november 1990

RePlay

window on the world of coin-op entertainment

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AMOA EXPO convention issue!

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

EXPO RESPONSE — There's a restlessness among many street operators regarding the state of the video game in their general equipment mix. From Miami **(Sol Tabb)** to San Diego **(Joel Weinberg)** to points in between (like **J.D. Hancock** in Idaho), the general complaint is the classic one on R.O.I. (collections vs. price) only this time some operators are making serious sounds about severely downgrading video buys in favor of other machines. All eyes will be on the new videos on stage at the New Orleans expo and from what we know, many video makers will show their best to respond to this critical problem. There's no room here for a laundry list of new goods, but in a sentence: there will be videos of all prices (even low-end kits) covering many themes including adult strategy like ***Ataxx.*** For most video manufacturers, the going has been tough (as it has for the operators). We'll all see if "the tough get going" at Expo!

ON THE CHART — The flip side of this malaise (and this sheet of paper) shows a few video success stories, topped by Atari with the top three on our upright list. *RePlay,* responding to market conditions, now reads the Top 25 Software games (rather than 20) and conversely only the top 20 Uprights. Heading the Flipper list in its first entry is Midway's ***Dr. Dude,*** "doing boxcar numbers and even better than *Elvira* out of the gate," according to Midway's **Roger Sharpe.** Now comes ***The Simpsons*** from Data East.

CHICAGO ARCADE OPS, please install ground fault interruptors on each game (about $12 at local hardware shops or your distributors') by Dec. 1 to avoid red-tagging by city fathers. This is a strong plea from AMOA's Standardization Committee!

STILL NO WORD — By mid-October, two sources at the Seeburg Corp. said the firm still hadn't buttoned up any new financing agreement with either of the "two interested parties." A number of operators and distributors are awaiting such news in hopes that prior equipment orders might be fulfilled. Stockholders would also like to see something happening here (shares were reportedly traded for around $1.75 apiece in late 1986 but have gone to the "pink sheet" for under a dime).

AND, THEY'RE OFF! Data East's "chefs" have combined the two top ingredients (play action and theme) to cook up a pinball they honestly believe could be the Hit of Expo '90 (all categories included). It's ***The Simpsons,*** lavish of playfield, jammed with Simpsons artwork and speech, and backed by serious test collections. It's shipping now!



On the night of Oct. 11, Fox TV (which distributes the "Simpsons" TV show) held a gala on their Sound Stage 21 in L.A. to kick off the show's new season. A lineup of *Simpsons* pingames were there for the event. Heavyweights from two industries flanking the game are Data East's Gary Stern, James L. Brooks ("Simpsons" executive producer and TV icon who piloted "Taxi," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," etc.), DE's Joe (the designer) Kaminkow and Holly Brooks. James Brooks said "Isn't this a great game?" True, but we still love **Bart Simpson's** line on the pin's soundtrack ("Eat my shorts, man!") best.

D.C. PUZZLE — Regardless of which way the new federal budget is constructed, it seems apparent the federal cigarette excise tax will rise from 16¢ to 20¢ per pack on Jan. 1 and to 24¢ in 1993. Also, the current 16¢ excise on a sixpack of beer will be doubled; wine will go up by 24¢ a bottle and hard liquor by $1.20 a gallon (according to figures in the *L.A. Times).* In an already weakened economy, these extra costs for goods at the tavern location won't be met by too many cheers.

RePlay

NOVEMBER 1990

the Players' Choice

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

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**RACE DRIVIN' (Atari) (1)**	**9.48**	**17%**
■	2	PIT-FIGHTER (Atari) (2)	9.19	51%
	3	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (20)	8.67	52%
■	4	TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (11)	8.66	99%
	5	G-LOC (Sega) (5)	8.54	38%
	6	GALAXY FORCE (Sega) (6)	8.16	16%
	7	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (10)	7.90	17%
	8	SMASH TV (Williams) (5)	7.88	62%
■	9	2-DUDE OFF ROAD (Leland) (6)	7.67	20%
	10	FINAL LAP (Atari) (24)	7.63	29%
	11	OFF ROAD (Leland) (20)	7.59	77%
	12	S.C.I. (Taito) (10)	7.39	31%
	13	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (16)	7.33	48%
	14	OUT RUN (Sega) (47)	7.23	64%
	15	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (19)	7.17	52%
■	16	MERCS (Capcom) (7)	7.07	60%
	17	CHASE H.Q. (Taito) (23)	7.06	51%
	18	BIG RUN (Jaleco) (6)	7.06	14%
■	19	MOONWALKER (Sega) (2)	7.03	49%
	20	S.T.U.N. RUNNER (Atari) (12)	7.00	34%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

flippers

■	1	**DR. DUDE (Midway) (1)**	**8.67**	**24%**
■	2	DINER (Williams) (3)	8.62	54%
	3	WHIRLWIND (Williams) (9)	8.34	71%
	4	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (19)	8.18	59%
	5	ELVIRA (Midway) (13)	8.14	59%
	6	BACK TO THE FUTURE (D.E.) (4)	7.90	36%
	7	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (D.E.) (8)	7.89	42%
	8	ROLLER GAMES (Williams) (6)	7.66	47%
	9	POLICE FORCE (Williams) (13)	7.44	53%
	10	CYCLONE (Williams) (30)	7.34	71%

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**MAGIC SWORD [H] (Capcom) (2)**	**8.82**	**56%**
■	2	NINJA COMBAT [S] (SNK) (1)	8.67	15%
	3	FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (9)	8.64	85%
	4	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (8)	8.00	18%
	5	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (16)	7.84	79%
■	6	RAIDEN [V] (Fabtek) (3)	7.84	16%
■	7	OFF ROAD TRAK PAK [R] (Leland) (6)	7.55	39%
■	8	BASEBALL STARS [S] (SNK) (1)	7.48	24%
	9	MVP [H] (Sega) (7)	7.35	28%
■	10	MAGICIAN LORD [S] (SNK) (1)	7.23	21%
■	11	CADASH [H] (Taito) (7)	7.22	31%
■	12	COMBATRIBES [H] (Am. Technos) (5)	7.05	67%
■	13	VS. DR. MARIO [S] (Nintendo) (1)	7.05	16%
■	14	OUT ZONE [V] (Romstar) (1)	7.00	5%
■	15	PIGSKIN [H] (Midway) (3)	6.93	22%
■	16	AIR BUSTER [H] (Sharp Image) (5)	6.93	12%
	17	GOLDEN AXE [H] (Sega) (17)	6.92	74%
■	18	HYDRA [H] (Atari) (4)	6.88	27%
■	19	LIGHTNING FIGHTERS [H] (Konami) (2)	6.85	11%
■	20	THUNDER FOX [H] (Taito) (4)	6.84	21%
■	21	GATE OF DOOM [H] (Data East) (3)	6.81	22%
	22	ROADBLASTERS [S] (Atari) (35)	6.76	59%
	23	VS. CRIME FIGHTERS [S] (Konami) (10)	6.73	34%
■	24	STRATA BOWLING [V] (Strata) (1)	6.67	5%
■	25	CAPCOM BOWLING [V] (Capcom) (19)	6.65	60%

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

best new videos

■	1	RIDING HERO [sys.] (SNK)	8.00
■	2	ATAXX [u/r] (Leland)	7.80
■	3	TOP LANDING [s/d] (Taito)	7.50
■	4	AIR INFERNO [s/d] (Taito)	7.40
■	5	PUNK SHOT [u/r + kit] (Konami)	7.20

■ *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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Story

The year is 2039 A.D. When a distant colonized space station experiences strange and unexplained occurrences, the Federation of Earth launches a special off-world unit of commandos to investigate. En route, a distress signal from an Earth-bound cargo ship is intercepted. The crew has been taken hostage by hostile alien life-forms. Tension builds as the commandos search through the ship for survivors, while fending off the brutal, inhuman attackers. It's a fight to the death when the aliens' true course of cold-blooded destruction is discovered . . . Destination: Earth!

How To Play

- This high-powered shooting game is in the first person perspective and can be played by one or two players simultaneously. A second player can join the game at any time.
- The hostages must be rescued while annihilating the alien monsters in seven shocking and horrifying rounds.
- The game is over when the player's LIFE ENERGY has expired, when no hostages have been rescued, or when the seven rounds have been completed. And with Taito's buy-in feature, the player can continue the action!
- A LIFE ENERGY capsule appears periodically to restore life to the player. In addition to the endless supply of bullets, the player can collect special weapons including Freeze, Blade, Fire and Explosive Bombs.

Operation

- The controls include a high-powered, pump-action, fully automatic machine gun and a foot pedal to assist the player in maneuvering through the alien-infested ship.
- The pump-action allows the player to select the special weapon of choice. The player then simply pulls the trigger to unleash total destruction.
- The foot pedal allows the player to reverse his direction of travel. This gives the player additional maneuverability to explore each corridor of the large ship.









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COVER

Williams is not only bringing out a new flipper ('Riverboat Gambler') to AMOA Expo but is reinstating the old program of exclusive distribution (one dealer for their pinball line per territory). Joe Dillon (depicted on the playfield along with Ken Fedesna, Leslie Ross and Roger Sharpe) said 70% of the exclusive U.S. dealers had been signed up by Oct. 3 with the rest "in the process."

So, the pins you see at the show and want to buy just may not be available at all the stores you've been used to buying them at. Call and ask, and hopefully 'RePlay' will have an up-to-date list of Williams dealers to print next issue.

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EDITORIAL

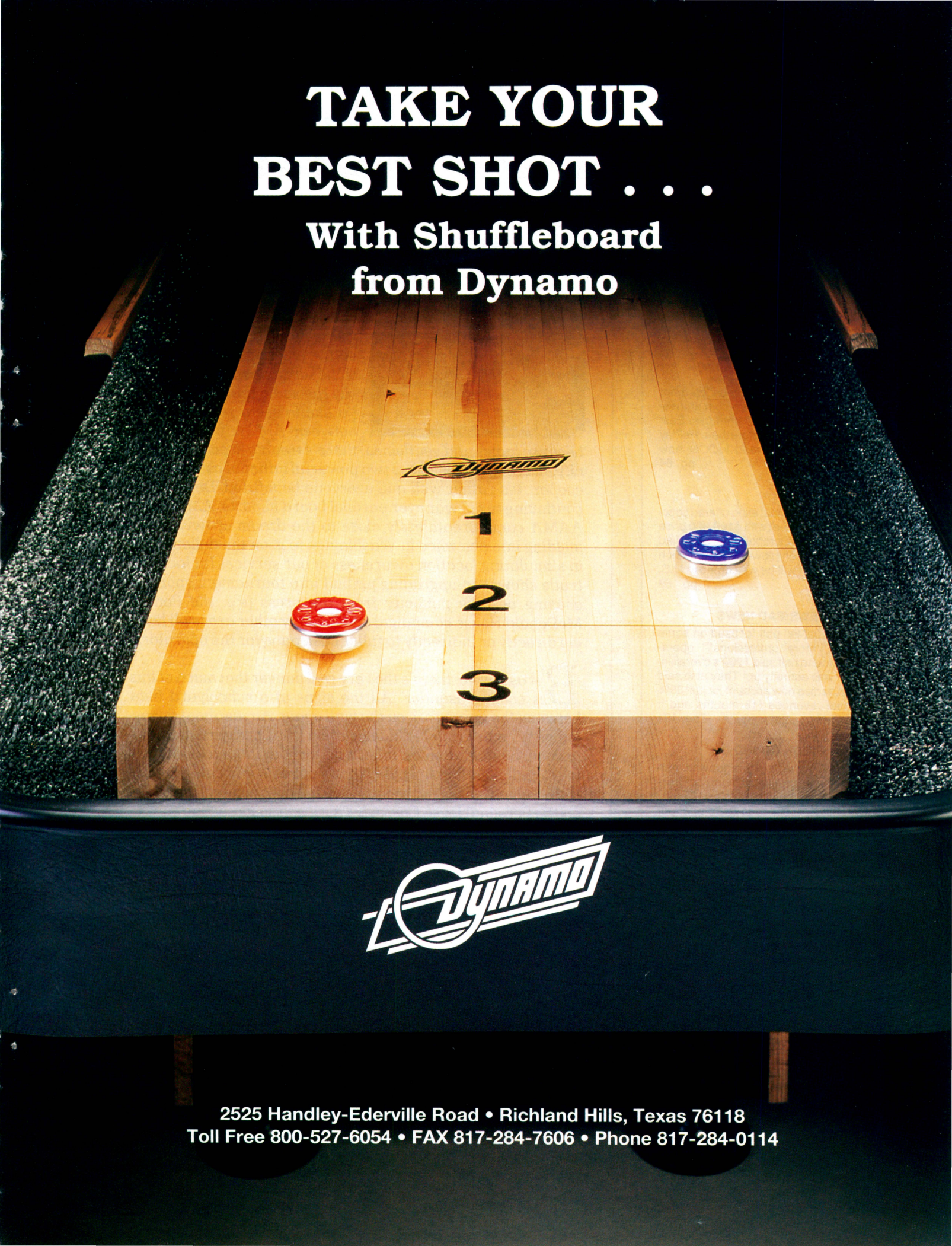
A number of economic doomsayers are warning that another economic slump is around the corner. They say signs of its impending appearance abound, including the belt-tightening on the retail store level as the holiday shopping season approaches. Now, some believe the new federal tax package will throw yet another arrow into an "ailing" economy, close on the heels of the gasoline roulette going on at the service stations.

This country climbed out of its last economic slump back in 1982, just about the same time our industry began crawling out of the infamous video game bust. No one is sure if the national malaise had any primary effect on the industry's trauma (most believe it was oversaturation of locations with video equipment of the so-so variety), but a lot are sure that Pac-Man *pulled us out of it in the end.*

The amusement business is supposed to be "recession proof," according to some who remember that the industry actually flourished during the Great Depression. Others say times have changed, that the cost of living has gone up for the average citizen while his or her salary hasn't kept pace, all of which has made people careful about the amount of money they spend in the tavern and restaurant. DWI enforcement has also hurt many operator revenues (though a lot of those same operators are pushing pool and dart tournaments to take up the slack).

However, one veteran industry observer from New York State said the traditional bustle at his area's bars late at night has disappeared, along with the stock of take-out beer in the C-stores. "I believe they're drinking at home," he said. Still in all, only 34% of the street operators we polled for our survey in this issue said their individual businesses are "worse" now than they were in 1989; the rest say it's stayed the same and quite a few boast of improvement!

This is a huge country with a huge number of operators. With locations like Spanish bars in Chula Vista, Calif. all the way up to seafood restaurants in Maine, you're bound to get different fiscal stories. But a number of those stories say the ailing economy has become their number one problem. So if the Pac-Man *theory is correct (which means machine designers have to be* creative *if they want to* create *unit sales and thereby let the operator* create *fuller cash boxes), that's where we should be looking . . . and the AMOA Expo is the first place to look. Fingers crossed, the "right stuff" will be there.*



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INSIDE

NOVEMBER 1990

SPECIAL ARTICLES

AMOA ON THE MOVE

Our show coverage for AMOA's "biggest expo ever" profiles new AMOA prexy Jim Trucano, reports on AMOA's Jukebox Promotion Committee and interviews AMOA Exec VP John Schumacher . . . . . pg. 33

ONE GERMANY

The two Germanies united Oct. 3 but the rush to bring modern coin amusements to the former Communist East was underway well before then. RePlay brings you a first-hand look at how "East Meets West" . . . . . pg. 84

JAMMA '90

Japan's 28th annual expo offered spectacular equipment with $100,000 price tags. Tokyo (October 3-4) also had some (relatively) lower-priced hi-tech goods which will be welcomed in U.S. arcades . . . . . pg. 99

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

Our annual fall poll focused on some of the "more professional" operators. Around half said 1990's overall income was actually up! They also said video games now account for just 35% of total revenues (18 months ago it was 65%) . . . . . pg. 191

REDEMPTION ROUND-UP

Special coverage of this growing market includes profiles of manufacturers Coin Concepts, Vari-Tech and Design Plus, plus guest essays by operator Randy Chilton and distributor Patti Novak. Lots of good stuff! This special section begins . . . . . pg. 148

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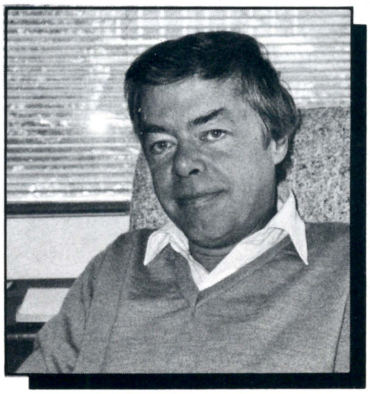

When you ask any operator or distributor what he expects to get out of the AMOA Expo, nine out of ten say "a couple of really hot machines." Considering the rather spotty nature of video games in both collections and new machine sales, maybe all ten would say the same thing today. Me? I'd like to see a reconciliation between AMOA and AAMA, because ladies and gentlemen, there's trouble in coin machine city. In recent times, these two powerful national associations cooperated rather well and everyone benefitted. Despite the continuing tug of war over parallel board imports, AMOA and AAMA came breathlessly close to the dream of two forces melding into one voice in Washington (e.g. on the dollar coin), in stimulating location awareness of our services (at location trade shows), in upgrading pinball into tournament sport, in coaxing positive publicity from the press (e.g. the Ronald McDonald House campaign) and in many other areas all leading directly or indirectly to fuller cash pans for the operators.

But as I write, there's the very real danger that much of this is coming asunder. All the signs of a schoolyard fight between the groups are on the wall again. Anger about opposing views on parallel PCB legislation (that pesky issue that's become a huge zit on an otherwise smooth industrial face) is tearing the cloth in half. But that's not the only cause of this reawakened acrimony, because you now hear spiteful criticism on the personal level. Correct. There are so many "he sucks" and "he sucks worse" remarks being traded back and forth I wonder if it will reach the point where it becomes unhealable.

Each association professes to push for the same end goal . . . the operator's well being . . . and each (together or separately) has worked very hard for that. If they could only "agree to disagree" on parallels like gentlemen while keeping all the rest in place, how grand it would be.

I know the industry isn't a democracy, but I believe members of each association should put pressure on their officers to sit down with opposing officers in New Orleans. We have all sorts of business meetings and seminars scheduled, but I can't think of a more valuable one than a "gentlemen's summit" between AMOA and AAMA . . . one that could turn those fists into a handshake. We need their combined leadership very badly today. We don't need this fight.

It's Showtime!

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VIEWPOINTS

NICE STYLE

Dear RePlay,

I enjoy your magazine. It's very educational for a newcomer. I like your "loose" style of editorials. Each copy is a collector's item. Keep up the good work.

Bill Zinger
Zinger's Video Arcade Equipment
Austin, Texas

[Billy: the compliment is passed back to you from RePlay's *"comma king" Eddie Adlum for your clipped sentences, as well as for your kudo on the writing style usually run in the editorials and publisher columns. The idea is to communicate, not to parade any dusty style better left to a high school text book. Thanks for digging exactly what "godzilla game" and "chew on this idea" mean. Ed]*

WE'RE PROFESSIONALS

Dear RePlay:

I'm one of the operators who filled out your recent survey. Your opening note on top of that questionnaire said only "professional" music & game route operators were selected to participate in the poll. You know, more of us should remember that we are "professional operators." We must feel this and show this to our accounts . . . let them know we are experts in our field . . . so we can make the decisions, not them! After all, it's our business. The locations don't give us commissions on drink sales (I remind them of that).

Mary Lavine
Bullseye, Inc.
Madison, Wisconsin

[Mary, if you ever feel the need to write a full-fledged Guest Editorial, give us a call first. We love the way you talk so candidly and so smartly. Ed]

DISTRIBUTOR BLUES

Dear RePlay:

In regard to your Publisher statement in your September issue, the distributors are not as great as you describe them. I'm a small operator trying to start out and upgrade my inventory. The prices distributors charge are ridiculous, ludicrous, a joke! Take $2,699 for a *Whirlwind* pinball and $4,200 for a CD jukebox as examples. How can the small guy make it? What about 18% financing? And that bit about "an arm around the shoulder"! Who are you kidding? Not me!

All the distributor is is a middle man out to make money. They won't cut you a deal or even try to work with you. All I ever got was the runaround. I'd like to deal directly with the manufacturers but they won't. For such outrageous prices they charge, the quality of the new games leaves much to be desired. They look like the same games for the past eight years.

The economy is slow here in Texas and we need the distributors to cooperate with us so we can get the new 50¢ games out. But not with higher prices.

Sincerely,
David Snider
Prospector Salvage and Video
Mineral Wells, Texas

[Dave: this is neither the first nor the last time we'll receive complaints such as you listed. Without going into the short hairs, our advice is to get to know your distributor personally, as well as his sales and service people. In other words, get inside "the tent" with these people and then see what shakes. Knowing and dealing with local distributors is the best way to go, no question of that. You sound like you know exactly what you're doing. So . . . do this part too. Ed]

PARTS AVAILABILITY

Dear Ed:

Amen! to your recently published view on the industry and the issue of putting fun before profit. I personally believe this to be a serious problem at



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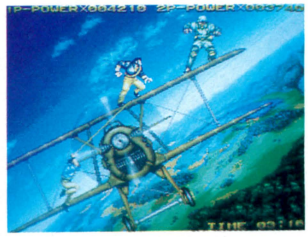

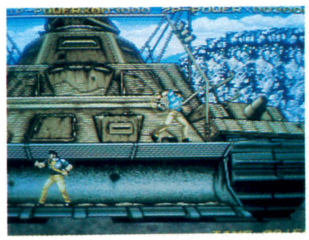



Pinball.

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The Simpsons name is synonymous with fun, action – and profits. From the hit television series to posters, dolls and T-shirts – Simpsons-mania has rocked the country. Now, Data East brings you the hottest license around in the wildest pinball game you've ever seen. The Simpsons Pinball is charting record-breaking collections everywhere it goes. And like Bart himself, it's one of a kind. The Simpsons, from Data East.

Videogames.

Edward Randy™

In the tradition of Data East arcade blockbusters like Bad Dudes, we bring you Edward Randy – a new thriller sure to make the cash box jingle. Enhanced three-dimensional graphics and state-of-the-art sound will carry gamers through level after level – and quarter after quarter – from the wings of a 1930's Biplane, to the bow of a speed boat, to car chases through the streets of Europe. Edward Randy, from Data East.

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Think Data East.

coin-drop . . .





Redemption.

Wacky Gator™
It's a proven winner. All over the world, Wacky Gator is logging chart-topping redemption collections. No arcade location is complete without the riotous action of this crowd pleaser. It's not easy trying to whack our elusive group of gators – and after just one try your players will be hooked. Possessed by a reptile-smashing obsession, they'll be trading tokens for tickets all night long. Wacky Gator, licensed from Namco by Data East.

Cosmo Gangs™
Two-player redemption gaming has never seen anything like the five extraterrestrial characters sent to capture our planet in this fun, light-hearted shoot-'em up. Light-gun technology and mechanization sets Cosmo Gangs apart from anything else on the arcade floor. It's endearing and non-threatening – ideal for your family and youth-targeted arcade locations. Cosmo Gangs, licensed from Namco by Data East.

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hand and have seen a trend which parallels the video game boom occurring with redemption. There are many issues other than how much money was in the cashbox which continue to be unanswered, including redemption cost, design and whether or not the game is skill or chance.

Setting this aside for a moment, I would like to address another serious issue which concerns the entire industry. We currently operate games such as *Skee-Ball* and *Whac-A-Munch* in our restaurants. In some cases, these games are over ten years old, although the average is about eight. In both cases, we can still procure parts for these machines and have been successful in refurbishing them and continuing the life cycle after full depreciation has occurred. Not only is this a good business practice for companies such as *Skee-Ball* and *Bob's Space Racers*, it allows our company to re-invest in the business with their products and others.

However, I would challenge manufacturers such as Namco, Atari and especially Sega to support a track record of parts availability which would even come close to these other companies. As a case in point, parts for *Thunderblade* are essentially becoming non-existent. Parts for *Turbo* games have been unavailable for sometime, although through scrapping a few units and having parts made locally, we continue to operate these games.

This issue has been discussed with the manufacturers on several occasions to no avail. I believe that we must not skirt this issue any longer when we talk about representing our industry to the public with equipment which operates properly.

This is a thumbnail sketch of the problem, and in no way do I mean to highlight or single out any particular company, as there is more to be said on both sides both by operators and the manufacturers. My intent is to bring the issue to the table in hope of finding a solution.

On a final note, I continue to be a firm supporter of assuring that the manufacturers proceed with meeting all U.L. Codes in their production. This appeared to be a burning issue a few months ago, although it appears as if nothing further has occurred. I would like to hear your views on this matter as well as those of manufacturers as we must hold them accountable to resolving the issue which references their equipment design.

Gene Cramm
Senior Vice President
Purchasing/Entertainment

[Gene: The FCC only sent citations to a handful of operators, mainly to stir up more respect for their codes. Most, if not all, video manufacturers are fully aware of the situation and should be complying (many, but again not all, originally were in compliance before the FCC people made their few but frightening visits). Manufacturers have been reminded about the code and operators are reminded to check equipment for code compliance before they buy. It's not a big issue, thankfully. Ed]

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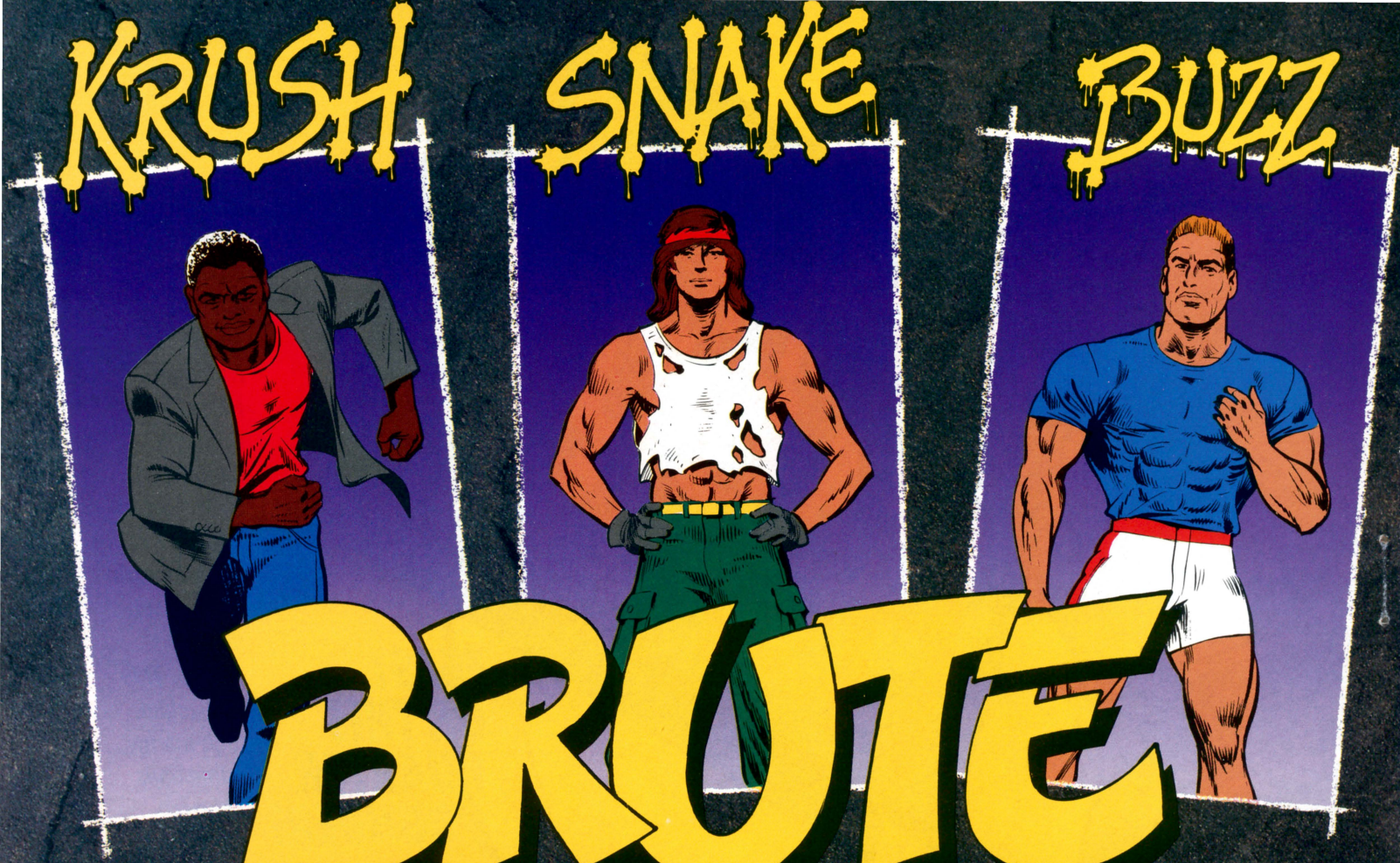


BRUTE FORCE™

A city dweller's nightmare, Big City, USA is out of control! Skinheads are rioting in the street. Chuco gangs have staked out their territories. Crazed snipers prowl the rooftops while escaped felons rub elbows with terrorists. Once quiet neighborhoods crackle with drive-by gunfire. Columbian drug lords hold the high school in their grip. Ninjas move like shadows to their next dirty deed. And pyromaniac crack addicts are trying to burn the whole scene to the ground!

With the police department hopelessly overwhelmed, there's only one force that can take back the streets of Big City . . . **Brute Force!** The **Brute Force** is a three man team with a personal vendetta to put a choke hold on crime. Together, they form the elite crime-fighting steamroller that takes its "assignments" from the evening news and are reporter Cindy Summers.



There's no place where crime won't travel, no place where **Brute Force** won't go in this intense action-packed interactive 3-dimensional adventure that can move in any of eight directions against a backdrop of over 60 scenes. The more bad guys you put away, the higher the price on your head in this dedicated, 3-player with its incredible 25″ high resolution action screen.

Put **Brute Force** to work at every location. It'll put the "force" in your collections every time!

"Nothin' like drop kicking a punk to start my day."





Ninjas sabotage sewers

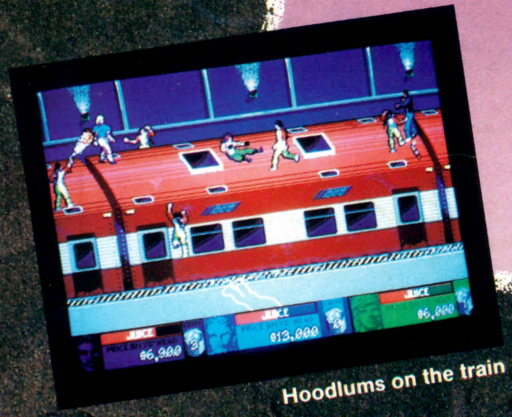


Brute Force Profile

- Three-player continuous buy-in
- 3-D interactive environment
- Eight direction mobility
- Convert-A-Credit feature
- 25" high resolution screen
- Dedicated cabinet
- Nine bad guys
- Nine target crime scenes
- Four city levels-over 60 screens



Gangwar in the park



Hoodlums on the train

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NEWS DIGEST

STREET OP SURVEY SHOWS...

...that CD jukeboxes are rosy-cheeked but the video game remains numero uno in terms of collections. Our newest route survey, covering the winter, spring & summer of 1990, also shows the tavern being the anchor location for the average route. And though DWI law enforcement is hurting, 7 out of 10 operators are fighting back by holding game tournaments to pick up the slack. From collection averages down to individual "likes & gripes" written in by operators, it's there for your use. The survey begins **on page 191.**

NSM'S BOX LINEUP FOR NEW SEASON ON STAGE AT AMOA

For the first time in its history selling jukeboxes in this country, **NSM** will simultaneously ship samples of its new line to dealers and to the AMOA Expo. USA chief **Rus Strahan** is saving a lot of the details until showtime (and/or showroom time) but did allow that one of the four pieces called ***Silver City*** will be a 100CD compact ("a little taller than the *City IV* box holding 100 discs," he revealed). All new NSM music boxes will feature a CD album display taking anybody's title strip, including the big *Silver Sky* (remake of the *Galaxy)* 100CD that comes with 8 speakers. And, yes fans, the *Fire* wall-mount box is continued and will come in two versions: the ***Firebird*** and another called ***Fire Country*** (which has a wood cabinet look). Everything's inside these wall-mounts except the speakers. The original *Fire* did well on last year's market and Strahan insists that enough new ones will be shipped over from Germany to meet expected demand. NSM people at AMOA will offer plastic stop watches to operators as a promotional tool: reason being their boast that their CD songs only take an average of six seconds between cuts while they say others aren't as speedy. Strahan also "warns" the trade that something "really special" from NSM is coming this March. He revealed no other details!

NEW S.G. SMOKING REPORT OUT

While you can't say it's never too late to quit smoking, this year's **Surgeon General** report (issued Sept. 25) encouraged smokers of all ages, including those who've already contracted a smoking-related ailment, to kick the habit. "Smoking cessation has major and immediate health benefits for men and women of all ages," the S.G. said, even for those who've been puffing for years and years. The annual report, probably viewed by the Tobacco Institute the same way Bart Simpson views his report card, was surprisingly mild this time out and some federal officials want public and private insurers to pay for the cost of stop-smoking programs, believing that many want to stop but can't quit the habit as easily as others.

In a different study reported by the *L.A. Times,* there's a theory that people prone to depression are more vulnerable to nicotine addiction. Since American women are especially prone to depression, smoking may become more of a female habit as the years go by (women have been less successful than men in quitting). Individual states already have the option of extending coverage for stop-smoking programs under Medicaid but it would require congressional action to get similiar coverage for the elderly under the federal Medicare program.



The combination of the S.G. reporting that habitual smokers still "have a chance" if they quit, along with some thinking that smoke-quitting programs like Schick should be funded by insurers, etc., will surely put a further crimp into the already troubled cigarette vending business. In a scan of the first 75 operator questionnares returned to *RePlay* for its fall street poll, it's surprising that nearly half of the routes still operate cigarettes.

FINALLY, HI-TECH VIDEO FROM JAPAN! BUT WILL SKY-HI PRICES "PLAY" IN THE USA?

The best of the new products shown at the **JAMMA show** (Oct. 3-4 in Tokyo) were "overwhelming"... both in terms of impressive hi-tech capability, and also in terms of stunning prices which reached $100,000 per unit with some simulators. The response from U.S. tradesters, however, was distinctly "underwhelming." The reason? Relatively few of the goods displayed seemed suitable for American street routes. (This lack is perhaps not surprising, since street operators are virtually nonexistent in Japan.) Some of the hi-tech goods seen at JAMMA will make it to the U.S., however, probably including **Sega's** new 32-bit video game technology; **Capcom's** two-player, three-title sitdown system cabinet with a 50" monitor



featuring liquid crystal display; and a moving cabinet jet fighter simulator from **Namco.** Beyond that, some promising "standard" video game titles were on view.

Tradesters also noted a big surge in gaming and redemption-style equipment, both in the show floor and in Japanese arcades. Report follows on **page 99.**

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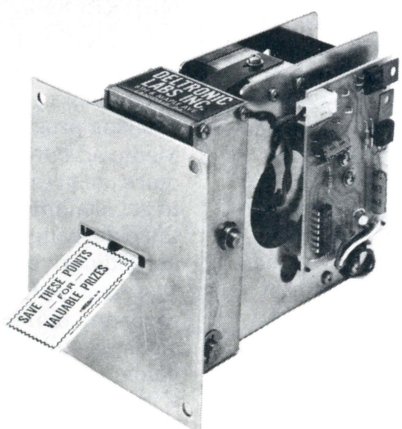

★ Our new Quick Release ticket guide snaps out and allows easy servicing.
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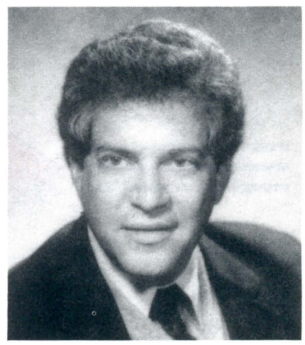
SKEE BALL MOVES TO BIGGER PLANT; BOWS NEW GAME CONCEPT

Effective Sept. 1, the new address for Skee Ball, Inc. was: 121 Liberty Lane, Chalfont, PA 18914. New phone is 215/997-8900. The new fax is 215-997-8982. President **Joseph Sladek** moved his firm to a larger site so they could increase production of their timeless skill games... which are often the first piece any operator buys, when he decides "it's time to get into redemption." Although this game has been around for decades, it's continually updated with all the electronic lights, bells and whistles that keep it fresh and entertaining. By the way, look for an exciting new concept from Skee Ball at this fall's AMOA and IAAPA shows!

GLAZMAN TOPS KANEKO USA



Former Williams VP **Marty Glazman** has formed an American subsidiary for Tokyo's Kaneko of Japan to market video kits & uprights into North America. Glazman (prexy of the new organization) has taken over a 6300-sq.-ft. facility at 1370 Busch Pkwy. in suburban Buffalo Grove, Ill., has hired on **Shirley Vega** as Sales Administrator and will be outfitting the firm with more people once product begins shipping in.

Kaneko has already designed around 40 different videos (like ***D.J. Boy)*** but always licensed them to others. Now, their new inventions will be marketed here by the American subsidiary (they expect around four or five pieces a year). Glazman will not have his first game at the Expo, but will be there to chat up his new project with prospective distributors. His business phone is 708/808-1370; fax: 708/808-1375.

PIONEER'S OP PARTY

All music operators are invited to **Pioneer's** Thursday night party (Oct. 25) at the Expo, taking place at the Cat's Meow on Bourbon St. in the French Quarter. The soiree begins at 10:00PM and at midnight, a drawing for a free Pioneer laser disc video jukebox takes place. But you have to have an Expo badge to get in and be eligible.

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Shift into **Over Drive,** Konami's stockcar racing challenge. Experience day-into-night driving in this fast-paced competition of world-class racecar drivers.

With tires squealing and the roar of the crowd ringing in his ears, the player begins the heat. The competition will take him through various sections of the country, including: Rural and Rough, the Valley of Doom, Oriental Mystique, Sunset Cruise, and the Final Frontier. While trying to maintain world record-breaking speed, the player must negotiate hairpin twists and turns in the course. The route is alive with danger—one wrong turn of the steering wheel and the player's car can crash into a competitor's vehicle, a building, or plunge off a hazardous precipice. As long as the driver can make it to the different checkpoints within the time allowed, he can continue in this perilous race.

Over Drive offers excellent graphics and realistic sound effects, which add to the player's enjoyment. In addition, the player is able to choose his background music at the beginning of the race. Throughout the game, the screen shows the driver his score, speed, distance to the next check point, and time remaining, so he can pace himself. Any time remaining after reaching a checkpoint is added to the player's score as bonus points.

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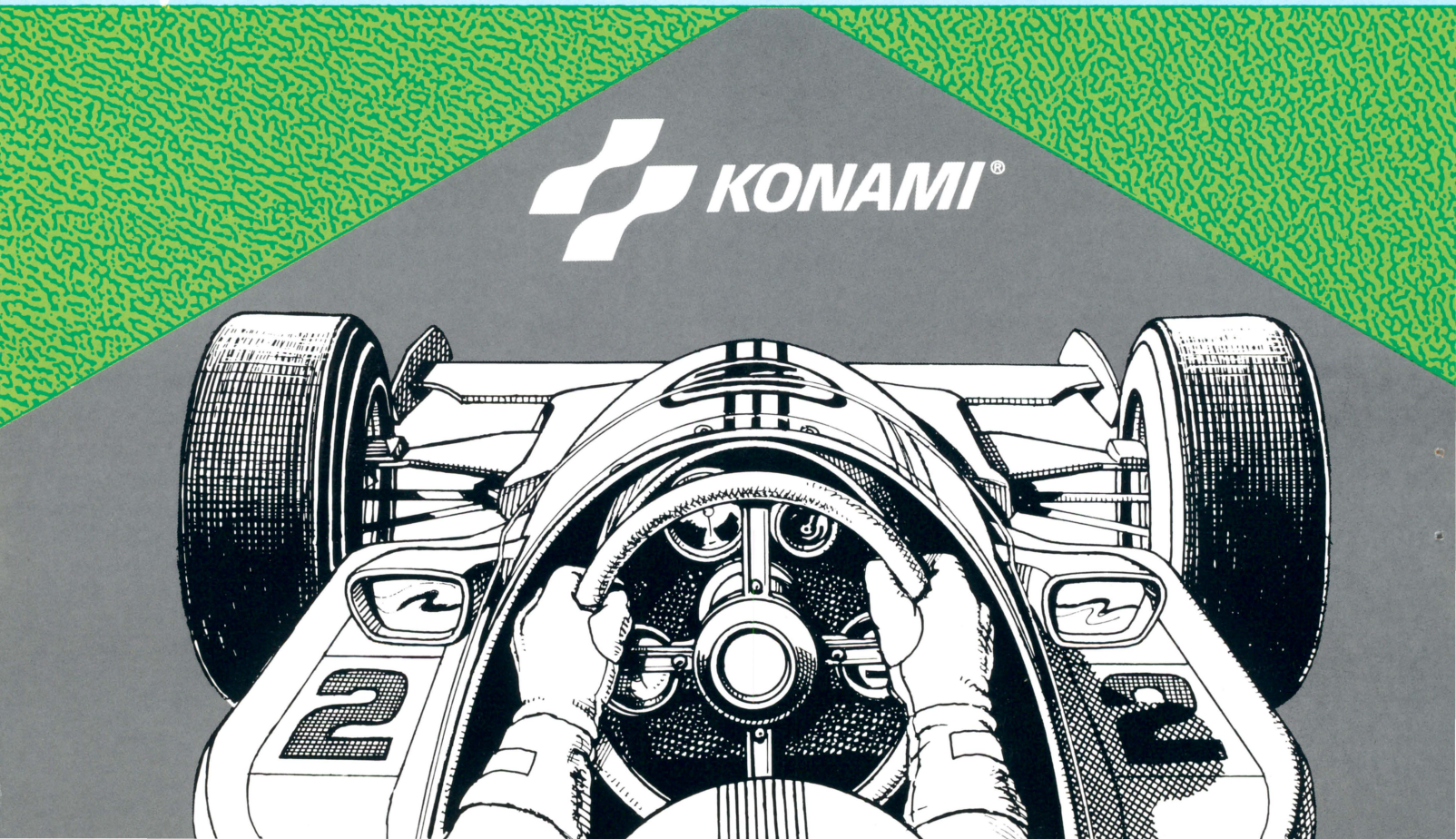
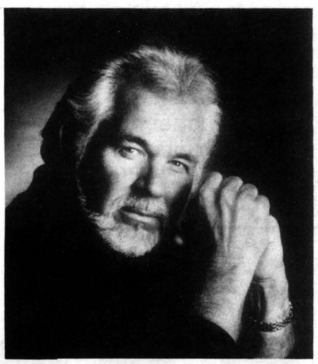
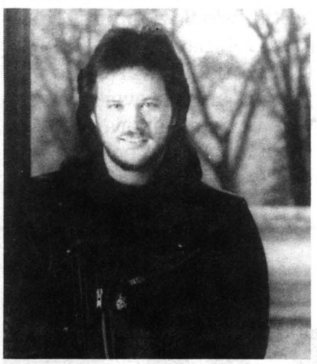


ALL-STAR AWARDS SHOW & BANQUET SET FOR EXPO '90



Receiving "Jukebox Hall of Fame" awards at this year's AMOA Expo banquet will be the members of the Commodores (pictured above) and Kenny Rogers (below left). They join the ranks of such other greats receiving the AMOA honors including the Bill Medley, Conway Twitty and the late Elvis Presley.





Performing for the AMOAers at the Friday evening festivities will be country artist Travis Tritt (above right) and the Everly Brothers (below). If you haven't bought your tickets yet, you best get with it as it looks to be a great evening!



NEW AMOA NOTRE DAME "GROUP 5" DATES: NOV. 24-27

If you're in Group 5 of AMOA's Notre Dame Executive Development Program, listen up! Dates for your upcoming session have been changed from Nov. 17-20 to Nov. 24-27. For details, call AMOA's Fred Newton at 312/565-4602 or Randy Chilton at 316/262-3538.

PARALLEL BILL PASSES HOUSE; COIN-OP TEMPERATURES RISE

A bill which would make it legal to operate **"parallel imports"** passed the full U.S. **House of Representatives** on Sept. 26. It now moves to the U.S. Senate for consideration. Parallel imports are lawfully-made video games intended for the Japanese market, but imported to the U.S. and sold at discount prices through "non-standard" channels. At presstime, it remains illegal to operate parallels because of "public performance" rights held by the copyright holder (U.S. subsidiaries of Japanese firms). It's questionable just how important the parallel issue really is to the industry . . . but the political fall-out from this battle is very serious indeed. AMOA supports the pro-parallel bill; AAMA opposes it; and each intensely dislikes the lobbying tactics of the other. We regretfully report that AMOA and AAMA are showing a distinct "lack of good will" toward each other these days. No clear prospects for improved relations between the associations are in sight.

MARY OPENSHAW RETIRES AFTER YEARS AS INT'L. TRADE WRITER

The grande dame of international coin-op trade magazine writers has retired to her new home in Ireland. **Mary Openshaw,** whose arcade-operator father kicked her into the business back in England too many years ago for her to mention, has resigned her post at *RePlay* (and presumably at the other trade papers she worked for around the world) to settle in Kilkenny and devote her writing talents to "other things."

There is hardly a manufacturer or distributor in Europe who doesn't know "Mary." This "Miss Marple" of coinbiz intrigue knew the powerful. She enjoyed the respect of many for her years of authoritative analysis of European trade shows and the often peculiar laws that govern individual countries over there. Her face was as well known as that of *Ms. Pac-Man* (though she is much prettier), and the miles she put in over the years covering Euro trade events for *Coin Slot, RePlay, Game Machine* and other international journals would take her to the stars.



She was and is a star, because this industry always keeps the "retired" to its bosom. In her best prose, her resignation letter to *RePlay* stated: "If you're ever in an emergency where you had absolutely no one to cover something that simply had to be covered, then I'd be prepared to do my best." Mary, you've already done your best. Enjoy Ireland and maybe one day **Cravens** and I will visit as threatened! Your good friend, Eddie.

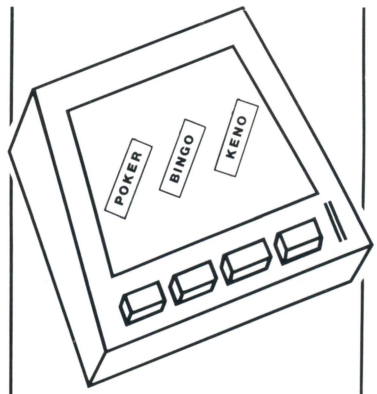
OPERATOR-RUN VIDEO LOTTERY REPORTEDLY READY TO PASS IN WEST VIRGINIA, NEBRASKA & NORTH DAKOTA

"Video lottery" (operator-run, pay-off video poker, bingo and keno) is picking up momentum in several states. The tightly-knit **West Virginia** operators association is confident they'll pass a bill to legalize operator-run, pay-off gaming by **Jan. 1, 1991.** Distributor **Doug Wilson** of the state's Hilltop Vending said the law would be "almost verbatim" what was passed in South Dakota.

Voters in **North Dakota & Nebraska** may approve video lottery referenda in their states on Election Day, Tuesday Nov. 6. Nebraska's NOA has raised lots of money and hired a top advertising/PR firm to run their campaign. NOA may also tie their proposal to a central computer system designed by Video Lottery Consultants (VLC's software is the central program for South Dakota's video lottery, too).

In **Wisconsin,** a major slot machine maker (IGT from Reno) has proposed its own video lottery bill to the legislature. At presstime, WAMO's officers (Wisconsin operators) were consulting with IGT execs about whether the two groups could work together to ensure a primary role for coin machine operators in any eventual video lottery market.

In Pennsylvania, "we're hoping for a vote on our video lottery bill when the House and Senate reconvene" from Nov. 11-30, said PAMMA's EVP **John Milliron.** "If we pass it in only



the House by Nov. 30, we'll start lobbying right away in the Senate next year."

Many coin-op faces attended the **World Gaming Expo** (Oct. 2-4, Las Vegas). "Many state officials were also present and the overall mood was very pro-operator," reported AMOA board member **Tami Norberg-Paulsen.**

In three Canadian provinces on the Eastern Seaboard, gray-area poker operators were reportedly their own worst enemy in giving legal video lottery to a single-source vendor in partnership with the state. Said one tradester: "Some operators just wanted to stay with their present, illegal equipment rather than getting aboard with a state of the art, computer-linked system." **Video Lottery Consultants** will supply the central computer link-up and accounting system for the operator-run pokers in New Brunswick and Newfoundland, Canada. It's still not totally clear if operators will participate in video lottery in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

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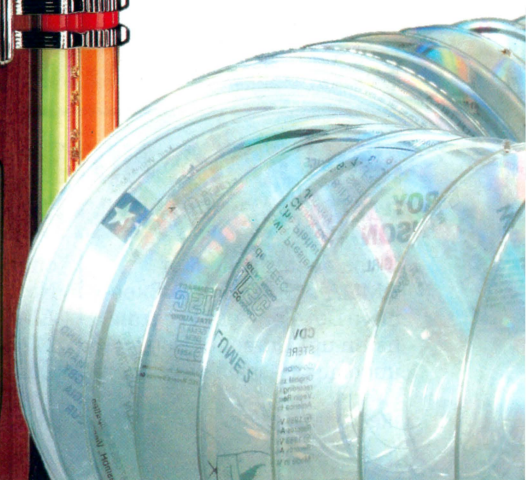



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HEY, OPERATOR! HAVE A COW! BART SIMPSON'S ON A PINBALL

The hottest license property around is **"The Simpsons."** One store in Century City, Calif. in fact, is totally devoted to Simpson's doodads. Now, **Data East** has nailed **Bart, Homer** and that madcap bunch of animated monstrosities to theme its newest pinball machine and it wasn't just slapping artwork onto prototype: Simpson's creator **Matt Groening** actually kibbitzed with DE's pinball guys when they designed it (e.g. pop bumpers are little nuke cooling towers to remind all where Homer works).

From test collections, as well as the accolades of its creators **(Gary Stern, Joey Kaminkow,** et al) the game would be a beaut even if they called it "Flypaper." But themed upon, and using



their outrageous pusses, their music and their actual speech, this combo of "The Simpsons" and pinball play could spell primacy for this outing. It's shipping now and will be highlighted at AMOA. See details **on pg. 77.**

UNIFICATION OFFERS A MIXED OPPORTUNITY TO GERMAN TRADE

On Oct. 3, the two German States united under one common set of laws, laws that have ruled the West German amusement industry which now open wide the nearly virgin territory formerly known as Communist East Germany. With maybe only 4,000 "locations" in the East at present, but lots more to come, many machines have already been placed. And although the West German operators can rather easily drive right in to do service, the telephone system between the two sectors is dismal and could cost as much as $34 million to modernize. "How do you fix a breakdown if they can't call," goes the question.

The larger question is "how much money will the East Germans actually put into the machines?" Money is precious to them, but perhaps the unique diversion of the modern video and pinball are necessary to people who've been locked into tedium since the war ended back in 1945. **Hans Rosenzweig** (Nova Apparate, Hamburg) figures it will take years before the East is brought up to Western standards. But still in all, this will be the first of the former Communist nations to come anywhere close to the life style that's taken for granted in the free world. See our report on German unification and how it impacts on the coin-biz **on page 84.**

ent in Profit!



This Fall Everything Turns To Gold With Neo·Geo

SNK's Fall Promotion is more exciting than ever! With every purchase of a NEO·GEO MVS-4 cabinet, we will include at NO CHARGE two great earning games, NINJA COMBAT™ and THE SUPER SPY™.



Ninja Combat is a 2 player fighting game. Pick up weapons, throw punches, kick the enemy, even change into a different character! Non-stop action, great graphics and real voice!

The Super Spy allows you to be the hero. 3-D action provides realistic game play while you go through a 16 story building trying to destroy the terrorists that are building a new "super" bomb.



In addition, SNK is also including 3 NEO·GEO Memory Cards with every purchase of a MVS-4 cabinet.



The memory card provides players with the ability to save their game play on any NEO·GEO game. Players can save and store up to 27 different game titles (when *available*). For more information on the NEO·GEO fall promotion, contact your authorized SNK distributor, or call SNK at (408) 736-8844.

SNK

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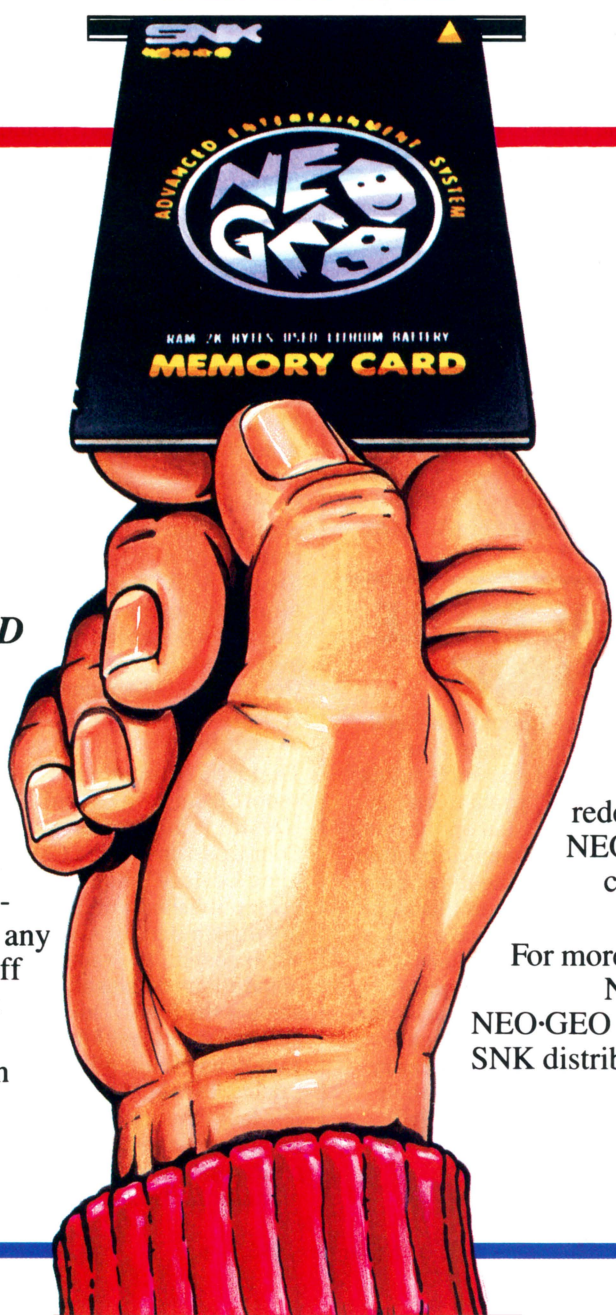
The Player's Gold Card Keeps Them Coming Back For More





NEO·GEO MEMORY CARD

Besides NEO·GEO's great games, superb graphics, digitized stereo sound and voice, the players have one more reason to play NEO·GEO --The Memory Card System™.

The NEO·GEO Memory Card System enables the player to continue any NEO·GEO game where they left off at a different time, even a different location! Up to 27 different NEO·GEO games can be stored on the NEO·GEO Memory Card.

SNK is including 3 sample memory cards with every purchase of a NEO·GEO MVS-4 cabinet (in our special Fall Promotion). Special on site promotions and redemption are just a few of the ways the NEO·GEO memory card will continue to create location excitement and greater earnings on every NEO·GEO game.

For more information on obtaining additional NEO·GEO memory cards and our full NEO·GEO product line, contact your authorized SNK distributor, or call SNK at (408) 736-8844.

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SNK

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NAMCO (JAPANESE GIANT) WILL SELL ITS GAMES FROM OWN U.S. OFFICE



Namco Chairman Masaya Nakamura and President Masahiro Tachibana.

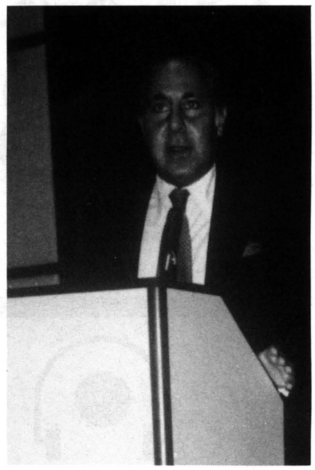
Namco is the Japanese video game manufacturer that invented *Pac-Man* and many other major hits. In recent years, many Namco titles were released through their U.S.-owned firm, Atari. . . or were licensed to other U.S. manufacturers. But now that Namco has sold Atari, they're going to activate their existing but "dormant" U.S. sales office and sell directly to the U.S. market under their own name. This according to Namco's **President Nakamura,** who also says Namco will continue to license some titles to other U.S. game makers. By the way, Namco's ***Steel Gunner,*** a two-player video gun game featuring robot policemen in a futuristic setting, was mentioned as one of the most promising "street pieces" at the recent JAMMA show in Tokyo. ***Final Lap 2*** was also on show. In our next issue, we'll have a wide-ranging interview with Mr. Nakamura covering many global industry issues (he's also president of JAMMA).

LUCKY 8-LINES LEGAL BATTLE CONTINUES WITH HEARING

Nov. 19 will be the next hearing in **Yamate USA vs. Myron Sugerman** and Atlantic & Pacific Corp. Federal Judge **Harold Ackerman** will address two issues at that time: 1. is the *Lucky 8-Line W-4* board that A&P had earlier put into evidence genuine, or not? 2. When was this title first marketed in the U.S.? Hanging in the balance is the disputed copyright on this "slot machine"-style striptease video game. On Sept. 26, plaintiff Yamate asked the judge (once again) for a preliminary injunction against A&P selling *Lucky 8 Lines.* The judge said any such ruling would be "premature" in September, but on the basis of new evidence submitted by Yamate, the judge did agree to re-open this issue on Nov. 19, Yamate was pleased to note. For its part, A&P was pleased that — at presstime — the judge's earlier March 6 ruling of "no preliminary injunction" against their firm "still stood." We'll keep you updated as the case develops.

ATARI GETS NEW BOARD AS TIME-WARNER ERA BEGINS

As reported earlier, New York City-based communications and entertainment conglomerate Time-Warner, Inc. became the new owner of Atari Games (Milpitas, Calif.) in July. On Aug. 16, a new board of directors was elected: four members from Atari, five from T-W. The Atarians are President **Hide Nakajima,** General Counsel **Dennis Wood,** Tengen Sr. VP **Dan VanElderen** and Chief Financial Officer **Bob Sheffield.** Board members from T-W are T-W Vice Chairman **Martin Payson,** Senior VPs **Geoffrey Holmes** and **Ed Hamowy,** T-W Prexy **Bob Pittman** and CFO **Mark Mitzner.** The new board said Atari would "continue as an independent firm regarding corporate policies and decision-making," although Atari says it will "take advantage of any joint entertainment opportunities that will benefit both companies."



One of the new Atari board members, Time-Warner Senior VP Ed Hamowy. The new board of directors is made up of four members from Atari and five from Time-Warner.

NAGRA (GAMBLING REGULATORS) WILL MEET, VISIT AT AMOA EXPO

Members of NAGRA (North American Gaming Regulators Assn.) will meet in New Orleans at the time of the AMOA Expo (Oct. 25-27). A member of AMOA will address NAGRA regarding efforts to legalize operator-run video poker in nearly half the states. On Friday, Oct. 26, NAGRA members will also tour the AMOA exhibit floor.

That long-awaited joint report from AMOA and NAGRA ("Standards on Coin-Operated Video Gambling Devices") has now been published and is being distributed by AMOA. As expected, the recommendations do closely resemble the South Dakota set-up (i.e., $2 bet limit; $1,000 win limit; 80-95% payback scale; 20 machines per location limit; mutually exclusive licensing for operators, distributors and manufacturers; dial-up link to central state-run computer for accounting purposes; etc.). By the way, the message from NAGRA on these guidelines is: "We're not endorsing or recommending that states legalize video poker, but **if** they should decide to OK this activity, this is **how** we recommend it be done." A video tape explaining AMOA's video lottery program is also now available.

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Steve Blattspieler (formerly with the Midway division at WMS) is **Irem America's** newly-appointed VP. Said company chief **Frank Ballouz:** "With Steve's extensive sales background throughout the world marketplace and his knowledge of product development, he makes for a welcome player on our winning team."



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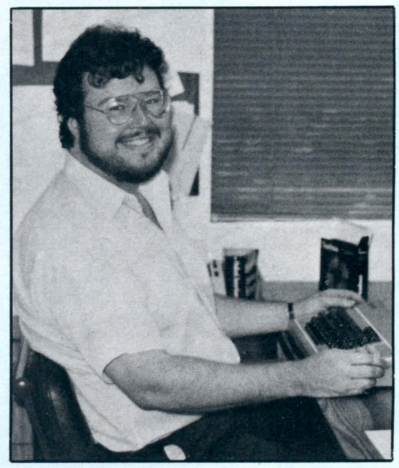

"I stopped thinking of myself as a 'video operator' some time ago," said a leading U.S. street operator. "Today, video is just one part of my broad product mix. In certain locations, it's far from the most important part."

"The American coin-op video market is not important anymore," one president of a leading Japanese manufacturer has stated privately.

"I'm worried that the sameness of games is causing our player base to shrink, and that if too many players wander away we'll have a tough time getting them back," said a leading U.S. distributor.

If these remarks are typical, then at least three key elements of the global coin-op industry are drifting apart from each other. Add to this the bitter relations between AMOA and AAMA these days, plus the occasional "Japan bashing" and "America bashing" that's happening in those two countries, and you have to ask: Is the coin machine industry fracturing?

To some extent, yes. All the name-calling and political wrangling at so many levels comes down to this: certain major people in our industry no longer perceive each others' profitability as crucial to their own. "I can go it alone, I don't need you" is the common theme.

Is it really so baffling that 5,000 or more American operators aren't interested enough in "professionalism" to join their local and national associations? Ditto for many distributors and manufacturers who don't belong to their associations. Where do they see "good citizenship" in the industry today? Where are large blocks of coin-op interests making common cause with other large blocks? If it's not happening at the top, how can it filter down to the bottom?

Yes, plenty of criticism can be leveled at all of these groups. Too many operators aren't professional enough. Too many distributors are "order takers," not full-service salesmen. Too many manufacturers are re-making the same games. Too many associations are driven by agendas of a few top people, not by the true, broad needs of the full membership. But this means simply that there's plenty of blame to go around, that industry groups must stop pointing fingers at each other, and get busy mending our own faults.

Along about now, some wiseacre is saying: "There's nothing wrong with this industry that a smash hit game won't cure." Oh, really? We've had some smash hits lately. One prompted a federal lawsuit last year, and lobbying warfare on Capitol Hill this year. Hits come and go, but the underlying issues of power and money remain the same.

Cooler and wiser heads know that Japan and the U.S. should be each other's strongest coin-op allies. Likewise, AMOA and AAMA should be each other's strongest allies. American operators, distributors and manufacturers should be each other's strongest allies. But preaching forgiveness and "unity" is pointless, so long as large elements in all these groups think they can make money without the others.

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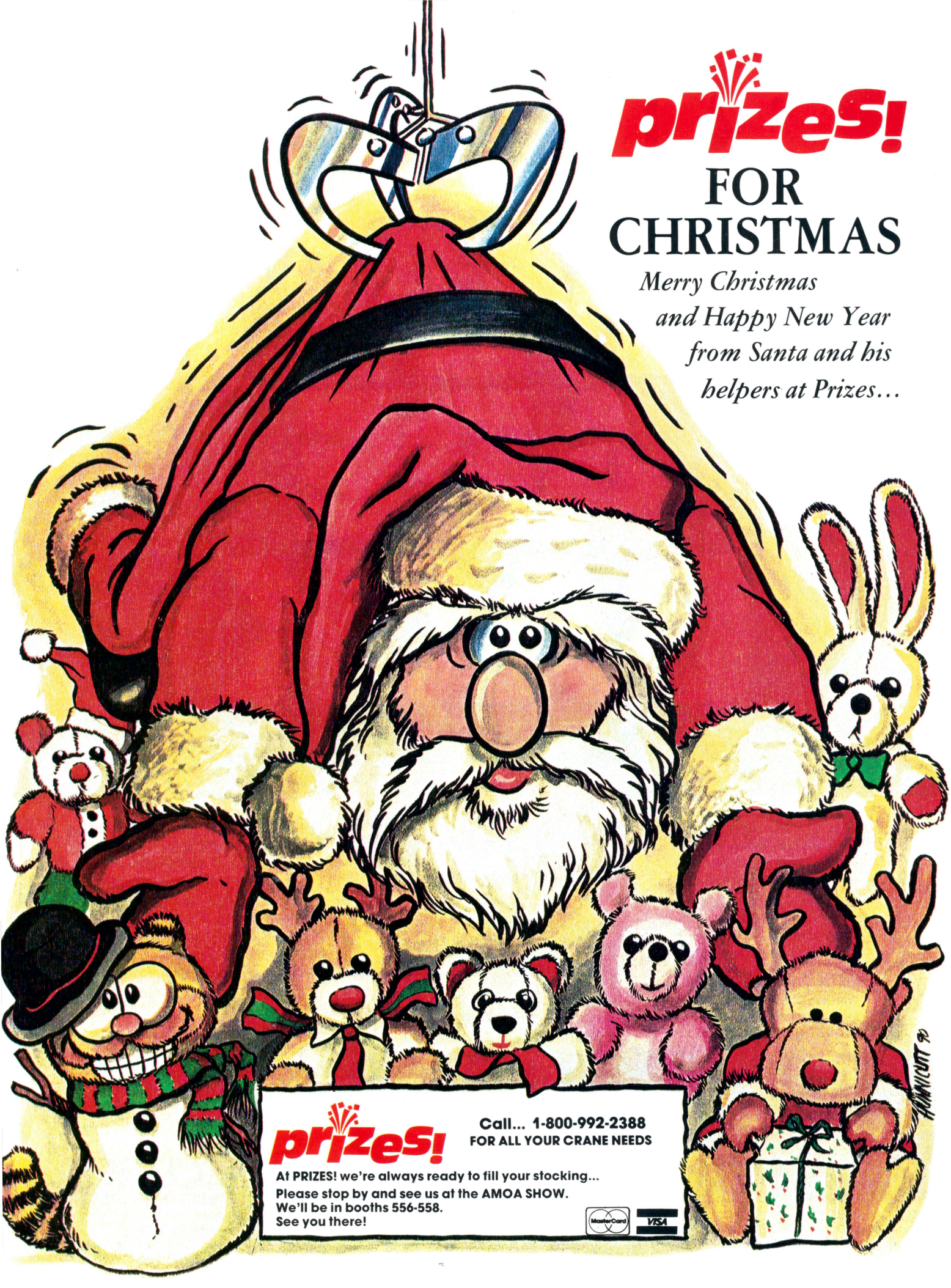
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IT'S SHOWTIME!



"Let the good times roll!" shout the promoters of the city of New Orleans. "Terrific!" say the American, Canadian and (to a degree) foreign operators reading the publicity about AMOA's Expo 90. Many are coming (pre-registrations show that) but many may show up at the last minute unannounced.

When the whole Expo, with all its new machines, its entertainment hoopla, its private hospitality suites, its French Quarter bistros and its continuous yata yata about the state of the business in specific and the economy in general is tallied up (attendance and otherwise), we'll all be dying to see if the Summit Meeting of the Industry this year does its avowed job.

That job is to pump the industry's veins with refreshed verve in thought and in machine. It's the biggest three days on the trade's calendar. It is a "must attend" thing for many if not most in the music and amusement machine industry. This year it comes to New Orleans.

For those who were asleep, the 1990 AMOA Expo runs Oct. 25-27 (Thursday through Saturday) at the New Orleans Convention Center. Nearby hotels like the Hyatt, Sheraton and the Marriott provide the housing. Several pounds of black ink and enough trees to outfit a small park have already been pounded & pulped by the AMOA association and the trade papers to get the word out. By closing day, the effect of this blitz and the need for trade people to gather amongst themselves and talk about their issues will begin to be tallied.

AMOA has once again brought forth an SRO exhibit hall, a bunch of seminars that no doubt will verge from the valuable to the boring, and a few social affairs that should delight the wife (as well, as you, big guy). Anyone who hasn't pre-registered can pay for his "ticket" right at the registration desk (make out you're going to a movie). All seminars are included. The only thing needed is your big mouth and your experienced advice to make this show outstanding.

It's far too late to list plane fares, hotel charges and other costs. Just remember the show runs Thursday through Saturday and if you haven't signed on but still want to come, there is nothing holding you back except your own hesitancy! Come on down and everybody will help you out, hotels included (though you may not get the one you prefer at this late point).

AMOA Expo 90 will be rich in equipment and in learning. There truly is nothing like their annual meetings in the nation, maybe even the world. Business is one thing, but if you want social stuff, you can get the Everly Bros. at the AMOA Banquet Friday night (and a front seat at the game awards presentation).

No event on the industry's calendar is as important as the AMOA Expo. You have the greatest compression of operators, manufacturers & distributors per square foot that you'll find uncomfortable to deal with at times. The newest products in every configuration are on stage along with the people who make and sell them. Only the timid could ignore the opportunity to talk to the man whose machine arrived looking like a box of breakfast cereal. Opportunity gets a new name at AMOA.

While the equipment trade show runs 9-5 on Thursday & Friday for operators (an hour shorter on closing day Saturday), the Expo is actually a 24-hour situation. We have some more nuts & bolts information on the show following this, along with a pair of important AMOA interviews and some other guidance into the future. Simply put, it's that time again! See you ALL in New Orleans and let's make better times roll together!

"President Trucano"

it has a familiar ring — Jim's dad had the job in 1972; now Jim Trucano offers his leadership as AMOA's "top op"

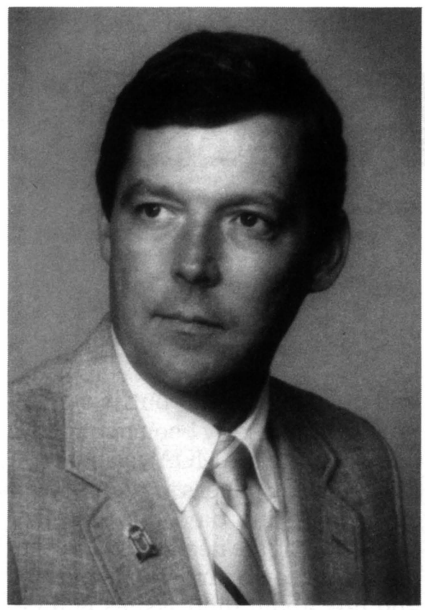
Strike up the band, and hail to the chief! As AMOA's annual Expo gets underway, a new president is taking the helm of the association. Jim Trucano (Collins Coin Music, North Charleston, S.C.) will be the "top op" for 1990-91.

As the son of a prominent and successful operator, Jim literally has the industry in his blood. "I was one of those guys who grew up cleaning pinball legs before I was big enough to peer over the glass," he says. In fact, you could also say Jim's got AMOA itself in his blood, since his father, John Trucano, was AMOA's 1972-73 president. Even more AMOA leadership has undoubtedly rubbed off since Jim now works with and for AMOA's 1974-75 president, Fred Collins Jr.

What kind of man is Jim Trucano? He's a very smart, well-spoken fellow with a quick, friendly smile and a strong sense of family. And, if you want an association president who exemplifies and believes in that term, "the new operating professional," Jim's your man. He can rotate a game or manipulate a computer spread-sheet with the best of them. Most of all, he has a clear vision of AMOA's long-term mission, great determination to help carry out that mission . . . yet at the same time, a modest view of his own importance.

AMOA'S MISSION; TRUCANO'S GOALS

Jim Trucano also has a reputation for candor — and when *RePlay* spoke with him, he lived up to this image. "Let's be brutally honest," Jim said. "AMOA's mission is to become so valuable to the operators in this country that if you don't belong, you can't compete. Period. I know that's a strong statement," he smiled, "but everything we do is based on benefits to the industry."



Jim says his number-one goal as president will be to let every operator in America know that each of AMOA's member programs is "really an opportunity for growth and increased profitability." He uses the word "continuity" a lot . . . as in, "My first goal is to ensure the continuity and longevity of those programs AMOA has initiated to date."

Operator education is Jim's second major goal as president. "I think we're in the midst of some massive, fundamental changes both in our society and in how society perceives us as an industry," he noted. "Operators as a whole need to be aware of these changes, and to become more responsive to them. In the past, too many operators took a myopic stance — only looking at problems day to day. Even now, too many operators only worry about how to relate to their locations, and what machines to put where."

OPERATOR PROFESSIONALISM

"Well, we can't afford the luxury of that narrow focus any more," Jim continued. "We need to be aware of the larger environment we're in — how external licenses, legislation and other factors can affect us. Otherwise, we're putting our businesses at risk."

Finally, in a related goal, Jim hopes to use his office as a platform to help promote operator professionalism. "I plan to do whatever I can to help instill an increasing level of professional and pride in our industry," he said. Hand in hand with that, of course, goes the idea of attracting more operators to become AMOA members . . . and converting passive members into a more active stance.

"After my tenure as AMOA president," Jim said, "it's my hope that operators will view the association in a new light. I hope they will see AMOA as being just as valuable and important to their businesses, as the machines they operate. If I can achieve that," he said, "then I'll go down in industry history on the same page with such people as John Trucano and Fred Collins Jr."

Bringing that kind of strength to AMOA is a very lofty ambition, as Jim himself is the first to acknowledge. "I've always believed in setting goals that make you stretch," he smiled.

THE STATE OF AMOA

Looking beyond his own role and goals to assess AMOA itself, Jim says the association "is in sound financial condition and is positioned to lead our industry into the 21st Century. We have consistently planned, executed and followed through on a wealth of programs



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during the past years," he continued, "and we've kept our 'customers' firmly in hand.

Through the years, AMOA has occasionally been accused of being "just a trade show organization," he added. "This was never the case, but in the past few years the AMOA board has made a concerted effort to leave the Expo and its execution in the hands of the trade show professionals, while we concentrate on member services and strategic direction for the future."

Of course, Expo remains a key pillar of AMOA's success. Jim pointed to the "104% sellout attendance" at this month's AMOA Expo. He's chairman of the show committee, but disclaims any credit for this success for himself, saying instead: "It shows AMOA is on the right track."

This year's show is the biggest in AMOA history, however. What accounts for this? "I believe the tremendous popularity of Expo is due to three things," Jim said. "First, the competence and hard work of our various committee chairmen. Second, the increasing awareness that if you're an operator and don't attend the show, you're at a competitive disadvantage. Much of that's due to the growing number of member programs and services.

"Third," Jim said, "you have to look at the incredible proficiency and professionalism of the AMOA staff. AMOA Executive VP John Schumacher and his group have been stellar in their performance. Talk to anybody who works with AMOA and they'll agree."

TALENT IN DEPTH

Jim also says AMOA's committee structure, board of directors and officer corps is a greater asset than many tradesters realize. "Many industry figures think the AMOA board and officers are extraneous appendages just waiting for their turn as president, or are individual entities in their own little world. Often, the perception is that officers below the president are like ladies in waiting, with no real responsibility, power or accountability.

"That perception is simply not true," Jim said. "The role of the officers is to execute the policies determined by the AMOA board, and as a person is elevated through the chairs, he or she gains great insight into the committee system under which AMOA operates. Each of the officer positions teaches you something different and valuable as you handle the specific responsibilities that go along with it." He paused a moment, then added: "I would never advocate that anyone become AMOA president without sitting in the other positions, any more than a prudent business would install a manager without first putting him through some training!"

Jim Trucano on Jim Trucano: a family man with coin-op in his veins

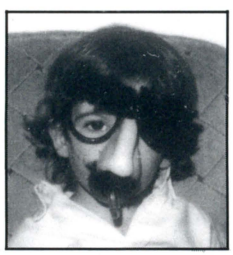
RePlay asked Jim Trucano to provide a brief sketch of his industry career and little background about his family. Here's what he told us.

"Upon graduating from Notre Dame I went to work for Rowe International in Distributor Operations. But you have to realize I was one of those guys that grew up in the industry, cleaning legs on pinball machines before I was big enough to peer over the glass.

"In any event, I worked with Rowe for two years, then moved to Wyoming to manage a route my Dad purchased. I moved to South Dakota to take over the family distributorship shortly before my Dad died in 1984. I stayed there until 1988, when at an AMOA Notre Dame seminar, Fred Collins made me an offer I couldn't refuse. The rest, as they say, is history and I'm proud to be a member of the Collins Music team here in South Carolina."

About his family, Jim said: "My wife Beth is my single greatest source of inspiration, and my two girls Megan and Sarah are my greatest source of pride. I have a super family and without them, there's no question: I would not be where I am today.

"For those aspiring AMOA presidents out there," Jim added with a smile, "never underestimate the value of your spouse and your family. During all the traveling, when you wake up in a hotel room one morning . . . and realize you don't even know what state you're in . . . you'd better have an understanding family! I am extremely fortunate to have a wife who understands and supports what I do for the association as much as she does. You've heard the phrase 'better half'? Well, Beth is that!"



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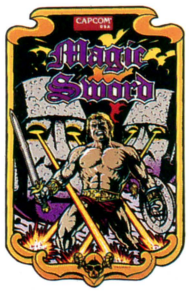



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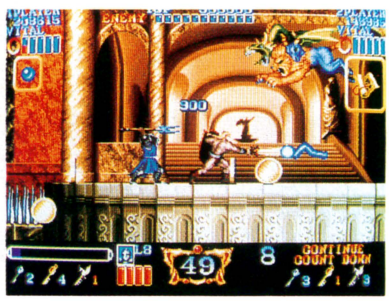





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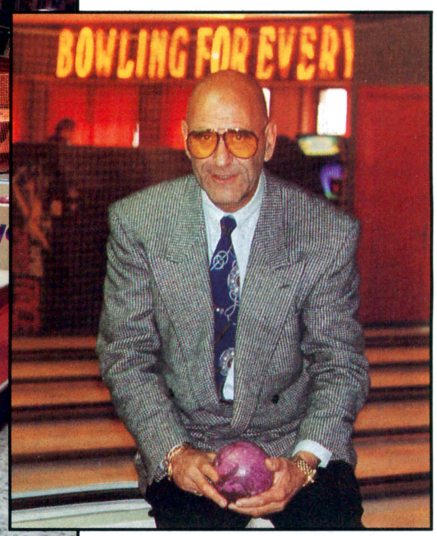

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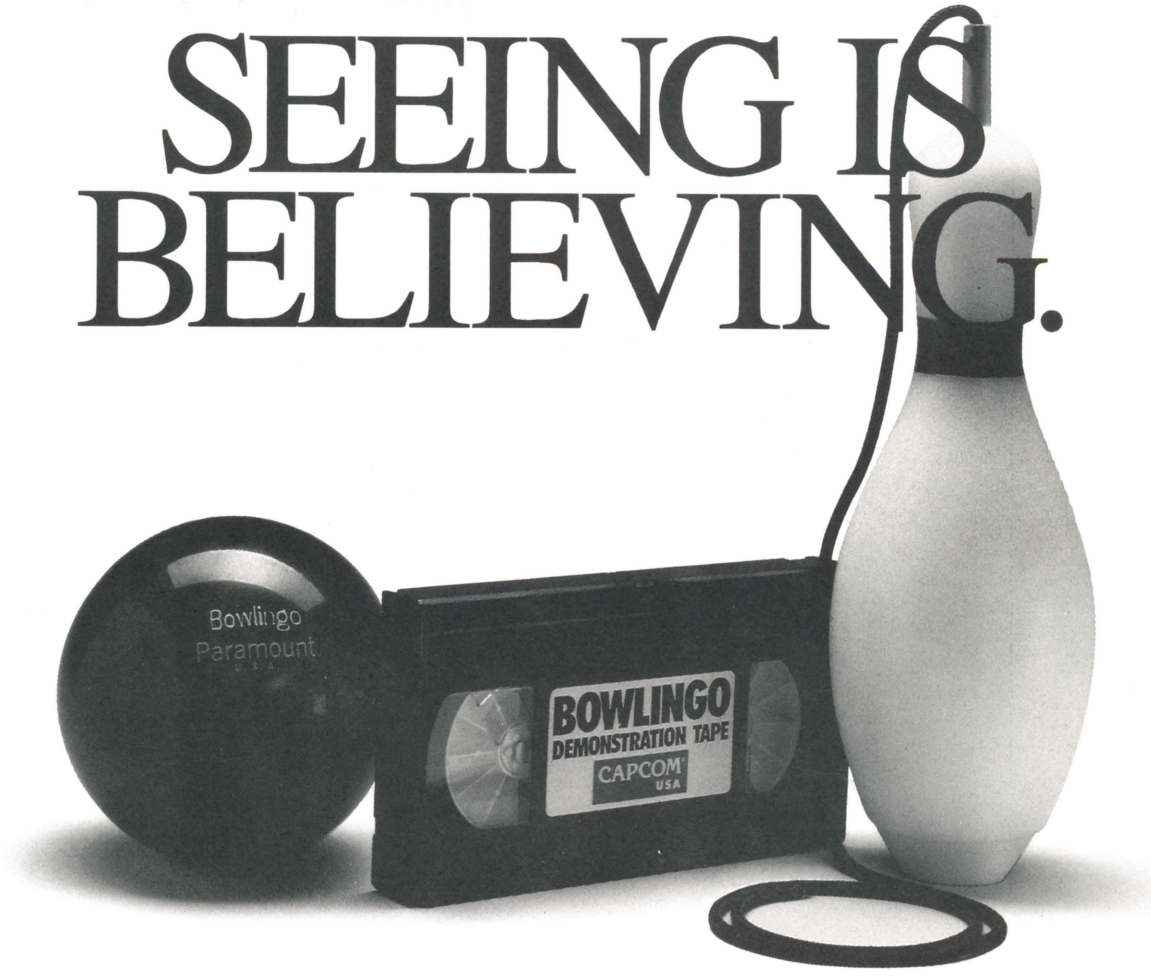

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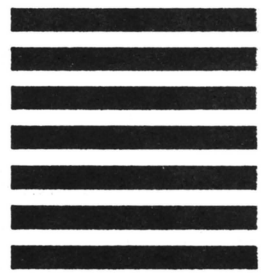

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WORKING WITH MANUFACTURERS & DISTRIBS

Along with John Schumacher and other AMOA leaders, Jim shares a vision of the national operator association as a "full service group" that works for the benefit of the entire industry. "It's important to realize that — just like an operator — AMOA has more than one customer," Jim said. "Operators must be responsive to location owners and the playing public alike. In the same way, AMOA's function is to respond to distributors and manufacturers, as well as operators."

Along these lines, Jim acknowledged that AMOA and its manufacturer-distributor counterpart, AAMA, each represent different members and "may have different agendas" and goals which "may be in conflict." But "this whole AMOA versus AAMA scenario bothers me," he added. "I don't think there's anything inherently wrong" in each association responding to its members' wishes, he said — and, in his view, that's precisely what each group is trying to do. "We just need to remember where each association is coming from and what each is trying to do," he concluded.

In respect to joint marketing efforts, Jim predicts that operators, distributors and manufacturers will continue to grow closer. "Fifteen years ago, operators would have skinned manufacturers alive for what they're doing with dart promotion, for example," he said. "Today, operators attend manufacturer's seminars, invite manufacturer's representatives to locations, welcome help in setting up leagues, and so forth. I expect to see more of this."

THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Is the much-discussed "soft market" of 1989-90 a permanent condition, or a temporary glitch in a longer road to more profits? Asked about the "state of the industry," Jim said he believes coin-op is on a "relatively consistent long-term growth pattern. This should continue for the next few years, although no one can say how many," he advised.

We asked Jim to complete the following sentence: "What this industry really needs is . . ." His answer: "Affordable, discernably different applications of new technology for the coin machine industry."

And what can AMOA do about the business, political and regulatory environment faced by operators? "The coin machine industry today faces many opportunities . . . and some challenges," Jim said. "It's AMOA's function to provide the leadership, the programs and the support to exploit the opportunities . . . and to overcome the challenges that stand in our way." Under the circumstances, Jim said, tradesters should "absolutely" look for AMOA to keep expanding its list of programs and support activities.

Meantime, Jim Trucano's message for *RePlay's* readers is short and sweet. "Feel free to call me any time at 803/572-4444 for an application to join AMOA!" he said.

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Schedule

Wednesday, October 24

7:30 a.m.	1st Annual Expo Golf Outing
3:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Registration Open — *New Orleans Convention Center*
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	AMOA Member Welcome Reception — *Hyatt Regency New Orleans* *(You must have AMOA member badge to enter!)*

Thursday, October 25

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Open — *New Orleans Convention Center*
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Special Distributor Hour in Exhibit Hall
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Educational Seminars — *New Orleans Convention Center*
10 a.m.	Exhibition Ribbon Cutting
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	**Exhibit Hall Open**
10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Spouses' Tour & Luncheon
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Educational Seminars — *New Orleans Convention Center*

Friday, October 26

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Open — *New Orleans Convention Center*
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.	AMOA Breakfast & Annual Business Meeting — *New Orleans Convention Center* *(Breakfast will be served from 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. only)*
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Special Distributor Hour in Exhibit Hall
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	**Exhibit Hall Open**
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Educational Seminars — *New Orleans Convention Center*
6:00 p.m. - Midnight	**AMOA Awards Show & Banquet** — *Hyatt Regency New Orleans*

Saturday, October 27

8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Registration Open — *New Orleans Convention Center*
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Educational Seminars — *New Orleans Convention Center*
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	**Exhibit Hall Open**

Seminars

...These are titles and times of educational seminars to be held at Expo '90. All will be held at the New Orleans Convention Center.

Thursday, October 25

9:00-11:30 a.m.

- Pinball Firing Lane
- Equipment Budgeting
- Dart, Pool & Pinball Leagues (i.e., the newly formed International Flipper Pinball Association): Your Key to Profits
- How to Market Your Jukebox & Maximize Income

2:00-4:00 p.m.

- Redemption: The Best Is Yet to Come
- How a Small Operator Can Keep the Competitive Edge
- Monitor Repair
- Family-Owned Businesses
- The New Jukebox Licensing Agreement *(To be repeated on Saturday)*

Friday, October 26

2:00-4:00 p.m.

- Game Conversions: Painless & Perfect
- Location Profit Analysis
- Video Gaming Amusement Equipment: Industry & Regulators Working Together
- The Future of Music: Vinyl, CDs and Video Jukeboxes
- How to Find and Keep Good Employees and How to Deal with the Problem Employee

Saturday, October 27

9:00-11:30 a.m.

- The New Jukebox Licensing Agreement
- Maximizing Income Through Proper Game Adjustments
- Performance Management: How to Plan & Achieve in Your Business
- Pinball Technical Seminar
- Customer Service



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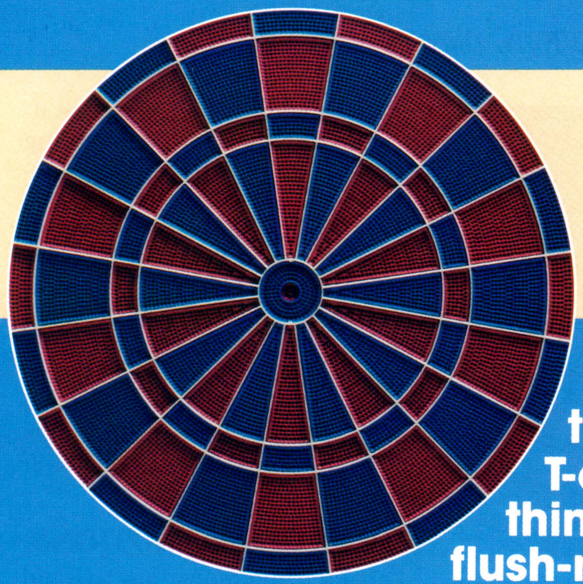

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Jukes Are Jumpin'

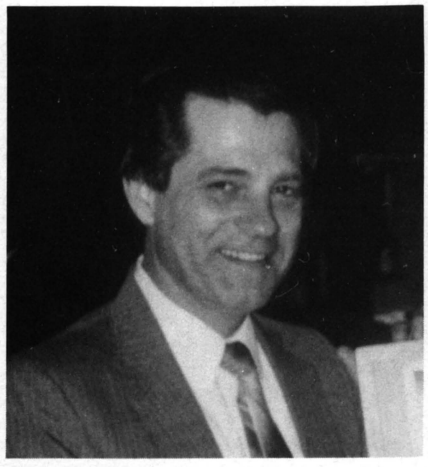
cooperation from record labels grows as Juke Promo Committee charts ambitious programs to reach locations, players & more

Why are music superstars like Kenny Rogers, hot upcoming country artists like Travis Tritt, and classic acts like the Everly Brothers on stage at AMOA's annual banquet and stage show this year? If you're wondering why, well, you can thank your jukebox.

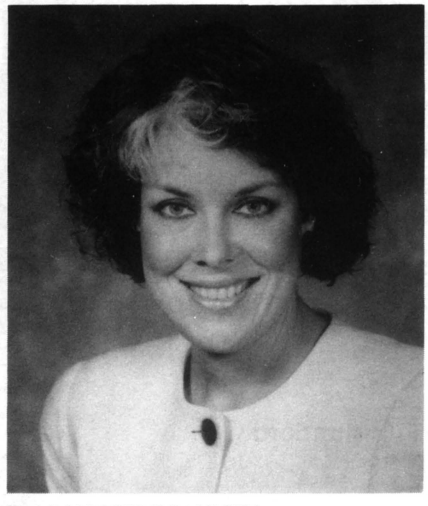
The jukebox is on the verge of regaining the kind of muscle and respect in the American music industry that it hasn't seen for decades, according to AMOA officials. "We've reached a new level of cooperation with label executives, managers and artists," stated Tami Norberg-Paulsen, chairperson of the AMOA Jukebox Promotion Committee. "The record industry is starting to look at the jukebox once again as a viable channel to promote their records. That was one of the original, main goals of the Jukebox Promotion Committee — and now, building on the outstanding promotional work done in past years under Clyde Knupp and Jim Hayes — it's starting to happen."

"We've had more cooperation this year in every respect, including the AMOA Expo Awards Show, than ever in the past before," said the committee's record label liaison Sam Atchley. "The record industry is receptive to our message about the jukebox's ability to add to the bottom line and its ability to promote new and established acts and songs. Executives and managers at all the major labels are becoming strong allies for us, and really seeing the value of this medium."

As this magazine has long lamented, for decades the music industry paid little attention to jukeboxes or operators. But today, said Atchley,



SAM ATCHLEY



TAMI NORBERG-PAULSEN

"the attitude of the labels is changing so much that it's unbelievable!"

PROMO COMMITTEE: STILL ON THE CASE

AMOA always knew it had a winner in the jukebox, and that's why the Jukebox Promotion Committee (JPC) was created a few years back. The committee's first major promotional event, the Jukebox Centennial, is over . . . but the committee itself is still going strong, promoting the jukebox to record industry, locations and players.

They've got plenty of funds to work with. A healthy chunk of money raised by 1990 jukebox licenses is being funneled to the JPC from ASCAP, BMI and SESAC (through the new Jukebox Licensing Committee). Also, various state associations and distributors have made major contributions to help the JPC with its work.

LOCATION PROMOTIONS

On-site promotions that will put more dollars into the jukebox are high on the JPC's agenda. This month, thousands of operators are using table tents, wall posters and special title strips to promote a package of oldies (or, alternatively, current country hits). It's called "Jukebox Celebration" and it is AMOA's first-ever November music promo.

Here again, the cooperation from record makers has been outstanding. To enable CD juke operators to participate, the labels agreed to press a special compilation CD with all the promoted songs. The JPC paid for table tents, posters, etc. (which are supplied by Sterling Title Strips); the labels paid for licensing of the songs, etc.

Response has been good with many ops ordering the promo packages from their participating one-stops by late September and through October. "It's incredible! The phone is ringing off the wall for this promotion," said the JPC's Sam Atchley. "I've had no less than 12 one-stops calling here for more information."

AMOA hopes to do many follow-

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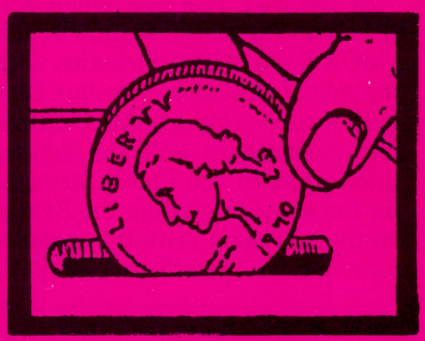

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up promos of this type. The next one on the calendar happens in February 1991. For the third year in a row, all the parties mentioned above will cooperate on a "Love Month" (Valentine-themed) promotion of love songs on the jukebox. In the past, record labels have used this event to promote new singles and new music will get the spotlight once again this time around.

TRADE SHOW PROMOS

One way to make the jukebox more profitable is to get it into more locations. That's why the JPC will take its message to different industries which represent possible locations "as a class" for jukebox deployment. To this end, the committee has created a permanent, reusable exhibit trade booth. It stands 10x10 feet square and is a glittery silver, gray and blue showcase for the jukebox.

Long-term, AMOA hopes to bring this booth at trade shows for other industries and locations, to promote use of operator-run jukeboxes. Bowling center proprietors, pizza restaurants, you name it. . . if they have their own trade show, the JPC will consider taking exhibiting there!

By the way, this new booth will be shown for the first time at the AMOA Expo in New Orleans, with plaques of AMOA's "Jukebox Legend" award winners. Also, different entertainers will be signing autographs in the booth throughout the show (including the Everly Brothers, Travis Tritt, the Commodores and the Texas Tornadoes). Also on display at the booth will be some music video entertainment.

HITTING THE MEDIA

Another major way to make the jukebox more profitable is to remind record labels, other segments of the entertainment industry, and Mr. and Mrs. American Consumer that jukeboxes are around, they're fun, and they're the place to find today's music. For these wider PR efforts, JPC has hired a top-flight entertainment/PR/marketing agency. Schwab Entertainment (Orlando, Fla.) lists among their accounts such show-biz mega-greats as Warner Bros. Studios, Twentieth Century Fox, UA Studios, Casablanca Records, Disney World and others.

"Schwab is a specialist in the entertainment field," explained Tami Norberg-Paulsen, "and we're hoping they can get us more coverage of the jukebox, our promotions and our industry in consumer and other entertainment trade media (both print and electronic)."

Another hoped-for avenue of reaching the record industry will be to create a "Most Played Songs on the Jukebox" chart, for publication in *Billboard Magazine*. Toward that end, said Tami, about 10 operators are cooperating in a bi-weekly "jukebox reporting system." The JPC's Randy Chilton compiles data from popularity meter readings from dozens of jukeboxes. The system is only in a limited test phase now, but AMOA hopes to expand this system to many more operators around the country. Then, getting a jukebox chart in the music trades would be another big boost for coin-op music.

JPC is also exploring setting up a "900 number" that would raise money with toll calls and offer jukebox trivia, contests, prizes of such items as jukebox memorabilia, and cooperation with artists on promos of new singles, etc. AMOA is seeking a corporate sponsor that's willing to spend money publicizing the number.

In all, the Jukebox Promotion Committee is coming out "swinging" (also rocking, crooning and polka-ing) as the industry moves into the new fiscal year. Watch for more promo activity from this hard-working group and its many allies!



"Jukebox Celebration" — the Play List

This month's "Jukebox Celebration" promotes the songs on thousands of jukeboxes across the country. Operators may buy a set of 14 classic oldies or 14 classic country tunes at the regular price, and recieve promotional materials free (title strips, wall posters and table tents furnished by Sterling Title Strips). The package is available both for 45s (seven two-sided records) and for CDs (a single compilation disc). Check with your participating one-stop, because supplies are limited and are going fast!

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You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet/Takin' Care of Business, Bachman Turner Overdrive

RCA Country Classics

Make the World Go Away/I Want to Be with You, Eddie Arnold
Pleae Help Me I'm Falling/You're the Reason, Hank Locklin
I've Been Everywhere/second song, Hank Snow
The Easy Part's Over/second song, Charley Pride
Welcome to My World/I Guess I'm Crazy, Jim Reeves
Abilene/second song, George Hamilton IV
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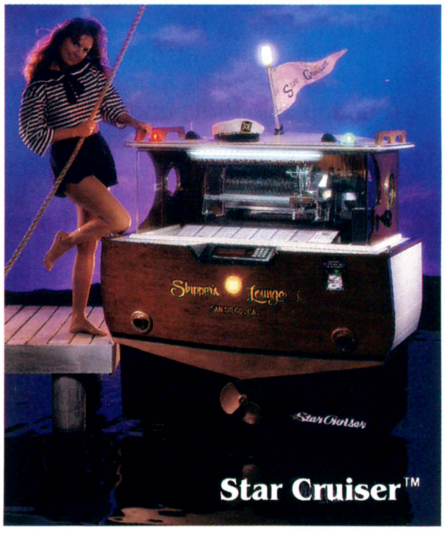

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INTERVIEW

John Schumacher

AMOA's Executive VP is calm, logical, managing exec . . . and he's helping AMOA attain a new professionalism

In the spring of 1989, AMOA suddenly learned it had some big shoes to fill. Bill Carpenter, President of Smith-Bucklin Associates (America's largest association management firm) announced he was cutting back on association work and could no longer serve as AMOA's Executive Vice President. AMOA's officers, past presidents and board members embarked upon a lengthy and exhaustive search for a skilled, savvy executive who could take over and devote full time to running the AMOA staff.

They decided on John Schumacher, 41. the Chicago native has been AMOA's EVP for about 15 months now, and he consistently earns high marks from his fellow AMOAers for his logical and thoughtful approach to association business. Many, if not most, agree that AMOA is now running better and more smoothly than ever — and this with its most ambitious agenda, largest budgets and biggest annual trade show ever! Conclusion: in John Schumacher AMOA chose a true professional.

John has been ultra-busy working behind the scenes to make AMOA function smoothly, and he has also stepped into the limelight on occasion, making speeches to various state operator associations or other industry groups. RePlay *thought this special Showbook issue would be a good time to have a chat with the man who is expected to be "Mr. AMOA" for many years to come.*



REPLAY: First of all, congratulations. We understand AMOA is mounting its largest Expo ever. Can you tell us about that?

SCHUMACHER: The attendance, booth count and so on exploded last year and again this year. We had 687 booths in 1989 and this year it's 705. The only reason it's not higher is that we just flat ran out of space! But from an exhibitor standpoint, it will probably be the biggest we've ever had. In terms of attendance, we're running 10% ahead on registration and 5% on ticket sales compared to the same point last year.

REPLAY: What accounts for this growth?

SCHUMACHER: The success of this year's Expo reinforces the wisdom of a decision AMOA's leaders made before I arrived, to move the show around the country. This offers a major advantage: it allows people to attend Expo who couldn't get to Chicago conveniently and affordably. Last year in Las Vegas, for example, we got more show attendees from California than ever. This year in New Orleans, we anticipate getting a lot more Southerners who wouldn't have been there last time. In all honesty, Expo outgrew Chicago. Historically the Hyatt was okay for the same 550 booths with the same exhibitors every year. The size we're at now, the Hyatt is too small, yet Chicago's McCormick Place is probably too big. But again, the major advantage of moving the Expo around geographically isn't getting better physical sites, it's bringing in more people who otherwise couldn't go.

REPLAY: Obviously, Expo serves to showcase new products to the industry, as well as

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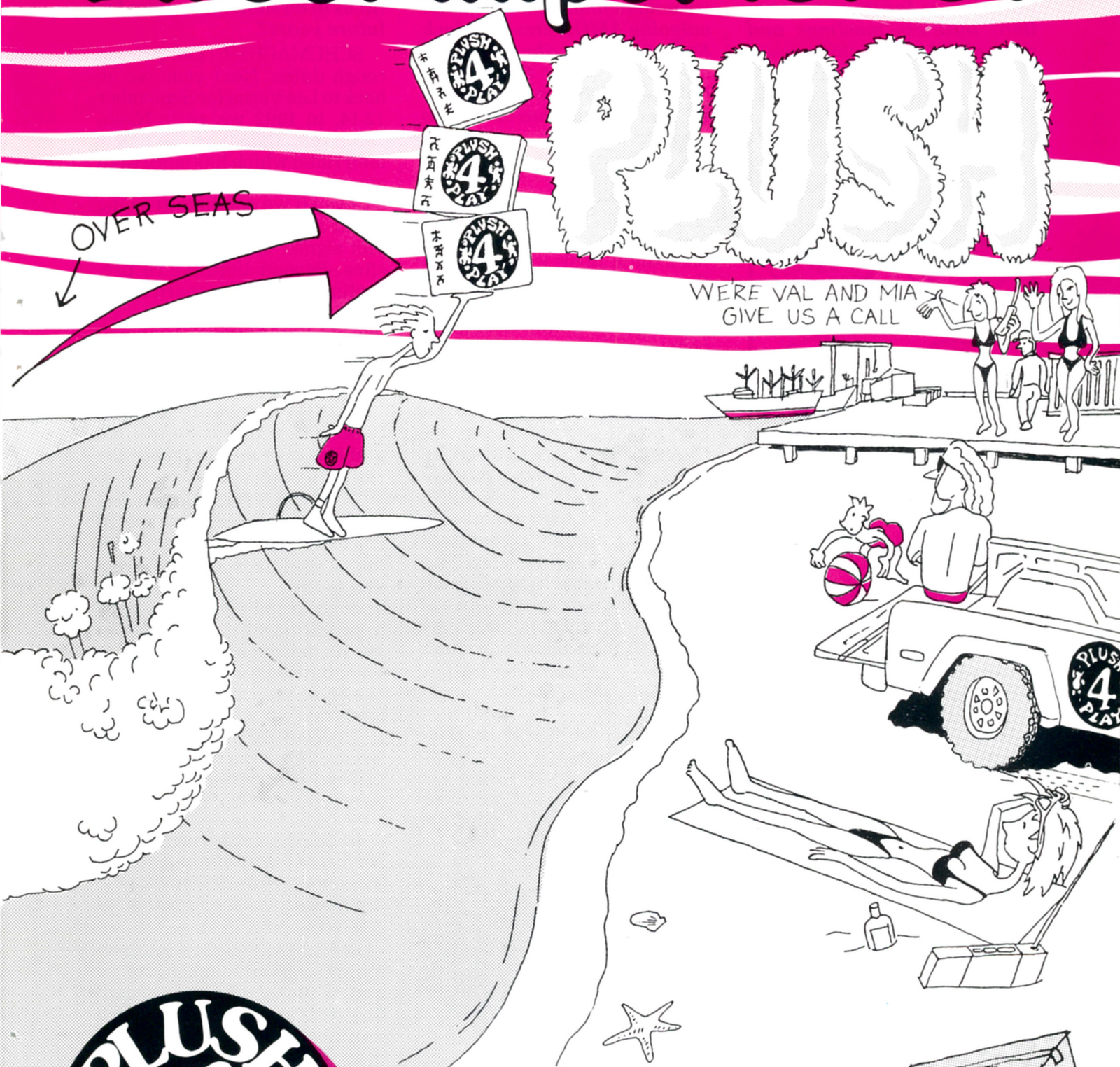

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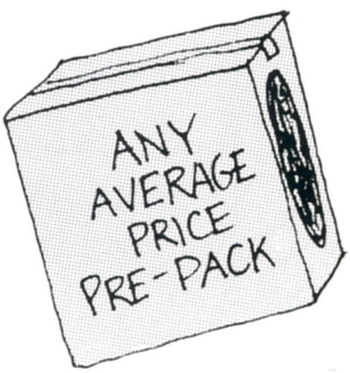

providing a forum for education, business meetings and general industry conferences. It also makes money for AMOA, we understand. Less obviously, outgoing AMOA president Jack Kerner has described the Expo as a recruitment tool/promotional event for the association. What other functions does Expo serve?

SCHUMACHER: Expo does serve all those functions, but let's prioritize them. The number one reason for having Expo is not the exhibit floor; it's the site of the membership meeting and board of directors meeting. Secondarily, the exhibit floor gives people a chance to view new products and hear about new ideas. The educational component and awards show are the next factors, and when you mix it all together it becomes "an event." Does it make money? Sure, but that's turned around to fuel all the activities and projects that AMOA committees pursue the following year. Yes, Expo does promote membership and while we'd certainly love to have everybody in the world be an AMOA member, you don't have to be a member of AMOA to come to the show.

REPLAY: By the way, can you fill us in on show sites/dates for future years?

SCHUMACHER: I can give you rough dates. Next year we go back to Las Vegas for September 12-14. In 1992 we go to Nashville, Tenn., right in the Opryland Hotel which has more than enough space to accommodate us, even if we continue growing at our recent pace. We have in fact signed contracts on those sites. Beyond that, we're presenting ideas to the board about locations for other years — cities like San Antonio, Anaheim, Las Vegas, Nashville again, and New Orleans.

REPLAY: Have you personally been devoting a lot of time and travel to making those arrangements?

SCHUMACHER: Not necessarily. I've done my share of traveling, but not over and above the norm. I do give some direction to the AMOA staff on this, and our standing officers comprise different components of our site selection team. We try to anticipate who will be president in a given year, and that person leads that site selection trip. We try to get different perspectives so we can get the right information and give a strong recommendation.

REPLAY: Let's turn to the subject of John Schumacher for a moment. How do you like being Executive Vice President of AMOA?

SCHUMACHER: It's interesting and certainly challenging . . . and while some management functions are the same in almost any business, there are some other aspects of working with AMOA which are sure different. Travel is a major difference! When you've got a peddler's background, as I do, you're used to traveling 90% of the time. Now I travel maybe five or six percent of the time. But even in the office, there's never two days alike. We have activity go-

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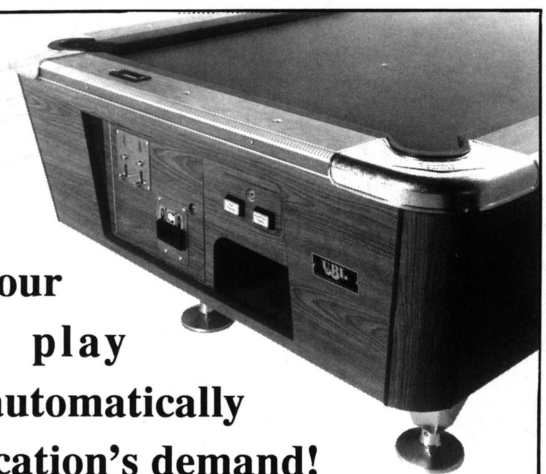

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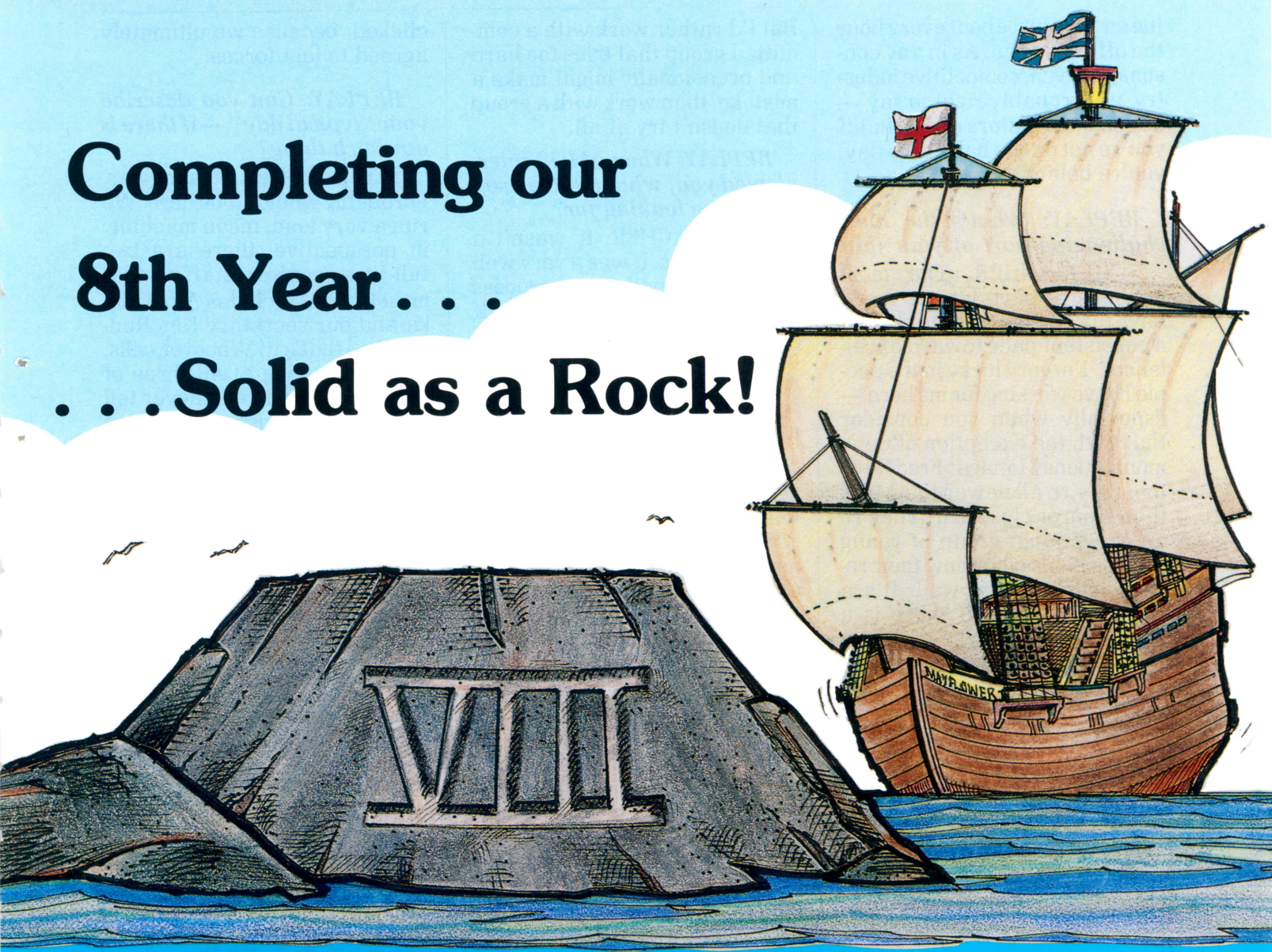

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ing on here just about every hour the office is open. As in any consumer-driven, competitive industry, it's probably right to say — as some tradesters do — that if you're not on the ball every day, you're behind.

REPLAY: What's the most challenging part of your job?

SCHUMACHER: The most challenging part, I guess you'd have to call "moving the staff at a consistent pace toward excellence." I'm very lucky in the people I have working for me here — especially when you consider that with the exception of Communications Manager Fred Newton, they're all newer to AMOA than I am, or close to it! They're an exceptional group of young professionals who know their responsibilities very well. It's a young group and if there is a down side, it's maybe that they try a little too hard sometimes. But I'd rather work with a committed group that tries too hard and occasionally might make a mistake, than work with a group that doesn't try at all.

REPLAY: When AMOA interviewed you, what did they say they were looking for?

SCHUMACHER: It wasn't a quick process. It was a very well thought-out, methodical process that took about three and half months. Neither AMOA nor I made a quick decision. I believe they were looking for industry background, work ethic, honesty, and frankly, street smarts.

REPLAY: What strengths did you tell AMOA you would bring to the job?

SCHUMACHER: My sales and marketing background and management skills. That's what they bought, let's put it that way! That's what I told them I was all about, and they must have clicked, because we ultimately agreed to join forces.

REPLAY: Can you describe your "typical day" — if there is any such thing?

SCHUMACHER: If there was, I probably wouldn't be here. We run a very lean, mean machine: in perspective, there are two full-time people on staff besides myself. That includes April Sojka and our secretary Kim Rundle. And that's it! Whoever calls, the phones ring at all three of our desks, so you can never tell who's going to answer. Anything could pop up at any time and when it does, one of us is involved — sometimes all of us! We're headquartered in Smith, Bucklin Associates, a management firm, and we "buy" goods and services from the firm as needed. For instance, as we head into Expo, we employ the services of the professionals here

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for trade show management. As we need good, strong PR we call on Fred Newton. He is the AMOA Communications Manager, although he also has other non-AMOA responsibilities within the Smith, Bucklin organization.

REPLAY: How do you see your role in AMOA? What duties and responsibilities are you charged with in the AMOA bylaws?

SCHUMACHER: (Smiles) You mean, what does an Executive Vice President do? Essentially, as stated in the bylaws, the EVP is the chief operating officer of the organization and has bottom-line responsibility for everybody. Of course, the responsibility transcends the black-and-white statements in the bylaws. It includes responding to members and assisting board members in accomplishing their goals.

REPLAY: We've noticed that the AMOA board truly does seem to have a pretty firm hand in setting most matters of policy and direction.

SCHUMACHER: We're much more board-driven than any other trade association I've been exposed to. The board members and committee chairs set their own objectives, develop their own budgets, and measure their progress. It's a hands-on approach and our responsibility in the permanent staff is to ensure they have as much support in activity and follow-up as we can possibly give them.

REPLAY: You are the "continuity man" who remains in place while officers and board members change annually or tri-annually. Does this give you a special responsibility to look out for long-term trends, future impact of current decisions and policies, etc?

SCHUMACHER: As an officer of a company or association, I think you've always got that challenge and responsibility. In our case, it's easier because there's more continuity than you might think on the board. We've also got a great resource called the Past President's Council. After an operator serves as an AMOA president, he stays on the board for five years. That has been very helpful to April Sojka and me. In the past 15 months, I don't think a week has gone by that we haven't consulted with one of those fellows and that's helped us stay on course. So, yes, I do have some of the responsibility for AMOA's continuity, but the board and the Past President's Council helps AMOA ensure its own continuity.

REPLAY: What direction do you see AMOA moving long-term?

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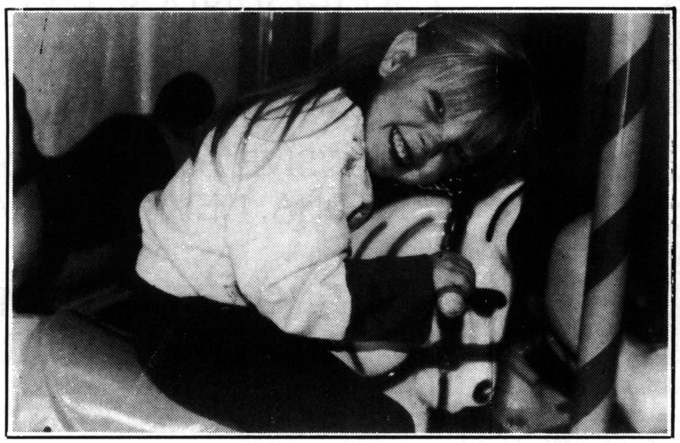

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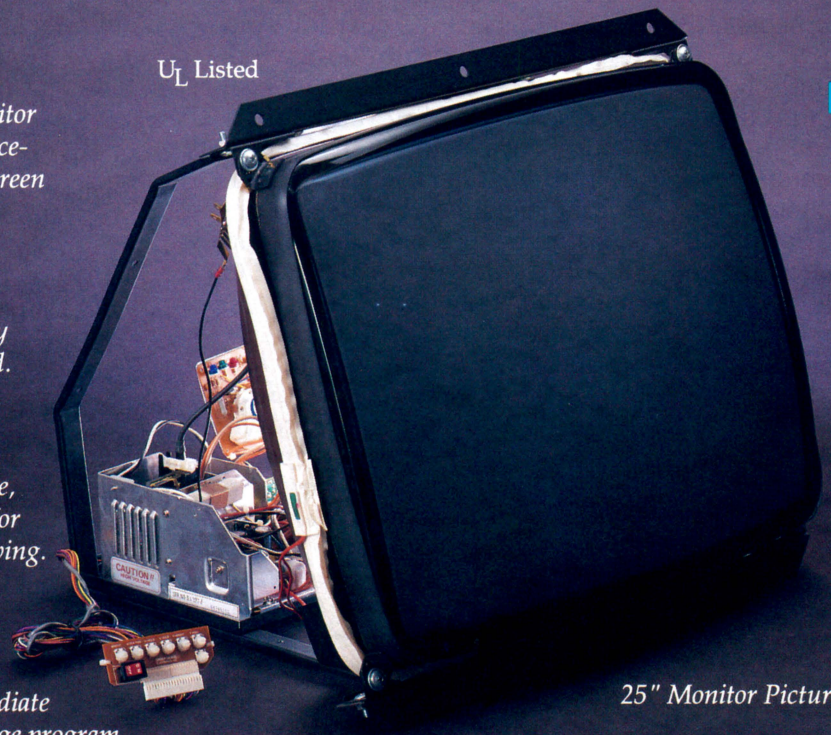

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SCHUMACHER: From a long-term perspective, I think we still have to step back and be true to the AMOA "Mission Statement" — which is to make sure we're protecting the best interests of the people who operate coin-operated equipment. We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, but as long as we stay true to that mission, I think we can accomplish whatever we have to, whether in the realms of legislation, PR or promotion. I also think we need to be mindful of not over-extending ourselves by taking on too many projects at once. Instead, we should focus on our top priorities and doing those the best we can. I'm a big believer in setting two or three top goals and doing the best job with those, instead of setting 10 goals and doing each of them half-way. It's a brick on brick approach.

REPLAY: AMOA is clearly becoming more professional and ambitious. Where is the "average American operator" headed these days? Has AMOA done another statistical survey recently?

SCHUMACHER: About four years ago we did a statistical survey on operators and there's probably a need to repeat that. But first, we need to get our house in order a bit. Up until a few months ago, we were working very hard on the new jukebox licensing agreement, and nobody knew what it meant. As for the basic statistics we do have, if you ask how many operators there are, you look at two different reports and get two different numbers. Is it 5,000 operators? That's what I keep hearing, but I don't know if it's correct. And who is an operator, anyway? Again, two different studies will give you two different definitions. So we're in the first phase of a three-step program to identify our member base, then understand their real needs, and finally to develop programs to meet those needs.

REPLAY: Based on the impressions you get from dealing with operators around the country, are the mom and pop operators dying out, as AMOA's Notre Dame program director Jerry Sequin suggests? Are the larger operators swallowing the smaller ones?

SCHUMACHER: I haven't met Jerry yet, but you could take the word "operator" out of that statement and say "businessman," and it would apply to just about any industry in the United States today. So whatever consolidation is going on in our industry, it's not anything out of the norm. By the way, if there is a trend in this direction, it's not reflected in our membership count. The base is not decreasing, and remember, our membership is primarily composed of small operators.

REPLAY: So answering those kinds of questions is something AMOA intends eventually to do.

SCHUMACHER: Yes, although in terms of serving our membership, I believe a customer attitude survey would have even more impact than an operator survey. We always say what counts in coin-op is "location, location, location." But the consumer is the one who puts the coin in the chute, and we don't know why. We don't know why the consumer comes in or goes away. Once we understand this, we can do something about it. (Smiles) That's the marketing side of my brain talking!

REPLAY: Does AMOA do anything to track market strength, trends, etc.?

SCHUMACHER: We don't try to duplicate what we sense is already there. We've already got trade publications doing "state of the industry" surveys. As far as earnings trends go, because of the diversity of operators and their markets, I don't know how AMOA could gather and qualify such data in a way that members could use.

REPLAY: Government lobbying is AMOA's second-largest budget item (after your annual Expo, which pays for itself). What's your assessment of the political climate that operators face today?

SCHUMACHER: Our Government Relations Committee has

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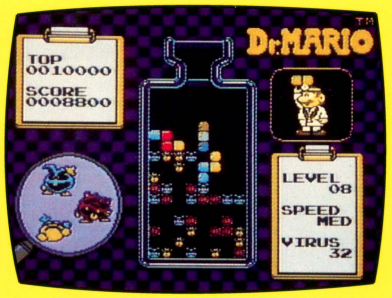

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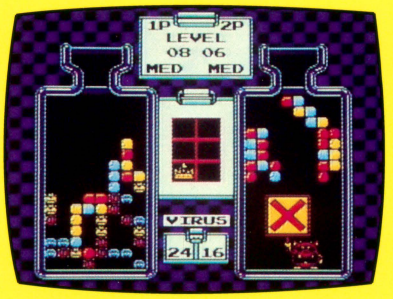

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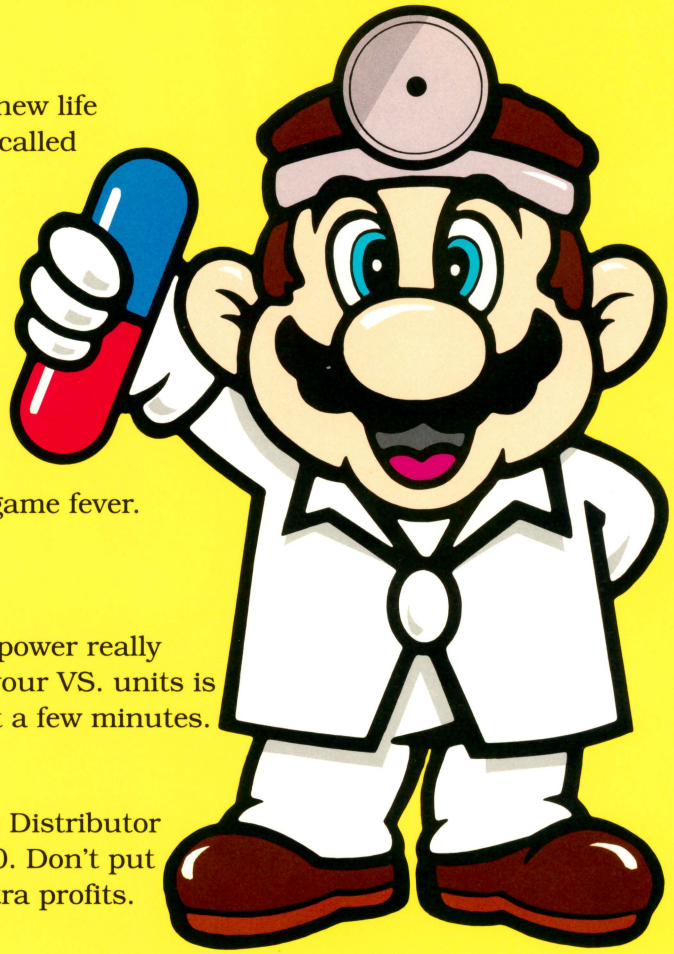

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come a long way with the continuity of the same chairman for three years, Wally Bohrer. Relationships with lawmakers are improving and our visibility is on the rise. There has been a lot of improvement here in recent years. I think the White House and Congress are becoming more sensitive to small business, but like anything else that depends on how much visibility the party in question has. We're talking about coin-op amusements — the second-largest category in the whole vending industry — but traditionally we haven't been visible. If people don't know who you are, what you stand for and how professional you are, then they tend not to believe what you say. Gaining credibility and stature with the government isn't like turning on a light switch. It's a building process.

REPLAY: What are the prospects that coin-op will be a 'tax target' this year?

SCHUMACHER: Gas, liquor and other taxes do and will affect us. But for the most part, our tax vulnerability is more of a "state by state" and "city by city" problem, than a national issue.

REPLAY: What's the current state of the relationship between AMOA and AAMA? Is there going be a joint leadership meeting anytime soon?

SCHUMACHER: AAMA asked for an industry meeting recently, but unfortunately their timing was mid-September. Three of our four officers were slated to be at various state association meetings, and our immediate past president and Government Relations Chairman are all out of the country and won't be back until shortly before Expo. So we suggested a meeting sometime during Expo. How was our proposal received? At this time I guess it's under study — as you know, it's tough to set up meetings during that busy time — but



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we're open to other meetings and whatever needs to be discussed.

REPLAY: How does AMOA view AAMA's role in the industry?

SCHUMACHER: I think some folks make too big an issue out of this "relationship." I don't see that there's any kind of a different relationship with AAMA than with any of the other associations we dialog with, such as IAAPA or NAMA, the vending association. With AAMA as with the others, when we find we have common ground in pursuing an objective, we work together.

REPLAY: But AAMA members make the majority of products purchased by AMOA members. And most AAMA members also belong to AMOA.

SCHUMACHER: I haven't seen an AAMA membership list, so I don't honesty know who is an AAMA member and who isn't. I can tell you that where I am aware of an individual who is an AAMA member, he is usually also a member of AMOA . . . and probably of several other trade associations, as well. As for AAMA members making the products that AMOA members buy, that's a buyer-seller relationship, not a trade association relationship. Who an operator buys his goods from has a different motivation from the collective motives of AMOA or AAMA as a group. A trade association has an entirely different mission. For instance, I wouldn't expect to see numbers coming out of AMOA implying whose product is better.

REPLAY: Sure, but both groups have — or should have — a vital interest in ensuring each other's health. AMOA members can't be profitable without successful manufacturers to sell them good products. Likewise, AAMA members need healthy, profitable operators to buy their machines, make money and reinvest those profits. That should give the two associations a tremendous, vital area of common interest.

SCHUMACHER: I don't disagree with that. I absolutely concur with everything you just said.

REPLAY: What kind of working relationship do you have with your AAMA counterpart, Bob Fay? Are you guys on the phone every day coordinating strategy on dollar coins, standardization, PR efforts, and other joint projects?

SCHUMACHER: Personally, are there frequent contacts between him and me? No, our organizations are structured differently. Bob is a specialist, very good at what he does, who comes from what I would call a small, stand-alone organization. I'm a business manager who has my own staff and resources here that I can draw upon. So if Bob needs to get an AMOA perspective, say on a legislative issue, because of our set-up he can appropriately go to our Government Relations Chairman Wally Bohrer, our lobbyist Wayne Valis or our full-time Washington liaison Bob Wilbur. Or if it were a different sort of issue, there would be other committee chairmen who had jurisdiction over that area.

REPLAY: Is it correct that JAMMA President Nakamura will visit the AMOA Expo for the first time this year? What concerns will AMOA discuss with him?

SCHUMACHER: When our 1989-90 President Jack Kerner was in Japan earlier this year, he extended invitations to all the Japanese trade association leaders. We heard they were going to be having a transition in officers and would get back to us, but I haven't seen anything. It's possible they simply went through the normal registration process. But we haven't discussed a meeting agenda because there's been no formal notice that anyone's coming. We're still open to it, obviously.

REPLAY: AMOA is swearing in a new 1990-91 President, Jim Trucano. What can we look forward to under his leadership?

SCHUMACHER: My impression is that Jim is going to be very, very good. He's a thoughtful gentleman and you quickly realize how much he cares about the industry and the people around him. He has some specific interests in education that we'll work with him on when things settle down after Expo. He's also a good people manager who lets people do their jobs under his direction. And he's going to be highly visible with continuing some of the things AMOA has already started. So we are looking forward to a strong, highly active year.

REPLAY: Thanks for your time and your thoughts . . . and good luck with Expo '90! ◆R



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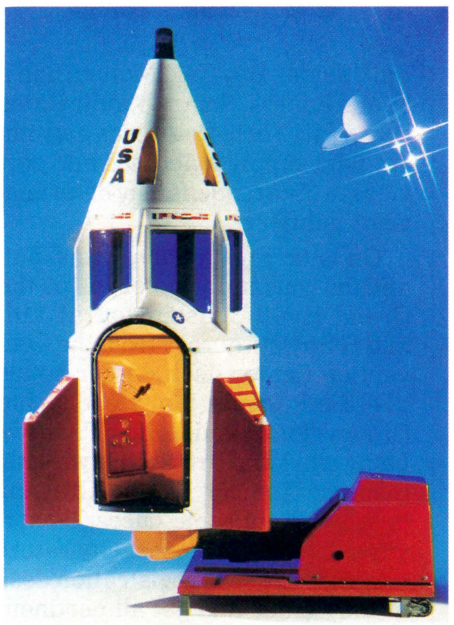

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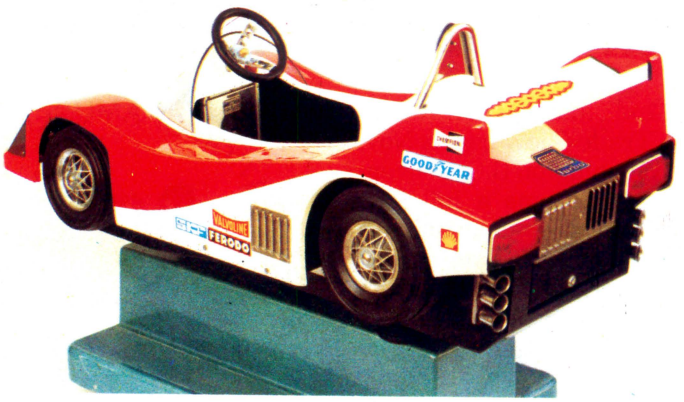

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The "72nd" annual IAAPA Convention & Trade Show begins Nov. 14 at the Washington D.C. Convention Center and runs a full four days. Known most commonly as "the Parks Show" (after the association's old "Parks & Pools" designation), this authentic carnival of exhibits showing everything for the indoor and outdoor recreation industries you can imagine, expects to display wares ranging from roller coasters (literature, of course) to redemptive coin games to plush prizes at perhaps 1,800 exhibit booths manned by over 600 companies.

The Parks Show could be called "the other show" by coin amusement people. When the old MOA concentrated on music, a lot of arcade owners went to the old parks shows. Then, the pendulum swung back toward the new AMOA which has clearly done its best to show just about everything modern arcade people might want to see. But there's still a big place for the Parks outing, especially since many machine users don't go to AMOA.

This year, a load of redemptive machine companies are planning to make a big statement at the Parks show, and are fully expecting a big turnout of arcade operators and possibly even street operators all looking for new ways to skin the cat in this time of economic attention. Around three dozen seminar workshops are also slated over the span of the four-day outing. The impressive assembly of arcade equipment manufacturers will show their wares on the show floor, most of whom will be concentrated in one area for the convenience of those who may want a basketball but not a carnival ride.

Included among the exhibitor group from "our side" are key people who make coin-op hoops and other redemptive equipment, from Doyle & Associates (a key player at the Parks Show), to Betson (also a big exhibitor), to Sega (which is taking 16 booths to show off its arcade attractions). Others included on the exhibit list are: Design Plus, Skee-Ball, Seidel, Bay-Tek, Meltec, Bob's Space Racers, Smart, Kiddie Rides USA, Vari-Tech, Deltronics and others who supply machines and services to the arcade/family entertainment industry.

On site registration costs $50 and the convention hotel will be the Grand Hyatt Washington at 11th and H Streets across from the Convention Center itself. Other hotels like the Ramada Inn, Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza and Henley Park are being used and are within walking distance from the Center. Outlying hotels will, in some cases, be serviced by shuttle buses. Operators can sign up at the registration desk at the Center and get all pertinent literature, including a rundown on applicable workshops.

WHAT'S NEW?

That very question will be answered with a What's New Theater multi-media presentation starting at 9:00 in the morning at the Hyatt Hotel on Nov. 14, focusing on trade innovations around the world. Then a dizzying array of seminars on subjects ranging from water parks, to miniature golf courses to family entertainment centers (this one for members only) run during the balance of the convention. As mentioned, get your hands on literature when you register. The cost is $50.

Except for such special events as their Air & Space Museum party, spouses' tour of Capitol Hill and Annual Banquet, all seminars (except to those for members only) are apparently included in the on-site nonmember charge. This is one of the best bargains of the show season and the IAAPA staff is hoping to secure many people from the standard arcade industry at their events this trip.

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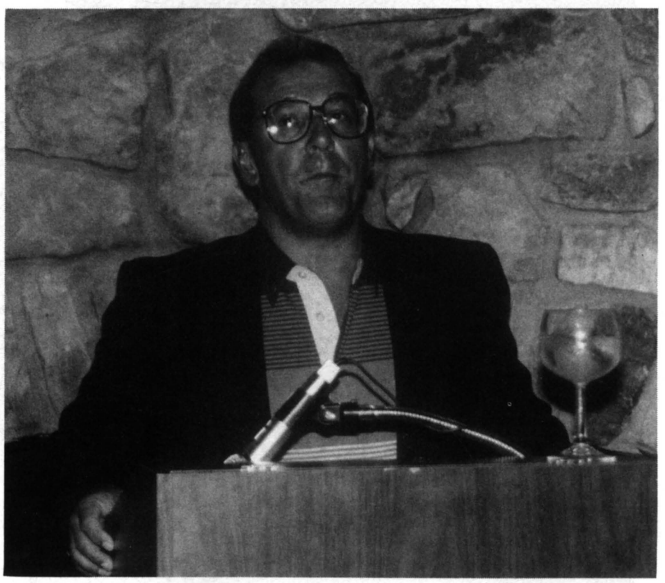
The place was the Basking Ridge Country Club and the theme was a golf tournament in the memory of Betson's late Sr. VP/Vending Operations Lou Avoglia. Money in Lou's name for Tomorrow's Children came via 22 company and individual sponsorships as well as through private donations. Once again, the push by Cirillo and the Betson people hit the bell and loudly.



Betson Executive VP Joe Cirillo passes out some heartfelt thanks to those who contributed to the Lou Avoglia fund for Tomorrow's Children during dinner at the Basking Ridge. It was an emotional address.

"You know, a charity golf outing like this usually raises around $5 to $6 thousand," said Cirillo. "Our people put together a package amounting to $65 thousand which came out

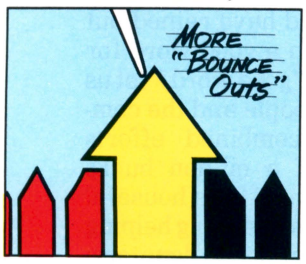


Gathered for lunch in the clubhouse, golfers and wanna-be's photographed include: Ken Anderson, Steve Blattspieler, Paul Scribner, Drew Maniscalco, Alicia Lavay, Frank Ballouz, Rick Rochetti and Chris Brady.

THE NEW Scorpion™ TARGET

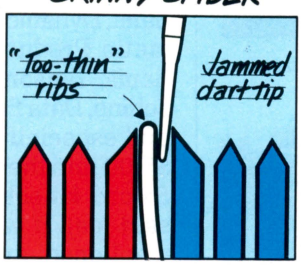
COMPARE

FAT SPIDER



Spider overpowers appearance. More darts hit spider.

SKINNY SPIDER



"Too-thin" ribs are flexible, allow tips to jam between spider and segments.

- FLUSH SEGMENTS & VIRTUALLY SHADOWLESS, NON-PROTRUDING SPIDER RIBS.
- SOFT-CUSHION SOUND—ACCOMMODATES UP TO 32 GRAM DARTS.
- REINFORCED RIBS & CLOSE TOLERANCE MOLDING—NO GAPS, NO JAMMED TIPS—**ELIMINATES SERVICE CALLS!**
- PIE SEGMENTS HAVE 15% MORE HOLES.
- EXCITING COLOR CHOICES, INCLUDING NEW 4-COLOR INTERNATIONAL STANDARD RECOGNIZED BY DART PLAYERS THE WORLD OVER.
- RETROFITTABLE TO ALL MERIT DART GAMES.
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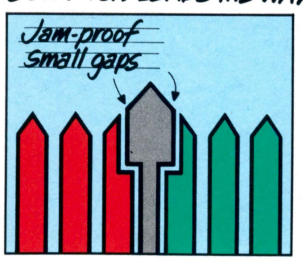

Reinforced ribs won't budge— **NO STUCK TIPS —EVER!**





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to $50 thousand after all the expenses were paid. Isn't that grand?" he asked, the answer being obvious.

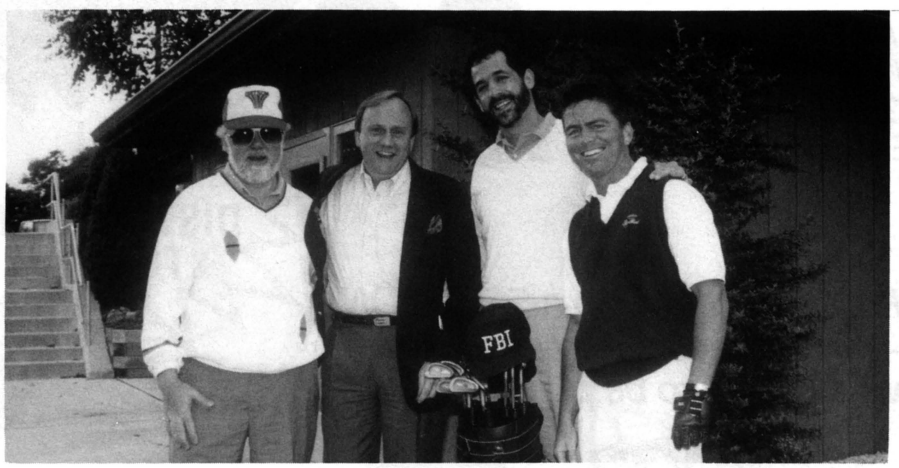
Seventy-two golfers, mostly from the business, turned out that day (110 in all showed up for dinner that night). Course awards for the usual low net, low gross, longest shot and closest to the pin were awarded. And around one hundred door prizes were also given out, from color TVs to VCRs, golf shirts, hats and balls. "Almost everyone who came left with some kind of prize," Cirillo boasted.



Tomorrow's Children Director Michael Harris with Lynn Hoffman and Gail Chirico of the same charity relax at the clubhouse during Lou Avoglia Day at Basking Ridge.



Eddie Ernst, Robert Betti and Rob Franchini by the Chevy door prize which (it's true) went unwon. This is a truly honest door prize operation: they stick by the rules!



This looks dangerous! Ready to cripple golf balls (from left) are Ken Anderson (Leland), Steve Blattspieler & Frank Ballouz (Fabtek/Irem) and Chris Brady (Dynamo).

The Good Lord (possibly with the urging of Lou Avoglia himself) provided clear, crisp wheather that day. Bert Betti himself was quoted saying, "It should have rained but I think Lou put in a good word for us." Speaking of "good word," let us now thank the people and the companies whose combined efforts raised 1/20th of a million bucks (with more to come?) for a houseful of kids who need a super big helping hand. Congratulations to donators:

Bert Betti & Family, Hugh Betti & Family, Joe & Joyce Cirillo, E.G. Vending, Skee-Ball, Taito, Romstar, Leland, insurer Ray McCarthy, Konami, Dynamo, Fabtek, Ardac, Automatic Products, Mars, SNK, Williams, Betson Treasurer Bob Geschine, Data East, Rowe, Sega, Atari and especially to Capcom that put $5.00 into the kitty for every *Magic Sword* kit sold (and it's added up, said Joe). If we left anyone out (or mentioned anyone twice), sorry. Special thanks go out to Frank Ballouz of Fabtek/Irem for "special work for the cause" as well.

Lou Avoglia's widow Vera and their two daughters were at Basking Ridge for the day and evening, along with a grandson. Although Louie passed away back in November of 1988, many there still remember the sound of his voice and can recount tales of his expertise in the maintenance of equipment. If that wasn't enough emotion for the day, former N.Y. Giants football player George Martin spoke in the clubhouse for around ten minutes on the Tomorrow's Children Institute which really brought a tug to the heart.

Cirillo, probably with others from the H. Betti Industries executives, will attend a Nov. 3 black tie affair in New York City for this charity (they're buying a table). It's entirely possible that the company will continue to raise money for Tomorrow's Children next year, especially since the Lou Avoglia Golf Tournament was called its "first annual." A different charity could always be picked, but we'll wait and see.

GRAND PRODUCTS

Before Fire, Before the Wheel... There was...

DYNO BOP™

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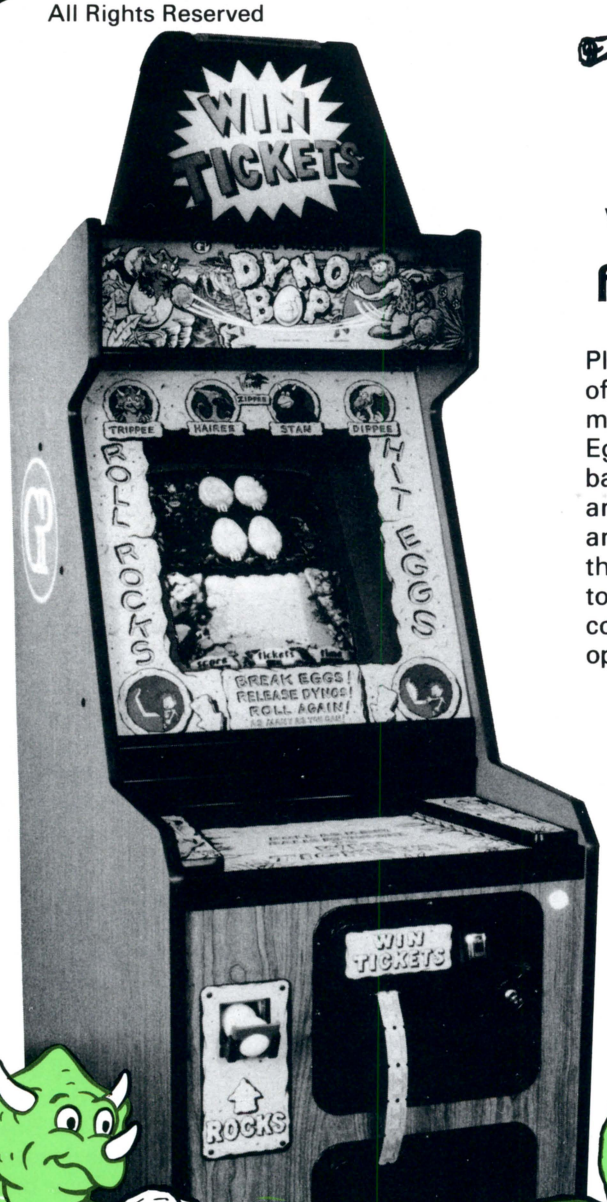


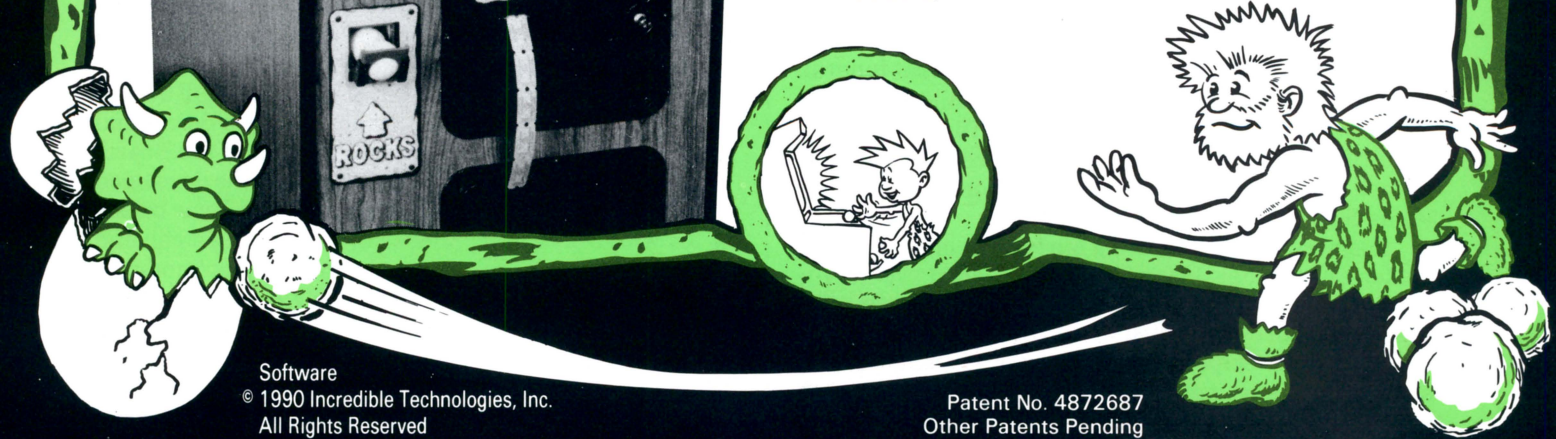
The Pre-hysteric, New Video Redemption Game from Grand Products, Inc.

Players with a dinosaur's appetite for fun will come out of their caves to discover Dyno Bop! Roll the balls, as many as you can, across the playfield at the "Dyno Eggs" on the video monitor. Balls become rocks, bashing into the eggs and hatching comical prehistoric animals and birds that flee and fly away. Every egg, animal and bird has a different point value when hit. In this terrain, there are some special high value targets, too! At game's end, tickets are awarded, so players come back for more. (Operators can also select an option called Megatickets!)

Dyno Bop comes complete with:

- Flashing display sign
- 19" Wells Gardner video monitor
- Deltronic ticket dispenser

And Dyno Bop is so easy to play, even a caveman could enjoy this egg-citing, new innovation from the creators at Grand Products, Inc.



Software
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Patent No. 4872687
Other Patents Pending

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Bensenville, Illinois 60106
Phone 708/766-8282 Fax 708/766-6688

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

Raymond (R.B.) Williams Remembered

Raymond Williams, the Texas patriarch whose stature and success in this industry was as big as the Lone Star State itself, passed away Saturday, Sept. 22 at his Dallas home after a two-year battle with liver cancer. This veteran distributor and operator had beaten two prior bouts with the same disease and had been successfully fighting this one until days before his death when he deteriorated markedly before the anxious eyes of his family. He was 77.

Catholic services were held the following Tuesday at Sparkman Hillcrest Cemetary after which he was buried in the family plot close by his late brother and former partner B.H. Many of the state's route operators and distributor principles joined the family saying goodbye to a man genuinely considered to have been a legend in his lifetime.

Williams entered the coin machine business back in the '30s as a salesman for the Commercial Music Co. which had been founded by his Uncle Joe Williams years before. His brother B.H. also worked for the company. Then in 1941, Uncle Joe and his wife died in an auto crash and Raymond acquired the company from the estate. He and B.H. then went on to found B&B Vending, the giant Texas route now owned by Canteen. The brothers later started up City Vending, a multi-branch route still owned by the family, with offices in El Paso, Wichita Falls and Austin.

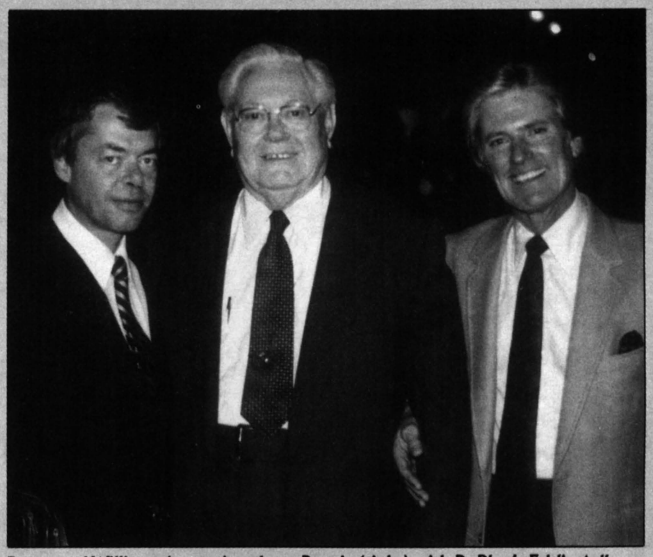
But Commercial Music was his business card best known around the territory and the country, and for many years, the "calling card" of that company was the Wurlitzer jukebox line. Uncle Joe had been a Wurlitzer dealer but when Raymond acquired the company, legend has it that he had to lie about his age since the Wurlitzer Co. in Tonawanda, N.Y. was afraid to appoint any distributor who might be drafted into service. The war had begun.

B.H. was drafted into the Navy but Raymond, who also had a working cattle ranch producing beef for the country, was exempt for a while. He was ultimately drafted into the Army but was stationed throughout the war at Ft. Bliss near El Paso and was pretty much able to run his companies from the phone. His immediate commander at the base was Dan Perrotta who would eventually come into the Texas distributing business as well (Allcoin, San Antonio) and who was among the mourners at the recent funeral.

After the war, Raymond built his distributorship into a network that eventually included full offices in Oklahoma City, Houston and San Antonio, as well as Dallas. The branch offices were eventually sold to such trade luminaries as Short Culp and L.C. Butler.

Business was great during the war, as many old-time dealers remember. After hostilities ended, Wurlitzer brought out their classic *Model 1015* and Commercial, like the other Wurlitzer distributors, continued to do good business. The company also sported every major line of amusement game on its roster, save only for Gottlieb which was under the domain of the late Abe Susman (a relative of the Gottlieb family besides being a successful dealer in his own right).

Commercial had Chicago coin and other hot brands including United . . . the shuffle alley maker run by Lynn Durant and sold by such as Billy DeSelm and Herb Oettinger . . . people Raymond became very close with. As they say, he was one of the Chez Paris crowd. He also had many other important friends around the country like Johnny Bilotta, Mark ("Pete ") Blum Sr., Bill Gersh and Fletcher Blalock and many stories about their "meetings" at MOA shows have been shared over the years, like the time some of them tried to give hundred dollar bills out to passersby on a Chicago street and found out that people can be very suspicious; they didn't "move" too many bills.



Raymond Williams (center) and son Bernie (right) with RePlay's Eddie Adlum.

But Commercial moved plenty of equipment while also building its routes. Then in 1974, Wurlitzer shut its plant down in Tonawanda and Commercial took on the NSM phonograph line. After a couple of years, they changed over to Rowe and for years, counted among Rowe's hottest jukebox dealers.

Despite his ailments, Raymond Williams put in a six-day work week almost until the very end. Those days often began before the sun came up. As his son and company President Bernie Williams put it: "We all had keys to the office, but even if we came in at 7:00 AM, we didn't need them because daddy was already on the job."

Around three years ago, Raymond passed full ownership title to his coin machine companies to son Bernie and daughter Barbara and became Chairman of the Board. Other ventures like his real estate holdings (he developed and summarily rented many bars to operators) now belong to his widow Eva Jane. She is 80, still driving a car and known to her many friends in the industry as Snooky.

Besides his wife, son and daughter, Raymond Williams is survived by four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. His grandson (also named Ray) runs the Ft. Worth route today.

During all his decades in the industry, R.B. was a giant (he was instrumental in getting the Austin Legislature to pass a law prohibiting any operator from giving more than 50% of the machine collections to locations). He will be missed and *RePlay* humbly joins the family and his many friends in wishing him God's most serene peace.



GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES.

Just 51 discs fill Rowe's new LaserStar® CD-51.

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So tell your Rowe distributor you want the small box with the big profits: the new LaserStar CD-51.

All Rowe jukeboxes are available through your local music and games operator.

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Video Disc Cowboy Adventure

A brand new laser disc game will be on display at the Betson booth at AMOA that clearly has the seeds of greatness. Developed by Icat, the Albuquerque, N.M. manufacturer of firearms shooting simulators for police training, the amusement is called *Mad Dog McCree* and it's bound to stop lots of eyes at the exposition.

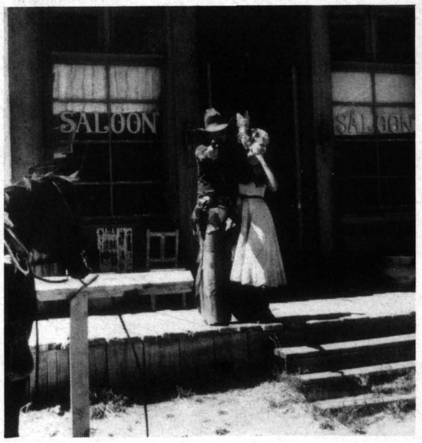
The player uses a gun-in-holster and shoots at a 50" wide screen that displays motion pictures depicting a whole wild west story. Good shooting on the part of the player rewards in points scored. But the sensation is actually shooting at the characters (played by professional live actors at professional movie sets) as the story of Mad Dog winds its way through a western town his bunch has taken over, to rescue the sheriff, the mayor's daughter, etc.

Photos on this page give an idea what the screen shows (but sorrily, not the game as presented in the arcade). That will be shown at Betson's, who quite likely will market the piece nationwide. A street location version, using an upright cabinet and 25" monitor, is planned and will probably be made by Grand Products for Icat (the bigger arcade version will be produced at Icat's plant in Albuquerque). Betson will probably be the marketing agent for that as well.

Icat's President Robert Grebe said he's formed a new division for these amusement products called American Laser Games. He's already ordered tests (at $1.00 play) of the big one at Metromart (Phoenix), Knott's Berry Farms (SoCal) and some other places in the midwest and east. Players get three lives for their vend; its dynamics are very similar to normal video play except you're looking at live actors in costume doing a stage play.

Icat makes its money producing "costly" firing simulators for cops. And they sell these all over the world, Grebe says. Now he enters the coin amusement world with a much less expensive amusement version and hopes the industry will instantly recognize its potential.









"I also recognize the industry's needs and hope to produce new laser disc programs every six months," he advised. So, you're not only talking about a new factory and a new game, but a new video disc "system" attraction as well. Check it out at AMOA (we certainly will).

As mentioned, Betson is in the center picture with this dual attraction. Anyone seeking further information can contact them, or call Bob Grebe at 505/344-3887.

WEDGES/LEDGES®

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about it—
please call and
FIND OUT
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maybe you'll also
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WEDGES/LEDGES Features:

- **Quarter- or Token-Played Coin/Ticket Adjustable (1-1 to 1-8)**
- **Music Played During Ticket Vend**
- **Gross Potential: $360/hr. per game**
- **Dimensions: 49½'' long x 40'' wide x 37'' high**

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Get ready to be thrown for The Loop.

When it comes to explaining the high-speed thrills of Atari's new Race Drivin'™ arcade game, we're at a loss for words.

After all, Race Drivin's even more outrageous than our popular Hard Drivin'™ game. It's tricked out with breathtaking new features like SuperStunt--with a



Race Drivin'™

corkscrew loop, jump loop and full pipe that will challenge even the bravest racers. New Autocross track with built-in pace car. And Buddy Race, where players take on each other and the clock simultaneously.

Then there's Race Drivin's life-like 3-D graphics, incredible handling, and true cockpit-style controls. All of which will leave you speechless, too.

But don't take our word for it. Instead, take Race Drivin' out for a test spin, loop, jump, race, roll, crash, drive today.

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The Name of the Games.

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Atlas Re-Con

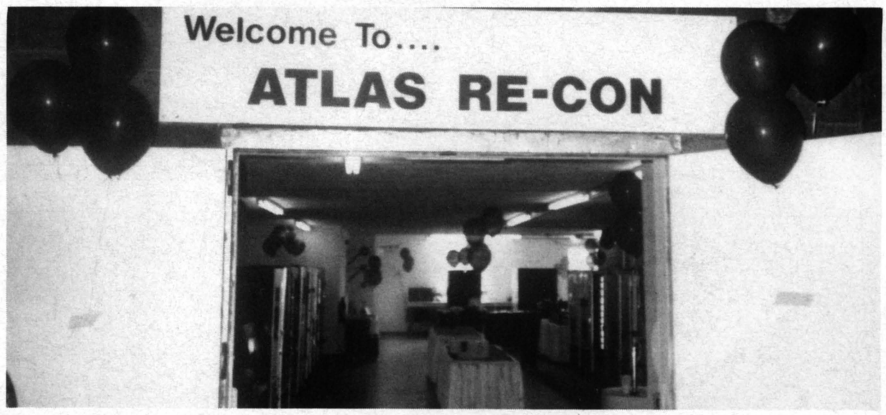
where do old vending machines go? to Atlas Re-Con, where they're rebuilt, re-sold and re-profitable

So if you were Atlas Distributors Co. (Pittsburgh, Pa.), and you were going to open a new division that specialized in reconditioning, re-manufacturing and re-selling used vending machines...what would *you* call it? Refurbished Venders "R" Us?

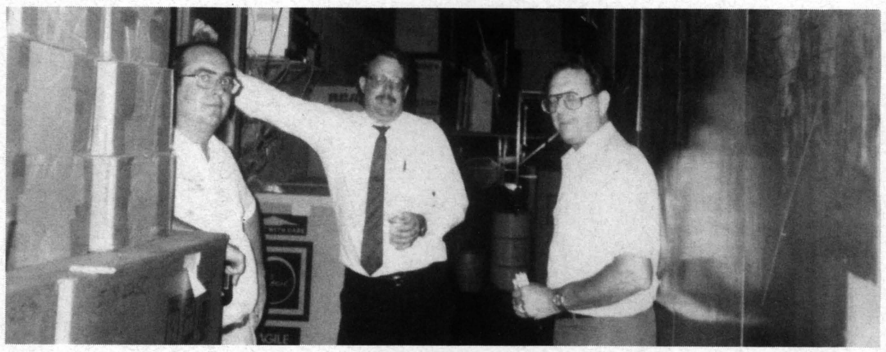
The name that Atlas VP Jim Wittler, Vending Sales Manager Bob Druga and their crew decided on was "Atlas Re-Con." They also decided on Lee Ivory as the manager of the new division, assisted by Dean Manso.

Atlas Re-Con held its grand opening in late August, hosting some 35 vending operating firms to a hearty party complete with refreshments. Among the quality firms whose reps attended were Rowe, Coin Acceptors and Mars. "We took some orders and enjoyed talking shop," Jim Wittler said of the opening.

Atlas Re-Con's nationwide toll-free number is 800/233-4407.



Above, Atlas folks spruce up the place for the open house. Below, Phil Obringer and Jim Wittler of Atlas talk with Ralph Decosimo of Three Rivers Vending about equipment needs at the event.





Atlas' Bob Druga and Lou Larson flank Lisa Liberatore and Angelo Dellorso of Canonsburg Amusements & Vending at the grand opening of Atlas Re-Con.



Mick and Loretta Michalojko from Joshua Vending Co. in New Castle, PA get an inside look at a re-manufactured RMI 850 from Lee Ivory.

CATCH A SHOOTING STAR.



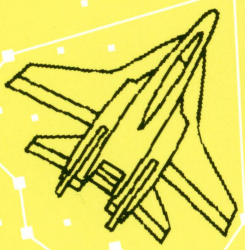
Nintendo Releases A Whole New Galaxy Of PlayChoice Titles.



Our ever popular video heroes, Mario and Luigi are back and better than ever in ***Super Mario Bros. 3***™. *New worlds, new enemies, and new special suits with amazing powers make this the most exciting adventure yet!*



Players join forces with Chip 'n Dale and their Disney pals in the ***Rescue Rangers***[3] *to frustrate Fat Cat and his chums in their sinister attempts to destroy the city.*



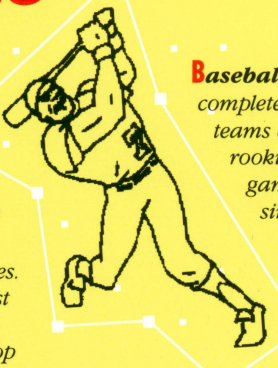
Alien invaders are draining the Earth's energy. As ***Captain Skybawk***[1]*, it's the player's job to stop them. All the speed and firepower of a fully equipped, F-14VTS jet is at their disposal.*



Don, Raphael, Mike and Leo have become international heros. Now players can join in the action as ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles***[4] *struggle to protect their friends from the evil Foot Clan.*



Super C[5] *kicks into action where Contra left off. Players take on a whole army of demented alien soldiers led by the vile Red Falcon. Simultaneous play lets two players challenge the game's eight levels of excitement!*



Baseball Stars[2] *gives players complete control to choose leagues, teams and players—from green rookies to the true heroes of the game. And now, exciting simultaneous play means two players can push each other to the limit!*



Players of all ages are lining up to help ***Dr. Mario***™ *conquer the world's most harmful viruses. Game action is fast and colorful, as players try to stop the diseases from spreading. Watch out, the excitement is contagious.*

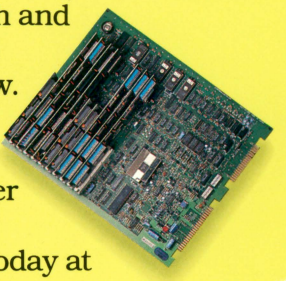
PlayChoice is Still the Leader in the Race for Space.

Profitable space is the last great frontier in the business. That's why establishments around the world are installing the PlayChoice Entertainment Center™, the game system that offers ***more*** exciting entertainment per square foot. All of Nintendo's brightest stars are available for installation on both PlayChoice™ Upright and CounterTop models. And when you give your players the hottest game choices, they'll come back to play again and again.



Make Your Move to the Next Dimension in Profitability.

With PlayChoice, the choice to be successful is all yours. And remember, installing new games is a simple, two-minute, do-it-yourself job. So you can rotate games between your PlayChoice locations and keep the action fresh and exciting. Make your move now. Call your authorized Nintendo dealer or Nintendo of America Inc. today at 1-800-633-3236.



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DON'T HAVE A COW!!

Get a Load of Data East's The Simpsons! Hot License could Spell A Godzilla Pin

How can you pass by a pinball machine that yells "eat my shorts!"? And who else but that animated maniac Bart Simpson has the authority to say such a thing on a coin machine? Yes, the hottest licensing property available has been nailed to a pinball backglass & playfield by Data East whose successful outings with *ABC Monday Night Football, Phantom of the Opera* and *Back to the Future* have placed this newest member of the pinball manufacturing community in the front court.

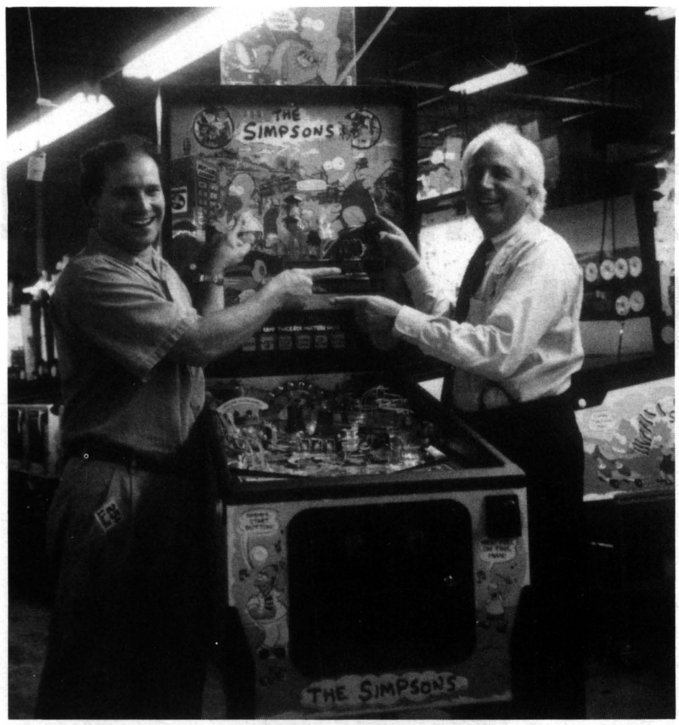
"This one will put us on top of the mountain," said DE's Pinball Division chief Gary Stern. A flow of test location earnings from the Melrose Park, Ill. factory, from Pete Gustafson and from chief designer Joe Kaminkow (the "Bart Simpson" of all game makers) show that players gravitate to the game (along with their money). "That includes players of all stripes, from yuppies to youngsters, college kids to blue collar pinball fanatics and certainly to the women," said (screamed?) an enthusiastic Stern. "This product appeals all across the board!"

Why? According to what we've learned so far, the game itself is solid and would get good play even if it was called "Flypaper." However, add the magical name *The Simpsons* to it and bingo (forgive), you've got a license marriage that's extremely hard to beat.

'The Simpsons' TV show on the Fox Network is already going toe to toe with television's "unbeatable" 'Cosby Show' on Thursday nights at 8:00PM. In case any coin operator isn't aware of what's going on with this show, 'The Simpsons' is a half hour "family sitcom" featuring the animated monstrocities known throughout America (and soon to a few others in the world) as Homer, Marge, their children, friends, enemies, acquaintances and above and beyond all, as their maniac son Bart.



A lavish array of Simpsons drawings dress the Data East pinball's backglass and playfield, with Bart's famous puss dominating all, as it



"He did it!" "No he did it!" Two type A personalities (Joe "Bart" Kaminkow & Gary "Homer" Stern) have a bit of a cow as they banter over a production pin. Truth is, they ALL did it.



Arnie Aarstad, Pete Gustafson & Jim Gorman over at the final packing audit station. The ad header on the top of the backglass reads "Play Pinball, Man!" What fun!!

should. But this is not merely a slapping-up on licensed artwork: Simpsons creator Matt Groening (pronounced Greening) actually contributed his thoughts on the design (pop bumpers are little nuke cooling towers since Homer Simpson works for a nuclear power plant).

Nielsen TV ratings confirm that all stripes of Americans love watching these strange people do their strange things. It's a happening thing, and the money Fox and its people have been making from licensing has been equally heady. It is the hottest license property around today. And it didn't come easy to Data East.

Gary Stern said securing the license was "very, very difficult." Apparently it wasn't inexpensive either, although the machine is selling just a bit above what their "major competitor is selling at." "They were demanding, but it was so refreshing that Matt (Groening) was interested in helping with his advice on the play and in supplying the drawings. He likes pinball and he really wanted to be involved," Stern declared.

Besides the artwork, there's Simpsons theme music on the pinball and great sounds like Bart saying "eat my shorts" and "play pinball, man" done by the very same actors who do the TV show's voices. This combination of vision, play action and sound effects has been pre-tested and began shipping to its distributors mid-October.

Naturally, it will be on stage at the AMOA Expo. And get this: Simpson's creator Matt Groening himself will be at the show on Saturday to say hi to operators and perhaps even to pass out an invaluable autograph (which just may have Bart's puss on it).

PLAY ACTION

We won't go into the stem to stern (pardon, again) tempo of this game, except to highlight a few key points. It's a multiball item with a ramp called the Ultimate Behemoth. When you shoot the ramp, you spot a letter in S-I-M-P-S-O-N-S for a million point shot.

Bounce around the Turbo bumpers and you build Nuclear Power Value. Ride down the return lanes to any ball lock and you collect the Hot Reactor points from the left, center and right Cooling Tower. You can also stop by the convenience store and visit Apu. There's an extraball feature and a zillion other Simpsons/pinball related goodies that present themselves until you wind up at game's end for match time as Homer tries his hand at Lotto Fever and Lucky Scratch.

Neither Gary Stern nor Joey Kaminkow are "shrinking violets" when it comes to promoting their newest game. Talk to them and you hear about Bart on a skateboard, Jacques in the bowling alley and also about such Data East factory folk as Paul Faris, Kevin O'Connor, Brian Schmidt, Margaret Hudson and others who played their roles in getting the art/action/sound package all together.

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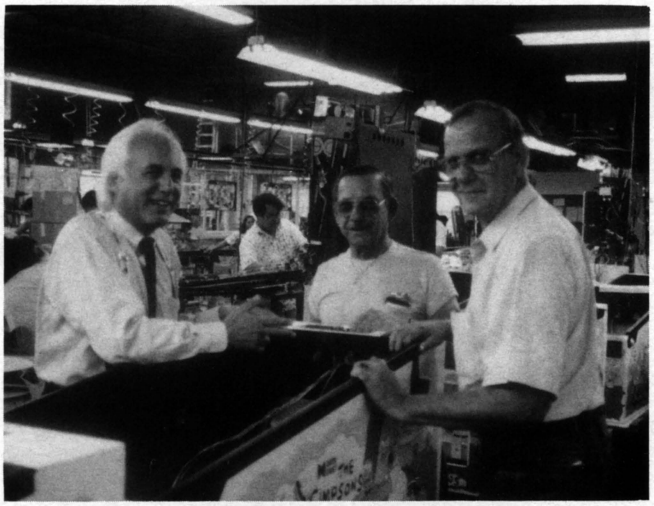

Gary (left) with Ed Cebula & John Lund out on the line. There's a special kick in the factory, knowing that The Simpsons *is a special game.*



Joe Kaminkow (left) with Tim Seckel in the Data East Pinball design department. There will always be another pinball to come.



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No trick missed: Gary Stern even has Simpsons artwork on the cabinet sides (showing Bart stealing hot dogs from the family picnic).

sons' are?" yells Gary, as if we didn't. "Burger King has a promotion going on in excess of $10 million based on them. Nestle has another valued at around $5 million. Hey, over $1 million in legal Simpsons t-shirts are sold every week! Legal t-shirts! And speaking of goodies, Stern said a box of spares like coils, switches etc. is included inside every *The Simpsons* cabinet for operator use in field.

The factory is into full production, which may not equal the orders from their distributors (advanced orders were already being logged in as we spoke to the DE brass). So if you drink it all in, *The Simpsons* is as classic a melding of license theme to game as you can find. If test averages are the norm in the field with production models, operators may find themselves waiting for these games like in the old days.

With the allure of *Turtles* (which Gary Stern's friend Steve Kaufman had the honor to present from Kona-

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On the line: The Simpsons *pinballs in production. Gary Stern (lower left) tours the line at his Melrose Park beehive while lots of Data East Pinball "Simpsons" are hard at work.*

mi and which, rumor has it, may be doing something later on with 'The Simpsons' in a video), Data East comes into the AMOA with a center court eye stopper. If it makes video money and has long legs on the calendar, this will indeed be Data East's hottest flipper to date and perhaps one of the operator's best investments on the market today. Now, don't have a cow if you order late, man!

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Welcome Home!

uniform German coin-op law officially opens DDR to western jukes & amusements

After 40-plus years as a captive nation, preceded by over ten more under the Nazi jackboot, East Germany joined the Free World Oct. 3 when she officially "married" the Federal Republic (West Germany) to once again form one nation under one government and under one law.

But after decades of severe (and sometimes corrupt) dictatorship, this land of 15 million people occupying half as much acreage as the 65 million do in the western portion, has been a dark and forbidding place...a third world country where the air is so polluted you can see it...a musty prison of a semination now trying to squint its eyes as the lights from the west shine through its collapsed walls and barricades.

The two German states are one again and all the existing laws from West Germany are now the laws in the East whose nomenclature DDR now drops into the dustbin of history. One of those laws controls the operation of music, amusement and gaming machines and for the West German operators and distributors, the opening of the East presents an opportunity for expansion, but hardly one without its troubles, as you will see.

Imagine, if you will, that a whole territory adjacent to your own state legalized the operation of the same machines you've been used to operating for years. With some exceptions, the territory is virgin. The people there speak your language, the types of locations are identical (except for the absent arcades) and even the coinage has become uniform (which was the case in the DDR).

Clearly, the opportunity caught spark way before unification, and quite a few West German operators made trips into the DDR in search of new locations once the barriers came down. Laws governing the operation of machines in the DDR, however, didn't lax up as quickly as the barriers dropped. A "legal limbo" of sorts existed between the time the Berlin Wall was punched open (less than a year ago) and the official date of unification, but some operators put machines out anyway.



Nope, it's not Aladdin's Castle, but it sure was grand anyway. That's little Ed standing in front of the big castle in Schwerin, East Germany.

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Jogging back through time. Ed Adlum struts along a cobbled street in a northern DDR town which was typical of similar towns in this forgotten world.

Trouble was, there were (and still are) so very few locations there, and money to the East German is still a priceless commodity better used for food, clothing, housing and other more immediate needs than banging away on a video or pinball. Diversion is necessary, but these people live on the edge.

During the days of the communist dictatorship, few coin machines were legal for operation. Of course, the question was largely moot, since private enterprise was also against the law. Some old soccer tables "grandfathered through" from the pre-war days, but otherwise, it was basically a nation where the jukebox and the amusement machine was a rare "western" oddity.

Things are different now. Or are they? Hans Rosenzweig of Nova Apparate (the prominent Hamburg distributing veteran) told *RePlay* that only 4,000 suitable locations exist in the former DDR for coin machines of the entertainment variety. Many, if not most of those, have already been visited by West German operators (an aggressive bunch) even before unification, planting seeds, making deals and even setting equipment.

Rosenzweig believes a total of 20,000 locations will ultimately be available for operators after the DDR goes through its costly reconstruction phase, but that will take years. "It will take at least five to

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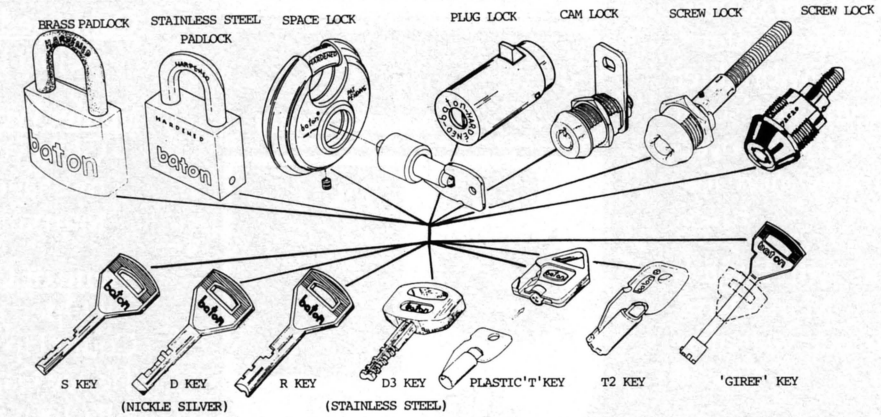

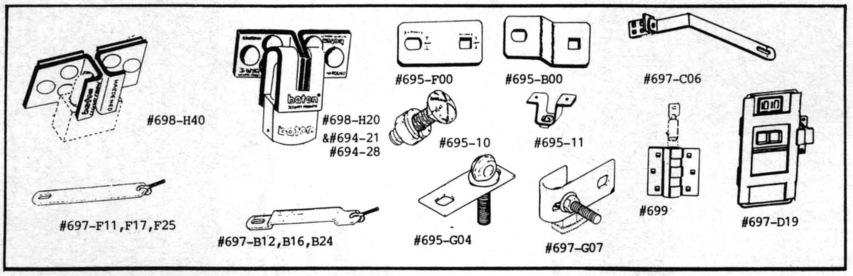

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Tippy (left) listens while the manager of a hotel in Osteebad Kuehlungsborn tells her the multi-game Poly Play *is out of order but that she'll call the "committee" that performs service in due course.*



Ancient scale probably grandfathered through East Germany's no-machine laws since it was builtin the old days. The DDR could be a treasure trove of antique coin machines like this!

eight years before they reach the same level as Western Europe has because they need some time to get used to the new situation," Hans said. "Remember this: not only the economy but their whole way of thinking over there has to change. Most of them have spent their entire lives living under one or more forms of dictatorship where they were always told what to do."

A free market with all its fierce competition is completely unknown in the East. Not so in the West where coin machines have been running since the post-war economic miracle. German operators in the West do well, but their laws are a bit different than those in the United States. For example, no one under the age of 18 can go into an arcade (essentially because German arcades have payout machines along with amusements). And, players have to be 16 or older to play videos in other locations; if they're younger, they need to be accompanied by a parent. These are now the laws in the East as well.

These laws are draconian by our standards, but they seem to work for Germany which gets so much of its play from wall-mounted payout machines (e.g. the famous *Rotomint).* Oddly, the DDR during its final hours authorized the use of such payout machines at its few locations just before it officially expired as a government. These were older machines. Now under uniform "West German law," they will eventually have to be destroyed because that law prohibits the use of gaming devices after they reach a certain age.

Bernd Donalies of the Stella organization told *RePlay* that a huge number of locations were already set with equipment even before unification. Everyone knew it was coming and many wanted to get first licks on the available opportunities. But . . . did the people put money into these new toys?

Ah, the core question. Rosenzweig said there are good and bad locations in the former DDR. "The top ones got very good play but there was a decline after the introduction of the West German Mark coin," he said. Clearly, everyone wonders how much money East Germans are actually going to spend on coin-op entertainment, considering the sobering fact that very few of them have *any* disposable income at all.

"Why do you from America ask such questions about us," Rosenzweig posed with a laugh. "Are you hoping to coax Americans to come over and visit the DDR in hopes of getting up a route?" Nope, Hans. Because it's as if Wisconsin was split and then unified and the Stansfields and their brother operators had first dibs on the new location possibilities. No, we wonder about it for a personal reason.

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Duske Automaten, prominent West German operators, were among those energetic companies scouring the DDR for suitable machine sites. The Adlums spotted their car by accident, but never managed to catch up to the driver (but they photographed his car through their windshield).

USA, but a tug at this old world country for varied reasons, religious and ethnic. Others look at Ireland, some at Poland. *RePlay's* Publisher Eddie Adlum looks at Germany, the country of "most of my family" (he says), "even though Adlum is an Irish name. It's also the homeland of my wife and a place I've visited with her so many times I forgot to count, I really did," he added.

Before the official unification of the German states, Eddie and his wife Tippy made a trip to Germany that included a junket into the then-DDR. Much of what he's about to say may not impact on the coin industry. But it should be interesting reading, especially for those who know that the magazine's publisher is not only thoughtful but outspoken. Here's a capsule on what he saw during that brief trip behind the crumbling, but not yet crumbled iron curtain:

◆

My wife (and business partner) Tippy is an American citizen but a German national. Some of you knew that, but you may not know she turned 50 a couple of months ago. Being German, she doesn't mind admitting this in the least. Germans, after all, love statistics.

We decided to celebrate the occasion with her relatives back in the old country, so we cashed in some of the frequent flyer points we'd run up over the years visiting factories, distributor open houses and association meetings and went via business class to Hamburg. A quick ride up to Kiel, her home town on the Baltic Sea, put us in the bosom of family and friends.

Since I neither speak nor read German, I spent my time at first reading maps (my many trips to Tippy's home town over the years have made me a geography expert). This time, I poured over the East German sheets and remembered my lifelong dream of somehow touring the Communist East and actually sitting down in a pub with the locals to debate the pluses and minuses of our conflicting systems.

You all know by now that the iron curtain is down between the two Germanys. The border, now totally unguarded, was less than two hours away by car, and I was getting cabin fever. So, one day, we packed a picnic basket and took off for the old "forbidden zone," the Russian sector of pre-war Germany we call East Germany and they call the DDR.

The first thing you see driving across the once-sealed border is the old checkpoint station. Now abandoned like the gruesome watch towers that still stand in the nearby fields, these and many other reminders of the days when East Germany was a huge jail for 15 million people will probably be dismantled just as the more famous Berlin wall is presently being chopped up and hauled away.

There's lots of traffic coming from the DDR into West Germany these days and we saw a jam that ran maybe 5 miles long. We ourselves had smooth sailing going in and thanks to a first-class roadway, charged along the northern coast. Each town we passed through could have been filmed in black and white. The buildings are a flashback to 1939 and coated with soot. The best words to describe the visual images were "ancient, creaky, filthy and depressing."

The DDR, as we rode along, didn't really look like hell itself, but it sure would make a great way station to that place. I waved my camera at Tippy as she drove the car and said, "Let's stop somewhere so I can get some pictures . . . maybe even some pictures of whatever machines they have here." She turned, smiled and asked, "what machines?"

What we eventually were to learn was that East Germany doesn't have many machines, save for a few that grandfathered in from pre-war days by special permit of the communist government. Most machines have simply been illegal, although there are the occasional foosball tables (truly ancient) and as we saw in a seaside hotel, some home-made video games called *Poly Play*.

According to Hans Rosenzweig (whom I called in Hamburg after we returned the next day), *Poly Play* is "probably" a video game like *PlayChoice* that was actually built by East Germany some years back and sold for around $9,000, although none of us could figure out how many were sold and to whom since the DDR was communist and its people had (and still have) very little money.

Anyway, this hotel had two of these uprights. One was busted and the other was still set on the old E-mark coinage, so we couldn't play. The lady manager of the hotel said she'd get around to calling "the committee" responsible for the game service, whatever that meant.

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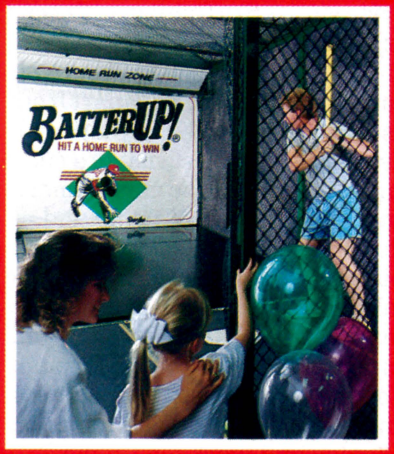

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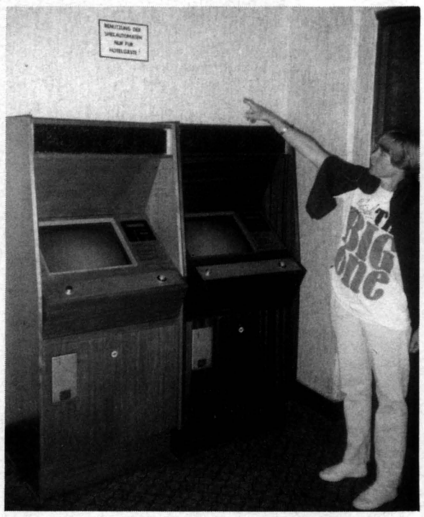
As we hit the road south, we almost ran into a car emblazoned with the words Duske Automaten on the trunk. Tippy knew this company from her *RePlay* subscription list. They operate in the northern part of West Germany and obviously were on a "fishing expedition" in the DDR checking out suitable location possibilities. We tried to flag the car down but he made a right when we made a left. I called Herr Duske afterwards, but we kept missing each other.

Anyway, we kept on the trail to our target city Rostock, visited another seaside resort called Warnemunde and then headed south for the big city of Schwerin where Tippy's father grew up before the war. We got out and walked, even visited a pub where we had a small but inconsequential conversation with some people about the expectations for the DDR's future (I kiddingly tried to pay the bill with an American $5.00 bill and the waiter's eyes nearly fell out).

We saw many towns that day, but rarely did we pass a restaurant or a beer bar. Rosenzweig later told us



Tippy Adlum points to a German sign warning that only hotel guests can play the Poly Play *video games. The manager later told her that this rule was not strictly enforced.*

there are only around 4,000 locations in the entire DDR, a country with nearly the population of New York State! We saw more cows than that in the first couple of hours. (We also saw towns that must have been named after coin machine people, or vice versa, like Goldberg, Rosenberg and Sternberg.)

I don't want to sound too much like a naive traveler, but apart from bus trips into East Berlin years ago, this was my very first visit to a communist nation. Like so many Americans, I was taught at home and at school that communism was an evil. You know what? Communism is really sad...an idea that sounds great in a book (Das Kapital) but simply doesn't work when you put it into practice, unless you have a bunch of guys with guns forcing you to "enjoy and work for Utopia."

This is the true skinny. Forcing this utopian idea onto people has created so much pain, you sort of want to hide from these people in the DDR when you see them. You feel superior. You feel guilty. You feel like you want to help. You also notice that they don't feel any real reason to work (they get paid anyway). And then you think: "Can they ever change into 'normal' people or are they stuck in this upside down picture puzzle Lenin created and Stalin put in concrete?"

The magazine I work for isn't a political journal, so enough of this chatter. Let me finish by saying that East Germans are spending their money on clothes and food and are terrified they're going to lose their jobs as their nation turns into a free market and they're off the public dole.

Then I zero in on our business and try to figure how the West German operators are going to do location service since the East German phone system is more like two cardboard cups strung together with string than anything AT&T has. The *L.A. Times* quoted somebody saying it could cost West Germany over $34 billion just to get the DDR's phone system up to Western standards. How do you service an account that can't call with a breakdown? You can't, until you pay your normal routine call (besides, they don't know any better).

Everything is new (except for VCR cassette rental stores and the lastest audio electronic gadgetry from Japan). I can only imagine the discomfort on an East German's face when he first encounters a modern video game...a "machine from Mars!" They'll all do all right with the wall payouts, the pinballs and the less demanding things (probably used) that are coming over from the West. But how much of that newly-won hard currency of theirs is going to be inserted into the coin chute? You guess, I can only shrug and wait for word next year. Thanks for reading my post card from the old country.

◆

The united Germany, for obvious reasons, is Eastern Europe's most potentially lucrative market for our industry right now. Common language, currency, border and (to a degree) custom will implant the West German coin machine grid onto the DDR within years. What about Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary? Yes, one day the neon lights of our jukeboxes and games will shine brightly there as well and (yes, I'll say it) joining the other lights of freedom for those many millions of "prisoners" who never committed a crime. Hey, according to Nintendo's Al Stone, Russian citizens even now are playing *PlayChoice* video games in an arcade on Red Square. Welcome home!

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Wertplan Provides Access to East Europe Via Unique Real Estate Consultancy Plan

As the formerly Communist nations of Eastern Europe come to grips with a free market system, many members of the international coin machine operating industry have thought about exploiting the historical opportunity and injecting their own expertise and capital into some arcade or street location venture. But it doesn't come easy.

The eastern portion of Germany (formerly known as the Communist DDR) has united with the West and under the same law governing machines in street stops and gamerooms. Their few street locations will expand, but one question is whether or not the arcade side of things will blossom. Further, how do you secure real estate should you want to install an arcade, be it devoted to pure amusement machines, pure gaming devices (legal there) or a mix of both?

After all, the complexity of getting real estate in a formerly Communist country is hardly easy (they still have to canvass the world to find out who origianlly owned what before the Communists seized everything in the late '40s). Right now, some specialists have arisen to help entrepreneurs and one is the Wertplan organization headquartered in Cologne, (West) Germany.

What Wertplan does for the coin industry is simple on the surface (but requires a deep knowledge of red tape): they lease business property in the West but more importantly in the East and sublease pieces of that property to individual tenants, be they want-to-be bar owners, shop owners or arcade operators. In short, and if you want to keep the red tape short, you can contact Wertplan and tell them you'd be interested in setting a gameroom or two in the East and they'll come up with a selection of locations for you to choose from (they have recently set up a branch in Leipzig, a major city in the former DDR).

Wertplan was established back in 1980 by Ernst Schleipmann as a business consultancy and real estate agency. Their services included helping get staff for and internal decoration of the shops, cafes and arcades they secured for their customers. The arcade sector was of special interest and in order to know it better, Wertplan itself got into arcades in Germany directly in 1985.

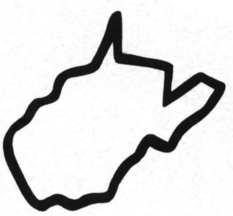
"We really had little knowledge about the arcade business," said Schleipmann, "and the closed-shop politics of much of the German coin machine industry didn't make learning it any easier. So we got into our own gamerooms."

It's important to note that arcade operating is not Wertplan's direction at all. It really is to locate, secure and decorate suitable gameroom premises for clients. After all, they are consultants and real estate agents at core. "Most of the premises are leased by Wertplan," the chief stated. "Prior to this, we carry out a market survey for the area and ultimately sublet the properties to various businesses. And remember, we deal with more than arcade people," he further advised.

The advantage to the landlord of the property is that he only has to deal with Wertplan, and the sublessees save time and money in developing their businesses dealing also with Wertplan and not so much with the landlord. As mentioned, Wertplan completes market studies on suitable areas for new business ventures as part of its offering.

Back in January, they did a survey of markets in the Eastern Bloc and ultimately established an office in Leipzig. They further say new contacts in Soviet Russia are following. By the way, the firm has properties under its control (or advisement) in other parts of Europe.

Wertplan employs 65 people. "In the future, we hope to establish a business link stretching from London to Russia," said Schleipmann. So, if you're interested in getting a toe-hold in the opening countries of Europe, you might wish to write a letter to: Wertplan GmbH, Postfach 41 08 49, Wullnerstrasse 117, 5000 Cologne 41, GERMANY. We have no idea of their terms, so you'll be ahead of us if you ask.



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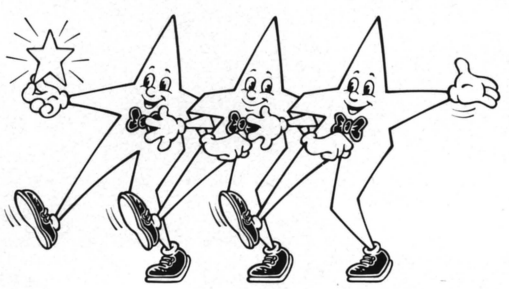

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Atari Games Ireland

with an Irish twinkle in their eyes, Atari's Tipperary plant speedily supplies Europe & other foreign markets with games

by MARY OPENSHAW

It may be a long way to Tipperary, but once you arrive it's worth the trip. That's because the famed city is home to Atari Games Ireland, the European branch of one of the world's leading video game manufacturers. These days the 60,000-sq.-ft. plant is busier than ever, assembling mostly Atari games (with PCBs and monitors imported from the U.S.) and even building some titles for Namco and Sega under those firms' respective licenses and contracts.

Under the direction of Mike Nevin (who started in Atari Games Ireland's accounts division in 1979), the plant was humming with its sixth production run of *Hard Drivin'* and gearing up to build *Hydra* when this reporter visited the site in midsummer. New fall games were also in the pipeline.

The vast majority of the plant's output goes to major European distribs such as Nova (Germany), Brent Leisure (the UK), WDK (France), Segasa (Spain), National Music of Belgium, Raha (Finnish monopoly) and Elettronolo (Italy). Non-European customers include Israel and Australia. Sales are handled from a special London branch. The odd item produced in Ireland does get shipped Stateside when California's Atarians don't build it *(Four-Trax,* for instance).

Proud of their efficiency, Atari Games Ireland produces games faster than a Leprechaun hides his pot of gold. "We can respond very quickly to the needs of our market," Nevin said, thanks to smooth organization and a flexible-speed production line. Since the big international Shannon Airport is just 35 miles away, anything Atari Games Ireland needs from the U.S. can be acquired within hours.

All that square footage is neatly subdivided into various operations and divisions. In one hall, Atari Games Ireland builds cabinets ("We're one of the few European manufacturers with its own woodworking shops," Mike Nevin smiled).



The Atari Games factory in Tipperary, Ireland. Mike Nevin is the lead man at this European branch office for this major video game maker.

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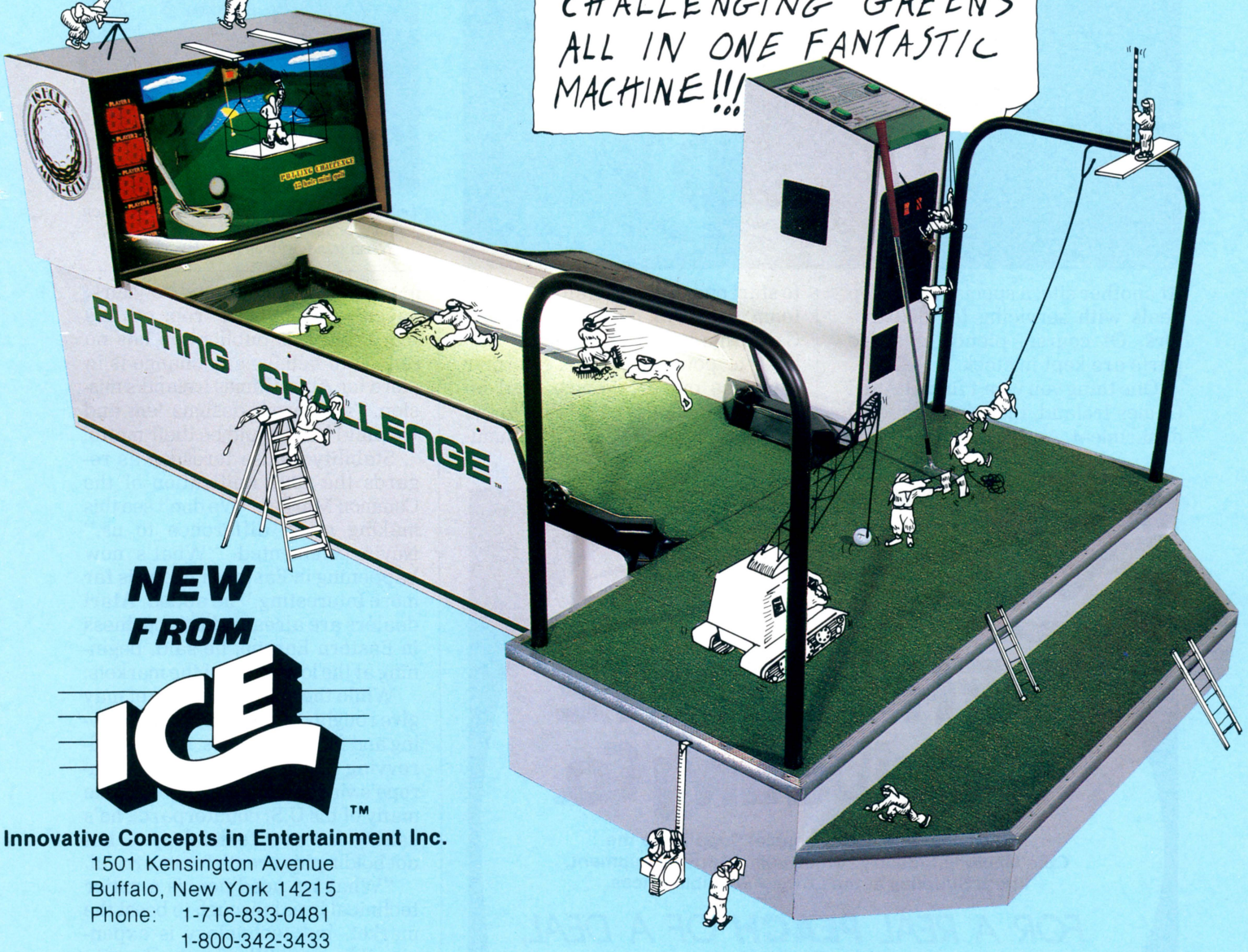

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Left, Mike Nevin in the factory with production going on behind him. In the photo above, Nevin stands with an Atari Hydra video.

At another site, a special workshop deals with servicing for distributors. Of course, plenty of spare parts are kept in stock.

One thing you won't find at Atari Games Ireland, though, is an R&D department. And there are no plans to start one. Atari's California R&D team is the U.S. industry's largest, California-based VP Shane Breaks likes to point out. Atari's former Japanese owner, Namco, had no plans to add R&D capability to the Irish plant. Time-Warner Communications, Atari's new owners, haven't been heard from on this score, but this publication has no reason to believe any change is in store for Atari Games Ireland's mission. "California designs 'em and we build 'em" could be their motto.

Stability is also foreseen as regards the 1992 unification of the Common Market. "We don't see this making much difference to us," Nevin commented. "What's now happening in Eastern Europe is far more interesting," he added. Atari dealers are already doing business in Eastern Europe, he said, beginning at the lower end of the markets.

While the U.S. video market may give roughly equal emphasis to driving and fighting themes, it's those hi-revving drivers that dominate Europe's video scene, Nevin feels. Like many of his U.S. counterparts, he's calling for new technology... but not holding his breath for its arrival.

"What we need now is a major technical breakthrough to boost the market, but technology is expensive," he said. "Production here in Ireland helps with costs. And the establishment of Atari Games Ireland was a good move, which helped Atari become the great name it is in Europe."

As Eastern European opens wider for coin-op, and as Atari Games Ireland continues to produce popular Atari games, you can look for the continued "greening" of Europe... in more ways than one!

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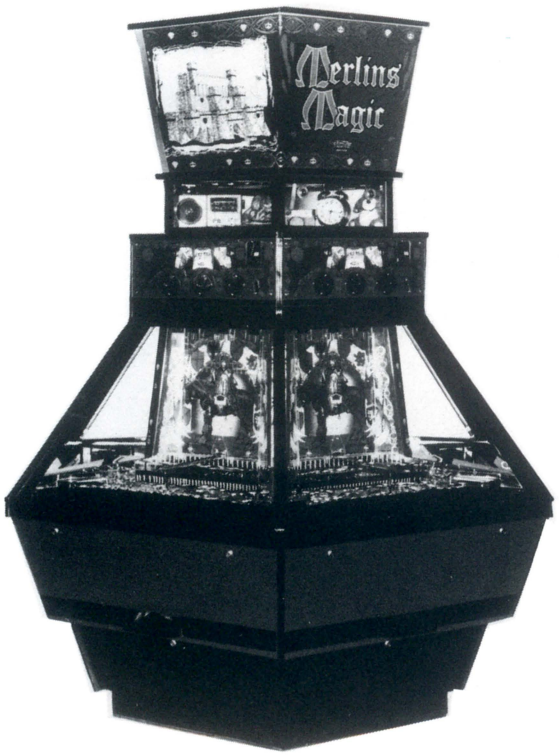

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JAMMA '90

hi-priced hi-tech takes spotlight at fall Tokyo trade show; gaming-themed and midway-style product also "made in Japan"

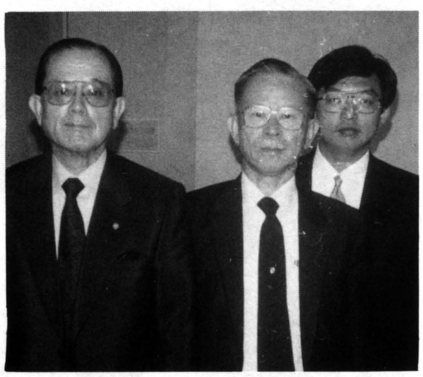
Overwhelming new video game technology met with "underwhelming" international response at the Oct. 3-4 JAMMA expo in Tokyo. The mind-blowing (and expensive) technology consisted of super-big-screen video units, multi-screen video units, fantastic motion simulators that strapped players inside metal capsules and whirled them in all directions (while they played standard-monitor video games inside), etc. While some standard videos were offered which could be translated to the American street operator's market, they were few and far between.

Indeed, if the JAMMA exhibit floor was any guide, Japanese tradesters believe that a top arcade in the 1990s should look much like an indoor amusement park. Funny, isn't it? All those American redemption folks who keep saying that "amusement park operating is merging with coin machine operating" have got heads nodding in Tokyo: video manufacturers.



Tradesters lined up early to get into the expo sponsored by JAMMA (Japan Amuse. & Music Machine Assn.)

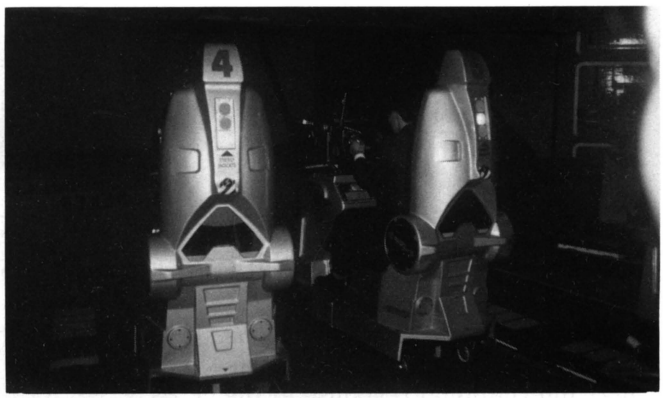
Of course, Japan's two highest coin currencies are the 100-yen piece (about 75 cents) and the 500-yen piece (about $3.60). This, plus the structure of the Japanese market (major arcades are owned by major manufacturers; no U.S.-style street operators) may help explain why Japan's coin-op can afford to move to the "high-end" piece.



Above: Formed in 1981, JAMMA has one president through its entire life: Mr. Masaya Nakamura (left), who is also chairman of Namco. Center is JAMMA Managing Director Koaru Hinami, while the gentleman at right is Tsutomu Kawai, manager of Namco's public relations center. Right: JAMMA was jammed! "This is the biggest crowd I've ever seen at one of these shows," said a U.S. tradester. Besides manufacturers and their arcade staffs, location owners who own their own equipment and players were checking out the new games.







At left, curious tradesters peek under the shade flaps into Sega's Cyber Dome, *a 40-ft.-wide attraction with a large movie-type screen inside. At right you can see some of the eight gun cockpits, mounted on tracks, that faced the screen (which displayed a space scene).*



Sega's C.P. Rider *was a one-piece, two-player motorcycle simulation unit. Notice the super-header which shows the race course.*



Sega's Rad Mobile *featured their new 32-CPU hardware, which doubles the computing power, allowing images five times sharper.*

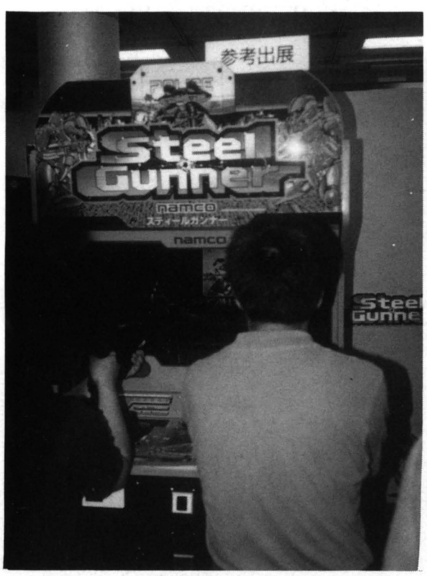


This neat moving-cabinet jet fighter game from Namco is called Solvalou *(don't ask us why).*

"What's here for the American street operator?" asked several U.S. skeptics. "Only about half of this equipment will even make it to the AMOA show floor," predicted other American tradesters. "More of the high-end equipment will make it to the States — and succeed — than you might think," predicted the president of one U.S. subsidiary.

ARCADE SPECTACULARS

As mentioned, Sega and Taito both showed huge "capsule" simulators that strapped players inside and spun them in all directions. Sega's two-player capsule was called *R360*, and reportedly costs 15 million yen (about $108,000 in U.S. currency). Taito's one-player capsule unit was called *D3*. Sega also displayed *Cyber Dome*, a huge video game arcade set-up that resembles a miniature movie theater with eight



Namco's two-player upright Steel Gunner *was "the hit of the show" for some U.S. tradesters. It features two player stations, each equipped with an Uzi-type machine gun, and robot cops and bad guys in a sci-fi setting.*



Definitely coming to AMOA is this 2-pl. space-themed gun game called Space Gun. *Notice the card reader below the right-hand gun.*



Tatsumi's Cycle Warriors *featured a wide-bib control panel for three players. Play shows three bikers bumping, kicking and fighting enemy bikers & bad guys on mini-helicopters. Wild!*



At Namco's was this large, striking three-screen driver called a 3D Visual System Formula 1 Simulator. *The triple screens are like three "windows" opening onto a single panoramic view.*



Namco's Final Lap 2 *offered 2 screens, 2 seats, 2 steering wheels, etc. in a single cabinet. It was already on location in some Tokyo arcades.*



A player climbs into this metal capsule by Taito, straps himself in, closes the hatch and plays a video on a standard size monitor as the capsule spins in all directions. Sega had a similar, larger, spinning capsule for two for $100,000+.



AMOAers will also see Capcom's three-title, 2-pl. sitdown system cabinet. CAV System 60 *offers a 50" monitor with liquid crystal display.*



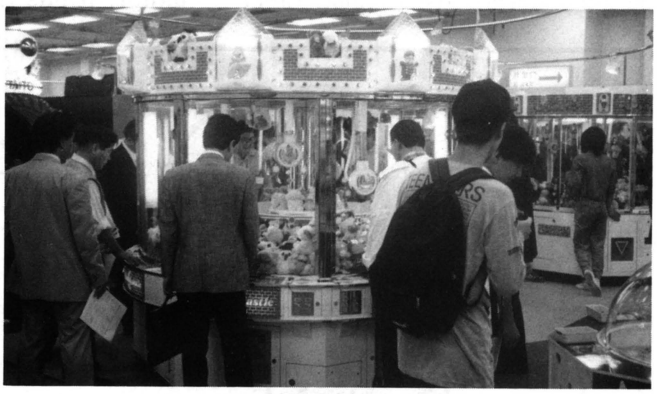
Between the familiar "big red" six-game Neo•Geo cabinet at left and the new, compact two-game cabinet at right are SNK's Susan Jarocki, John Barone and president Paul Jacobs.



The Simpsons! *Proving that pinball is truly a universal passion, Data East drew a crowd with one of the few U.S. imports seen at JAMMA.*



Lots of gaming-themed equipment was on display at JAMMA. Here you see a six-player, amusement-only roulette device from Jaleco. By law, gaming-themed units may dispense "medals only" (i.e. tokens).



This 8-pl. crane from Taito was a typical redemption-type piece at JAMMA. We noticed lots of this equipment getting lots of play in Tokyo arcades, too.



Right: San Francisco settings such as the Golden Gate Bridge and all those hilly streets provide the setting for Jaleco's cop-chase driving simulator, Cisco Heat. *Above: Jane Cavanagh (of England's coin-op to home software adapter The Sales Curve) and Bob Deith of Britain's Deith Leisure with Namco's midway piece,* Cosmo Gangs, *(a Deith excluxive in Europe).*





From left, Atari president Hide Nakajima with Konami Japan president Fumihiro Hishikawa, Atari's Shane Breaks and Mary Fujihara.



Dynamo's Mark Struhs with Tecmo's J. Fukada and Junji Nakamura at the giant JAMMA cocktail party (it's hosted by JAMMA for the entire industry).

linked, moving-cockpit simulators facing one giant screen under a darkened, closed canopy. Prices on the high end for some of these spectacular units reportedly ran to $100,000.

CAV System 60 was Capcom's 50" monitor, two-player, three-game video system. Games for this included *Air Carrier Wing*, *Chiki Chiki Boys* and *Magic Sword*. This one will definitely come to AMOA, advised Capcom USA, and it's a little easier to see it going into U.S. arcades.

Also in the "arcade spectacular" category was a one-player race driving simulator from Namco. Called *3D Visual System Formula 1 Simulator*, it has the player sit down and face three adjacent screens which give a really "wide-angle" view for a "This Is Cinerama" effect. Namco also showed *Galaxian 3*, a one-player sitdown space gun game with a big two-handle sci-fi gun. The screen is super-magnified and drew big crowds (this one-player unit is a street adaptation of an 18-player "CircleVision" attrac-



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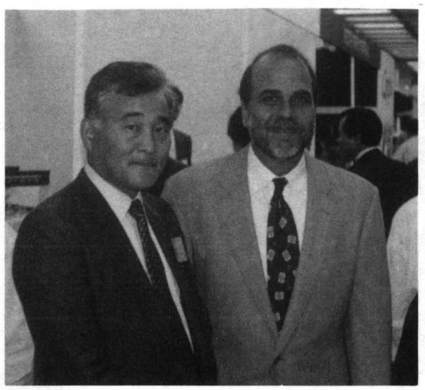
AAMA Exec VP Bob Fay with Betson Pacific's Peter Betti, one of only three U.S. distributors to attend the JAMMA 1990 expo.



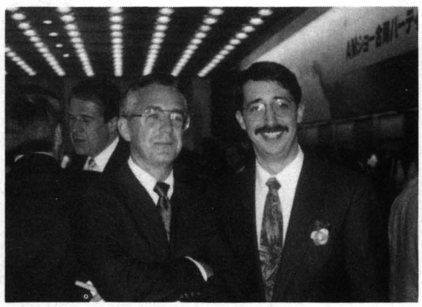
President Fukuda of Data East Japan with Gene Lipkin of Data East USA.



At the booth of Japan's Game Machine magazine are, from left, Capcom USA's Jeff Walker and Bill Cravens, GM publisher Mr. Masumi Akagi, and AAMA's Bob Fay.



From left, trade vet Marty Bromley with super-distrib Ira (C.A. Robinson) Bettelman, Nintendo's Al Stone and Mike Newton of the British trade paper Coin Slot.



Doyle & Associate's new VP Bill Condon with Dave Bishop, managing director for Namco Operations (U.S. arcades).



Irem/Fabtek's Frank Ballouz with M. Sasatani, who runs Irem's worldwide sales and marketing.



Romstar's Rene Lopez (left) and Tim Jackson (right) play "bookends" to Toaplan overseas director Hamjime Moriya, Toaplan president Kiyomoto and Mr. Kaneko of Kaneko, Inc.



From left, Konami USA's Frank Pellegrini and Steve Kaufman with Steve Bierrum and Peter von Schlippe of Konami's U.K. and German sales offices, respectively.



Marty Bromley with Sega Japan's Dave Rosen and his lovely wife Masako.

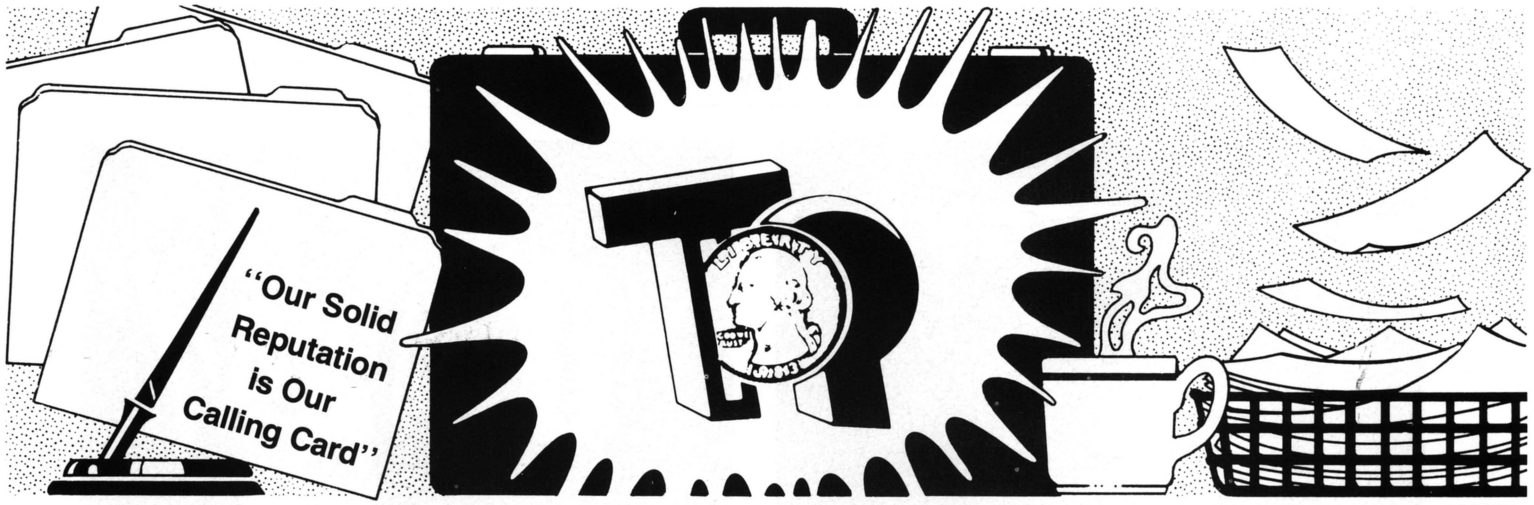
tion that's making huge money in a Japanese arcade).

STANDARD UPRIGHT VIDEOS

Street-oriented U.S. tradesters seemed to like Namco's *Steel Gunner* best. This is a two-player upright video gun game with a sci-fi theme, but it's unclear whether it will be offered in the States . . . or when, or from whom. Other "standard" videos which looked promising included Irem's boxing game *Pound for Pound*, Irem's samurai adventure *Ken-Go*, Tatsumi's three-player *Cycle Warriors*, Sega's *Columns II* and *Auraiz*, a tank game. Taito's one-player sci-fi shooting game *Space Gun* featured a swipe slot for a debit card. Taito's *Majestic Twelve* and their *Pomades* were themed with space battles and cute characters, respectively.

Data East's *Joe & Mac* offered cute cavemen characters on a rescue mission, while their *Cliff Hangar* (pun intended) featured two "Indiana Jones"-type adventurers doing stunts on an old biplane. (Data East also had the only pin in town — *The Simpsons* — and it was getting lots of play.) New from Konami was a cute character shooting game called *Twin Bee*, along with *Surprise Attack*, a sci-fi street fighting number. For the Japanese market, Konami also showed three Atari games: *Punk Shot*, *Race Drivin'* and *Pit Fighter*.

Namco's *Gholly!Ghost!* was more of a novelty than a standard video, though it's housed in an upright cabinet with two guns. This game projects light images of fast-moving, cute, cartoon-like ghost targets over a real-life model dollhouse (with cutaway rooms) inside the playfield.



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From left: Electranolo's Tiziano Fagioili with The Sales Curve's Jane Cavanagh, SNK's Susan and Leland's John Rowe.



From left, Mondial's Ago Mensah, Bondeal's F.T. Milner, Belam's Alex Perner, and overseas op-distribs: Argentina's Jose Gaglio and Mexico's Oscar Gutierrez.

SITDOWN DRIVERS

Sitdown drivers debuted at JAMMA included Jaleco's *Cisco Heat* (a police chase game). Also shown were Sega's *CP Rider* (a two-player, two-screen motorcycle game) and their *Rad Mobile*, a one-player auto race game with a moving cabinet and large monitor. Namco's *Final Lap 2*, featuring two screens and dual, linked player stations, was on the exhibit floor and also getting play in nearby Tokyo arcades.

NOW WHAT?

Japan's U.S. subsidiaries are keenly aware that many — not all — of their American customers are still waiting for the "next *Pac-Man*" — a cheap, small game that will make a mint. That game wasn't shown at JAMMA, but the show did prove that Japan is moving big-time into gambling-themed and midway equipment. Cranes, video slots, roulette wheels, strip pokers, ball-throwing games, roll-downs and other (mostly token-vending) games

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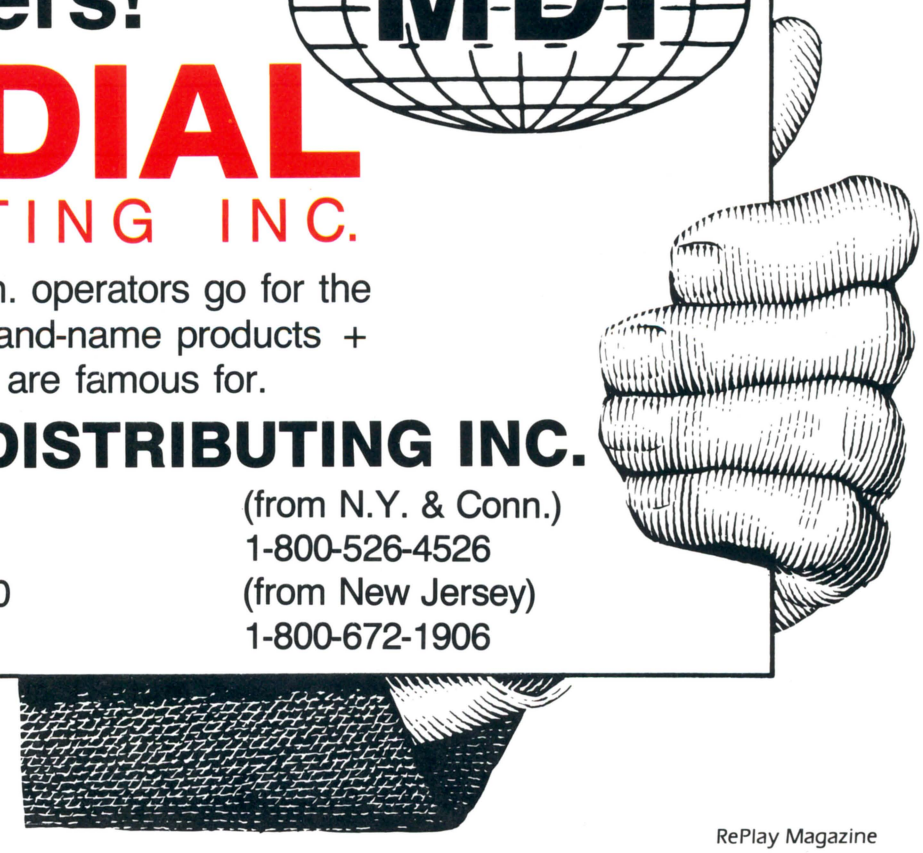

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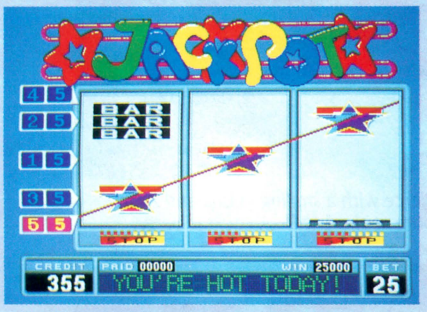

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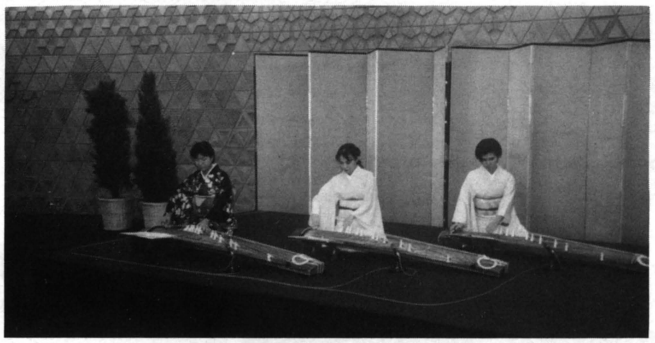
From left, Capcom's Kazushi Hirao with Belam's Marc Haim and Capcom USA's ever-smiling prexy George Nakayama.



Atari game designer Mark Pierce with a smiling geisha and Atari engineering chief Rich Moore at the JAMMA cocktail party.



From left, Sega USA prexy Tom Petit shares a smile with Belgian tradester Hank Grant (worldwide rep for Bowlingo*) and Capcom USA's Jeff Walker.*



Three geishas play traditional string instruments at the JAMMA cocktail party.

took up much floor space. "I don't ever remember seeing so much of this type of equipment before," said one U.S. tradesters who has visited the JAMMA show several times.

One video technology upgrade that may help bolster U.S. video revenues was Sega's "System 32," a new generation of hardware which doubles the computing power from 16 bits to 32 bits and results in images that are five times sharper than previous coin-op video games, said the firm. Sega Japan plans to release an auto racing game using this technology in December, and to release a new 32-CPU game every three months thereafter, according to Japan's *Game Machine magazine.*

Some of the spectacular, amusement park-type developments seen at JAMMA bring to mind the ploys of the U.S. motion picture industry in the 1950s, when it was first competing with television. Box office returns dipped because of competition from Milton Berle and "I Love Lucy," so Hollywood turned to wide screen, full color, stereo sound and even 3-D movies for a while. This led to the era of super-spectacular, big budget films, from *Ben-Hur* to *Star Wars,* along with Hollywood's portraying of adult themes which couldn't be shown on TV.

The equipment shown at JAMMA raises the question of whether the same trend is now beginning in coin-op. The industry seems to be offering big-scale, high-priced attractions, gambling themes and "adult" entertainment that players can't duplicate at home. A profound market shake-up is obviously underway, and it's not over yet.



Holland Automaten's Robert Veltmeijer with Gary Stern of Data East Pinball. Gary had plenty to laugh about with the strong reception to The Simpsons.



American Sammy's Norman Evangelista and Dave Peckels were full of their usual good humor and keen insights.

Successful Neo•Geo Vid System Adds More New Titles + Compact Cabinet to Program

The phrase "video system" has been used to describe the game operator's oft-stated wish for a single video cabinet in which he could swap software programs as easily as he swaps records on his jukeboxes. But, considering the mixed success such attempts have experienced (e.g. well-intentioned but extinct ideas like the Deco cassette and the Sente systems), the concept of the "forever video system" sounded great on paper but tough to score in reality.

The most successful system of all time was the *Nintendo VS.* which, in its heyday, seemed to have one hit after the other. They discontinued that years ago and concentrated on their current multi-game *Playchoice* concept. (A latter day VS. cartridge called *Dr. Mario,* however, was recently launched by Nintendo for its venerable system, many of which are still in the field.)

Earlier this year, SNK Corp. of Osaka, Japan notified its American subsidiary in Sunnyvale Calif. of its intention to concentrate all video development for the foreseeable future on its own new multi-game system. They said they called it *Neo•Geo.* The American salesmen took a big gulp.

But, after a few months of difficult spade work (i.e. coaxing distributors and their operator-customers into trying it out), SNK's people are smiling. Said American chief Paul Jacobs: "It was a hard go in the beginning but enough machines went out, and after the play appeal of the games were proven, we turned the corner. Today, our system is in constant demand. Tomorrow, *Neo•Geo* will be a household word in the industry," he declared.

The cashbox apparently took them onto the high road with cartridges like *Nam 1975* and *Baseball Stars Professional*... games that booked the action needed to land *Neo•Geo* in the top section of the chart. (*RePlay Magazine,* for one, will now read individual *Neo•Geo* titles rather than the combined system itself on its Players' Choice chart.) And it wasn't just good games but the amount of them that opened eyes: by AMOA Expo time, the firm will have issued 12 different cartridges in less than one year.



SNK's Susan Jarocki, John Barone and Paul Jacobs at the Jamma show with the new Neo•Geo compact cabinet (right). This smaller unit uses a 19" monitor, sports a wood-grained look and holds two game cartridges (rather than the four the other Neo•Geo hardware holds).

Their newest titles include *League Bowling, King of the Monsters,* a role-playing game called *Blue's Journey* and an adult puzzle item called *Puzzled?* Thanks to a fall sales promotion, operators who purchase an *MVS-4* cabinet (which plays four VCR-sized cartridges)will get their current *Ninja Combat* and *The Super Spy* cartridges absolutely free.

NEW COMPACT BOWS

In addition to their familiar red-sided 4-game system cabinet, SNK will introduce a new compact model at AMOA which is shorter in profile and uses a 19"monitor. Sporting a wood-grained treatment on the sides, this cabinet is designed for street locations (where size & appearance is a factor) and holds two cartridges rather than four. Those two games could be the new *League Bowling* and *Puzzled?* for adult tavern stops.

Jacobs recently returned from Japan where he said SNK's R&D people are hard at work on future titles. "We have 180 people over there in various design roles and that powerhouse is going to come up with ten more games for us by next April. That will mean a total of 22 pieces of software in just about one year's time," he boasted.

Jacobs also advised that the home version of *Neo•Geo* is now on the market here. While individual game titles will be the same, there'll be a time retard in home software release compared to coin-op. He also said *Neo•Geo* home cartridges are "very costly" and that the company plans to market them (and the machine itself) primarily on a store rental basis rather than strictly through outright sale. (It should be noted you can't interchange home and coin-op cartridges and further that more "information" is on the coin screen than appears on the home tube, like operator bookeeping features.)

A separate division has been formed in Torrance, Calif. to handle this home market separate from the Sunnyvale coin-op division. "But I must tell the people in our industry that the home system will never have a negative effect on coin-op. I've been in this industry for 25 years and I mean this sincerely," Jacobs stated.

So, with two coin-op cabinets ("all priced for the operator well," said Jacobs) 12 games to choose from and a fall sales promotion (which also includes 3 free *Neo•Geo* Memory Cards for players to bring form location to location as they record their game histories), SNK has viable goods. But more important, they appear to have a viable new multi-game video system. Get involved, and if you haven't already done so, AMOA's a great place to begin.

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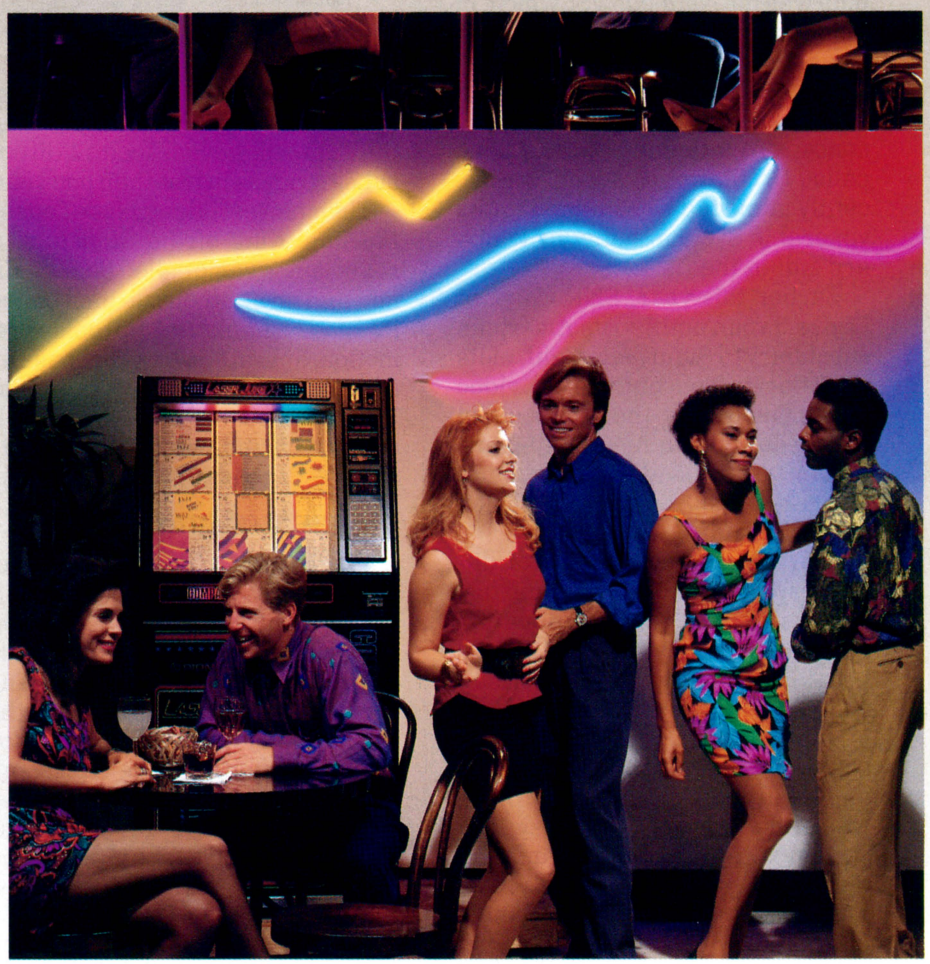

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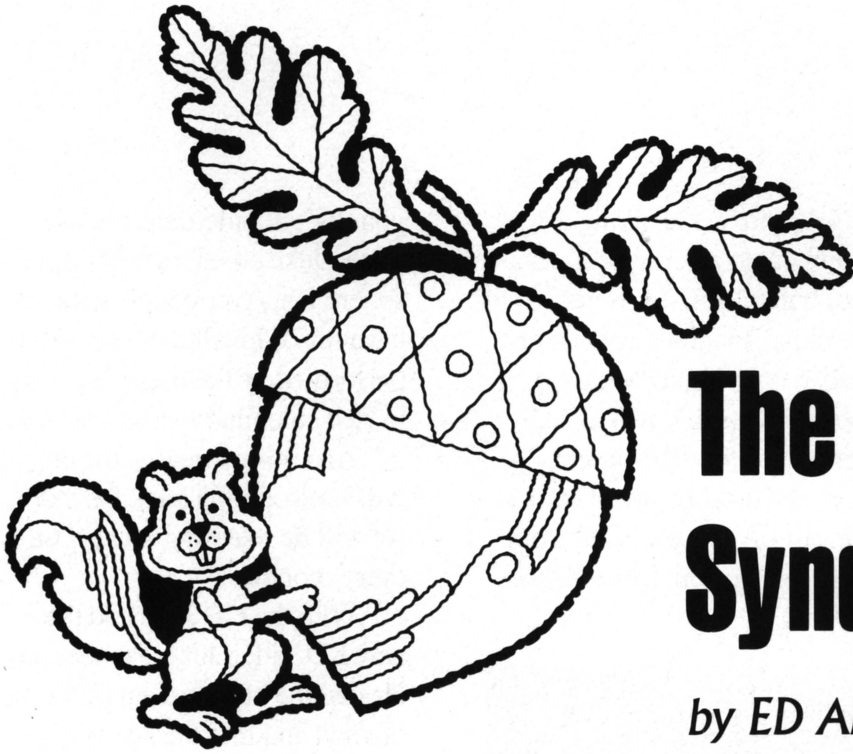


The "Benny Syndrome"

by ED ADLUM

I've been sitting at my table working on the new street operator poll for this issue, while all the squirrels in creation are hopping around the yard outside raping my walnut tree. It's time for these furry (and greedy) little critters to hide their nuts. They sure love to *save* things and they remind me of some of the folks I've run across in our industry.

I'm not going to call these people "squirrels" (I value my life), so I'll refer to these savers of everything from *Pong* manuals to power supplies as "Bennies" after that late, beloved comedian who made more money out of his penny-pinching jokes than Belgium makes pool balls. Conventional wisdom says that Jack Benny's real character was to spend money like the next guy. But the image he created of the scrounge who kept his money in a guarded vault and drove an ancient Maxwell car is how we remember him.

The epitome of Jack Benny's self-effacing humor happened on the radio years before TV in a sketch where he met a mugger while walking a dark city street. "Your money or your life!" threatened the crook. After a long, silent pause, the guy repeated the threat and Benny responded "Wait a minute! I'm thinking, I'm thinking!"

We have several syndromes in the coin-op trade, like the "hit syndrome" (featuring guys who only buy the outstanding games), the "pee and moan syndrome" (suffered by people who make the rest of us suffer with their constant complaining about how bad things are) and the "Benny syndrome," the subject of this story . . . and a description of a group of people from all levels of the industry. Do you wonder if your own personality inclines in their same "prudent" direction? Check it out:

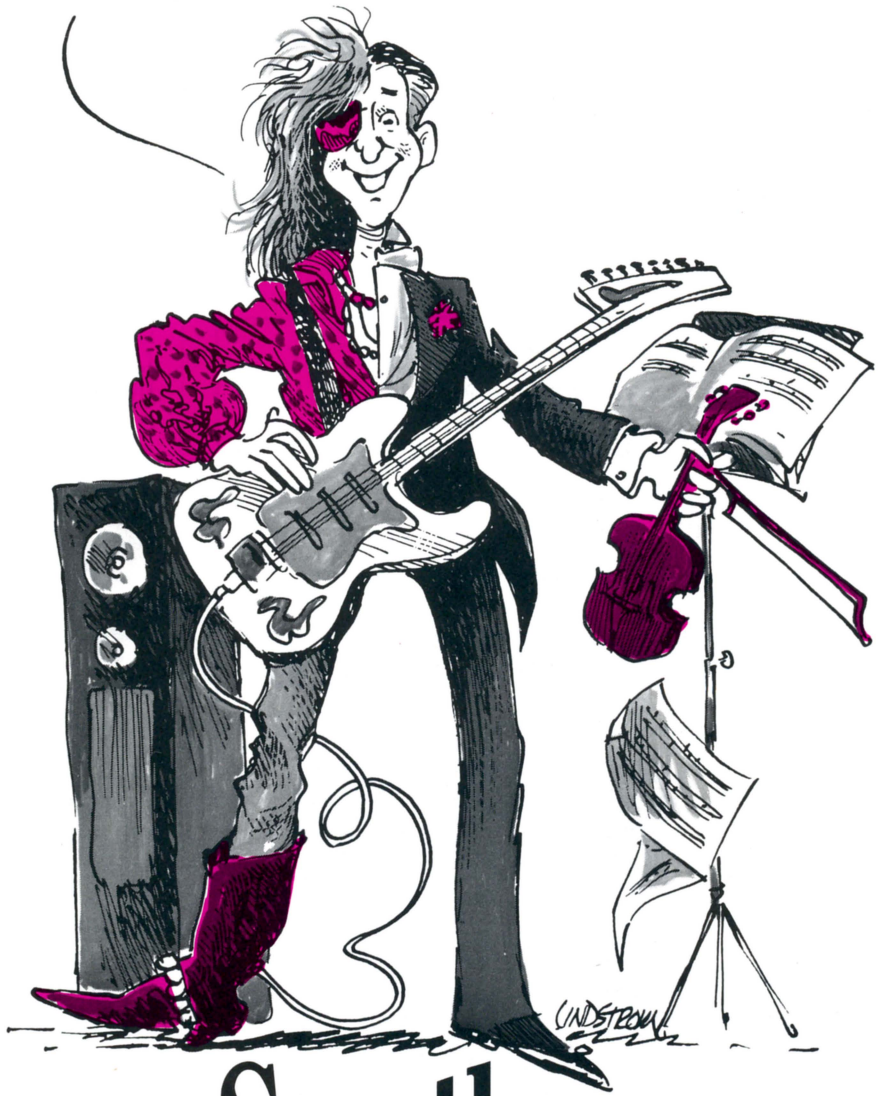
First of all, do you ever stoop to pick up a paper clip lying on the parking lot? Do you keep the air conditioner in the office and house "moderate" in summer and the heat down in winter? Have you ever taken a broken wooden cue stick home for the fireplace? Worse yet, have you ever seriously considered taking a Grayhound bus to the AMOA show?

If you meet these and the other "standards" I'll list further along, you're probable a Benny . . . a guy, like myself, who simply took Benjamin Franklin at his word when he wrote "a penny saved is a penny earned". Unfortunately, those suffering from the Benny syndrome don't stop there. They not only save pennies, they save old video game monitors, every record yanked off a jukebox, every power supply and, yes, every paper clip found everywhere.

While the syndrome has its bright sides (frugality is, after all, its own reward), there are darker sides (like the resistance to buying new equipment, especially if it costs serious money). It can get darker yet when one of these fellows buys something he has absolutely no use for, just because it was "a bargain!"

Being a Benny myself, I have the authority to talk about the "artform" and I hope I entertain you a bit while you're sitting reading this at the New Orleans show or more likely back at that "old but functional" desk of yours in the shop at home. I have a desk like that which I brought all the way from *Cash Box Magazine* in New York City to Woodland Hills, Calif. Why? Hey, it's still got a lot of years left in it, even though even W.C. Fields would probably chuck it for something a tad more modern (which was how I got the desk from *Cash Box* in the first place).

Don't miss it!



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Benny syndrome, like red hair, comes down through the genes. My father was a classic. Not to bore you, but my dad once bought a 75' yacht that had no bottom. He sold it for scrap, plus an old Lincoln car. Lotta work, little money, but there's a sport here. Dad also bought two tons of chicken feed (at a bargain price) even though we had no chickens (don't ask about the 160 frozen steaks or the sacks of charcoal, okay?)

A wise man once told me that anything done to excess is wrong. Well, that may not apply to someone like Mother Theresa, but in general, that wise man was on the money. The "balanced life" is what's needed . . . a mix of work and play, some sinful food along with the granola, a couple of belts if you're not driving home after the party and a decent number of new machines mixed up with the moldy oldies stuck to the location floor with cooking grease.

There are classes of Bennies just like in every other of life's "careers." You have the Class C types who truly *need* to squirrel their money, Class Bs who have more than enough to live normally but still rub the first dime they ever earned against the first nickel, and the Class A. This Benny is my all-time favorite . . . the jillionaires who still fly in the back of the plane and make connections to score a lower fare and frequent flyer points . . . the guys who could buy the Coca Cola plant but still bring their bottles back for the deposit.

We must always remember that operators make their money from quarters, sometimes from dimes, nickels and even pennies. When a person views his income from that standpoint, naturally he's going to bend over to pick up a penny if it's lying on the ground. It all adds up! And who among us doesn't check the price signs at the gas stations before rolling in? The class A Benny, of course, has the whole town memorized and may even drive two miles out of the way to save a penny on the "no lead deal at Arco."

There are some good aspects to the Benny. For example, he often pays his bills on time since he figures the guy he owes the money to is also a Benny. He even pays his help decently and often over-tips at the restaurant for the same reason. He's a nice enough guy in those regards, but don't get into a discussion about high finances, or adding to the building or buying a new truck with him unless you know your oats.

This Benny knows which banks offer the best interest on CDs and the best borrowing terms. He also knows where to have his trusty old Pontiac fixed ("the guy's honest, but more important, his price is right!"). Benny probably lives in the same old house, although he could easily afford to move. "Why should I move?" he'll yell. "I bought this place for $25 thousand and cold probably get ten times that much for it today. Then I'd end up buying a place for $250 thousand that cost $25 thou-

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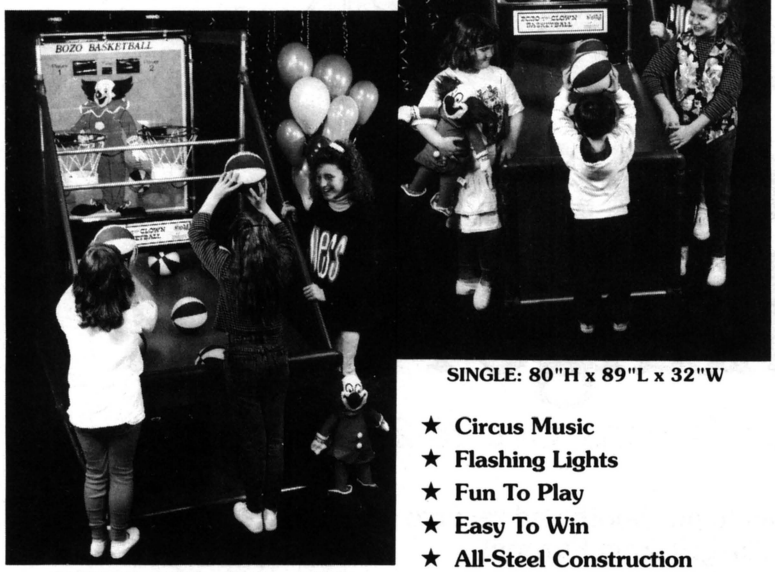

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sand back when I bought the house I'm living in! Where's the sense?"

I have known some of the most amazing Bennies in my years in this industry. One chap, a guy joked, probably, took a bus when he made calls on clients back in New York City. I thought that was neat since cabs cost so much more. I also knew a distributor in that city who decided to be his own building contractor on his new facility (the elevator rubbed against the shaft wall after the joint was completed).

I remember the late distributor David Rosen of Philadelphia who divided his equipment between "usable and saleable", the former being mostly junk he might be able to use on his own route but which wasn't suitable for resale to customers. And I will never forget the third storey of the Mike Munves building on New York's Tenth Ave. where "every coin machine" produced before the War was in storage. (In truth, they made a pack of dough renting these ancient things to movie studios.)

I cannot imagine the vast number of old machines hiding in operator shops and distributor warehouses these days, but I'll bet it's extensive. I'm talking about games and music machines that go way back before modern refinements . . . classic machines that could probably get a big buck on the consumer market if cleaned up . . . stuff we like to talk about sometimes which the Bennies of the biz have in case we ever create a real Hall of Fame. (I knew the guy who had the sixth *Pong* ever made; don't know if he's still got it but I bet he does.)

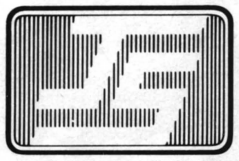
I've known millionaires (when the phrase meant something) who wore rumpled suits. I fondly recall Sam Stern, the pinball patriarch, poking around Broad St. in Philly in search of a can of cleaning fluid he wanted to bring with him to the A.T.E. Show in England. I wonder if old Sam was trying to skirt the valet bill at those London hotels.

If you're smiling about this story, you're either a Benny yourself or you know a couple of guys who are. But just to be safe, let's do a quick test to see where you sit. Don't score yourself . . . just giggle if I hit the right chords on the piano.

Have you got shelves full of old video parts in the back of the shop . . . parts you know in your heart you'll never use? How about the record library? Any 78s there? I'll bet you've got yards of electrical wire and a big huge box of "gemix" (the nuts, bolt, screws, fuses, pinball bulbs, ad infinitum) back there. The size of the gemix usually tells what class of Benny you really are, measured by weight and uselessness. Guess what? If you're an authentic Benny, you'll *never* throw it out!

Why? Because you paid money for it and you never know when you'll need it!

Sometimes the Benny syndrome comes through the genes, and sometimes it's learned through the school of hard knocks. In the former, it can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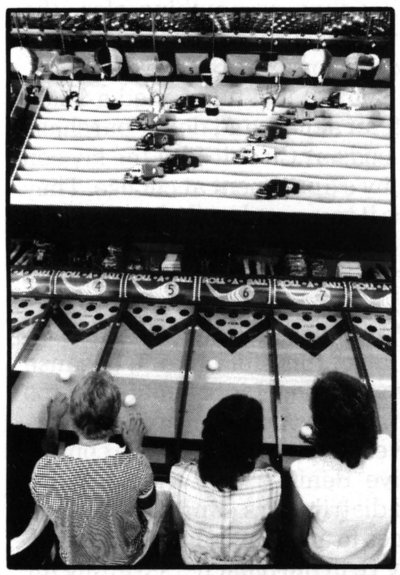

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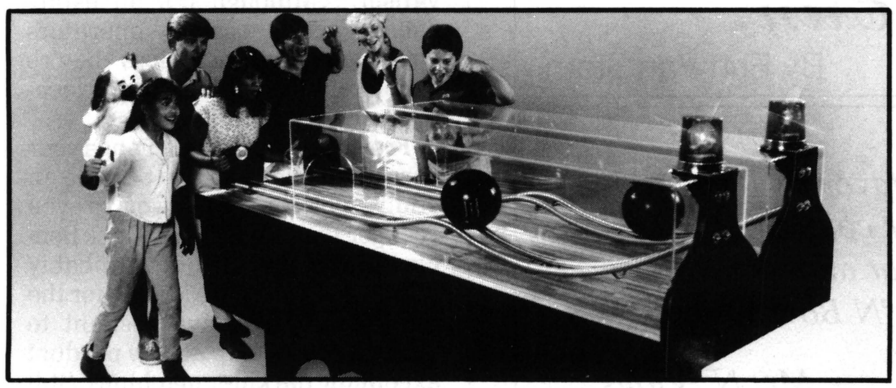

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be a result of the fear generated by the Great Depression. In the latter, it might stem from a couple of years working as a route mechanic for a cheapo operator before starting your own route.

Of course, it might come from Scottish ancestry which conventional wisdom (incorrectly, by the way) says is a nation of nickel-rubbers. According to an operator named Albert that I know (who comes from that part of the world), it's a myth. This guy Albert doesn't buy too many new games, I found out.

That's one of the downsides of the Benny syndrome. I'll bet there's a Class A Benny telling his wife right now that he's got a line on a used *Turtles*. Adventuresome operators jump at promising new goods, while the conservative Bennies often lie back and wait until the good stuff sits on the top of the charts for a couple of months. I don't know if Albert is of that cloth, but I'll ask him before AMOA.

One of the business axioms Bennies smile at is "you've got to spend money in order to earn it." Unfortunately, by default, they often miss the cream collections on much of the good new things the factories make, but since their debts and receivables are always low, they always stay in the biz.

I knew a distributor (dead now) who boasted that he only went down the chute for less than $100 thousand when the video game busted back in the early '80s. I said "terrific" but I secretly wondered what kind of sales engine this guy had running when the going was great. In my heart, I knew he wasn't selling anything in quantity during the boom unless it was to a blue ribbon operator. Of course, the man I recall passed away with a jillion dollars in cash and assets, so how do you judge?

Is the money made during a lifetime of work for the earner himself or to squirrel away for the next generation (or maybe to forestall trouble from the "next depression")? Who knows why Bennies roll pennies, fly through Denver to make an inexpensive connection, wait for *Turtles* to turn up on the used market and love video kits because "I paid for that cabinet and I'm not going to throw it away!"

Oh, yes, the video kit was *made* for the conservative operator. So, can one misunderstand why they have felt so strongly about parallel boards? And knowing their philosophy, it's easy to see why some hate the federal music license (they do math in their heads and can come up with the aggregate license figures quicker than an adding machine).

There are pluses and minuses to nearly every one of life's approaches. The downside to being (I'll use the word) "cheap" is that so much of the quality of life is missed on the altar of the almighty dollar. These people often put distributor salesmen through pure agony when they actually buy something new (i.e. every listed retail price is an "ongoing bid" to them). Call it bargaining or hondling or anything else, the Benny tries to get a reduction in price, even it it's only token.

I know. I just demanded a $5.00 spiff off a thousand-dollar purchase of goods at Circuit City for my son Kenny's apartment at college. They gave it to me and smiled as I walked out of the store. (I have no idea why they were smiling, and I don't wan't to: I got my $5.00 spiff.)

A psychologist could do a far better job of this story than I, because this syndrome I talk about is all too real. In a product-driven, price-sensitive industry like ours, the conservative Bennies give the factories and distributors canaries. When it comes to anything remotely "new," they're in the bleachers waiting for the more adventurous of their brothers to step to the plate first. And when it comes to association meetings, it's "kill that new license but while you're at it, don't raise the dues."

The saddest Benny I ever knew was a midwest arcade operator who had to sleep on the gameroom floor because collections were so bad, he couldn't afford his apartment any longer. He wasn't economic by choice . . . it was forced upon him. So I don't make too much light of this subject of economic conservatism . . . although it's an established fact that many operators won't buy anything unless they're absolutely forced to by their locations or by competitors.

Freud says you can't change your personality once you've become an adult (in fact, not after you're even younger than that). So, the Jack Bennies in our industry are probably "forever" . . . always looking for the bargains and always hesitant to take a serious jump at new product except for the killer machines. Still I wonder if the day will come when some of them will rise up and say, "Hey, I'm in showbiz" when we can play the closing music from *An Officer and a Gentleman* with the lyrics ". . . lift us up where we belong."

Maybe the other side knows something they don't.



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By Erin Van Stern

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'Riverboat Gambler' *new pinball from the leaders at Williams Electronics capitalizes on America's gambling fever with amusement-only gaming built into play*

"That infamous street piece!" said Williams' Sales & Marketing VP Joe Dillon. "Where is it? Who's got it? That's what everyone is asking. Well, it's here from Williams . . . and it's called *Riverboat Gambler!*"

Shipping to the U.S. since mid-October, *Riverboat Gambler* is an amusing pinball themed around a floating gambling house in the Old West. Test reports show that earnings are steady and stable long-term, and that earnings build over time, said Williams execs.

Riverboat is play-priced at three play for a dollar, two for 75¢ or one play for 50¢. But players who drop quarters into the game aren't just playing pinball . . . they're also playing amusement-only roulette, blackjack, slots and five card poker. A separate alpha-numeric display on the backboard counts up the "chips" you win and wager on these "games inside the game" so that playing buddies can enjoy extra competition with themselves and the pin.

"You can come up to *Riverboat Gambler* and everybody instantly understands the concept of blackjack, slot machines and roulette," stated Williams VP/GM Ken Fedesna. "But as you learn to play it better, you get a better concept of how to achieve scores on those wagering features. You learn more about the interaction of pinball and amusement gaming."

"I would not classify it as a shooter's game, because it's very easy-playing," said Joe Dillon. "But the more players get into the gameplay, the more adept they become at the gameplay . . . and the more the cash box take rises, week by week!"

Players can "play roulette" while locking up the ball (winning extra points if the right one of four colors comes up on the wheel). The player chooses his color (red, green, black or white) via pushing down one of four buttons on the hand panel. The roulette wheel in the backglass lets players build up a "jackpot" of chips and "break the bank," triggering a sound and light extravaganza.



Between 100 to 200 of the "chips" may be "wagered" on the roulette wheel. "Chips" may also be won while playing the other gambling-themed features. Players who don't want to risk losing chips may "pass" on the roulette feature by pressing the white button to cancel. For the other gambling-themed games, the "chip" feature is a win-only proposition. That is, players don't lose "chips" even if they don't beat the odds. Whatever value is displayed on the chips display is added to total score when ball drains.

Riverboat Gambler is another in a series of pins from Williams that brings innovation and reliability to the market . . . not just in the U.S., but in the strong European and growing global pinball markets. As the International Flipper Pinball Assn. gets underway and the Pinball Expo heats up, Williams has played an ace which offers some unique and fascinating possibilities for the street operator.



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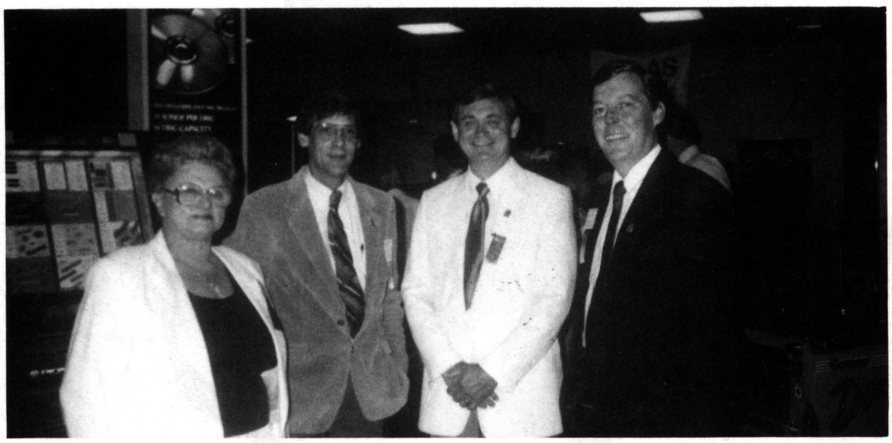
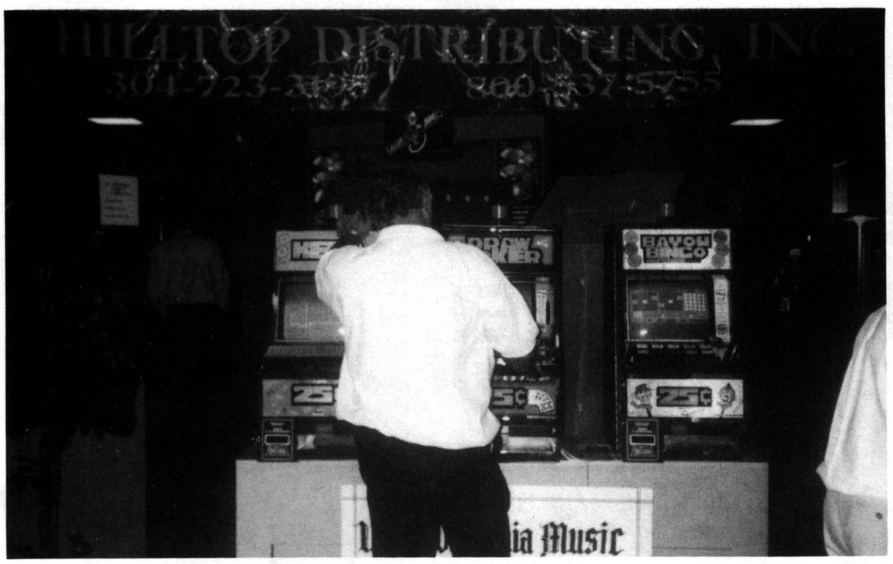


VIPs at the West Virginia show (left to right): Leoma Ballard (association secretary), Doug Wilson (Hilltop Dist.), Kenny Price (association prexy) and Jim Trucano (incoming AMOA chief).



An operator at the West Virginia trade meeting tries out a South Dakota-style pay-off poker machine at Hilltop's display. Operation of these units may become legal Jan. 1, 1991.



Some of the guys & gals relaxing aboard the West Virginia Belle riverboat.

The West Virginia Music & Vending Assn. was told by their attorney that he is confident pay-off video poker machines could become legal in the state by the first of the year. During their business meeting held during their 36th annual convention & trade show (Sept. 13-15) in Charleston, he reportedly told the operators that the State Lottery Commission is favorable, based on results they've enjoyed in an 85-game test at racing tracks.

As we understand it, the law could be almost identical to South Dakota's (i.e. tickets are issued from the game for winning hands and are redeemable afterward for cash). On the trade show floor, Hilltop Distributing displayed the "South Dakota"-type video poker machine for all to see as most operators were unaware what the "legal" equipment looked like.

Hilltop's Doug Wilson told us the entire convention was well attended and one of the best he'd seen in the tri-state area for quite some time. The display area was outfitted with the latest equipment at booths taken by a good number of distributors.

Aside from the business activities, the association also sponsored a Nite at the Races with a dutch dinner at a local dog track and a three house dinner cruise on the West Virginia Belle 4-deck riverboat where an excellent prime rib dinner was served, several bands and singers entertained and a great deal of fun, socializing with old friends was the mood.

If all goes according to educated speculation, beginning Jan. 1, 1991, West Virginia will join the small but hoped-to-be-growing roster of states offering legal video lottery, putting more sparkle at locations on those famous "country roads" of theirs.



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Real "Boss"

Merit's Superstar Pit Boss *is a versatile, proven winner; eight-year track record shows high ROI and "go-anywhere" application*

RePlay does not use its monthly chart to track "staple" games like video countertop systems. But if we did, one of the games that would probably appear very high on the list would be Merit Industries' *Superstar Pit Boss*. The system has been nominated for AMOA's "most innovative game" award this year, Merit President Pete Feuer reported proudly. And Merit execs add that operators have been snapping up this versatile video system at the rate of hundreds per month.

Why all the acclaim? "The national average gross is probably $75 to $125 per week, forever," said Sales Director Dave Rubinstein. "Operators get their investment back after only six to nine months. *Superstar Pit Boss* has evolved over the course of eight-and-a-half years from a 4-in-one game to a 15-in-one game, based on operator requests."

Today, the system is available as a 9" monitor countertop, a 13" monitor countertop, a standard dedicated upright, or as a conversion kit. Among the entertainment choices offered "all in one cabinet" are a series of five amusement-only card and casino-style games, plus Super Phraze Craze (Wheel of Fortune type gameplay), Sex Super Phraze Craze, Tic Tac Trivia, Sex Tic Tac Trivia, six additional trivia games (Sports, Movies, Music, Sex, History & Geography), and Four Score (a connect the dots game).

The operator may shut off the sex games via dip switch for selected locations. A "Hall of Fame" feature allows five high-scoring players to enter their names on the screen after each game (seven characters per name may be entered). "This feature gives the player bragging rights, lets him put his name up in lights," said Merit. That factor helps increase play, which of course increases earnings.



At right, the Merit Superstar Pit Boss *top-notch multi-game countertop. "We've made quality control in design, as well as the assembly line, a special focus for 1990 and '91," says Merit.*

"*Superstar Pit Boss* has become a key, staple device for many operators," stated Merit's national sales rep Bob Whitehead. "It has a universal appeal and succeeds in cafes, restaurants, lounges, anyplace where you find grown-up clientele. It goes in fancy nightclubs like Bennigan's and into a shot and a beer bar. This is because the immense variety of games offers something for every type of player: men, women and younger people."

Merit also says the game beats the typical "summer doldrums" which plague much of the industry. "We smile from May to September," said Bob Whitehead. "While some other types of games may experience a sales and earnings fall-off during hot weather, we find that *Superstar Pit Boss* just keeps going."

The 9" monitor version enhances gameplay versatility with a go-anywhere 13x16x19" cabinet. "Bar owners see each barstool as a profit center and if a game is too large or cumbersome, they'll move it," noted Bob Whitehead. "That's why we've designed our smallest *Superstar Pit Boss* to take up less space than one customer's counter area." Also, he noted, the swivel base means more than one player (and more than one seat) may be accommodated by a single game.

"Operators can put three and four of these smaller units in the back seats of their vehicles," said Dave Rubinstein. "As they're driving around working on their route, whenever they see an applicable location they can carry in a *Superstar Pit Boss*, show it to the location personnel and land themselves a new route stop."

A small, lightweight game might raise questions of security in some operators' minds, said Merit, but the company offers an easily-installed hasp which the operator can use to chain the game to an anchor inside the bar itself.

Merit maintains a complete eight-year backlog of games, offering a

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library of software packages. Any operator who buys his first *Superstar Pit Boss* in 1990 will have the luxury of being able to retro-fit the game menu often, and inexpensively. Operators can update chips on *Superstar Pit Boss*. By the way, any operator who purchased the old 4-in-one *Pit Boss* several years ago, may upgrade to the 15-in-one *Superstar* generation by quickly replacing a board. They don't have to buy a full kit or a full dedicated game. Kit versions are also available for uprights and countertops of non-Merit games.

Also, Merit issues update chips on an "as-needed" basis. "We're working on one right now which will increase the number of games on the menu and will refresh the current games," said the firm.

Rotation is not a problem for this Merit system. The large menu of games keeps it fresh. "We've had operators keep it on the same location and earning well for over a year," said company sales staff. By the way, the "modular" design allows operators to quickly update the game on location. You don't have to worry about losing the space, said Merit.

Successful games for a countertop system fit a formula, noted the company. That formula may be described as "minimal action, minimal instruction, minimal concentration." Said Bob Whitehead: "It's important for a player to be able to have a drink in one hand, a conversation going on with his girlfriend or his buddy, and yet still be able to play at the same time. The game is a core for social interaction, it's an ice-breaker. Adults don't want to come into a location after work and be tested, they want to be entertained at a leisurely pace. It has to be fun and light, and our software meets those requirements."

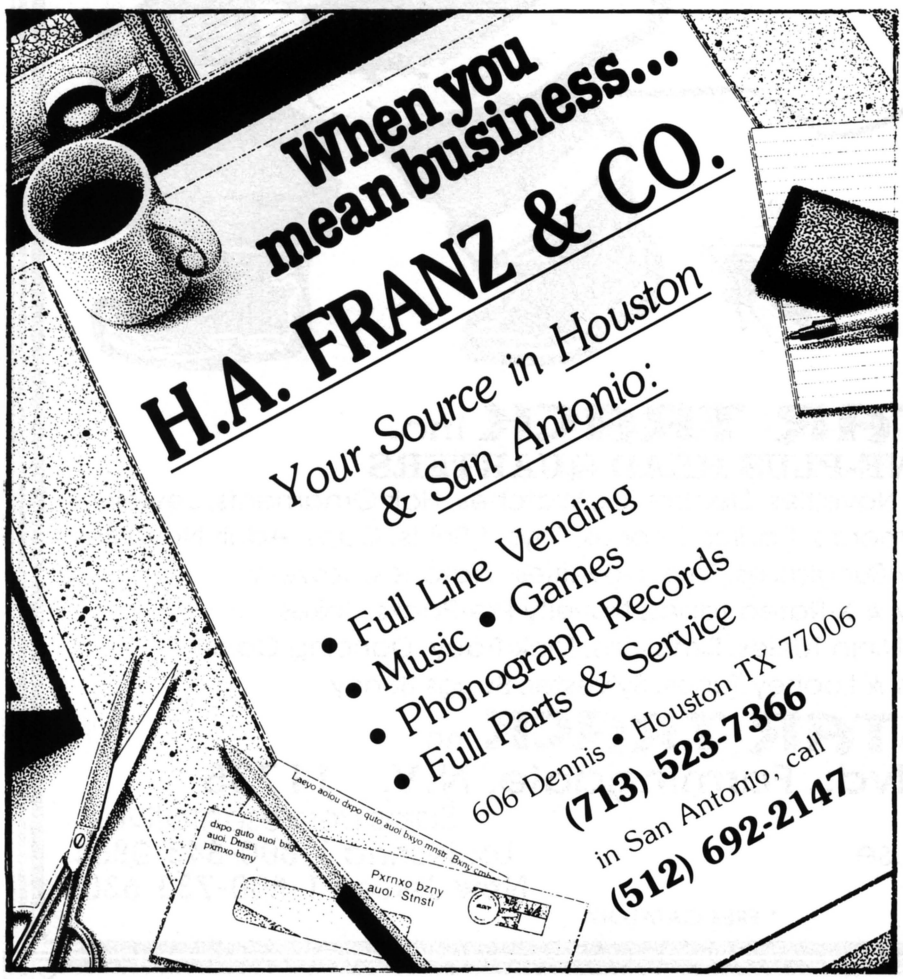
Another aspect of *Superstar Pit Boss* which contributes to its universal appeal is the subtle quality of the cabinet graphics. When the game is sitting right in front of a player, you don't have to hit them in the face with loud colors and flashing lights. The graphics are sharp, clear and appealing . . . but the real "grab appeal" is in the software. All of this means the unit can fit into any type of location without clashing with the decor.

By the way, operators can add a module to *Superstar Pit Boss* which enables the game to display up to 12 advertisements when not being played. Those screens can advertise the location, the operator's business or a pizza restaurant down the street . . . and the operator can charge for this "electronic billboard," which means the game generates revenues even when it's not in the play mode.

"My belief in *Superstar Pit Boss* is so strong," asserted Dave Rubinstein, "that if any operator can show me a comparable game at the same price, which earns the same ROI, I'll give them free update chips."

Be sure to stop by Merit's booth at the AMOA Expo at check out this versatile system. It's a winner!





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Franz Customers Dance to New Rowe Music Boxes at Houston Open

Popular Houston distributor Hoddy Franz said "Ya'll come!" and around 250 operators and guests did exactly that Sept. 25 when the venerable machine dealer opened his showroom wide to celebrate the new Rowe AMI line of phonographs for the new season.

The party, held at the H.A. Franz & Company premises on Dennis & Smith, featured an excellent Southern barbecue with all the trimmings. But the real "meat" of the meeting was the Rowe product . . . the brand new CD-100A and its companion, the "tiny titan" called the CD-51.

Hoddy Franz was one of the very first Rowe dealers to hold an open house to present the new line to local operators, and he did so in speedy fashion (Rowe only introduced the products ten days prior over in Palm Springs).

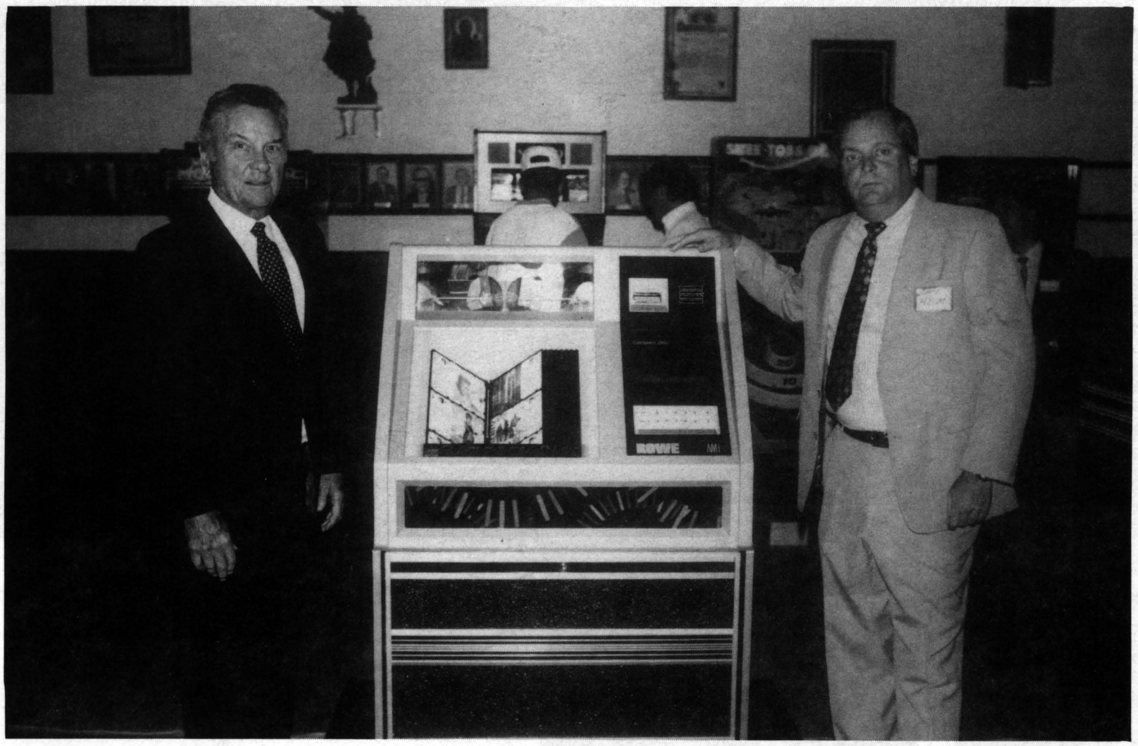
Door prizes were awarded and the grand prize, none other than a new gold CD-100A, was won by Ted Stevens Jr. of Quicksilver Amusement (Ted's father and grandfather are also in the operating business).



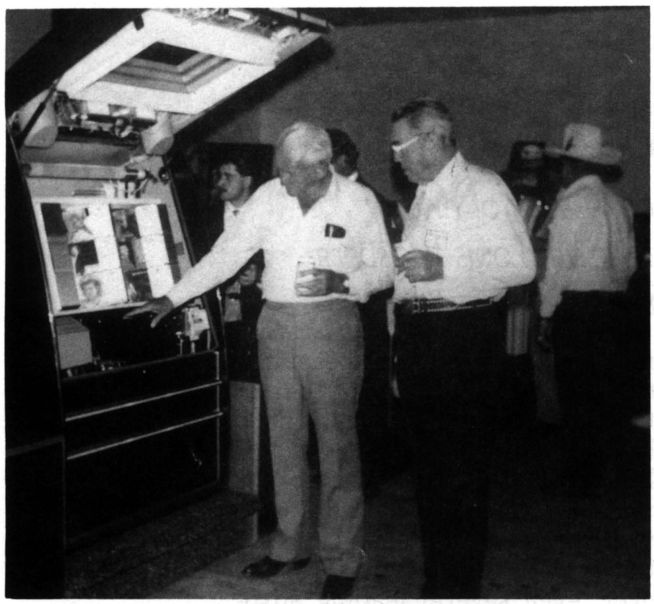
All winners: (from left) Hoddy Franz, Floyd Taylor (of their San Antonio office), Dave Stegman (winner of the Bally pinball), Ted Stevens (winner of the Rowe CD-100A), Jay Hum (Rowe), Rick Caputo (winner of the $200 worth of CD's) and everybody's pal Jerry Johnston (Franz).

Dave Stegman of Replay Amusement won second prize, a new Bally pinball, and Rick Caputo of Brown Bag Amusement won $200 worth of CD discs from Franz' own record service division as third prize.

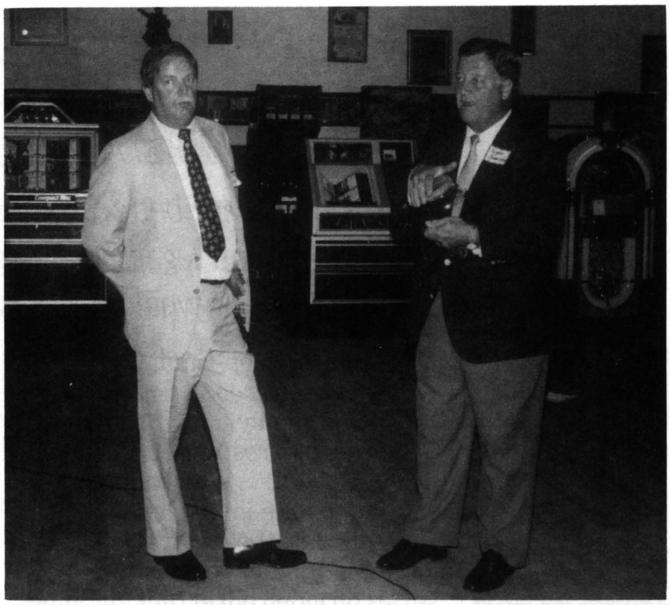
All was not music as Frank Cosentino (Atari), Art Gallagher (Nintendo) and Dave Carrington (Tornado) were on hand to demonstrate their current lineup of amusement machines. Good equipment, lots of fun and plenty of down home chow made for a great Tuesday in Houston, thanks to Hoddy Franz and staff. Here are some snapshots.



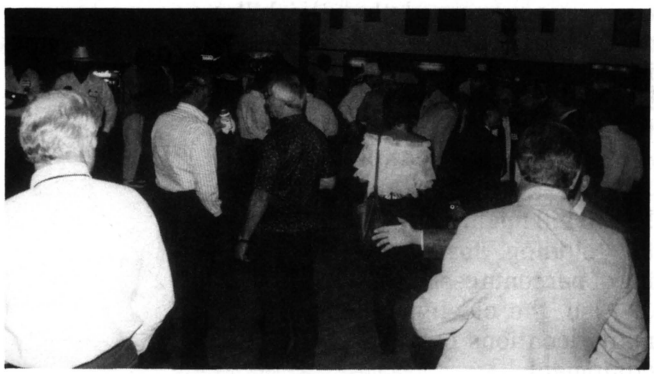
Hoddy Franz (host) and Rowe's Jay Hum (who pulled the door prize tickets) flank the new CD-51 at the Franz showroom. This "tiny titan" is making solid sales points.



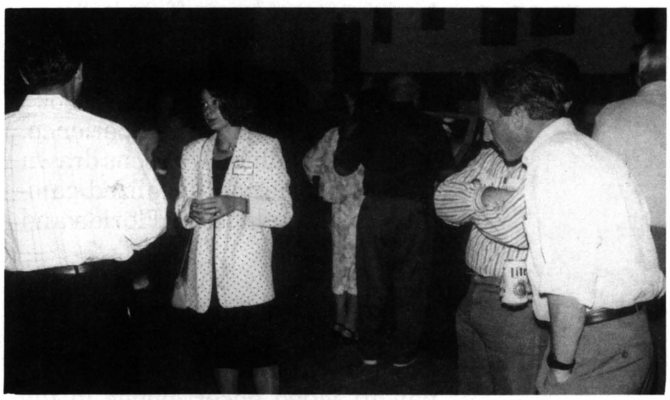
Texas trade veterans Jack Maund (AAA Vending) and Ray Fickey (F&F Vending) check the CD-100A out from the operator's viewpoint.



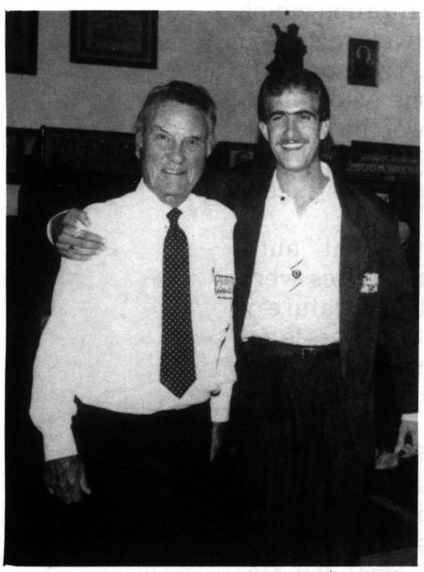
All set to start rolling out the door prizes are Rowe's Jay Hum (who did the ticket drawing) with Franz salesman Jerry Johnston.



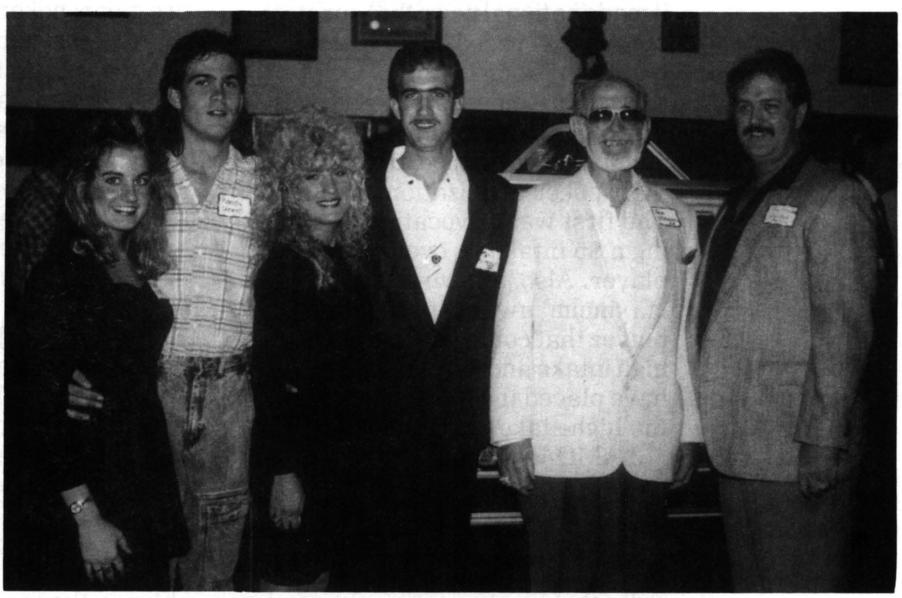
You can almost hear the industrial chit chat from this photo showing part of the 250 folks who came out to the H.A. Franz & Co. showrooms in Houston Sept. 25 to see the Rowe AMI jukebox line for the new year.



Jimmy Franz (right) listens closely to a customer during the hubbub at the Franz party. Jim Charlie and Marty all work for Dad's companies.



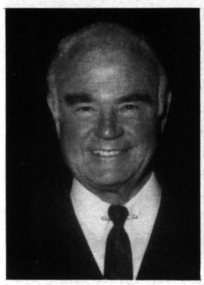
Hoddy Franz gets a hug from Ted Stevens, Jr. after winning the CD-100A phonograph shown at right. If we know Ted, the golden beauty is working on the route right now.



Three generations of operators! From left: Randy Stevens, Ted Stevens Jr., Ted Stevens Sr. & Ted Stevens (whew!). They like that name Ted and also the CD-100A jukebox the younger Stevens won in the door prize drawing. Sorry, we didn't catch the names of the ladies.

Don't Gamble!

instead, bet on the proven lessons of history when you legalize gaming; trade vet Louis Boasberg looks at what works, what doesn't. . . and why



by LOUIS BOASBERG

"If the coin-op industry's gambling games are too strong and make too much money. . . if they are not moderate and restrained when they are legalized. . . they will lead to trouble for the industry."

That was the central message contained in my recent three-part series on video poker (*RePlay*, June, July & August). Since I penned those essays, events in my home state of Louisiana may have offered a "case study" of some of the benefits and hazards of poker legalization. The following, then, is a "second look" at the recent Louisiana experience, with some additional lessons drawn from the history of legalized gambling in such places as Florida and England.

As many know, LAMOA, our state operator association, made a gallant and tireless effort this past summer to legalize operator-run, pay-off video poker games in the Bayou State. Operators failed only at the last moment (you may recall, it made national news that our statehouse was bogged down with a controversial abortion bill).

Despite their generally good work, the LAMOA may (in this writer's opinion) have made two mistakes in their poker legalization campaign. The first was advocating or allowing a $5 intake on every game, per player. Also, allowing for a $1,000 maximum award per game, per player that could be won. This very high intake and capital prize would have placed the coin-op industry in the high-stakes gambling class.

LAMOA's second political miscalculation, in my view, was that their bill would have permitted every location to have from one to five pay-off gambling games, with unlimited numbers of machines operating in off-track betting parlors and race tracks. Let's face it: five fast-operating, big-money poker machines operating in a single bar or tavern would be the equivalent of having small casinos in hundreds of locations throughout the state!

In my opinion, this would lead to trouble. I'm not the only one who thinks so, either. After it was all over, even several leading advocates of poker legalization stated that perhaps it was a good thing for everyone concerned that the bill didn't pass. Their reasons for saying this? 1. Outsiders with unlimited resources might have come in from all over the country and taken over many of the better locations. 2. Poker legalization as envisioned by the bill might have led to operator "bidding" for locations, lowering of percentages to operators, etc. 3. Also, the old fear persisted of many locations owning their own equipment.

These are the very hazards I mentioned in my earlier three-part series on poker legalization! The facts are clear: poker legalization which is not sufficiently well-regulated will lead to trouble. This comes as no surprise to anyone who is familiar with the history of the subject. Allow me to offer an example that few people know about — except for us "old-timers"!

Regular "one-arm bandit" automatic pay-out slot machines were legalized by the state legislature of Florida in 1935. Just two years later, in 1937, the gaming act was repealed. . . and the operation of slot machines in Florida has been illegal and taboo ever since! The explanation for this remarkable turnaround is simple. Even though Florida received a tremendous amount of money from its 1935-37 legal slot machines, the operation caused so much trouble and provoked so many citizen complaints throughout



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the state, that the legislature soon voted to ban slots almost unanimously.

Beyond the need for sufficient regulation, I deduce a second lesson from legal gaming history: states and cities with large populations cannot and should not have unrestricted gambling machines. If they do, it will cause trouble and undermine the area's economy and industry. Now, some advocates of high-play pokers may cite Las Vegas and Atlantic City as examples of tranquil, big-city operation of slots. But remember: gambling is the Number One Industry for both cities. Take away gambling, and Vegas will revert to a "deserted" desert. Take away gambling, and Atlantic City reverts to just a slum by the sea. Neither city had any significant prior economic development to "lose" by legalizing full-fledged gambling.

In this writer's view, there is only one way large cities such as Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans, Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, etc. could successfully have gambling. Namely, to follow the British model and have limited, restricted, well-regulated gambling.

British jurisprudence provides the "Magna Carta" of gambling laws. Basically, they have two types of gambling. A British citizen may pursue whichever of the two types of gambling his financial means permit. In gambling clubs, the rich and affluent — who can afford to gamble without limit — may do so to their hearts' content. But the club membership fees and other restrictions protect the poor and working classes from losing their daily bread in these premises.

'The facts are clear: poker legalization which is not sufficiently well-regulated will lead to trouble. This comes as no surprise to anyone who is familiar with the history of the subject.'

These latter groups are still given an opportunity to gamble, however. Their gaming entertainment is via machines located in pubs and arcades. But the point is, the intake, pay-offs and prizes of said machines are all strictly regulated. This is done both for the economic well-being of the citizens/players, and for the long-term health of the gambling/amusements industry. This is the way it should be!

The virtue of this gambling "Magna Carta" is that it controls a public vice, yields a large amount of revenue to the state (through taxes and licenses), yet protects those who can't afford large gambling losses. Into the bargain, it also protects the well-being of gamblers and of their families.

Therefore, all U.S. state associa-



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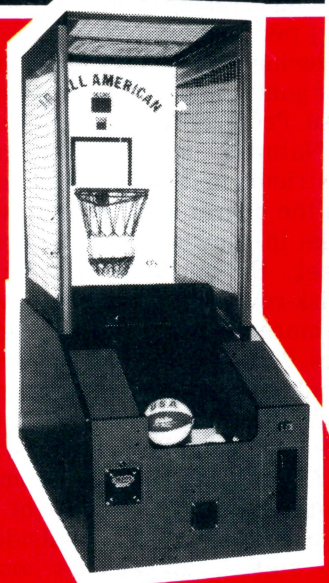

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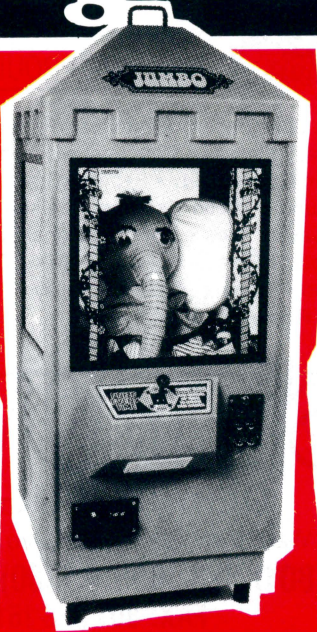

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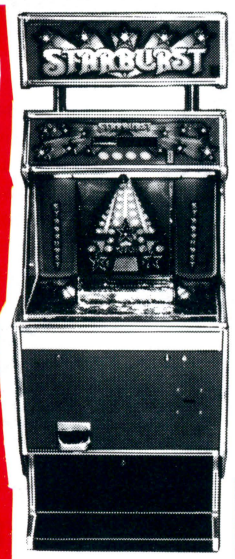

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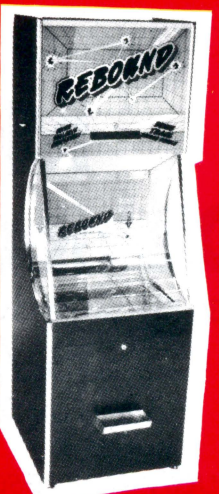

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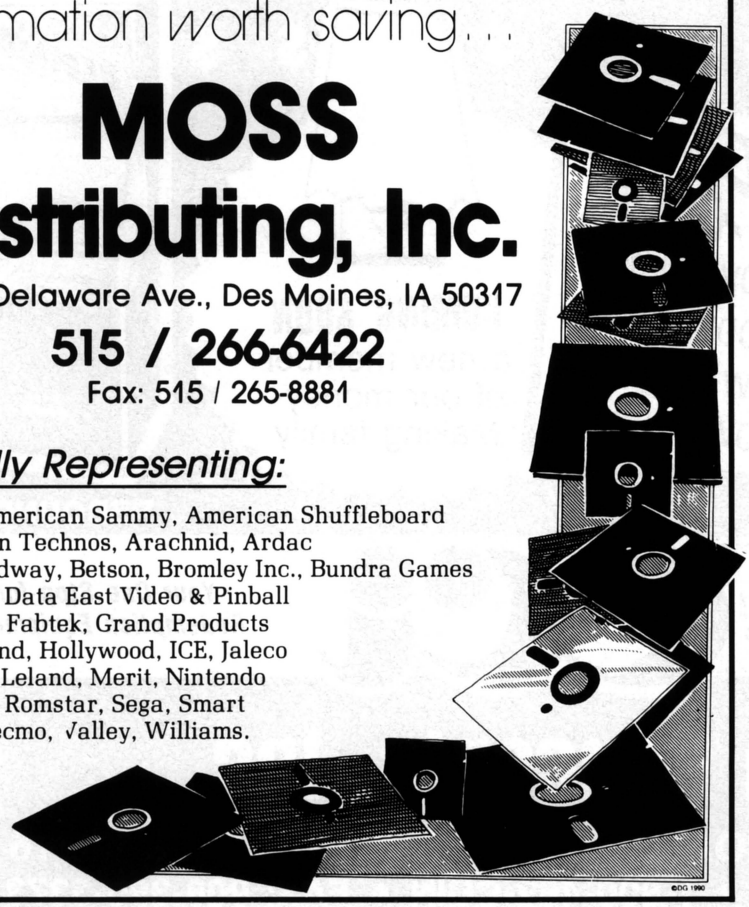

tions and trade organizations contemplating the legalization of any kind of gambling machines, such as poker or other risk-reward games, would be wise to offer a *moderate* machine for state approval. Perhaps in larger states, the trade should consider a one- or two-player machine, taking in one coin (a quarter) per player, per game...and allowing a maximum prize of $10 per game, paid in cash or merchandise. Preferably merchandise!

Naturally, running such limited, restricted machines would not mean the operator or location would rake in thousands of dollars per week. But perhaps this form of "risk-reward amusement" would be more acceptable to state legislators. Perhaps such limited gambling would not generate intense opposition from religious groups and entrenched gambling interests.

Above all, the revenue from such "limited" gaming would not be so enormous as to attract outsiders to the state...unwelcome competition that would disturb the local operators' status quo. And, neither would the revenue be so great as to inspire intense competition between local operators, and raising of percentages to locations.

If cities and states with large populations are going to offer any kind of gambling machine, I believe they must do so in moderation or not at all. And, placement of these machines must be limited to alcoholic beverage outlets...meaning on-premises consumption sites such as bars and taverns where minors are not allowed, not package liquor stores.

True, this is a start-small, "go slow" approach. That is exactly the point! I'm well aware that many tradesters may feel too impatient to wait for such gradual legalization of gambling. Others feel too ambitious to settle for small-scale legalization. But as Florida slot machine operators would have told you in 1937, fads that heat up fast can also cool down fast. They usually do, in fact! On the other hand, small beginnings can lead to profitable markets that last for many years, if they are carefully nurtured. Which would you prefer?

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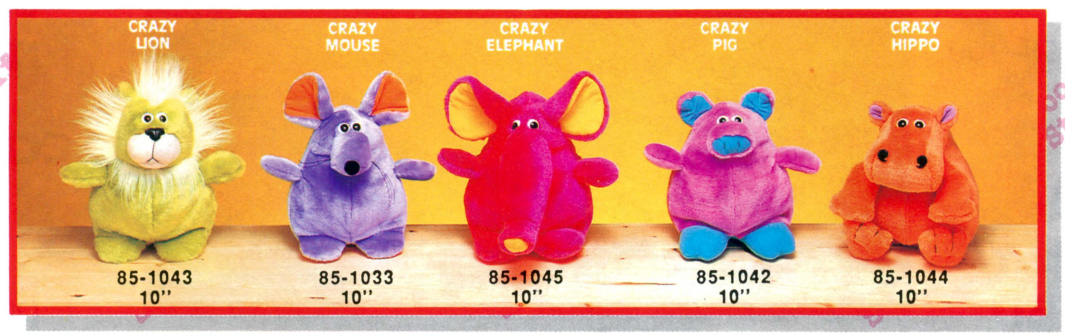



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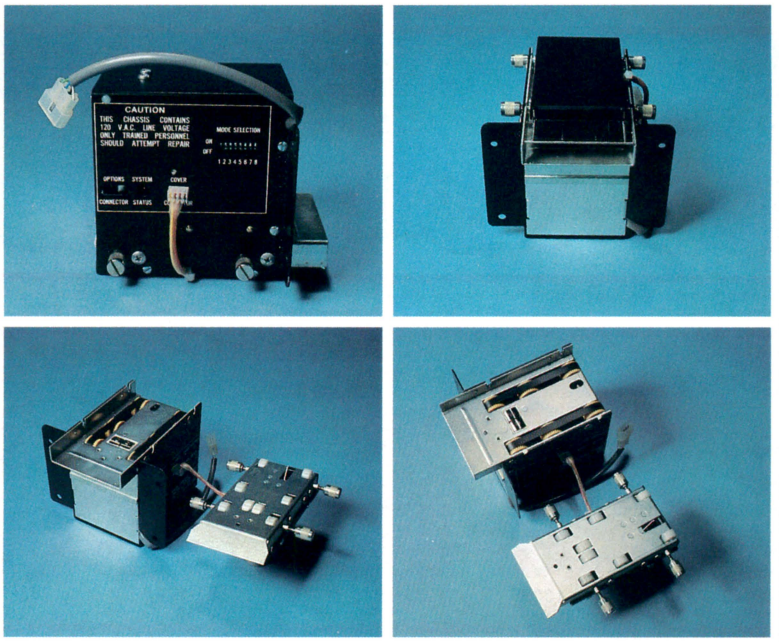

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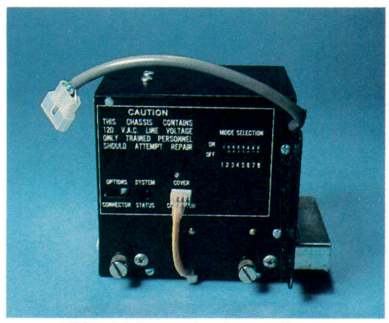

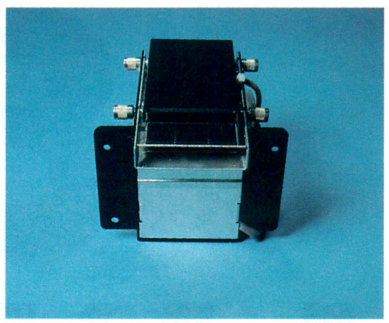

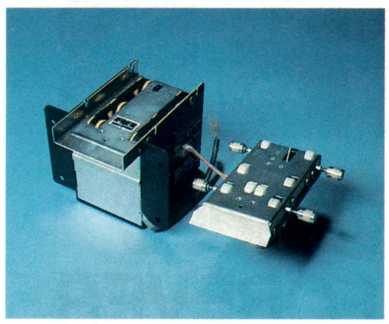

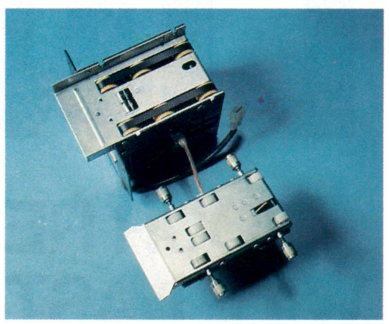

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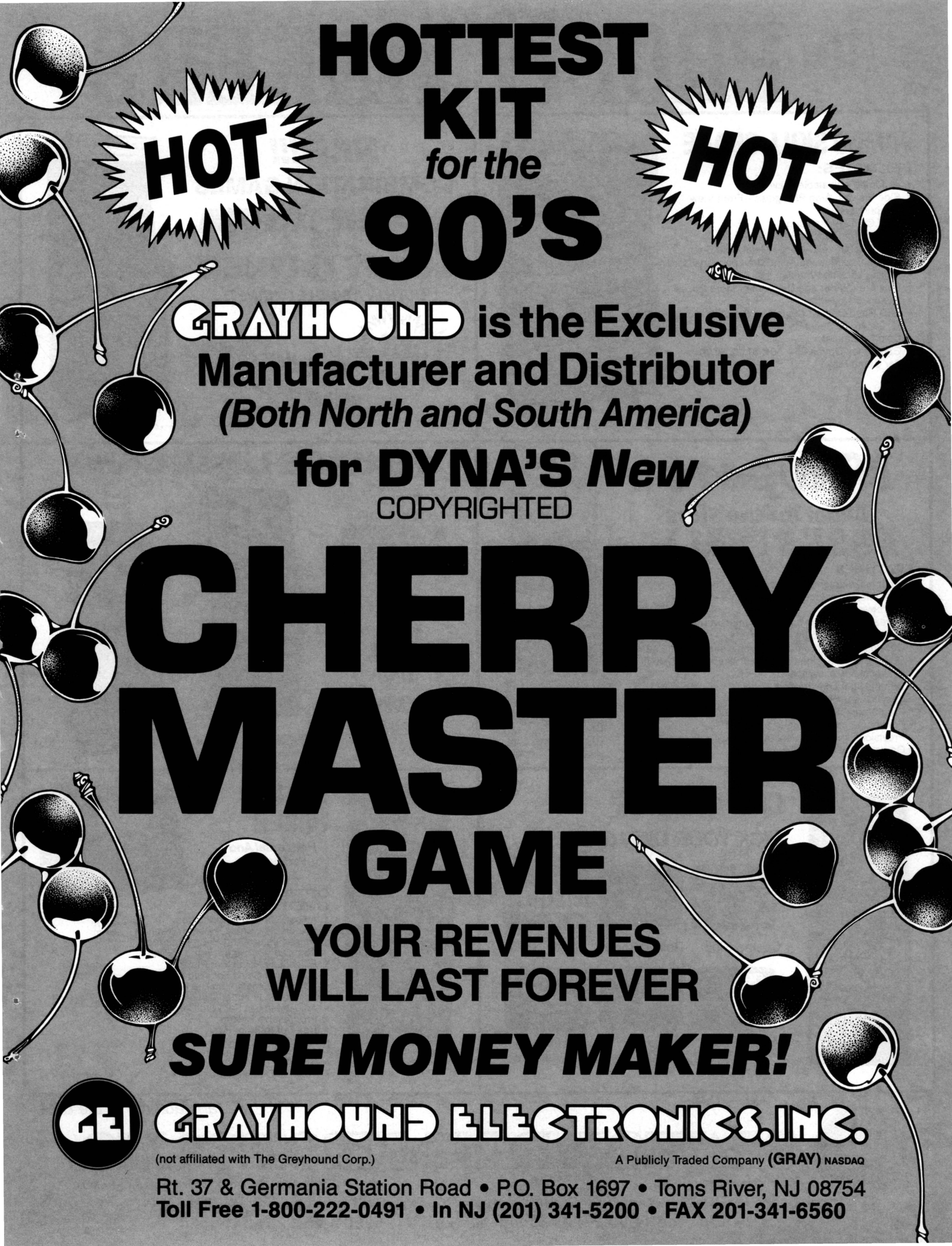
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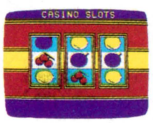

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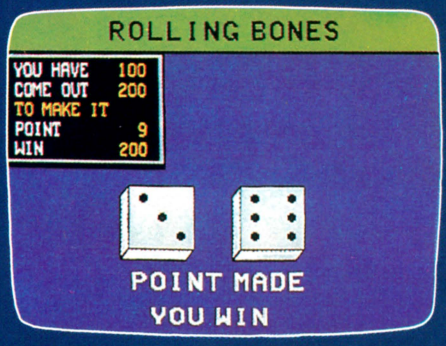

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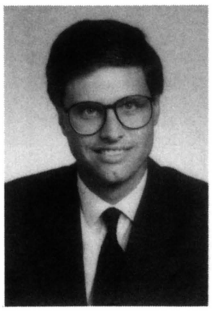
Why Redemption?

leading redemption operator Randy Chilton tells "pros & cons": in this profit-making market, the operator can call the shots



RANDY CHILTON

AMOA VP Randy Chilton (Chilton Vending, Wichita, Kansas) is a devoted redemption operator. He runs profitable crane routes in truck stops, and runs a variety of redemption equipment in gamerooms and arcades. If other categories of equipment aren't performing as well as they used to, Randy says, redemption is proving to be timeless . . . a "what you get out of it, is what you put into it" type of market.

The Minnesota Operators of Music & Amusement thought enough of Randy's redemption expertise to invite him to their spring convention, where he delivered a seminar on the topic to an eager audience. This article is based on Randy's seminar.

Are you considering getting into redemption? If so, you're in good company. You've probably heard about the increased family traffic, the higher profits, and the equipment which can last for months — or years — in the same location.

You've probably also heard about the hassles of tickets and toys, the need for more staff, and — in some states — legal questions surrounding issues of "skill versus chance."

Redemption is a whole new world for the typical coin machine amusement operator. It pays to belong to this world, but it also pays to think carefully about it, before you do.

Why redemption? Operating this type of equipment offers several advantages. The equipment retains its value. It boasts wide audience appeal. It increases your product mix. It's more widely accepted (in most cases) by a broader demographic basis than pins and videos. Redemption also makes more money for you and your locations. It gives you an



The redemption center at Northrock Lanes, one of Chilton Vending's bowling center locations. Note the attractive and modern design — appearance counts!

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edge over competitors who are too lazy to meet the redemption challenge. It gives you a valid argument for new location contracts.

Hey, redemption will even draw new players to your video games . . . and it's not currently available on anybody's home video system!

For all these reasons, redemption is the direction the industry is going.

On the other hand, why would anyone *not* want to operate redemption equipment? Well, don't let anybody fool you: it is hard work. You have to mess with tickets. You have to mess with toys. Somebody — either you or your location — has to staff a redemption center, and that costs money. You might have to buy a prize showcase.

But ask yourself: am I really so thrilled with the performance of the "typical" categories of equipment on my route? If not, maybe you're looking for something new. Maybe redemption is your answer.

PRODUCT & STAFFING

If you say "Yes, I'd like to try redemption," what then? You begin by thinking about product mix selection. That means considering legality. Your local distributor can probably tell you which way the wind is blowing in your state. It also means considering overall attraction. Do you want to draw moms and dads to pizza gamerooms? Whole families to arcades? Adults in taverns? Little kids in shopping malls? There's something in redemption for any and all of these groups.

Next, you have to think about staffing. Ideally, during off-hours, you want to tie your redemption machine into existing counter control staff. The location pays for this. But during peak hours, *your* staff should supervise the redemption machines. This way, you share the expense with your location. Post the hours that your guy will be there. If profits go up during that time, the location will come back for more!

One reason the redemption machine supervisor should be your employee, is so you can train that person properly. You should give them the keys to the machine so they can keep it stocked. You should train them to do minor repairs. You should train them to *constantly* clean the machine. It sounds expensive, but it makes the machine more attractive, which means, more profitable. The salary of a part-time, unskilled (but trained) redemption machine supervisor also compares favorably to the cost of sending a highly skilled technician out on service calls.

TICKET & PRIZE VALUES

The next issue to consider is ticket values. "Redemption" is called that because most of the machines vend tickets which are "redeemed" for prizes. Now, you can have several different tickets which are valued differently — the common range in the industry is between one cent and six cents each. (But don't let players hear you calling them "cents"; call them "points.") These ticket values can be distinguished by using differently colored tickets.

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give away in two ways. First, by establishing a sufficient mark-up on products. Mark-up can be anywhere from zero to 100% over what you paid for the goods, wholesale. Set the price wherever you feel comfortable, or wherever your policy dictates (according to ticket values which you have established). Marking up the value of merchandise is fair, because the customer would have to pay that mark-up in a retail store anyway. And, if the player wins the game from your prize counter, he is also paying for the entertainment value of playing and winning the game.

Second, you should control prize give-away levels by controlling the number of tickets dispensed per game. This is known as the "hit frequency" (to use Frank Seninsky's term, which has been adopted industry-wide). If you leave each of your redemption games "as is" when it comes from the manufacturer, the hit frequency will probably be all over the scale — some games dispensing tickets freely, others not. That's not a good idea. Figure out the average score per game, and set up a ticket reward level which comes out to be 20 to 30% of the gross. That is, over the long haul, the average player should win 30 cents' worth of tickets for each dollar he puts into the game.

If you're doing this correctly, your merchandise expenses should come out to be 20 to 30% of revenues. Make sure you're achieving this goal by taking weekly physical inventories of how many prizes you still have, and how many you have given away to players.

You've probably heard about "trade-in" or "trade-up" merchandise. This refers to letting players win, say, a lot of 85¢ prizes, then trade them in at the prize counter for one, really nice, $10 prize. Of course, these values are simply cited for illustration. You could let your players win $8 deluxe plush toys, and after they've collected enough of them, trade them in for a TV set, or whatever. The idea is to offer many low-value prizes (sometimes called "slum merchandise"), along with a few high-value products. Prizes at better redemption centers typically range from a plastic comb worth 3¢, to a VCR worth $500.

When you get up to high-value merchandise like this, you want to make sure your staff is not counting the tickets wrong, or giving costly product away to anyone who hasn't really earned it. One way to ensure this, is to use ticket validators (punch, fold, cut or shred the tickets as they are counted). Also, you can cut down on the number of tickets you give away (saves overhead) and increase customer convenience, by giving ticket vouchers. A ticket voucher is a certified document generated by your company, such as a little card or printed slip of paper. On this card or slip, your employee can fill in the blanks: "This voucher certifies that *(name of customer here)* has won *(number)* points' worth of tickets at the Fun Land Arcade." The customer can save the voucher (or several

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of them) until he or she has won enough points to win their desired "high-ticket item."

GAMEROOM DESIGN

If you're going to go this far — setting up prize counters, offering slum prizes and high-ticket items, training a redemption staff — you might as well think about designing your site for maximum profitability. Remember: we sell an "impulse" product. A well-designed entertainment center will earn more money for you than a regular "gameroom."

To make your redemption center attractive to the customer, consider everything from the layout, to the carpet, color scheme, lighting, and wall paint. Also (assuming we're talking about a gameroom in a bowling center, etc., instead of a stand-alone arcade) try to have the location pay for as much of this as possible. After all, it's his property. He'd have to pay for paint, carpet and lights anyway. If needed, share the expenses which are over and above what the location had already budgeted for an "ordinary" gameroom. Don't forget, the higher profits will be shared by the location. The cost should be shared, too. In an average-sized gameroom, by the way, you can jazz up an appealing design for probably no more than the cost of another video game.

The first two elements of gameroom design to consider, are product mix and floor space. For lack of a better guess, I'd say a redemption center should be at least 400 square feet. Now ask yourself: is this place going to have too many games, or not enough? Banking multiple units of a single type of game can generate more player excitement; but then, too many multi-player games in a small space can make for a tight fit. If the center is too small, maybe you should not even be thinking about redemption in this particular site at all! Ask yourself some common-sense questions about this.

When it comes to visual appeal, it pays to establish a relationship with an architect. (Remember, the location can pay some or all of this fee, too . . . and it doesn't have to be outrageously expensive.) Discuss budgets in advance. If necessary, do sketches. And tell your architect that your main goal is to *flash* the area. Use mirrors, neon, carpet designs, etc. to achieve this effect.

Of course, there's much, much more to say on the subject of redemption. The art of crane operating is a complete subject by itself. So is the art of merchandise selection, and the art of displaying prizes, and the art of assessing your clientele. The great thing about redemption is, there's as much room for creativity as you want to put into it. You're not locked into one type of product, one type of location, or one type of customer.

Why redemption? Because with redemption, you do the work . . . which means, you call the shots . . . which means, you make the profit margin!



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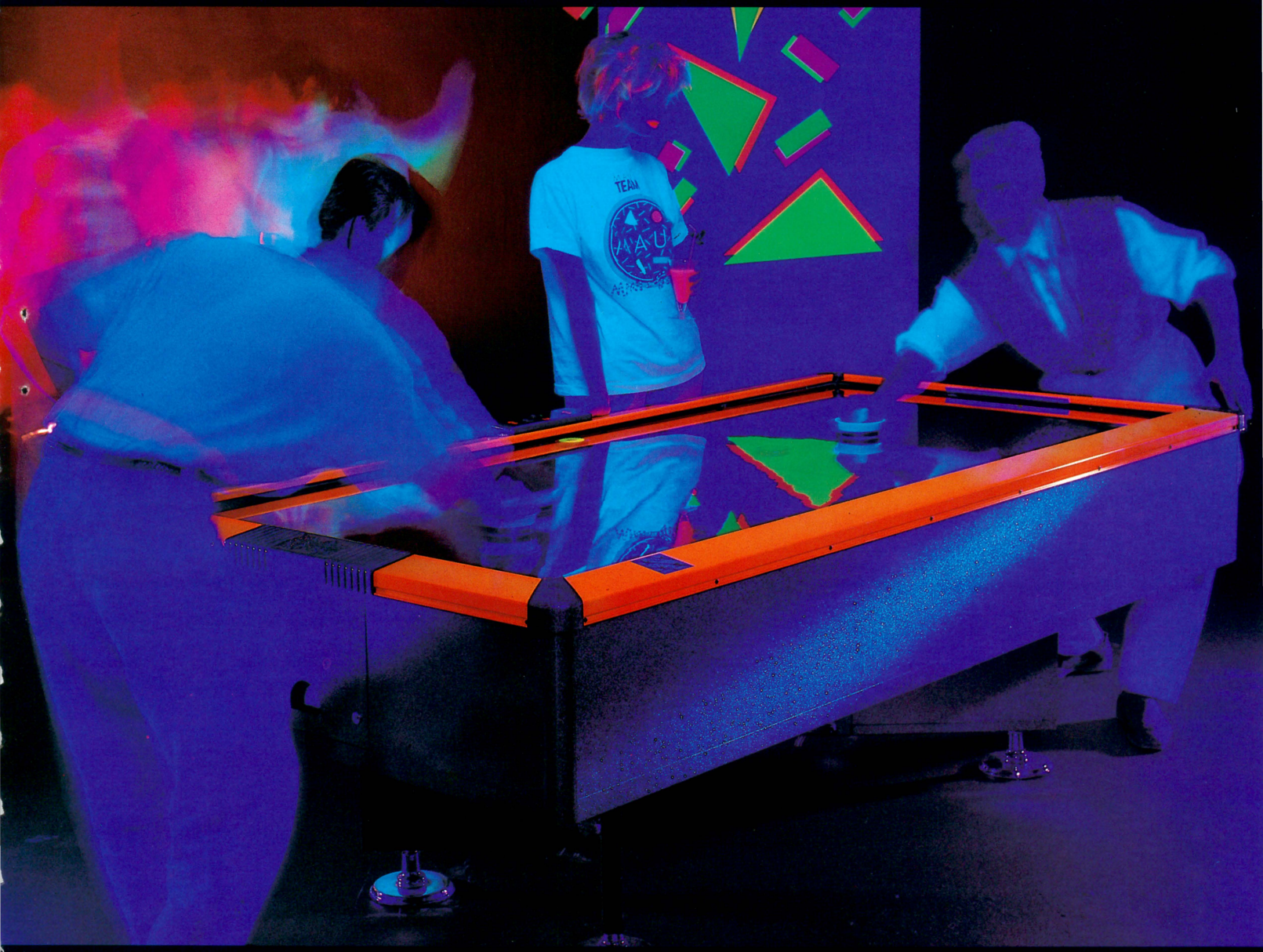

Dimensions: Height 86 cm, Width 126 cm, Length 249 cm
Weight: approximately 260 kgs

Equipment:
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All around profile strip prevents the puck from jumping out.
Rails: special rails fluorescent shining under black light
Fan: radial compressor with 420 m³/h air transport quantity
capacity 125 W
easily exchangeable
noise level: 61 decibel
Display: indicating the game credit, the time left and the goals made
Electrics: mounted on service slide easily accessible behind the door of the coin rejector,
fully extractable
Cash box and coin mechanism: large format cash box
coin mechanism: electronical or mechanical
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Installation of the table: simple installation by simply screwing on the feet
adjustment possibility: 20 mm provided by adjustable feet
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SPOTLIGHT SPECIAL

Coin Concepts, Inc.

these experienced pros are the operator's "redemption one-stop" offering their own & imported games, consulting, education & more

This month, the "*RePlay* Spotlight" shines on Coin Concepts, Inc., the East Brunswick, N.J. redemption specialists. CCI celebrated its second birthday last month... and smiles were even broader when all the milestones were added up.

CCI has nearly doubled its sales in the past year. They just moved into a new facility at 16 Edgeboro Road which, at 12,000 sq. ft., is double the size of their original site. The number of people at CCI has expanded from the four "founders," to a roster of 17 employees today.

CCI's product line is growing, too. Currently CCI has around 18 games on the market and four new games in development. At least one new title will be introduced at the AMOA Expo, and even more new games will bow at the IAAPA (the amusement parks show takes place in mid-November in Washington, D.C.).

"We've achieved a great deal of controlled growth in a very short time," reflected company president Art Warner. "But we never want to lose the personal touch we have with people. Nearly all of our employees have years of operating experience, and the resulting rapport with our customers is probably our single greatest asset."

A "REDEMPTION ONE-STOP"

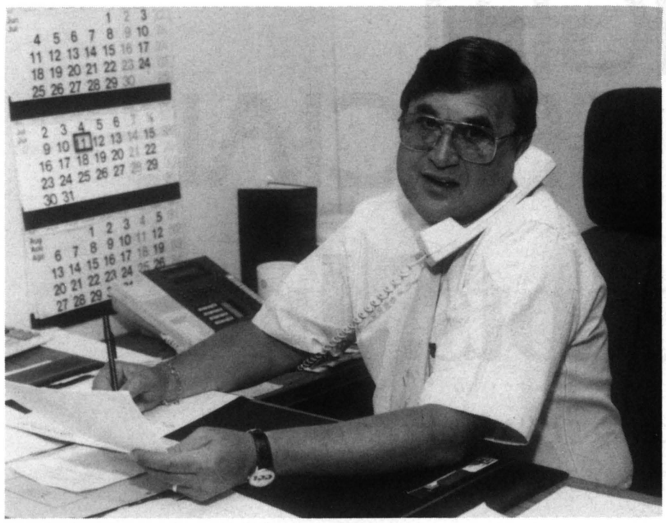
For those who haven't met them, CCI can best be described as a "one-stop" for redemption operators. They are truly a full-service organization, doing everything from creating initial game concepts, to assem-



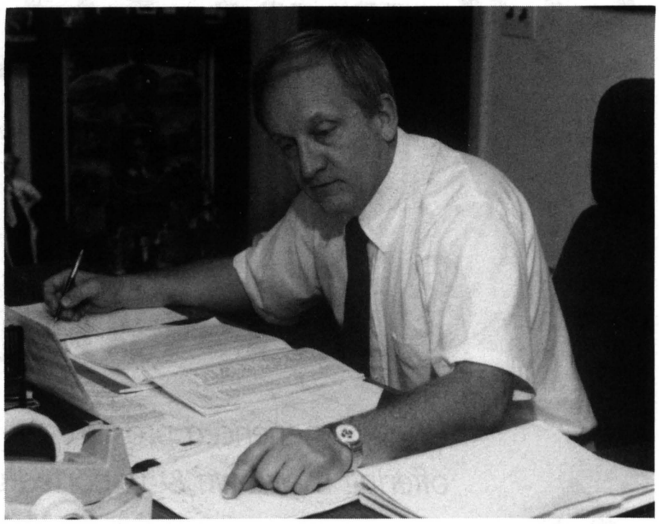
Having a conference in Coin Concepts' East Brunswick offices are Secretary/Treasurer Wylie Irwin, Carl DeVenio, Sales Rep Jim Tunney, Sales Rep Rhonda Fletcher and company prexy Art Warner.



Wylie Irwin and daughter Rhonda Fletcher proudly pose with their Jr. All American *basketball game sized for kids. This game is just one of Coin Concepts' "home grown" machines.*



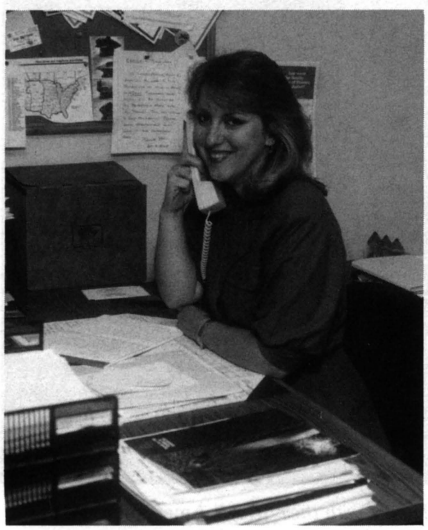
Coin Concepts, Inc. President Art Warner.



Secretary/Treasurer Wylie Irwin.

bly, thorough prototype development and tweaking, modification and importation of outstanding redemption games from overseas, consulting, education of operators and distributors, you name it. Starting this month they're even offering a product that will help redemption sites count tickets faster. Smiled Art Warner: "We do it all, short of collecting the cashbox!"

To every facet of the redemption business, CCI brings a "conceptual" approach. They always boil down years of operating experience into workable products and a wise, yet common-sense, approach to operator education and support. Company execs may walk around in "manufacturer shoes," but they still wear "operator hats"...and they see things from an operator's perspective.



Sales Rep Rhonda Fletcher.

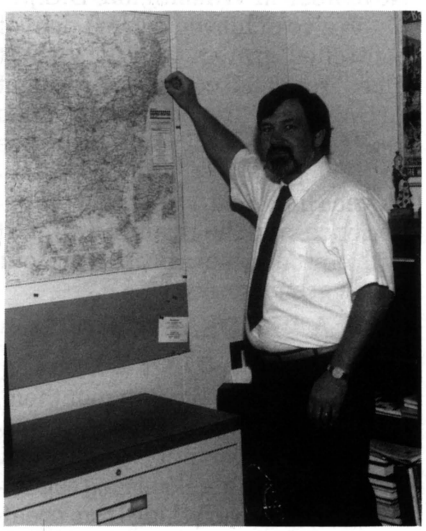
SELLING EXPERTISE & SERVICE

Basically, CCI isn't just selling games with ticket or token dispensers on them. They are selling years of expertise in this new and unique market which requires just as much specialized understanding as, say, jukeboxes. With years of redemption experience behind them, the folks at CCI understand how to make a successful redemption game. "You can't just take an amusement game or a gray-area game and put a ticket dispenser on it," said execs. "You have to know how to entertain the players with enjoyable gameplay and then reward them with the feeling that they are winners. That's what redemption is all about. With redemption the player normally gets a return on his money of 25 to 35%. If he spends $10, he should walk out of the location with something worth $2.50 or $3.50; which means, the player walks out a winner and the operator is a winner, too!"

Like most worthwhile things, this isn't always easy...even for the seasoned pros at CCI. They pour all their expert knowledge into the design and concept of a new game, then build a prototype and set up video cameras to record customer reaction at test sites. Games are tweaked according to data gathered in this process...and up to three different prototypes may be constructed and tested before the product is offered to the trade.

But once a CCI game is put on the showroom floor, said the firm, "our games have been tested and proven successful. They entertain players and they make money for operators. And they're sold at reasonable prices!"

Even making the sale is far from the end of CCI's involvement in the redemption process. The firm thoroughly prepares each machine before shipment, custom-tailoring it for the individual operator and location. That means taking care of many specialized redemption features which many operators (and even quite a few distributors and other manufacturers) don't understand ...things like setting the percentages of ticket or token pay-out levels, setting the "coinage in" requirements, setting the ticket or token out options, establishing the value of tokens, and then tying all these factors together for the most profitable



Sales Rep Joe Tunney.

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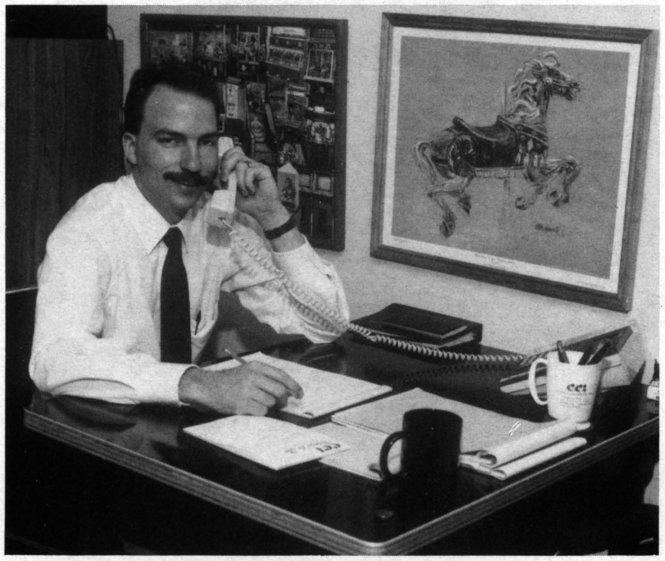

Operations Manager Jeff Lankiewicz.



Wylie Irwin, Jeff Lankiewicz and Art Warner confer on some plans.



Connie Fallon, office support.

operation of the unit.

And even then, the process doesn't stop. "Whenever we ship a game, we follow up with a questionnaire to see if they operator is satisfied or if there's a problem," Art Warner said. "And if there is a problem, we do something about it."

HOME-GROWN GAMES

Games now manufactured by CCI include the skill toss game *Toss 'Em*, the kiddie basketball game *Jr. All American*, the grown-up random-action game *Lotto Fever*, a fun novelty called *Mating Game*, and (new at AMOA) *Fire Fighter*, which is aimed at the growing family market. Their home-grown *Rebound* is now supplemented by *Rebound 2* (new at AMOA, updated with jazzier graphics and more skill features for wider legal acceptability).

"When we first built *Jr. All American & Toss 'Em*," recalled Art Warner, "we'd already had them out in the field four months and were on our third prototype. Nobody paid much attention at first when we introduced these titles at the 1989 IAAPA show. We literally had to give trial periods in order to get exposure. But once operators saw how the games performed, we had no problem . . . and by March of '90 some other manufacturers noticed this product was around!" Smiled Warner: "Around here we like to say we're often imitated, but never duplicated."



Beverly Hugle of the Accounting Department.

CCI'S IMPORT LINE

In addition to creating and building their own games, CCI also imports some real show-stoppers from some of the finest European redemption game makers. Even here, however, CCI puts its expertise to work.

"Every machine we sell is built to our specifications, even if it's imported," Art Warner stated. "We don't buy off-the-shelf units. If we see a game that we feel could be successful, we tell the original manufacturer how to tweak it for the U.S. market."

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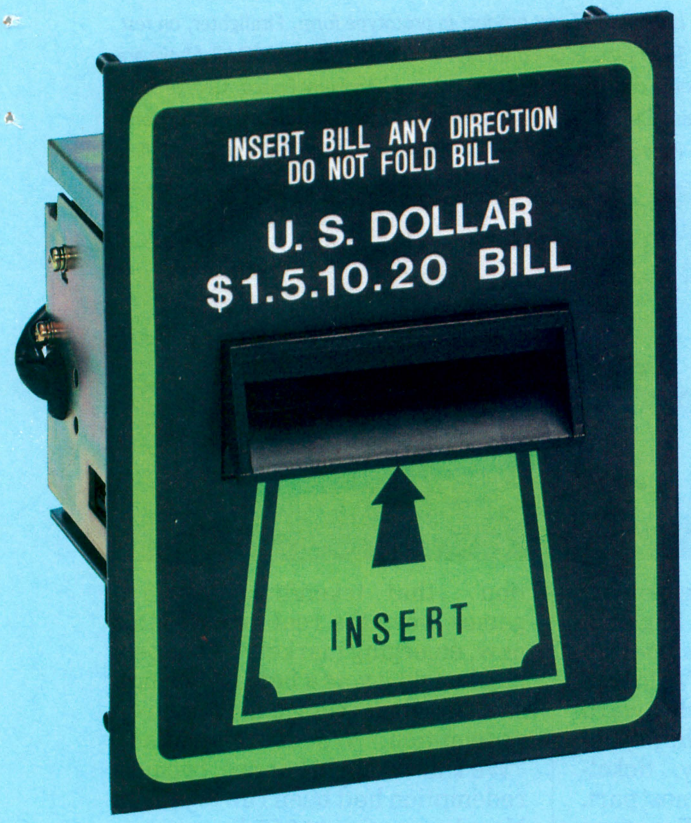



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At left is the firm's latest product in prototype form, Firefighter, *on test at Side Show Pizza in Greensburg, PA. (Look for it at AMOA!) Above are warehouse crew members Lonny Warner, Anthony Frusco, George Santana and Carl DeVenio with a lineup of* Toss 'Em *skill-toss redemption games. Pictured below are Service Manager Bob Schneider & Jim Moffat.*



Games currently imported by CCI include *Carousel Crane, Body Match, Five Card Draw, Gold Mine, Star Burst, Fairground Attraction, Love Meter, Power House, Jumbo the Elephant* and *The Monkey.* These range from large pusher-type arcade attractions to casino-themed amusement pieces to cranes, novelties and small kiddie venders. CCI currently deals with six overseas firms. They are Electro Automaten, the Belgian crane maker . . . K.W. Systems, Ltd. and MDM Leisure, two British firms which make larger novelties and attractions . . . Glendale Automatic, Ltd. is another British firm which makes the kiddie venders . . . and Amusement Design, an English firm which makes impulse/novelty games . . . .and a Welsh firm called Ace Coin (they make CCI's card-themed game *Five Card Draw).*

Adopting a European redemption game to the U.S. market isn't just a matter of changing from tuppence to quarters, CCI explained. It's also a question of shifting from gambling-style appeal to pure-amusement entertainment value. "In England, gaming is legal across the board," Art Warner explained. "We looked at many of Britain's cash award games and tried to see if they could be adapted to skill-play, ticket-rewarding games. For the most part, it was difficult. The entire European redemption market has been a good ways behind the U.S. market, although in the past six months it is really starting to catch on."

THE REDEMPTION MARKET

For all the super-heated hype and hoopla about redemption in the last couple of years, CCI believes the industry is still just warming up to the true potential of this market. "Today's activity is the tip of the iceberg," insisted Warner. "Redemption is still in its infancy."

Art Warner and CCI's secretary-treasurer Wylie Irwin gave their first crane seminars to the industry in 1984. They said then that cranes were just the beginning of redemption . . . that token/ticket reward games were the real heart of this new, emerging market. "Most people thought it was a fad, but we foresaw the whole blossoming of coin-op redemption," Warner pointed out. "We knew it could happen, because redemption had been run legally in New Jersey since 1957."

Warner's and Irwin's predictions came to pass. "In some parts of the country, such as large pockets in the Midwest and the entire East Coast," said Warner, "I don't believe anyone would even consider opening a family arcade or gameroom today without including redemption. That fever is now catching on in parts of the country we've never heard from. It's spreading westward."

Warner continued: "Many people are taking it slowly because of legality. You can't get anyone to put in writing, 'yes it's legal' or 'no it's not legal.' But we absolutely see an explosive market around the corner. We've gotten orders literally from all over the world!"

Full-blown redemption operating with prize displays, etc., is classically confined to arcades, but "We've even heard of one or two cases where a street operator has gotten involved in catalog redemption merchandising," Warner said. "It's an S&H Greenstamp type concept: they produce a small catalog showing the various prizes they offer. They have a small display — in a bar, a pizza restaurant, a bowling center, or whatever. When the player wins enough tickets, he sends them to the operator and is sent a prize in return."

Another facet of redemption's continuing growth is its expansion into the kiddie market. Coin Concepts was "here" well before some of its competitors. "Since we consider ourselves leaders in redemption, we wanted to have a product for everyone who came to an arcade," explained Warner. We saw that young children don't really have anything to play when they go to arcades with their families. They basically stand around and watch. We saw a niche and filled it. *Jr. All American* is played by kids in diapers, by two-year-olds. We also saw that parents don't stint on spending to make little kids happy. They're much more likely to spend $10 to put a smile on the little child's face, than to give $5 to their teenager." CCI has more games for the kiddie market in the works.

REDEMPTION'S BROTHER: GAMBLING GAMES

As some operators turn their attention to video lottery, CCI notes that redemption and gaming can profitably complement each other very well. "The redemption market and cash pay-out machines can coexist," Warner stated. "We know this because in Atlantic City, redemption arcades operate right next to gambling casinos and they both make money. Each market attracts its own type of player. Also, most people like to think they're winners. What's happening here, with both video lottery and redemption, is they get a few minutes of inexpensive entertainment and the opportunity of winning a prize. Redemption lets them feel like winners, without spending a lot of money, and the entire family can enjoy it."

REACHING OUT

Obviously, CCI isn't just throwing products into the market and then rushing on to the next fad. They take a long-term, nurturing approach . . . and that goes beyond service and support for individual games, to educational efforts that reach out to distributors and operators alike.

The firm recently began sending reps out to give redemption seminars at distributors' open houses. These events have met with a successful reception and will be continued. Warner himself will give a redemption seminar at the "Parks" show and will bring successful redemption operators along to talk as well. Other educational efforts are in the works for 1991.



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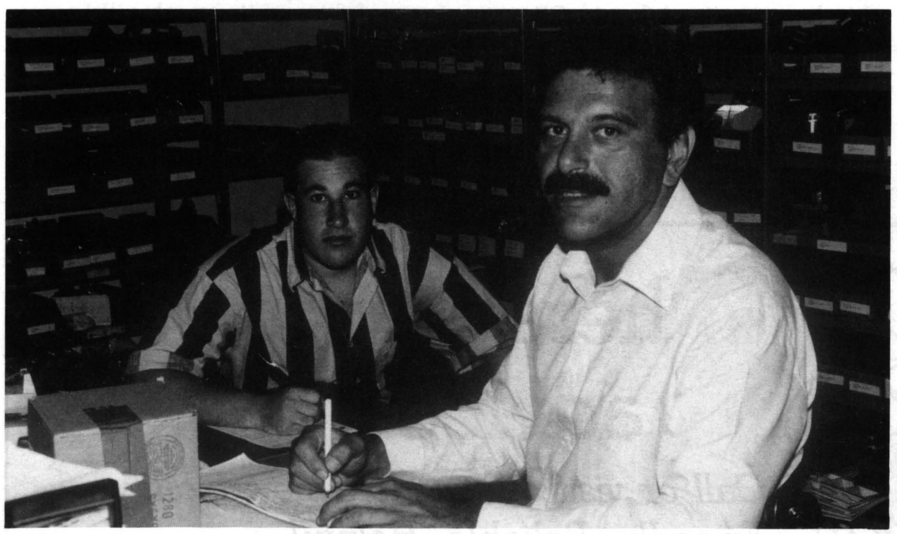
Above, brand new goods get shipped to the trade. Below, warehouse worker Lonny Warner and Parts Manager Dan Zych go over an order.



As for the all-important middleman, the distributor, CCI has gone from working with a handful of distributors in their initial months, to enjoying support from a truly nationwide network of major dealers, including some of the biggest names in this tier of the business. Overseas, CCI enjoys good working relationships with distributors in Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East.

"Distributors are waking up to the fact that they must rely on redemption," said CCI's Rhonda Fletcher. "They're calling and asking us about this market, which is great. That's why we're going on the road and giving seminars — these educational sessions are as much for distributors as for operators. They're slowly starting to learn and be receptive."

She added: "They will not be able to order 50 games and sell them off the floor. That's for a couple of reasons. One reason is that redemption is very specialized with each game customized to the individual customer. Another is because the distributors need to acquire knowledge of ticket and token value, prizes, merchandising . . . and they need to be able to educate the operator so that he's an informed customer and knows what he wants."

THE PEOPLE OF CCI

Four people were there when Coin Concepts opened its doors in Sept. 1988: Art Warner, Dick Silverman, Wylie Irwin and Rhonda Fletcher. Art was a VP with Betson and has almost a quarter century of experience selling to arcades, amusement parks and street operators. He's a familiar figure to many in the industry from years of redemption seminars and now via his column in this journal.

VP Dick Silverman is the engineer who turns redemption concepts into profitable realities. This graduate engineer boasts over 25 years' experience as a project engineer. He, too, toiled in the Betson shop before co-founding CCI.

Wylie Irwin, the firm's third Betson alumnus, is the company VP and is finishing up his third decade of involvement in all facets of coin-op, from manufacturing, sales and rides to operating arcades. He currently operates a family amusement center of his own, bolstering his operating experience with training in industrial arts and product design.

The fourth member of CCI who was "there on day one" is Rhonda Fletcher, who literally grew up in the business. From the time she was small, her family ran arcades in carnivals. While in college, Rhonda briefly worked for the respected operator Frank Seninsky and later she managed boardwalk locations in Seaside, N.J. After two years at Betson, Coin Concepts beckoned and Rhonda came aboard.

Sales rep Joe Tunney's family likewise owned an amusement pier in Seaside Heights, N.J. "When I was 11, I collected tickets on kiddie rides," he recalls. His family operated an arcade in the '70s and later Joe owned Funtown Arcade. He stopped operating and joined Coin Concepts in 1989.

Carl DeVenio is being "groomed" to join the sales staff as well. He started in the back preparing machines for shipment and he literally knows the games inside out. Head service man Bob Schneider and parts manager Dan Zych both get credit from all at CCI for their patient and hard-working approach to the business.

"The best thing about Coin Concepts is our employees. They all care and they all react to the customers' needs," said Art Warner. It's an approach which has brought two years of rapid growth to Coin Concepts . . . and one which will stand CCI in good stead as the redemption rocket continues to rise!

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Redeeming Quality

Dunis and Music-Vend host hundreds to successful open house; new videos & a redemption seminar highlight the happy affair

Dunis Distributors/Music Vend (Portland, Ore.) held an open house on Friday, Aug. 24 featuring two videos (Sega's *Moonwalker*, Capcom's *Magic Sword)* and redemption equipment by Coin Concepts including *Toss 'Em, Starburst, Rebound, Jr. All American,* and others.

Scores of arcade owners and street operators attended, and when you count their families and crews, plus the factory reps, attendance totals climbed into the hundreds, said one participant. Door prizes and refreshments were also provided. One clear highlight of the day was a redemption seminar given by Coin Concepts' Rhonda Fletcher. "The interest generated by the seminar and open house just goes to further prove the growing attention that redemption is receiving in our industry," Rhonda said afterward. "Also, by working in conjunction with other manufacturers, we're showing that redemption's success helps other facets of the industry. We're not out to replace videos and pins!"



Dunis' Lyn Shearer & Michael Damtew with Coin Concepts' Rhonda Fletcher and some of her games.

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Mr. Ticket

"don't redeem stolen tickets!" says inventor Steve Shoemaker
simple, inexpensive device lets you ID vended tickets on sight

Are you leaving thousands of dollars in blank checks for just anybody to pick up?

Don't answer so fast. . . especially if you're a redemption operator. "My manager told me a story about my ticket redemption center that I just had to pass along," related Wedges/Ledges prexy Steve Shoemaker (besides manufacturing cranes and coin pushers, Steve operates the Fun Factory arcade in Redondo Beach, Calif.).

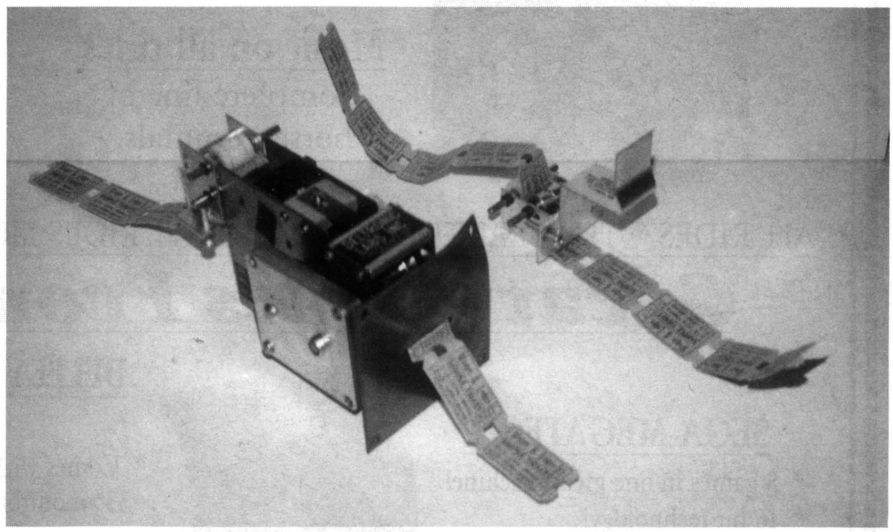
Here is Steve's story. "My manager explained that the price of merchandise in our redemption center — including sales tax, storage and inventory costs — made each ticket redeemed worth about 10 cents. We have, in effect, a 10-cent ticket.

"That made sense," Steve continued. "I would have thought it was a little lower, but I knew we had a pretty valuable ticket. After all, that's the reason we do so much redemption business.

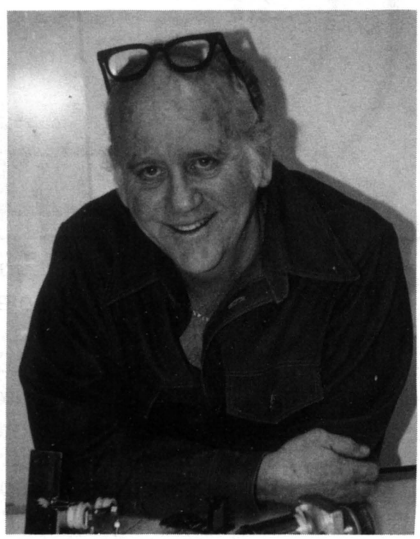
"Then he said each ticket was like a little signed check, guaranteed to be redeemed. . . paid off at a cost to us of 10 cents apiece. Two hundred dollars per stack, $4,000 per common box of 20,000 tickets!

"The subject came up," Steve said, "because somebody broke into a game and stole almost 2,000 tickets and it was going to *cost us more than the amount of cash in the coin box!* And, we already knew it's next to impossible to try to watch for ticket numbers when you're busy. The solution was that we simply had to be able to tell the difference between a vended ticket and a non-vended ticket. Now we can. . . and so can you."

That's right: game and gadget inventor Steve Shoemaker has come



Mr. Ticket *is shown by itself (right) and attached to a Deltronic Labs ticket dispenser.*



STEVE SHOEMAKER

up with a new ticket validator that he calls *Mr. Ticket.* It's a simple but effective device that punches a star-shaped hole in each ticket as it is vended from the machine. Available from Steve's manufacturing company Wedges/Ledges, in one- or two-wheel versions, *Mr. Ticket* uses a few classic components.

It's designed to last, too. The axles which hold the validating mechanism are stainless steel. The "star wheel" and plastic guide are easily and cheap to replace. Both parts of the validating mechanism roll on bronze bushings.

Compact enough to fit into any game, the present version marries to Deltronics ticket dispensers. It can be made to fit any other make of dispenser, said Steve Shoemaker.

The unit has been tested extensively at the huge Fun Factory arcade. If ticket theft is a possibility at your redemption center, you may wish to contact Wedges/Ledges and ask about Steve's current offer. "I'm so relieved about closing off this loophole in our system," he said, "that I'd like you to try our new ticket validator with my compliments!"

Prices start under $30 for one unit. Quantity discounts can bring the per-unit price down to under $20 each. Call Wedges/Ledges at 800/553-3439 for more information.

A Circus of Dollars

Bozo Basketball *takes the folks at Design Plus under the Big Top with major dealers and arcades*

Bozo the Clown has changed his corporate image. No longer the laid-back, happy-go-lucky character with nothing but fun on his mind, today Bozo is a very prosperous businessman. Matter of fact, Bozo's a "triple threat" who embodies three of the hottest trends in coin-op: character licensing, basketball games and the kiddie market.

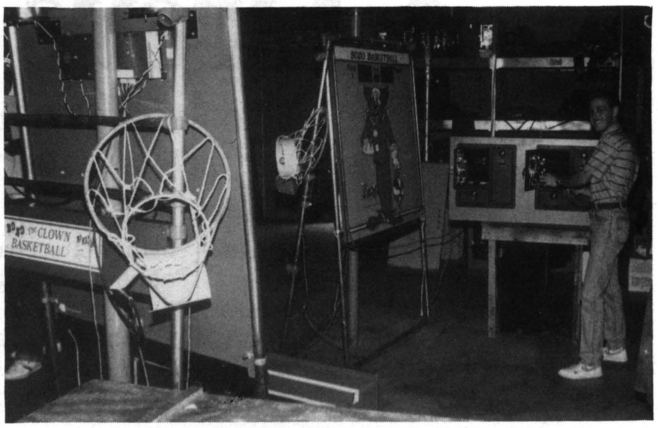
Which Bozo are we talking about? *Bozo Basketball,* featuring the likeness of the popular red-haired circus character. The popular ticket-vending, skill-toss basketball game is manufactured by the experienced folks at Design Plus Industries (Peoria Heights, Ill.).

Pictured are Design Plus' husband & wife team of Diane & Mike Seibert with Bozo Basketball.





The Design Plus team out in front of their Peoria Heights, Ill. facility with graphics for their Bozo Basketball *and* Quik Shot *games.*



Bruce Roxby, the firm's wiring expert, is hard at work in the factory.

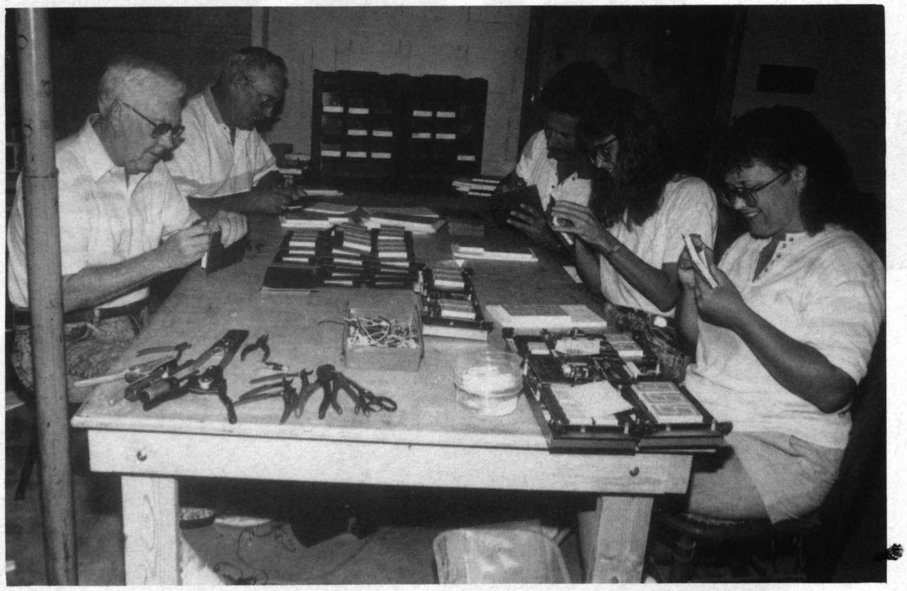
Of course, Bozo hasn't changed his image one bit as far as the kids who play the game are concerned. He's still the lovable goof whose globally broadcast TV shows have made him "the world's most famous clown." With *Bozo Basketball,* Design Plus Industries has carved out a solid market share in the small-fry basketball market.

By the same token, the company has found new "niche markets" for their line of redemption basketballs. Among these niches: inexpensive arcade products and — believe it or not — correctional facilities in 18 states. "They just love the games!" said company VP and sales chief Diane Seibert.

RePlay readers first met Design Plus's husband and wife team — President Mike Seibert and VP Diane Seibert — in our May, 1988 issue as they were bringing their *Quik Shot* basketball game to the industry. The company behind the game describes itself as "not a big manufacturer, but very knowledgeable about the product." From Office Manager Vicki Mesescher, to Arleen Smith who oversees in-house electronics production, to Production Manager Bruce Roxby, the key staff members at Design Plus run the show very professionally when principles Mike and Diane are on the road.



Office Manager Vicki Mesescher.



The firm's electronics "crew" stuffs electronics for the Bozo *and* Quik Shot *games.*

These days the road beckons often as the industry warms to a quality product featuring a beloved character. *Bozo* is easy to play, noted the firm, but still a true game of skill and players will keep playing simply because it's fun. "It's got a little bit of competition," explained Diane Seibert. "That's why we call our company 'Design Plus': we want to add a little something extra, not just copy somebody else's product. We want to create our own special market niche, and with *Bozo* we think we have. You're never a loser with Bozo. Even if you win zero points, you get one ticket. That's important for the little kids. The big kids can't dominate arcades by winning all the tickets."

That's why *Bozo* basically appeals to the kiddie market, "but you'd be surprised how many teens, young adults and parents also play the game," said Mike. "A lot of people grew up with Bozo on TV every morning. Big kids don't feel they're playing a game that was meant solely for babies. Little kids don't feel intimidated."

This universal appeal means that *Bozo* fits into a variety of locations, said the firm. Potential sites include

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Out in front of Aladdin's Castle's Fox Valley Center location (Aurora, Ill.) are Ace Novelty's Ron Lipp, Mike & Diane Seibert, American Vending Sales' John Neville and Aladdin's Manager Steven Berg.

redemption arcades, pizza restaurants, bowling alleys, skating rinks, movie theater lobbies, any family-oriented arcades, and basically anyplace kids go. "We were proud to be accepted by some of the larger chains with this game," stated Diane Seibert, "and we attribute that to the character of Bozo. He's a familiar, friendly character."

Play pricing is adjustable from one to four coins or tokens. Also adjustable is the playing time (30, 40, 50 or 60 seconds). A ticket dispenser is optional. "*Bozo* makes money without dispensing tickets," explained Diane. "It's gone into skating rinks, bowling centers and arcades without prize centers and it still makes money."

Ticket vending is also adjustable. The operator can reward a ticket for every 2, 4, 8 or 10 shooting points earned by the player. The operator can also regulate the game so the game stops vending tickets after a selected maximum, or so that it gives unlimited tickets.

Construction of *Bozo Basketball* is "almost modular" said the firm. Assembly is a breeze, said Design Plus. *Bozo* comes in one shipping crate and can be assembled in 45 minutes, tops, by following simple, numbered-picture instructions, and not having to call the manufacturer for help five times in the assembly process. Also, says Design Plus, operators appreciate having the final, assembled unit work reliably "right out of the box."

By the way, these design features also yield considerable mobility. Whether it's *Quik Shot* (arcade version 400 lbs.) or *Bozo* (single weighs 310 lbs., double weighs 400 lbs.), they're just 32" wide and go through any standard door.

Design Plus also makes a double hoop version, one- or two-player *Bozo Basketball* that's only 13" wider than the single-hoop version. A well-known San Francisco arcade with the double hoop version did over $1,000 in just six days with a double-hoop unit, reported the company. "Nobody else makes a narrow-width, double-hoop basketball game," Mike pointed out. "This feature is a big seller for us. Beyond that, all versions of the game are not over-built or so massive that the game is not inviting. It has true eye appeal. We have four-color silk-screened graphics on our backboards. That's a real plus for locations that take pride in their appearance."

Gameplay on *Bozo* offers practice time before the clock starts — either 15 seconds of shooting, or until the player makes his first basket. There's no start button. This is yet another feature which makes the game "user friendly" for little kids,



This colorful shot shows kids enjoying the basketball skill game featuring the "world's most famous clown." The **Bozo Basketball** *game is available in single-hoop and double-hoop models.*

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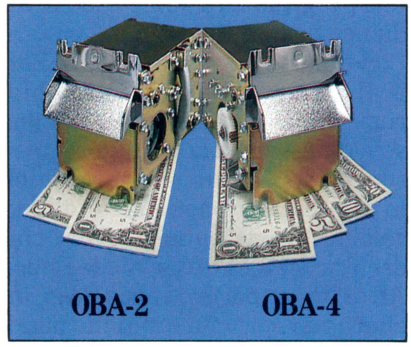

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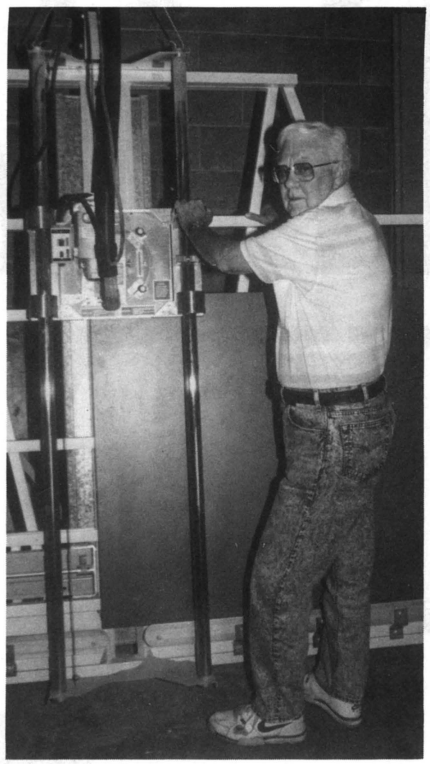
said the firm. They put their money in and just start playing. (By the way, *RePlay* has observed some little kids who were simply enchanted with *Bozo Basketball* at distributor open houses. The children were brought to these affairs by their operator parents.) Bells & whistles include an optional winner light, flashing lights on the background are standard, as is the music ("Entry of the Gladiators," the instantly recognizable circus tune).

Service is a point of pride with Design Plus. Within the 90-day warranty, they deliver overnight replacement of individual components if anything goes wrong. "Ask anybody in the industry and you'll find we have impeccable service," Diane said. The firm offers a reasonable, flat charge on any PCB repair, even if the board is a couple of years old.

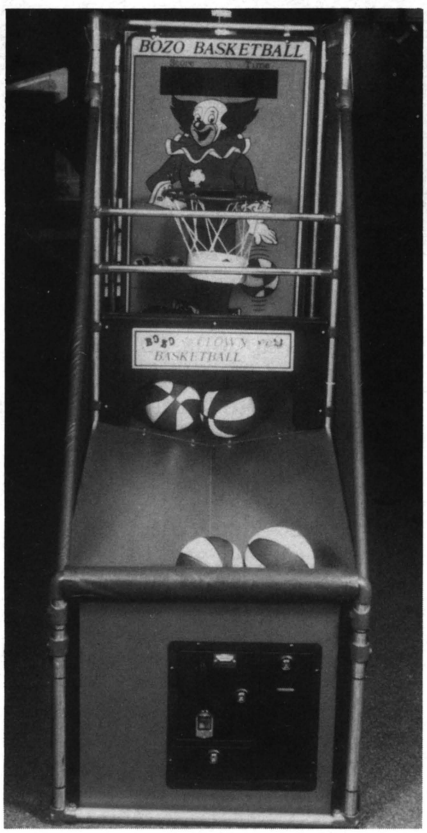
One factor that *Bozo Basketball* has going for it is the incredible exposure given to the title character, thanks to Larry Harmon Studios in Hollywood. A live show featuring Bozo airs on TV five days a week in six major American TV markets. Most cable channels get Chicago's WGN Channel 9 Superstation, for example, which means that this live Bozo programming is available on the TV sets of over 100 million U.S. citizens. This same show is also broadcast overseas, for example in much of South America, said the Seiberts. *Bozo Basketball* has received international publicity on this program as a game used in audience competition.

Beyond the live-action show, Bozo is also an animated cartoon which runs in various time zones, stations, schedules, etc. And an actor impersonating the Bozo character is liable to pop up in promotional and fund-raising events ranging from children's charities to the White House. All of this exposure keeps Bozo, the character, prominent in the minds of kids and parents . . . and keeps a wealth of positive (and profitable) associations on tap for *Bozo Basketball.*

The game is available through the distributor network . . . a marketing chain that Design Plus strongly believes in. "We are a fairly new company compared to many in the industry," allowed Mike Seibert. "When we entered the market, many distributors had already selected a basketball to represent. It was hard to establish that network, but we worked at it. We didn't go direct and hurt the market. As a result, we have some super distributors."



The firm's "master craftsman," D.C. "Red" Engel. He's responsible for the ramps and coinboxes.



The single-hoop Bozo Basketball *game.*

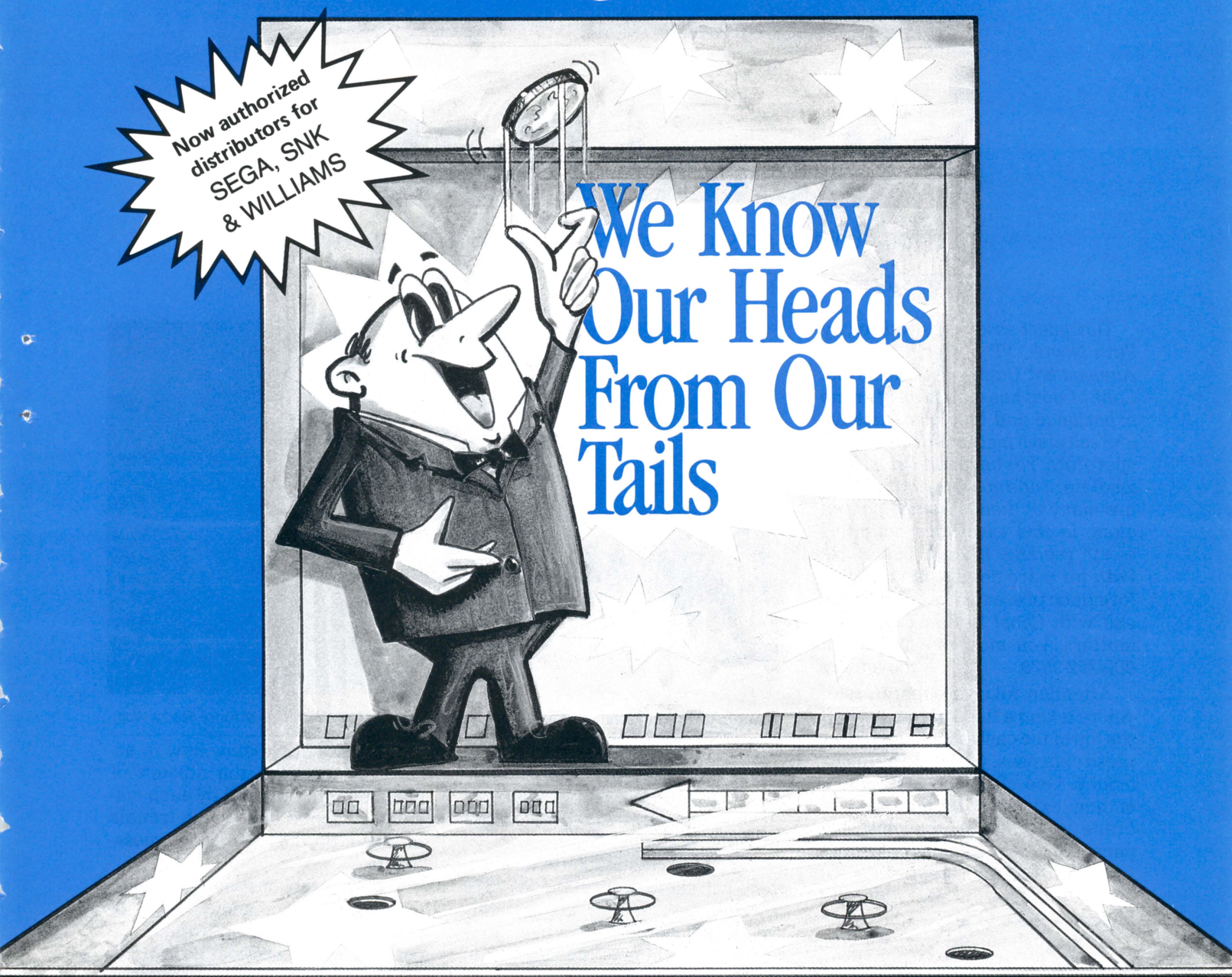
Added Diane: "We support distributors and they support us. I can't say enough good about American Vending, who did a phenomenal job with our *Quik Shot* game. The same goes for Pioneer Distributing, J&J Distributing and Music-Vend. They all put *Quik Shot* on the map. With Bozo," Diane continued, "distributors actually called us and have asked to represent the game. And today we're very proud to count dealers like Mondial, State Sales, Brady, Operators' Distributors, Rowe International, Active, Cleveland Coin, Mountain Coin and many others in our lineup."

Bozo has given Design Plus a fresh new impetus for 1990 and beyond, said the firm. "We've found that by expanding the niche games, we've been able to keep basketball a strong product," Mike Seibert said. "Our philosophy is to find the middle ground and build the most reliable game possible, within a reasonable price."

Bozo has had positive effects on the firm's other products as well. "We've been using the technology from *Bozo* to improve our line of *Quik-Shot* games, now available in single-hoop or double-hoop versions, with your choice of full-sized or seven-inch basketballs." Better netting, backboards and a state-of-the-art, air-operated gate are all recent upgrades, yet the unit remains economical, said Mike. "It's a lower-priced alternative for the arcade market."

Planned for an AMOA expo debut is another Bozo product from Design Plus. This one will be another redemption skill game (but not a basketball game) featuring Bozo "in action" on the background. Stop by Design Plus's booth and meet the "world's most famous clown" in all his coin-op glory. Bozo the Clown is sure to put a smile on the player's face . . . and Bozo the Coin-Op Businessman is sure to put extra dollars into the operator's bottom line.

American Vending Sales...



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Busted Plush?

are you "coming up short" on crane profits every darn month? common-sense tips from Coast to Coast's Patti Novak could help

This guest essay was written by Patti Novak, VP of Coast to Coast Amusement Game Dist. (Roseville, Calif.). Coast has quite a bit of crane experience and they also package and sell plush merchandise to crane operators. For beginning and intermediate crane operators (and there are many of them), the tips passed along in this essay are definitely worth reading. If you'd like to ask Patti for more details about the information presented here, or to consult with Coast to Coast on other matters, you may reach them at 800/752-9879. — the editors

Attention, all crane operators! If you're taking a fixed percentage off the top of the cash box take to cover plush expenses, you could be losing money. One of the biggest, never-ending expenses in operating a crane is, no doubt, the plush expense. Too often, crane operators find that their plush expenses eat away at their profit. But it doesn't have to be like this!

Your plush should work for you, not against you. In this essay, I'll give you a few tips on making plush a "profit center." But first, let's take a closer look at the problem: charging for what you're actually vending.

THE "CATCH-22" OF RUNNING CRANES

Some crane operators get caught in a classic "Catch-22" situation. They feel they can't put attractive, quality items in their cranes at quarter play (or even fifty cent play), because they have no way to recapture their cost. How does this happen? Frequently, route collectors will collect 33% off the top of the cash box earnings for plush cost. They might not have detailed records or other good reasons for making it 33%; they just automatically say, "Okay, that's 33% off the top." Then they split whatever is left 50/50 with the location.



Coast to Coast's Ben Santucci & Patti Novak (Ben's fiancé) with Bill Van Anda & fiancé Sandra Wolf.

But close examination of the numbers will show many of these "33% off the top" cranes are *actually* vending closer to 40% or even 50% of the total value of the cashbox in prizes. This happens either by accident or necessity... but either way, the operator's profit margins are uncomfortably small. Consequently, the operator feels compelled to settle for smaller, less-appealing plush. Of course, this usually results in decreased income and greater customer dissatisfaction.

A related dilemma that faces some operators: inventory expense and control. Keeping track of (and actually getting an accurate account of) exactly how many toys were used in a particular location, for a particular collection period, can be both tedious and time-consuming. That's why these operators may take 33% off the top in the first place. They don't know how to accurately measure the amount of plush actually vended by each machine, or feel it's too much trouble to do so. So they work by "guesstimate."

If these problems sound familiar, we'd like to recommend a new approach to crane operation...a common-sense approach that can save you time and money (in labor costs as well as inventory control). At the same time, this recommended approach allows you to fill your cranes with quality merchandise that more than pays for itself.

CHARGING FOR ACTUAL FILLS

Our common-sense approach begins with the collection procedure. Start by charging only for the actual fills you've made for a particular collection period. You can accomplish this by a simple, on-site, record-keeping system. Here's how it works.

Let's say you install a crane into a location filled with toys. You begin

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Machine #	Machine Name	Install Date	Last Collection	Amount	Left	Right	This Collection
192	CRANE-WOOD	09/21/90	New Install		47050	0	$

Charged Expenses $_____ Total Amount $_____

Overhead Expenses $_____ - Refunds $_____

Amount to Escrow $_____ - Expenses $_____

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_____ _____ # TOYS ADDED FROM FILLS_____

_____ _____ # TOYS ADDED TODAY _____

_____ _____ COST OF TOYS PER PIECE x_____

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with approximately 150 pieces in the crane. On an index card kept inside the crane, you log the number of pieces with which you began. A blank collection ticket is then left inside the crane with an area marked specifically for fills.

As your route personnel make the necessary fills, they simply log the number of pieces entered for that period. At collection time, your employee charges off the top only for *what was actually used* (i.e., the amount of new plush put into the crane since the last collection period). In this case, say 60 pieces were put into the crane for that collection period. The cost of those 60 pieces would come off the top, and the remainder of the money in the cash box would be split 50/50.

This enables your 50% to be realized as what it should be: *profit!* Should you decide to pull the crane from the location, simply refer to the index card and charge off the top only what is needed to reach the original 150 pieces.

A WIN-WIN SITUATION

Now you are guaranteed a return for your true product cost. Should you pay out even 50%, you are still sure to recover your actual cost instead of only regaining, as in the example cited above, 33%...while the other 17% of plush costs come out of your profit.

Using this method, as prize value goes higher, so does operator profit. You may even wish to add a nickel or dime to your per-unit plush cost to help recapture your overhead expenses, such as vehicle upkeep and employee costs.

Now the only problem you're faced with is making sure your employees properly add and log the correct number of pieces each time a fill is made. In order to simplify the fill process, we suggest making the fills in consistent 20-piece increments. By simply breaking down the plush in bags of 20 (or buying it already bagged in lots of 20), you'll be able to determine exactly the cost and size averages you're operating with. Should you decide to purchase plush in 20-piece pre-mixed lots, you'll also eliminate money in labor costs as well as ensure an accurate inventory.

By following the record-keeping and inventory-cost procedures suggested here, you can keep your collections up...and keep the crane market strong. Let's work together to make sure all crane operators have a truly prosperous future!



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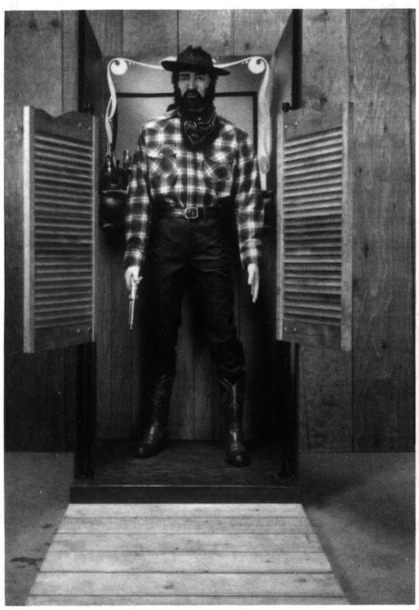
Versatile Vari-Tech

Into redemption? So's Vari-Tech. Sports games? They've got 'em. How about impulse, midway or arcade games? Vari-Tech does it all!

Are the coin-op amusement industry and the outdoor amusement park business growing closer together, borrowing each other's equipment and philosophies? If so, when the two markets finally meet in the middle, they'll find Vari-Tech International already there, helping them. Indeed, Vari-Tech has spent the last several years reaching out to both markets and pulling them closer together, resulting in more profitability for all.

Some tradesters may still think of Vari-Tech as that Grandville, Mich. firm which makes the entertaining novelty *Mr. Six-Gun*. Charming as this classic attraction is, there's more . . . much more . . . to the company. With redemption on the rise, Vari-Tech is expanding into multiple markets and positioning itself as a real coin-op contender for the '90s.





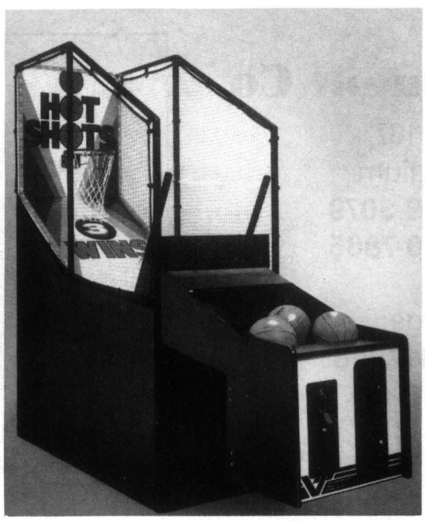
General Manager Mark Kane.

STAKING THEIR CLAIM

"We feel we are one of the leading companies in the coin-op industry, based on our level of involvement in cross-markets," said General Manager Mark Kane. "We address more markets than probably any other amusement games company in the business: everything from U.S. and overseas coin-op arcades and giant, world-famous amusement parks, to the small operator who needs a single piece of equipment. And we have unique operating experience to offer."

What does Vari-Tech make? Arcade games like *Water Race, Truck Race, Dip Bowlers, Tin Can Alley, & Animal Festival* . . . Impulse games, like *Speed Test, Memory Test & Reaktotest* . . . Sports games like their basketball and golf games *Hot Shots, Mini Pro Golf & Golfomat* . . . and a variety of group midway games that can be custom-built for individual sites. And they do contract engineering and manufacturing for other game makers, too.

To whom does Vari-Tech sell? Big national arcade chains. Street operators. Amusement parks. And everybody in between. Moreover, Vari-Tech has set up, operated and/or launched special coin-op amusement sections for some of world's most famous amusement parks — starting with Disney and going straight through Universal Studios, Marine World, Dollywood, you name it.



SIZE COUNTS

They're bigger than you think: Vari-Tech has 32 employees includ-



From Mr. Six Gun *to their* Hot Shots *basketball to reaction testers, Vari-Tech does indeed offer a wide variety of amusement products for the trade.*

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Vari-Tech International's large and good-looking Grandville, Mich. facilities.



Vari-Tech's top-notch Sales Department: back row, Sales Manager Reggie Moultrie and Sales Rep Tom Kane; front row, Sales Secretary Kim Scripps and Sales Rep Larry Thatcher.

ing four sales staffers, six management chiefs and the balance in production and administrative support. Their 42,000-sq.-ft. facility includes sales and administrative offices, an accounting department, complete engineering section, customer service department, and that's just half the building! The other half is devoted to manufacturing and parts storage.

Vari-Tech has been around longer than you probably realize. Vari-Tech's parent company, Burke E. Porter Machinery, is well into in its fourth decade of manufacture (they now build specialty test gear for car). Looking for new markets in the mid-1980s, Burke hired experienced coin-op pros and applied Burke engineering talent and experience to the coin-op games market. The result was Vari-Tech.

OPERATING EXPERIENCE

Many of the firm's key personnel have amusement park experience. In fact, anybody who wants to start an alumni club for the Six Flags amusement park conglomerate would do well to start here.

Vari-Tech's general manager Mark Kane spent six years in management at Six Flags, mostly in games. A decisive man who speaks crisply and confidently, he's extremely well informed about his multiple, overlapping markets and can martial his thoughts — and Vari-Tech's strategies — to address many aspects of the business simultaneously and intelligently.

Anne Coleman runs special operations and consulting for client locations, marketing and advertising. She's another Six Flags alumnus. Her impressive track record includes running successful Vari-Tech coin amusement operations for Disney, Marine Land and other "name" parks.

Sales Manager Ray Moultrie also came to Vari-Tech from Six Flags as operations manager and has moved to sales, where his ready smile and easy rapport with operators make him a natural. Engineering Manager Joel Beezhold and Manufacturing Manager Ted Maday round out the leadership.

THEIR FIRST GAMES

Vari-Tech's first games were *Dip Bowlers* and *Hot Shot Basketball*, late 1985. Vari-Tech found them successful in amusement parks, put ticket dispenser on them and converted them to coin-op redemption pieces. For indoor amusement operations, *Dip Bowlers* work best in kiddie-oriented places and when immediate wins are part of the experience, said Vari-Tech.

The firm has concentrated more on amusement parks with their basketballs which still have steady sales. "It's designed for an amusement park, which means it's durable and will last," said Mark Kane. "We decided not to make a low-end, PVC model."

MR. SIX-GUN

In 1986, Vari-Tech debuted *Mr. Six-Gun*, a technically solid update of an idea executed earlier by a British firm. The basic idea is for players to try to beat an mannequin-type cowboy figure to the draw with a

six-gun. "It's been one of the staples of our product line," said Mark Kane, "and in some circles, has shaped our identity in the market."

The game gives two plays for 50 cents, and is played by kids and adults alike. "Everybody loves it and it's a crowd-pleaser," said sales topper Ray Moultrie. "It gets constant, constant play. It does very well in everything from arcades to family entertainment centers, amusement parks and retail stores." Ray Moultrie said. "He draws a crowd if you can get him near the doors of your arcade, he'll actually pull people in and even increase the take of nearby games! It's definitely an attraction and a solid earner."

The title character is animated and features a high-quality voice which challenges and chides the players into a shoot-out. The digitally-generated voice does not distort over time, said the firm.

To see if they can out-draw the gunman, players pick up a metal six-gun which is connected to a pedestal-type player station. When the barroom doors swing open, the character and the player both "shoot." A photo sensor in the cowboy's chest registers a flash from a light inside the players gun muzzle. Based on the player's speed and accuracy, the game flashes a "rating" — slowpoke, he-man, etc. Hits and misses also provoke different verbal responses from the character.



Sales Mgr. Reggie Moultrie, Operations Mgr. Anne Coleman and Sales Rep Larry Thatcher go over design layouts. Among other things, Anne Coleman runs special operations and consulting for client locations.

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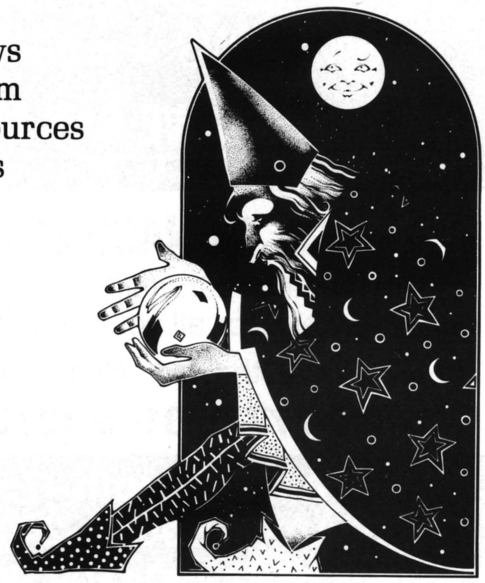

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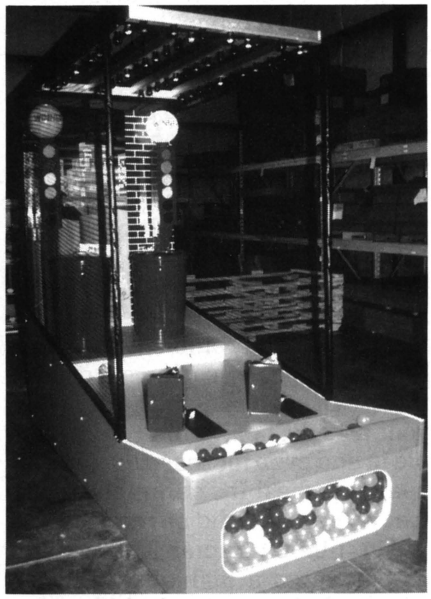
The gun is connected to the pedestal via wires which are covered by a flexible metal hose. It's very reliable, said the firm, but some supervision is a good idea to ward against vandalism. The game now has a ticket dispenser and three difficult player-selectable difficulty settings. It has also been adapted to different languages including Spanish, German, Finnish and Japanese.

Different characters and themes for this same basic concept are under development and may be shown at AMOA, Vari-Tech advised.

TIN CAN ALLEY & MINI PRO GOLF

In 1988, *Tin Can Alley* — another classic concept from amusement parks — was scaled down to a two-player coin-op unit with ticket dispenser. The game's basic concept is for players to throw balls into trash cans time after time as the can lids go up and down, with lots of music, digital voice instruction and sound effects (alley sounds, cars, horns, cats yowling, etc.) egging them on.



The firm's Tin Can Alley, *a fun two-player coin-op skill-toss game with ticket dispenser.*

"It's very flashy, entertaining game and it's also fun for non-players to watch," said Ray Moultrie. "This unit really adds a lot of action to any area it's in."

1989 saw Vari-Tech bring out its *Mini Pro Golf*. They bought the concept design from Tekbilt's Buzz Bruner and set about manufacturing this 12' deep by 4' wide game. The unit offers an up-sloping ramp with three scoring holes. One or two players have limited time for each putt as they compete over a nine-hole game. The putter is connected by plastic-covered steel cable to a metal putter stand. Music is played when you score. Digital LED scoreboard and timer display add to the fun.

"The mini-golf game category came about because of the tremendous growth of golf as the number-one growing sport in America today," said Mark Kane. (He's right: yuppies are trading tennis rackets for golf clubs.) "Also, everybody was looking for the second coming of the coin-op basketball," Kane said. "Coin-op golf hasn't proved to be that, but it has its own devoted



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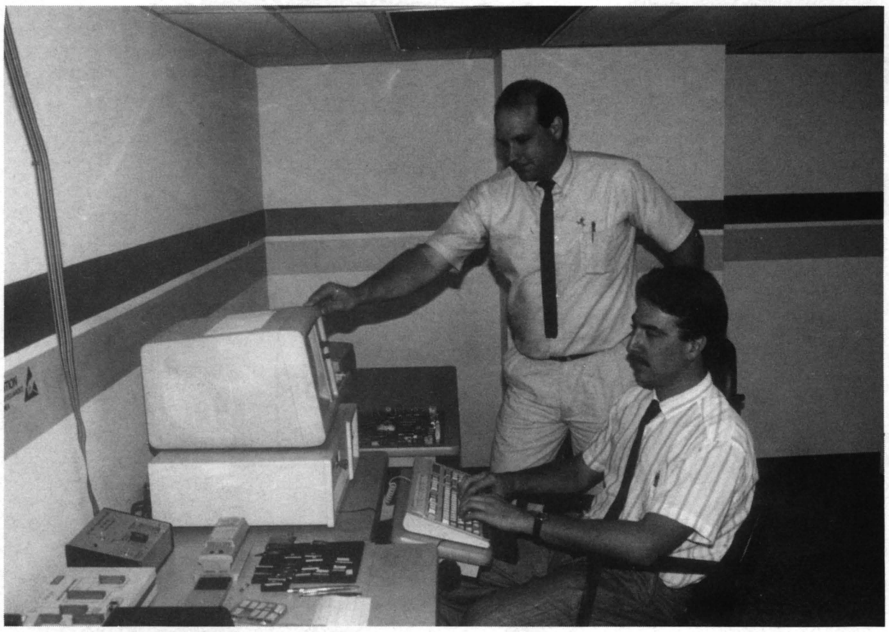
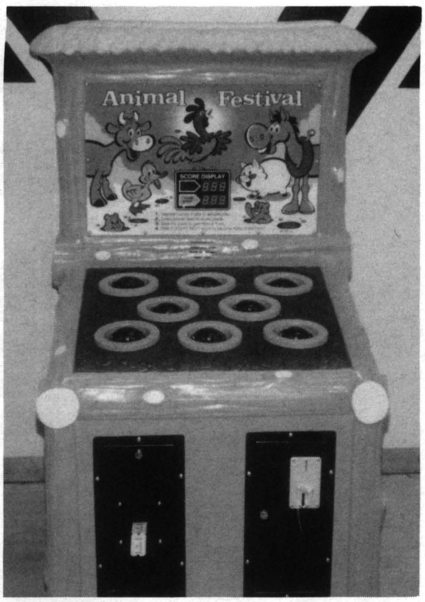


In the Engineering Department, Ross Timmerman (seated) and Engineering Manager Joel Beezhold.



The firm's Animal Festival *animal-smashing game, which debuted at the 1990 ACME.*

market such as sports bars and taverns, and amusement centers with sports themed games, and sports complexes."

RACING GAMES

Vari-Tech bowed its attractive two-player racing games (truck or dolphin) at the IAAPA show in fall, 1989. "They've been very good performers in family entertainment centers," Kane stated. "They're rather large at 12x4 square feet of floor space, but they've got all the bells and whistles and earn proportionally."

The concept of these games is quite simple, Kane explained. In *Rougher Rider Truck Race,* the player rolls balls into scored target holes. The better he scores, the faster "his" four-wheeled truck moves up the playfield track. Sounds include gears shifting, engines roaring, etc.

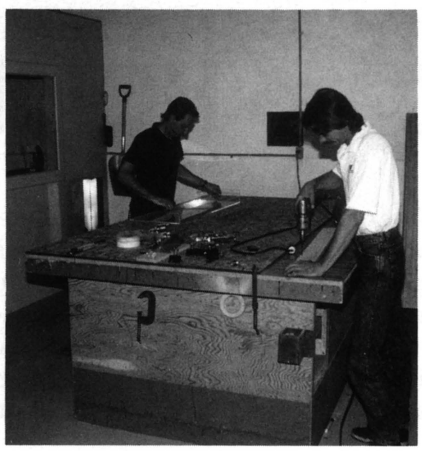
In *Water Race,* players use squirt guns to take aim at dolphin targets. If they shoot accurately, two additional, plush dolphins advance up the raceway to the finish line. Beach music gives a unique feel to the experience.

Both games feature vocal narration of the race. "Again, we've taken the amusement park experience where you would have a live attendant giving instructions and hyping the race, and duplicated it in the arcade," said Mark Kane. "Once you drop coins in, the game starts talking to you. It says if another player deposits money in a certain amount of time, it will be a competition race. Otherwise, you're playing against the house."

ANIMAL FESTIVAL

ACME 1990 was the occasion for the debut of *Animal Festival.* Here again, Vari-Tech as updated a classic concept with a flashier execu-





Vari-Tech employees hard at work in the firm's production area. In the photo at left are Mark Cunningham and Bill Ripley. Above are Mark Ripley and Mark Garwolds.

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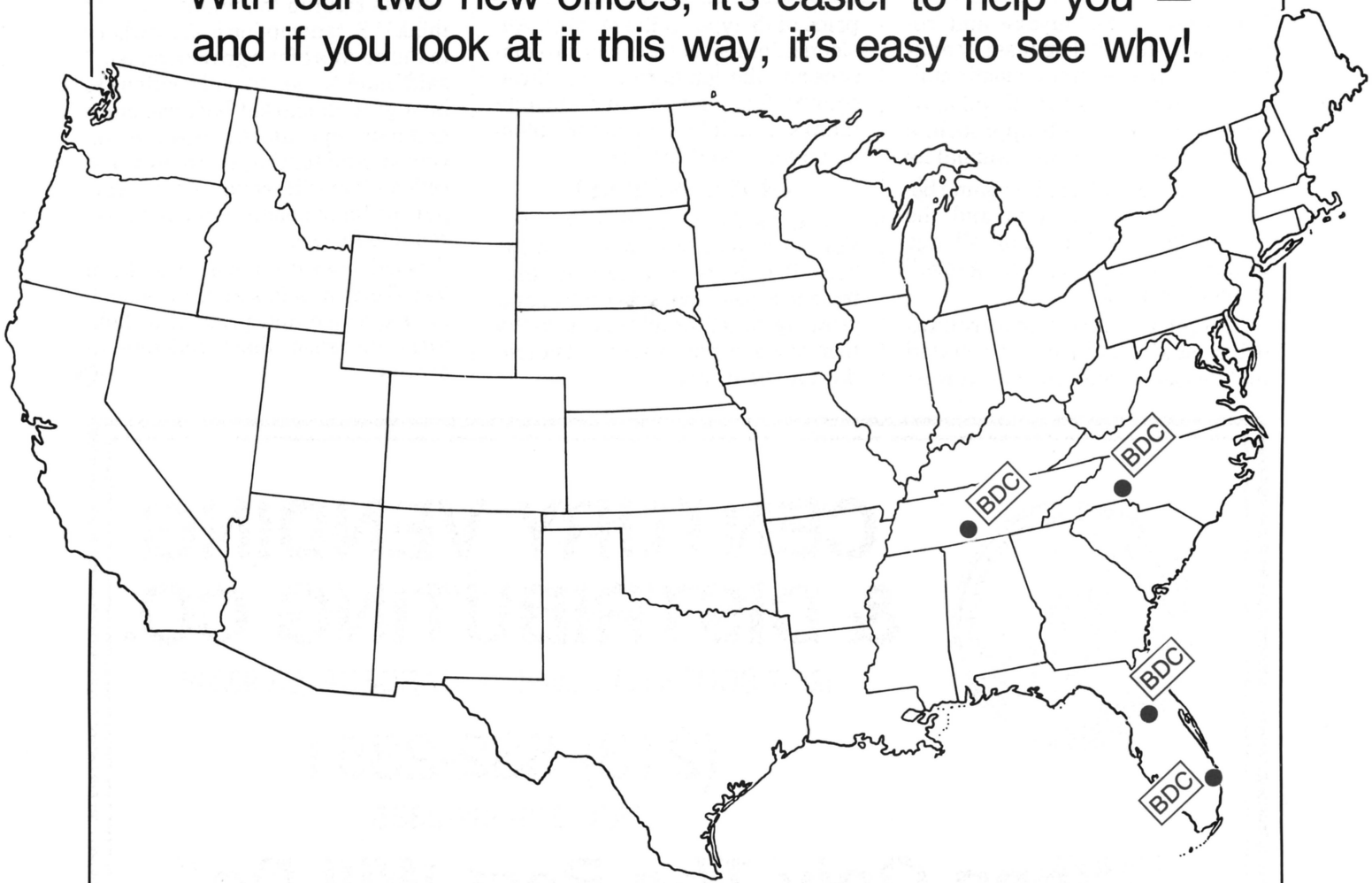

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Vari-Tech's colorful Que Line *games:* Fire Bug!, Rain Drops *and* Speed Tester. *They're set at 10-cent play.*

tion, reliable technology and redemption (ticket dispenser) capability. The player uses a plastic mallet to pound at different animals' pop-up heads and gets appropriate sound effects from each animal he hits. "It looks like a kiddie game because of the coloration and the theme, but we find that all age groups are playing the game," smiled Mark Kane.

The game retails at an attractive price, said Moultrie, who stated that this game came in at the lowest price of its type on the market. All-electric, uniquely requiring no compressor, the game takes up three square feet and is very durable thanks to an injection-molded plastic cabinet, said the firm.

THAT'S NOT ALL!

There's far more to say about Vari-Tech than we have room for here. Briefly, we can indicate that their European market is active and growing, and that this is where the firm sees some of its greatest potential for the future.

We can indicate how Vari-Tech provides "one-stop shopping"... how their consulting and management services can help anyone from the smallest street operator, to a mid-sized arcade operator, to a world-class amusement park as any of these parties wishes to conceive, design, select, create, operate (and train personnel for) coin-op games and centers.

But we'd like to leave you with this thought. Starting with the crane comeback in 1985, redemption has proved to be not just a fad, but a long-term, major trend... and Vari-Tech is right in the middle of it. "I think U.S. redemption is somewhere in the middle of the growth phase," said Mark Kane. "It will continue to be a growth market because more and more operators are getting involved. And for the good operators, redemption will remain a profitable part of their business for the foreseeable future."

Good operators will also keep Vari-Tech in mind as they search for expertise and product to help them increase their redemption profits.

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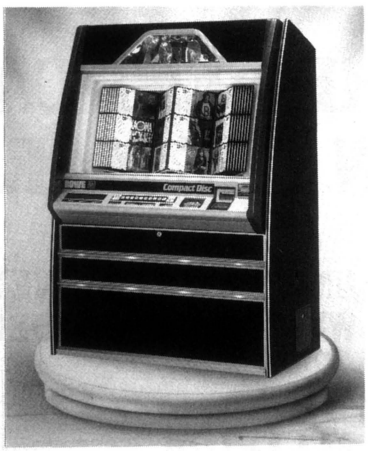

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CUTTING THROUGH THE FOG

1990 STREET SURVEY

Even before 1990 began, "conventional wisdom" said that street location operators were hurting in comparison to their brothers in the arcade sector. But while the arcades do seem rather robust, most routes are also doing reasonably well. Despite a collection dip here and there, reawakened coin box activity in phonographs and video systems (to name two) are taking up some slack. Yes, some operators could be doing better, but that hardly means they're doing badly at all.

As *RePlay* always does for its AMOA Expo special edition, we surveyed operators, this year taking pains to zero in on those more "professional" route owners with our questionnaires. Judging by the gusty return we got in the mailbox, we picked the names pretty well. These are the people who work the taverns and the C-stores, the pizza places and the smaller gamerooms, the airports and the truck stops.

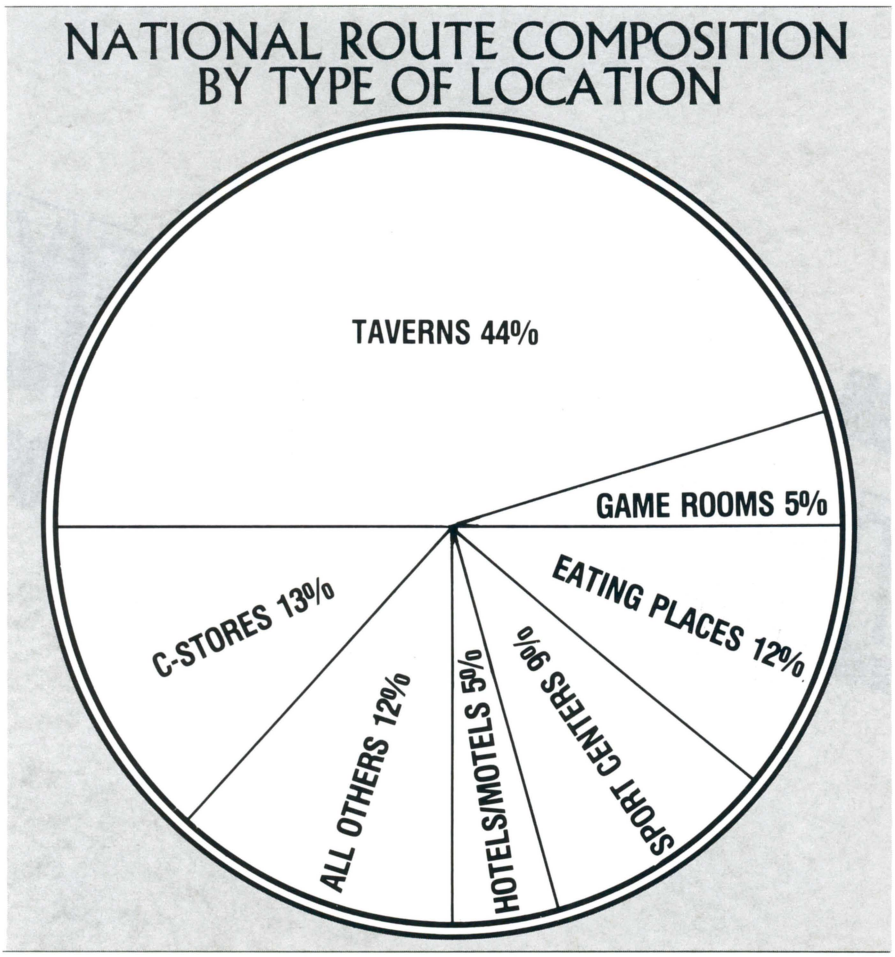
The time window measured by this survey is the winter, spring and summer of 1990. . . the first glimpse at the new decade. It's showing a good start. The tavern location is the average route operator's anchor and they're combatting problems with DWI law enforcement by pushing game tournaments (almost one out of seven surveyed operators are running them these days). And though they may love pool tables and jukeboxes, when their whole income is measured machine to machine, the video game is still numero uno in terms of importance.

More than seven out of ten in this poll have jukeboxes. Those that don't probably came into the industry post-Bushnell (i.e. after the video game took the best seat). But the jukebox is coming back strongly with hot video-styled collections thanks to the CD revolution. Pinball, thanks in large part to new units going out on 50¢ play, is keeping old fans and making new ones on the operator circuit. Old staples like shuffle alleys are hanging in there, and the dart game, where it's pushed in the country, has become an established staple as well.

There really is no gigantic issue facing today's route operators, other than the one they've always faced: buying within budget while taking some chances, looking for new and better locations, re-selling themselves to nasty location owners, scheming to streamline service to save on gas while trying (often failing) to divide the horrendous workload among employees and getting some free time for themselves without the phone ringing from Joe's Bar looking for change.

Many will be at the AMOA Expo, having spent higher plane fares due to the mideast gas situation and those exotic prices the first class hotels charge for a bed and a shower. But it's a cost of doing business in order to get first view of all the new machines the manufacturing sector has been working on for the show. Another piece of conventional wisdom says the machine makers (with some notable exceptions) have been running on the soft side this year and the dice say their Expo displays will try to answer that with state of the art product.

Enough. Let's go into the survey itself. At the end you'll find another *RePlay* tradition. . . that section called *Likes, Gripes & Swipes* where the guys and gals let their hair down and alternately praise or peeve someone else. We hope the survey helps show where your piece fits in the great industrial picture puzzle.



THE BIG PICTURE

Despite the "conventional wisdom" voiced time and again throughout 1990 that the national cashbox was off its color, the picture presented by our polled operators was much brighter. Fully 37% of them said their businesses have improved thus far in 1990 compared to 1989, but only 34% said its been worse. Here's how their business observations break down measuring this year to last:

10% cited a "big improvement."
27% only a "modest improvement."
29% said business has been "the same."
34% (as noted) said it's been "worse."

Many route operators are serving more locations than last year. When asked to compare the total number of accounts they now have to 1989's number:

40% are serving MORE.
43% about the SAME number.
17% have FEWER on the route.

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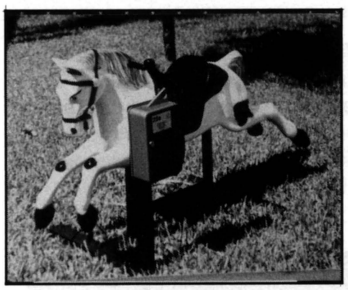

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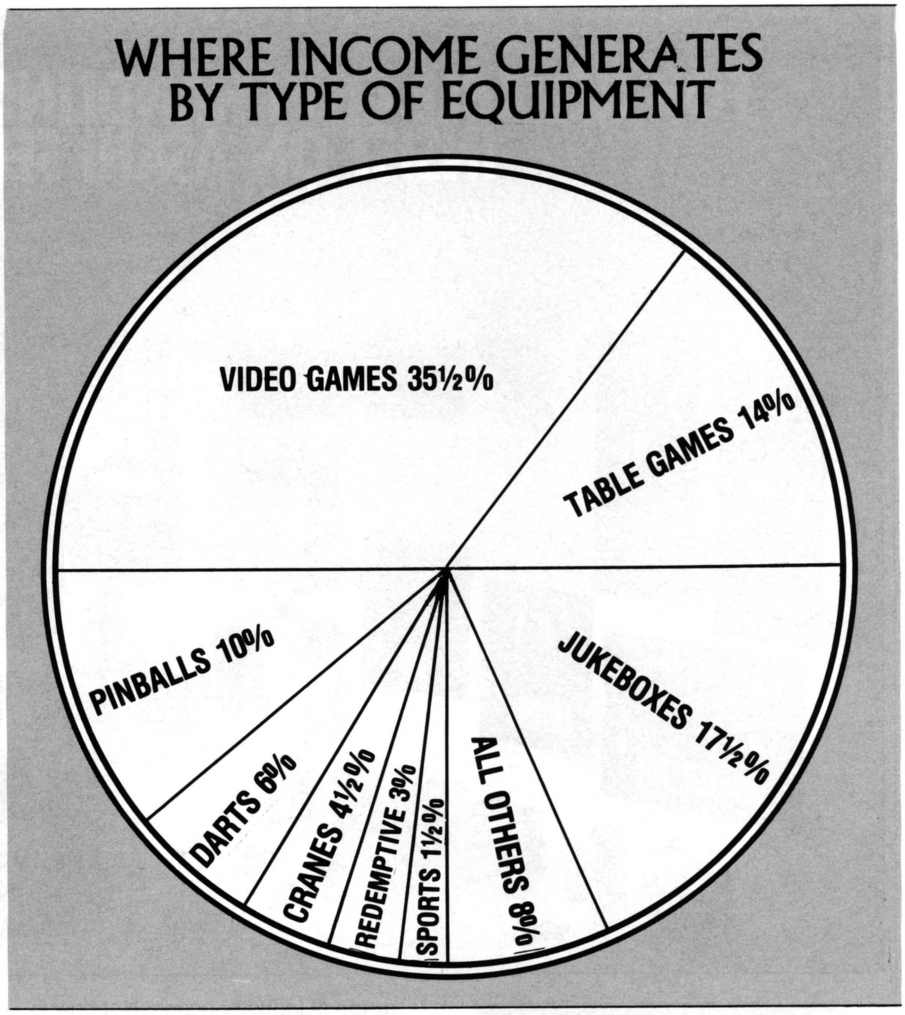

The makeup of the "national route" is as expected, with the tavern ranking as the number one account. We didn't run out a huge laundry list of location types for them to check off, but concentrated on the primary stops (so we'll have to guess at what that 12% "other locations" comprises). Here's how the national route is composed today:

44% are taverns.
13% are C-stores.
12% are eating places.
9% sport centers (e.g. bowling).
5% are full gamerooms.
5% are hotels or motels.
12% are "other locations."

Curious question: when asked to cite the type of account they'd pick if they could only operate in one type, they voted:

1. (by far) the tavern.
2. the sport center.
3. the gameroom.

And, asked which of all types of locations they'd DROP if they could afford to do so, they picked:

1. the eating place.
2. the C-store.
3. the gameroom (we guess one man's meat is another's poison).

While we were on the subject, we asked the route operators to pick the single type of machine they'd operate if they were only allowed to use one. The favorites were ranked as follows:

1. video amusements.
2. video pokers.
3. jukeboxes.
4. darts.
5. pinball machines.

EARNINGS PROFILE

Which types of machines make the most? We asked the operators to count off the percentage each was responsible for in building the collection bag and this is how the compiled answers came out:

35½% from all video games.
17½% from all jukeboxes.
14% from all table games.
10% from pinballs.
6% from electronic darts.
4½% from cranes/rotaries.
3% from ticket redemptive games.
1½% from sports games.
8% from all others not mentioned.

Since the tavern is the most common location on the route, we asked the operators if they use any unusual types of equipment there and learned they do, although hardly in the profusion they use the classic staples:

60% use some video countertop games.

40% have some cranes or rotaries in bars.

8% use some ticket redemptive games like *Skee-Ball.*

8% have some little impulse games like horoscopes.

THE DWI BLUES

When the tavern business gets bad it impacts strongly on the coin operator, for obvious reasons. Again, conventional wisdom says a bunch of bars went out of business already in 1990 and a key reason has been the enforcement of DWI (driving while intoxicated) laws. But it doesn't hurt everybody. According to our respondents:

22% said DWI has hurt their tavern collections "extremely badly."

49% feel it's been "bad, but livable."

29% checked off "we hardly feel its impact."

Clearly, just about one in four operators with machines in taverns say DWI laws are hurting their collections "extremely badly." It's a conscience problem on one hand, a business problem on the other. Is there anything our industry can do, however, to make up for any losses . . . anything that would bring something unique to the tavern to take up the slack? We asked and the most common (and enthusiastic answer) was:

Push leagues and tournaments!

Running tournaments not only brings out players but spectators as well. Some will take soft drinks, provided the game competition is there. A theory is also that head-to-head physical competition burns off some of the booze. By far, the tavern operator's number one answer to the DWI problem is via organized game competition on pool, darts and the rest, including basketball.

Some other responses to the DWI problem ran as follows (the first off was a common one, which we paraphrase):

1. Organize car pools with designated drivers; encourage the use of cabs; maybe even have the local operator association sponsor shuttles or cabs.

2. install breath analyzers (although one operator said the patrons probably wouldn't take the test).

3. legalize video lottery (poker).

4. lobby to lower the DWI fine and insurance costs.

5. install the better versions of all coin-op amusement products and provide better operator service.

One operator said the problem was more a matter of public antipathy to alcohol consumption rather than to DWI arrests. Another got angry, declaring "I don't understand. You can't make people stop drinking once they start. You can change the law but the state (still) wants the tax. A catch 22?"

Finally, a Vermont operator wrote: "We supported all efforts to increase the bar's client base such as making it



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safe for females, improving the general appearance of the place, etc. We also supported efforts to make the bars used as locations for old-fashioned political debates with local candidates."

After digesting all of the above, the surest response to DWI's threat is to turn the tavern into a "social & athletic club" by offering game tournaments that draw extra clientele, even if sporatically . . . turning the once booze parlor into a center for friendly competition where the booze isn't so important. Let's get more of this going!

THEY'RE ON THE JOB

A remarkable 69% of all the operators who responded to this survey are holding at least some location equipment tournaments these days, some as small as a night's contest on the shuffle alley (and even sometimes on video) on up to major involvement with pool and dart leagues. Here's a capsule of operator tournament activity:

61% hold pool tournaments.
31% are into the dart contests.
8% have bouts on shuffle alleys.
4½% of our respondents use soccer tables.
(and get this: 26% of tournament operators are involved in BOTH pool & darts!)

SOME OTHER BAR MACHINES

28% use some basketball hoops in taverns.
35% say they've never used them in bars.
37%, however, say they've tried them and are yanking them.

The cigarette machine is a staple, but one that good old conventional wisdom says is going down the hill. Only 46% of our responding operators run cigarettes in taverns or elsewhere on the route and of them:

54% say they're "scaling down in cigarette operations."
36% state that they're still doing okay with them.
10% (remarkably) say they're expanding their cigarette operations!

The legalized poker machine is high on the wish list of operators in some states. Regardless of their locale, we asked them to check off the statement which best describes their present attitude toward poker:

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58% say they're HOT for it, provided the operator gets a piece of the pie.

32% like the idea of legal poker, but don't think it has a ghost of a chance passing in their states.

10% say "I couldn't care less about it."

We next asked the most thorny question about poker and surprisingly, 85% of the operators responded to it. The question: "Honestly, what percent of ALL operators in your territory are running at least some pay-off poker machines without legal sanction?"

44% are probably running some pay-off poker in their territories (and 13% of the operators who answered think EVERY area operator is doing it, while 9% say NOBODY is doing it in their neck of the woods).

One New England operator wrote in the margin of the questionnaire: "I'm against it. Poker is very bad for our image." And a Tennessee man wrote: "Poker games took all the pinball business."

PINBALL MACHINES

That last remark made a good segue into the staple games, beginning with pinball. If any branch of the manufacturing community made a college try to compete for improved market share against the video, jukebox and other machine makers during 1990, it was the flipper manufacturers.

Apart from many solid entries released this year, they have pushed the operating trade into higher play-pricing and it's working. When asked for their "average play-price on newly-bought pins":

47% set them on 50¢/3 for $1.00.

45% put them on regular quarter play.

5% actually go 50¢/2 for $1.00.

3% give 5 games for $1.00.

Regardless, you ask three different operators a question and you often get three different answers. Asked how the pinball machine is doing for them these days:

37% described themselves as "big pinball fans."

47% said the flipper is "just one more game for us."

16% stated they are "negative on pinballs.

A bunch of pinball compliments ap-

pear in our *Likes, Gripes & Swipes* closing portion to this survey, but let's jot out some pinball negatives as they appeared on the survey:

"Pinball play is on the increase, but associated service and rotation costs are high," said a Wisconsin operator. "I like pins but my stops don't," wrote a fellow from Tampa. And this from a Phoenix operator: "The pin is what we call a necessary evil." Guess you can't win 'em all.

JUKEBOXES

Just under 3 out of 4 route operators responding to this poll use jukeboxes (there are still plenty of game-only newcomers who happened by after the jukebox lost the throne as the industry's number one machine). The jukebox, thanks to the compact disc revolution, has reasserted herself quite forcefully the last three years or so but STILL 20% of the music operators who sent completed surveys haven't put their first CD box out yet!

Gauged by the responses sent in by all of the music operators, this survey finds the hardware in the field right now composed as follows:

73% of the boxes are pure 45 vinyl.
16% are dedicated CD machines.
10% are 45/CD combo units.
1% are video jukeboxes.

Will the number of dedicated CDs dominate the remaining vinyl machines in the field three years from now, considering the record industry's attitude toward 45s and the higher collections CD boxes are bringing in? Not yet, according to this survey.

When asked for the OPTIMUM percent of their music machines that will be dedicated to CD in 3 years, the tabulated answer came out to... 45%. This is definitely an orderly transition!

Curiously, while 88% of the responding music operators don't intend to buy ANY new pure 45 vinyl boxes this fall, 12% actually said they DID (luckily for them, these goods are still being manufacturered).

DISC ROTATION

The averaged-out changes on CD jukeboxes, according to this survey, is 2 discs per month.

For 45 singles, the average rotation is to replace 5 to 6 records every 2 weeks.

Which type of compact discs make the best money on the CD jukeboxes?

46% of the operators say it's the oldie compilation.

36% say its new CDs by hit artists.

18% find it's the new hit compilation.

The CD jukebox, even in its combo form, far outearns the traditional 45 vinyl box (as you'll see from the collection averages shown elsewhere). We asked the operators WHY? and their tabulated reasons came up as follows:

1. higher play-pricing (by far).
2. better sound.
3. more selections on a CD jukebox.
4. better commission terms with location.
5. the novelty of the CD box to the player.

Higher play-pricing is the key ingredient, so what are they normally

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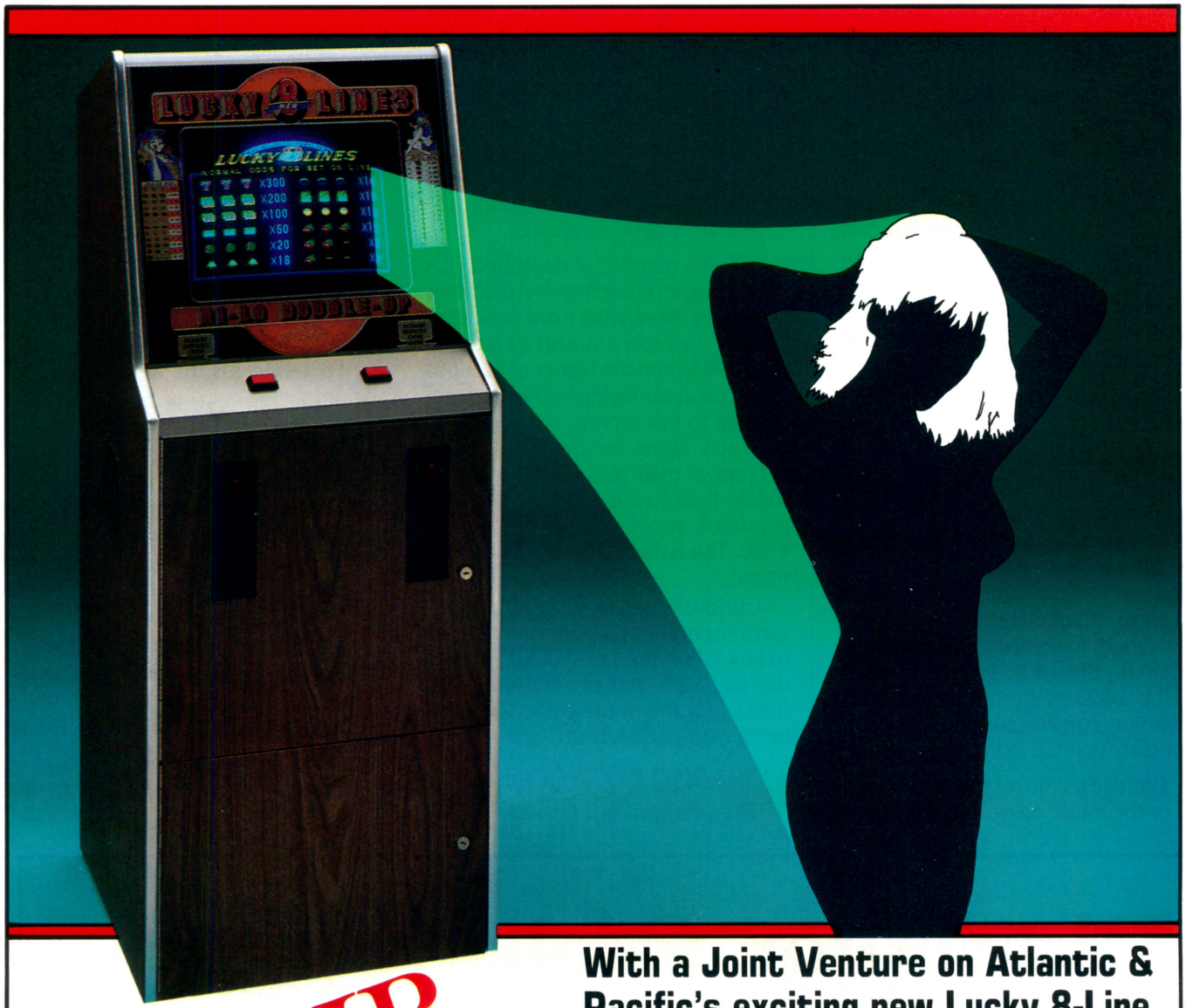

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charging?

56% charge 3 plays for $1.00

37% set it at the customary 4 for $1.00.

7% do other things like vend 5 for $1.00 and even 7 for a buck.

The most common numbers of tunes vended for the $5.00 bill are 18 followed closely by 20 and 25 songs. A few give 30 and one offers 40. Where's that joint!

Operators were asked to check off their biggest "negative" to the CD jukebox:

44% said it's the COST of the phonograph.

37% said it's the price of the CD discs.

19% felt it's the trouble filling location song requests with this album machine.

Is the "request" thing a major problem?

51% of the music operators said it's major.

48% described it as no big thing.

1% actually LIKE not having to find request 45s.

How about the overall problem getting NEW 45 singles after the record labels cut back. Only 29% of the responding music operators described the problem as SERIOUS while the balance (71%) said they are COPING with available 45s.

Finally, we wondered if the music operators are getting pressure from locations to bring in a CD box:

52% said NO pressure.

40% wrote a LITTLE pressure.

8% said they got a LOT OF pressure.

Speaking about pressure, a Charlotte, N.C. operator had this to say: "So far my jukebox locations are not mentioning anything about CDs and if they did I would get one tomorrow because these locations are the ones that have my pokers! Need I say more! They love the oldies: beach and country and rock, many of which would not be on a CD. I don't want to buy a $10.00 CD for one song."

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THE COLLECTION CHART

Asked for their "average weekly gross collections" (before commission to location) on the most common types of machines, the survey came up with these figures:

Dedicated videos (3 months or younger)	$115.50
Dedicated videos (older machines)	$50.00
Video kits (3 months or younger)	$92.00
Video kits (older conversions)	$39.75
Video system games	$57.50
Pinballs (3 months of age or younger)	$90.00
Pinballs (older machines)	$48.00
Jukeboxes (dedicated CDs)	$147.75
Jukeboxes (45/CD combos)	$112.25
Jukeboxes (pure 45 vinyl)	$70.00
Jukeboxes (video)	$122.00
Pool tables	$72.75
Electronic darts	$40.00
Cranes/rotaries (after prize deduction)	$87.75
Air cushion hockey tables	$53.25
Shuffle alleys	$37.00
Shuffleboards	$28.75
Ticket redemptive games (after prizes)	$113.50
Soccer tables	$27.50
Basketball hoops	$57.00
Kiddie rides	$35.00

THE COMING MARKET

Just how bullish or bearish will operators be in the distributor's showroom this fall regarding new equipment buying is a guess, although the operators were pretty evenly split on the question (about a third think they'll buy MORE, a third the SAME and the final third LESS). But we wanted to know WHAT they'll favor with their buying dollars when they're in the mood and here are the tabulated answers concerning which types of equipment could get the hottest action:

1. video kits
2. CD jukeboxes
3. pinball machines
4. pool tables
5. dedicated games
6. dart games
7. poker games
8. video systems
9. cranes & rotaries
10. air cushion hockey

(One operator wrote this after his list: "Air hockey is headed to #1!")

Often, operators buy used equipment. We asked them to percentage





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out the amount of new vs. used stuff they normally buy and it came out to:

69% new vs. 31% used.

(Of note: over 42% of the responding operators say 90% or better of their equipment buys are made brand new!)

Most favored used buys are in: 1. video games (by far); 2. pinballs, and 3. jukeboxes & pool tables (a tie).

IKS, NIX & DRIX

After asking the perennial question about home video's impact on coin-op and getting the perennial answers (70% this year think it hurts coin; 8% think it helps; the rest are non-committal), we got into the dollar coin.

55% of the responding operators are VERY POSITIVE about the prospects for the new dollar coin if the federal government passes it.

45% really don't give much of a hoot either way it goes.

Some comments about the dollar coin were penciled onto the margins, like: "It'll only be good if the government stops making bills. You can't have them both" (from a Michigan operator).

"It's good for revenues but bad for outfitting the coin counters" (Texas).

Likes, Gripes & Swipes

ON TAXATION

"The biggest hurt on coin-op is the government. We can always negotiate purchases of equipment. But, state, county and city licenses will price us out of business. I believe they think there's no end to taxing us. On another note, the distributors are to be commended for their support in financing, offering specials and making us aware of new locations opening up and sometimes about unscrupulous competition moving in."

Ron Davis, Carolina Coin, S.C.

"If the government continues to dip into the operator's pocket, I believe that locations will ultimately own and operate their own equipment. But they will only have the basic machines."

Utica, New York

"Bars are dead in West Texas due to the DWI laws as well as to the economy. New taxes on liquor will hurt even more. Our cigarette business is taxed so much we are cutting back because of low volume. Due to insurance, wages, taxes, etc., our overhead is going up and unless we can cut commissions or raise prices with a dollar coin, they will kill us."

R.R. Daniel, Daniel Music, Texas

EQUIPMENT PRICES

"I want the manufacturers to give the right for more operators to become distributors in my state, not just to the few distributors we have. Take their prices on Race Driving, Pit Fighter *and* Magic Sword *as examples. When you compare the prices they quote to those we've gotten from out-of-state, the difference is obvious."*

Anonymous

"Except for the cockpit driving types, today's dedicated games are too expensive to justify purchasing. The kits are also approaching the too-high level, going $1,500 and up!"

Atlanta, Georgia

"My biggest complaint is the price gouging by our manufacturers. The prices just don't reflect their cost plus a reasonable profit margin. It just spells greed."

Gary Hanna, Wakelee Amusements, N.Y.

"Home video games as an alternate source of entertainment are hurting coin-op amusement machine income significantly. The slowdown in the economy is hurting us significantly as well. If the manufacturers and distributors want to increase their profits, they should try lowering prices to encourage increased unit sales and thereby make up more than the difference for themselves."

Santa Ana, California

HOME VIDEO

"The Nintendo home systems have really screwed up a pretty decent business. And our players aren't in love with their coin-op PlayChoice *because they don't want to buy games running on time."*

Lima, Ohio

"The video and pinball industry is on its last legs. This is due primarily to the home video market. The only reason I still operate my present obsolete equipment is to milk what I can out of it. It's just not cost-effective to buy and install kits or buy new or used dedicated equipment. That's all, folks!"

C.S. Vending, Oklahoma City

"As Nintendo and Sega upgrade the quality of their home games, they are narrowing the gap between the retail and the coin-op game. As such, coin-op will suffer. They will cut their own throats and ours along with them."

San Antonio, Texas

"You've heard it before, but I still think the manufacturers, especially those providing games for the Nintendo system, should not release titles to the home for at least a year after they've been introduced to the coin-op market."

R. Wnek, Wnek Amusements, Buffalo

PINBALL MACHINES

"New pinballs should be tested in the field for a longer period of time before being released to the operator. We need better quality control on these games and the playfield designs need to be more practical for servicing by the operator."

Duke Tartaglio, Troy Vending, Phoenix

"I'd like to compliment the pinball manufacturers for the quality of product they've been producing the last year and for pricing it at 50% per play as well. I think the pressure is on the video game manufacturers to produce the same quality product and some better hits to help bring more players back into our gamerooms. I think the key to this is to provide far

superior screen graphics than the home games have."
Lee Complete Vending, Kansas City, Missouri

"Between the slow economy and the sorry new video games it's become even harder to turn an undepreciated dollar. But when one talks about pinball, it's another story. Better-than-average collections and a tremendous demand from locations and even players are making me buy real numbers of them now. Unless video has some dramatic breakthrough, pinballs are headed to the top of the hill."
Little Rock, Arkansas

"The price of pinball machines has been steadily climbing. They have become a necessity for many routes and many of us cannot do without them. They come out at $2,695, we buy them, then two or three months later, they're at $1,995 because the manufacturer is making the next one. Am I the only one who feels cheated? Why can't the manufacturers keep the cost down initially?"
Lynda Hanford, Mastermind Video, Florida

POKER & STUFF

"I feel like the operators are at the mercy of the manufacturers. While good new equipment like Final Fight *and* TMNT *will make good earnings, I'd still like them to make a game that's different from fighting that would appeal to a different audience. Our future is in vending and in lucky 8 liners. Payoff machines are really paying most of the bills."*
Alaska

"All we're doing is making a living. Our state can't make up its mind about pokers. The state picks on some for running them, including me, and leaves other people alone. Hey, you can play video poker one block from the State Capital and yet our state is too hard-headed to capitalize on these games."
Mississippi

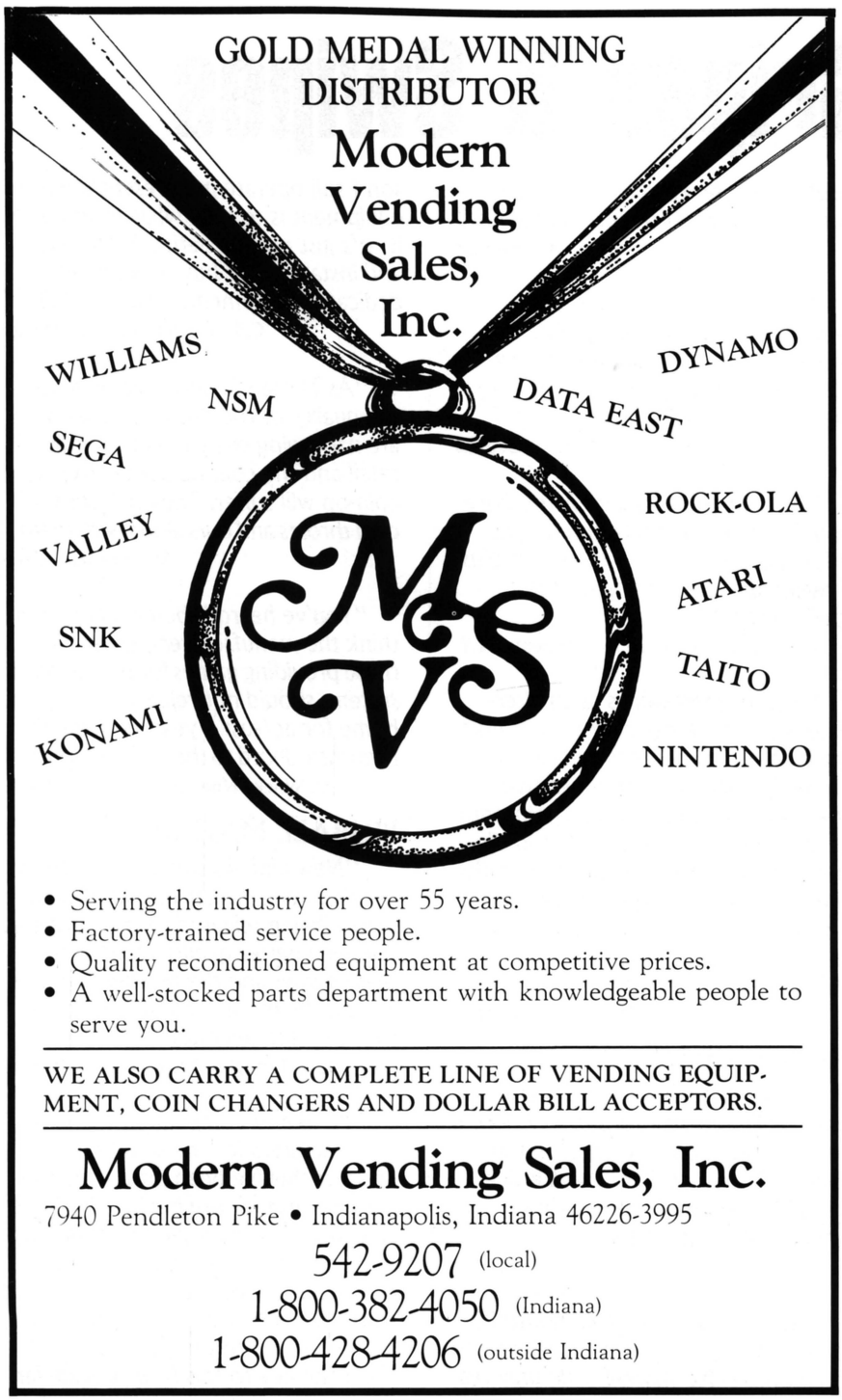
I am a new coin machine operator in South Carolina and am disgusted with the fact that our state legislators are hitting us so hard on the video poker license fee. They've raised it from $600 to $1,500 each per year, yet they do nothing to the bingo hall operators. Come on, guys! Make it legal for everybody or nobody!"
Trotty McCarty, Dixieland Amusements, S.C.

JUKES & MUSIC

"I like the 100 CD machine, but they require too many discs to install when you first put them out. Many pop CDs only have one decent song on them. So, they become obsolete too soon. Only places leaning toward oldies adapt readily to the 100 CD."
Anonymous

"I'm down on CDs, not only because of the cost but because they aren't perfected yet. I'm not convinced they're here to stay and your average tavern patron cannot tell the difference in the sound on a $4,000 CD box and an old $200 vinyl juke. Even though the CD has 1200 selection capability, it still will not be enough to satisfy. Also, my stops won't hear of 3 plays for $1.00."
Kansas City, Missouri

"My advice is to concentrate on getting new locations for jukeboxes



THE PIONEER HIT LIST

Volume 3 November, 1990

Bringing you more sights and sounds in the Juke Box business.

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NOVEMBER COMPILATION LASER DISC

Model#: LD-11-90

1. **Love Or Something**
   Bob Geldof
2. **Tie Dye On The Highway**
   Robert Plant
3. **Lonely You Lonely Me**
   Prairie Oyster
4. **Suicide Blonde**
   INXS
5. **Lisa**
   Lita Ford
6. **I Didn't Want To Need You**
   Heart
7. **Rhythm Of The Rain**
   Dan Fogelberg
8. **All I'm Missing Is You**
   Glenn Medeiros Featuring Ray Parker Jr.
9. **The Forecast (Calls For Rain)**
   Robert Cray
10. **Candy**
    Iggy Pop
11. **Lift Me Up**
    Jeff Lynne
12. **Sense Of Purpose**
    Pretenders
13. **You Lie**
    Reba McEntire

SIDE B

1. **If Anybody Had A Heart**
   Crosby, Stills & Nash
2. **Have You Seen Her**
   MC Hammer
3. **Same Ol' Situation (S.O.S.)**
   Motley Crue
4. **Merry Go Round**
   Keith Sweat
5. **Type**
   Living Colour
6. **You Made Life Good Again**
   Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
7. **Papa Was A Rolling Stone**
   Was (Not Was)
8. **Love Takes Time**
   Maria Carey
9. **The Night's Too Long**
   Patty Loveless
10. **Unbelievable**
    Bob Dylan
11. **Strung Out**
    Wendy & Lisa
12. **Georgia On My Mind**
    Michael Bolton
13. **Livin' In The Light**
    Caron Wheeler

NOVEMBER HITS COMPILATION CD

Model#: A12-11-90
Hits Disc #12

1. **Lonely You, Lonely Me**
   Prairie Oyster
2. **You Made Life Good Again**
   Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
3. **Giving You The Benefit**
   Pebbles
4. **Livin' In The Light**
   Caron Wheeler
5. **Heartbreaker (At The End Of Lonely Street)**
   Dread Zeppelin
6. **Oh Girl**
   Paul Young
7. **While My Guitar Gently Weeps**
   The Jeff Healey Band
8. **Tonight**
   New Kids On The Block
9. **Georgia On My Mind**
   Michael Bolton
10. **Same Ol' Situation (S.O.S.)**
    Motley Crue
11. **Merry Go Round**
    Keith Sweat
12. **I Was Made For You**
    Guys Next Door
13. **Fly To The Angels**
    Slaughter
14. **I'd Rather Go Blind**
    Sydney Youngblood
15. **Papa Was A Rolling Stone**
    Was (Not Was)

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and not so much on darts. I think darts are for certain areas but not for the south, southwest and west."

Consolidated Music, Las Cruces, N.M.

"Of the few music locations I have on the route, only one deserves a CD jukebox. Three things hold me back: my knowledge of the operation of this type of equipment, the price of the CD phonograph and the cost of the discs themselves. Can you imagine a breakin where they steal the discs? The thought is discouraging."

D & T Vending, Nashville, Tennessee

"The only reason we collect more from a CD jukebox and a 45/CD combo is because we get a higher play price on both. When the newness of the CD concept wears off and we can't get the requests our customers want, I'm sure the collections will drop on the CD boxes."

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

"Our biggest concern is about the operators putting out CD jukeboxes at between 4 and 7 tunes for a buck. If operators do this, they will ruin about the only profitable piece of equipment out there. They should go for overplay at 3 for a buck, 25 for $5.00. You can always make customers feel cheap if they complain about 3 for a buck. All you need to say is they do get 5 for a buck if they put in the $5.00 bill."

Kenny Grothmann, American Vending, Wisc.

"I love my CD jukeboxes but 'the leader' needs to improve its quality control. We've spent money doing 'warranty work', making modifications, etc. We also have trouble with the bill heads & OBA's, making it very difficult to justify bill-only play."

Leroy Smith, Smitty Music, Motley, Minn.

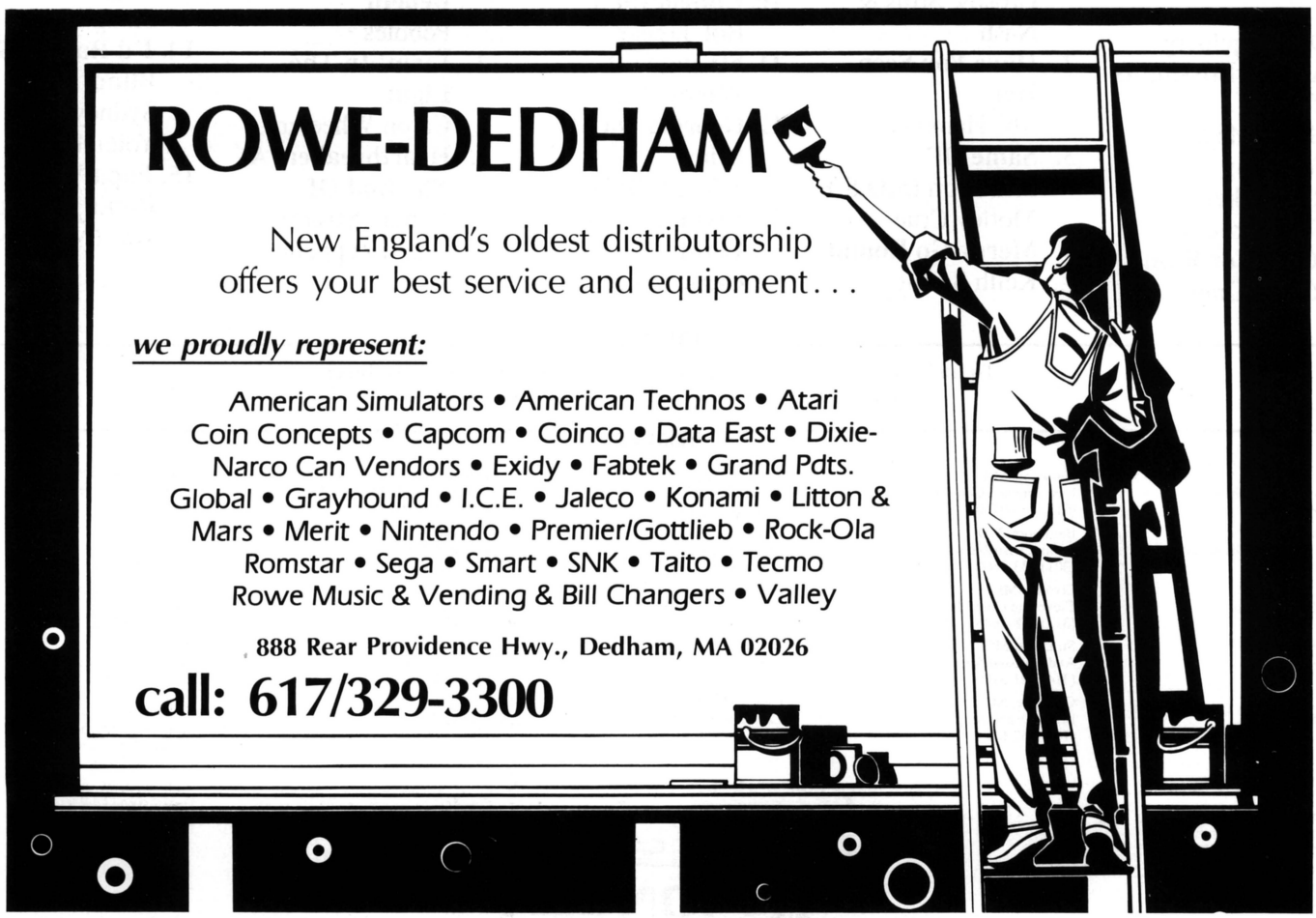
"I don't like the idea of being forced into buying CD jukeboxes because of 45 record unavailability. On a 50/50 commission basis, which is what I operate at, not many locations warrant the expense of CD equipment. Music and pool tables are the backbone of my route and so CDs should either come down in price or the record companies shouldn't ignore the existing market for 45s. Please don't even ask me about the copyright license!"

Anonymous, Massachusetts

"We're really in the dumper. Competition is our worst enemy. We're doing the best we can with the available, mediocre equipment. Our competition says that they can do better. The new equipment is a twist on all the old games. We need something unique and innovative. If I had the answer I'd be rich. CD boxes make more money and are great for bars and taverns but my low volume, top 40 locations are going to be hard to satisfy with new hits all the time. A current top 40 disc (like Pioneer) would help, but their hits aren't always the most popular songs."

Area Amusement, Southern California

"The CD jukebox gave my business a great boost and I'm almost to the point where 100% of my machines are CD. It allows me to get good locations and hold onto them. We put very good speakers on the system and



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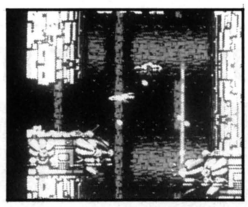
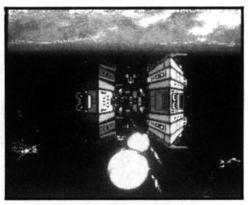
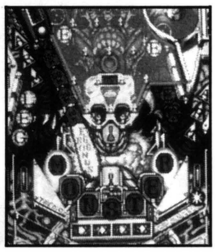
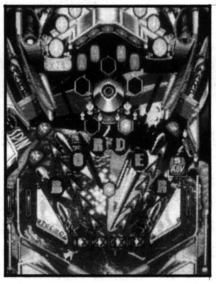




SUPER PINBALL ACTION







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the sound is super. My business has been great. Other operators just whine about the way business is.

"Videos are way down. I don't think home videos are killing us. What is killing game play are the $60 shirts, the $60 pants and the costly brand name shoes that the 12- to 18-year-olds have to have. My kids are 5 and 7, so I'm not making parent noises yet!!!"

Terry Brlecic, Tampa, Florida

GENERAL THOUGHTS

"The biggest problem with this industry is that operators don't stick together. There's more money to be made if the operators and distributors didn't sell equipment directly to locations (I'm talking about pool tables, pool table supplies, jukeboxes, etc.).

"Another thing is that manufacturers come out with so many games alike that you can't stay with the times. I believe that sports-oriented games do better, but not when they make the game too hard for the average Joe to operate. One more thought: if we ever get a new dollar coin, people won't carry them until all bills are out of circulation."

Don Leeps, Cue's Amusement, Iowa

"The two obvious suggestions I recommend to improve the business are: 1. reduce the price of the kits, dedicated games and jukeboxes, and 2. legalize pay-off machines."

Bernie Weiner, Miller Automatic, N.Y.S.

"I have no serious complaints or gripes because, generally speaking, the below-average collections can be blamed on the economy. Everyone seems to be feeling the pinch."

Wayne Harriman, Bangor, Maine

"My complaints are many, but they always exist. The future is clear. We have to become more professional and quality-minded. . . customer-minded as well. The smaller market for our equipment is due to fewer people drinking as a result of the DWI laws, as well as to the aging population. Obviously, there is a necessity (even an opportunity) to upgrade the quality of our product and service. This should increase the need for our service and the profitablity of better-run companies."

Rod Clennon, Collins Music, South Carolina

"I'm a street operator and the only way people like myself can survive is to buy pieces that they don't have to 'repeat-buy'. . . machines like CD boxes, pool tables, cranes and pokers. Video games are history! These staple machines I mentioned appeal to adults and are units we don't have to move around the route."

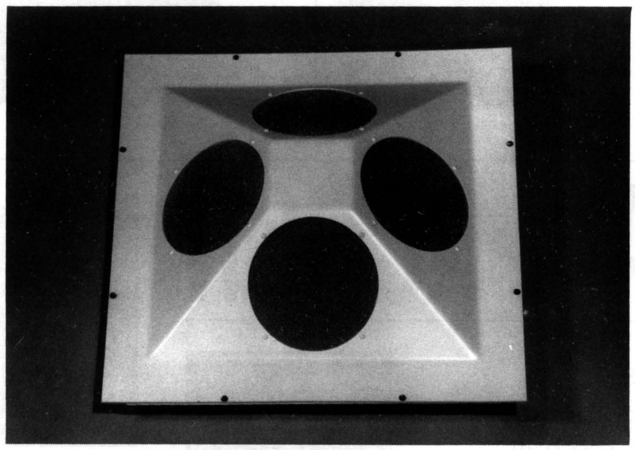
Royal Oak, Michigan

"We have no complaints about business in general. We're extremely encouraged to see pinballs coming to us at 50¢ for 3 balls, 75¢ on pool tables and CDs operating on dollars. Now, why aren't we seeing manufacturers putting out video kits on 50¢ play with quarter buy-in?"

Kinney Amusement, Springfield, Missouri

"Jukeboxes, pool tables and darts are the staples of our industry. Anything else is a necessary evil in order

IT'S OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT?



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- QUICK INSTALLATION - Designed to be installed in 2' x 2' and 2' x 4' ceiling grids in minutes! Simply lift out tile and lay in SD48. Retrofits into drop ceilings with absolutely no modifications.
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FREQ.RESPONSE:	40 Hz-25kHz +- 4dB
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Excaliber Video Kit Kabinet™

- The cabinet of the 21st century. It's innovative design gives it a life expectancy in excess of 10 years.
- The Kit-Kabinet accommodates 19", 25" or 27" monitors. Although with its unique space saving design its only 3" wider than a standard 19" video cabinet.
- The most space saving design of all large monitor cabinets. Ideal for all street and arcade locations.
- This unique. versatile Kit-Kabinet is designed to increase profitability in the competitive kit marketplace.



Arcade Vision ™

Special Features

- Removable and interchangeable slide-drawer system.
- Accommodating a 19", 25" or 27" monitor vertical or horizontal.
- 17 Amp power supply.
- Made of 100% high-quality durable plywood.
- All parts interchangeable or replaceable if damaged. Versatile enough that it can accommodate recycled parts from older machines.
- Rear steel corner protectors with enclosed 3" wheels for easy mobility.
- Handcups on the rear and bottom of the cabinet make for ease of vertical movement.
- Side impact bumpers for added protection, on location or in transit.
- High pressure plastic finish available in Black or White.

Other Accessories

- Arcade vision™ with 19" monitor (shown in photo above).
- Front corner protectors (saves lower front edge of cabinet).
- Three player control panel (fits on all cabinets).*
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- 25¢ coin holder for control panel (continued play or next player).*

* Not shown in photos.

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to hold locations. Any new videos are considered a waste of money by us, but it's necessary to buy some in order to satisfy location demand.

"We run strong dart and pool leagues which help hold existing locations and also get new ones. We are presently 10.8% up in revenues for the seven months of 1990 compared to 1989, mainly due to the CD jukebox, a small increase in pool revenue and a modest increase in pinball collections. By the way, our dart leagues have increased about 20% while pool leagues are off 10%.

"Revenue from darts is about the same, videos are down and novelties like cranes and basketballs are way down. We have some Skee-Balls *in taverns which are doing quite well, so we plan to increase the number of them we have out on location.*

"We are getting increasingly firmer with location demand for new equipment and are requiring guaranteed money if they want a particular piece. Being from Wisconsin, we're also looking forward to passing legislation legalizing video lottery (i.e. poker) machines. We feel this will change our business 150%. It will probably mean doubling our work force, increasing our shop and office space and going a million dollars into debt.

"We try to limit our equipment purchasing to what we can afford. We do not want to get into debt more than 25% of what we value our route at. This way, if times get worse (which is a distinct possibility with the situation in the Middle East), we'll be able to survive. Finally, the trend in the industry, as I see it, is toward fewer and larger operators. The days of the one-man operation are slowly disappearing."

John Speers, Winnebago Coin, Wisconsin

"I'm a small operator and I'm hoping that other operators will answer this questionnaire. I believe that I can learn from others when your issue comes out, in determining where they make their most money."

Albuquerque, New Mexico

"Rising operating expenses are, by far, our company's most serious problem. Equipment costs, the price of CDs vehicle insurance, health insurance, fuel prices, etc. are eroding our profits. These, coupled with the continuing strict enforcement of DWI laws and a recent 7% sales tax on drinks over the bar have almost brought the tavern business to its knees.

"The street operators like myself are facing some rough decisions in the near future. Do we lay off long-time, loyal employees or reduce their benefits? Do we not buy new equipment and risk losing some of our better accounts to more wealthy operators? There are no easy answers."

John Fisher, Louco Amusement Co., New Jersey

"The tools are there for us as operators to keep making more and more money! The new equipment is great as is the increased play-pricing. I'm high on our business in the '90s! More operators should take advantage of the league programs and promote our business in darts, soccer and pool. It's all there!

"I'm sick of operators with the PAM (pee and moan syndrome). Our business is as good as we make it and I'm making it with all the tools the manufacturers provide."

Mary Lavine, Bullseye, Inc., Madison, Wisc.

Conclusion

There you have the yin and yang of operators' thoughts on today's route business, along with a good deal of rancor and a little bit of praise for things as they are, as well as some verve to push forward and sop up the opportunities that present themselves. There were more opinions expressed than we printed, but this is a good selection . . . the general "gist" of the American operator's views on things.

Thanks very much, you guys and gals, for sending your data to us for this survey. Special thanks to those who wrote out personal observations. To the hundreds who "deep-sixed" the questionnaire, all we can say is please consider these questionnaires to be more important than fish wrap next time you get one. Knowledge is as important as a pan full of quarters (or a stacker full of bills) in today's operating industry. We hope the survey, and its subsequent operator remarks, expand your knowledge a tad or two.

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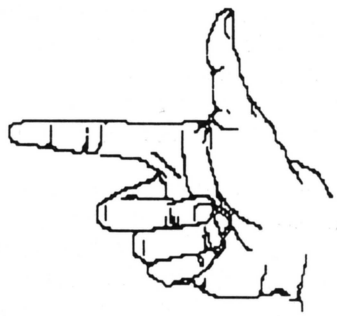

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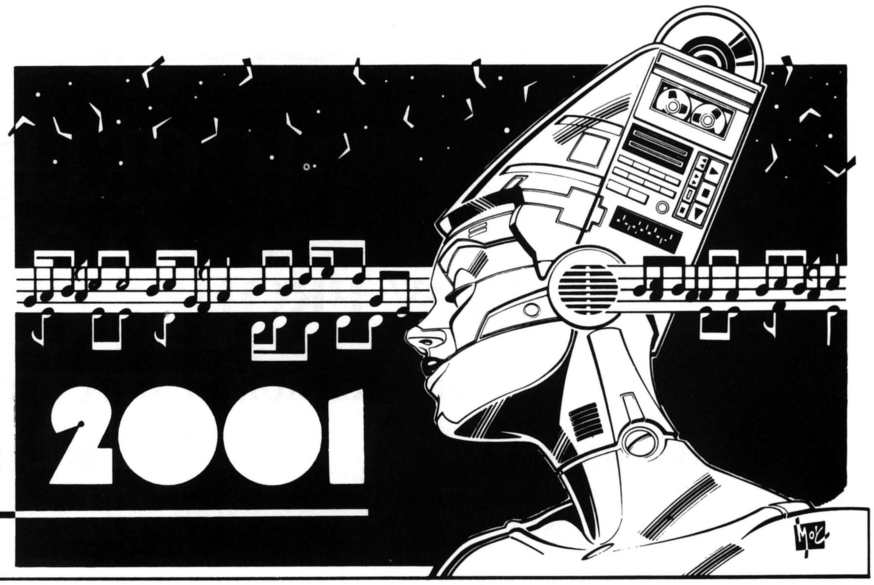


TAKING YOUR MUSIC SERVICES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

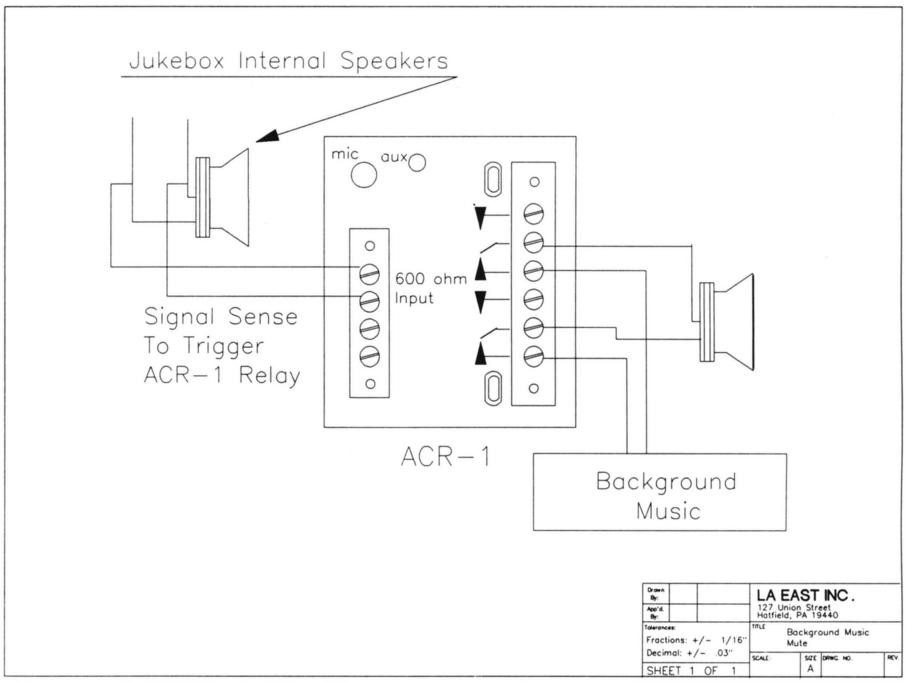
Making Your Jukebox Work Smoothly With Background Music Systems

by Emery Kertesz and Steve Devlin

Emery Kertesz and Steve Devlin are two operators who work for Lansdale Amusement (Philadelphia). They also serve as music consultants and distributors of audio-visual auxiliary equipment through their own firm, L.A. East (Hatfield, Pa.). "Jukebox operators already have lots of service know-how," Steve and Emery like to say. "Putting some glitter on that expertise is what we're all about."

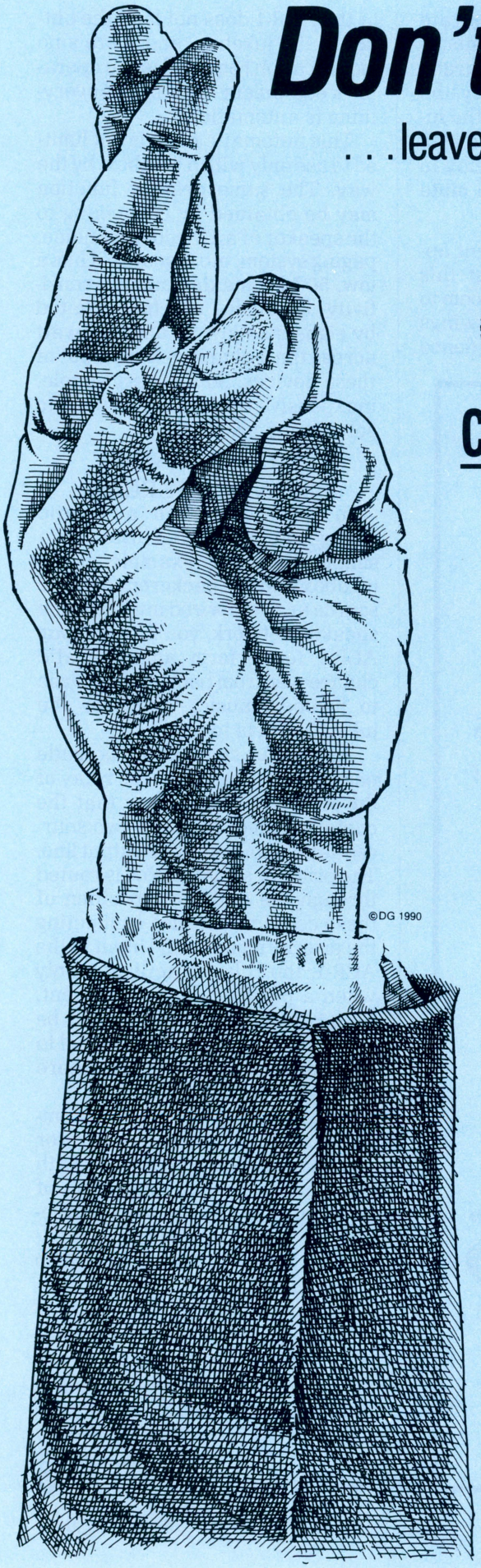
One technical question asked by many operators across the U.S. is "How do I interface my jukebox with a background music system?" This month, we'll show you a simple way to make your coin-op music system work hand-in-glove with the location's background music system. Your professionalism will move up a notch...and your grip on the location will become that much stronger.

The main goal here is to achieve a seamless change-over from background music to the jukebox, and vice versa. Some jukeboxes have this function built in. But if your jukebox doesn't, you must use the jukebox's own audio signal to trigger a background music relay that will create a smooth transition from the background system to the jukebox. To this end, you can use a very simple and inexpensive device called the Raymer ACR-1. It breaks or completes the line level signal between source and amplifier, or changes speaker networks, to make for a nice blend between music sources.



A little background information on this device: the original application notes for the Model ACR-1 were limited to interconnect and telecommunications use. When connected to an all-electronic telephone PABX system, the ACR-1 provides both the audio input to a paging amplifier and the necessary switching circuits to provide such functions as muting, and zone or selective paging. The ACR-1 is necessary in such cases, because there are no electromechanical relays in these computer-operated systems to provide external switching. Only an audio signal is available.

Now, this situation is true in many applications other than telephone paging. The ACR-1 may be used to solve problems when some electrical function is required — either in the presence or absence of an audio signal. One of the best applications



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of the ACR-1 is to mute background music when doing a jukebox installation. Another excellent application is to use the ACR-1 to switch signals so that the location's speaker network takes its signal from the jukebox, not the background music system, whenever someone plays the jukebox. We'll discuss both of these applications below.

MUTING BACKGROUND MUSIC

In this application, we're assuming that the jukebox will broadcast over its own speakers, separate from the background music system's speakers. Referring to the diagram, when the jukebox starts to play, the signal that is sampled from the internal speaker and sent to the 600-ohm input will trigger the relay to the change state... and will mute the background music.

There are so many different applications of the ACR-1 that this article couldn't take enough room to supply all the different drawings needed. But the 600-ohm impedence of the ACR-1 does not load the output of the jukebox, and there's no modification required to the operator's equipment. Best of all, everything is automatic.

This automatic mute is not limited to use only with a jukebox, by the way. The same priority function may be obtained by connecting to the speaker of a TV, video machine, paging system, etc. Because it has a low, 50-MV. maximum input sensitivity, the ACR-1 can be activated by signals as low as one milliwatt across the 8-ohm speaker output of these devices. So this very simple, inexpensive device can be used to solve many problems.

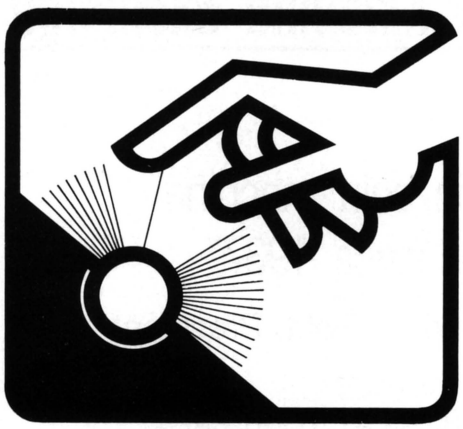
CHANGING SIGNAL SOURCES

In some cases, an automatic changeover is required instead of a simple mute. For example, if the jukebox and the background music source are both wired into the same speaker network, you'll want your ACR-1 to perform an automatic changeover from background music to jukebox music, whenever the jukebox starts to play.

Automatic changeover is made possible by connecting the relay of the ACR-1 in such a way that the contacts select between two sources as the signal into one output line. The primary signal source is routed through the automatic position of these contacts. By also connecting the priority signal to the input of the ACR-1, the relay is activated only when a priority signal is present. This causes the output line to be switched from the primary signal to the priority signal, as long as there is a signal on the priority line.

And that's it! We strongly recommend that any jukebox operator who has had to "compete" with background music add this bit of knowledge to his "operating arsenal." It can add to your professionalism... and increase your coin-op music profits.

[Editor's note: obviously, the ACR-1 is available from L.A. East. Steve and Emery will be happy to discuss different applications or any other questions about installing hi-tech jukebox equipment you may already have. You may contact them at 800/366-4523.]



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TECHNICAL TIPS

Video Game Monitor Repair: Trouble-Shooting Horizontal Deflection Failures

by RANDY FROMM

Most video game monitor failures are pretty straightforward. A quick glance at the screen will usually point you to the general area of the problem. A missing color will lead you to the video amplifier circuits while a horizontal line will point to a loss of vertical deflection.

But a failure in the horizontal deflection circuit can be a bit more difficult to figure out because the monitor will appear to be completely dead. The characteristic high pitched squeal of a functioning monitor will be missing and there will be no picture or brightness of any kind on the screen. That's because the horizontal deflection circuit is used to drive the high voltage unit (see *RePlay*, June 1990 for more on high voltage units.) Without high voltage, there is no picture at all.

THE HORIZONTAL DEFLECTION CIRCUIT

The horizontal deflection circuit is similar in most monitors; in fact, it is almost identical in just about every video game monitor in use today. Inside an IC on the monitor's printed circuit board, a circuit known as the 'horizontal oscillator" is used to generate an alternating current signal of approximately 15,750 Hertz. Although this signal will eventually be used to power the horizontal deflection coil in the yoke (as well as the high voltage unit) it is still very weak at this point (only about 1.5 VAC); it has to be amplified.

The output of the horizontal oscillator is connected to the input of the horizontal drive transistor where it is amplified to obtain an output of around 100 VAC. A small transformer (appropriately called the horizontal drive transformer) is used to change this output into a high current AC signal. This is used to drive the horizontal output transistor.

The horizontal output transistor is the hardest working transistor in monitor. All the current for the horizontal deflection coil in the yoke and the flyback transformer in the high voltage unit passes through the horizontal output transistor. In fact, approximately 80% of the power consumed by a video game monitor is controlled by the horizontal output transistor.

FIGURE 1

Electrohome - Remove transistor X701.
Hantarex MTC 900 - Unsolder and lift one end of resistor R152.
Hantarex MTC 9000 - Unsolder and lift one end of diode D10.
Orion - Unsolder and lift one end of diode D401.
Sharp Image - Unsolder and lift one end of diode D410.
Wells-Gardner K4600 series - Remove transistor TR353.
Wells-Gardner K7000 series - Unsolder and lift one end of diode D12.

TROUBLE-SHOOTING HORIZONTAL FAILURES

If the monitor has a blown fuse, chances are excellent that the horizontal output transistor has shorted. You can check it with your digital multimeter. Set the meter to the diode test setting. If your meter does



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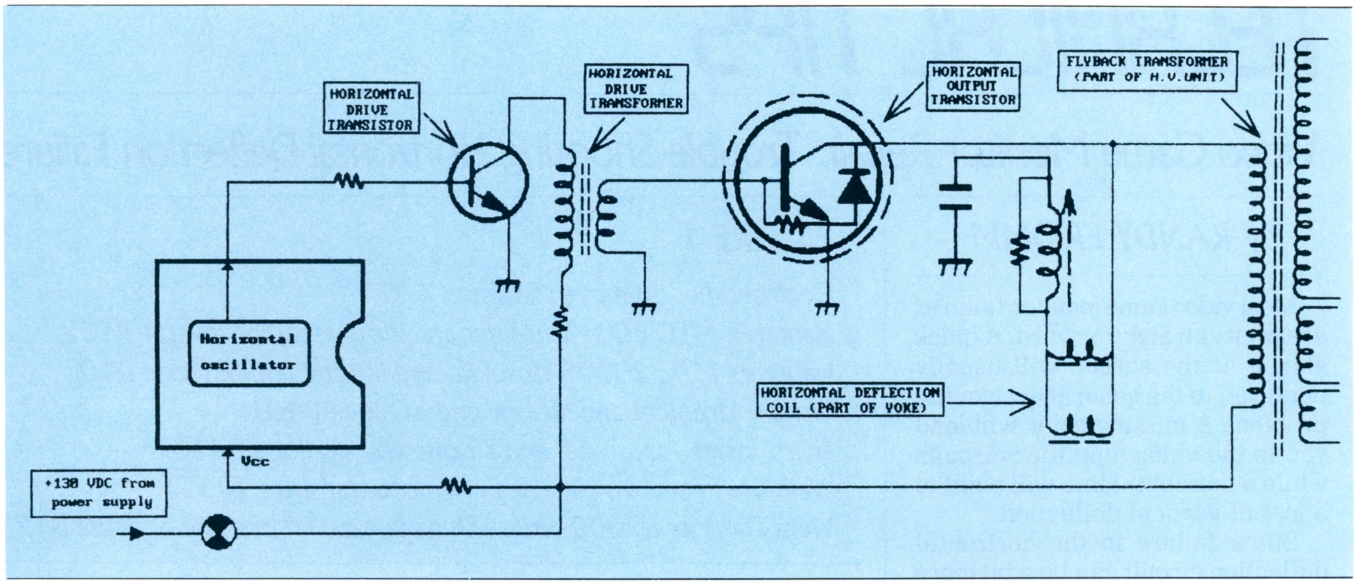

not have a diode test, use a low resistance scale. Remove the power to the monitor. Ground the black meter lead to the chassis and touch the red meter lead to the collector of the horizontal output transistor. If the meter displays a low resistance or short circuit, you've found the culprit. A bad high voltage unit also may cause the fuse to blow. In fact, the horizontal output transistor and high voltage unit will often fail together (the bad high voltage unit having caused the transistor to fail.)

Horizontal deflection problems that do not blow the fuse are somewhat more difficult to troubleshoot. There are a few things that can cause the horizontal deflection to become inoperative. One may have nothing to do with a horizontal failure at all!

Most monitors include a circuit known as an "X-ray protector" or "high voltage shut-down." The purpose of this circuit is to shut down the high voltage if it becomes exces-

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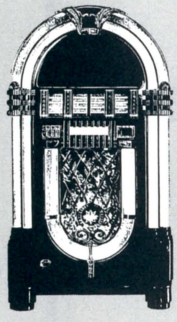
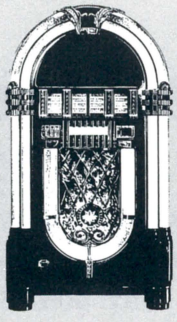
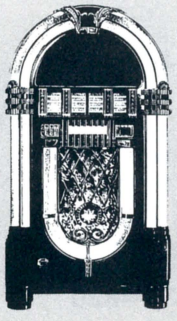
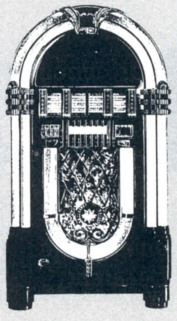
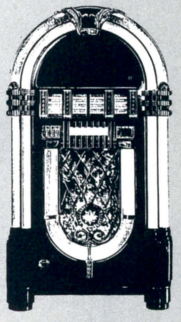

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sively high in voltage. It does this by killing the horizontal oscillator circuit. This prevents the monitor from emitting excessive X-rays.

To figure out if the horizontal deflection circuit is really defective or if it has been shut down by the X-ray protector, you should start your troubleshooting by disabling the shut-down circuit. This will be different in each type of monitor. Here are some commonly used video game monitors and the method of disabling the X-ray protector (see Figure 1).

Note: Quite a few of the monitors use an HA-11235 integrated circuit for the horizontal oscillator. Pin 9 of this IC is used for the shut-down input. If you see a zener diode connected to this pin, lifting either end of the diode off the board will disable the shut-down circuit.

With the shut-down circuit disabled, apply power to the monitor. If the monitor now gives you a picture, the horizontal circuit is working. Your problem lies elsewhere (probably in the voltage regulator circuit).

If the monitor is still dead, you need to make a few more tests. Measure the voltage at the collector of the horizontal output transistor. It should be around + 110 to + 130 VDC. Warning: never test the voltage at the collector of the horizontal output transistor if the horizontal deflection circuit is working properly! This test should only be performed if the monitor is dead. If you hear the high pitched squeal, or if a neon lamp glows when held near the flyback transformer (see *RePlay*, June 1990) measuring the collector voltage can damage your meter.

If the collector voltage is missing, there are only a few things that can be wrong. The most likely is a crack in the printed circuit board. Also, examine the solder joints around the high voltage unit. You may find some cracks or fractured solder joints. There is a highly remote possibility that the high voltage unit may be bad.

The Wells-Gardner K4900 series has a common problem with the jumpers that carry the + 130 VDC power supply around the perimeter of the board. One of the jumpers is located in the position on the board that is suspected to stress from the plastic clip that holds the board in place on the chassis. Removal and replacement of the board can cause this jumper to break, cutting off the voltage to the horizontal output circuit.

If the collector voltage of the horizontal output transistor is good, test the voltage at the collector of the horizontal drive transistor. If this voltage is missing, the primary winding of the horizontal drive transformer or the resistor that is in series with it may be open. The resistor will generally be 5 watts at 2.2K to 3.8K ohms. Check these with the power turned off. Naturally, you want to check for bad solder joints here as well.

If the collector voltage measures at around 50 VDC, switch your meter to read AC volts and measure it again. If you read approximately 50 VAC, the horizontal drive circuit is probably working properly. Your problem is most likely an open secondary winding in the horizontal

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drive transformer or broken traces and/or bad solder joints between the output of the horizontal drive transformer and the base of the horizontal output transistor. There is a remote possibility that the horizontal output transistor is bad but this is highly unlikely. As the horizontal output transistor is often a specialized one (with an internal resistor and diode) the best test here is substitution with a known good component.

If the collector voltage of the horizontal drive transistor measures at + 110 to + 130 VDC, turn off the monitor and test the horizontal drive transistor. You must unsolder and remove the transistor from the printed circuit board to test it properly. Horizontal drive transistor failure is not too common, so don't be too hopeful.

If the drive transistor tests good, re-install it, apply power to the monitor and measure the voltage at the base of the horizontal drive transistor. It should measure at around .4 VDC and 1 VAC. If you have performed all the previous tests and still haven't found the problem, it probably won't. You probably will measure 0 VAC. This means that you do not have an output from the horizontal oscillator in the integrated circuit. Before you declare the IC to be defective, you should test to make sure that the IC has power (Vcc) to it. Most of the time this will be around 12 VDC. As before, this connection will vary from monitor to monitor. See Figure 2 for some common monitors and the Vcc connection for each:

FIGURE 2

Electrohome - IC501 Pin 6.
Hantarex MTC 900 - IC2 Pin 2.
Hantarex MTC 9000 - IC2 Pin 15.
Orion - IC401 - Pin 11.
Sharp Image - IC401 - Pin 11.
Wells-Gardner K7000 series - IC2 Pin 16.

Of course, any monitor that uses the same IC as those listed above, will use the same pin number for the Vcc input. If the input voltage to the integrated circuit is okay, the IC itself may be defective. This is not a very common problem but at this point the IC should be replaced as you have all but eliminated everything else. If the Vcc power input to the integrated circuit is missing, trace the circuit back to see where it comes from. In general, the Vcc power for the IC comes from a 6.8K to 7.5K, 3 watt resistor that is connected to the + 110 to + 130 VDC power supply. If this resistor opens, it will cut off the power to the IC.

Author's note: Following these procedures should help you locate most horizontal deflection failures. As always, if you need any assistance, feel free to give me a call at (619)697-4035 and I'll try to help you out over the phone. Have your schematic ready, and be prepared to make some tests on the monitor as we discuss it.

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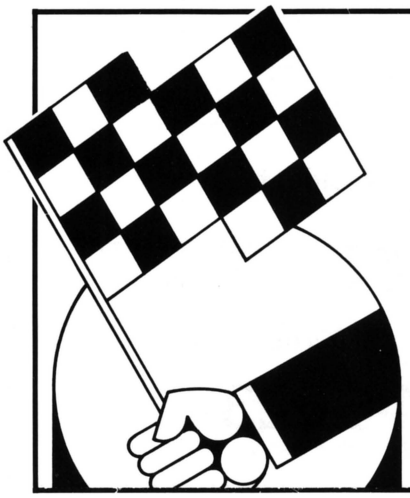

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The Old Values Still Stand *by Bob Rondeau*

As my friends know, I'm a great saver, which means I rarely throw anything out. I was combing through my "stuff" the other day and came across a newsletter dated October 1979 which I'd written and issued to my customers when I worked for Empire Distributing before Bally bought them. I found my own words rather interesting, considering that the industry in those days had yet to experience the video game boom and, of course, hadn't even heard of a dart game much less a CD jukebox.

Those were the days when operators pretty much repaired a game with a soldering gun, a point bender, a little oil and a lot of imagination. Those were times when the truck you hauled the machines in cost a lot more than the machines in the back. I'd like to reprint one portion of that 20 year old newsletter for you now because it's fascinating to see how some things have changed while the basic values really never waver. Apart from some expected edits by my pal Eddie Adlum, here's what I wrote 20 years ago this month:



"I wasn't a novice in this industry when Empire took me on, because this business has been a part of me since I was 16 years old. Before I came here, I spent twelve years operating like you. I've been in the tavern at 11:00PM listening to a drunk telling me how to fix the machine. I've had to pull equipment from locations that I busted my butt to please, just because some guy offered them 60% and the first month's take on the house . . . or because a guy I never heard of sold the location the machine for a little over cost.

"I've had to explain to the location owner that his machine would be broken down over the weekend because I didn't have the part and wouldn't be able to get it until Monday. I ran what's called a ma & pa route and as such, I had to learn that if the state suffered an earthquake, the temperature dropped to 20 below, the black plague came back and the water and power to the location was shut off, the real reason that location's business was slow was because I had the wrong records on the jukebox!

"I learned the hard way about painted coins, blue sky deals, machine break-ins and calls that came late every Friday afternoon saying: 'The machine's been broken for two days, but I didn't call because I didn't want to bother you, but I'd like it fixed right now!' I also learned that every location felt that if it wasn't for them, I couldn't make a living and go to the bank every morning with my wheel barrow full of money.

"I also had to learn that machines don't automatically pay for themselves, that financing was provided as a 'privilege' and that I could lose a location once in a while but I couldn't expand my business (or even exist) without proper credit.

"The dream of 60% commissions, the guarantees, the proper pricing on games and phonographs and the contracts were all things I knew should be done. I was far from successful in achieving these goals because I fought the same things all good operators fight today. We learned we operators couldn't afford every new piece that came out but we also learned the value of a good distributor, how he could help and how the manufacturer that stood behind its products could be an asset as well.

"My problems with finance, help, competition, direct sales, politics, etc. were the same as they are today. The only difference now is that

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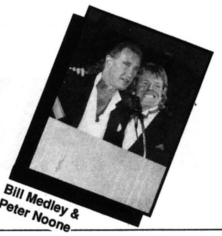
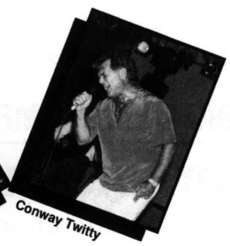

Bill Medley & Peter Noone

Jukebox Excitement!


Tyler Collins


Conway Twitty


Col . Tom Parker

(Scenes from last year's show in Las Vegas)

New Orleans

AMOA Expo '90

October 25-27

New Orleans Convention Center

The Amusement & Music Operators Association International Exhibition & Seminar for the Coin-Operated Amusement, Music & Vending Industry

Amusement & Music Operators Association 1990 Awards Show ★ October 26 ▶ Hyatt Regency New Orleans

This Year's Nominees*

Jukebox Pop Record of the Year

★Black Velvet, Alannah Myles (Atlantic)
★ Blame It On the Rain, Milli Vanilli (Arista)
★ Love Shack, B-52's (Reprise)
★ Nothing Compares 2 U, Sinead O'Connor (Chrysalis)
★ Wind Beneath My Wings, Bette Midler (Atlantic)

Jukebox R&B Record of the Year

★ Blame It on the Rain, Milli Vanilli (Arista)
★ Bust A Move, Young MC (Delicious Vinyl/Island)
★ Escapade, Janet Jackson (A&M)
★ Poison, Bell Biv Devoe (MCA)
★ Whip Appeal, Babyface (Solar/Epic)

Jukebox Country Record of the Year

★ Dumas Walker, Kentucky Headhunters (Mercury/Polygram)
★ Here in the Real World, Alan Jackson (Arista)
★ Just A Matter of Time, Randy Travis (Warner Bros.)
★ Killin' Time, Clint Black (RCA)
★ Statue of a Fool, Ricky Van Shelton (CBS/Columbia)

*Awards will also be given for Jukebox Pop, Country and R&B CD of the Year; Jukebox Rising Star Awards (male, female and group categories); and new inductees into the Jukebox "Legends" Hall of Fame.

AMOA

Amusement & Music Operators Association
111 E. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601
1-800/YES-AMOA
FAX: 312/565-4658

For more information on AMOA's 1990 Awards Show in New Orleans contact:
Sam Atchley, show producer,
at 817/267-4915; FAX: 817/545-9009

This ad underwritten, in part, by ASCAP, BMI and SESAC.

we as an industry are winning the battle for public recognition. We are solid business people and are now recognized as such by most everyone, except some idiots and hypocrites.

"During my dozen years as an operator, I formed some strong opinions on what I'd like to see in a distributor. I wanted a distributor I could call by his first name and be able to call him either at the office or at home. I wanted a distributor who wanted me to be successful and believed more than anything that the operator's problems should be shared by himself and his suppliers.

"I wanted a distributor who knew what was going on and kept me informed of things...a guy who fought unfair laws with me, who watched for equipment he knew I wanted and surrounded himself with competent people who also wanted to help me. I wanted a distributor who advised me and never oversold or undersold me...a guy who really knew that the $2.00 part **at the time** was more important to me than the machine he was selling and that he would make certain I got the part even if he had to go out of his way to get it.

"I wanted a distributor who didn't inflate the price of equipment just so he might give me more for an undesirable trade in...a man as interested in tomorrow's business as in today's. I wanted a distributor who would say what had to be said to me without worrying if it would hurt his business...a guy whose life was this industry.

"I'm not lily white, nor can I walk on water unless it's frozen. But I hope that someday I can be most of these things to you, Empire's customers. I really want to earn your business. Our industry is selling great entertainment at a price that cannot be beat. Our industry is also aggravating, nerve wracking, competitive, frustrating for the people in it, but also challenging and exciting. Can you imagine how dull anything else would be?"

That letter was written 20 years ago. Since then, we have crossed many hurdles and fought many brush fires, including some amongst ourselves. We run our businesses a little more like a 'business' now, and we're more recognized by the public. But as you saw, some values remain the same and people that reach for them are the better for it. And one more thing hasn't changed in all these years: we still sell some great entertainment!

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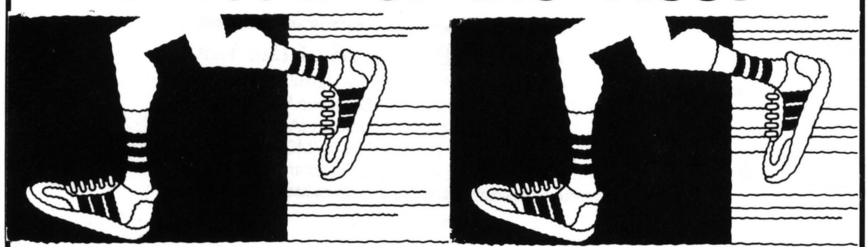

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HOTHITS PLAY LIST

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

POP

1. ***CHERRY PIE,*** *Warrant, Columbia 73510*
2. ***SUICIDE BLONDE,*** *Inxs, Atlantic 81860*
3. ***SOMETHING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO HEAVEN,*** *Phil Collins, Atlantic 87885*
4. ***PRAYING FOR TIME,*** *George Michael, Columbia 73512*
5. ***BLAZE OF GLORY (from "Young Guns II"),*** *Jon Bon Jovi, Mercury 875896*
6. ***UNCHAINED MELODY,*** *The Righteous Brothers, Verve/Polydor 871882*
7. ***UNSKINNY BOP,*** *Poison, Enigma/Capitol 44584*
8. ***SO CLOSE,*** *Daryl Hall & John Oates, Arista 2060*
- ★ 9. ***PRAY,*** *M.C. Hammer, Capitol 44609*
10. ***FLY TO THE ANGELS,*** *Slaughter, Chrysalis 23527*

CW

1. ***JUKEBOX IN MY MIND,*** *Alabama, RCA 2643*
2. ***FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES,*** *Garth Brooks, Capitol 79239*
3. ***YOU LIE,*** *Reba McEntire, MCA 79071*
4. ***A FEW OLE COUNTRY BOYS,*** *Randy Travis & George Jones, Warner Bros. 19586*
5. ***'TIL A TEAR BECOMES A ROSE,*** *Keith Whitley & Lorrie Morgan, RCA 2619*
6. ***WHEN I CALL YOUR NAME,*** *Vince Gill, MCA 79011*
7. ***FOURTEEN MINUTES OLD,*** *Doug Stone, Epic 73425*
8. ***WRONG,*** *Waylon Jennings, Epic 73352*
9. ***DRINKING CHAMPAGNE,*** *George Strait, MCA 79070*
10. ***COME NEXT MONDAY,*** *K.T. Oslin, RCA 2667*

R&B

- ★ 1. ***THIEVES IN THE TEMPLE,*** *Prince, Paisley Park/Warner Bros. 21598*
- ★ 2. ***OOPS UP,*** *Snap, Arista 2071*
- ★ 3. ***LIES,*** *En Vogue, Atlantic 87893*
- ★ 4. ***PRAY,*** *M.C. Hammer, Capitol 44609*
- ★ 5. ***B.B.D. (I THOUGHT IT WAS ME),*** *Bell Biv Devoe, MCA 53897*
- ★ 6. ***BANNED IN THE USA,*** *Luke featuring The 2 Live Crew, Luke/Atlantic 98915*
- ★ 7. ***DO ME!,*** *Bell Biv Devoe, MCA 53848*
- ★ 8. ***LISTEN UP (from "Listen Up — The Lives of Q. Jones),*** *Listen Up, Qwest 19576*
- ★ 9. ***GIVING YOU THE BENEFIT,*** *Pebbles, MCA 53891*
- ★ 10. ***JERK OUT,*** *The Time, Paisley Park/Reprise 19750*

CDs

PLEASE HAMMER DON'T HURT 'EM, *M.C. Hammer, Capitol 92857*
SOUL PROVIDER, *Michael Bolton, Columbia 45012*
PUMP, *Aerosmith, Geffen 24254*
MARIAH CAREY, *Mariah Carey, Columbia 45202*
WILSON PHILLIPS, *Wilson Phillips, SBK 93745*
X, *Inxs, Atlantic 82140*
END OF THE INNOCENCE, *Don Henley, Geffen 24217*
BRIGADE, *Heart, Capitol 91820*
. . . BUT SERIOUSLY, *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82050*

HOTHITS BEST NEW

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

POP

SOMETHING TO BELIEVE IN
Poison - Enigma/Capitol 44617

LET'S TRY IT AGAIN
New Kids On The Block - Columbia 73443

MORE THAN WORDS CAN SAY
Alias - EMI 50324

STRANDED
Heart - Capitol 44621

I'D RATHER GO BLIND
Sydney Youngblood - Arista 2055

FROM A DISTANCE
Bette Midler - Atlantic 87820

GEORGIA ON MY MIND
Michael Bolton - Columbia 73490

LOVE TAKES TIME
Mariah Carey - Columbia 73455

HEART OF STONE
Taylor Dayne - Arista 2057

TIME FOR LETTING GO
Jude Cole - Reprise 19743

TELL ME SOMETHING
Indecent Obsession - MCA 53830

★ ***BANNED IN THE USA***
Luke featuring The 2 Live Crew - Luke/Atlantic 98915

JOEY
Concrete Blonde - I.R.S. 73014

★ ***OOOPS UP***
Snap - Arista 2060

CW

AMERICAN BOY
Eddie Rabbitt - Capitol 79398

AIN'T NECESSARILY SO
Willie Nelson - Columbia 73518

WHAT WE REALLY WANT
Rosanne Cash - Columbia 73517

PUT SOME DRIVE IN YOUR COUNTRY
Travis Tritt - Warner Bros. 26094

SOMEONE ELSE'S TROUBLE NOW
Highway 101 - Warner Bros. 19593

DON'T GIVE US A REASON
Hank Williams Jr. - Warner/Curb 4492

HOME
Joe Diffie - Epic 73447

TOO COLD AT HOME
Mark Chesnutt - MCA 53856

NEVER KNEW LONELY
Vince Gill - MCA 53092

GHOST IN THIS HOUSE
Shenandoah - Columbia 73520

THE NIGHT'S TOO LONG
Patty Loveless - MCA 53895

YOU REALLY HAD ME GOING
Holly Dunn - Warner Bros. 19576

BACK IN MY YOUNGER DAYS
Don Williams - RCA 2677

MOONSHADOW ROAD
T. Graham Brown - Capitol 79269

R&B

YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT
Kiara - Arista 2053

★ ***BLACK CAT***
Janet Jackson - A&M 1477

★ ***LOVE TAKES TIME***
Mariah Carey - Columbia 73455

CLOSE QUARTERS
Cameo - Atlanta Artists/Mercury 878198

SOMEONE TO LOVE
The Mac Band - MCA 53837

I'D RATHER GO BLIND
Sydney Youngblood - Arista 2055

NO SWEETER LOVE
Geoff McBride - Arista 2087

Jumping for Joysticks

many operators happily report 'Perfect 360' joystick is just that: ops cite better performance, higher earnings, fewer service calls

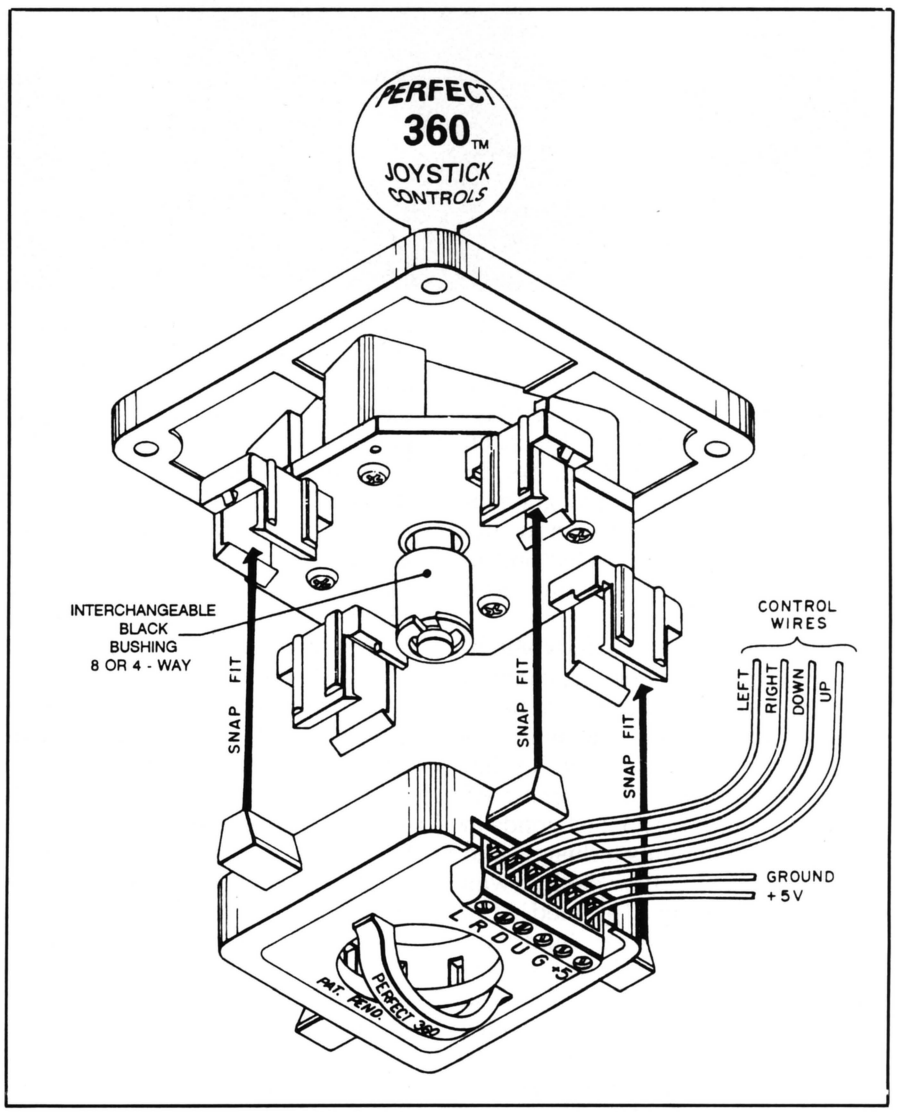
It isn't often that *RePlay* gets a press release about a new product so impressive we decide to make a feature story out of it. It's even more rare when that new product is a "mere" component. But there's nothing "mere" about a revolutionary new joystick called *Perfect 360.* As players, respected operators and established distributors have testified, the industry's first solid-state joystick "performs exceptionally well" (significantly better than a conventional stick), yet costs less than a typical service call.

Perfect 360 was designed by electrical engineer Randy Mitchell and is built by the company of the same name (Perfect 360, Salt Lake City, Utah). As many know, a typical, standard, mechanical joystick has over 20 moving parts. These can wear, break, mis-align, or oxidize. When that happens, players don't get responsive gameplay. They vanish. . . and so do operator profits.

Now that problem has been solved. By using solid-state optical coupling instead of actual mechanical switch openings and closings, the *Perfect 360* has no moving parts and no switch bounce, giving it an ultra-fast response, perfect accuracy, higher field reliability, and much longer life expectancy than a standard joystick, according to the manufacturer. President Randy Mitchell recently sent us some eye-opening oscilloscope tests using a state-of-the-art LeCroy device. Results showed the solid-state control really does "maintain perfect performance" as he claims. (See chart.)

As stated, we've also seen glowing testimonials from various tradesters. Distributor David Franz (H.A. Franz & Co. of Texas) praised the product's performance and called it "overdue in the industry." Operator Don Emery (Area Amusements, Barstow, Calif.) installed many in his players' favorite games, saying: "Installation was easy, supporting paperwork was clear and manufacturer follow-up displayed their interest in the product."

Operator George Piplica (Fremont Vending & Amusement, Fremont, Calif.) said the control "has required the least amount of service of any joystick we've ever used" and "increased revenues in games by a minimum of 20%." George added: "Without any reservations, I would





The staff of Perfect 360 (left to right): Curt Jones, design and testing; Bonnie "Bonzai" Foster, bookkeeping; Randy Mitchell, president and engineer; Don "Dealer Don" Swaby, marketing; Debbie "FTW" Hillers, secretary; and David "Turbo" VanVleet, production and shipping.

buy and advise other operators to buy this control."

Finally, our columnist Frank Seninsky went so far as to have players test and compare the *Perfect 360* against conventional joysticks on the same game. Frank has gone on record saying that to a man, his players described the *Perfect 360* as having faster response time and more accurate control.

Company President Randy Mitchell, an electrical engineer, came to coin-op from an extensive background in fiber optic telecommunications networks. How did he find himself in the world of video games?

"I had some very close friends in the coin amusements industry, and out of necessity this design was spawned," Randy explained. "I'm also a player," he added, "and standard joysticks are always a very consistent source of complaints. Many players feel they don't receive a fair play because of poor performance from standard joysticks. Remember, the joystick is the only interface the player has with the game. If players don't trust that interface, they won't put quarters in. Lucrative repeat players vanish, and a potentially profitable video dies prematurely, along with lost revenues."

To Randy, the solution was obvious. "Most other industries have already gotten away from mechanical switched input," he said. "You just don't see it around anymore — for example, nobody uses mechanical points in the ignition of an automobile engine. It's amazing to realize the coin machine industry works so hard to create up-to-date board programming, but then hooks up out-of-date controls to manipulate that programming. So we used a solid-state design for the *Perfect 360* and it's worked extremely well."

The solid-state joystick was actually designed in 1984, but high component prices prompted him to wait until 1990 — when prices had fallen — to introduce it to the coin-op market.

Response has been mixed, Randy said: great from operators, less enthusiastic from manufacturers. "I've found OEMs a little resistant to introduce anything new that costs even a tiny bit more," he lamented. "I have a hard time understanding how a company could spend millions on R&D, and then put an outdated $5 control on it.

"But I have been very happy to see the quick response of operators and distributors," Randy added. "They're very open to new ideas and they recognize the value of this product. We hope to bring more manufacturers on board as time goes by, but for now we're a very operator-oriented firm. We listen to operators and we help solve problems other than joystick concerns."

Randy's firm is now working full-time to supply the coin machine industry with the *Perfect 360.* Their staff of six in-house design and administration personnel are bolstered by a staff of dozens who do production and quality control on a subcontracting basis. "A lot of quality control is involved to make a solid-state device," Randy smiled, "and we've got it. I come from the telecommunications industry where if you have to spend a little more for excellence, that's what you do."

The firm's next project is a solid-state pushbutton which will employ the same solid-state technology. Look for it in three or four months, he said.

By the way, the *Perfect 360* can now be purchased with a platform which enables the operator to retrofit it to a Happ or Wico joystick. Happily, both of those firms now represent Randy Mitchell's company and distribute his solid-state control device. To order the *Perfect 360* joystick, contact your local authorized Wico or Happ Controls distributor. For more information, contact President Randy Mitchell at Perfect 360, 3840 Hillside Lane, Salt Lake City, UT 84109; 801/534-8950. Fax is 801/487-7784.

PINBALL POWER

OPS LIKE FLIPPER ASSN. — Operators are responding positively to invitations to join IFPA, the AMOA-International Flipper Pinball Assn. "Inquiries are coming into our offices daily," stated Exec Director Joe Conway. "The response has been overwhelmingly positive."

Membership costs $200 for the first year. New members receive a charter and a start-up kit for setting up pinball leagues and tournament play in streets and arcades. Other educational materials are also provided.

IFPA's president Sharon Harris held the gavel as the group's board of directors met at the Williams-Midway offices (Chicago) in late August. Obviously, the association is now fully incorporated and able to function autonomously. It's getting solid financial and political support from AMOA, Premier, Data East Pinball, Williams and Midway.

By the way, Sharon's dad — veteran Pennsy operator Stan Harris — presented IFPA's board with the first $200 check for a charter membership. Stan Harris & Co. will be IFPA's first chartered member.

To join IFPA or get more information, contact Joe Conway at 414/263-0233.


SHARON HARRIS


JOE CONWAY

THAT'S LIFE — The September edition of Life magazine carried a beautifully photographed, beautifully written six-page profile of the Williams-Midway pinball plant and its people to note the game's 60th anniversary. Penned by Jeanne Marie Laskas, Life's essay waxed poetic with this thought: "The idea of pinball does not, as a rule, sit near the surface of man's consciousness. That is precisely the point. Pinball is meaningless. Pinball is joyful or hateful, depending on what kind of day you're having. Pinball is pure emotion, a kind of kinetic passion occurring under glass."

More prosaically, Life quoted Williams-Midway pinball patriarch Steve Kordek as explaining the game's timeless appeal this way: "The player looks at the game, it attracts him, it's got some goofy design on it or something, and he looks at it and says: holy cripe, what the hell is that!?"

PINBALL EXPO & FLIP-OUT TOURNEY — Pinball Expo '90, the world's only pinball showcase, will attract pinball lovers from around the world for its 6th annual extravaganza Nov. 9-10 at the Ramada Inn, 6600 No. Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, Ill. Scheduled events include a tour of Data East Pinball's manufacturing plant and plenty of seminars including a "workshop" on flipper promotion headed by IFPA prexy Sharon Harris. RePlay publisher Eddie Adlum will sit in on this panel and try to help answer audience questions.

According to promoter Robert Berk, Expo will also feature a huge exhibit hall displaying old and new pin games, plus parts, supplies, and related collectibles. The special speaker at this year's show is Rufus King, a Washington, D.C. attorney who represented pinball makers in the late '50s in their battle to get pinball accepted as a legal form of amusement by state and federal governments. He's a charming gent with some colorful tales to tell.

For registration info, contact Pinball Expo headquarters at 2671 Youngstown Rd., Warren, Ohio or call 800/323-FLIP (323-3557). For exhibit info, call Mike Pacek at 800/321-2722.

NEW PRODUCTS

DYNO BOP from Grand Products



A new ticket redemptive game from Grand Products, housed in the same style of cabinet as their previous 'Slick Shot,' will make its national debut at AMOA. Called **Dyno Bop,** the piece is played by rolling as many balls across the field (and as fast as possible) during the alloted play time at Dyno Eggs displayed on the monitor.

Balls appear as rocks on the monitor and break the dynosaur eggs releasing comical prehistoric animals and birds running and flying to keep from being hit again by the rolling rocks. Each egg, animal and bird has different point values when struck, plus some special high point value targets are also offered. Tickets are awarded at game's end based on the score.

'Dyno Bop' offers operator-select option called Megatickets. When this is selected, the player is allowed to deposit as many as two coins or tokens (quarters) to get three times as many tickets for scored points. A great idea! The operator has to select this option when he sets the piece on location.

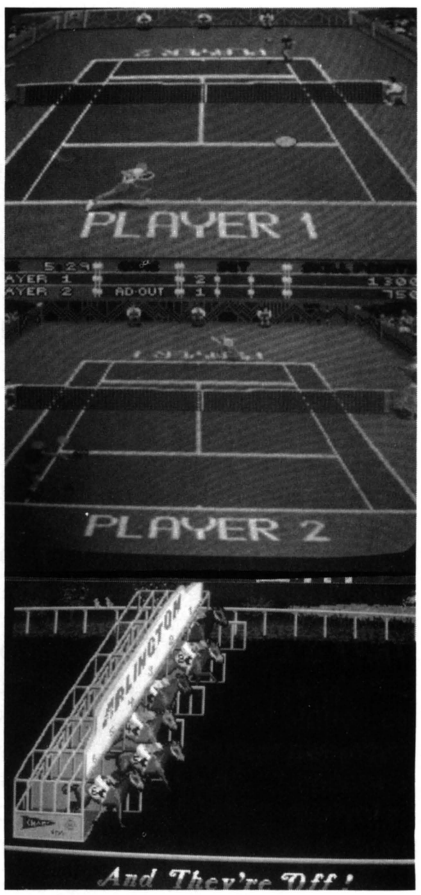
The game comes with a 19" Wells monitor, Deltronic ticket dispenser and a lighted display sign that attaches to the cabinet's top and flashes as tickets are awarded. It's a brand new novelty piece with lots of flash and makes a good fit into most locations using redemptive tickets considering its comfortable cabinet size.

Grand Product's Stan Jarocki says the game is easy to understand, fun to play and requires minimum skills . . . "elemental considerations for a game's success in today's marketplace, the fourth being that it vends tickets." Jarocki said the piece is testing well in a medium-sized arcade in a mall against other redemption machinery. "Age is no barrier, since both boys and girls as well as moms and pops are enjoying it. So, if operators and their players are ready for something new and refreshing in a redemptive game, welcome to the world of 'Dyno Bop'! he added.

For more information, contact your distributor or Grand Products, 425 Meyer Rd., Bensenville, IL 60106; 708/766-8282.

New from Strata

Hot Shot Tennis is a vertical upright, countertop or cocktail video game. It features split-screen graphics and simultaneous two-player gameplay. Theme: major tennis tournament. Gameplay: plays can



use hard, soft and lob shots and may begin at whatever level of play is comfortable for them. As players improve they can accumulate skill points, trying to earn Ace ranking. Features: you can see the court from your own point of view and from your opponent's point of view at the same time. Also realistic court sounds and announcer vocals add to the drama.

Arlington Horse Racing is a redemption video game that allows "wagering" of tokens. It's available in upright and countertop versions with a ticket dispenser. Theme: the famous Arlington International races. Gameplay: limitless races and combinations are possible, with 24 world-famous past Arlington

winners as the "cast." Any number of tokens may be bet for any of the six running horses to win, place or show. There's also a chance to bet on a perfecta, trifecta and quinella, all of which are explained on bezel graphics. Features: Strata worked closely with Arlington track personnel to develop authenticity. The voice of "Mr. Horse Racing," Phil Georgeff, is heard on the soundtrack. By the way, dealers who buy 50 or more units can earn an authentic white satin Arlington Million touring jacket.

Strata Bowling, a vertical upright or countertop video, is shipping now. Theme: regulation bowling, Flash, and "Strike or Die" bowling. By the way, a $100 rebate is available for a limited time to distributors who turn in a working, color, coin-op bowling game circuit board when they purchase 'Strata Bowling.'

Also new from Strata is a joystick version of their very realistic 'Golden Tee Golf' for easy conversion with button-based cabinets. The game still features three challenging courses, and the player's choice of clubs and visual perspectives with each shot.

For more information, ask your distributor or Strata Corp., 709 W. Algonquin Rd., Arlington Heights, IL 60005; 708/437-2473.

Pull-Tab Ticket Dispenser from Tekbilt

Pull-tabs are a multi-billion dollar form of vending machine-based gambling that is authorized in quite a few states around the U.S. If you're into this type of operating, the **Zanadew** dispenser has some attractive features you might consider. Features include: simple "ticket length" adjustment; simple "ticket thickness" adjustment; individual "pricing per column"; holds over 3,000 tickets (500 per column); bull bookkeeping with mechanical meters (one meter for coins in; plus one meter for each column, to record tickets dispensed); battery backed-up memory; accepts coins and $1-5-10-20 bills; tamper sensing protection with audio alarm; automatic column "lock-out" in the event of an empty column.

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.

DR. DUDE from Midway



Dr. Dude and his eXcellent-Ray is the latest wonderfully goofy Bally pinball from Midway Manufacturing, a subsidiary of WMS Industries. "Featuring a spectacular storyline to draw in and hold players, the Doctor arrives with outstanding gameplay action, innovative scoring features, attention-grabbing effects and dazzling graphics, including an all new Optrix (TM) backglass panel," said the firm.

Theme: a "way cool" doc helps players become "super dudes."

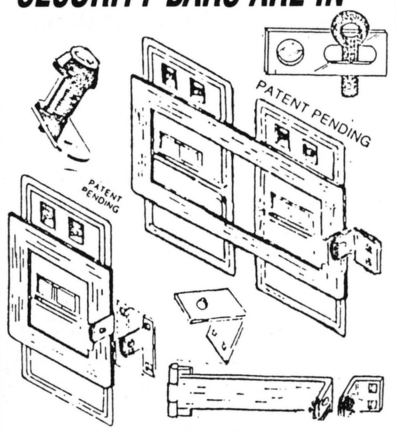
Gameplay: like, the object of the game is to advance the Dude-O-Meter (located at bottom center of playfield) from plain "dude" to "Party Dude," then "Cool Dude," "Major Dude" and finally "Super Dude." When players hit "Super Dude" status, they can try for the first-ever "Gazillion shot."

Features: where to begin? The "Optrix" backglass feature is a "before and after/Geek to Cool Dude" illustration that changes back and forth depending on your angle of view. The "eXcellent-Ray" is a sci-fi lighted bumper at the upper right playfield, activated by the spinning wheel called "Molecular Mixmaster"



TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH

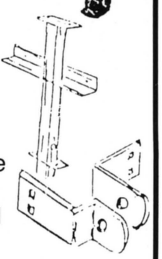
CHERRY TREES ARE OUT SECURITY BARS ARE IN–



WORD OF MOUTH IS OUR BEST ADVERTISING!



We have calls almost every week saying, *"Somebody told me to phone* **A-1 Products**." Sometimes we get a call for Avon Products. Other times callers are confused with the 800 number for U.S. Postal Stamp Service. Well, what the heck . . .we decided to stick with you guys in the game business. Now and then we get the feeling that y'all will need us some day!



1-800-782-6721

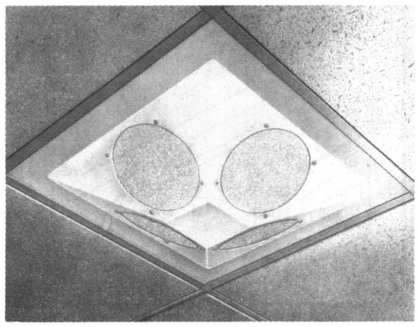
A-1 PRODUCTS

SEE WHAT'S NEW AT THE AMOA SHOW. . . BOOTH 649

in the upper right. Wonderful comic-book graphics and genuinely witty written and oral verbal messages add to the sometime two-ball play, the jackpots and double scoring.

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.

Jukebox Ceiling Speakers from L.A. East



SD48 is a "super dispersion" ceiling-mounted loudspeaker (patent applied for). It uses "suspended ceiling tile" technology (used in most modern buildings) to fullest advantage to deploy a low-profile, 4x8" loudspeaker that can handle lots of applications: jukebox music, background music, voice announcements, audio-visual systems, etc. Variations on the basic model feature wideband response that is projected evenly in an omni-directional sound dispersion pattern (that means fewer speakers do the job of letting everybody hear the jukebox). A corner module called SD-28 is also available.

For more information, ask your distributor or L.A. East, 127 Union St., Hatfield, PA 19440; 215/362-2890.

New Model 100 by CB Validator

A versatile bill validator/acceptor with detachable & lockable 500-bill stacker is now available from Coin Bill Validator, Inc. Called the **Model 100,** it has a $4096 credit register and can be set to accept not only $1, $2, $5, $10, and $20 bills but $50s and $100s as well, and in any combination.

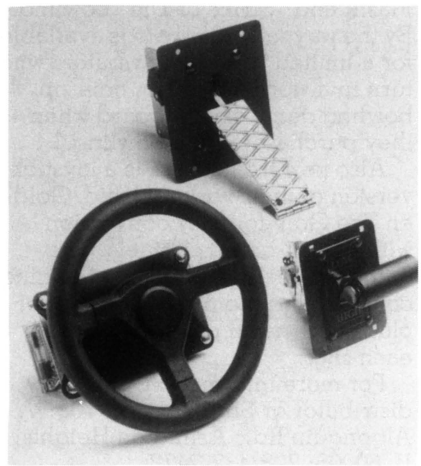
Electronics are on top and out of reach of sprayed fluid and reportedly safe from dew or other dampness. The maker says the self-contained unit is easy to service: if a belt has to be replaced, the job can be completed in 5 minutes, they say.

Company spokesman Joe Vogel says greater operating speed is another advantage. "The 'Model 100' evaluates each bill in approximately one second. It's also the only validator that doesn't require the user to wait for credit impulses to stop before it will accept additional bills. And, it accepts bills either-end first," he stated.

Compatible with all changers and hoppers, this 4x4x4½", 3½lb. validator runs on 115 VAC and 40 watts. Its companion stacker has an option allowing it to be positioned in more than one way to accommodate space limitations.

For more information, contact Coin Bill Validator, Inc., 30 DiTomas Ct., Copiague, NY 11726; 516/842-3810.

New Driving Controls from Happ



Happ's new 360 degree steering wheel and their 270 degree steering wheel are made from the "finest material" and feature standard mounting, ball bearing construction and many other exclusive features, said the firm. Their new Turbo Shifter is available as kit with complete hardware and instructions including replacement cover plate. Happ's new single and dual foot pedals are made of rugged steel with micro-switch or potentiometer control. The updated, stronger pedals also include improved pedal springs and links. Designed mostly for coin-op driving games, all of these new driving controls can be used in many customized applications, said the firm.

For more information, ask your distributor or Happ Controls, 106 Garlisch, Elk Grove, IL 60007; 708/593-6130.

Yankee Doodle Update for 'Do'

Two-Bit Score Amusement (Austin, Tex.) has released its newest "aftermarket" software product



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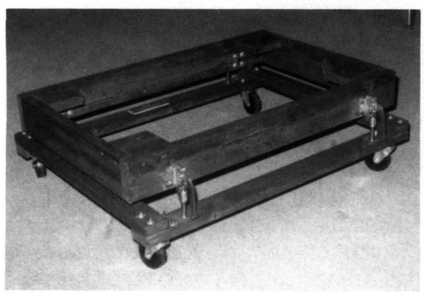
called **Yankee DOodle.** Sold directly to operators, this set of ROMs plugs into any original 'Mr. Do!' CPU board, they adivse. Once installed, players find themselves in an underground maze dotted with oil barrels. Its main character is Uncle Sam, complete with red, white & blue top hat, carrying a lit bomb.

Players push oil barrels down on top of the bad guys or dump them over for extra points. The update comes with complete instructions for speedy installation (the makers says the software includes a speed-up chip which makes the main character tunnel "much faster" than Mr. Do!.

For more details, contact Two-Bit Score at 512/282-9369.

STEP & ROLL DOLLY from JERM Enterprises





Step & Roll Dolly, made by one of the industry's best-known operators, makes it easy to move pool tables. This self-lifting wood dolly attaches to a standard coin-op table in play position (down) and is bolted to the table. . . and remains on location! Now, that's a new concept.

The dolly is hardly noticeable and is out of the players' way, said the firm. It means the location owner can move the pool table aside for special events without the operator spending time and money on service calls. It also means the operator can set the table in otherwise impossible locations for pool (i.e., on a dance floor, etc.). "The concept is totally safe and prolongs the life of the casters by not having to flip the tables each time the table must be moved," said operator Ray Lonsway.

For more information, contact Ray Lonsway, JERM Enterprises, 131 Youngstown-Warren Rd., Niles, OH 44446; 216/652-1251.

Improved Payphone from PPI

101-A is an upgraded model of one of the simplest coin-op payphones on the market. Line-powered, this desktop unit requires no electricity. The coin mech has no moving parts (quarter is "read" by an electric eye). Users may place 800 calls, operator-assisted calls and credit card calls. Manufacturer Ric Stephan has been involved in the private, coin-op payphone business since its inception in 1983.



For more information, contact Pay Phone Industries, 2415 W. Amherst, Bloomington, IN 47401; 812/333-9939.

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine magazine, Oct. 15, 1990

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

Model (manufacturer)
1 Quiz H.Q. (Taito)
2 Raiden (Seibu)
3 Columns (Sega)
4 Magic Sword (Capcom)
5 Tetris (Sega)
6 World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
7 Out Zone (Toaplan)
8 World Stadium '90 (Namco)
9 M. Jackson's Moonwalker (Sega)
10 Final Fight (Capcom)
11 M.V.P. (Sega)
12 TMNT [Turtles] (Konami)
13 Super Masters (Sega)
14 Capcom World (Capcom)
15 Parodius (Konami)
16 Adventure Quiz II (Capcom)
17 Shanghai II (Sun Electronics)
18 Air Duel (Irem)
19 Combatribes (Technos)
20 Bloxeed (Sega)
21 Hammerin' Harry (Irem)
22 Thunder Fox (Taito)
23 Ultimate Othelo (Success)
24 Lightning Fighters (Konami)
25 Mercs (Capcom)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

Model (manufacturer)
1 Final Lap 2 [del.] (Atari/Namco)
2 Final Lap 2 [standard] (Namco)
3 Beast Busters (SNK)
4 G-LOC [deluxe] (Sega)
5 Air Inferno [deluxe] (Taito)
6 Hard Drivin' (Atari/Namco)
7 Super Monaco GP [del.] (Sega)
8 Big Run (Jaleco)
9 Out Run [deluxe] (Sega)
10 Turbo Out Run (Sega)
11 Continental Ciccus (Taito)
12 WGP (deluxe] (Taito)
13 Racing Hero (Sega)
14 Winning Run (Namco)
15 Operation Thunderbolt (Taito)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

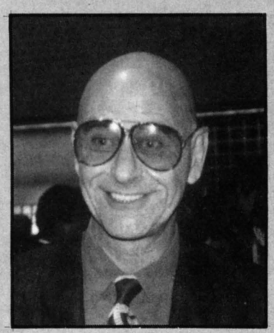
Model (manufacturer)
1 Phantom of the Opera (Data East)
2 Back To The Future (Data East)
3 Rollergames (Williams)
4 Earthshaker (Williams)
5 Monday Night Football (D.E.)

GRAPEVINE

SAY IT AIN'T SO — Despite all the positive PR about legal video poker, the gray-area variety are still getting some well-known tradesters in legal trouble. We won't name names unless and until some convictions come down, but two well-known operators in two different states that are trying to legalize video lottery have been charged with paying off on poker games. One of the operators has been indicted and may have gone to trial by now. Both operators say the locations were at fault and that they didn't know anything about it. Fellow tradesters, including this publication, wish them well. The industry is also hoping that these legal situations won't have a negative effect on video poker legalization attempts in their respective states. A survey in this issue says that 44% of polled operators believe most of their local tradesters are "running gray"... and 13% of operators say "everybody's doing it." Another 15% "took the fifth." Let's see, 44 plus 13 plus 15... that's 82 percent, right? Under the circumstances, it's surprising we don't hear more stories like this.

NO NOD FROM BAR OWNERS — The 22,000-member National Licensed Beverage Assn. refused to endorse the creation of the new dollar coin at its July board meet. According to Tavern Sports (which carried the item), the NLBA will neither campaign for nor against the coin. The magazine quoted the association's Exec. Director Gerry Murphy saying, "One thousand dollars in coins is going to weigh a lot more than $1,000 in dollar bills."

international



HANK WINS! Hank Grant, the New York-born coin machine pro who now makes his living from an operations base in Belgium, is celebrating these days. His Amusement Machine Assn. has been accepted for membership as Belgium's second national trade group in Euromat, the "United Nations" of European national coin-op trade associations. This after a years-long fight in which the other Belgian trade group (UBA) did everything possible to block AMA's entry. Congratulations to Hank and AMA for their success... and to Euromat and its new director Mike Shefras for some statesmanlike policies.



LANJEU CELEBRATES — Canada's new school year was rung in with a coin-op party for younger players and their families. The party was thrown by Montreal's Lanjeu family amusement centers, which are run by Lacaille Amusements, Inc. Kids accompanied by parents enjoyed having their faces made up, received balloons, candy and tokens which let them play video games. Lanjeu's nine arcades, found in major shopping centers, are the only ones in the region with an "Under 16 requires parental accompaniment" admissions policy.

FOREIGN LEGION — Foreigners as well as Frenchmen who seek to escape into a land of adventure and amusement, look no further. Forainexpo/Amusemexpo's 19th annual edition takes place Dec. 11-14 at the Parc des Expositions in Paris. Equipment on show will include coin-op amusements, gambling pieces, carnival and midway games and service units, etc. Some 12,000 tradesters attended last year. For information, contact Mrs. Francoise Regnier, General Manager, 8 Rue de la Michodiere, 75002 Paris, France. Telephone is 47-42-92-56.

southeast

THE SINGLES SCENE — Only 50 of the top singles listed on Billboard's Oct. 6 Hot 100 chart were pegged available as 7" vinyl discs. (A Billboard rep will talk about this at an AMOA Expo seminar Oct. 26 in New Orleans.) A real curiosity on this particular chart: 'Unchained Melody' by the Righteous Brothers was #19 (the original single on Verve Records available in vinyl only) **and** #45 on Curb Records (available in cassette single only). The latter version was recorded years later but by the same group.

SIDEBAR TO THE GAS CRUNCH — Operators may not even know this, but the vinyl used in making singles and albums requires petroleum. But though the mideast oil problem has pumped up the cost of this base product, the record industry isn't shaking in its boots since the petroleum used in the polycarbonate of the CD is only about 1/7th what it is in an album. The previous oil shortage hurt the record business early in the '80s when albums were its key product (i.e. pre-CD).



HCCI HONORS GORDON — The Half Century Club International will pay honor to the memory (and to the contributions made to the trade) by Jack Gordon at its Oct. 26 meeting during AMOA. Steve Kordek (HCCI prexy) said the late Gordon's wife Muriel wouldn't be able to attend (she's still feeling poorly), but that his group of industry deans would mount a suitable tribute to the former Seeburg chief (and innovator of so many jukebox breakthroughs) all by themselves. For latecomers, the meeting goes from noon until 2:00 PM at the Williams suite in the Marriott. Be there and share an anecdote about J. Cameron Gordon (Cameron? Isn't that a country in Africa?)

MENDING — Peach State Distributing's veteran Devon Griffin slipped while working on a ladder early October and tore his leg up pretty badly on the way down (muscles & skin). It didn't heal well and he was scheduled to go into the hospital about a week before AMOA for skin grafting. Hope it works out. Obviously he'll miss the show, and Dick Sershon may also miss his first AMOA in 16 years taking up the slack in Devon's absence.

ON STAGE — How's this for a jukebox "ad"? Rowe's new CD-100A gold box is installed in the Hytops Bar right at the busy New Orleans Hyatt Hotel at the Expo. A.M.A. Distributing's genial Bob Nims says "Rowe oughta be pleased about that, right?"

CIA EDICT — Believe it or not, a mysterious-looking envelope recently crossed our desk with a return address saying only "Intelligence Community Staff, Washington D.C. 20505." Inside was a press release from the office of the Director of the CIA. It seems that the nation's spooks want to standardize something called "CD-RDx" as the universal hi-tech software used by themselves, the FBI, the National Security Council, the National Security Agency, etc. "CD-Rom is an ideal medium for sharing data between intelligence agencies," said the Director. Wonder if the CIA will also pop the occasional CD-Rom video game into the top secret info mix. . . like It Came From the Desert? Shh!

NEW RECORD CATALOG — Looking for hits and golden oldies on 45? Jewel Paula Ronn Records has just released their new catalog featuring everything from Ike & Tina Turner to Gospel music and country-western artists. Call "Stan the Record Man" in Shreveport, Louisiana at 800/446-2865.



SHAFTED — Bill McCartney, GM of Rowe's Columbia dealership, won the jukebox & vending maker's Golden Shaft Award for 1990 at their recent meeting at La Quinta on the Mojave Desert in SoCal. Holding his "coveted plaque" (given to distribs who, shall we say, have had their "creative" marketing moments), Bill is surrounded by past winners like (from left) Kelly Flynn (Indianapolis), Al Toranto (Birmingham), Pete Betti (Los Angeles) and by missing winners there in spirit, including Al Kress. Joining the gang are Rowe's Jerry Gordon & Joel Friedman. Other awards passed out at La Quinta included the Rowe Cup to Steve Koeningsberg & Eddie Kucharski of State Sales (Baltimore) and the President Cup to Bill Merrill & Jack Killian of Rowe/Dallas (Bud Kice accepts this plaque from Jerry Gordon in the photo below).



northeast

MADE IN COINBIZ — Betson/Jersey sales hitter Bob Boals met his wife Darby at a Sega distributor meeting in San Francisco three years ago while out to a restaurant. Ah, love happened and marriage followed. The union was blessed Aug. 23 with the birth of their first child, a 7 lb. 7 oz. cutie pie named Kelsey. Mom & daughter are in ace shape at their Rahway, NJ home, says the proud pop.



WEDGES/LEDGES, the coin pusher game that's heavy on skill features for operators in strict states, is now being marketed by the redemption pros at Betson Enterprises in Moonachie, New Jersey (800/524-2343). It's made by Steve Shoemaker (Wedges/Ledges, Inc. of Redondo Beach, Calif.) but the nationwide Betson distributor network can now get this FBI-approved piece for you.

midwest

NATALIE KULIG of Taito America and her husband Gene became the proud parents of baby Zachary Alexander Kulig on Sept. 1. The brown-eyed tyke weighed in at 7 lbs., 9 oz. — warmest congratulations!

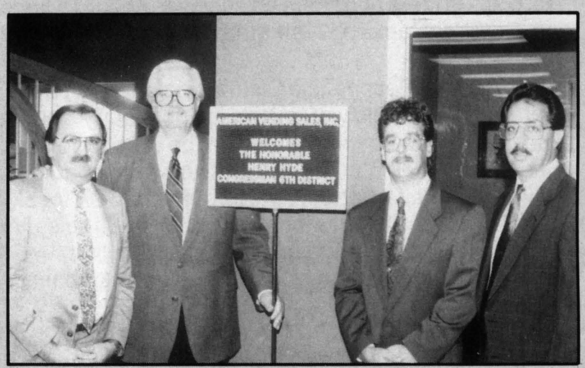
LIFE GOES ON — NSM's North American commander Rus Strahan recently lost his grandfather Roger Nixon; he died in San Diego peacefully at the age of 86. Then Rus advises that his own son Sean's wife Fern is expecting their first baby this May (Sean is stationed in Germany, where the NSM boxes come from). So, there's good news and sad news in the Strahan household. As we said, life goes on. By the way, this will be the third grandchild for the youngish Strahan.

WHISPERING JOE REMEMBERED — Joe Siwak died on Aug. 22 at the age of 82. With his passing, one of the most colorful operators left the ranks of the jukebox and game crowd. This authentic "Damon Runyon" character was a straight-shooter in business, but his broad-brimmed hats, his cigar and his whispering "jukebox voice" (that resulted from a botched throat operation when he was a youngster) combined to create the picture of what Hollywood would consider your classic "jukebox man."

All his life, Joe spoke in a perpetual whisper, which Detroit Free Press columnist (and Siwak obituary writer) Neal Shine said "virtually guaranteed the rapt attention of his customers, especially those who decided the way he spoke was sinister affectation being used to make a point." Shine wrote that Whispering Joe started out back in the slot machine days and went on to become an established jukebox and game operator under the company name Joe's Coin Machine Service.

According to Shine, Joe's courtly manners impressed the location ladies and his fluent Polish was welcome by a lot of the men who owned the places where he set machines. His acquaintance Hank Heiser (Cartel Distributing), who sent us the newspaper clipping, said Joe was everything the obit said he was. Joe was cremated and his ashes spread on the waters of Lake Saint Clair from the stern of his boat, the Cutty Sark II. Wish we'd met him, but now we can't. May he rest in God's peace.

PAT NETTERVILLE IS GONE — Working from the mid-'70s to the mid-'80s for Bally Distributing in Green Bay and Chicago as well as for Pioneer in Milwaukee, Pat Netterville passed away after a long bout with diabetes. He's already missed by his many friends in Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois.



CONGRESSMAN CALLING — One of the most respected members of the U.S. Congress is Rep. Henry Hyde, Republican from Illinois' sixth district. He's smart as a whip but also has a very likeable, "regular folks" personal touch . . . in spades. Rep. Hyde visited American Vending Sales' HQ in Elk Grove Village, Ill. on Aug. 13 for a tour and a luncheon hosted by the distributor. After lunch, Rep. Hyde addressed the group of distributors, their staffs, operators and other guests. He discussed the world situation and also detailed his opinion of the importance of the vending industry as an integral part of the American economy now, as well as its growing importance in the future. What an honor for this fine distributor, and doesn't this event reflect nicely upon our industry! Congratulations! Seen here (from left) are congressional staffer Patrick Durante, Rep. Hyde, and AVS's Vince Gumma and Frank Gumma Jr.



THE 'DYNO BOP' TEAM — Grand Products' new dinosaur redemption game Dyno Bop was developed with lots of help from some creative guys and gals at Incredible Technologies. Here, we see four of the IT folks with two Tyrannosaurus Rex cakes, baked to celebrate the game's money-gobbling launch. From left, technical art coordinator Tony Sherman, producer Dave Theil, background artist Denise Walner and character artist Stan Fukuoka are ready to make those cakes "extinct." Not shown: "Dyno Kid" artist/animator Ralph Melgosa and game programmer Pierre Maloka. IT credited Dave Marofske of Grand Products with the visionary concept of using a much-improved "gestural play control" (first version of which was seen on Slick Shot) to bring the prehistoric beasties to vidgame life.

YOU MISSED A SPOT! — Dick and Lois Mellen (Mellen Sales, Green Bay) turned the business over to sons Pat and Mike around three years ago while they spent the cold Green Bay winters down in sunny Arizona. When they returned this summer (this time to avoid the Arizona heat), the kids put them to work painting the entire outside of the Mellen building on Velp Ave. (the local Green Bay Press newspaper took their pictures painting and put it on the front page.)

THERE'S LESS OF YOU — Jan Jaquet of American Vending Sales' parts department lost 90 lbs. and really knows how to keep it off. "Just think of the money she could make if she managed a baseball team," says her friend Bob Rondeau in reference to the L.A. Dodgers Manager Tommy Lasorda's TV ads.

CANDACE SUPER is the new Executive Director of MCMOA (Michigan operator association). She comes to the group after 15 years in association management. She has managed trade shows and conferences, has edited and published many publications and newsletters, and brings considerable experience in legal, educational and membership areas to her new post. She's also a registered lobbyist in the state and has administered PACs. Welcome to the industry!

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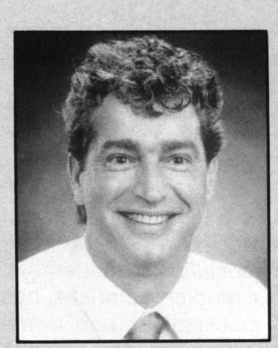
MORE AUCTIONS are being offered by U.S. Amusement Auction Co. (Bloomington, Ind.) says the firm's Ric Stephan. They've been in the music & games auction biz since 1983. They're now bringing their travelling auction block to as much of the USA as they can, letting you buy cheap and sell dear in your very own region. Fall and winter sites for USAA auctions include St. Louis (call for date), Dallas (Nov. 17), Miami (Jan. 5) and Anaheim, Calif. (Feb. 23) which should be one of their biggest. Of course, they'll keep going with events in Indianapolis, Columbus and Pittsburgh. Get more info at 812/333-9939. And please, tell USAA where you read this item!

southwest

NO BULL — Stan (Grand Products) Jarocki recently spent a couple of days out at the Gary Leffew Ranch in Santa Maria, Calif. riding rodeo bulls. You read correctly. While some guys are reluctant to ride on a roller coaster, Stan and his son Jim banged around the Leffew corral for a couple of days on some lively critters. We asked the obvious question: "Why?" Said Stan (a 40-year veteran of the industry): "For the same reason some guys climb mountains!" He'd asked those young SNK bucks John Barone and Tracy Tate to join him and Jim but they declined (we always knew those SNK guys had sense). Cowpoke Jarocki will be riding his new Dyno Bop redemptive novelty game at AMOA, saddle sore but raring for sales action (bet he's standing up in the booth).

CALIF. CRANE RAID — Several law enforcement entities in the San Diego area took part in an Oct. 9 raid on the San Diego Toy Co., an operating firm which runs cranes. The firm's office manager, Paul Harmaier, was arrested and charged with "grand theft" (since the firm earns over $5,000 per week with cranes), "conspiracy" and "fraudulently obtaining money by a hidden mechanical device" (potentiometer), according to the San Diego Union. Harmaier was bailed out the next day. Police also reportedly seized $20,000 in toys, plus company records and an additional value in parts from the office. About 40 Grayhound cranes from 29 locations were also seized. The locations will not be charged, said police. More area crane operators are under investigation, said police. Dave Jackson of the Amusement Assn. of Calif. (AAC) predicted police will find the 40 seized cranes had been modified to remove the potentiometers, so the "hidden device" issue may not pan out. To get AAC's free pamphlet on proper California crane operation (authored by legal expert Bob Snyder), call 818/775-1935.

'PIT BOSS' SITUATION — Police in Ontario, Calif. seized some Merit Pit Boss countertop games (which include amusement only card-themed video games) from locations served by Pat Doub's PatEarn Video. "Everybody in L.A. County should know that despite the fact that this game awards points only, the double-up feature could possibly get you in trouble," said Dave Jackson of the Amusement Assn. of California. Merit has a California program that eliminates the double-up feature on the poker games in Pit Boss. "This situation has got nothing to do with illegal gambling or gray area," Merit's Sales Director Dave Rubinstein stated confidently. "The double-up feature falls under an old technicality regarding extended play. It's a situation we addressed long ago and we have a special chip program for California games which will prevent the problem from ever arising." Distributor Dave Stroud at PGD has the needed chip updates (619/441-9100). SoCal operators can also contact Betson Pacific (213/388-9338) for the needed chips.



NEW CALIF. DISTRIB — Rick Lynch, a West Coast promotions expert from the manufacturing sector, has announced the opening of "Lynch Distributing of California" (San Diego). The dealership will offer Valley Cougar Dart games and Powerkick soccer tables "at great prices," said Rick. These sporting games offer low initial investment, long-term, steady income and long life in a single location. "Promotion is the key to success in the Nineties and Lynch Distributing has a full line of ideas and materials

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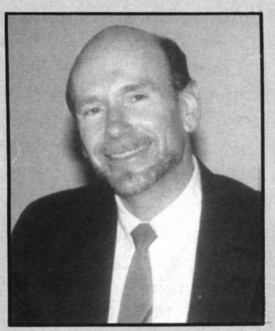
Mayoni Enterprises

to help you organize and run your leagues from start to finish," Rick advised. "Our approach is to work with the operator to help him protect his locations, rather than seek them as potential sales targets." Factory support from Valley and Powerkick is also available through the dealership. Contact Rick, Candy or Eric at Lynch Dist., 3139 Guilitoy Ave., San Diego, CA 92117; 619/273-1028.



ROBERT STEWART has been promoted to Director of Manufacturing for Atari Games. He'll oversee all production operations for the California factory. The nine-year Atari vet knows this job quite well, since he's been "acting director" for the past 18 months. Atari has one of the trade's largest factories — including, said Stewart, the only factory which currently makes its own PCBs, including surface mount, auto insertion and auto test equipment. Atari prexy Hide Nakajima said the firm was fortunate to have a man of Bob's caliber on the line, since fast response "on the production line" is directly tied to sales success.

STAR*TECH SEMINARS — The next Advanced Game Tech Seminars held by the pros from Star*Tech Journal will take place Nov. 16-17 (New-Way Sales, Toronto); Feb. 23-24 (Shaffer Distributing, Columbus) and March 9-10 (Rowe-Dedham). Recent seminars hosted by Struve in Salt Lake and by Commercial Music in Dallas drew game techs from as far away as New York, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Louisiana and Tennessee to learn valuable time- and money-saving trouble-shooting tips! Call the publication at 609/662-1080 for more info.

SPACE AGE ELECTRONICS prexy Carl Fleischman revealed that a new 25" video monitor "featuring the ultimate in design function at an affordable price" will be unveiled at their AMOA Expo display (booth #560). "I believe this monitor will become the criterion of the amusement machine industry," he declared.

WEDDING BELLS — Romstar's Tim Jackson will tie the knot with his lovely lady Fern Scott on Feb. 16, 1991. That's two days after Valentine's Day, so the happy couple is sure to be in a romantic mood. Congrats, Tim!

SHARP IMAGE Electronics has welcomed 10-year trade vet Ron Clapper onto the team as National Sales Manager for this L.A.-area manufacturer of video monitors. Sharp prexy Chris Anderson made the announcement and eager-beaver Ron began touting the firm's top quality and "unprecedented warranty" right away.

COMES THE 3RD SHOE? — Pioneer has followed their CD jukebox with a video jukebox. Since the firm's been hyper active in sing-along karaoke (where hand-held microphones are used by location customers singing to the lyrics printed on the video screen), we wondered if the company intends to drop the third shoe at AMOA and show a coin-op karaoke. After all, they already have a mountain of such software cut and pressed.

Well, their coin-op chief Paul Scribner did tell us a kara-

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oke demo will be shown at the AMOA Expo (probably not coin-op) but said he had no idea of the official plans for our biz. "Look, a market research team from Tokyo came through here around the end of September and one of the things they were considering was coin-op karaoke," Scribner told RePlay. "But, as I speak to you, I don't know their decision. Obviously if they decide to make a full court press on coin-op karaoke, the product will fall into my realm," he added. Let's see what happens at Expo.

BOB MEYER, age 75, passed on recently after suffering heart failure. The long-time San Jose, Calif. amusement operator (San Jose Novelty, Tempo Sales, Meyco Games) attended San Jose State College. He entered the coin machine business in 1940 and kept working in it for 50 years. Along the way, he also served as a flight instructor and airplane ferry pilot in World War II, and worked as a real estate broker on the side for a number of years. "He was my best friend and a 50-year coin machine operator," said San Diego operator Fred Gillman. Bob is survived by his wife of 54 years (Bernice), four children and seven grandchildren. Our condolences to his family and friends.

DRINKS YES, VIDS NO — As of Aug. 20, the Alcohol Control Board of L.A. County is at it again. They're denying locations the right to have video games, when locations apply for new liquor licenses or when they apply to change the type of old licenses they already have. The actions come under a rule called "Condition 7," which is supposed to prevent "undesirable activity" where liquor is sold. C-stores, liquor stores, restaurants and retail food outlets have all been "targeted," according to the Amusement Assn. of California (AAC). Going even further, the Rosemead city council has decreed that all existing "arcade devices" in liquor licensed locations must be removed by Dec. 31. If you're running into these problems, contact AAC at 818/775-1935.

TURTLES II — New Line Cinema and Golden Harvest productions have announced they'll produce a sequel to this summer's hit movie "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles." Tentative release date is March 15, 1991 which coincides with college students' Spring Break. Hmm, doesn't it also nearly coincide with the ACME show? (March 22-24). Every time we ask the folks at Konami about a possible sequel to *TMNT,* the coin-op game, they just smile.

DATEBOOK

	OCTOBER 25-27 AMOA Expo '90. Hyatt Regency (and two other hotels), New Orleans. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/644-6610.		**JANUARY 7-10, 1991** ATEI, Grand Hall, Olympia, London. For info, contact Exhibitions Administrator Dawn Milroy, ATEI, 122 Clapham Common Northside, London, SW4 9SP. Telephone is 071/228-4107.
	OCTOBER 25-27 Park Show International, Remini Exhibition Center, Remini, Italy. For more information, contact the organizers at telephone 054/171-1111. Fax is 054/177-4313.		**MARCH 22-24, 1991** ACME Show, Bally's Hotel, Las Vegas. For more information, contact Bill Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292 or AAMA at 703/494-2758.
	NOVEMBER 9-10 Pinball Expo '90 and Flip Out pinball tournament, Ramada O'Hare, Rosemont, Ill. For more information, contact Rob Berk at 216/369-1192 or 800/323-FLIP (3547).		**APRIL 12-14** National Amusement & Vending Expo, Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Kent. Contact show organizers Andry Montgomery & Assoc.: 502/473-1992; fax: 502/473-1999.
	NOVEMBER 14-17 "Parks" Show: 72nd Annual IAAPA Convention and Trade Show. Washington, D.C. Convention Center. For more information, contact IAAPA at 703/671-5800.		**MAY 18-22** AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington D.C. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/565-4602.
	DECEMBER 11-14 Forainexpo-Amusexpo 1990, Parc des Expositions, Paris le Bourget, France. For information, contact Mrs. Francoise Regnier: 47429256; fax: 42661428; telex: 211897.		**MAY 31-JUNE 1** OCMA Expo '91, Radisson Airport Hotel & Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/486-8677.

THE BLUE PAGES

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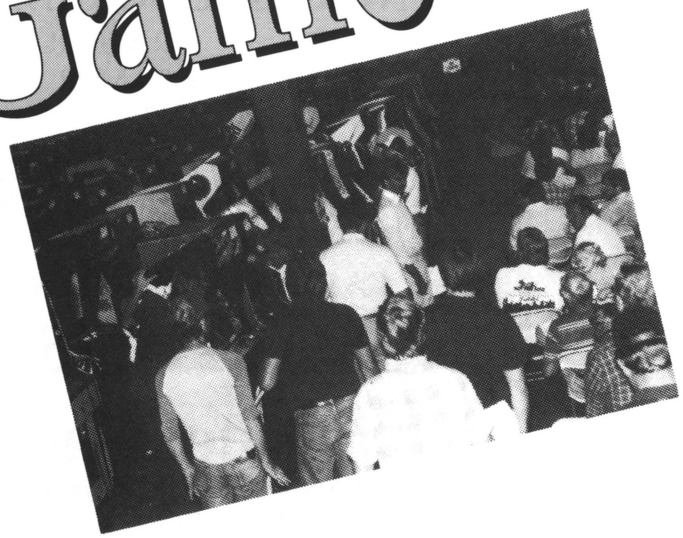

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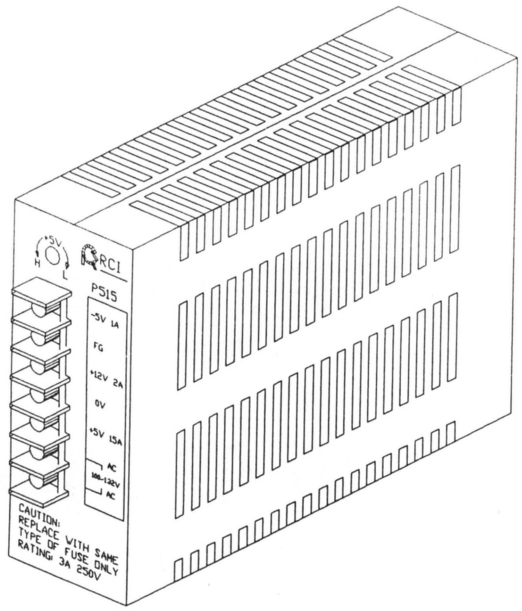

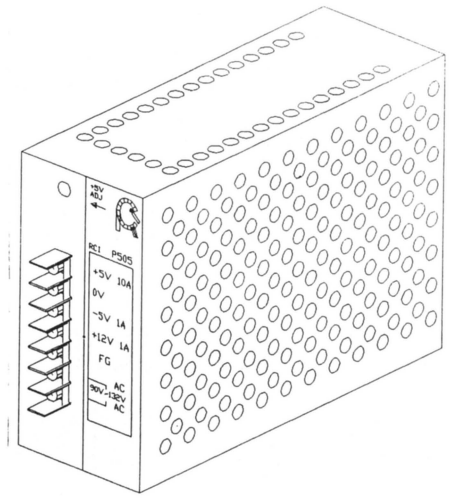

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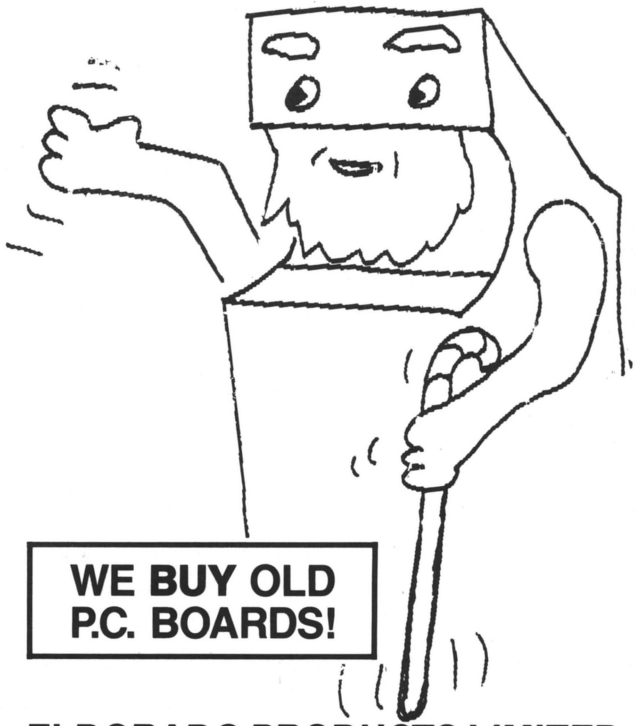

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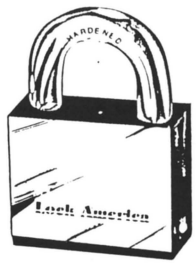

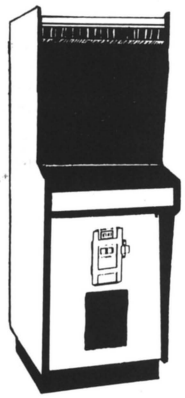

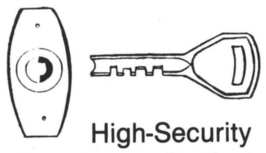

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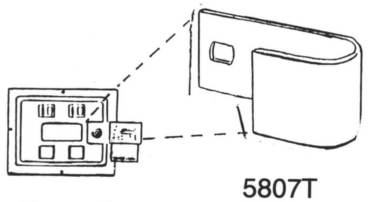

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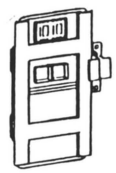

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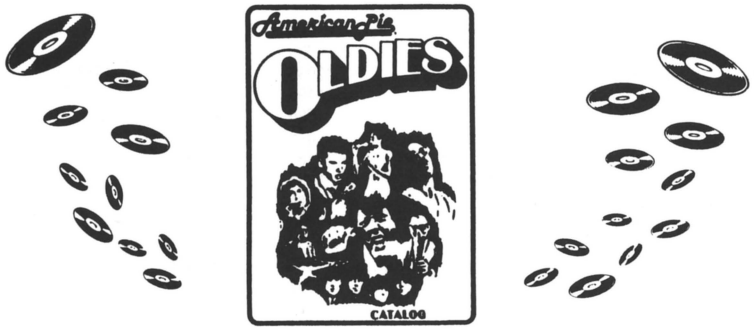

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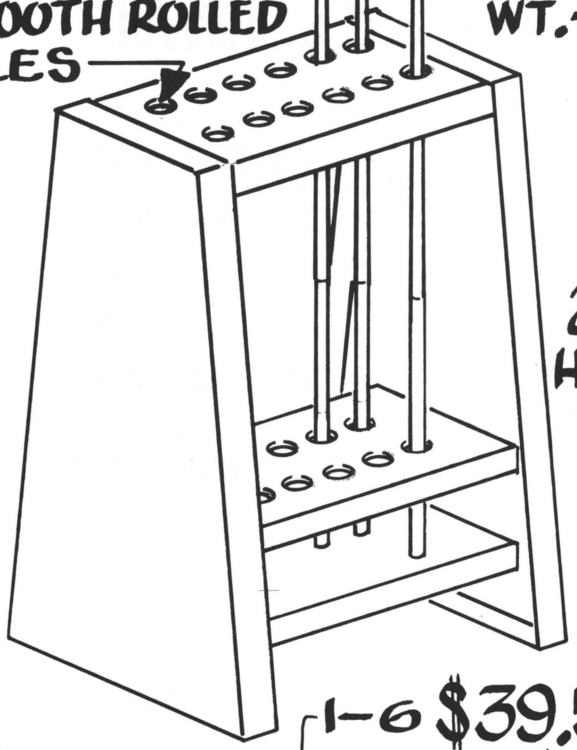

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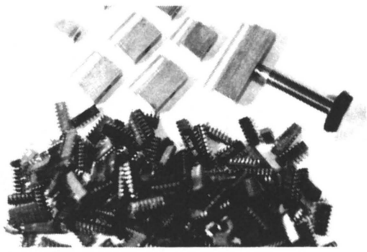

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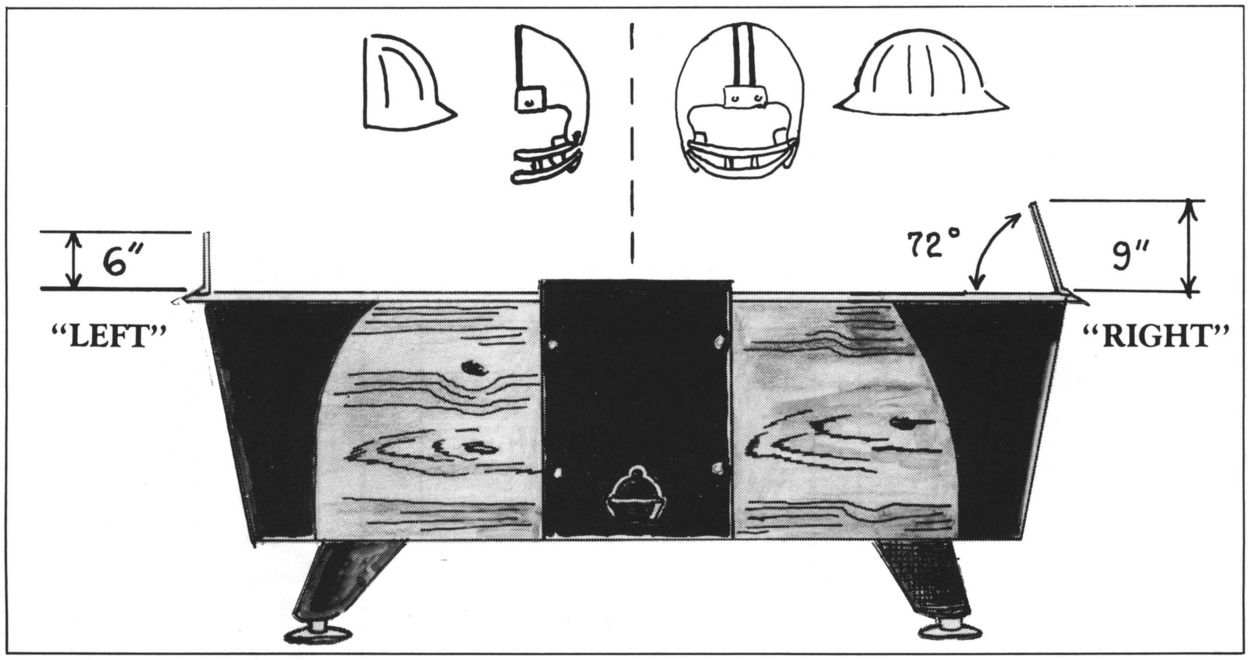

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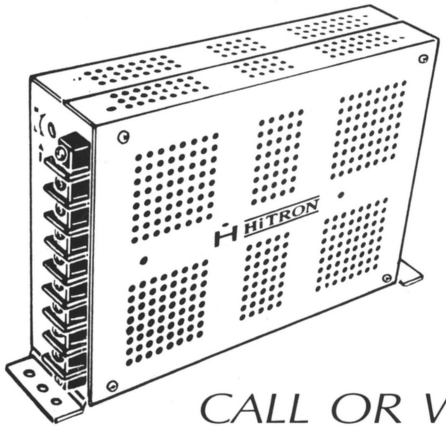

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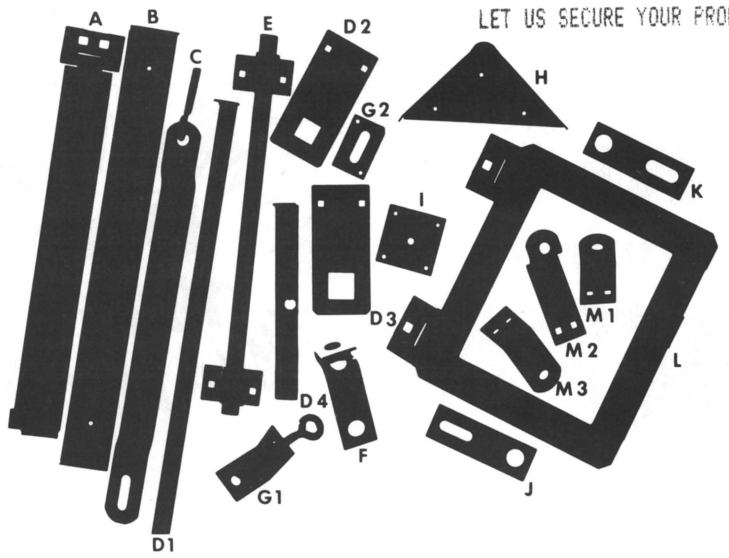

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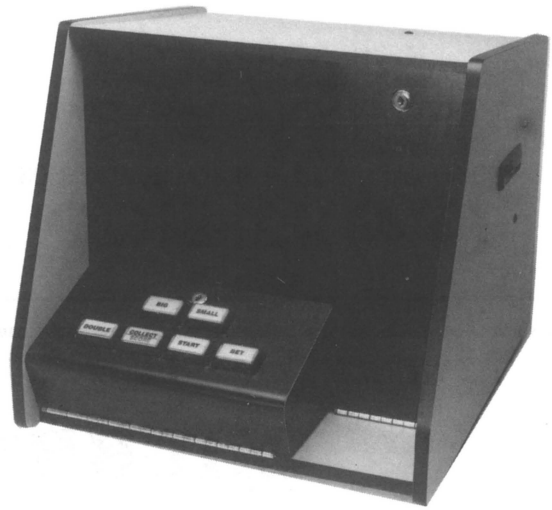

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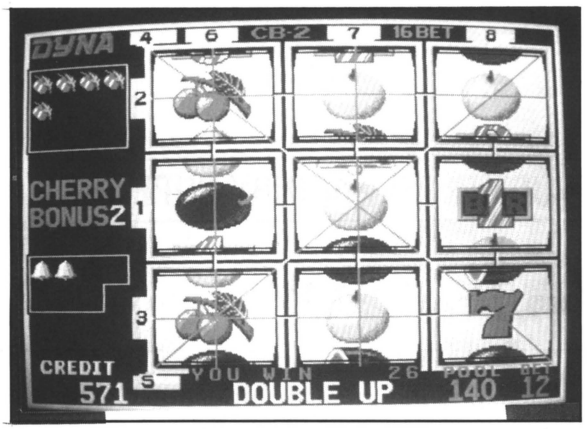

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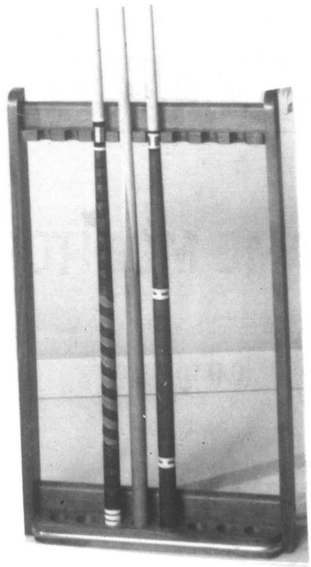

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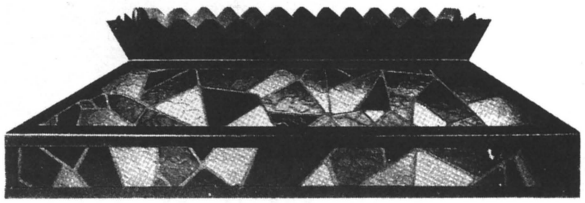

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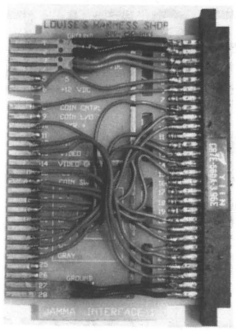

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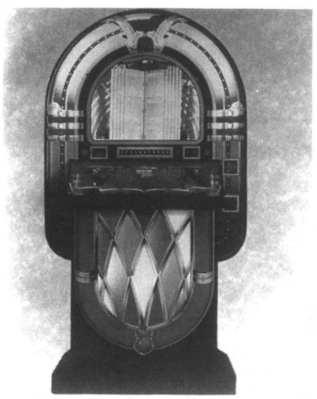

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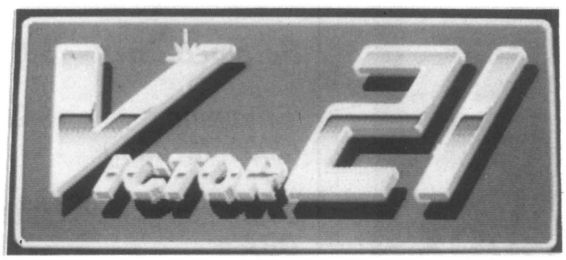



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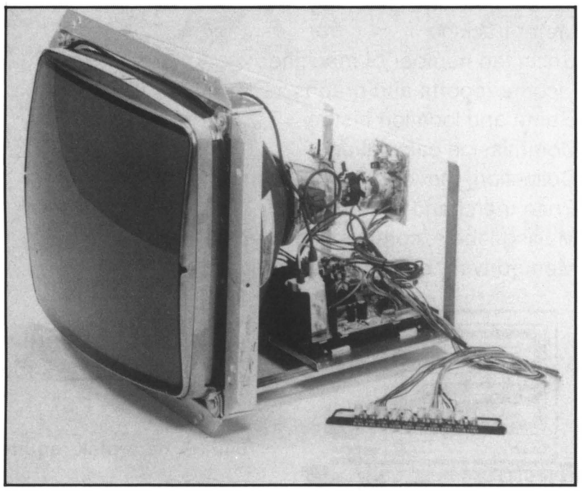

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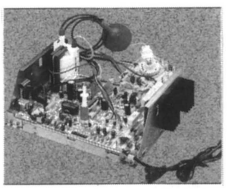

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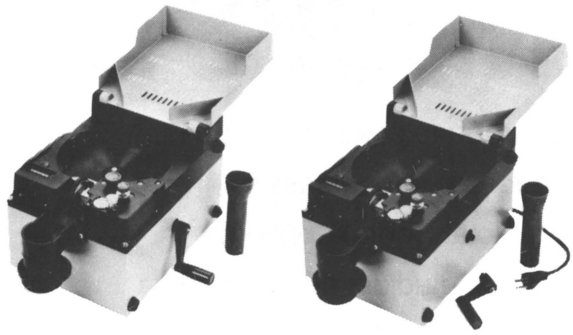

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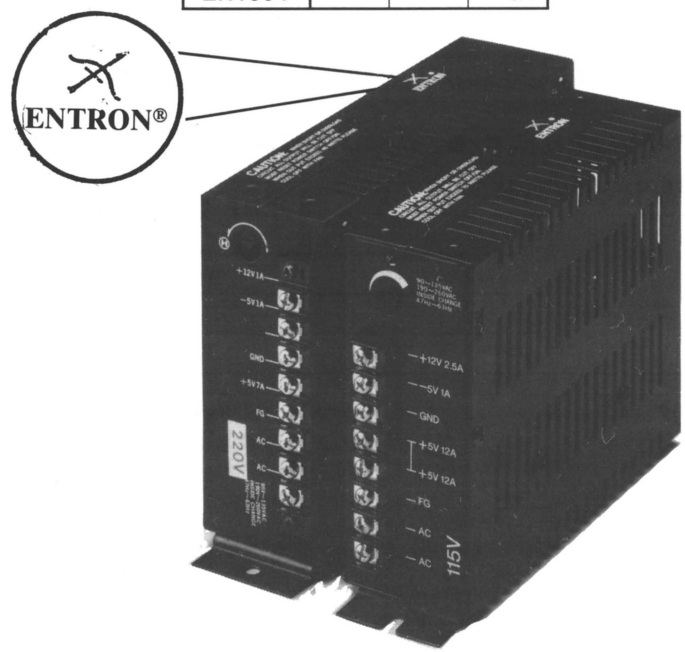

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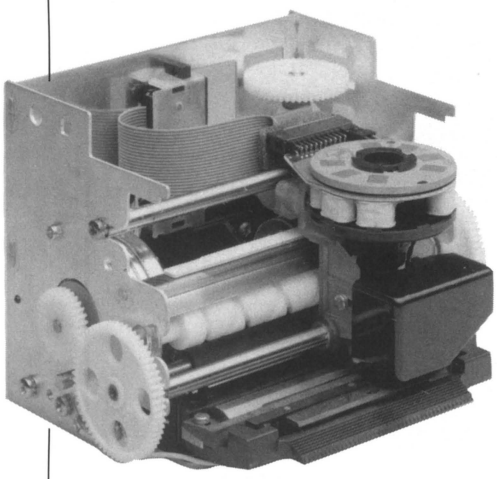

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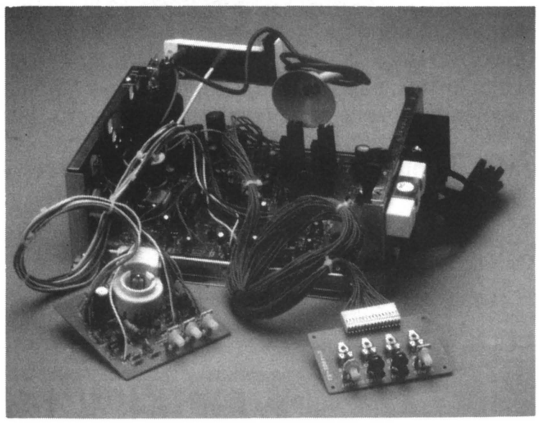

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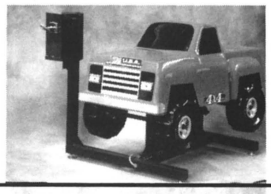

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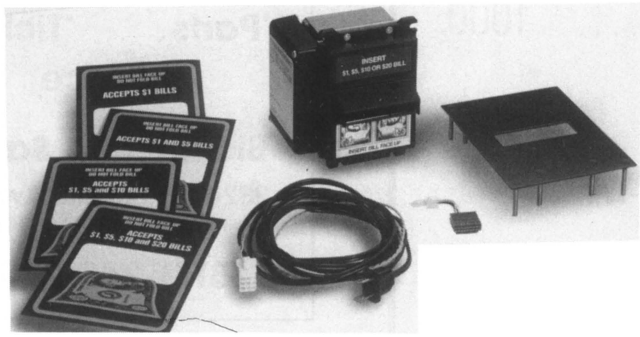

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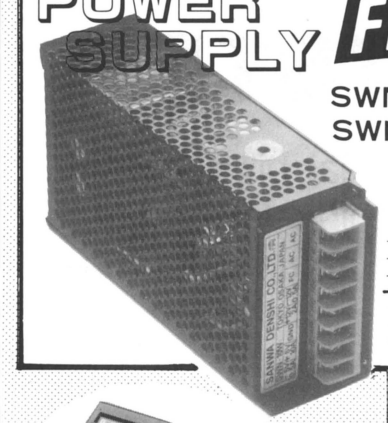

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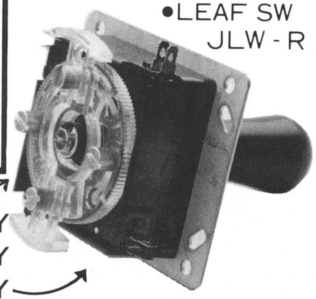

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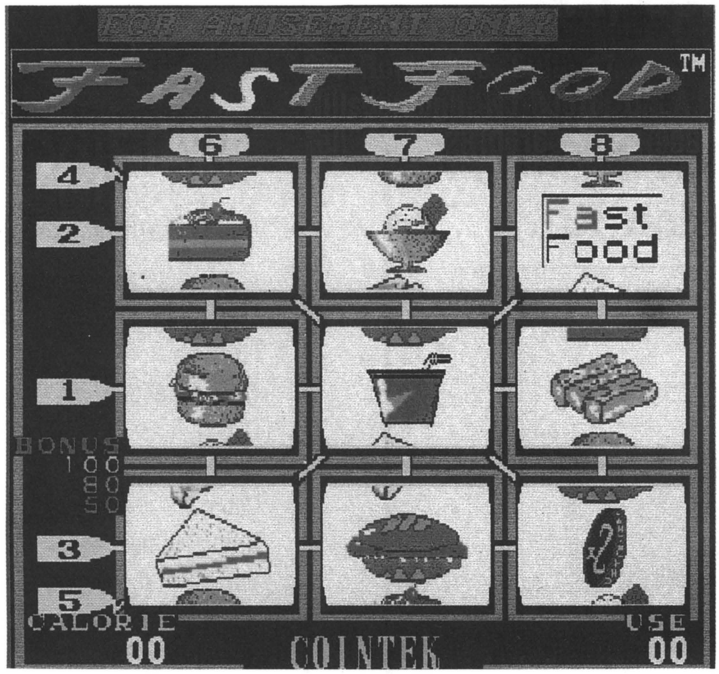

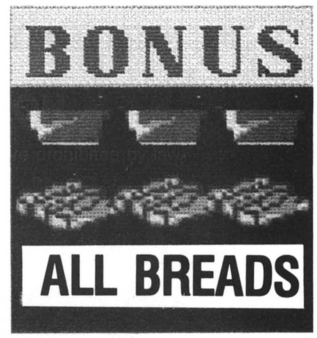





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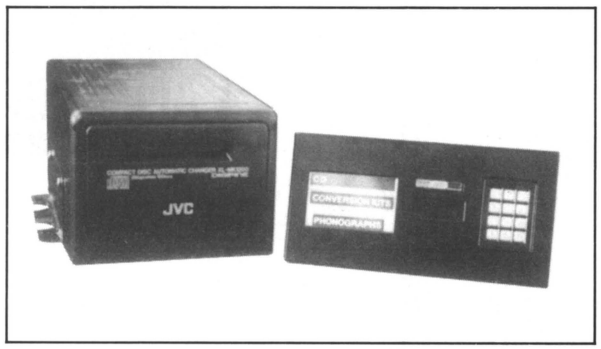

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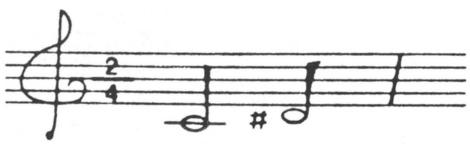

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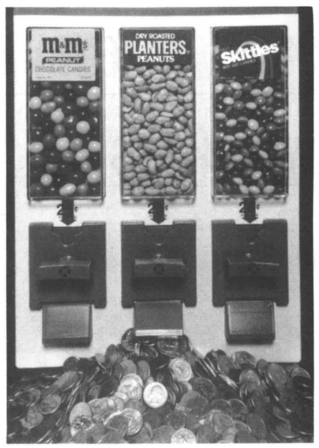

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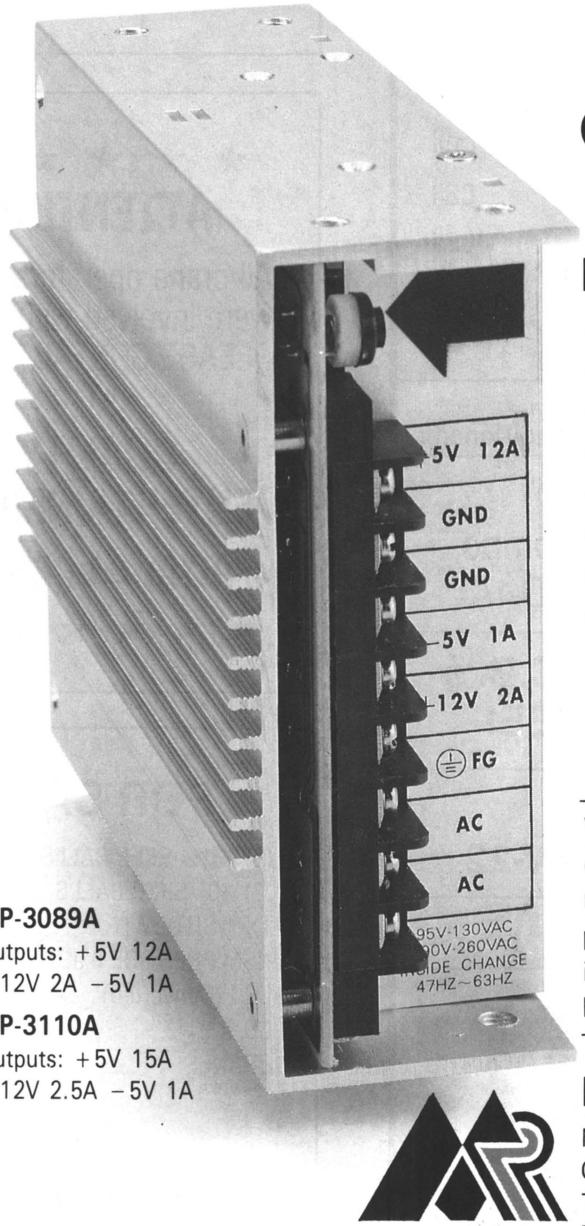

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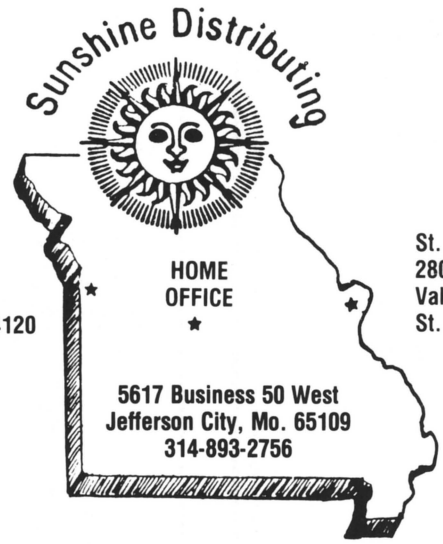

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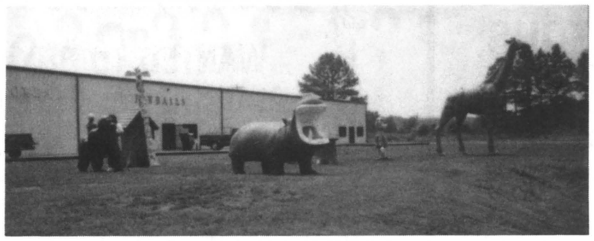

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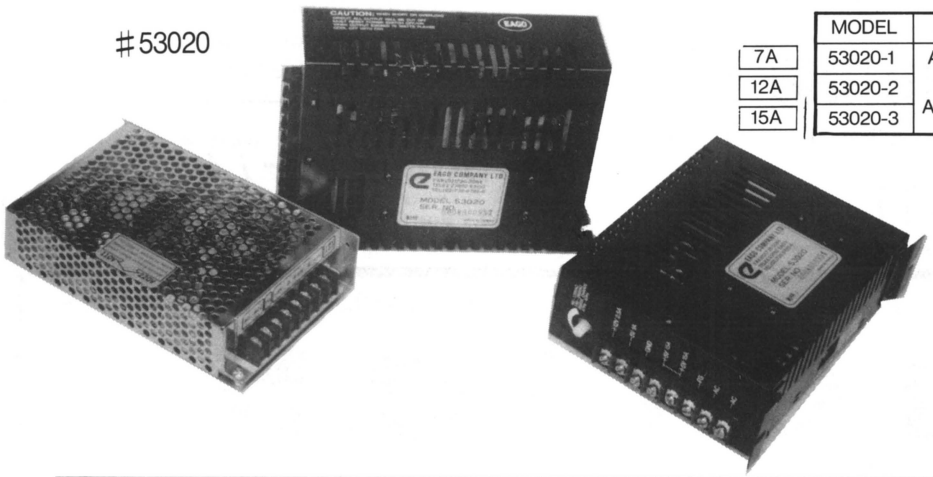

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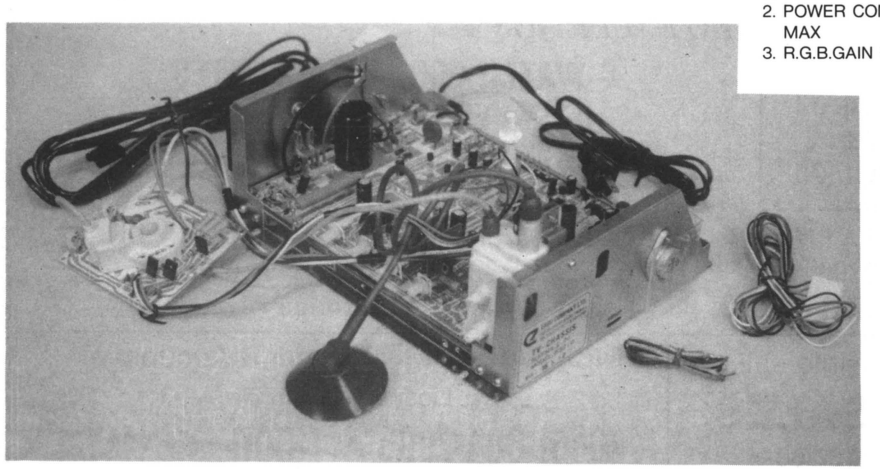

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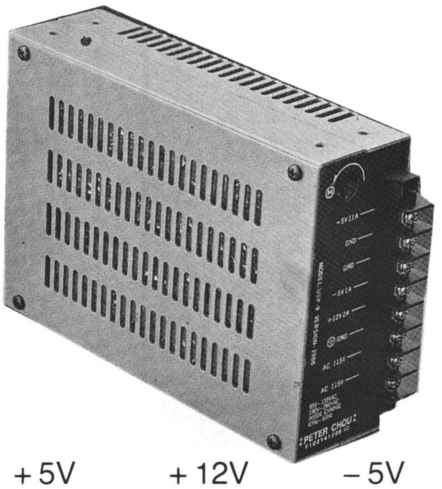

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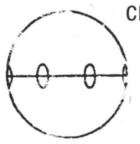



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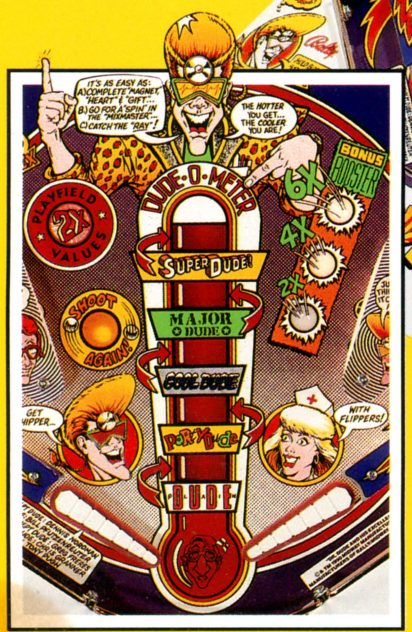



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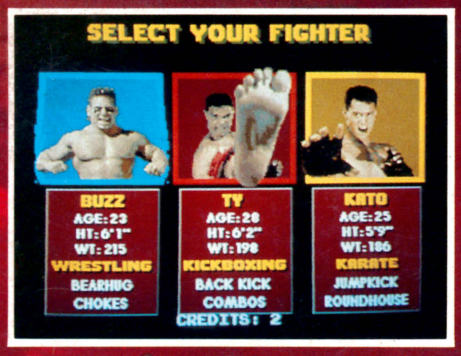

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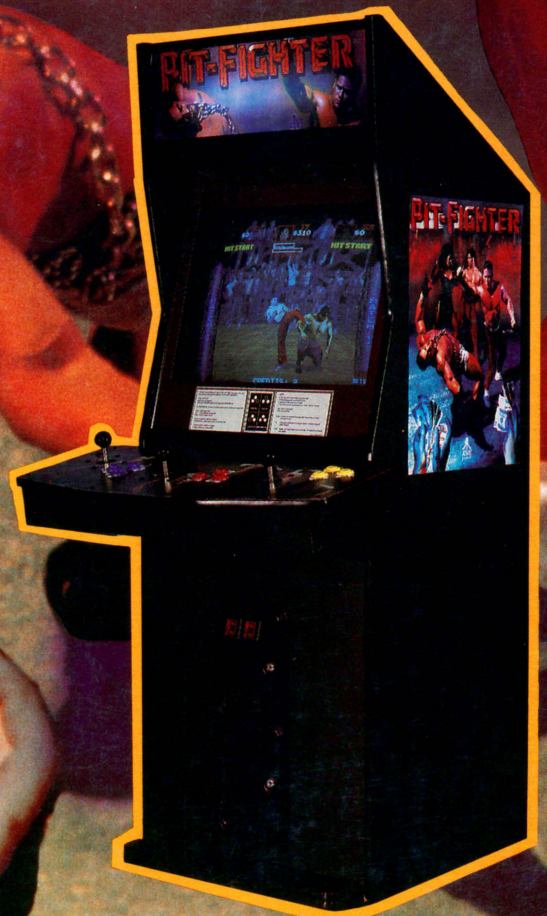

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