent flyer points), Ken Anderson (who presented him with a Leland plaque after turning him around the spit a few times), Larry Siegel, Ed Adlum and Capcom's Bill Cravens (who, as expected, ended the roast with the hottest gibes of all).

Denise Marcus did a spectacular job arranging for everything, including blown-up photos of her husband as a kid and as a wet-behind-the-ears army officer back before he started counting numbers for Rowe. And her husband did an equally spectacular job gibing right back at the roasters when he was finally introduced. The Friars Club may be experienced at this sort of thing, but we're getting there.

A full band provided dancing entertainment throughout and adding to the general good fellowship was the presence of the Marcus family members, led by Jerry's mom Sara, up from St. Pete and quite the belle of the ball. Chalk this party a winner, and why not: the guy on the grille is one of the industry's favorite people. Happy birthday!



Family portrait: flanking Jerry's mother Sara, the Atlas exec and his wife pose with the third Marcus generation (Richard, Barbara, Scott, Marian & Lauren) at the Ravinia Country Club. Congratulations to Denise for a super job!



About half the celbrants came from the coinbiz (others from the Marcus family and local friends). This snapshot of the industry folks at the Ravinia reads like a who's who of the industry, certainly including Jerry's Atlas partner Ed Pellegrini and more other factory heavies than you can shake a stick at.



"I bet this guy put you up at the Hyatt so he could make the points for himself," said Joe Dillon. At the end of the roast, Jerry said, "Joe's right, but I didn't get them from the Hyatt." About 70 folks gathered for the cocktails, dinner, dancing and roasting.

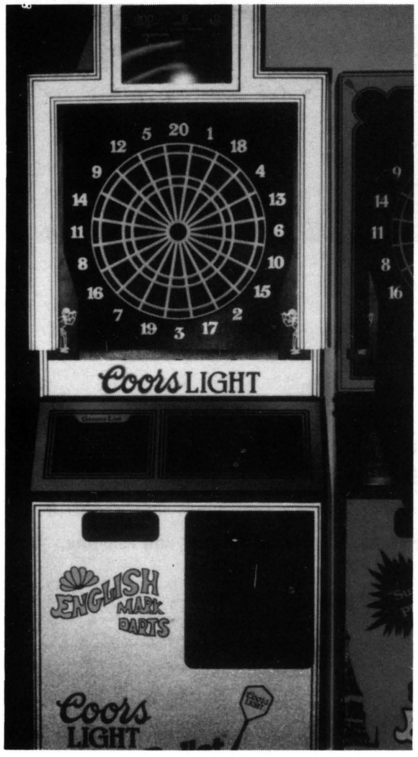


Left, friendly competitors Joel & Peggy Kleiman (Pioneer, Milwaukee) were joined by other dealers (Lou Singer, Ruby Franco, Terry Moss & Morris Piha) at the party. Right, decked out in a 60th b-day ribbon, Jerry happily accepts his plaque from Leland's Ken Anderson at the end of the latter's "roast"



NEW PRODUCTS

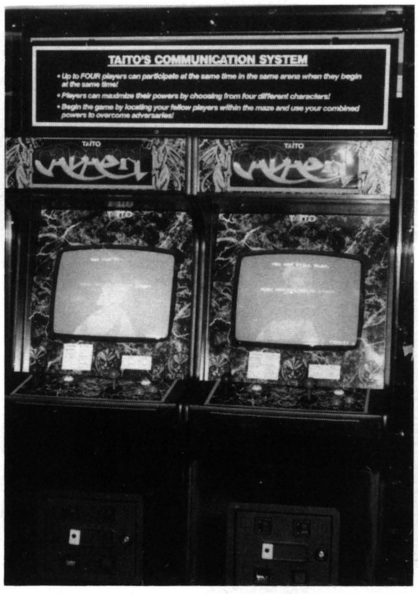
Arachnid's TOP OF THE LEAGUE



Top of the League is a new "English Mark Darts" electronically scored darts game featuring a larger, 12" overhead display monitor (previous games had smaller monitors that were mounted mid-cabinet). Also featured are a new web and catch ring with 80% more catching surface; coin or credit card adjustable pricing; and the firm's "Spider Writer" feature which permits on-site promotion of leagues, tourneys or tavern specials, etc. It allows darters to play all the popular games including three versions of Cricket.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Arachnid, Inc., P.O. Box 2901, Rockford, IL 61132-2901; 815/654-0212 or 800/435-8319.

Taito's CADASH



Cadash is a two-player (cooperative) video game horizontal conversion kit. It offers unusually detailed "story depth" and a nifty two-game linkage option.

Theme: the familiar fantasy adventure theme has been enhanced by a far more complex storyline, characterization, and detailing of the fictional "world" than is usually seen in this type of game. Also, there's no set pattern or required linear progression of scenes, missions, goals and adventures. These new factors result in real depth of play, which is supported by colorful graphics with large characters, plus a variety of interesting and unusual settings.

Gameplay: the player chooses to be a fighter, magician, priest, or ninja. He receives various missions from various characters as he goes along (makes for variety and surprise). The hero gets help and advice from various characters he meets along the way, too. (Not everybody is an enemy or a victim — another nice touch.)

Features: a special communication cable is available which allows operators to link two kits in two cabinets together for an interactive four-player, two-screen unit. You push the two cabinets flush together and place an extra-large special sign over both (provided by Taito) to let players know this option is available. Both cabinets need not show the same scene at the same time, but if players choose to have this happen, they can fight the same enemies together.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Dr., Wheeling, IL 60090; 708/520-9280.

Betson's SKEE-TOSS

Skee-Toss is a children's ski alley with electronics by Betson and cabinet by Skee-Ball (game is built at the latter's Pennsylvania factory). The game features "player interaction" via digitized speech to enhance the classic ski alley fun.

For more information, contact the exclusive marketer of the game: the redemption division of Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; 201/440-2200.

Midway's TROG

Trog is a dedicated upright video game. It features attractively simple gameplay (reminds us a little of Bally's 'Pac-Man') combined with a fun theme and sophisticated (yet still simple and attractive) graphics.

Theme: cute character chase game.

Gameplay: cartoon-like dinosaurs (in four different colors) try to collect eggs in a maze structure and go home, without getting clobbered (and eaten) by a hungry one-eyed



caveman named Og.

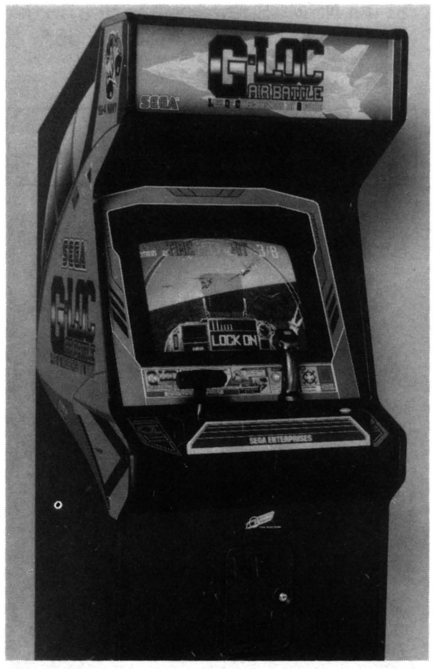
Features: Midway used stop-motion photography (the same camera tricks that brought "King Kong" to life in the 1934 movie) to animate some 3D models of very appealing characters. Digitized images of these apparently moving models appear on the screen in a process Midway calls "Playmation." Definitely beguiling to the eye.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 No. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; 312/267-2240.

New from SEGA

Sega introduced several new games at the recent ACME show. **G-Loc** is their new one-player aviation simulator. It comes in three configurations, each of which features a 19" monitor: the Deluxe (moving cockpit simulator); the smaller, stationary cockpit model (great for street locations); and the upright. Gameplay brings real depth to the air combat experience. Players may enter at any of three levels (trainee, rookie or ace). They are given different missions and targets at the start of each round of play, and are informed (at the end





of each period of play) how far they got in the mission (or if they complete a mission, they go on to get a new, even harder, mission). Dogfights, ground strafing, night flying, maneuvering through varied terrains and realistic atmospheric conditions, plus three exciting landing sequences on an aircraft carrier deck, are rounded out by superb graphics, sound effects and speech. Very realistic and complete (yet simple to understand) data displays on the screen add to the fun. In the moving cockpit version, a new level of life-like synchronization between images and motion has been achieved, Sega feels.

Alien Storm is an interactive, cooperative, horizontal dedicated upright video with 25" monitor. Colorful and realistic graphics (which



are the result of powerful new technology, says Sega) present three hot dog stand employees who are called to combat duty when Earth is invaded by nasty aliens. Nine rounds of action range from street fights to shooting inside the alien monster's body! Character "bits" and expressions add humor and human interest to the non-stop excitement.

Bloxeed is a puzzle-themed horizontal video conversion kit for one player or for two players competing simultaneously. Players arrange falling blocks in required patterns, competing against the clock or against one another to create the patterns as quickly as possible. As time periods elapse, the player is challenged by an additional row of blocks which appears at the bottom of the screen. Several other intriguing gameplay features are included.

MVP is an extremely realistic and detailed baseball-themed horizontal video conversion kit for one or two players simultaneously (they com-



pete). Each player uses a joystick and three buttons to play "at bat" or on the field. Players can swing for the stands, bunt, pinch-hit, adjust stance and swing, run back and forth between bases at will, etc. The defending player (as the pitcher) can vary type, strength and direction of pitches, pick off base runners, or put in a relief pitcher. Fielders can throw the ball to any base, chase and tag base runners, etc.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Sega Enterprises, Inc. (USA), P.O. Box 610550, San Jose, CA 95161-0550; 408/435-0201.

NSM's CD CARAVELLE and & CD FIRESTREAM



CD Caravelle is a remote-selector wallbox which features a beautiful mahogany look. It works with a hideaway unit or any NSM dedicated CD jukebox. Up to two remotes may be connected to the central phonograph.

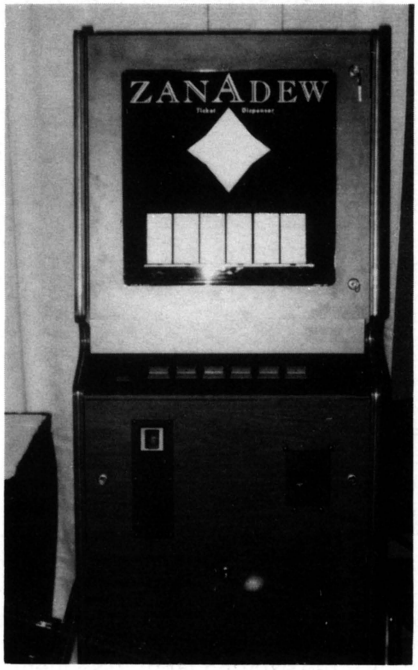


CD Firestream is also a remote-selector wallbox, but the decor of this unit recalls the light-up plastics of jukeboxes from the 1930s and '40s. It works with any NSM dedicated CD jukebox; several remotes can be connected to the central phonograph.

Features common to both units: can display up to 2,400 selections (both CD single and album title strips). Entire albums or single songs may be selected by customers. Different color markings identify musical categories. Title holders are easy to load and change.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's NSM (Loewen-America), 207 No. Rose St., Chicago, IL 60656; 312/992-2280.

New from Tekbilt



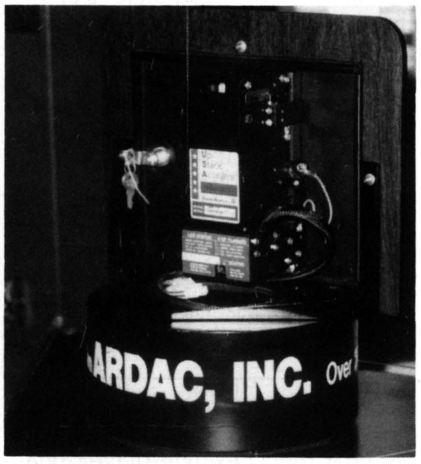
Zanadew is a ticket dispenser which features six individually-priced columns of tickets; 3,000 ticket capacity; fully metered coin in/ticket out; sensors for jams, empty or tampering; audio tamper alarm; solid state electronics; and heavy-duty mechanical dispensing system.

Powerhouse & Lil Powerhouse are upright and countertop universal cabinets, designed for poker or eight-line games. The upright features an easy access service drawer and Mars $1-20 bill acceptor; 13" or 19" monitor; and a 25¢ coin acceptor. The countertop features all plywood and formica construction; a Mars $1-20 bill acceptor with 400 bill stacker; 9" color monitor; and optional no coin/no bill versions.

For more information, ask your distributor or Tekbilt, Inc., Huntingdon Valley Industrial Center, 3979 Mann Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; 215/322-3232 or 800/666-7776.

Dixie-Narco's MAG-USA





MAG-USA is a new stack acceptor. The "MAG" stands for "music and games." The unit is the first designed specifically for the industry, and is the only acceptor with stacker which fits on a game door, said the firm. Variable pricing is possible (in fact, you can set it for 33¢ per game). Credit output is also operator-selectable (from 1 to 10 credits per dollar). The stacker can stack 300 bills. Bill path clearing and cleaning are accomplished in

BUY ONE . . . GET 24 FREE!

INDUSTRY STANDARDIZATION—or uniform parts and components for the coin-operated amusement industry—helps both manufacturers and operators reach a higher level of efficiency, productivity and profitability. AMOA's industry standardization committee now has a list of 24 standardization recommendations. These range from power switches and pricing options to coin door locks and leg levelers. Standardized parts and components simplifies the manufacturing process as well as machine repairs. It also saves you money.

INDUSTRY STANDARDIZATION!

Another way AMOA is working to build the coin-op industry.

AMOA MEMBERSHIP — It's For You

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON AMOA PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND MEMBERSHIP, VISIT YOUR LOCAL AMOA REPRESENTATIVE OR CALL/WRITE AMOA HEADQUARTERS AT 111 E. WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 600, CHICAGO, IL 60601. PHONE: 312/644-6610

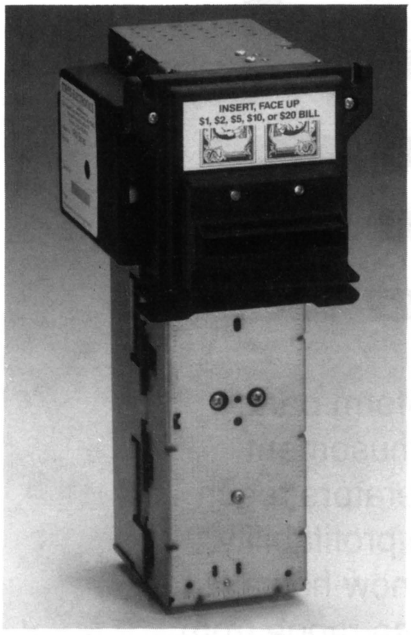
AMOA

Amusement & Music Operators Association

seconds. Other features include an attract mode and built-in diagnostics. This UL-approved product is backed with a 15-month warranty.

For more information, ask your distributor or Dixie Narco, Inc., Lawrence St., Ranson, WV 25438; 304/725-3481.

Mars Bill Acceptors



VFM3S & VFM5s are new bill acceptors providing downstacking capability (ideal when lots of bills are coming in) and increased fraud protection (gotta protect all those dollars!). They're the first in a new 1990 Mars "security series" of bill acceptors; more are coming. Both units come with different capacities of bills: 185 bills, 400 bills, 600 bills, or 1,000 bills. The 3S takes $1, $2 and $5 bills, while the 5S takes those plus $10 and $20 bills.

Both units are perfect for music and amusement machines, plus lottery ticket machines and casinos, said Mars. Security is "the highest level available on the market today," the firm added. Operators can use switches or software to program the units in very sophisticated ways: for instance, you can tell the unit not to accept $20 and $10 bills between 10PM and 6AM, etc. Bills can be inserted face up in either direction, or direction may be limited to meet bank requirements.

Also featured is built-in diagnostic capability to allow fast, easy troubleshooting, faster turnaround time, and lower cost for out-of-warranty repairs. In case you haven't noticed, folks, Mars is very serious about our industry and their products deserve a close look. You'll be hearing much more about Mars in future issues.

For more information, ask your distributor or Mars Electronics International, Inc., 1301 Wilson Dr., West Chester, PA 19380; 215/430-2500.

New Vender from Krieg



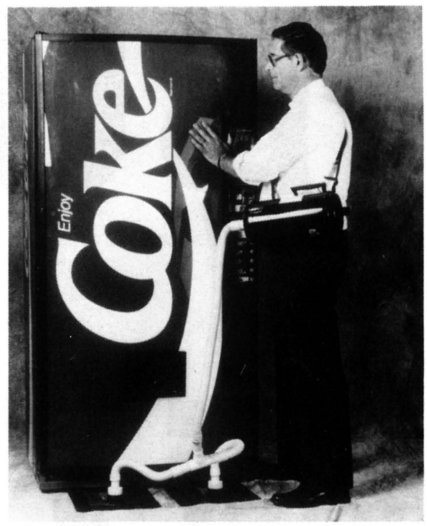
Bodyclean is a personal products vending machine made by AB of Austria and Bodyclean of Switzerland. Units can dispense a wide variety of products for men or women, including shaving sets, panty hose, etc. Units can be purchased for coin or bill operation. Advertising stickers are also available.

For more information, contact A. Krieg Consulting & Trading, Inc., 119 Maple Vale Dr., Woodbridge, CT 06525; 203/393-3672.

SODAFLOAT from Airsled

Sodafloat is one of the appliance moving systems designed and built by this Delaware firm. Idea is — literally — to float a heavy machine on a cushion of air, much like a portable hovercraft. Using their gear, one person can reposition a half-ton load all by himself.

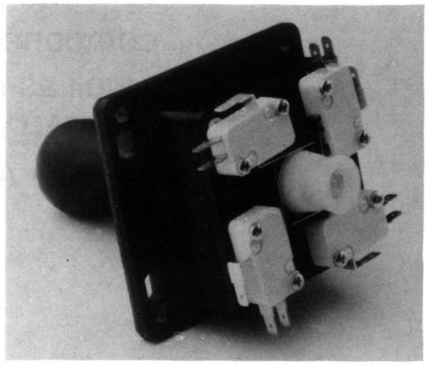
These devices are in use by more than 20,000 appliance services and others, said the firm. How does it work? Well, one Airsled device



uses two 9x36" aluminum air beams, connecting hoses and a blower which creates air pressure under the beams. You slide the beams under the appliance and, when inflated by the blower, the machine is lifted and can be moved with minimum effort. It does a great job of preventing back injuries, said the firm. Amazingly, these systems start at under $300.

For more information, contact Aaron Silverman at Airsled Inc., 408-B Meco Dr., Wilmington, DE 19804; 302/996-5417 or 800/247-7533 (which is 800/AIR-SLED).

SUPER JOYSTICK from Happ Controls



Super Joystick features nylon and solid steel construction; micro switches of solid steel with metal actuators which may be individually replaced; unique handle design; spring return to center; durable nylon actuator; capable of changing to 4-way or 8-way simply by flipping the actuator over. No tools needed.

For more information, ask your distributor or Happ Controls, 106 Garlisch, Elk Grove, IL 60007; 708/593-6130.

Tournament Highlights

GIANT SPIDER INVASION — Or, in other words, "record breaking, largest-ever dart tournament coming to Chicago." Where do spiders come in? The Latin for spider is "Arachnid." Ah, now you get the picture. Yes, Arachnid's $40,000 BullShooter V championships will take place over Memorial Day weekend (May 26-28) at the Holiday Inn O'Hare in Rosemont. (Warm-ups start the day before, May 25.) The $440,000 finals event is the climax of the 1989-90 $135,000 BullShooter V Tour, which included 16 regional and state events, international competitions, and local league play. Available for play at the championships will be 128 *English Mark Dart Super 6* games manufactured by Arachnid. Held in conjunction with the dart competition will be a beauty contest and two international challenge matches for the Pacific Cup and the European Cup.

VALLEY 8-BALL FINALS — The 10th Annual VNEA International Singles & Team Championships will be held at the Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas from May 26-June 2. VNEA members only are eligible to send pool shooters to this classic contest. Contact Gregg Elliot for information at 517/893-1800.



MERIT IN ST. LOUIS — Finninger's Banquet Center was the site for the $3,000 World Series of Darts St. Louis Open on March 9-11, sponsored by Merit Industries and featuring their line of electronic darts games. "Even in this brand new market, players from five states competed for the purse," Merit said proudly. Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois and Florida shooters all came to play in the event, as did the fast-growing league sponsored by local operator O.K. Novelty (they've gone from 7 to 17 teams in their spring league). Players, including many novices, said they hope the Open will become an annual event. By the way, the contest also benefitted the Musical Dystrophy Assn. via a special event; almost all players participated.

MERIT'S N.Y. CLASSIC — March 2 was the date, Buffalo was the city as Pub Time Darts and WNYDA (the Western New York Electronic Dart Assn.) co-sponsored the New York Classic tourney. Formed in 1986, WNYDA is a unique group of operators: Liaro's Vending, WNEK Vending, Johnny's Amusement, Empire Smokes, Mike's Amusement, Sally's Amusement and Rank's Amusement. Merit tourney director Bob Hodges praised WNYDA as "terrific to work with, a class group of people" who support darts locally, statewide and nationally. Players came from New York, Pennsylvania and Canada to shoot darts and very much enjoyed the event. WNYDA is confidently planning a New York State Tournament and a 1990-91 repeat of the Buffalo affair with at least double the entries and a prize of at least $5,000.

POP-A-SHOT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS — Co-sponsored by Miller Brewing Co., Pop-A-Shot (Salinas, Kan.) hosts its open-entry World Championships with cash, trophies and product on May 18-19 at the O'Hare Marriott near Chicago. Ten events comprise this annual event on a game which is endorsed by the National Basketball Assn. and the Basketball Hall of Fame. Tourney registration and information can be had at 913/827-6229.

AMOA NDA FINALS are slotted for May 2-5 at the Sahara in Las Vegas. It's the National Dart Assn.'s fifth annual team championships for electronic darts, and the first such affair in which Arachnid will participate as a sponsor along with longtime NDA supporters Valley and Merit. "We expect over 2,500 players from 40 or more states and six foreign countries to swarm to this event," stated NDA Exec Director Joe Conway.



PLAYFAIR ON ST. PADDY'S — Playfair Shuffleboard Co. (Ft. Wayne, Ind.) co-sponsored two St. Patrick's Day weekend shuffleboard tournaments along with Beef's Tavern (Kendallville, Ind.) and local radio station WOWO-AM. The March 17 event, hosted by Beef's and Playfair, drew top regional players to a 16 team, double-elimination event. "We had turn-away crowds," said Beef's co-owner Margie Camp. The second contest that weekend was part of the annual "Sports, Vacation and Boat Show," held March 15-18 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Ft. Wayne. WOWO Radio 1190 helped Playfair promote a four-day open competition. "We're always looking for way to introduce people to the excitement and challenge of tabletop shuffleboard," noted Playfair prexy Brian Cowl. He praised the show and WOWO for creating the "perfect atmosphere" to try the game and test skills. Get more info from Playfair at 219/420-3807.



ARACHNID FROM N.Y. TO CALIF. — The BullShooter V Tour of electronic dart tournaments stopped in two states in February. First, a $5,000 qualifier took place in Rochester, New York, co-sponsored by T.O.P. Distributing. Next, C.A. Robinson co-sponsored the $5,000 California Regional in the L.A.-area city of Torrance, drawing over 600 entries for one of the Tour's largest regional events. Top three winners from both events qualified for the BullShooter Finals in Chicago this month.









ARACHNID TO OHIO — The fifth annual Arachnid "BullShooter Dart Tour" came to Columbus, Ohio on Jan. 6 for a $5,000 regional tourney sponsored by Cleveland Coin and Shaffer Distributing. Players came from several states to compete in eight events. Barb Hall (pictured here) was the big winner, placing first in two events (women's singles, mixed cricket), second in one event (mixed doubles), and third in another event (women's doubles). Buffalo, N.Y.'s Rocko Wojnowski (seen here with Arachnid's Steve Johnson) took top honors in Pro 301 double in/double out. Top winners in all events qualified to play in Arachnid's May 26-28 "World Challenge" finals in Chicago.

TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

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 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.

NOVEMBER 9-10

Pinball Expo, Ramada Inn, Rosemont, Illinois. For more information, contact Robert Berk at 216/369-1192. For exhibit information, contact Mike Pacak at 800/321-2722.

PINBALL POWER



POOL SHARKS is a new Bally pinball from Midway Mfg. Co. It was first unveiled at the FAVA show (late April) and offers an industry first: two games in one. You can play 8 ball or 9 ball, just as in real pool. Backglass graphics will light up 8 ball or 9 ball, depending on which you select — make your selection at game start by using flipper buttons, which are programmed to act like toggle switches. Said the firm: "It's a worthy successor to our earlier pool-themed pins, *8 Ball* and *8 Ball Deluxe.*" It does have a couple of ramps, but is a very clean, simple, easy-playing game which should appeal to taverns as well as family amusement centers, Midway said.

ROLLER GAMES is the new roller derby themed Williams pinball game, which the firm is branding "the successor to *Whirlwind.*" Based on the popular TV show of the same name, it's Williams first licensed pinball in quite some time. Said the firm: "Hot neon uniforms and incredible-looking women in the artwork add to thrills and spills which truly capture the essence of the sport." That essence, by the way, is wrestling type combat on roller skates. A special shot: a magnet will hold the ball at the best point for shooting by the mid-field flipper, and a voice prompt will tell you when to flip for a guaranteed power shot up a ramp. "It's a foolproof perfect shot for every average player," said the firm. By the way, game artwork contains ads for several products including Pepsi-Cola.

IFPA TOURNEY IDEAS — March, 1991 may see a national pinball tournament in Milwaukee, Wisc., sponsored by the International Flipper Pinball Assn. The director of the tournament would be flipper fanatic Steve Epstein, operator of the Broadway Arcade in New York City. The umbrella group, IFPA, was being created by the AMOA-AAMA Pinball Promotion Committee at presstime. Joe Conway, who's the executive director of AMOA's National Dart Assn. in Milwaukee, has agreed to serve as executive director on part-time basis of the proposed IFPA, until a full-time staff can be hired.

TONY KRAEMER died April 8. The inventive Williams-Bally/Midway pinball designer was leaving a location where his latest creation, *Pool Sharks,* was on test when he was struck by a passing car. Tony's enduring creations for various manufacturers include Williams' first solid state game *Hot Tip;* the curved-flipper game *Disco Fever;* the wide-body *Algar;* the dual-level *Pharoah;* and the long-charting *Swords of Fury,* which ran in the top 10 list for nine consecutive months. *Truck Stop & Transporter* from Midway bore his distinctive stamp, as does *Pool Sharks,* his final — and perhaps finest — work. Said WMS Industries Director of Game Design Steve Kordek: "The industry has lost a true original who was responsible for bringing much entertainment and joy to millions of pinball players the world over. We mourn his passing and offer our heartfelt sympathy to his mother Elizabeth, brother Carl and sisters Maria and Loretta."

GRAPEVINE

international

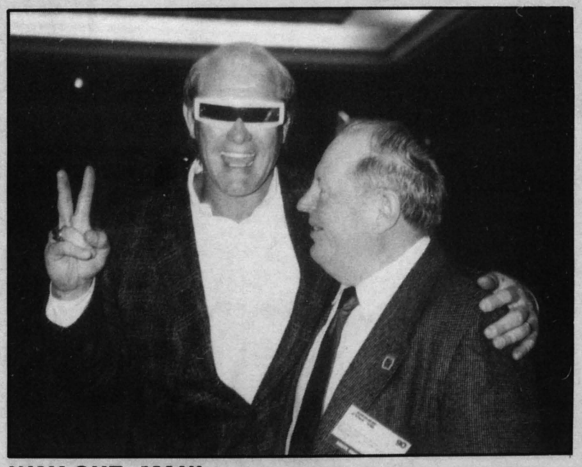
ENADA 1990 — The spring ENADA (March 8-11) was a great success, said organizers of this Italian show. Attendance by trade visitors was up 31% for a total of 4,825 visitors from around the globe; the number of exhibitors jumped from last year's 80 to this year's 130. Italy holds its next national coin-op amusement machine expo,also called the ENADA, at the Rome Fair (Via dei Georgofili 7) from Oct. 11-17.

BURNIP RESIGNS — Family health problems have forced England's Joe Burnip to tender his resignation as Asst. General Secretary of the board of directors of the Amusement Trades Exhibition, a post he'd held since 1978. He'd also served as ATEI's full-time manager since 1988. During his tenure, the London ATEI virtually doubled in size to 17,000 admissions this year. The ATE board had already started the search for a replacement, since Joe had earlier announced 1992 retirement plans, but for now director Michael Shefras (an industry consultant) will step in to manage the expo planning and set up a new management team. ATEI execs said they were fortunate to have someone of Mike's caliber on board and they promised their 1991 show would be "bigger and better than ever."

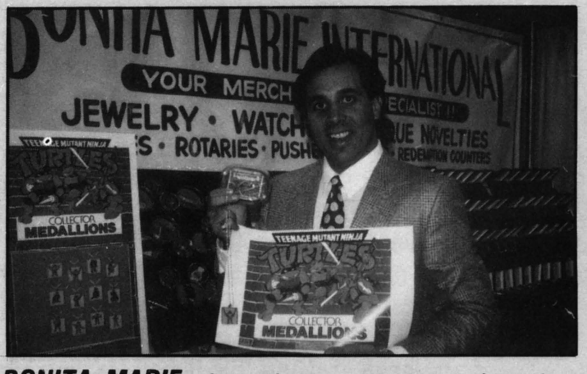
northeast

CCI WILL MOVE — Art Warner and Wylie Irwin of Coin Concepts (East Brunswick, N.J.) have announced plans to move to larger quarters in July. Said Art: "The demand for redemption and novelty games has increased so rapidly, that we under-estimated our space requirements. We never expected to outgrow the space in 18 months!" Irwin designed the new facility. "We considered our needs for the next three years," he said. "In addition to a larger warehouse facility, we've increased offices for a larger sales force and parts department."

FRANK*STAR SEMINARS — Yes, the "Frank Seninsky & *Star*Tech Journal* seminars" are being offered at major distributors' offices throughout the spring and summer. This month's dates and sites include May 5-6 at General Coin (Seattle); May 12-13 at Active (Philadelphia); May 19-20 at Betson Pacific (San Francisco). In June, the seminars will come to Las Vegas, Portland, Denver and Houston, while July will see them offered in Omaha nd Bloomington. Dallas is the August site. For more information on these two-track, "management or technical" seminars, call Neil Calore at 609/662-1080 or Frank at Alpha-Omega Amusement (you'll find the phone number in his ad in our Blue Pages).



WAY OUT, MAN! Our buddy Sam Morrison (Musical Moments, New York) with football great Terry Bradshaw who gives us a way-cool peace sign, which is very fitting considering the far-out shades Sam had him wear. (As Sam's buddies know, he usually has some trinket at each show to amuse his fellow tradesters. For those that missed Terry's talk, he was both entertaining and gracious, spending a lot of time signing autographs and posing for photos like this one.



BONITA MARIE showed some snappy redemption merchandise at the recent ACME. Topping their line was 1½" square gold medallions, featuring the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. It's available exclusively from Bonita. With purchase of these items, operators will also receive free TMNT posters to put up on the mirrored back wall of their cranes, to promote these hot prizes. So order now for immediate shipment. As the Turtles would say, "Cowabunga, dude!"

DON KISSINGER is the new sales manager at Competitive Products Corp. A 10-year industry vet, Don's prior post was parts manager at the Active distributor office in Philadelphia. "We're expanding our inventory here at Competitive Products daily," said VP Bill Ray Jr., "and we're very happy to add Don to our team!"

midwest



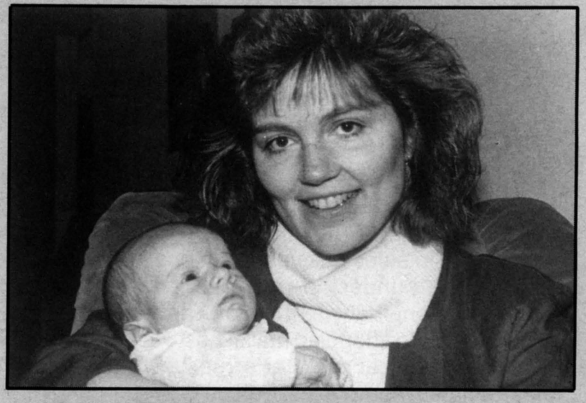
LAURA REZEK has moved from Marketing Director at the Chicago-based pinball and video game makers, Midway Mfg. Co., to Marketing Communications Manager at Bally Mfg. Corp. in Las Vegas. She made the change effective April 6, Williams-Midway VP Ken Fedesna announced. "We were sorry to see Laura leave, since she contributed much to the way the day-to-day success of Midway. We wish her well in her future endeavors."

JUKEBOX HONOR ROLL — AMOA's Jukebox Promotion Committee (chaired by Tami Norberg-Paulsen) has thanked many industry groups for generous contributions for 1990 jukebox PR activities. As of April 6, the "honor roll" included (manufacturers): NSM, Pioneer, Rowe and Wurlitzer . . . (distributors, suppliers or one-stops): American Vending Sales, Bird, Brady, Eastern, Lieberman, Mondial, Roth, Shaffer, Starway Records, Technisound and World Wide . . . (state-level trade associations) AMOC-Conn., AMOT-Tenn., AMOT-Texas, ICMOA-Ill., MOMA-Minn., MOMA-Mont., OCMA-Ohio, OAMOA-Ore., PAMMA-Penn., RM-AMOA Rocky Mtn. states, SCCOA-S.C. and WAMO-Wisc. Planned jukebox promo activities for 1990 include a November campaign to highlight national jukebox month, a reporting system to spotlight most-played juke tunes, and a possible "900" toll line involving on-site location promotions. Many details on this latter idea have yet to be worked out, but a limited trial in some selected test markets may be in the works.

KIDDIE RIDE MEETING — The American Kiddie Ride Assn. (AKRA) held its first meeting on March 10 (in conjunction with the ACME show) in Chicago. President of the group is Tom Theisen; Jerry Reda is treasurer and Stephen Banks is secretary. Anita Bennett is executive director of this Minneapolis, Minn.-based group. Board members include folks such as Fred Gillman, John Druga, Irwin Kaplan, Ron Rollins, Eric Torres, Tony Urso, Bruce Eckard, Tony DeMarco, George Braverman, Frank LaVecchica, Brad Veatch and Buddy Shiro. Other results of the first meeting are reported in our "News Digest" section.



CAROL TOMME is the new Director of Communications for Incredible Technologies, a developer of pinball and video games, and for IC's subsidiary Strata, which markets certain IT games. Said IT prexy Elaine Ditton, "IT has grown to the point where we needed someone with Carol's background to help us communicate the strength we bring to the amusement industry. We're delighted to have her on board." Carol will direct marketing strategy communications, including PR and advertising. Her background includes stints as an account supervisor (Golin/Harris Communications, a top Chicago PR firm); as manager of corporate communications (Systems Management); and as a high tech journalist. Welcome to coin-op, Carol!



ALSO NEW AT IT — Yes, the baby boom has reached Incredible Technologies. Here we see IT prexy and founder Elaine Ditton with her favorite new product: Benjamin Ditton, born Feb. 21. Congrats to mom and dad!



HAPP AT CES — Star power! Standup comic par excellence Jay Leno dropped by the Happ Controls booth at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show (held in Las Vegas January 8-11). Seen here is big Jay at center with Happ's Dennis Sitcler (at left) and Mike Happ.



PYTHON TAMED! Python Angelo, that wild and crazy Williams pinball designer, has been "charmed" into sedate husband-hood by a beautiful gal named Aurora. Is she an Indian fakir who plays a snake-charming flute? No, she's his lovely bride! The two wed on Feb. 20 and we offer them our heartiest congratulations. Said a very happy Python: "There is hope in this industry!"

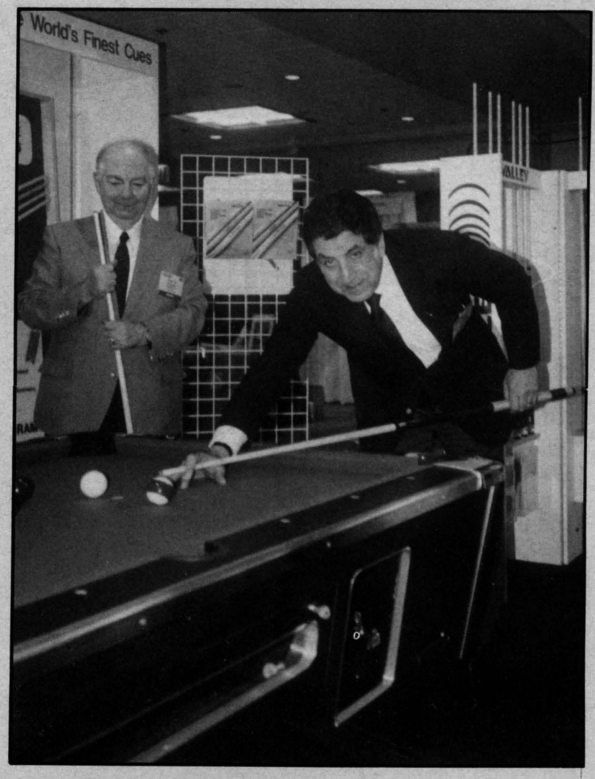
EDISON BROS. BUYS ARCADE CHAIN — The St. Louis, Mo.-based Edison Brothers Stores, Inc. have purchased Adventure Properties, Ltd., a firm which realized $12 million in sales last year from operating 48 gamerooms (mostly under the name of Space Port), plus one larger family entertainment center. The arcades are located principally in shopping malls. Last year, Edison Bros. purchased Dave and Buster's freestanding restaurant/entertainment complexes. Edison is a retail conglomerate with ambitious plans for their entertainment division.

VALLEY HONORS MOSS — Moss Distributing Co. (Des Moines, Iowa) has received the "most improved distributor" award from Valley Recreation Products. The award, a cougar's head mounting, was presented to dealer Terry Ross at a Des Moines ceremony. Staff from both firms attended. "Moss Distributing has performed exceptionally well throughout the year," stated Valley Marketing VP Alan Schafer. A proud Terry Moss said he "intended to keep the momentum going for 1990."

DESIGN PLUS — The folks at Design Plus Industries (Peoria Heights, Ill.) are doing some serious "clowning around" since licensing the character of "Bozo, the world's most famous clown" for a series of youth-sized redemption games. Owners Mike and Diane Seibert pointed out that a syndicated live-action TV show featuring the beloved character is seen in over 20 million homes daily. The firm's first release, the one- or two-player *Bozo Basketball,* debuted at the ACME show. It features colorful structure, bright flashing lights and snappy circus music. Optional ticket dispenser can be adjusted for "a winner every time" and works with the revolving flashing winner light. Said the firm: "With this adjustment, even the smallest shooter will be a winner." The game is a little longer than other kiddie basketballs, creating more of a skill factor and competition. "But it's still fun to play and easy to win," said Diane Seibert. Her husband Mike, who designs each game, said additional "Bozo" youth-sized redemption games will be released later this year. The entire "Bozo" line is being crafted so that each game compliments the others, said Mike.

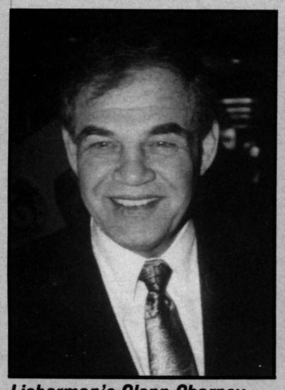
WORLD WIDE REP'S MIDWAY — Midway Mfg. Co. has named World Wide Dist. (Chicago, Ill.) as the newest authorized distributor for the firm's pinball and video games. Midway Sales & Marketing VP said the move would round out "a very strong network" in the state.

KATIE LEE KAMINKOW made her debut on Feb. 22 at 5:31 PM, daughter of proud parents Joe (Data East Pinball) and Kim Kaminkow. Congratulations!



VALLEY IS SMILING — "We've really had an excellent year and 1990 is starting even better. Pool is doing extremely well and last month we shipped our 20,000th dart game to NSM. Business has been great! I can't say enough about it." By the way, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Mossbacher has contacted Valley to say the firm will receive the Presidential "E" (for excellence in export) award. It will be presented to Chuck by one of Michigan's senators (Levin or Riegle) an an upcoming ceremony. Congratulations!

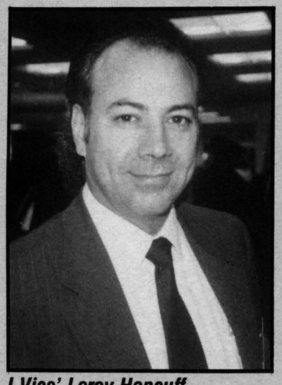
ACCLAIM MARKETS WMS TO NES — Acclaim Entertainment (Oyster Bay, Wisc.) is already a major supplier of games to Nintendo's home video market, but now they've got "right of first refusal" on home rights to coin-op games from WMS Industries (Williams-Bally/Midway). First titles to NES under this agreement will be *Narc* and *Arch Rivals.* Both titles will also go out as "SuperPlay Hand-held" video games.



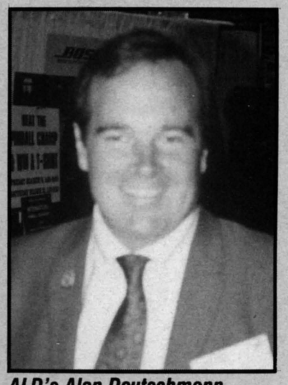
Lieberman's Glenn Charney



Jim Roberts (r) with Ed Adlum



I-Vics' Leroy Hancuff

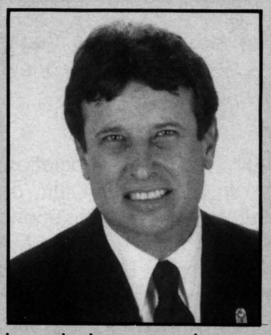


ALD's Alan Deutschmann

BALD FACED — Five formerly-mustachioed tradesters showed up clean-shaven at ACME. Lieberman Music's Glenn Charney, James Industries' Jim Roberts, ALD's Alan Deutschmann, I-VICs' LeRoy Hancuff and Rowe's Mike Reinert (not pictured) decided to "take it off. . . take it all off." Valley's Chuck Milhem started this revealing trend last year, if we recall correctly. Now, let's see: if hemlines go up, it's supposed to be a good omen for the economy. So when five prominent mustaches are mowed down, does that mean the industry had a close shave?

southeast

WORTH WAITING FOR — The MicroProse *F-15 Strike Eagle* upright video simulator may make its official market release at the end of June. This according to factory sources in Hunt Valley, Md. Some tradesters inspected the partially-completed version at the ACME and are anxious to see all remaining phases (or "arenas" as MP calls them) in final form. Operators' price is in the $7,000 range; everyone agrees it's quite an advance in vidgame technology — sort of a "thinking man's video." MicroProse has appointed only about two dozen U.S. distributors (they're on exclusive territorial status) to handle local marketing. The prototype was displayed during post-ACME open houses at Betson (East and West), NECO, and SunBelt in Dallas. We're anxious to see what happens when the game makes its official debut.

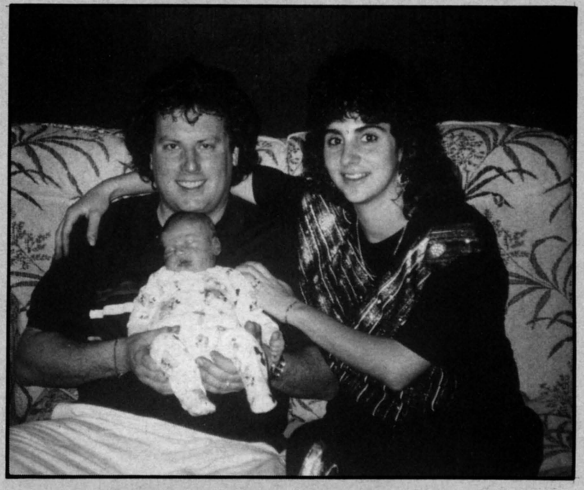


GRAY STOWERS of Stowers Leasing is the new Commercial Vending Division VP for Music & Games International (Marietta, Ga.). In that post, he'll oversee vending operations in the entire state of Georgia. Gray's 17-year-plus vending career includes a recent post on the board of the GAMOA. He brings much knowledge, experience and integrity to the firm, stated the company's President Mike DeMoya.

FOR CHARITY — Last month's issue reported on coin-op's involvement in "Give Kids the World," a resort hotel for terminally ill children and their families located in Kissimmee, Fla. The kids stay at the hotel and visit nearby Disney World. . . but that's not all. Thanks to local operator Bill Miller (WGM Amusement) and AAMA, the kids now have a free play arcade on site. Donations were made by Birmingham Vending (Fla.), Brady Dist. (Fla.), Dynamo, Konami, NSM, SNK and Williams Bally/Midway. Nintendo also supported the project. A big salute to past AMOA prexy Clyde Knupp, who helped get AAMA aboard.

U.S. GAMES, INC. has a new shipping and billing address. It's 5825-B Peachtree Corners East, Norcross, GA 30092; 404/441-2910.

southwest



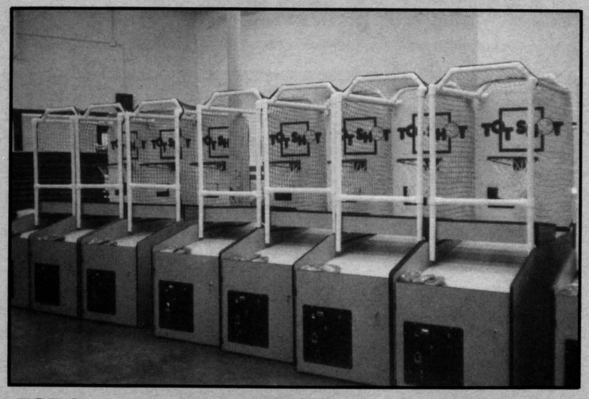
GAIL ZWEBEN is the name of the little bundle of joy who arrived in the family of *RePlay's* Barry and Nancy Zweben on March 27. She's the first child for Barry and Nancy. Mom and baby are doing fine (though Daddy isn't getting much sleep these days) and the entire *RePlay* staff again wishes the Zwebens a very warm "congratulations!"

MOUNTAIN COIN DIST. opened a new Las Vegas office on April 27. The site is 5675 So. Valley View, Las Vegas, NV 89118; 702/798-0900.

NAMA TALKS $1 COIN — NAMA (vending association) held its annual Western expo in San Jose, Calif. on March 23-25. With 170 exhibitors, it was the second largest of these 29 annual affairs ever held, NAMA reported. NAMA Chairman Harold Blotner told convention-goers that getting a $1 coin into circulation is "the most important" item on the industry's agenda.

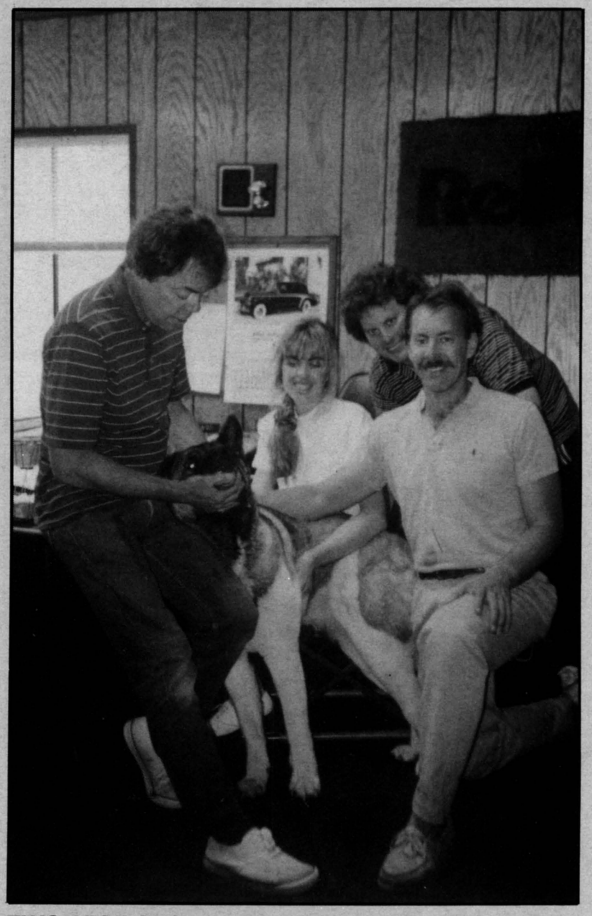
A NICE LADY PASSES ON — LaVerne Jacobs Ellingston, mother of SNK (San Jose, Calif.) prexy Paul Jacobs and widow of Harry (United Distributors, Milwaukee) Jacobs, passed away in her sleep the morning of April 11 at her home in suburban Milwaukee. She was 70. Since she'd been in good health, death was attributed to heart failure. Years ago, she was known to quite a number of Wisconsin operators when her husband Harry ran United. (That's where son Paul got his start in the industry.) Harry died from a coronary back in 1969 and LaVerne remarried years later, outliving her second husband as well. LaVerne was well-liked by a number of Paul's industry friends like Ken Anderson and Eddie Adlum, who enjoyed chatting with her at the house when they visited Milwaukee. Paul, his sister Carole Townsend, several grandchildren and many friends bade her goodbye at services held April 18 at Wisconsin Memorial Park in Brookfield.

We also just learned that Louis Selinger, father of Angie (Leland) Anderson, passed on March 25 at age 85 in Little Falls, Minn. May they both rest in peace.



'TOT SHOTS' TAKES OFF — Intermark Amusements (a division of National Sports Games) says their new *Tot Shot* kiddie-sized basketball game is really taking off. "Response to the game has literally been off the charts since we introduced it at the ACME show in Chicago," smiled VP Kim Cook. Judging from the photo, Intermark is turning 'em out as fast as they can!

NEW FROM SHARP — Sharp Image bowed two new monitors in their Optima line at ACME. One is the Optima 20" flat monitor; the other is a 23" flat square monitor. They'll be available beginning April 1, advised Chris Anderson, prexy of the Southern California firm.

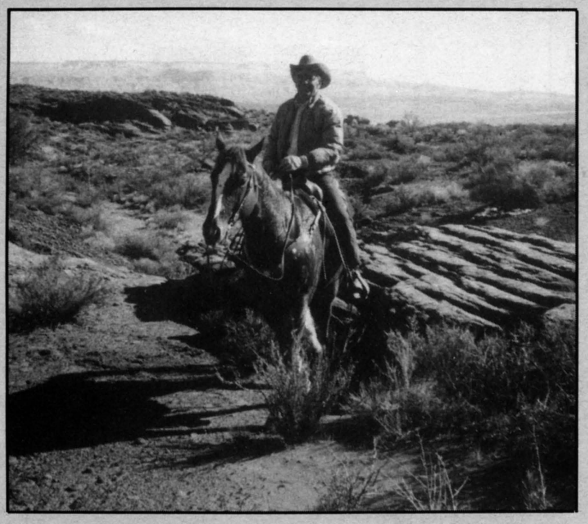


TWO VISITORS — Operator Bill Van Anda (Alpine Gameshare, Reno, Nev.) dropped by *RePlay's* offices in early April, bringing with him his beautiful six-year-old along. She's got sharp teeth, a silver and black coat, and (fortunately) a very friendly disposition. Bill himself looks great, by the way (must be pumping a lot of iron at the gym these days). Seen here are (from left) Eddie Adlum, Bill's canine companion, our own Carolyn Lokken and Barry Zweben, and Bill himself.

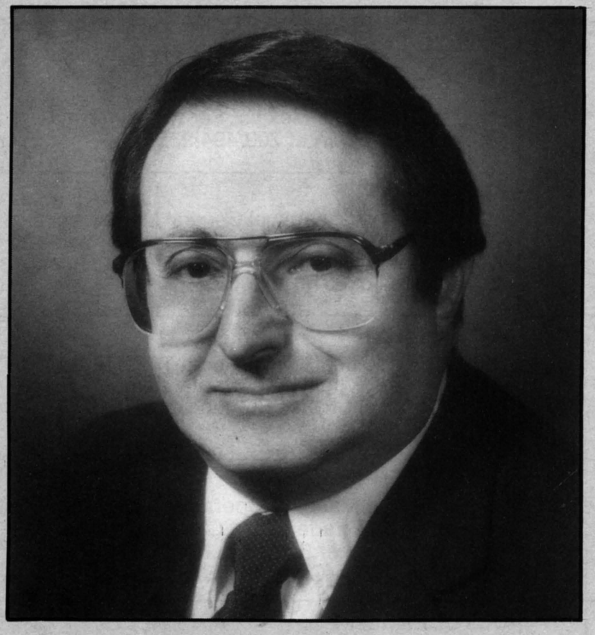
STAN ROUSSO is a name many SoCal trade vets will remember. He worked for Portale before it became Betson. We ran into Stan and his wife in a restaurant a while back and can tell you he's enjoying a good career in real estate these days. And he looks marvelous!

CRANEABLES gave away prizes in a drawing to lucky operators at the recent ACME show. Great Games (Glendale, Ariz.) won the grand prize, one free premium assortment of redemption merchandise. Ten other firms from across the country won a Craneables route bag.

HI-TECH CHIP — Who says hi-tech has to be expensive? A new "Silicon Valley" firm called C-Cube Microsystems, Inc. has developed a $150 "compression chip" that allows small computers to store, edit and manipulate full-color, full-motion, real-time video images. What does that mean for video games? Interactive movies are going to be affordable.



PRES STRUVE is president of Struve Dist. Co. (Salt Lake City). He works hard, but he also knows how to get away from factory quotas: just ride your horse through Utah's southwestern desert. "Out here in Color Country, no one can find you," Pres grinned. He's conditioning his horse Tavish for a 50-mile endurance race this month.



KNIGIN TO BETSON — West Coast trade vet Irwin Knigin took over the reins of the Los Angeles parts and service department of Betson Pacific Distributing on April 9. (Dave Guettler left the post a few weeks ago.) Besides heading the busy support program, Irv says they're streamlining a new computer system which will allow him to interface with Betson's other offices in Phoenix and San Francisco. "We aim to be totally responsive to operators here in Southern California," Irv stated, "as well as to those in the other two territories, with their needs in both spare parts and equipment service."

Knigin, as many Western operators know, has numerous years logged in the industry. Immediately before Betson, he worked as president of Silco Management Services, covering chain accounts like Denny's. He also spent two years as Williams' western regional sales manager. He's perhaps best known for his years with Circle International (former L.A. distributorship). "I'm happy to be working here for Peter (Betti) and with his staff, some of whom like John Scarvarda, Denny Robinson and Joe Farney are old friends and co-workers of mine from other companies," Irv said. "And I look forward to helping the operators, many of whom have also become friends of mine over the years."



TOM CAHILL gave one of his patented pinball service schools at Betson Pacific's Phoenix branch on Jan. 25. A full house of 57 operators and techs attended as Tom walked them through Williams' *Whirlwind.* Afterwards, the crowd said, "It was the best service school I've every seen!" Gee, somebody should video tape Tom doing this sort of thing . . . come to think of it, somebody has. Contact your authorized distributor! Meantime, look to Betson Pacific for more great service schools in the future, advised branch manager Sal DeBruno.

northwest

NINTENDO GETS TOUGH — An elaborate undercover sting operation which used hidden cameras, mikes and $100,000 in marked money has resulted in the arrest of four home game counterfeiters by U.S. Customs, Nintendo reported. Among the arrested was a Taiwanese couple who were caught bringing counterfeit video games into the U.S., reported the firm. Arrests occurred April 12 in Wilmington, N.C.

In other Nintendo news, the Redmond, Wash.-based firm announced a "get tough" campaign against video rental outlets and others who rent or sell counterfeit NES home games. Lawsuits have been filed in U.S. District Courts in California, Minnesota and Florida to stop the sales, said the firm. Some Canadian suits were also announced, and more suits are expected in both countries.

By the way, *Billboard* magazine has reported that Nintendo is having trouble with parallel imports of used Japanese NES games, as well as counterfeits of its home games.







COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE — Dunis Distributing (Portland, Ore.) followed up their successful post-ACME open house with a Williams technical school. The firm's much-respected Tom Cahill led the seminar, which Dunis VP Mike Damtew said exemplified the dealer's commitment to excellence in customer service. In the first photo, we see Mike (left) and Tom with Williams' *Whirlwind.* The second snap shows Mike and the Dunis/Portland crew ("As you can see, we are multi-national," smiled Mike). Third snap shows graduates of Tom's seminar.

DATEBOOK

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 11-14
NAMA National Convention, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, contact NAMA at 312/346-0270.

OCTOBER 25-27
AMOA Expo '90. Hyatt Regency (and two other hotels), New Orleans. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/644-6610.

NOVEMBER 9-10
Pinball Expo, Ramada Inn, Rosemont, Illinois. For more information, contact Robert Berk at 216/369-1192. For exhibit information, contact Mike Pacak at 800/321-2722.

HOTHITS PLAY LIST

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

POP

★ **1. BLACK VELVET,** *Alannah Miles, Atlantic 88742*
2. SAVE ME, *Fleetwood Mac, Warner Bros. 19866*
3. NOTHING COMPARES 2 U, *Sinead O'Connor, Ensign/Chrysalis 23488*
4. ALL I WANT TO DO IS MAKE LOVE TO YOU, *Heart, Capitol 44507*
★ **5. ALRIGHT,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1479*
★ **6. ESCAPADE,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1490*
7. I WISH IT WOULD RAIN DOWN, *Phil Collins, Atlantic 88738*
8. LOVE WILL LEAD YOU BACK, *Taylor Dane, Arista 9938*
9. I'LL BE YOUR EVERYTHING, *Tommy Page, Sire/Warner Bros. 19959*
10. WHAT IT TAKES, *Aerosmith, Geffen 19944*

CW

1. HARD ROCK BOTTOM OF YOUR HEART, *Randy Travis, Warner Bros. 19935*
2. STRANGER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED, *Ronnie Milsap, RCA 9120*
3. GUARDIAN ANGELS, *The Judds, Curb/RCA 2524*
4. LOVE ON ARRIVAL, *Dan Seals, Capitol 44435*
5. HERE IN THE REAL WORLD, *Alan Jackson, Arista 9922*
6. NOT COUNTING YOU *Garth Brooks, Capitol 44492*
7. WALKIN' AWAY, *Clint Black, RCA 2520*
8. I'VE CRIED MY LAST TEAR FOR YOU, *Ricky Van Shelton, Columbia 73263*
9. FIVE MINUTES, *Lorrie Morgan, RCA 9118*
10. BLACK COFFEE, *Lacy J. Dalton, Capitol 79962*

R&B

★ **1. WHIP APPEAL,** *Babyface, Solar/Epic 74007*
★ **2. ALL AROUND THE WORLD,** *Lisa Stansfield, Arista 9928*
★ **3. ALRIGHT** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1479*
★ **4. TREAT YOU RIGHT,** *Luther Vandross, Epic 73258*
★ **5. THE SECRET GARDEN,** *Quincy Jones, Quest/Warner Bros. 19992*
6. RUB YOU THE RIGHT WAY, *Johnny Gill, Motown 1982*
7. ALL OVER YOU, (from "Def By Temptation"), *Freddy Jackson, EMI 1445*
★ **8. GET UP! (BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER),** *Technotronic, SBK 07315*
★ **9. POISON,** *Bell Biv Devoe, MCA 53772*
★ **10. ESCAPADE,** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1490*

CDs

NICK OF TIME, *Bonnie Raitt, Capitol 44366*
FOREVER YOUR GIRL, *Paula Abdul, Virgin 90943*
. . . BUT SERIOUSLY, *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82050*
JANET JACKSON'S RHYTHM NATION 1814, *Janet Jackson, A&M 3920*
GIRL YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE, *Milli Vanilli, Arista 8592*
FULL MOON FEVER, *Tom Petty, MCA 6253*
PUMP, *Aerosmith, Geffen 24254*
SOUL PROVIDER, *Michael Bolton, Columbia 45012*
STORM FRONT, *Billy Joel, Columbia 44366*
ALANNAH MILES, *Alannah Miles, Atlantic 81956*

HOTHITS BEST NEW

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

POP

VOGUE
Madonna - Sire/Warner Bros. 19863

★ ***POISON***
Bell Biv Devoe - MCA 53772

★ ***HOLD ON***
Wilson Phillips - SBK 07322

★ ***GET UP! (BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER)***
Technotronic - SBK 07315

OYE MI CANTO ("Hear My Voice")
Gloria Estephan - Epic 73269

THIS OLD HEART OF MINE
Rod Stewart with Ronald Isley - Warner Bros. 19983

THE HEART OF THE MATTER
Don Henley - Geffen 19898

★ ***ALL AROUND THE WORLD***
Lisa Stansfield - Arista 9928

DO YOU REMEMBER?
Phil Collins - Atlantic 87955

YOUR BABY NEVER LOOKED GOOD IN BLUE
Expose - Arista 2011

ALL MY LIFE
Linda Ronstadt featuring Aaron Neville - Elektra 64987

I WANNA BE RICH
Calloway - Solar/Epic 74005

LAMBADA
Kaoma - Epic 73090

HOUSE OF PAIN
Faster Pussycat - Elektra 64995

CW

RUNNIN' WITH THE WIND
Eddie Rabbitt - Capitol 44538

SEEIN' MY FATHER IN ME
Paul Overstreet - RCA 9116

SHE CAME FROM FT. WORTH
Kathy Mattea - Mercury 876746

IN ANOTHER LIFETIME
The Desert Rose Band - MCA/Curb 53804

OKLAHOMA SWING
Vince Gill with Reba McEntire - MCA 53780

HELP ME HOLD ON
Travis Tritt - Warner Bros. 19918

FIT TO BE TIED DOWN
Conway Twitty - MCA 79000

HUMMINGBIRD
Ricky Skaggs - Epic 73312

WALKING SHOES
Tanya Tucker - Capitol 44520

MISTER DJ
The Charlie Daniels Band - Epic 73236

PASS IT ON DOWN
Alabama - RCA 2519

I WATCHED IT ALL (ON MY RADIO)
Lionel Cartwright - MCA 53779

THE DOMINO THEORY
Steve Wariner - MCA 53733

LOVE WITHOUT END, AMEN
George Strait - Epic 73312

R&B

GET A LIFE
Soul II Soul - Virgin 9898

TOMORROW (A BETTER YOU, A BETTER ME)
Quincy Jones featuring Tevin Campbell - Qwest/W.B. 19881

AIN'T NO WOMAN (LIKE THE ONE I GOT)
Kashif - Arista 9926

HOW 'BOUT US (from "True Love")
Grayson Hugh and Betty Wright - RCA 19163

READY OR NOT
After 7 - MCA 53772

WHY YOU GET FUNKY ON ME (from "House Party")
Today - Motown 2036

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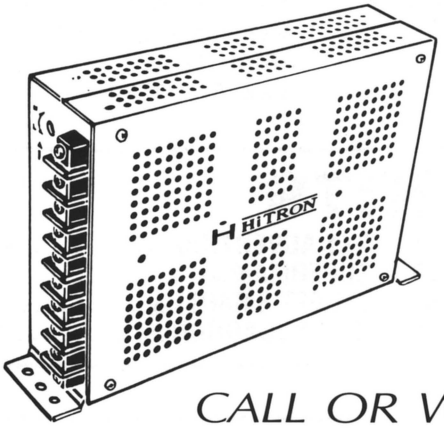

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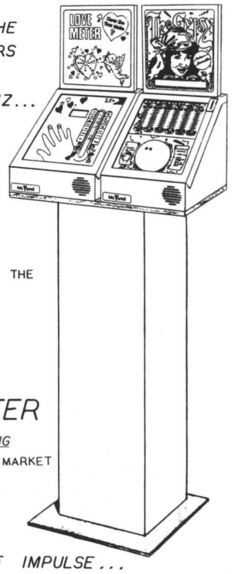

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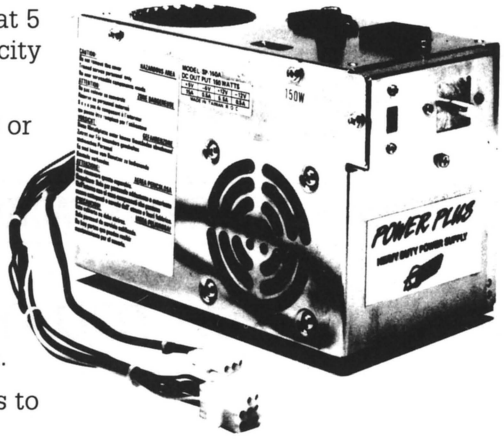

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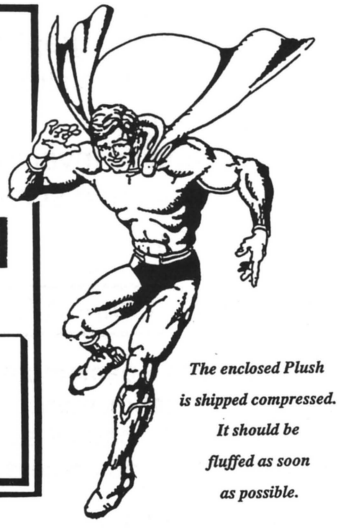



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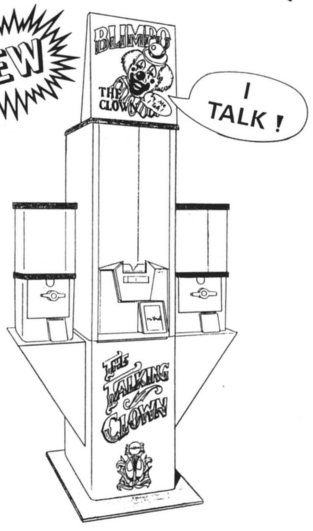

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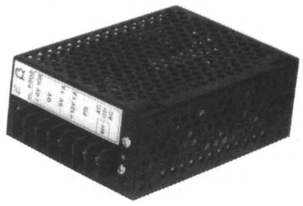

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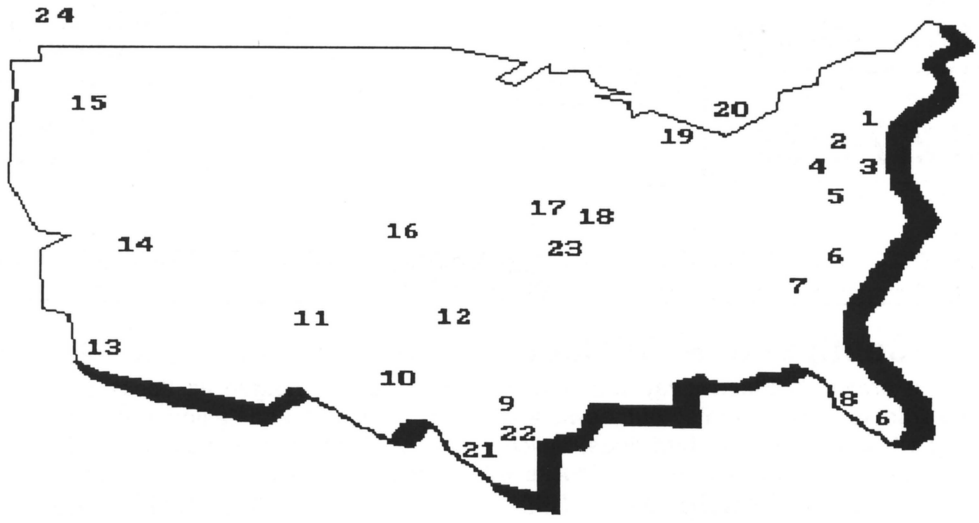

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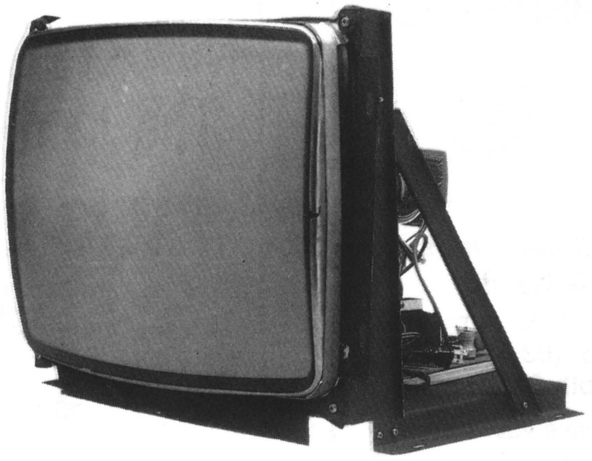

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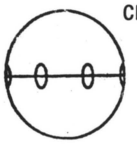



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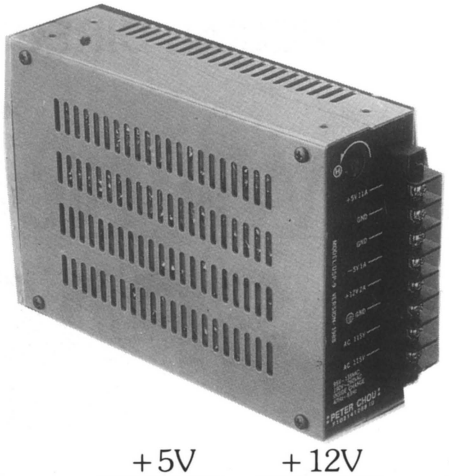

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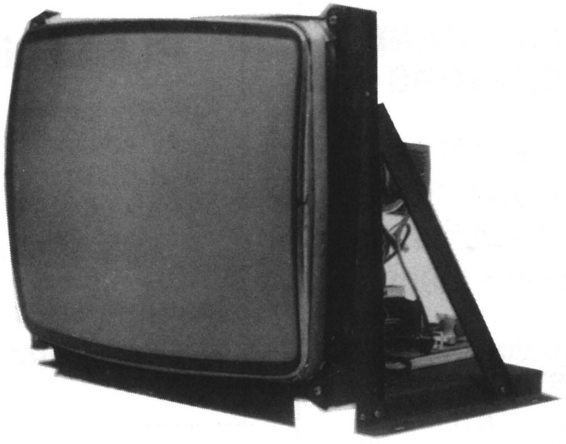

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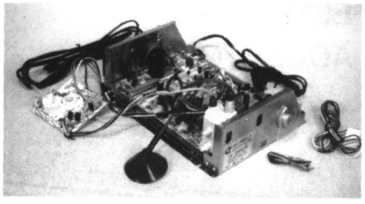

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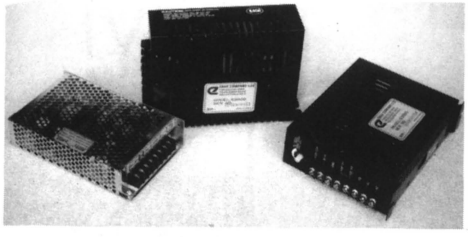

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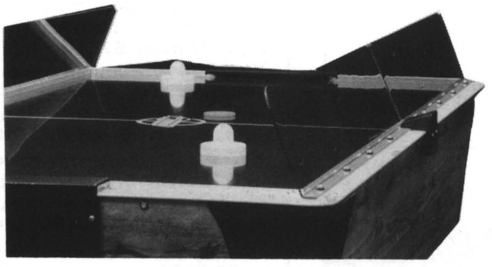

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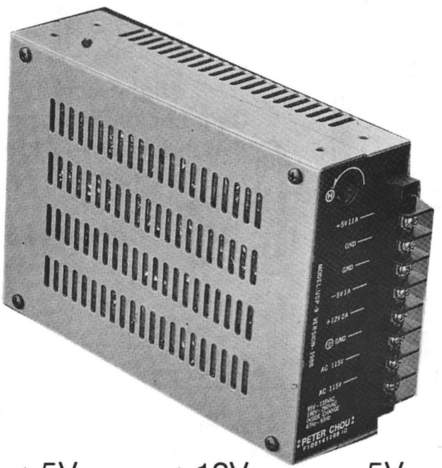

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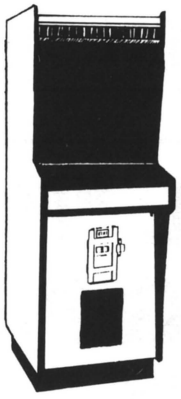

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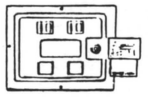

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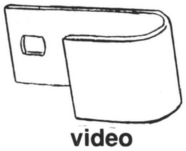

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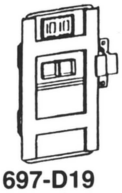

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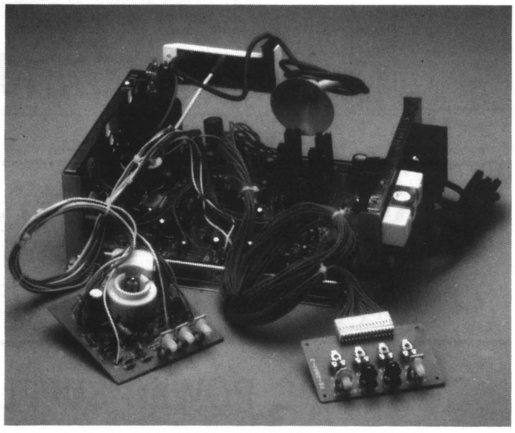

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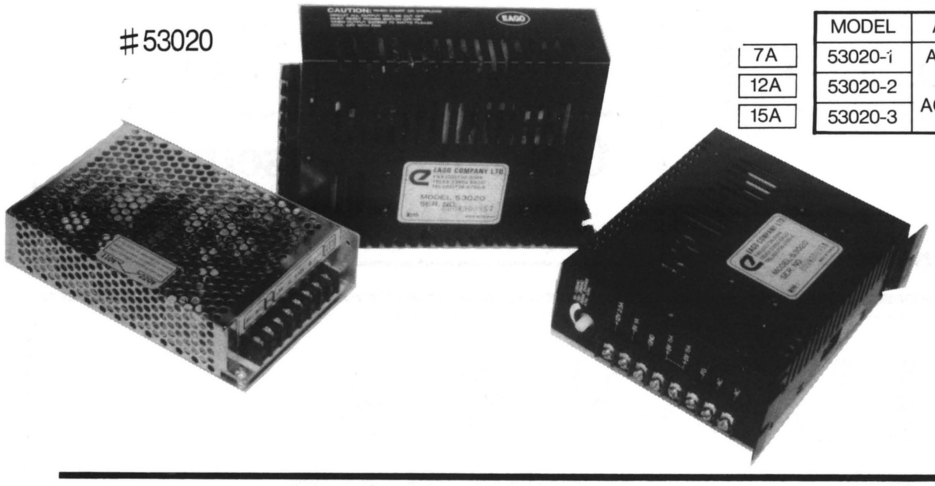

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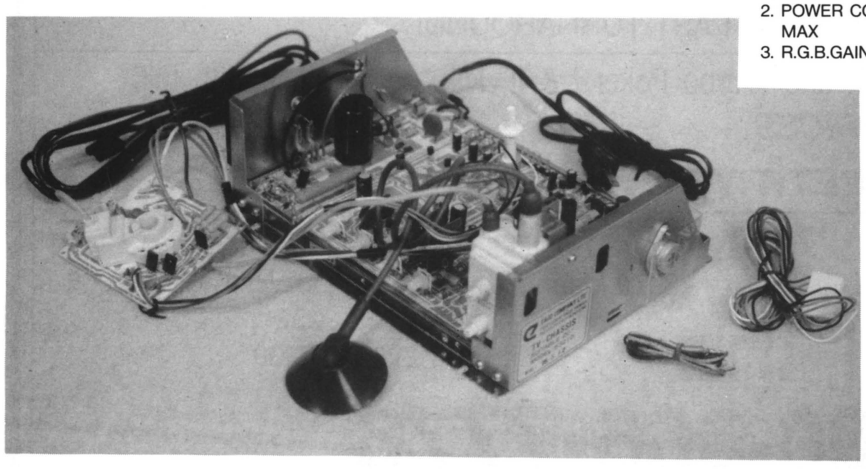

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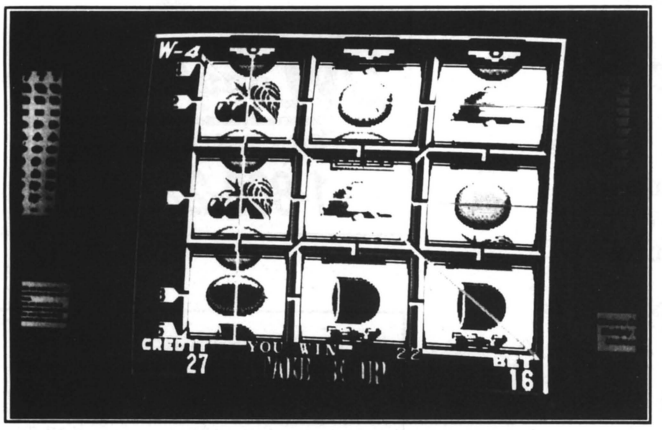

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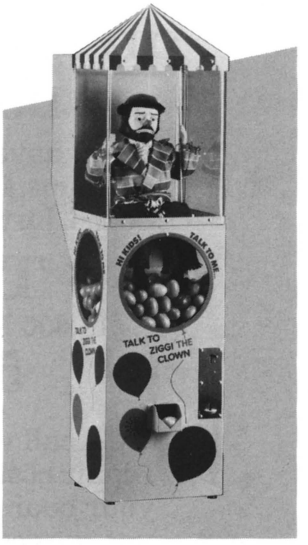

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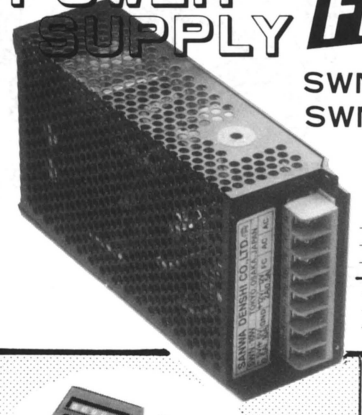

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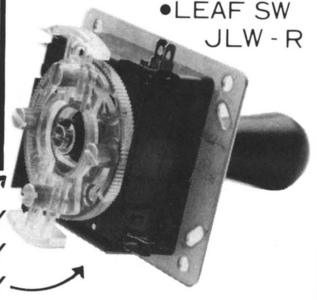

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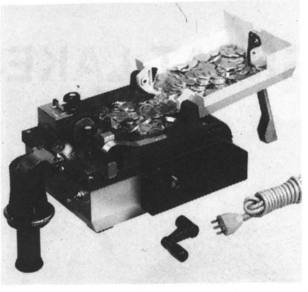

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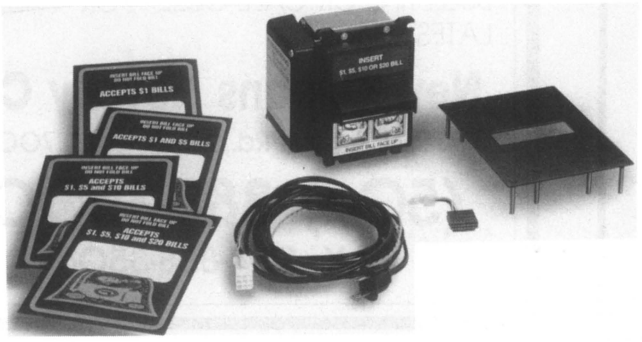

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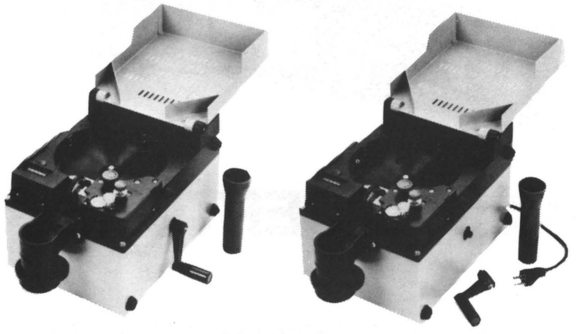

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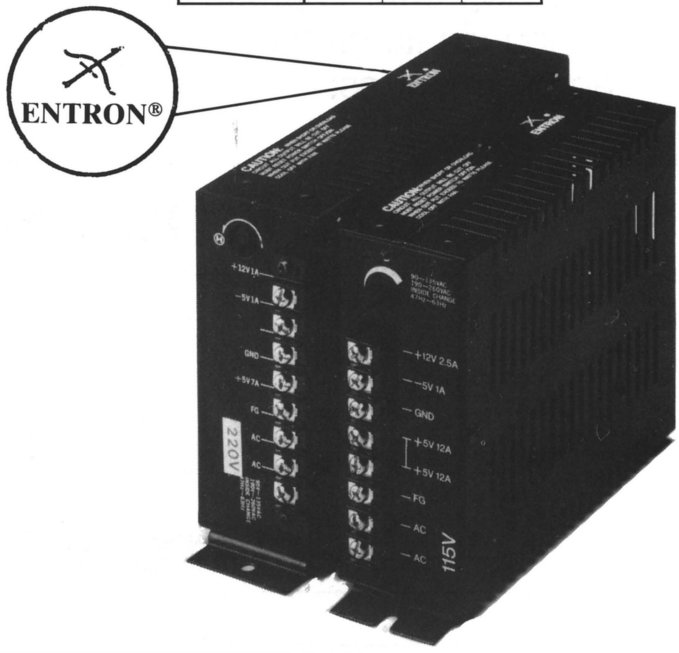

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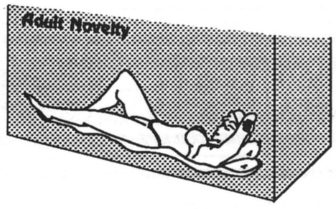



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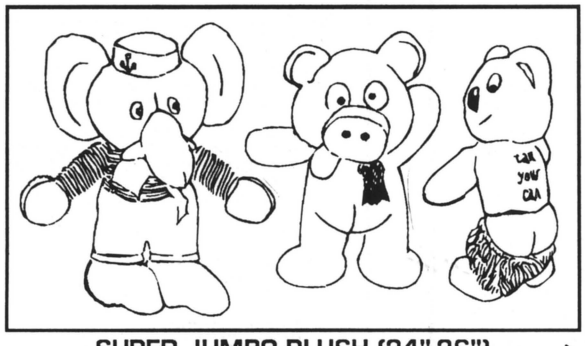

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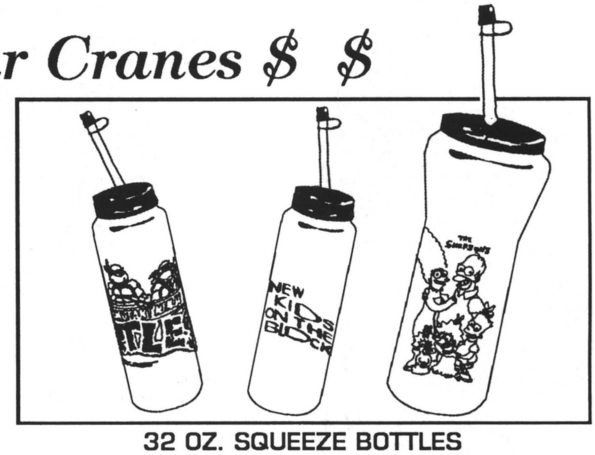

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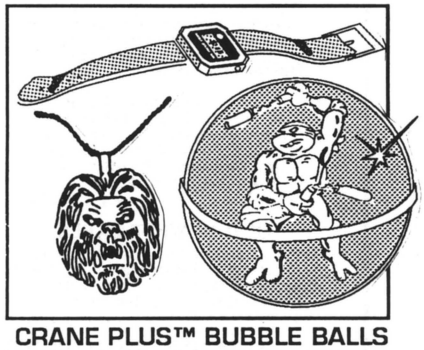

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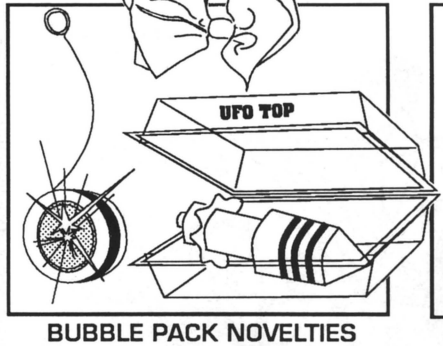

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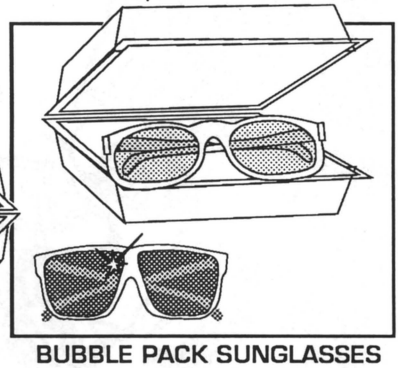

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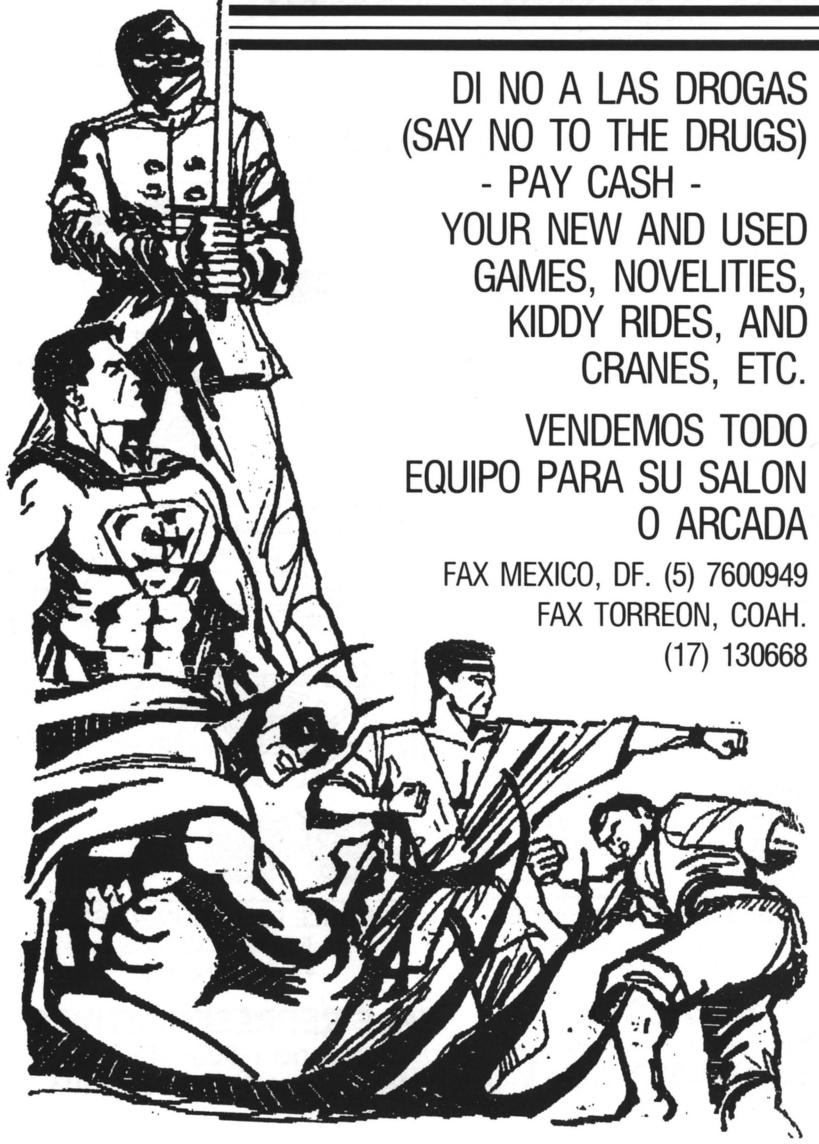

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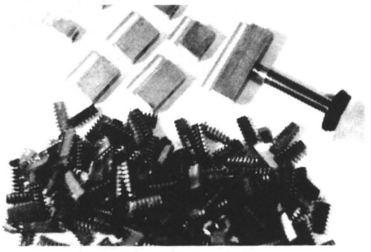

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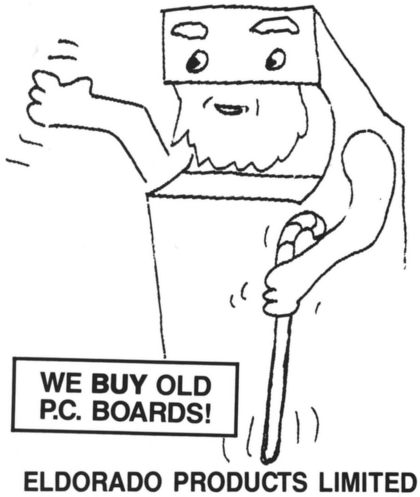

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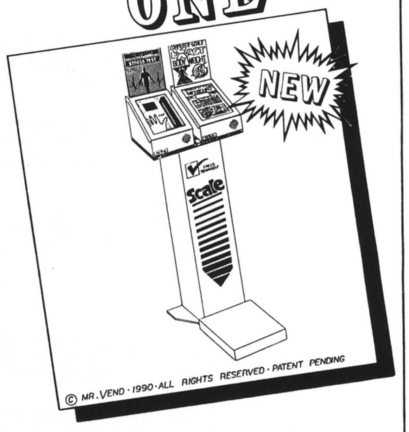

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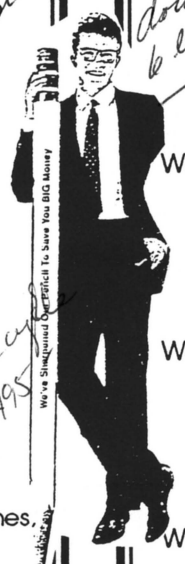

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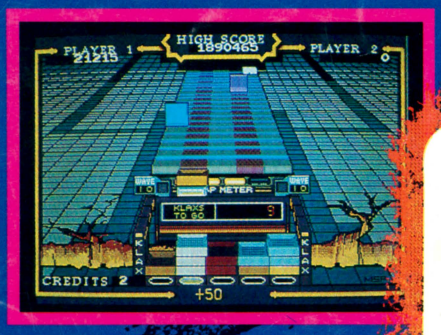

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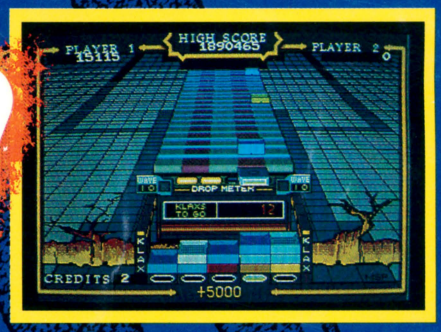

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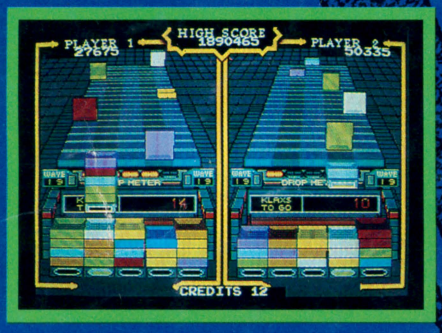

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