may 1991

RePlay

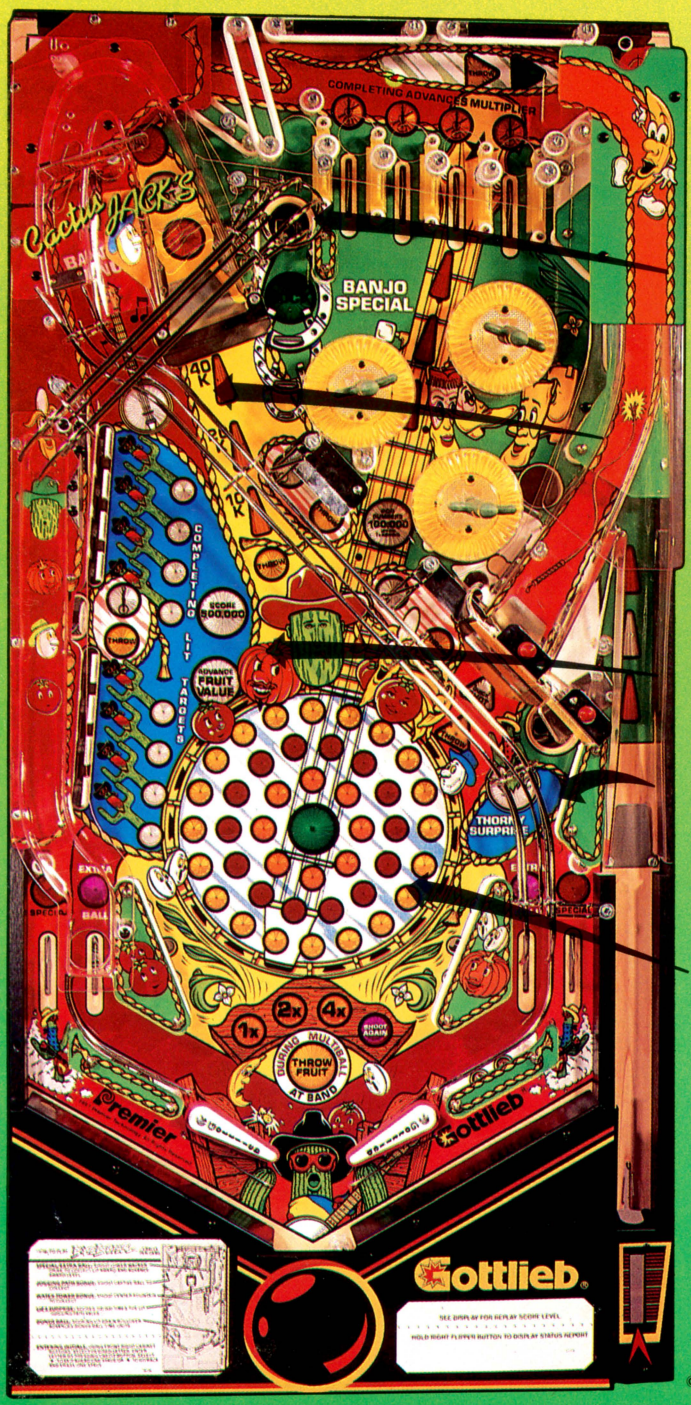
window on the world of coin-op entertainment



SPRING SPECIAL

Gottlieb® Cactus JACK'S™

YEE-HAH! LET'S PARTY!!!



SIZZLING COUNTRY ROCK MUSIC!

SHOOT LOCK FOR 2-BALL MULTI-BALL!

SHOOT "BANJO BONUS" When Lit!

Add FRUIT MULTIPLIER By Completing DROP TARGETS!

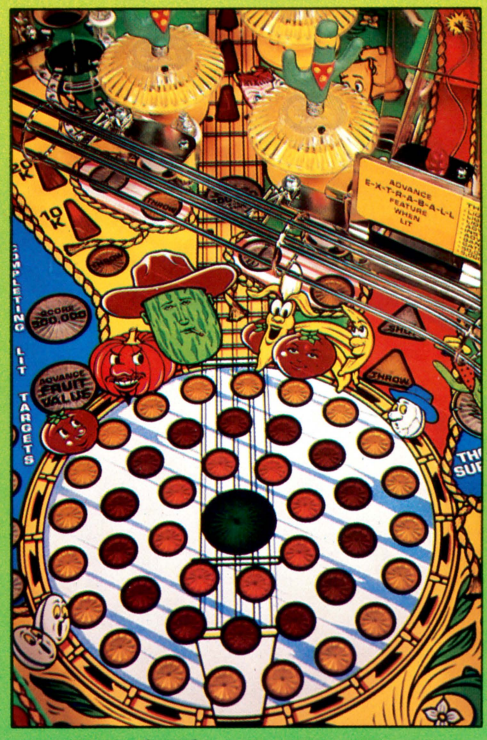
GO FOR THE BIG "THORNY SURPRISE"!

GREAT SPEECH, SOUNDS, ART, And What A LIGHT SHOW!!!

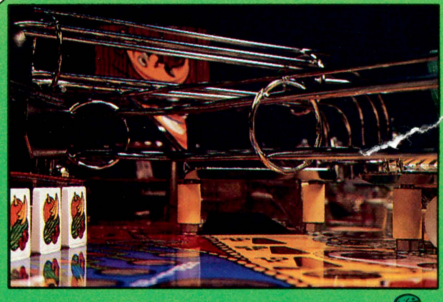
LET'S HAVE A BOOT-STOMPIN' GOOD TIME!



Activate The Band During 2-Ball MULTIBALL!



Watch The CACTUS Spring to Life and Keep Your Eye on That There Banjo Light Show!



Shoot The RAMPS For A Wild Time!

Height: 75" (189cm)
Height with Light-Box Folded: 50" (126cm)
Width: 27" (68cm)
Depth: 52" (131cm)
Packed Ship Weight: Approx. 260 lbs. (118kg)

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

SEEBURG DEAL SEEN IMMINENT — A source at **Seeburg** revealed that a "creative financing agreement" was one inch away from conclusion by April 25, but until all the T's were crossed, couldn't release more details. Confident the deal will go through, the source said the financial injection (from people outside the industry) will return the firm to surer footing. Readers will probably learn more "through the industry grapevine" if and when the agreement is finally announced. . . Friends of Seeburg's venerable salesman **Bob Breither** will rejoice that the old soldier's hip transplant (done April 17 at Sherman Hospital, Elgin, Illinois) went well. Bob will probably be back on the job mid-May. (Rumor has it he damaged the old hip break-dancing; in any case, he joins **Hank Tronick** in the exclusive Bionic Coin-Op Club). Get better, Bob, we miss you.

AMOA GETS SERIOUS — AMOA may put together a Video Lottery Assn. (like its National Dart Assn.) with its own budget and executive director to bring high-level coordination and professionalism to pro-legal vidpoker lobbying at the state and federal level. AMOA Government Relations Chairman **Wally Bohrer** gaveled an April 17 Chicago meeting of about 20 current and future video lottery factories, major distributors, components suppliers, etc. to discuss the idea. Some liked it, some didn't but "It looks to me like it's on its way," Wally said. "I've learned over the years that you get a lot further working together than being fragmented." The group's next meeting is in New Orleans May 8, just before that city's Lottery Expo where AMOA has a booth.

POLISH TRADE SHOW — Eastern Europe had its first coin-op trade show April 4-7 in Warsaw. According to the British trade paper *Coin Slot,* few orders were taken but Poland does have hundreds of "well-established" small operators and a few small arcades. The journal estimated about 15,000 machines comprise the Polish trade (roughly 80% video, 20% pins. . . few jukes, but some pay-out gaming of hazy legality). The Polish zloty is nearly worthless, so players pay via tokens or credit system. By the way, an international press conference held at the show was reportedly interrupted quite often because no translation was at hand for trade lingo such as "jukebox," "merry-go-round" and "vending operator"!

ON THE CHART — As you'll see when you turn the page, Data East's new ***Checkpoint*** flipper rocketed to the top spot first time out. **Shelley Sax** says they began shipping early March; by presstime their several thousand production run was nearly done. Nice going, guys & gals! . . . Too few of our chart reporters had the brand-new Gottlieb ***Cactus Jack's*** pin for it to make this month's chart, but those that rated it gave it an aggregate 9.33 rating! Let's see what happens next month. . . Finally, readers who wonder why we continue listing *Mad Dog* and *F-15* in the "best new videos" column all these months should know we don't place any game on the chart proper, unless at least 10% of chart reporters rate it. However, we need to keep listing each because good ratings are there and both units are very much in production and available at dealers.

SIX FLAGS FINANCIAL SNAGS — According to a story in the *L.A. Times,* the Six Flags Corp. (which owns & operates seven amusement parks) is in financial difficulty and may have to sell some parks or even file for bankruptcy protection (seen unlikely) if it can't keeping paying the massive debt it took on when its owners, the Wesray Capital Corp., bought the chain from Bally in 1987 (a $610 million leveraged buyout). The *Times* said documents filed with the SEC revealed at the end of 1990 that Six Flags' total debt outweighed its total assets by $127 million. They're now trying to restructure their debt by talking to potential investors. **Larry Cochran,** their chairman, reportedly stated "Six Flags has no intention of going into bankruptcy." The firm owns theme parks in New Jersey, Illinois, Missouri, Texas, Georgia and California.

CONGRESS ALERT — AMOA has passed along an "Action Alert" warning that some bills which could hurt small business are picking up steam very fast in the U.S. Congress. S.5 and HR.2 are the Senate and House versions of a **mandated leave** bill that requires job guarantees, health insurance and 12 weeks' unpaid leave to any employee for births, adoptions or illness of parent or spouse. S.55 and HR.5 are **right-to-strike** bills that would require employers to rehire any two or more employees (union or not) who walk off the job for economic reasons. *RePlay* takes no position on these bills, we're simply passing on the news.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

MAY 1991

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

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**RACE DRIVIN'(Atari) (7)**	**9.36**	**44%**
■	2	GP RIDER (Sega) (2)	8.76	14%
	3	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (26)	8.60	41%
■	4	RAMPART+ (Atari) (3)	8.60	25%
	5	G-LOC (Sega) (11)	8.38	40%
■	6	SPACE GUN (Taito) (5)	8.37	22%
■	7	GALAXY FORCE (Sega) (12)	8.13	13%
	8	PIT FIGHTER (Atari) (8)	8.09	74%
	9	FINAL LAP (Atari) (30)	7.86	29%
	10	TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (17)	7.63	95%
	11	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (16)	7.60	17%
■	12	RAD MOBILE (Sega) (1)	7.57	12%
	13	S.C.I. (Taito) (16)	7.43	31%
	14	OFF ROAD (Leland) (26)	7.27	74%
	15	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (15)	7.19	39%
	16	SMASH TV (Williams) (11)	7.12	61%
	17	CHASE HQ (Taito) (28)	6.97	51%
	18	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (22)	6.96	43%
	19	BIG RUN (Jaleco) (10)	6.92	10%
	20	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (24)	6.83	50%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

flippers

■	1	**CHECKPOINT (Data East) (1)**	**9.26**	**20%**
■	2	FUNHOUSE (Williams) (5)	9.17	75%
	3	THE SIMPSONS (Data East) (6)	8.49	60%
■	4	THE MACHINE (Williams) (1)	8.48	18%
	5	DR. DUDE (Midway) (7)	7.73	42%
	6	WHIRLWIND (Williams) (15)	7.70	68%
	7	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (25)	7.66	48%
	8	DINER (Williams) (9)	7.60	51%
	9	ELVIRA (Midway) (19)	7.48	54%
	10	BUGS BUNNY (Midway) (4)	7.25	21%

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**STREET FIGHTER II [H] (Capcom) (2)**	**9.38**	**45%**
■	2	SENGOKU [S] (SNK) (2)	8.60	24%
■	3	KING OF THE MONSTERS [S] (SNK) (1)	8.45	18%
■	4	HIGH IMPACT [H] (Williams) (4)	8.42	46%
■	5	CAVEMAN NINJA [H] (Data East) (1)	8.20	12%
	6	FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (15)	8.15	86%
■	7	RAIDEN [V] (Fabtek) (9)	8.04	36%
■	8	CARRIER AIR WING [H] (Capcom) (5)	7.91	9%
■	9	BLOOD BROS. [H] (Fabtek) (5)	7.88	14%
■	10	GHOST PILOT [S] (SNK) (2)	7.82	14%
■	11	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (14)	7.79	15%
■	12	CYBERLIP [S] (SNK) (5)	7.63	28%
■	13	GALS PANIC [V] (Kaneko) (1)	7.63	6%
■	14	STRIKE FORCE [H] (Midway) (1)	7.50	8%
■	15	NINJA COMBAT [S] (SNK) (7)	7.35	44%
■	16	TROG [H] (Midway) (1)	7.33	7%
■	17	GROWL [H] (Taito) (2)	7.21	11%
	18	OFF ROAD TRAK PAK [R] (Leland) (12)	7.19	38%
■	19	SUPER SPY [S] (SNK) (5)	7.03	26%
	20	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (22)	7.01	80%
	21	MAGIC SWORD [H] (Capcom) (8)	7.01	68%
■	22	STRATA BOWLING [V] (Strata) (7)	7.00	10%
■	23	BASEBALL STARS [S] (SNK) (7)	6.95	33%
■	24	ROLLER GAMES [H] (Konami) (2)	6.83	5%
	25	HYDRA [H] (Atari) (8)	6.63	26%

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

best new videos

■	1	FINAL LAP II [deluxe s/d] (Namco)	9.50	5%
■	2	GUN FORCE [H kit] (Irem)	9.00	4%
■	3	MAD DOG [deluxe u/r] (Betson/Icat)	8.90	8%
■	4	F-15 [u/r + s/d] (MicroProse)	8.90	8%
■	5	LASER GHOST [s/d + u/r] (Sega)	8.80	8%

■ *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 10% of these operators appear on the Upright Videos chart, but promising new items appear under Best New Videos.*

Operation Coin-Drop

Blast your way to a stockpile of quarters. In the tradition of Data East combat blockbusters like Bad Dudes, our newest videogame combat adventure is hotter than the blistering desert. An army of gamers will line up at all your locations for a shot at Desert Assault™. This challenging wargame will have them pouring plenty of quarters into this timely arcade hit.

- Dedicated upright cabinet with graphics.
- Popular theme.
- 4-Player simultaneous game play.
- Proven high earnings.









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RePlay magazine

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COVER

Aye caramba! Bart Simpson can certainly make his madcap impression on a business meeting. More importantly, he, dad Homer, his mom and sisters are certainly making their impression on the coin machine business. Yes, Simpsons fans, the Video has arrived and began shipping just before the ink on this page dried

'The Simpsons,' a four-player dedicated upright with wide apron and wider player appeal, has begun moving from Konami to its dealers to their operators and to the hands of players. Will this tantalizing item score the kind of marketing and coin box points as this company's 'Turtles' did? Prexy Steve Kaufman (shown on the cover with Frank Pellegrini and Mike Kubin) says it's got the same coin-grabbing ingredients. If so, there's another spicy game on our table.

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EDITORIAL

We've been waiting a long time to print this sentence: "The smile is back on the industry's face!" Almost everywhere we've been and with almost everyone we've spoken to since the ACME show, the impression was the same: regardless of what's going on in other businesses, ours seems to have snapped out of its recession. That's very nice indeed, especially since ours has been running far longer than others (about a year and a half, by some calculations).

So, as they say in Chicago, "how's come?" Many will say it's the good product being shoveled into the industry's boiler. Hard to argue. Others say the bright, shiny ACME with its glitz and (yes) the new product shown there was instrumental in changing frowns (and closed operator checkbooks) into smiles (and pens scratching words on order blanks). On the other hand, some dealers said the month of March was strong order-wise (before ACME), again due to good product on hand, but also to something we expected to happen all along: the cycle to snap up almost by itself.

There's no use hiding an established fact. So many months of slow buying on the operator's part (not all, but many) has put a bunch of them in a cash-rich position. Many operators are in ace shape and apparently were only awaiting a rich spread of good machinery before making their moves. Well, many are making exactly those moves. Gratefully, it's not only being spent on outstanding mega-machines, but on "this, that and (oh, yes) that unit over there." We're not facing a video buying "binge" or a "pinball buying binge." Truly, there's no binge at all, but something more subtle, and more sensible: an across-the-board "facelift" to the national route.

Hey, it's about time and Spring is the time for a good "cleaning up" anyway. So, let's not "divine" the why's and how's come of this turnaround, but be quietly thankful the griping has largely stopped and that upbeat words spice today's industrial chit-chats. Man, oh man, it's grand to grin again when you type these stories!

CLUTCH HITTER™



O.K., who hasn't dreamed about hitting Roger Clemens' fastball, or striking out Jose Canseco, or throwing out Rickey Henderson? CLUTCH HITTER™ is everyone's trip to the major leagues. Sega's advanced graphics display and audio soundtrack provide a realism that includes everything but the hot dogs and sunburn.

CLUTCH HITTER, developed by Sega Enterprises Ltd with licensing rights granted by Major League Baseball Players Association(MLBPA) includes a roster packed with today's top stars. With three scenarios to choose from, Major League, A-Star, or Tournament play, players can select any of the 26 major league teams to play for and against. Play is realistic enough to replace spring training. While at bat, players control all the action: Bunt or swing for the fence...take an extra base or steal...or bring in a pitch hitter. While in the field, play is equally exciting: Set a batter up with a curve then strike him out with a forkball...pick a runner off first...attempt a diving catch and double up a runner at home. The three-dimensional view of the action moves from behind the home plate umpire to a full-field view from the upper deck.

The CLUTCH HITTER kit includes game board, controls, JAMMA harness, full graphics display as well as a 25"/19" monitor bezel and is the leading contender for this season's MVK Award (Most Valuable Kit). Contact your Sega distributor for more information.

PLAYBALL!

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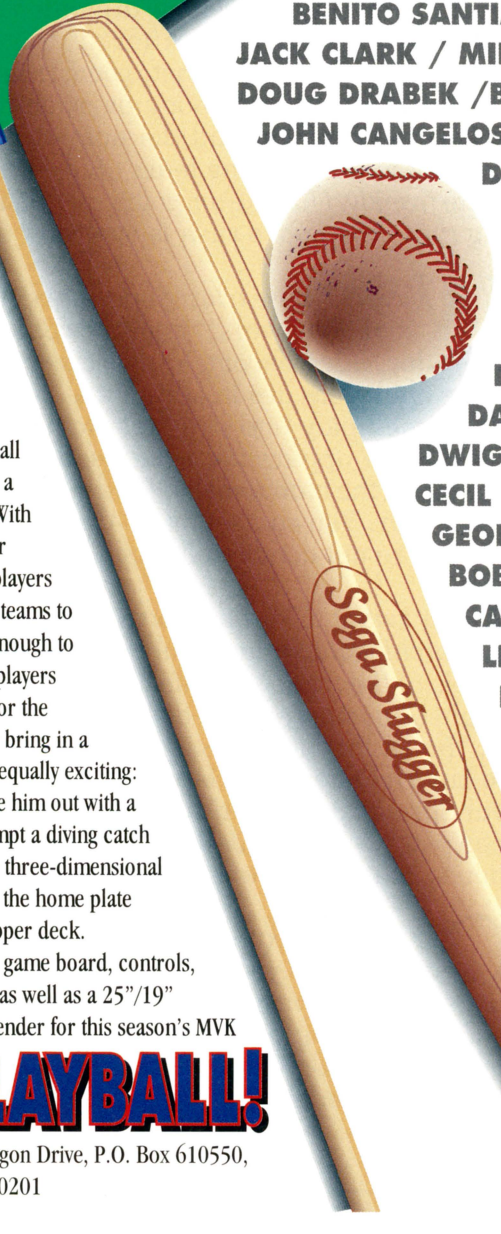

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DENNIS RASMUSSEN
JOSE OQUENDO
BRETT BUTLER...AND MANY MORE.

SEGA

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INSIDE

MAY 1991

SPECIAL ARTICLES

ACME REPRISE
Okay, this month we let 'er rip! After last month's brief overview of the March 22-24 ACME Expo, we are proud to present our usual "everything but the kitchen sink" coverage of a very successful trade show.....pg. 39

DEALERS ARE SMILING
Distributors drew big crowds to their post-ACME open houses from coast to coast. And, they reported happily, operators were starting to order equipment again. We bring you extensive photo coverage, starting on.....pg. 117

OH, THAT BART
Bart Simpson and his family are featured on Konami's four-player video which scored great test earnings and big advance orders from dealers. The Simpsons trademark and 1991 copyright are controlled by 20th Century Fox Film Corp.; all rights reserved.....pg. 103

SEGA'S NEW TECHNOLOGY
And now, the full story on the game that "stole the show" at ACME (according to the foreign trade press). How does Sega's *Hologram Time Traveler* create the illusion of 3-D? With mirrors! Read the detailed story on.....pg. 132

REGULAR FEATURES

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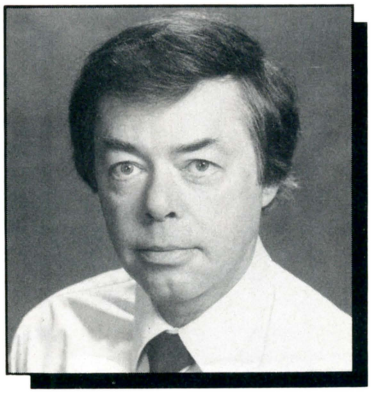

There's more spring in the industry's steps these days because the foundation blocks of the business...the machines themselves...are looking quite good. Some distributors actually enjoyed improved equipment sales in March, even before ACME had its effect. So, while the Las Vegas show gave our rather sluggish business a big shot in the behind, it's possible that the business cycle was coming back up anyway. But, I have to caution readers that the soft market isn't history yet. After all, this isn't a Frank Capra movie where the story starts good, tragedy occurs and then toward the end, somebody or something "miraculously" solves the problem and the actors end up smiling at the camera while dripping tears of joy. This is a business and quite frankly, I for one am going to wait a while before declaring that "the bum's rush is over and the gold rush is on."

Why? Because a lot of operators out there have "financial hangovers" from the collection fall-off and, regrettably, have become credit risks at distributors. Sure, some operators are in ace shape, but many suffered from decreased play and are still playing catch-up with their bills. Some apparently even used money from their core business (the machines) to fund outside investments which went sour. You can get hurt "throwing dice" at any industry you're not completely familiar with.

I don't want to lay any gloom on the brighter picture we're watching these days. But I want to remind everyone at all levels of the trade that the old rules still apply, even as we might be coming out of a down-cycle. And the first rule of all is, "Buy right and pay your bills on time!" Is there good stuff to buy right now? Devote more time than usual going over our Spring Special and you'll ferret out a bunch of items you can place with confidence. If you missed your dealer's open house, make a private visit to inspect the new things soon.

Our Special took a lot of time to produce, so I hope you give more of your attention to it than just reading headlines and ads. We have a million photos covering the spring show season and some very useful articles you should inject into your memory bank. The book is a good tool for this season ...a season that looks promising. Let's just remember Rule #1.

Ed Adlum

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F-15 Strike Eagle, the hot new combat flight simulator from MicroProse Games, draws crowds and quarters in record numbers. The sit-down version, competitively priced, is out-earning higher priced sit-downs in arcades everywhere, even the most popular driving games! The stand-up version of *F-15* is consistently among the top five earners internationally and has stayed on the top earnings charts for over 20 weeks. Order *F-15 Strike Eagle* today and experience the drawing — and earning — power of one of the world's hottest arcade games.

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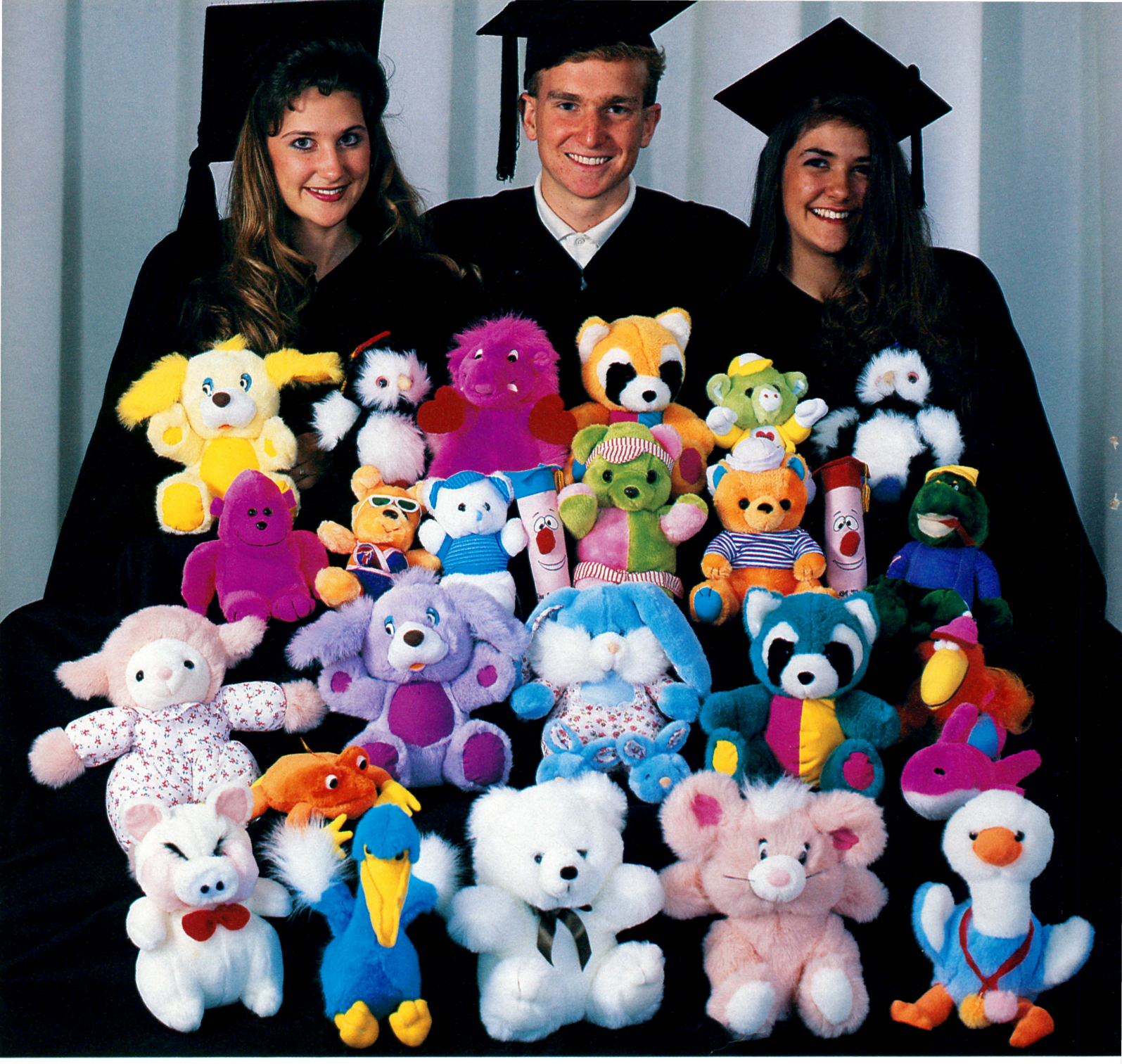

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NEWS DIGEST

GREAT ACME PRODUCT IS SPARKING STRONG DEALER SALES

As we reported (briefly) last month, the 1991 **ACME** show gave coin-op exactly what it needed: a kick in the pants, a tickle under the chin, and a great big kiss in the cash box. Why? Great product! New technology! And what was the result? A marked up-tick in operator buying. "Operators are starting to dig into their pockets," said Aladdin's arcade supremo **Ron Malinowski.** "We're doing good business," smiled L.A. distributor **Sandy Bettelman** at C.A. Robinson's overflow open house April 5.

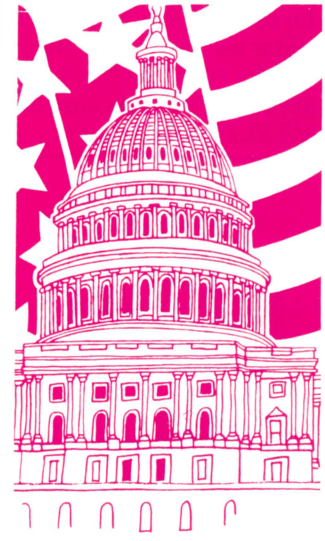
For you earlybirds, the next ACME takes place March 15-17, 1992 in San Antonio, Texas. . . but let's take a final look back at the successful Vegas affair just concluded. *RePlay* now weighs in with our usual slam-bang show coverage: people, parties, exhibit booth photos, and a lengthy product review. We also have extensive coverage of post-show open houses, hosted by dealers from New York to California! Special ACME section begins on **page 39.**



East met West at SunBelt's April 6 open house in Dallas when Irem's **Minoru Sasatani** donned a Stetson (but not the Texas accent) to conform with the "rodeo" flavor of the affair. SunBelt's open, plus others we cover inside, repeated the spirit of ACME.

AAMA, AMOA PLAN D.C. VISITS; DOLLAR COIN IS TOP ISSUE

"It's going to be bonkers! I mean a zoo!" said AAMA's **Bob Fay** of the group's planned May 7 reception for Members of Congress, their families and staff in **Washington, D.C.** By early April, over 50 congressmen and senators, along with hundreds of congressional staffers, family members and children, had indicated they would attend the affair. Well-connected guests will include **Speaker of the House Tom Foley,** and the son of White House Chief of Staff **John Sunnunu.** Special attractions will include "Michelangelo" of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles; "Mario" of the Mario Brothers (Nintendo); and two members of the Washington Redskins.



AMOA expects to pull in similar numbers of senators, congressmen, families and staff for their Congressional Reception two weeks later. There, the attraction will be AMOA's ever-popular pinball, coin-op basketball, and electronic dart tournaments, featuring "Democrats vs. Republicans" (winners get to donate prizes to favorite charities).

Both associations are lobbying for dollar coins during their respective lobbying efforts. Get details inside this issue.

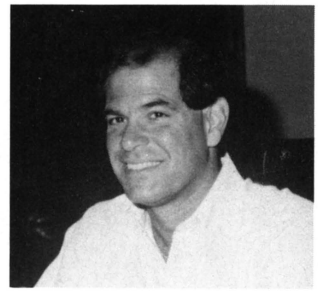
AMOA EXPO PLANS PERKING FOR SEPT. 12-14 IN LAS VEGAS

AMOA says plans for **Expo '91** are humming along nicely. The event takes place Thursday through Saturday Sept. 12-14 at the Las Vegas Convention Center; the operator association expects to fill over 700 booths with great new coin-op product. Expo planning chairman **Gene Urso** says tradesters should be receiving info on booth rental, housing and registration in the mail soon, if it hasn't arrived already. Call AMOA at 312/245-1021.

PREMIER BUYS SMS; SAL, JIM, BOB & THE CREW WILL REMAIN

Premier Technology will purchase **SMS Corp.** from its prexy **Sal Mirando,** who will remain in place as president of a separate, new video lottery division. Premier prexy **Gil Pollock** told *RePlay* he hopes the deal can be finalized "in two or three months." Manufacturing will be shifted to Premier's Bensenville, Ill. facilities, but engineering, marketing and sales will remain in New Jersey with **Jim Pietrangelo, Bob Harzer** and the whole SMS team. The move is a tremendous vote of confidence by Premier in the future of video lottery; the pinball factory gets a hot new product line, while SMS gets more manufacturing muscle," said an SMS official: "This is going to be good for us, especially when more states legalize video lottery and demand goes crazy."

SMS did have its license to sell VLTs in Canada re-



Sal Mirando

scinded recently, but company execs say Canadian officials may reverse themselves. Extensive testimony and documents from Sal and SMS have made the company feel confident that its Canadian license will be reinstated "probably by the end of April." At any rate, the new ownership impacts the situation in the meantime. By the way, the Premier deal does not include **Coastal Amusements,** Sal Mirando's redemption sales outfit, which is owned in partnership with **Len Dean.**



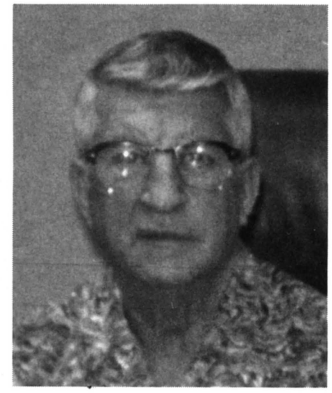
MICKEY ANDERSON PASSES ON

Veteran Erie, Penn. operator/distributor **Mickey Anderson** died March 11 at the age of 77. While death was attributed to heart failure, he'd been suffering from a serious liver ailment for a time and was in need of constant medical attention when he passed away.

Son **Richard,** who has been running the Erie-based business ever since Mickey retired around 10 years ago, flew his dad back from his Ft. Lauderdale condo Feb. 19 and put him into the St. Vincent Health Center in Erie, where he could be close to his family. Richard had been searching for a nursing home for his dad only days before his death (he has since sold the Florida condo).

Mickey's wife **Margaret** and his other son **Mike** both passed away around 10 years ago themselves. Besides Richard, other survivors include a sister, two brothers and several grandchildren including Richard and wife Terry's newly-adopted daughter Terry Richell. On the latter, Richard told *RePlay:* "We lost Dad, but we gained a new daughter just about the same time. It's God's way."

Mickey Anderson had an accent and a Scandinavian name but he was actually born Michael Andrychowski to Polish parents in this country. Several members of the family also changed their last names to Anderson, but others still carry the European one (e.g. his brother Zygmunt Andrychowski). Mickey founded Mickey Anderson, Inc. back in 1945 after doing service in World War II. He not only built up an impressive route out of Erie, but quickly became a distributor, most notably with the Bally line. He worked hard and according to Richard, innovated such things as location contracts and minimum guarantees, and was very keen on customer service. As stated above, both the operating and distributing

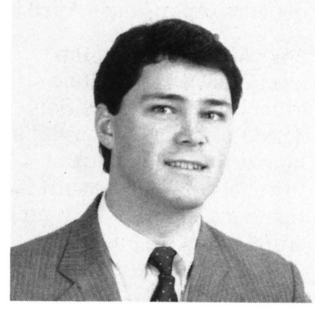


businesses continue under Richard's direction today.

Services were held at St. Luke Catholic Church on Friday, March 15 during which family members and industry people said goodbye to their late friend and business patriarch. He was buried at Gate of Heaven Cemetery. May Mickey rest in God's peace and may Richard and his staff carry on his fine legacy.

LIGHTING MAY STRIKE TWICE AT TECHNOS

American Technos, which enjoyed a critical hit with its *WWF Superstars* wrestling kit, previewed their next bonecrusher at ACME. Called ***Wrestlefest,*** the game received good reviews from operators, but wasn't intended for production until June. Now we hear the



company's **Greg Rice** made a special trip to Japan to coax the powers that be over there into releasing it earlier. Reason for moving it up? "We got those good notices on the game just like you," said Gregg.

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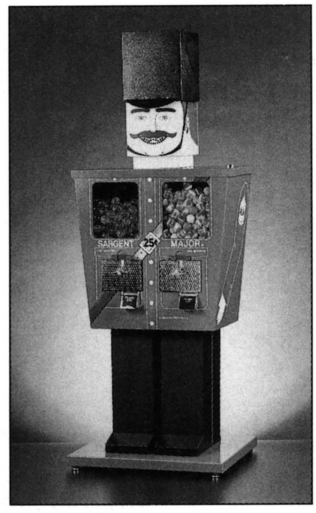

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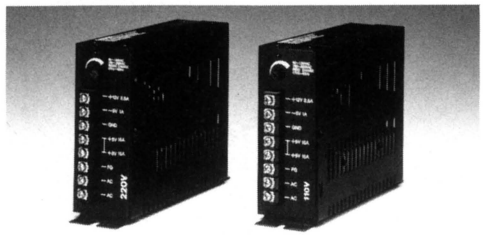

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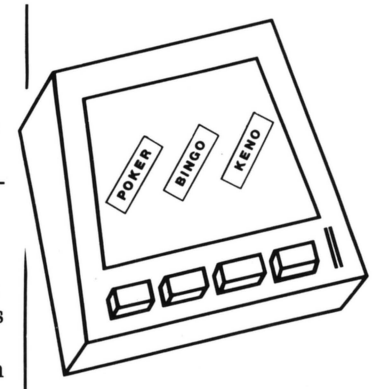
VIDEO LOTTERY PROSPECTS FOR W.VA., OREGON & CANADA

Legal video poker in **West Virginia** seems certain to begin operating this year, according to reliable sources. A positive opinion was issued in March by the State Attorney General, saying West Virginia's lottery director has the power to start video lottery tomorrow, if he wishes. Fine, but the lottery commission wants its own dial-up software to be written by NCR, the cash register people (the state already has NCR software in liquor stores). The final result should be "very similar to South Dakota," stated one VLT factory rep. Local tradesters want VLT up and running by July 1, but engineering requirements (and discussions about profit splits between the state and private industry) may delay things.

Oregon is one of the "surprise states" we've been alluding to as a legal vidpoker possibility for 1991. Now sources tell us they are "definitely going to have VLTs." The state okayed pokers generally some time ago, but the law was vague about how they would be run, and by whom. Officers of Oregon's AMOA met with state lottery officials on April 12, trying to ensure that VLTS will be operator-run. If we get word about solid results we'll report them on our *Hot Off the Press* page.

CANADIAN LOTTERY

Up North, **Canada** is a mixed picture: some good, some bad. Quebec is cracking down on gray-area games (and actually refunding license fees!), but some hints are appearing that this populous province may want to go to operator-run, South Dakota-style video lottery. Operators there are pushing for it. Game manufacturers met in Winnepeg the week of April 15



with officials of the Western Canada Lottery Corp. (a private corporation, owned by the three government-owned state lotteries of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) to discuss having video lottery there. At presstime it wasn't clear if operators would be involved. As reported last month, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have joined Labrador in having video lottery run by the state-owned Atlantic Lottery Corp. (no operators involved). A U.S. VLT maker says "one way or another, all of Canada will probably go legal in a couple of years, because they're more relaxed about gambling than we Yankees are."

CORRECTION:

Last month's issue carried a story about the pluses and minuses of the various Canadian Maritime laws on video lottery, which is now legalized up thataway. In it, we quoted New Brunswick operator **Paul Frenette** saying the machines were generating about $400 per week unit net for the province's environmental concerns. Paul corrected us in a phone call afterward: "The machines are doing about $400 to $450 a week, but only 30% of that goes to the Province, not the whole amount as you inferred." The remaining 70% is split between the operators like Paul and the locations themselves.

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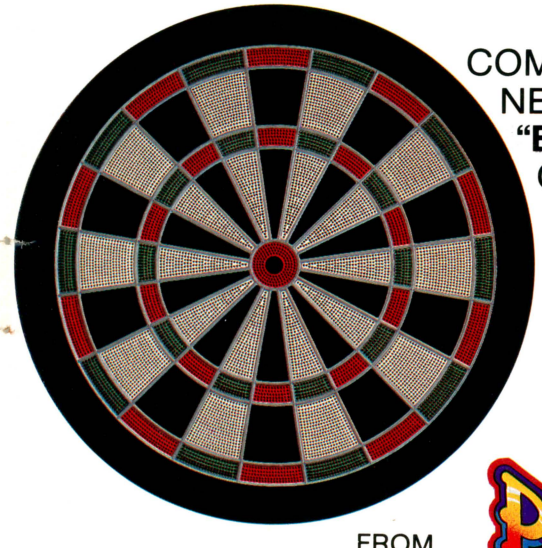

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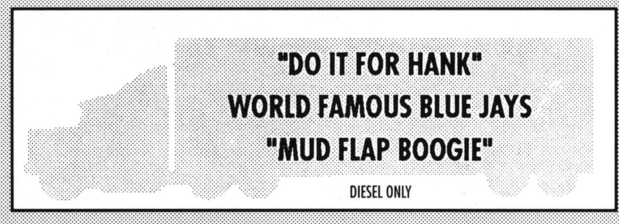

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ATARI BOWS BUGGY SITDOWN AT BOCA BEACH DEALER MEET



Atari Games' 1991 distributor conference saw the birth of another super two-seat arcade sitdown item. Called ***Road Riot,*** the attraction scored over $640 a week average at two test sites and begins shipping the end of May. The unit is another classy Atari piece, featuring those protection roll-bars familiar on dune buggies. Screen action is intense. Combining appearance and gameplay, "this is what the amusement industry is all about," said one trade pundit.
Atari's meeting took place at the swanky Boca Raton Resort & Beach Club in Florida April 20-23. Besides business meetings, the assembled dealers enjoyed golf, shopping and boating. Since next year's conference will celebrate the 20th anniversary of this pioneering video game factory, they've decided to hold it at the Carlton Hotel in Cannes, France, April 28-May 4. Why not? Atari's 20th is not only special for them; it's the 20th anniversary of the video game itself! See story on the Boca Raton conference inside.

NEW FACES IN NEW PLACES AT DATA EAST (JAPAN & USA)

At **Data East Japan,** the new managing director (reporting to **President Fukuda**) is **Keiji Takagi,** recently resigned from Namco Ltd. of Tokyo. The two Japanese firms have a cozy relationship, since Namco is a major investor in Data East (they acquired 25% of Data East's shares in March of '88, making them the second largest shareholder). This from Japan's *Game Machine Magazine.* Meanwhile at Data East USA, former Atarian **Steve Bristow** is the new VP of Engineering. He'll oversee all redemption and video projects, and will coordinate engineering matters between the firm's U.S. and Japanese offices. Also joining Data East USA is **John Slater** as Western regional sales manager. He'll work from their San Jose site. John is a financial expert who's done independent consulting and has toiled for such as Dean Witter, Drexel and his own trading and risk arbitrage firm. Execs said Steve and John are both big-league talents who will strengthen Data East's lineup considerably.



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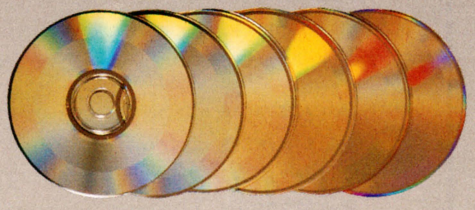

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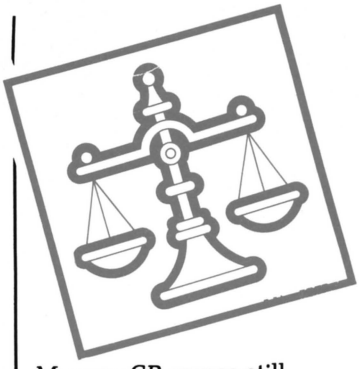
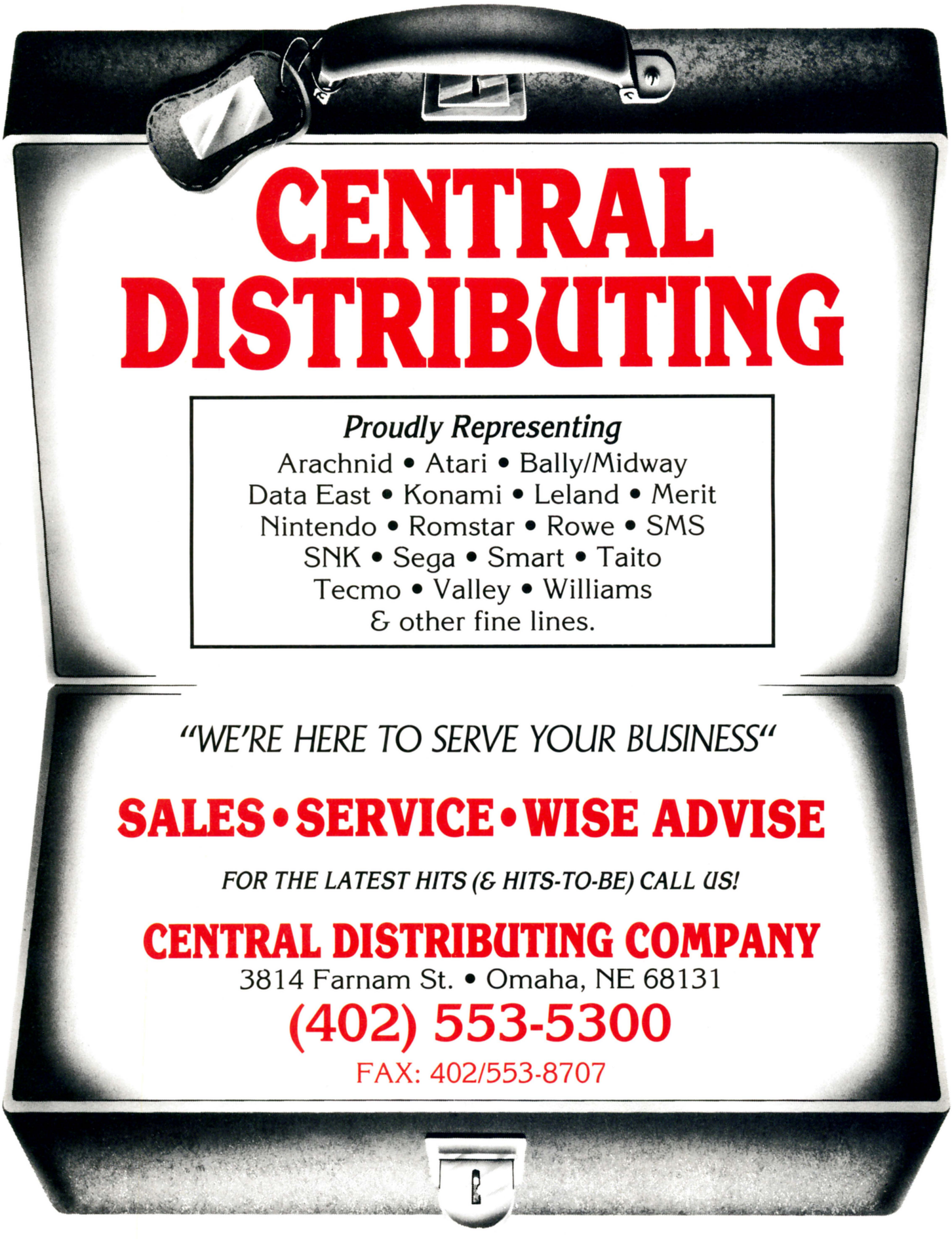


We print so many legal stories that AMOA's attorney **Roy Wolff** once jokingly suggested we change our name to *RePlay Magazine and Coin-Op Law Review.* (At least, we *think* Roy was kidding.) Well, it's time to play Professor Kingsfield once again. Pay attention, class, this will be on the final exam. . . **Nintendo** has won one, lost one on the legal front. A U.S. District Court granted Nintendo a preliminary injunction against **Atari/Tengen** to prohibit them from selling cartridges for the NES which infringe Nintendo's copyrighted computer program. Atari was also ordered to recall infringing product . . . On the loss side, Nintendo agreed to pay a $4.75 million fine to Uncle Sam, and up to **$25 million** (in discounts applicable to future purchases) to NES game buyers. This move helps Nintendo settle price-fixing charges leveled by the **U.S. Federal Trade Commission.** Nintendo did not admit guilt under the consent agreement, but did agree to advise dealers in writing that they're free to sell NES systems and software at any price they choose. . . **Philip Morris USA** has sued **Sega** for trademark infringement because some of their *Super Monaco GP* games still have Marlboro logos in the background graphics. You may recall that Sega urged operators of that game to take advantage of free chip changes to eliminate the Marlboro logos, but apparently the tobacco giant wasn't satisfied with that. . . **Federal Judge Harold Ackerman** has denied the appeal of **Myron Sugerman** and Atlantic & Pacific Corp. to stay the enforcement of his March 6 ruling. That ruling said **Yamate USA** has the valid copyright to *Lucky 8-Lines,* and that A&P must stop selling them and recall previously-sold boards, etc. . . .Finally (we hope), **Rowe International** has sued **Crane Co.** and its subsid Unidynamics (dba **National Vendors** in St. Louis) for patent infringement, regarding at least one — and possibly more — vending machine models sold by the defendants.

RESERVATION GAMBLING CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO VLT'S HEALTH

Some pro-lottery tradesters told *RePlay* last year that legalized Indian gaming on reservations could be a "lever" that helps get operator-run video lotteries going in various states. Operators could make the argument that "if gaming is legal for reservations, it should be legal for the rest of the state." But recent experience suggests otherwise. "Once gambling gets going on an Indian reservation, it can become an unstoppable snowball," lamented one tradester near reservations with legal casino-style activity. "Non-reservation locations lose serious customer traffic, and the reservation jealously guards its monopoly on this lucrative market," the tradester explained. In at least one state, people who advocate operator-run VLTs alongside Indian gaming have been accused of "racism." It's a ticklish issue and one that pro-gaming coin machine people are advised to study very, very carefully.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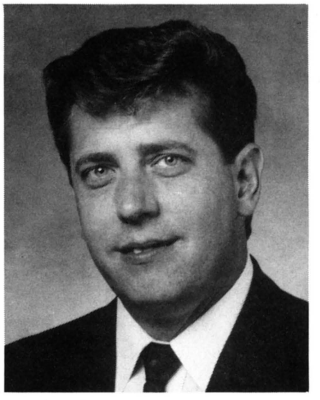
POLLOCK ENDS TERM AS AAMA CHIEF WITH WHITE HOUSE VISIT

On April 29, AAMA president **Gil Pollock** represented his association — and our industry — during a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden, at the invitation of First Lady **Barbara Bush.** The event was in connection with Mrs. Bush's interest in preventing child abuse . . . a cause for which AAMA has toiled, with a series of wholesome promotional posters. "Not only does charity work do good things for society at large, it opens legislative doors for the industry," beamed AAMA Exec VP **Bob Fay,** who masterminded the association's anti-child abuse campaign. It was a great close for Gil's term atop AAMA (they elect new officers this month).

More AAMA charity successes: on Saturday, April 27, AAMA's **Mark Struhs** and



Bob Fay, together with a representative from the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, presented plaques of appreciation to sports great **Nolan Ryan** on the baseball diamond at Texas Stadium just before that night's Rangers baseball game. Nolan and his family star in AAMA's latest anti-abuse poster.

"FUN EXPO" EXPANDS FOCUS TO INCLUDE VARIED SITES

If "pocket parks" really are "the growth location for the '90s," then the place to learn about them (or sell to their owners) is **Fun Expo,** a new event which calls itself "the only trade show to focus on the expansion of the family entertainment industry into new venues and markets" such as mini-golf courses, outdoor water parks, go-kart tracks, etc. The show takes place **Oct. 24-26** at the Atlanta Market Center, and organizers have recently expanded their focus to include sports bars, hotels, campgrounds, fast-food restaurants and "other owners and operators of non-traditional facilities who were, until recently, not necessarily committed to the amusement aspects of their business." Over 80,000 sq. ft. of floor space has been set aside for exhibits; some 200 firms are expected to display their wares, including such outfits as video game pros **Fabtek,** redemption champs **Bob's Space Racers,** and merchandise supplier **Dan Brechner & Co.** Seminars will include location experts on their panels; speakers will discuss everything from "Sports-Themed Games in Taverns" to "Land Development for Entertainment Use." The show is sponsored by Bellwether Expositions Co. of New York, and Communication Channels Inc. (publisher of *Shopping Center World* and *National Real Estate Investor* magazines). Some seminars will be sponsored by *Amusement Business* magazine of Nashville. For more information, contact show manager **Bailey Beeken** at 914/923-0129.

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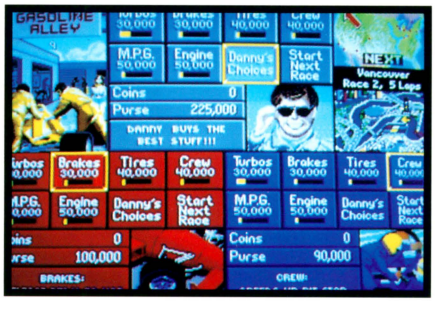
—Dimensions:
w32"-d43"-h83", 475 lbs
—Monitor: 25" Wells-Gardner









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BRITISH FIRM UNVEILS "VIRTUAL REALITY" ARCADE GAMES

Stunning news! We have it from *Coin Slot International* that a cockpit-based virtual reality system is now **up and running** in a coin-op arcade in Wembley, Great Britain . . . and six more virtual reality sites are planned to open in the next 12 months. Virtual reality is the "ultimate computer simulation." The basic player interface is a headset consisting of two monitors embedded in goggles; each monitor provides a slightly different view of the computer graphics for 3-D impact. Headset sensors cause the graphics to register realistic changes in response to your head motion: look up, you see the ceiling; look down, you see the floor, etc. Sensor-equipped gloves, body suits, etc. can also be used to allow even more realistic player interaction with the computer environment. The total effect is of actually being *inside* the computer graphics universe . . . hence the name, "virtual reality." (See the Feb. 1990 issue of *RePlay*).

The basic technology has been displayed at the Consumer Electronics Shows in the USA since the mid-'80s. Nevertheless, we believed public, mass entertainment applications were still years away. Wrong! On March 22, **W. Industries** (part of Wembley PLC) officially launched its version of the system, called "Virtuality," in sitdown and standup configurations. The first simulations let players pilot Harrier jumpjets or offshore powerboats — rather ordinary stuff, but the effect is stunning and the multi-player, linked player stations are equipped with microphones so players can talk to each other.

W. Industries Managing Director **Dr. Jon Waldern** told *Coin Slot:* "As we are a new company entering a new market, we have chosen fairly traditional environments to begin with . . . environments that people are already familiar with, so they can be introduced to all the facilities slowly. Progress to capitalize on Virtuality's full potential will be gradual."

Coin Slot said the system has undergone "stringent health and safety tests for electrical and noise safety, bacterial transfer, neck stress and visual comfort." The manufacturer is charging 1 pound per play (about $1.80 U.S.); each one-player Virtuality unit costs almost $40,000 U.S. and the factory expects to build 30 per week. Execs said Japan's Nisho-Iwai is a partner in the project and that they've also had "very positive feedback" from the States. We'll report more on this as it becomes available.

MONDIAL TO OPEN NEW BRANCH IN WEST VIRGINIA

Mondial Distributing, plans to open a new branch in **West Virginia,** possibly in anticipation of legalized video lottery in that state. In a related move, Mondial has hired West Virginia's Hilltop Distributing prexy **Doug Wilson** but he will not remain in that state; instead, he'll move to Pittsburgh to run that Mondial branch (recently purchased from Active). Doug knows Pittsburgh well, since he helped run Banner there from 1985 to 1988. "I've always admired the Mondial organization and am excited now to be a part of it," Doug said. "I've never in my career been given so many tools and resources to be successful."

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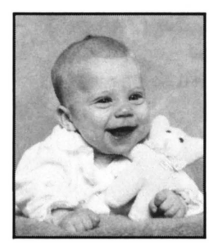
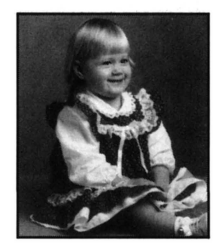
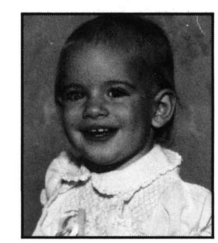
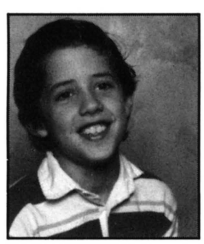
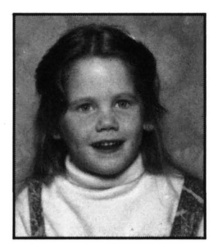



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NSM SMILING AT SALES SURGE

NSM-America prexy **Rus Strahan** announced April 12 that due to "heightened demand" for their jukes, the firm "temporarily" will be in "a severe back-order situation" and not able to immediately fill all the orders dealers are taking, probably for several months. "We had planned for a substantially increased demand, but what's occurred is way beyond anything we could have planned for," Rus said. "It's overwhelming." Available product is going to NSM dealers on an allotment basis according to their past sales volume, Strahan said. He advised that NSM's parent firm is running 24 hour shifts and six-day weeks at the German plant; that they've expanded the facility and even acquired additional space and manpower . . . but they're still running behind. "Right now we're flying in entire 40-foot containers of product in the



bellies of 747s, just trying to satisfy commitments we've made to our distributors," Rus said. "However, it isn't making a dent in the back-order." Rus suggested NSM operators who need product should set up a plan with their dealers for the next several months. *RePlay* earlier said 1991 could be NSM's year and it looks like that prediction is proving to be right!

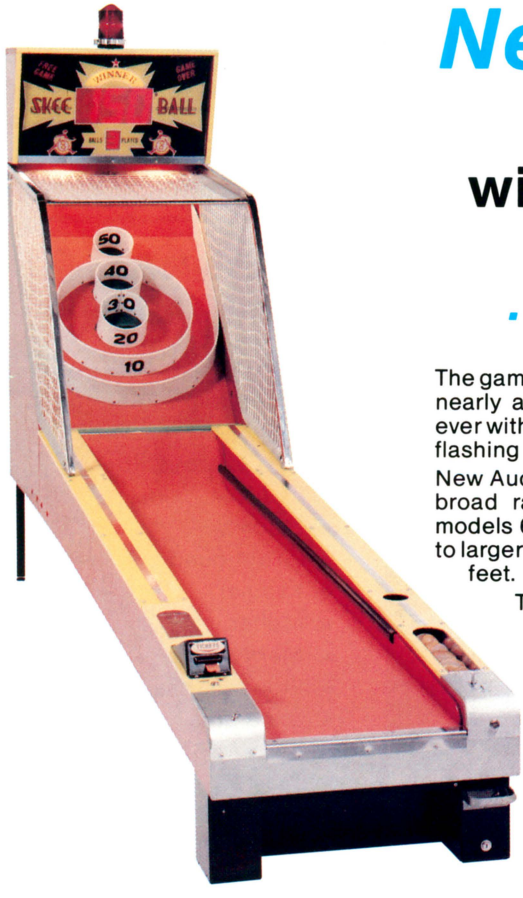
BART'S ON OUR TUBE

Simpson's fans don't have to wait for Sunday night to watch Bart, Homer, Marge, Lisa & Maggie anymore. Thanks to **Konami,** these characters (and their antics) will be readily available to the public on the factory's brand new ***The Simpsons*** video game. Production cranked up the week of April 29 (both Electronic Sounds and Dynamo will be building it for Konami) and some goods should be at your distributors by this reading. People like to compare the new attraction to Konami's previous hit *Turtles,* wondering if the same magic will happen in the coin box. Test reports have been great, and consistent (Chicago dealer Jerry Marcus, who helped test it there, confirms the big numbers). In addition, operators will be pleased at the flexible play-price setting.

GRAYHOUND



Former Grayhound president **Carmen Ricci** says the New Jersey company is still up and running, and still selling its cranes, bill acceptors, basketballs and the rest of its very full product line. As has been reported in numerous East Coast newspapers, the firm is under RICO investigation by the federal government regarding video slot machine allegations, but nothing has happened to impede the normal flow of business for its amusement coin-op products, said Carmen.



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RED, WHITE & BLUE

AMOA & AAMA will "salute the veteran" in Washington, D.C.; dollar coins remain top item on industry's lobbying agenda

Dollar coins will top the agenda as AMOA and AAMA stage separate lobbying trips to the Nation's Capital this month. AAMA's event runs May 5-9, while AMOA's affair takes place May 19-21. Tradesters hope to win more support for dollar coins — and make new friends for the industry — in Washington, D.C.

America is the only major industrial democracy whose basic unit of currency (pound, deutschmark, dollar, franc, etc.) is still exchanged in paper form. *Everybody* else uses coins. That puts the U.S. coin machine industry considerably behind the rest of the world when it comes to play-pricing. Accordingly, AMOA, AAMA, NAMA (vending association) and the other members of a lobby called the Coin Coalition want Uncle Sam to replace dollar notes, with dollar coins.

The suggestion makes sense for many, many reasons, not just to benefit a few special interests . . . but Joe Public doesn't much like the idea of tampering with U.S. currency. The Coin Coalition admits it needs strong leadership from Congress, and it also needs to recruit a strong ally in the White House, in order to win this struggle.

LOBBYING PROGRESS

A couple of things in Washington are moving our way. Last summer, the Coin Coalition revamped the proposed theme for dollar coins, dropping the Christopher Columbus design in favor of "the American veteran." The switch proved a happy coincidence of timing early this year, when vets suddenly became the darling of Capitol Hill.

On the White House side, AAMA Exec VP Bob Fay and Coin Coalition chairman Jim Benfield have been looking for "friendlies" in various Executive Branch enclaves from the Veterans Administration to the Dept. of Transportation. They've been getting encouraging feedback from the V.A., along with supportive statistics from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB confirms that switching to dollar coins could save Uncle Sam around $318 million per year).

Meanwhile, such groups as the AMOA, NAMA and other members of the Coin Coalition are continuing with their own pro-coin lobbying efforts, including hiring some major



D.C. lobbying firms to push this idea. On Capitol Hill, a new bill for dollar coins has been introduced in the House (though not yet in the Senate, at presstime). Last year, over 100 members of Congress supported dollar coin legislation; this year the Coalition hopes to round up the same parties and win new backers as well.

AAMA'S AGENDA

AAMA's Washington trip is headquartered at the Hyatt on Capitol Hill. Activities include lobbying, workshops, tours of famous sites, a "real" manufacturers' firing line at the FBI Academy shooting range (followed by a cook-out), and AAMA's annual board meeting and election of officers.

"It's going to be our best Washington event ever," stated the association's Bob Fay. "We've got some great items on our agenda that combine business and pleasure, and we'll have strong representation from our officers, board and the rank and file. Many important members of Congress will be contacted and will be exposed to what's good about our industry."

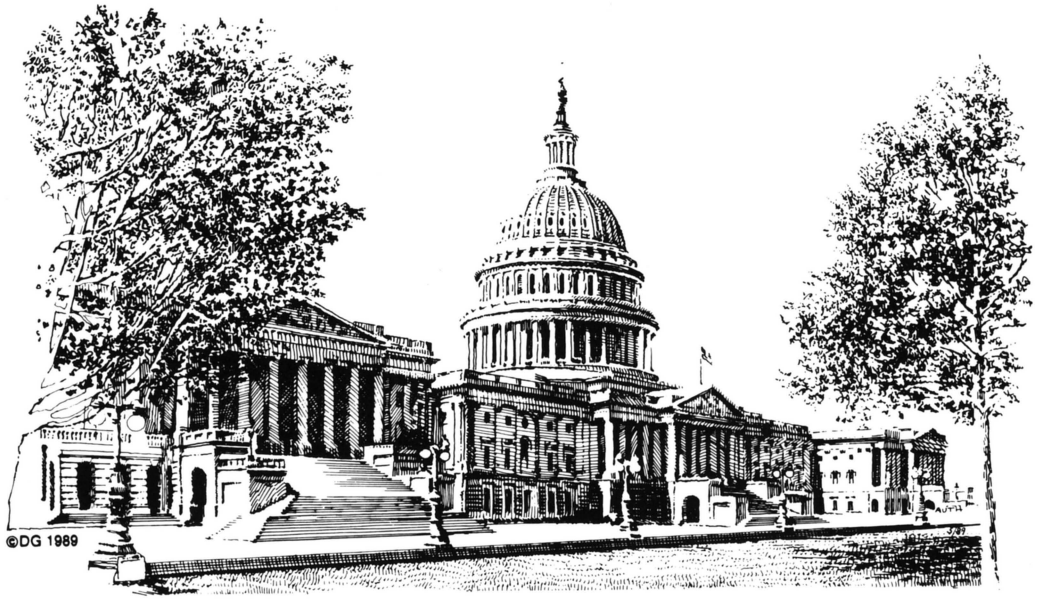
(By the way, at presstime Fay or AAMA President Gil Pollock was slated to represent AAMA at a White House ceremony in the Rose Garden on Monday, April 29 in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, a big AAMA cause. Barbara Bush issued the invitation.)

AMOA AGENDA

AMOA's D.C. trip two weeks later will also use the Capitol Hill Hyatt; operator activities will include lobbying, workshops, touring, and their famed Congressional Reception, featuring "Democrat vs. Republican" tournaments on a host of coin-op equipment.

"I hope to see many trade members attend AMOA's Government Affairs Conference," said AMOA President Jim Trucano. "I encourage everyone to participate. We need your participation in programs like this, to make an impression on those decision-makers who can critically affect our businesses."

Members of both associations should have already received informational packets in the mail about the upcoming Washington visits. For more details, call AMOA at 312/245-0121 or AAMA at 703/494-2758.



WASHINGTON, D.C. SCHEDULES

both coin-op associations will combine parties and politics

AAMA, MAY 5-8

Sunday, May 5

6PM-7:30PM: Kick-Off Cocktail Party at Hyatt Hotel. Some Congressional staff invited.

8PM-10PM: Dinner at a Washington restaurant.

Monday, May 6

8AM-8:30AM: Continental Breakfast, Hyatt Hotel.

8:30AM-12:30PM: Issues Briefing at Hyatt Hotel. Speakers include Sen. Barbara Milkulski (D.-Md.); Rep. Mike Oxley (R.-Ohio); Rep. Charles Hayes (D.-Ill); and officials from the U.S. Trade Representatives office & U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

12:30PM-2:00PM: Luncheon at Hyatt Hotel. Speaker: Sen. Orrin Hatch (R.-Utah).

2:15PM-6PM: Trip to FBI Training Facility. Congressmen and senators have been invited to join AAMA members for this "hands-on" demonstration of the latest FBI weaponry.

6PM-8PM: Dinner (cookout) on the FBI Shooting Range.

Tuesday, May 7

8AM-9AM: Continental Breakfast, Hyatt Hotel. Appointment schedules and issues handouts available.

Morning & Afternoon (TBA): personal appointments with congressmen and senators, in their offices on Capitol Hill.

5:30PM-8PM: Congressional Family Reception, House of Representatives, Longworth Building, Cafeteria.

8PM-10PM: Dinner at a Washington restaurant.

Wednesday, May 8

8:15AM-9AM: Tour of the White House.

Mid-morning: Tour of the J. Edgar Hoover Building, FBI HQ.

12PM-1PM: Lunch at the Hyatt Hotel.

1PM-?: AAMA Annual Board Meeting & Election of Officers.

6PM-8PM: Dinner at the Georgetown Club. Presentation of the Joe Robbins Award and the President's Award.

Amusement & Music Operators Association

AMOA, MAY 19-21

Sunday, May 19

3PM-7PM: Registration at the Hyatt on Capitol Hill.

6PM-7:30PM: Reception and cocktail party at the Hyatt.

Monday, May 20

8:30AM-9AM: Continental breakfast, Hyatt Hotel.

9AM-12PM: Political workshop & issues briefing, Hyatt Hotel.

12PM-2PM: Luncheon with congressional speakers, Hyatt.

2PM-onward: free time.

Tuesday, May 21

8-9AM: Continental breakfast, Hyatt Hotel.

Morning & Afternoon (TBA): personal appointments with congressmen and senators, in their offices on Capitol Hill.

5:30PM-8PM: Congressional Family Reception and tournaments, Longworth House Office Building cafeteria.



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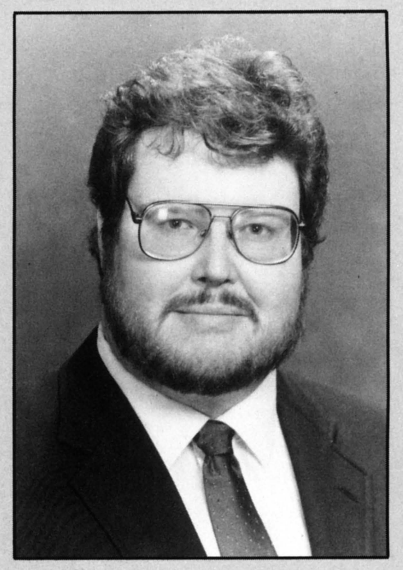

"Greed is good," the Michael Douglas character said in the 1988 movie *Wall Street.* "Greed works," he explained. "Greed makes our economy successful and provides jobs, dividends, and profits."

Right now, some readers are probably nodding in agreement. Other readers might be experiencing rising blood pressure. But which of us hasn't grumbled about greed, when we had to pay high prices at the supermarket, department store, or auto dealer?

On the other hand, who among us hasn't nodded in self-satisfaction at news of IBM's contributions to elementary schools, or U.S. Sprint's pro-environmental programs? Ever felt like saying, "They've been making lots of money off this country; high time they paid something back?" Yes, we all agree that business should acknowledge its social responsibilities.

We agree, that is, until it's time to apply that belief to our own industry.

Oh, I know there are exceptions: AAMA's annual charity drive; AMOA's scholarship fund; and individual manufacturing, distributing and operating firms who make an effort to be "good citizens of the community" with donated games, charity tie-ins, etc. But these, I reluctantly conclude, are the exception, not the rule. Too many in our industry won't spend five seconds on anything that doesn't earn them an immediate cash return. And too many have criticized others' charitable efforts as mere self-serving propaganda.

AAMA's anti-child abuse posters are an excellent case in point. "Who cares about a couple of posters for my locations?" some operators have said. "Can't AAMA think of anything better to spend our dues money on?" certain distributors and manufacturers have asked.

I think this attitude is shortsighted, self-defeating and wrong, wrong, wrong. It is wrong on a personal level because it underestimates the PR savvy of AAMA's Exec VP Bob Fay. It is wrong on a political level because it underestimates the power of community service to rebound for the good of our industry. And it is wrong on a moral level because it ignores the fact that — not to put too fine a point on it — we're making money from kids, and we have an obligation to make at least a few gestures in their direction.

Thanks to the anti-child abuse campaign, AAMA President Gil Pollock represented the coin machine industry at a prestigious White House charity function last month. It was a proud moment for our industry, and a great symbol of the potential synergy of business and community . . . if we care to make the effort.

The 1990s aren't the 1980s. The best of American business is owning up to its social responsibilities. From the local operator to the national association, let's be counted among the ranks of "enlightened self-interest." We owe it to our kids, our country and ourselves.

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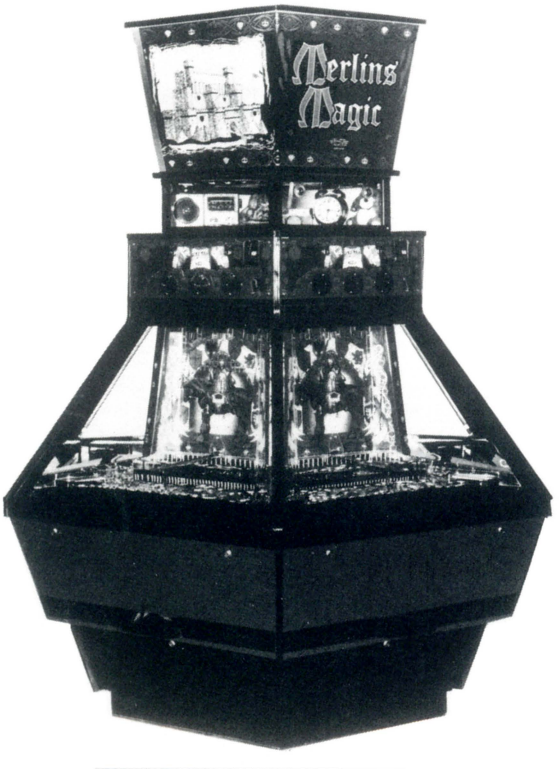

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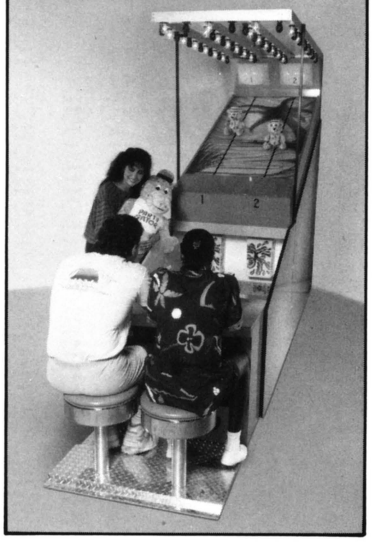

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WE'RE BACK!

trade vet Bill LaHart liked what he saw in Las Vegas: a more positive operator attitude & a renewed industry

Bill LaHart was born into the coin-op industry. He spent years in the family's Lake Placid, N.Y. operating concern and has also toiled in the manufacturing sphere. Bill speaks straight from "LaHart" so pay special heed to his assessment of "the state of the industry."

— the editors



The coin-op industry is alive and well. Despite continuing caution from some operators (and outright pessimism from others), quite a few of the operating segment came to the recent ACME show in a "buying mood."

My money is on those guys with the optimistic, can-do attitude to ride out the storm . . . and prosper. Yes, our industry has gone through some tough times lately. But look on the bright side: a challenging climate gives risk-taking operators a chance to get ahead of the ones who play it safe. As my father often told me: "He who is advancing when the competition is retreating, runs over the competition!"

One risk-taking operator I know didn't just moan and groan when his video earnings dropped. Instead, he shifted his focus to pool, darts and CD music. He invested time and energy in starting and promoting league play. Today, he's doing better than ever. His leagues are a strong asset, paying back the extra work they require, by reducing the need to rotate and replace equipment . . . reducing service calls and overhead . . . and making new friends of customers and location owners, who now say "hi" when he walks in the door. By the way, this operator's CD jukes are his biggest earners today.

Ask yourself if you could follow this operator's example . . . not just with pool, darts, leagues and CD music (though those are all excellent ideas) . . . but also with the "risk-taking" philosophy. Hey, you could even be daring and dig those soccer tables out of the mothballs! Word is that this type of game is making a comeback in some areas; why not investigate it for yourself?

Operating today is a whole new ball game. The days of just "collecting, moving and servicing" are over. Today's location is demanding more, and so will the locations of tomorrow! More professionalism . . . more problem-solving (that means operator creativity, not just "front money") . . . more ideas that will help them develop their businesses. We coin-op professionals must respond to those needs, paving new paths in and with our allied industries.

We've got to pave new paths inside our own operating firms, too. We must train our employees to be "future thinking." They're on the front line, in daily contact with the locations, and in the long run our people are our best asset. Many common business practices we use today came from an employee who had a good idea. Don't overlook this vital resource!

By the time I left this year's ACME in Las Vegas, I had a good feeling about our industry. Thanks to the daring and creativity of the better operators, plus some innovation from the better manufacturers, this industry has weathered the storm. It's coming back . . . just as it always has before. Let's keep moving full steam ahead!

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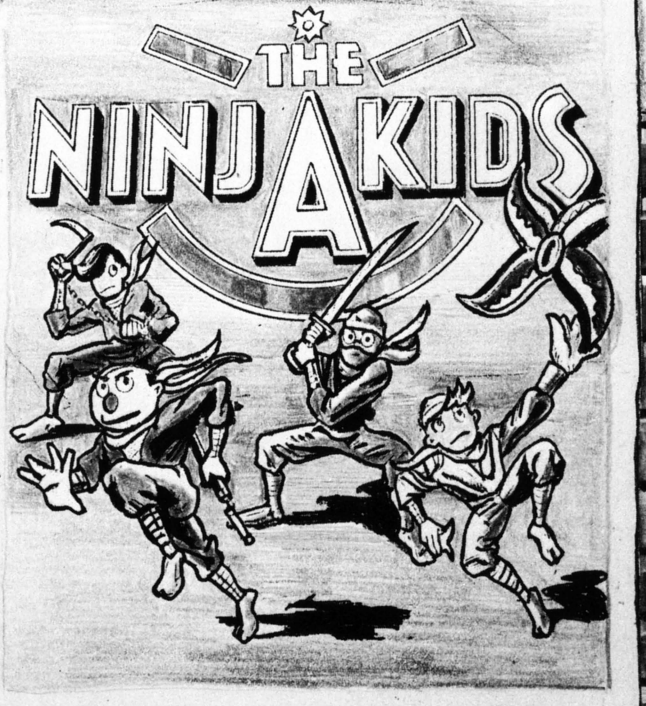

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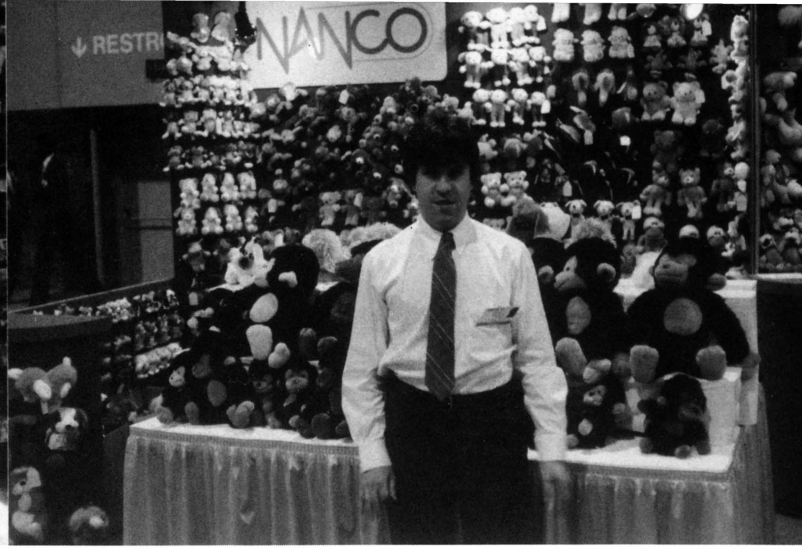


plush & prizes were plentiful at ACME, but the biggest "prize" of all was the boost the show gave to industry spirits









ACME REPRISE

great product, new technology & renewed optimism made ACME a hit; show created healthy afterglow of orders at dealers' open houses

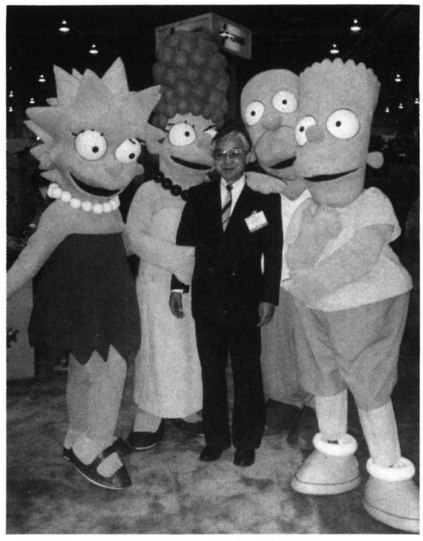


The fun came back into the coin-op amusements business in a March trade show called ACME. No doubt about it, the show was a hit. "Our best show in years," said many who attended.

How do you tell if a show is a hit? When operators say so. When dealers place substantial orders. When new themes and new technology are introduced. By all those standards, ACME '91 (March 22-24, Las Vegas) was a clear (and much-needed) boost to this industry.

Nearly every firm had at least one major new product at ACME '91 . . . and several had two, three or more good new things. New technology was unveiled, and it drew gasps of wonder and admiration. Sure, a few tradesters walked through the aisles and said "there's nothing here" — and we nominate those people for the international "I've Got Blinders On" club. The plain fact is, most operators left ACME with a dawning sense of new possibilities for coin-op. Quite a few left ACME with lengthy "wish lists" of new games. Dealers ordered the top titles in impressive quantity. And as a whole, the trade began to say to itself: "This expo is the light at the end of the tunnel."

Most of the operators we spoke to were smiling and nodding a lot. Yes,



Konami/Japan President Fumihiro Hishikawa is surrounded by the larger-than-life Simpsons family at ACME. His *The Simpsons* dedicated video was among the expo's hottest releases.

one or two tradesters said first-quarter collections on the street remained uninspiring. But that was the past. When it came time to pass judgment on the sparkling new product at the Sands Expo Center (i.e. the future), more than one trade member said: "What a switch! At this show, we've finally got some great new product to buy . . . but for a real change, the manufacturers aren't hyping it to death. Maybe they've learned something."

Maybe we all have. Operators had apparently learned again that we're in the entertainment business, and that new attractions are required to keep the public interested. Dealers seemed to recall that their own enthusiasm plays a vital part in moving the product along to its deserved destination. And everybody remembered that the "forgotten man," the player, is ultimately the person we all have to please.

ACME even created a healthy afterglow in the weeks following the show. On the distributor open-house circuit, we noted strong attendance and some healthy orders happening. Is the ACME show buzz really translating into post-show sales? Yes!

To recap the highlights, ACME was sponsored by AAMA and by Play Meter Magazine. It pulled in 2,028 operator folk (although nothing like that number ever actually appeared on the show floor at any one time). The exhibitors, many of them first-timers, took well over 700 booths in total, for a total of 183,000 sq. ft. of floor space. Layout, logistics and organization reached a level of excellence which will be the standard for any future trade shows to measure themselves against. (Hats off to AAMA's show chairman Bill Cravens, and to Bill Glasgow & Judy Novak of the Glasgow organization.)

Bally's was the official "host" hotel, but trade members also stayed at everything from the Sands to the Hilton to the Holiday Inn. Caesar's hosted ACME's major social function, an AAMA charitable foundation dinner honoring distributor Ray Galante and his late friend and partner Lou Dunis; the affair netted tens of thousands of dollars for a charity institute created by the two men.

Political disputes were blessedly absent from ACME. Instead, for the first time in a few years the focus was squarely back where it belonged: on new product, on marketing, on taking the industry into its next growth phase.

Redemption and gaming were the two paid seminars that drew the largest attendance. On the show floor, plenty of redemption games were displayed; fewer (but better) video lottery pieces were exhibited. Video game innovator Nolan Bushnell's speech on "The Future of Coin-Op" drew the best attendance



ACME show execs offer a champagne toast to their expo's success on opening morning. Between Joe Robbins (left) and Bob Fay (right), the folks in between (including Frank Sain of the Las Vegas Convention Bureau) had their wish fulfilled, and then some.



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Old Atarians meeting? In a way, yes, since (from left) Steve Bristow, Frank Ballouz, Joe Keenan (with wife Pat) and speech "keynoter" Nolan Bushnell all held heavy positions with that firm at one time, but all are working elsewhere today.

of any non-exhibit, non-party event. *Pong* creator Nolan spelled out his visions for tomorrow, including games that offer much more realistic simulations than anything imagined today.

On the show floor, *Hologram Time Traveler* in the Sega booth hinted at the early fulfillment of Nolan's bold promises. The game featured revolutionary 3D-type graphics from a Southern California developer. That one game, backed by "quality in depth" from the rest of the manufacturing contingent, helped spark an optimistic sense that coin-op could continue to change, to adopt, to innovate . . . and could remain a leading branch of the global entertainment industry.



Dynamo's Mark Struhs rewarded his top dealers with plaques at the show. Three made their Million Dollar Club: Brady, Stella (Germany) and Betson. All award recipients lined up for photo.

As one leading manufacturer said, summing up the spirit of ACME: "It's an exciting time to be involved in coin-op. The industry is about to see some great things happen, and guess what? This industry is going to be fun again!"

BUSHNELL PREDICTIONS

Nolan Bushnell drew the biggest crowd of any ACME seminar on March 24 when he addressed a standing-room-only crowd (early Sunday morning, yet) on "The Future of Coin-Op." When Nolan talks about the future, people listen. For good reason: he's the man who brought *Pong* to the market, started Atari Games Corp., and catapulted coin-op amusements from the backroom of the bar, to the cover of *Time Magazine*.

"The future of coin-op is going to be further convergence" of electronic media, Nolan began. Audio, TV, movies, and computers are all being combined these days in weird and wonderful ways . . . and that trend is going to accelerate. "The video game of the future will look more like a movie, than it does like a game," he predicted.

Movie-type games of the future will cast real actors and actresses as characters in their fictional storylines (indeed, this is already starting to happen). But coin-op will eventually progress from hiring unknowns, to hiring famous names . . . and perhaps even turning talented unknowns into household words. To finance the salaries of top-name stars, Bushnell said, there must be a change in the profit split between different segments of the industry. "You couldn't do this on a sale basis," he explained. "There would have to be some kind of link, to enable stars to get royalties from coin drop."

If tomorrow's games are going to be totally computer-based, will tomorrow's distributors look more like a modem or phone line, and less like a warehouse? "I think distribution will be bypassed" eventually by phone-linked video systems, Bushnell said.

This prediction seemed to contradict another prediction he made, namely that coin-op games will get larger and more complex. Conceding that home games have, of late,

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Mad Dog McCree is a collection engine. With it at Betson are (from left) Mexico dealer Mike Kessler and Peter Betti.



Another hot item is *Neo•Geo.* Showing it off at ACME (from left) are: Paul Jacobs, service technician Tom Lynn, and Neal Zook.



Data East's *Checkpoint* pin is solid and proud to show it off is their California Executive Vice President Gene Lipkin.



SNK's *Neo•Geo* 1-slot kit was beautifully demonstrated by Romstar (Tim Jackson and Rene Lopez flank converted cabinet).



Nintendo's Al Stone and the gang with *Play-Choice* showing *Turtles II* (what operators know as *TMNT).* Choice game pak.



Ted Furkin, Jerry Reeves and Joe Tedeschi show off Wurlitzer's *New York, New York* CD phonograph, a real glamour-puss!



At Fabtek by *Blood Bros.* (from left): Frank Ballouz, Linda Winstead, Jeannie Ballouz and Edison Brothers' Rich Long.



Skee-Toss BC was at the Skee-Ball booth and supremo Joe Sladek (right) brought the team over to show it off.

run away with much of video's glamor, Bushnell said that physical simulators will become larger, more realistic and more elaborate . . . and that they will remain "the exclusive domain of coin-op for a long time." As examples, he cited Chicago's BattleTech Center (which is operating now) and "virtual reality" technology (which is still being developed by various concerns).

Redemption was defined by Bushnell as "entertainment selling." He said this market is "here to stay and will get bigger." Bushnell grinned and added: "Ever since I got married, I've realized that shopping is a form of recreation."

As for video lottery, the former Atari chief predicted that moral prohibitions against gambling will continue to erode . . . and that the U.S. will quickly evolve to British- or German-style "slow slots" which take at least 15 seconds per play, and offer only limited payback. The new forms of gaming will be "extremely" heavily taxed, he said. "It's not going to be a good deal for coin-op," he opined. "Maybe it never was."

America's currency is due for dramatic reform, Bushnell forecast. "With the printing and photocopying technology that's coming down the pike," he said, "paper money will not be a viable form of currency . . . When every merchant has to check with electric eyes for red and green threads, it is not efficient. Transactions will be slowed down. This will happen in 10 years, and in 20 years paper money worldwide will go out of circulation. It has to," he stressed. "It will not work." Replacing paper dollars, Bushnell said, will be a hi-tech alternative which average Joes cannot mass-produce . . . perhaps plastic tokens with hologram artwork. "This will bring a tremendous benefit to coin-op," commented Nolan.

In conclusion, Bushnell said: "The future is bright for those who are willing to change. Those who keep abreast of changes will prosper. Those who don't, will fail." Citing anti-video operators of the 1970s who "aren't around anymore," he drew a final lesson: "Slow buffaloes get shot, but pioneers sometimes get arrows in the back. You've got to be somewhere in between!"

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Namco's new regional sales rep Tom Siemieniec and Joanne Anderson show their new *Steel Gunner.* Game got good notices.



Ecumenical? Truly, as Leprechaun's Todd Cravens tries out Konami's *The Simpsons.* Game looks like a real winner.



Coastal Amusement's Len Dean (left) with Rich Long and Bob Keelyn by his big and busty *Jungle Jive* coin/token pusher.



Premier/Gottlieb's Gil Pollock and Dan Clarton do cowboy things to jazz up their presentation of their new *Cactus Jack's* pinball.



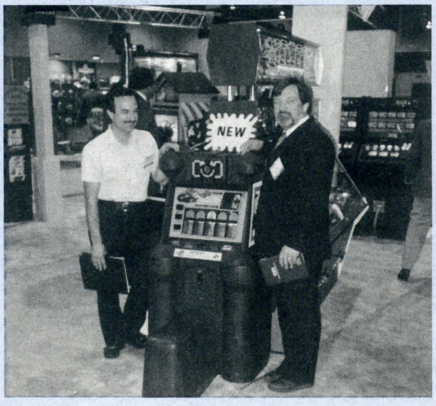
American Technos got good reviews on their *Wrestlefest* video (coming later). Rick VandenBrink and Greg Rice show it off.



Jerry Weiman and Dave Wise at Bob's Space Racers display a new water-themed redemption piece for the operators.



Skip Doyle (left) and Steve McCaul (Ryan Amusements) with Doyle's new *Dump the Ump* ball toss redemption piece at ACME.



Coin Concepts' new *Cat 'N' Mouse* symbol-match redemption piece flanked by operators Tom Guagliardo and the firm's Joe Tunney.



Auto Photo's booth lets players pick the background and the computer does the rest. The firm's been in business for 47 years.



Hot show product was Bromley's *Ghost Town.* With it are Lauran Bromley and Bruce Pomroy (a Lombard, Illinois operator).



Jinny, Pete and Jeff Kaufman, plus Peter Ching, with the *4x4* car racing redemption piece. Game got good comment.



Stella's *Quick Draw* flip-card poker was shown at Betson's booth. John Margold and Al Fraser are with this game to come.



Arachnid's lavish display highlighting "Marcio's Cantina" is graced by a group shot of the "A Team" with their new *Galaxy Darts* game.



After 19 years with Music-Vend Distributing, Lamar Forque has joined Merit as regional salesman. He's shown with *Solo Challenger.*



Tekbilt's Buzz Bruner with popular Arjay Export chief Bob Jones by the *Zanadew* machine (which dispenses pull tab tickets).



Jack Campbell (left) was pulled away from a meeting with Gordon Smart for a *RePlay* snapshot by the basketball cage.



Reg Morosoli rolls the bowling ball down one of the two *Bowlingo* lanes as the game's "Count" Henry Grant (r) awaits his own score.



At Johnston Products, Eric Cravens (Bill's nephew) and Mel LaForce pose by the *Kick 'N Catch* redemption unit (with ticket dispenser).



Skill Games' Michelle Kellenbarger, Gregg Perrie & Averil Stevens by their *Showdown* game. Who's the fastest gun at your location?



NSM's *Laser Target Shoot* prints hard copies of video screen art showing your hits on a bullseye target. Coming in '92.



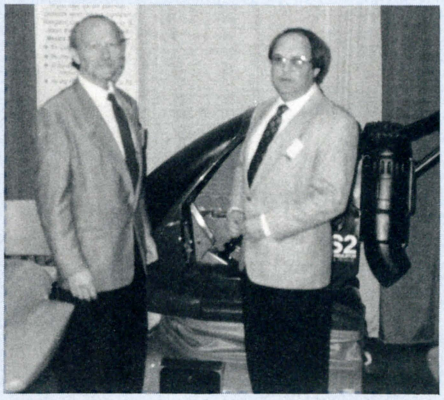
At the Access booth tossing balls are (left to right): Jane Margues, Eric Brashear and our buddy from Reno Bill Van Anda.



I.C.E. 's Ralph Coppola pauses for a picture while playing his innovative *Putting Challenge* golf course game with the changing playfield.



RePlay's Debbie Anderson takes a ride at Just Kiddie Rides (Farmingdale, New York) flanked by Eric Torres and Bill Lauterbach.



Linley Hughes and Zach Katz at the American Simulators Booth. Zach also notified AAMA about his own game testing idea.



Atari's well-liked Mary Fujihara poses with both *Batman* kit and character cut-out. They also showed their *Panorama* driver.



Sock em! say Taito's Jim Miskell and Natalie Kulig as they demonstrate the fascinating *Sonic Blastman* pad puncher.



The small American Shuffleboard *Bumpa* rebound table is back on line, say Leo Stelter and Dick Delfino at ACME '91.



Ohio's Bob Hull joins Mike and Diane Siebert at Design Plus show of their brand new *Roll-R-Ball* mini shuffleboard game.



Fronting Adastra's *Hoops* are (left to right): Jim Hellmer, Bob Dreher, Foster Brashear and Patty Hellmer. Nice folks.



Our pretty lady from France, Mireille Chevalier (standing), and Carol Barden demo'd the *SC 2000* game collection accounting system.



The Foto Fantasy booth gives a color Poloroid in only six seconds. Walt Kreisberg and Yefin Massarsky show it off in a bright red cabinet.



Bundra Games' *Crusher* asks you to crush the beer can. Demonstrating it are Joey Bundra and Betson's John Margold.



Amusement Equipment Exchanges' Tom Leon (left) spins the wheel for a guest at his booth at the Sands ACME show.



England's famous Harry Levy (left) with SMS's famous Jim Pietrangelo by the latter's *Player's Touch* poker game.



A tower of different-sized monitors showing *Ataxx* at the Tekbilt booth is flanked by President Buzz Bruner and Jack Sullivan.



Carousel's Ken Schaeffer provides Gail Zweben with a ride in the *Turbo Z-327* car. Yes, that's *RePlay's* Barry Zweben's daughter.

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Leprechaun's Bill Cravens with Mitsuo Kimura by Exit's *Pot of Gold* redemption piece. Appears to be a very solid game.



Pioneer's *Laser Juke* CD box is presented by Dave Druillard, Mary Carloss and John Maniscalco at their lavish ACME display.



Alter's *People Postcards* lets you pick your favorite background. Shown here with it are Nicole Lundberg and Joel Wallentek.



Irem has *Gun Force,* and it also has Steve Blattspieler (left), Drew Maniscalco and the Bettelman family of C.A. Robinson & Co.



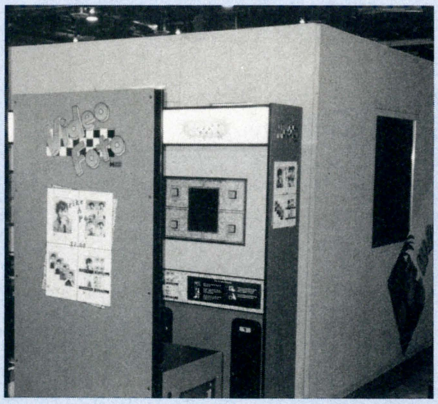
Grayhound's Dan Dinnebeil (left) slaps a puck on *Shot Hockey* as designer Pete Coulas observes. This one could go nicely.



Jon Yarbrough of Micro Mfg. (left) with Masamichi Iida and Kinichi Kamiyasa take a snapshot during the ACME show.



Edison Brothers' Rich Long (left) with Kaneko's Marty Glazman and the forthcoming *Berlin Wall* video conversion kit.



Video Foto was shown at Data East's display by Nolan Bushnell. You get computer-generated artwork in various scenes.



Seeburg's Joe Pankus (left) discusses what's doing with a couple of curious showgoers. Seeburg intro'd the first CD jukebox.



The Brady Bunch (Blair Norris, Bob Haim and Tom Keil) join Am. Sammy's Ko Adachi (left), Norman Evangelista and Dave Peckels (right).



Imagination Leisure's *Super Bowl* big ball bowler got the firm attention of Dick Simon, Irv Spinak, Tony Yula and Gene Sieben.



Dennis Rottino with the Game Sales lineup of gaming-styled uprights and countertop units, featuring video poker, keno and slots.

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NSM's American chief Rus Strahan (left) with new sales topper George Haydocy at their newly-designed CD wallbox.



Tecmo's Mike Robinson (left) with Dave Nafus and Bryan Sailors (Lookout Electronics, Longview, Wash.). Tecmo's shipping *Strato Fighter.*



Dale and Mineko Moore (California operators) get the lowdown on PVT's new Poloroid-film photo booth from John Biondo.



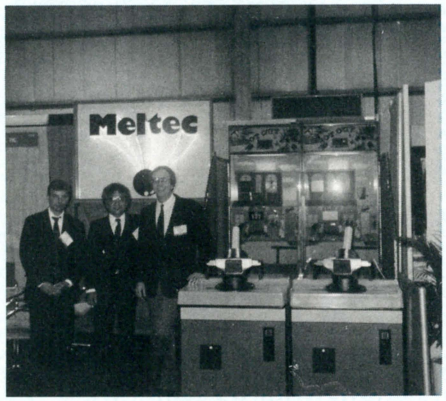
Trade vet Larry Berke enjoys watching two toddlers itching to play Jaleco's *Cisco Heat* sitdown driver, featuring San Francisco settings.



Brad Donnaly, Steve McCaul, Lori Treankler and Rick Kirby over at Bay-Tek's *Clown Rolldown* and *Fielders Choice.*



Vari-Tech's Tom Kane, Larry Thatcher and Joel Beezhold enjoy watching a youngster play their *B.C. Bash* whacker. What fun!



John and Mike McEwan with Roy Nishi at Meltec's display where two *Shoot Out* sitdown units offered redemption entertainment.



Playing the *Lazer-Tron* shooting gallery with a haunted house theme, are Stephanie & Norm Petermeier, Victoria Krentz & Damon Noriega.



Greg Sullivan and Kim Cook greet Ohio operator Don Hesch at their National Sports Games *Football Challenge* passing game.



Ohio's famous operator Bill Beckham (left) with Phyllis and Ed Seidel checking the insides of their *Dino-Roll* redemption game.



Jill and Bill at Sunmark Business Products show off their little grip tester and coin-op scale. Impulse games are timeless products.



Massaging the "footsies" at Just Vibrations Int'l. are: Dave Morgan, Nancy Duncan, Bob Watts and Joyce Lamb. What a great feeling!

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Capcom's Paul Wiederaenders greets company supremo Kenzo Tsujimoto by their smash hit *Street Fighter II* video.



MicroProse chief Bill Stealey worked the show in an arm sling. Chris Prouse and Dennis from Gro-Tech visited him and the *F-15.*



Leisure Entertainment's Jed Forman (right) with David Levy and Jed's *Lucky Numbers* lotto numbers-picking machine.



R.H. Belam veep and ever-smiling Simon Deith (second from right) with customer-friends Carmine, Randy & Peter taking a snap.



Rock-Ola's popular Frank Schulz (left) with Dom Fazie (Canada) and Paolo Dalla Pria (who flew in from Italy) by their CD juke.



Showing off Vend Tron's nacho vender are Leslie Morrow (formerly of *Vending Times)* and Peter San Juan. Watch that weight!



Nevis, Inc.'s *Thumb B Roll* is shown to Mark and Linda Fralein (right) by Mike and Roxann Adams. Interesting redemption piece.



Stephan Renaud, Pierre Leger and Luc Marcoux proudly show the Electro Games Industries mini *Shuffleball* produced in Canada.



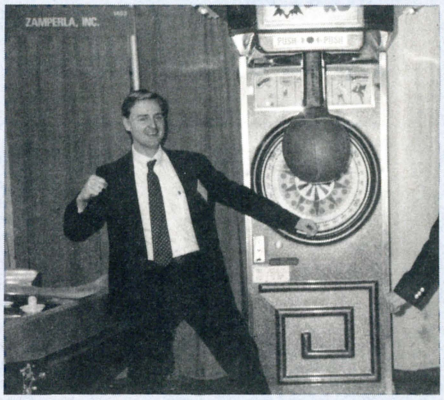
Stu Heller (left) and Joe DeMarsico treat a bunch of youngsters to fun at their Kiddie Rides USA display of quality imported rides.



Rich Suhy, Morris Barnhart and Jack Deming showed a barrel converted into a CD jukebox with their Aeries International kit.



Phil Cornick (left) and Mort Ansky are showing their video lottery game in a flashy chrome-plated cabinet at the Kramer Mfg. exhibit.



Dave Martin takes a swing at Zamperla's *Punchball.* Dave and his brother Allen agree that it's the company's best-selling game.



EVEN THE CABINET SAYS *Profits!*

Yamate video games would be real money-makers on the basis of their outstanding software alone. But we don't stop there. We house our games in the finest, handsomest cabinet available today.

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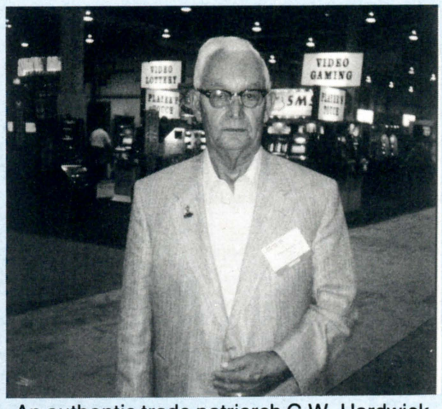
The Corvette was won by England's Marty Bromley (center); Matt Bettelman drew the ticket; Cravens and Bob Fay beam on.



Si (Mr. Nevada) Redd pictured with his wife Marilyn (and *EuroSlot* editor John Mellor) drove to the show from his Las Vegas home.



An authentic trade patriarch C.W. Hardwick on the show floor. C.W. deals Wurlitzer jukeboxes plus games out of San Antonio.



Enjoying after-show cocktails (from left): Ron Carrara, Joel Kleiman, Ralph Lubinsky, Tippy Adlum and Pioneer's Paul Scribner.



Millie McCarthy, matriarch of the New York State operating business, with old friend Bill LaHart, are getting ready for a seminar.



Stopped for a snapshot while touring the show are (from left): Yamate USA's Masahiro Shibata, John Dugas and Jane Rosen.



Flanking Joe (himself) Robbins are Harriet Singer (central) and LaVerne Berke (Larry's missus) over by the Jaleco exhibit.



AAMA's genial Bill Kidwell with the association's new lobbyist Laura Olson say hi outside the registration area in the Sands Center.



"Press conference": *RePlay's* editor Marcus Webb meets his Japanese colleague Akagi-san from *Game Machine* after hours at ACME.



The Leland girls on the job (from left): Donna Jorgensen, Jody Krugman, Denise Conaway and one of our fave people, Debbie Austin.



Mike Macke's company called Star Mfg. makes a vender for Fuji throwaway cameras. Here he tours the show with Harry Young (r).



Out by the Sands cafeteria (hmmm?) are (from left) Artie Warner, Frank Seninsky, Karen Nagle and former AMOA prexy Clyde Knupp.

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   Wilson Phillips
6. **Joyride**
   Roxette
7. **Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)/ I Want You**
   Robert Palmer
8. **Call It Poison**
   The Escape Club
9. **Are You Ready**
   AC/DC
10. **Rocket O'Love**
    The Knack
11. **Headlong**
    Queen
12. **If You Don't Start Drinkin' (I'm Gonna Leave)**
    George Thorogood & The Destroyers
13. **Break On Through**
    The Doors
14. **Mary And Willie**
    K.T. Oslin
15. **Down Home**
    Alabama

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The Art of Entertainment



Namco's supremo Masaya Nakamura (center) held a cocktail reception at ACME. With him are Shunji Iki and *RePlay's* Ed Adlum.



Premier's Gil Pollock held a drawing for a free *Cactus Jack's* pin and the winner was Jerry Hayes, a Saginaw, Michigan operator.



Prominent Jersey operators on show floor: Nina and Vince Storino with Frank and Gloria Mandia snapped by the Imperial Int'l display.



Can't get it out of his system: old time trade figure (now in another biz) Bud Lurie (left) meets up with Joe Robbins and Ron Carrara.



Trade pioneer Johnny Bilotta (New York State) gets gracious reception at the Leland booth where the *Indy Heat* was center stage.



All smiles at the combined manufacturer Viva Las Vegas party, machine makers greet Ohio's veteran distributor Ronny Gold.



Leprechaun's drawing for a $2,000 pot of gold was won by Top Notch Amusements (Va). Todd and Bill watch Kathy Acevedeo draw.



Mark, Faye and Mike from General Coin (Portland) join Pioneer heavies Ted Karasawa and Paul Scribner for meeting at latter's booth.



Mexico's Oscar and Damon Noriega (who do work with Carl Fleischman) enjoy hospitality at the C.A. Robinson party held during show.



Arachnid won a fine sales award from the AAMA during the show and execs Ed Adlum and the great Marcio Bonilla celebrate it.



Mireille Chevalier and friend Didier Salmon (from Paris) take a moment out from the show to "enjoy" the cafeteria at Sands.



Montrew & Lee Batson, of Sunshine Enterprises in Birmingham, toured the Sands exhibit and hopefully came up with a buying list.

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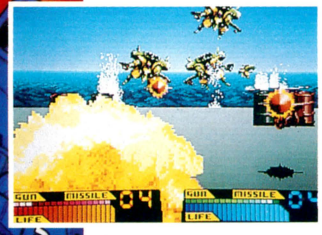

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Stop the terrorist's ultimate super weapon.

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GAME FEATURES:

- Two player interactive. Players can join in at any time.
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- Each player controls fully automatic machine-gun with unlimited 10mm size special explosive bullets, plus a limited number of homing missiles.



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SNK America's chief Paul Jacobs treated his staff and friends to a Chinese dinner to celebrate the success of their *Neo•Geo* system.



Steve Shoemaker (Wedges/Ledges) and friends let their hair down at superb after-show dinner party held at the Golden Steer.



Doing bartender chores at an evening's hospitality suite are Konami/Europe's Richard Dunn and Brent Walker's David Coren.



Hardly to be outdone, Nintendo's Al Stone (left) and Mike Minor man the refreshment table at their own hospitality gathering.



Tippy Adlum, Ron Gold and Claudia Wilson ham and jam it up during ACME '91. Claudia's a fixture down at Royal Dist. in Cincinnati.



Jimmy Roberts (second from right) held a combined party with some of his suppliers like Dynamo (Rickett and Velasquez enjoyed).



Good cheer was the order of the evening at Merit. From left: prexy Pete Feuer, Don DeVale and Merit sales hitter Dave Rubenstein.



Toasting their *New York, New York* jukebox at Wurlitzer's party (from left): Jerry Reeves, Joe Tedeschi and engineer George Siedel.



Up at the T.O.P. suite at Bally's, from left: Tom Tarantelli, Andy Vining, Tippy and Ed Adlum say hi by the steel tip dart board.



Relaxing at the Leland suite, Exidy's Pete Kaufman, Angie and Kenny Anderson and friends wind down the busy convention day.



North meets South as Charlie Caplan (Birmingham), Mrs. Bernie Williams (Dallas) and Bill LaHart (Lake Placid) share evening fun.



New York's Steve Epstein (left) and Germany's Ulli Kuennecke smother Tippy Adlum with good fellowship. That's the ACME way.

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Magic Sword	Apr. 30, 1992	$400
Carrier Air Wing	Jun. 30, 1992	$400

CAPCOM® USA



Flush with plush at P.M.I. Toys are Jay Foreman, Mark Gawkik and Ray Rodriguez. They have a super selection in spring colors.



The Prizes! Big shots enjoyed ACME '91. That's (left to right) Tom Portale, Jerry Rush and Bob Portale posing for our camera.



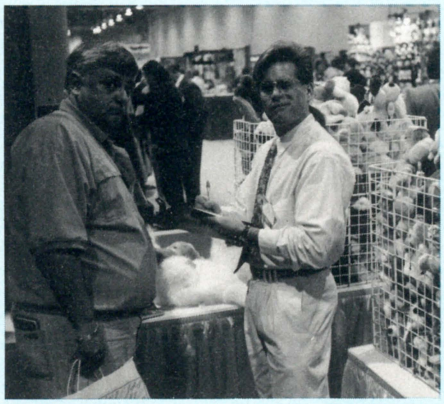
Bonita Marie's Dave Katz and Shelley Fernandez showed a mountain of redemption goods at their ACME exhibit for your spring needs.



HMS Monaco's Ira Erstling attends to a customer at his redemption prize display. Scenes of all these goods reminds us of the A.T.E.I.



Hal Steinberg at Rosette's stand with the best plush toy of all: Gail Zweben who got giddy with all those toys around her.



Joe Bates at Plush-4-Play throws the camera a wink as he says hi to the readers while writing up an order at his plush stand.



Cliff Brechner and friend at the Dan Brechner & Co. exhibit where toys of many description are available for arcade operators.



Jack Kelly and colleague at the Acme Premium booth have an assortment of plush and prizes for crane and arcade ops running wide.



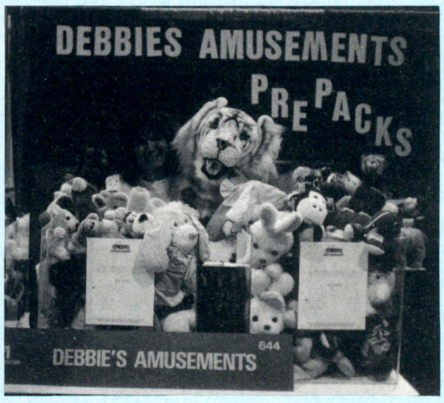
Now, that's a real teddy. Hugging it are Carolyn Campbell and Dorothy Volaski at the Superior Toy ACME exhibit display.



Brent Collins, Larry and Tami Morris and John Sullivan had a gator for showgoers at the Laramie Interests prize display at the Sands.



Carmen Ricci, maker of many a crane, drops by the S.O.S. Good Stuff display, meeting Steve Chernin and other tradesters.



Why it's none other than Debbie Frank at Debbie's Amusements offering pre-sort plush packs and lots of cheer to showgoers.

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Over at Dart World is a group including Nik Berquist, Kathy Poirier, Larry Brengman, John Petell and Don Amirault. On target.



One-stopper Ted Howell at his Mobile Records booth. Company provides title strip card compatible with various CD boxes.



Donna Chiararoli and Earl Romine at their ESD exhibit of coin related products. Service folks like these are backbones of the biz.



At Asahi Seiko USA, Pam Schaeffer, Rick Mines, Pete Bonadonna (Belam) and Mike Welter discuss their lineup of coin acceptors.



The redemption ticket tracker (by the same name) is center of Muncie Novelty, as are Carole Broyles, Dana Leoni & Claudia Broyles.



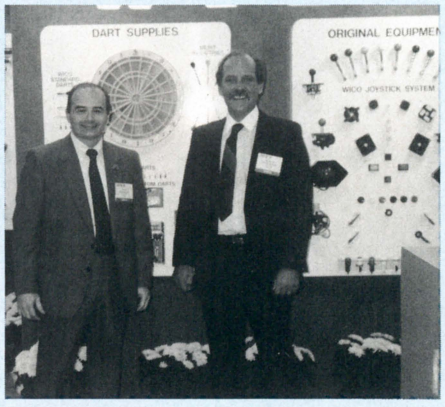
Scan Coin rep stands ready to discuss merits of the company's line of coin counters. Hope we have more to count after the ACME.



Paul Jacobs (SNK) with cabinet suppliers 3-Koam (including Unpo Paik). "Perfect construction" says Paul of their game housing.



Over at the Eygo booth are Chris Debrecht, Al Chieni, Bob Kingston and Roger Tangway (who hails from Canada).



You need it, Wico has it. Manning this national parts house stand are Rich Santecola & Howard Williamson saying "we're the source."



Rich Currie demos new Coin Controls electronic ticket dispenser for Darlene Lanz, Stan Jarocki and Mike Meisinger. Security Imprint!



Mario Martelli of Hantarex with a pair of monitors shown on his ACME booth. Hantarex is deep-rooted in monitor supply.



Bill Keller and Barry O'Brien at Standard Change Makers with their ticket vender . . . one more item in the SCM product catalog.

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Ads offering a *copyrighted* Lucky-8-Line™ or Fever Chance™ game for sale will now include the words "Genuine Yamate © – OK™ boards." And, more importantly, the boards themselves will have an *AAMA sticker of authenticity.* (If you still have doubts, you can of course also demand a written copyright guarantee from the seller, ask for an "indemnify and hold harmless" agreement and even check out the seller with Yamate.)



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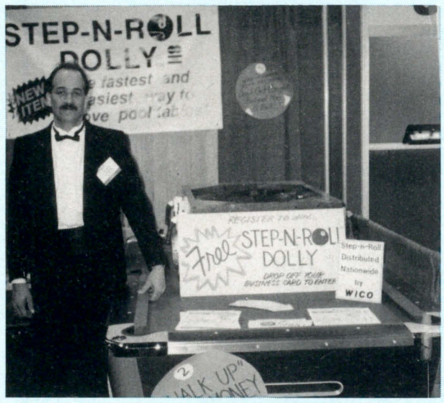
J-S Sales Company's John Nusser (left) and Don Shimel (right) with customer at their exhibit. This is a multi-parts house.



Frank Happ, Jim Happ and the happy crowd at Happ Controls pause in their busy ACME day to give *RePlay* a comfy snapshot.



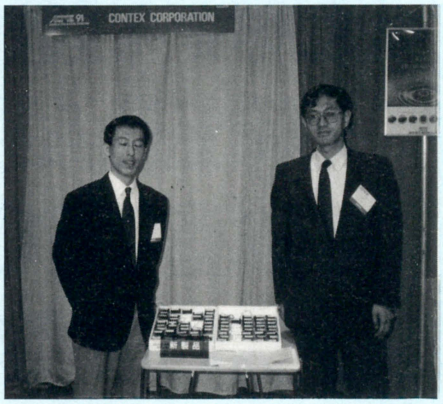
Redemption tickets are coming out of machines all over the place and veteran printer National Ticket is right there to supply.



Lonsway's *Step 'N Roll* pool table dolly is a back-saver for ops. The useful unit, which easily jacks up a table for moving, is neat.



A wide variety of darts for the nation's players is available from Great Lakes Distributors; many were on display at their ACME booth.



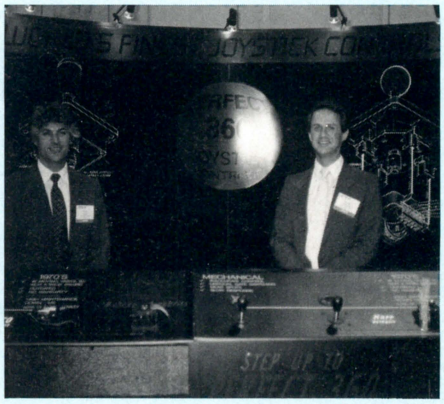
Contex Corporation's electromagnetic counter is presented by Toshihiko Okabe (left) and Shigeru Tsu Kakoshi at their ACME stand.



Betty Ringo (left) at Record Source Int'l. discusses their record program with Nancy Stathatos of Winchester, Calif. at the ACME.



Bill Willis (left) shows off fascinating new game security device in BRW Control Systems' lineup of anti-theft devices for tradesters.



Curt Jones and Randy Mitchell manned a good-looking Perfect 360 Joystick display at ACME to demo their line of video sticks.



Pete Thompson (Video Connection) joins Ted Furkin at the All Star Music Silent Partner computerized route income unit.



Stan Pearson, wife and daughters man (woman?) their A-1 Products stand at the ACME. It's great when the family gets involved.



Joe Davis joins Chris and Lanny at the United States Amusement Auctions booth. This company's filled a niche in the game business.

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For over 20 years, Asahi Seiko has served the worldwide needs of a variety of industries that utilize mechanisms that dispense coins, bills or prepaid cards.

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Mars Electronics folks on duty include Dave McLaughlin, Bart Shuldman, Steve Kinder, Denny Nicholson & Bob Smith (James Ind.)



Mike DiMotta (second from right) with colleagues at his Imperial International parts display. Mike's firm is big in the supply biz.



Buddy Mike Hoffman at his token exhibit greets big Nancy and little Gail Zweben (who's too young to know how to use a token yet).



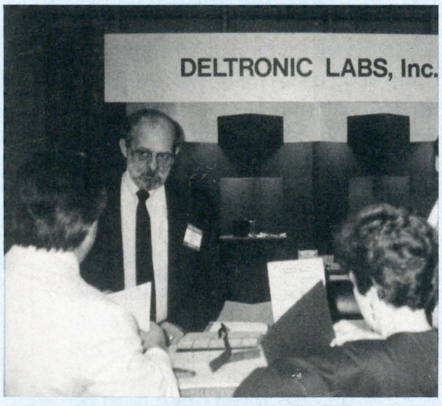
Lookin' sharp at Sharp Image: Ron Clapper, Fabian Espinosa, Tatsuo Ichise, Chris Anderson, Akira Auyagi and Kohei Teraoka.



At Space Age Electronics: Jae Jung, Carl Fleischman, Mikiko and Y.C. Park. Seems we have seen these fine folks at shows before.



Showing the Bush Enterprises Coin Tracker accounting system are Jan and Mark Costellano with David Scott.



Steve Horniak demonstrates the Deltronic Labs redemption ticket counter/eater. This was one of the hits at the AMOA show.



Speakers "spoke out" at LA East. Shown in the booth are Steve Palmer (left), David Lanstecca and Emery Kertesz.



Ray Chavez shows off the spread of security devices at the Baton Lock & Hardware exhibit. They keep the trade buttoned up.



Sheila Delacona, the "spokesperson" for the Roger Williams token mint at trade shows, once again graced her exhibit booth.



Belam's Ago Mensah (left) meets Ron Rollins at Coin Mechanisms where their System Gold debit card device was on display.



Jamp Corporation's Hiroshi Yara (left), Akira Kawamoto and Satomi Kurihara at their display of control panels and video accessories.

NOTICE OF UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT ORDER IN YAMATE U.S.A. CORP. VS. MYRON SUGERMAN AND ATLANTIC & PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORP.

COURT ORDER AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE EQUIPMENT AND ORDERING RECALL OF COUNTERFEITS

On March 6, 1991, the United States District Court, in the case of Yamate U.S.A. Corp. vs. Myron Sugerman and Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corp., Civil Action No. 89-763 (HAA), vacated its prior ruling denying Yamate's request for a preliminary injunction and granted Yamate's request for a preliminary injunction and impounding order against the defendants.

PURCHASERS & USERS OF POSSIBLY COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE GAMES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE COURT PRELIMINARILY ENJOINED DEFENDANTS SUGERMAN AND A&P IN THE CASE AS FOLLOWS:

- No more manufacturing, buying, selling, importing, using, performing, displaying and otherwise dealing or trafficking in PCBs for Lucky 8-Line W-4 or any games substantially similar to it.

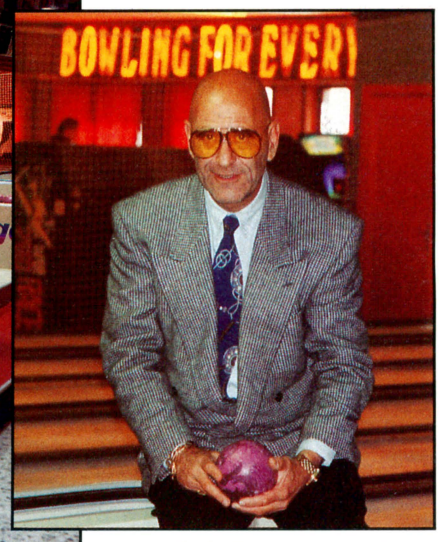
- In addition, the Court authorized the United States Marshal to impound from the defendants all PCBs for Lucky-8-Line W-4 or games substantially similar to it.

Anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of the ruling should contact:

Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corporation
1428 North Broad Street
Hillside, New Jersey 07205

A BOWLING CENTER NO LOCATION SHOULD BE WITHOUT.





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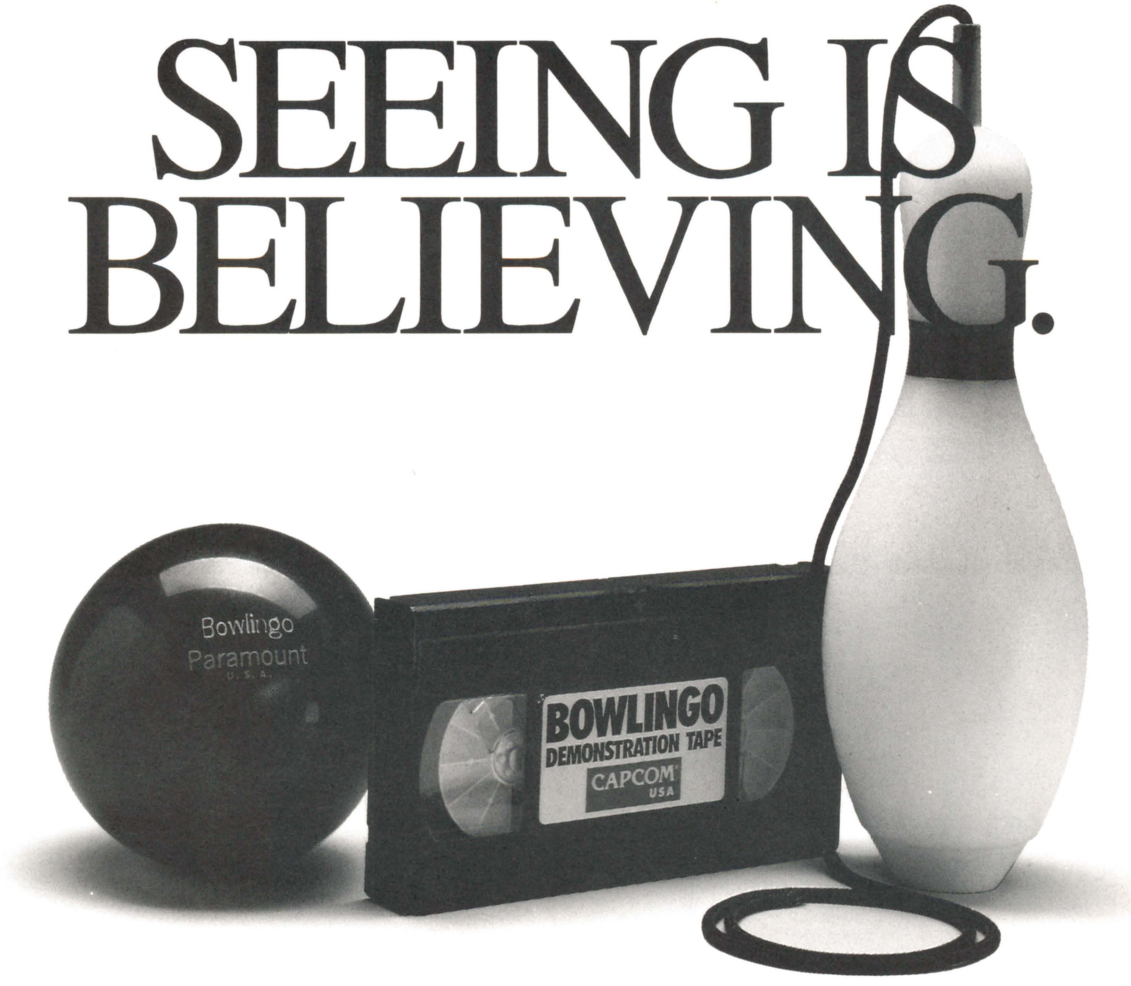

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ACME PRODUCT REVUE

Show offered "quality in depth" in every category of machine

Jackpot! The industry came up a winner with a wealth of excellent new product in Las Vegas. Many, many of the games and machines were top-drawer...so many, in fact, were so good, that we lacked adequate time to do them all justice before our April issue deadline. As promised, we're now providing a fuller report in this May edition.

Here, then, is an extensive listing of the goods seen March 22-24 at the 1991 ACME show. We've divided the goods by type of machine: video; pins; redemption & gaming; sports & novelties; and music. One note: since ACME offered so much product, we've confined ourselves in the video and pinball categories to describing *new games only*. We did not repeat information on games that were out for months prior to the show. However, in the other machine categories — redemption, novelties, etc. — staple items and "second-look" games are described, along with new product.



Spinal Breakers, the horizontal kit with the no-nonsense name from American Sammy, has an interesting sci-fi story line.

VIDEO GAMES

For two years now, operators have been crying for new themes and new technology in video games. At ACME '91, they got some of each. They also got several good two-player kits (few of these have been seen for a show or two) for all those cabinets on location that need updates. Dedicated games were few and far between, but those that appeared in this format justified their higher prices with unique controls, three- or four-player stations, etc. Some games were "previewed" for release later this spring or summer ...which is perfectly appropriate. That's exactly what trade shows are about! After all, if the retailer (operator) sees a new product at about the same time as the general public, what's the point?

American Sammy: this California-based subsid showed a new game called *Spinal Breakers.* It's a two-player (simultaneous) horizontal kit with a sci-fi storyline: the player takes the part of Captain Waffle, who must return from a space colony to reclaim the conquered Earth from an army of robots gone mad. Lots of shooting action here, and the firm says the game offers three different endings, so players will have an incentive to play repeatedly even after they've made it to the end of the story a couple of times. American Sammy also showed their *Bio Ship Paladin,* which was on sale well before the show.

American Technos had just one game in their ACME booth, which won't come till summer...but it was a beaut. *Wrestle Fest,* the sequel to Technos' earlier hit *WWF Superstars,* is a four-player (simultaneous) video game available in upright dedicated and conversion kit formats. Set for a June release, it features 12 licensed characters including Hulk Hogan, Mr. Perfect, etc. who appear in cabinet art and in gameplay. Oversized and improved graphics add to the fun as players enjoy "tag team challenge," the "cage match" and other colorful features.

Atari: the acknowledged U.S. video game leader showed *Batman,* a one-player conversion kit that's available now. Gameplay faithfully follows sequences from the recent hit movie. Standard kick-punch action is a major component, but you also get to drive the Batmobile, fly the Batplane, and help knock Jack into the vat of green goo that turns him into the Joker...then repeat the movie's final showdown atop a bell tower. Graphics are very good with oversized representations of Batman, Vicki and the Joker. The



Technos' *Wrestlefest* got solid reviews at ACME, and while it isn't slated for delivery till June of this year, it may pop earlier.

soundtrack includes authentic movie score and snippets of the actors' voices.

To be very frank, some tradesters looked at *Batman,* shrugged and said "Oh, another punch-kick game" . . . but don't listen to them! Some very savvy operators rated this item among their "top five" picks at the ACME show. Based on the character's continuing popularity and Atari's usual quality production, we expect to see this one earn nicely indeed.

Also from Atari, *Hard Drivin' Panorama* was a one-player, sit-down, three-screen driver which adds wider perspective to the *Race Drivin'* experience. The fictional "universe" of the game can — as always — be accessed in any direction and the car may "pivot" a full 360 degrees and drive off in any direction. . . not just along a fixed, linear route. A stock car track has been added to increase the gameplay fun, and a rearview mirror enhances central screen graphics. Of course, it goes without saying that the three-screen effect adds tremendous realism to the whole thing. It's expensive, so a limited quantity of these arcade attractions will be built to fill dealers' up-front orders, said Atari's marketing director Mary Fujihara.

Atari also had *Rampart* (previously available dedicated-only) in two-player kit format. The game,



Atari's *Rampart* is now available in a 2-player kit, and judging by the earnings of the dedicated version, this appears to be one of the more solid spring buys for operators.

which combines strategy and action in a medieval, castle-storming theme, had already built an impassioned following among arcade players prior to the show. This new, low-priced format should give more street operators a chance to cash in, said observers. "With so many high-end products are coming out, we thought it was time to offer some bargains," said one Atari rep. They did!

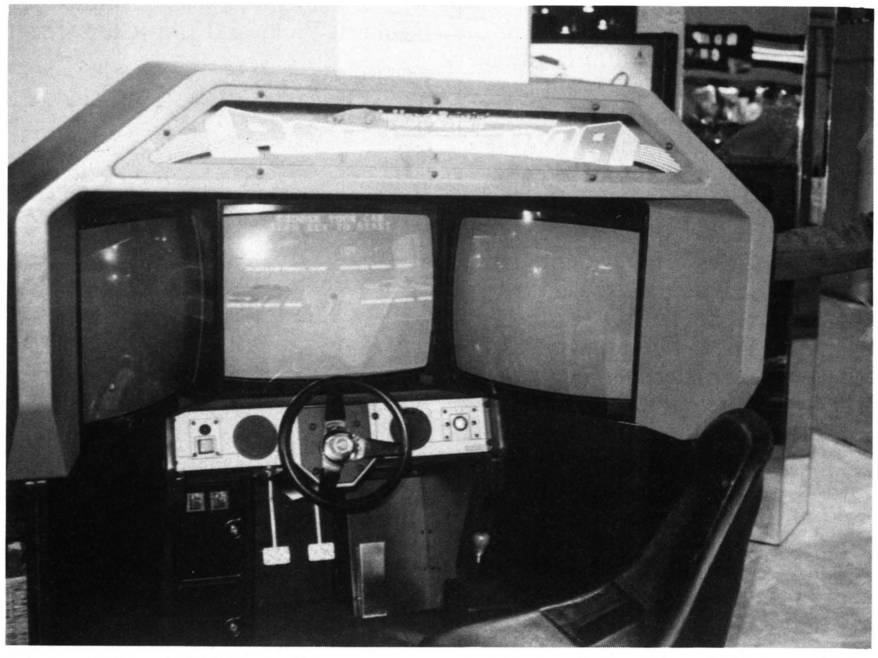
Betson Enterprises previewed *Who Shot Johnny Rock?,* the follow-up "interactive movie on laserdisc" for the Icat system which debuted with *Mad Dog McCree.* This sequel features a 1930s private eye theme: the setting is Chicago, and the player takes the part of a detective who is trying to help a sexy moll track down the murderer. As with *Mad Dog,* big-screen shooting excitement comes from the use of a large cast of real actors, detailed real-life sets, and a detailed, scripted storyline with dialog and sound effects.

Johnny Rock won't be available till summer, but Betson's redemption topper John Margold said many operators who had hung back when the system was first introduced, were pleased at this confirmation that Betson is firmly committed to the game. (Hint: the third software title for the Icat system is already in the early planning stages.)

Capcom kept the aisles crowded with *Street Fighter II,* the sequel to an earlier hit. The game was already out and earning great before the show, but many operators said it topped their ACME buying list. This two-player kit features superb oversized graphics. This type of game is what manufacturers point to when operators complain about too many punch-kick games; it proves that quality still earns (and sells) big. One operator termed it "without a doubt, the best investment at ACME." Dealers ordered accordingly, and the game debuted at #2 on our software chart last month. Look for a long, high ride on the chart to follow.

Data East USA offered two video game titles. *Cave Man Ninja* is a horizontal kit whose theme represented a sort of hybrid of two genres: "cute character" plus "punch-kick."

Data East also showed a big, four-player dedicated video called *Desert Assault,* the only game at ACME which was themed around the recent Gulf War. Players take the part of U.S. Army troops who combat enemy forces on land, sea and air in a desert setting. Obviously the game had to be very near production long before January's middle east conflict broke out. . . but Data East sensibly capitalized on the coincidence of timing with a title which calls to mind George Bush's name for the U.S. military operation — "Desert Storm."



Panorama from Atari is quite the attraction with its 3-monitor screens and driving realism. Costly, yes, and it will more or less be built to order according to a spokesperson.

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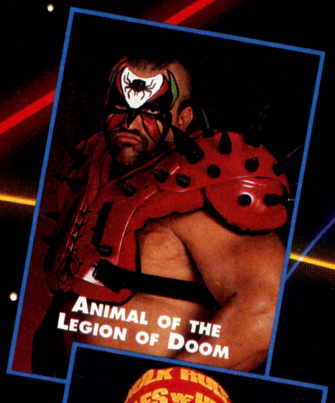

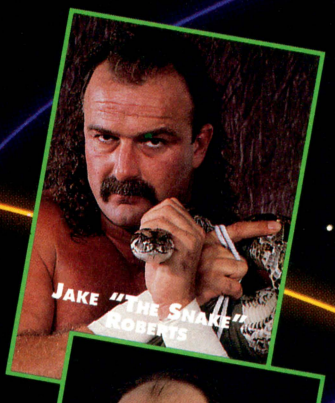





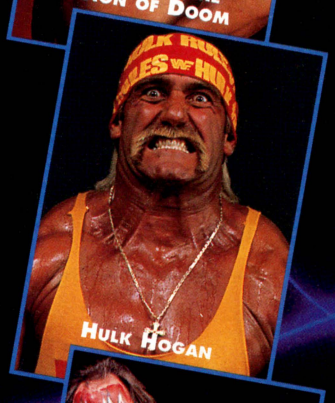

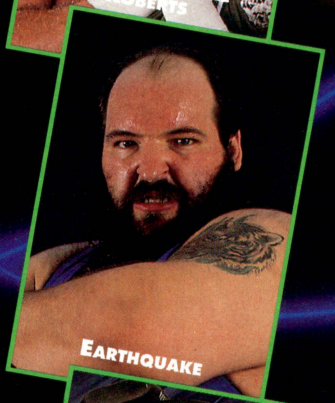



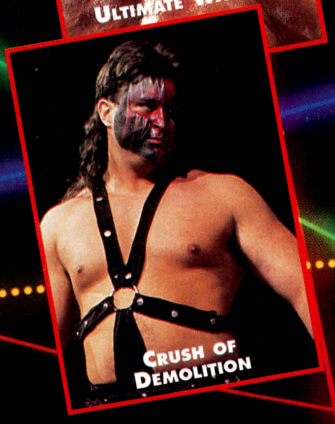

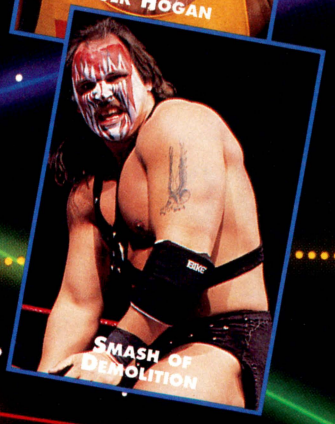

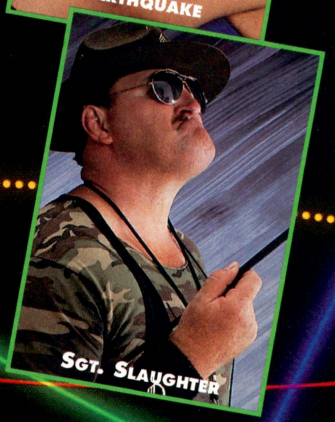

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Desert Assault from Data East was the only video themed after the Gulf war. From what we learned the game will ship dedicated only.

Irem America Corp. is now under the direction of Steve Blattspieler, with sales topper Drew Maniscalco at his side, since former prexy Frank Ballouz departed to run his Fabtek company full-time. Irem showed *Gun Force,* a two-player sci-fi shooting video that lets players join an international army to reclaim the Earth from invading aliens. Irem is noted for their quality graphics and this game is no exception. A six-stage battle plan lends depth to gameplay.

Kaneko had a new video at ACME called *Berlin Wall.* Not yet available, it's a two-player horizontal unit kit, featuring cute cartoon characters who break through blocks. It doesn't look anything like the real Berlin Wall, but the name is provocative enough to perk player interest by itself. ACME also gave many operators their first chance to see *Gals Panic,* the striptease block-busting game.

Konami drew crowds (and heavy dealer orders) with *The Simpsons.* This four-player dedicated video features Bart and his family in some punch-kick mayhem in various locations (home, school gym, street scene, etc.). We noticed that Bart turns into his alter ego, "Bart Man," at certain critical junctures of the action.

Strong test earnings from street



Irem's *Gun Force* scored reviews in the plus column. This 2-player simultaneous kit could be one of their best video game yet.

and arcade locations had built a powerhouse reputation for this game, long before the show began. One or two operators questioned whether this one would live up to Konami's earlier video smash *Turtles,* but even the doubters agreed it was "a must buy." As stated, dealers ordered very heavily indeed and we predict a nice, long, high-charting career for this piece. Whether your distributor has them in stock or not, put your order in and get at the head of the line. It's available now!

Leland used their prominent booth to good effect with two classy videos. *Indy Heat* is a dedicated three-player driving game, offering the same type of top-down racetrack perspective as their earlier hit *Off Road.* It has many elements that made that earlier game a hit, plus much more. Everybody loves a good driver and this is a fine addition to the genre.

Another top-down perspective gives you a bird's-eye view of the action in *Brute Force,* Leland's street fighting video kit, which can go into two- or three-player cabinets. By the way, both Leland videos will have a pricing option of 50¢ for one game, three games for a dollar.

Leprechaun, Inc. is a fairly new company on the industry's roster, but prexy Bill Cravens is a major coin-op figure and he had games at ACME to prove it. *Bowl-O-Rama* is a retrofit for *Capcom Bowling,* deve-

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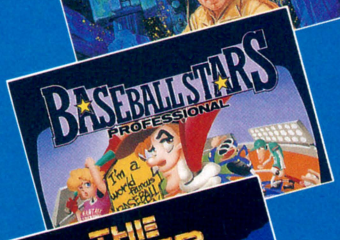















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loped by Exit Entertainment. It offers two additional games: "21" and "Flash." Previewed to dealers before the show, it won decent orders and should do well. *Welltris* is touted as "the successor to *Tetris*," since it is a puzzle strategy game that was designed by the same Russian creator as the earlier hit.

McO'River Inc. is a California-based video game development firm. At ACME they showed *Power Spikes*, which one experienced operator rated in his "top 10" video picks. Our understanding is that the game isn't in production yet, but if it's a powerhouse it will probably be marketed through Bill Cravens' Leprechaun outfit.

Merit Industries reintroduced their *SuperStar Pit Boss* (the one with the 9" screen) countertop video game system with video billboard and all-new questions (a key to countertop profitability). Much operator interest was evident in this winning product, and Merit enjoyed a well-deserved burst of fresh sales.

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MicroProse had the latest update of their flight simulator on the show floor. *F-15 version 2.2* featured a guaranteed no-failure "beginner's mode" that takes players through one complete mission to give them the idea. One step up, the "intermediate" round lets players fly the plane pretty much by themselves (which means you can crash if you're not careful), but shielded them from enemy fire. The advanced level demands full-bore, ultra-realistic flying skills and pits the player against a world of anti-aircraft fire and enemy planes. MicroProse confirmed that interest — and earnings — of the game shot upward as a result of favorable public sentiment in the Gulf War.

Upstairs in their suite, MicroProse was showing *B.O.T.S.*, a beautifully updated, full-color, full-sound rendering of the old *Battle Zone*-type of one-player sci-fi tank game. This may be offered as a chip change/kit update for *F-15*, execs said. Players drive around a Salvador Dali-esque landscape and shoot at oncoming enemy robots, planes, etc. which move in slow motion but still present plenty of challenge. Also shown in their suite was an impressive driving game, still in the early stages of development but offering a very realistic graphics interaction between your car and the road and setting. This is a company to watch!

Midway Mfg. Co. had two winners with *StrikeForce* (a breathtaking update on *Defender*) and *Trog*, a cute character game with caveman vs. dinosaurs theme, rendered in digitized images based on stop-motion animation. Both games won very positive reaction at the show (as, indeed, did all of the Williams/Bally-Midway line). See separate story in this issue for more details on their outstanding lineup of games.

Namco-America made ACME their first appearance under their own name at a major national trade show. (Previous Namco titles were licensed to other firms or presented by their former subsid, Atari). We loved the sense of depth, realistic graphics and shooting action in *Steel Gunner*, a dedicated anti-terrorist two-player gun game. Twin, linked, interactive monitors and twin sit-down player stations made *Final*



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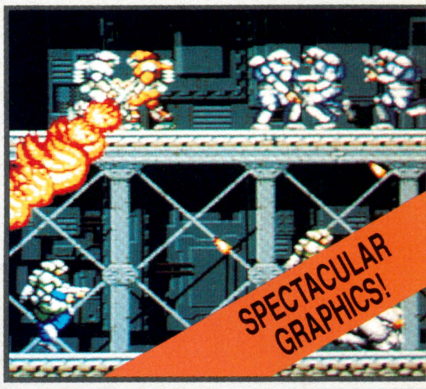

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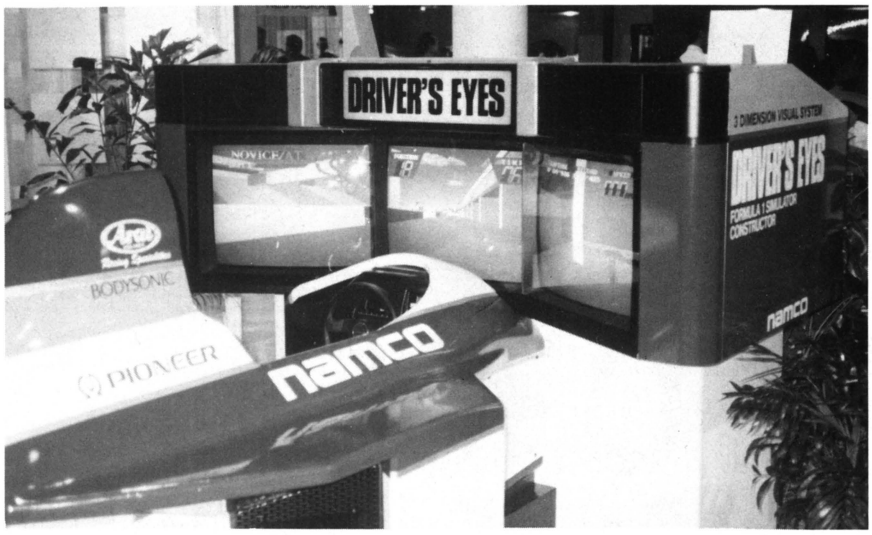

Namco, known for arcade attractions as well as regular videos, previewed *Driver's Eyes* . . . a 3-monitor driving experience, at the ACME. Pricey, but fascinating.

Lap 2 a distinctive addition to the driving category; it's already a major hit in Japan and is doing great in U.S. arcades. *Dragon Sabre* also won many mentions by operators as a quality piece. Namco also previewed *Driver's Eyes*, a three-monitor dedicated sitdown driving game featuring a panoramic view of the action. In all, ACME was a fine initial showing by this firm which is sure to become as important a presence on the U.S. manufacturing scene, as it has long been in Japan.

Nintendo of America bowed several new titles for their *PlayChoice* system cabinet, bringing them up to a total of 50. Best here were *Dr. Mario* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II*. Other titles were *Rad Racer II, Score, Mega Man III, World Cup* and *Solar Jet Man*.

Up in their suite, Nintendo previewed a 16-bit coin-op system which is still being tweaked; it will likely appear later this year. (So will a 16-bit home video system on the consumer market.) Nintendo's Al Stone told us that about 60 out of 180 game programmers at Nintendo are now devoted to working up coin-op titles, so look for a big launch when their new coin-op system is ready. Any operators who think *PlayChoice* needs more computing "beef" should be pleased by news of the forthcoming system, and the software personnel investment is good evidence of Nintendo's continued dedication to coin-op.

NSM is a name that hasn't appeared in our video lists before, but they did show a video game prototype called *Laser Target Shoot*, adapted from an Olympic training device made by the firm. It won't be available till 1992, said execs, but the version seen at ACME featured a heavy, very realistic, non-attached wooden rifle (emits light flashes); an on-screen bullseye-type target; and computer print-outs of the bullseye with hits for each player, after each round.



Romstar showed operators what their one-slot Neo•Geo kit games would look like in a wide variety of real-life converted kits. The conversions all looked brand new and dramatically made the point that any type of old cabinet — two-player, wide bib, etc. — can make a gleaming, handsome conversion to Neo•Geo. Romstar dealers did the conversion work and were credited with their labors via placards atop each cabinet. In all, it was a very no-nonense, operator-directed booth that really said "coin-op"!

Sega Enterprises had, without question, the "buzz game of the show." Called *Hologram Time Traveler*, it offered the startling and exciting effect of a full-color, full-motion, full-soundtrack "movie" of 4" high characters who were projected in space, hologram-style, atop

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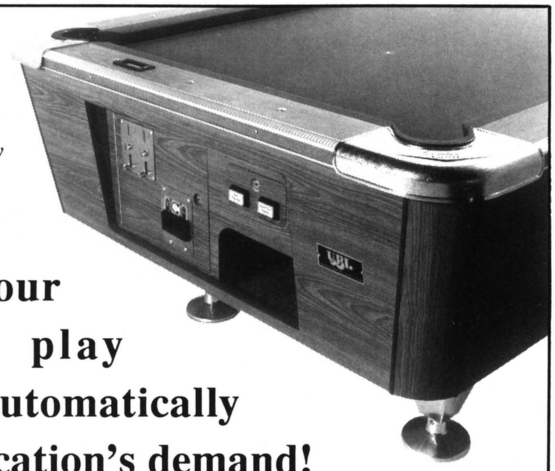
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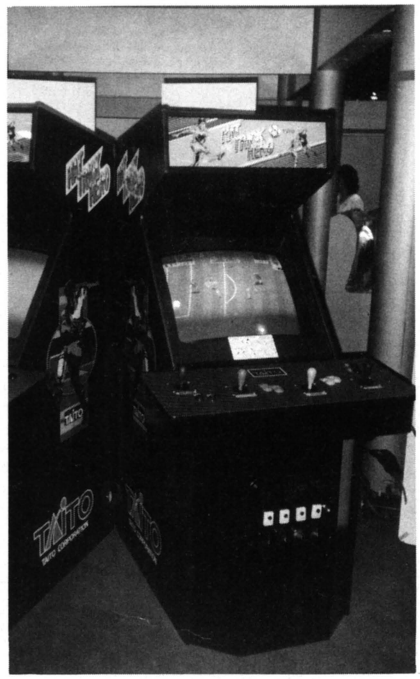
a glass playfield. Much more about this revolutionary game appears in a separate story.

Sega also had conventional video product of high quality, including *Rad Mobile,* the first game to use their new 32-bit system hardware. Available in upright or sitdown formats, this snazzy driver should rev to the front of the pack. Also, just in time for baseball season is a kit called *Clutch Hitter,* featuring a fan's delight of coaching and playing skills. You choose your lineup from the current real-life players and then, play ball! Lots of positive comment about this one was heard on the show floor.

SNK Corp. brought out five brand new titles for their popular Neo• Geo system: *Sengoku, Alpha Mission II, King of the Monsters, Burning Fight,* and *Ghost Pilots.* This brings the SNK "library" up to an impressive 20-plus titles.

Space Age Electronics debuted *Hard Head 2.* This kit is a sequel to the earlier title which certainly found its niche in the low-cost action category. Look for it exclusively at Space Age.

Strata Group, Inc. debuted *Peggle,* billed as a "redemption video." Sure, it vends tickets, but what we really like about this game is its combination of cute character and simple skill testing. "At ACME, distributors and operators saw with their own eyes that women and children love to play *Peggle,* which is more than you can say for many videos today," noted marketing pro John Cassiday. He's right — there was always a crowd around the game, and more than one competing game manufacturer openly admired this machine. That's the highest praise you can get. Strata also showed their sports-themed videos including the tennis game *Hot Shots,* which a visiting German dealer rated "one of the best two or three games on the market today." As predicted, this American company is building a fine track record on the strength of a core group of designers and marketing folks who truly love video.



Hat Trick Hero is brand new Taito horizontal kit offering ice hockey action for two-, three- and even four-player cabinets.

Taito had two new videos at ACME. *Ninja Kids* is a horizontal kit which can go into two-, three- or four-player cabinets. It combines cute characters with more violence than is usual for the genre, some observers felt. *Hat Trick Hero* was another horizontal kit which can go into two-, three- or four-player cabinets. It's themed around ice hockey

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and it plays fast with lots of action. ACME was the first chance many operators had to see *Growl*, featuring a timely pro-environment, stop the poachers theme.

Tecmo debuted *STG Strike Gunner*, a vertical kit which was positioned as another *Galaga*-type game. It began shipping in late April. Tecmo's *Strato Fighter* was in its second production run.

PINBALLS

Coin-op is full of pinball fans. In recent times, many of them have been heard to say at national trade shows: "Well, not much new in other categories . . . this was a pinball show!" But ACME '91 proved that good pinball games can more than hold their own against strong videos and other competition. All four companies showed some very fine games that received enthusiasm in their own right . . . games that will provide a spread of flipper excitement for every possible type of location and player.

Data East Pinball had a handsome and innovative unit in *Check Point*, a driving-themed flipper that invited players to turn the starter key, then try to "red line" their engine. Rumbling motors, squealing tires and dot-matrix backboard animation all put this one into the winner's circle with ease. By the way, the firm showed its follow-up pinball, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, in their suite.

Midway Mfg. Co. had its own rumbling engine excitement with *Harley-Davidson*, a licensed game that brings the open-road appeal of this American classic into the pinball parlor. We've heard that bikers have already made this unit an instant collector's item, and it's easy to see why. A natural marriage of theme and game, with the usual top-drawer Midway execution.

Premier Technology had an outstanding booth as prexy Gil Pollock, sales pro Dan Clarton and the entire gang were all outfitted in full cowboy garb. The purpose was to promote their rockin' new country-western pinball, *Cactus Jack's*, which is themed around a Western saloon with three singing cacti on the playfield! The green plastic cactus characters were situated at the top of the playfield, just in front of the backboard. The singing cacti "wore" cowboy hats and sunglasses, and they moved in time to the machine's music . . . using the same basic toy mechanism which has made Coke cans dance, flowers sway, etc. Simple, classic targets and fun shooting melded with eye-catching bright colors and a zany, lovable theme for a total effect you had to love.

Williams knocked one out of the park with *The Machine: Bride of Pinbot*. Designer Python Angelo created this wild number, whose object is to make a female robot come to life. "What player can resist making the fantasy become reality?" asked Marketing VP Joe Dillon. Apparently most players can't resist; Williams showed earnings graphs that had this game earning long-term on a par with *Fun House*. Dealers ordered accordingly; this game was Williams' top seller at ACME and may have been ACME's top seller, period. By the way, this is the first pin to have the firm's super-hard "Diamond Plate" playfield coating for its entire production run.

Information worth saving . . .

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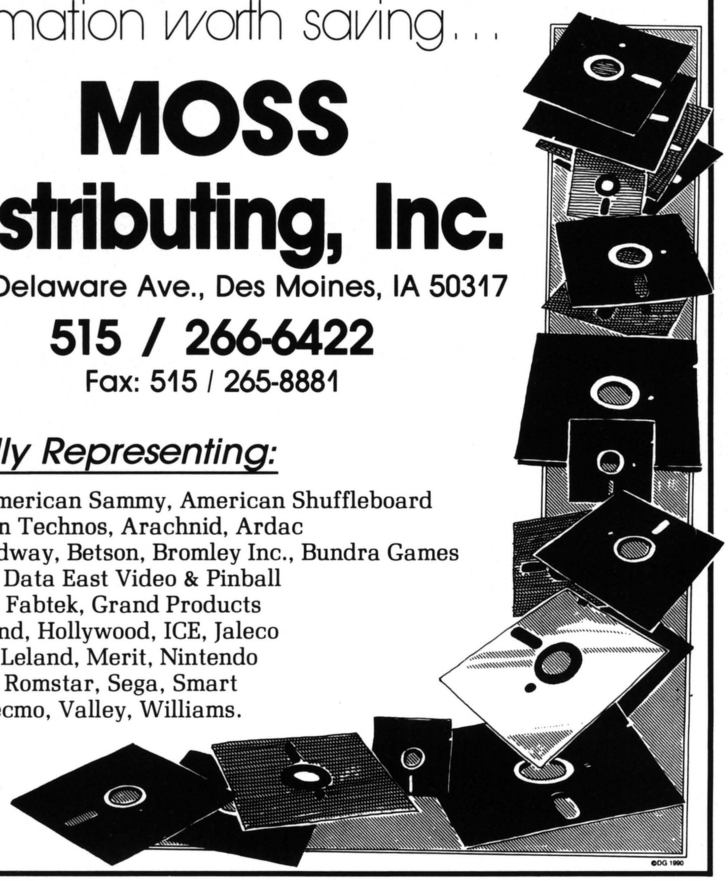

REDEMPTION AND GAMING

One major redemption pro said Western operators aren't as heavily into redemption as their counterparts in the South and East. Maybe not, but judging from strong attendance at the redemption seminar, they're getting ready to catch up. And we know one redemption firm which wrote $100,000 worth of business in a four-hour period on the second day of the show (they showed us their order book).

As for gaming, the video lottery seminar drew plenty of interested operators and many tradesters continue to see this category as their favorite hope for the future . . . al-

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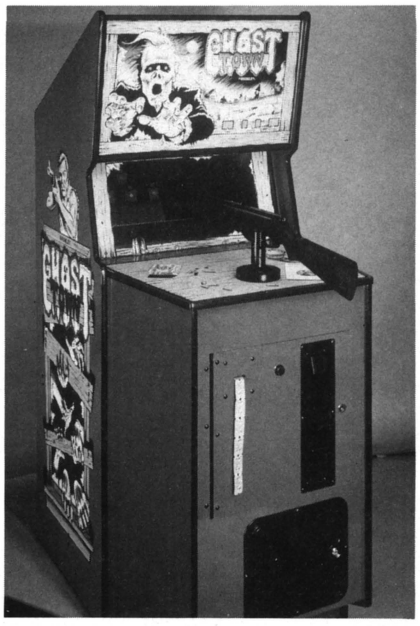
though the realization is filtering through that it will be a long, hard fight to legalize it in many states. Card-themed games didn't seem as overwhelming at ACME as at some previous shows, either.

Bay-Tek was still going strong with two rolldowns, *Clown Rolldown* and the baseball-themed *Fielder's Choice*. Over at **Bob's Space Racers,** street operators saw a nifty "driving rolldown" game called *Sidewinder*, plus an updated version of the classic *Whac-A-Mole* featuring funny new sounds and voices.

Betson Enterprises maintained their impressive presence as a redemption leader with a large booth which was filled with their full line of redemption items — everything from the new cover-the-spot game *Magic Circle*, to amusement-only card-themed items like their prototype *Quick Draw*, featuring flip cards. Betson's Neal Rosenberg described this one as "a totally, 100% skill poker game which is strictly for the redemption market." Another prototype on display was a six-player *Rock 'n' Roll* pusher game with a 1950s jukebox theme. This comes from Crompton; look for the multiple player versions to be available June 1.



Bromley, Inc. may have had the "hit of the redemption market" at ACME. It's an electromechanical shooting game in an upright cabinet, called *Ghost Town*. This classic theme harks back to beloved similar units from the 1950s and many, many showgoers told us it was one of their favorites in Las Vegas. Way to go, Lauran Bromley! Come to think of it, every show she's exhibited at, people mentioned her game as one of their favorites. Lauran has got big ideas and we hope this one is a big success for her.

Coastal Amusement Distributors strengthened their claim to fame as "redemption specialists" with an attractive foursome of new redemption games. *Riverboat* is a one-player skill pusher that will put you right back into those lazy days on the Mississippi. *Merlin's Magic* is a six-player skill pusher in a unique hexagonal cabinet, while *Sheriff Shoota* is a gun game allowing the player to shoot ping pong balls at five holes which light up at random. Finally, *Crazy Clown* is a pachinko-style game with steering wheel and driver's seat. Loads of fun!

Coin Concepts did great business with their current spread of redemption items. Highlighted were three new titles: *Luigi's Corner* was a prototype coin shooter game, themed around two dolls inside a large glass cabinet: a organ-grinder and his monkey. Object is to shoot the coins into various baskets or targets. *Cat 'n' Mouse* was an attractive sit-down skill-stop game in a bright red, molded plastic cabinet. The player hits buttons, trying to light up the proper "cat" symbol underneath one of many "mouse" symbols. Fast and fun! Finally, *Prize Lines Prize Bingo* was an upright, one-player, hi-tech bingo game with lots of bells and whistles. A game player's delight.

Data East USA came on strong in the redemption area once again with the revised version of *Cosmo Gangs*, an irresistibly silly shooting game with a cartoon-alien theme. They also showed their standby animal-whacker, *Wacky Gator*.

Doyle & Associates, as promised, came out with their new *Dump the Ump*. We played it and it is a fun game, harking back to the classic carnival piece. You throw a ball to knock down little furry targets with faces, which are arranged in three tiers. The ticket-vending unit is very tall, but doesn't require a great deal



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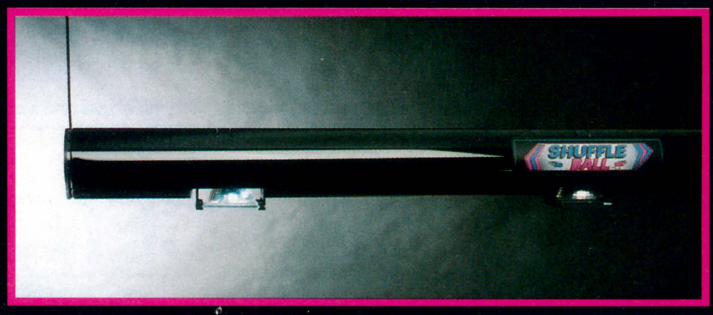

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of floor space. It's just the latest in a handsome series of redemption titles from this market leader. Don't forget Doyle's basketballs, pitching and batting cages while you're at it.

Exidy updated their four-player *Camp Town Races* game, this time pitching the action around truck racing over muddy hills. It's called *4x4* and won much favorable comment. Competition between players will make this one a fun addition to any redemption area.



Exidy founder Pete Kauffman demo's *4x4.* Toss balls into top slots and hope they drop into best pockets to move the cars along.

Grayhound Electronics had a selection of cranes and video pokers as usual, but the spotlight was on their new redemption piece, a very inventive hockey cage called *Shot Hockey* that lets the player use a hockey stick to slap a puck at the target. Targets were five open holes in the back, each scored differently. If the hole lit up before you sent the puck through it, you get bonus points. Now, that's our idea of fun!

ICE is doing so well with *Putting Challenge,* said prexy Ralph Coppola, that they chose not to "upstage" it with anything new. We can see why: players, locations and operators all love this skillful golf piece with the variable playfield. ICE also showed their classic *Super Chexx* and *Super Kixx* sports-themed games.

Leisure Entertainment Ltd. had a booth manned by Jed Forman, who was very excited about the potential of his *Lucky Number* numbers-picking video game (helps players enter the lottery). Of course, they continue to market their line of bill acceptors.

Leprechaun had a winner in their redemption novelty, *Pot 'o' Gold,* which lets the player guide a yellow golfball through a transparent plastic cylinder which is pockmarked with exit holes, like the barrel of a machine gun. The idea is to angle the tube to give the ball some momentum, while turning the tube to make the ball avoid the holes and get as far down the tube as possible before it drops out. Ticket vender is included. "This will be a slam-dunk," predicts Leprechaun prexy Bill Cravens. We agree!

Meltec kept the faith with *Shoot Out,* the game that you have to grin at. After all, it grins at you! With the big clown teeth as targets, players get to sit down and shoot small rubber balls out of a mini-cannon. Fierce ticket-vending fun!

Merit Industries showed a touch-screen video lottery game, with a multiple program for the legal mar-

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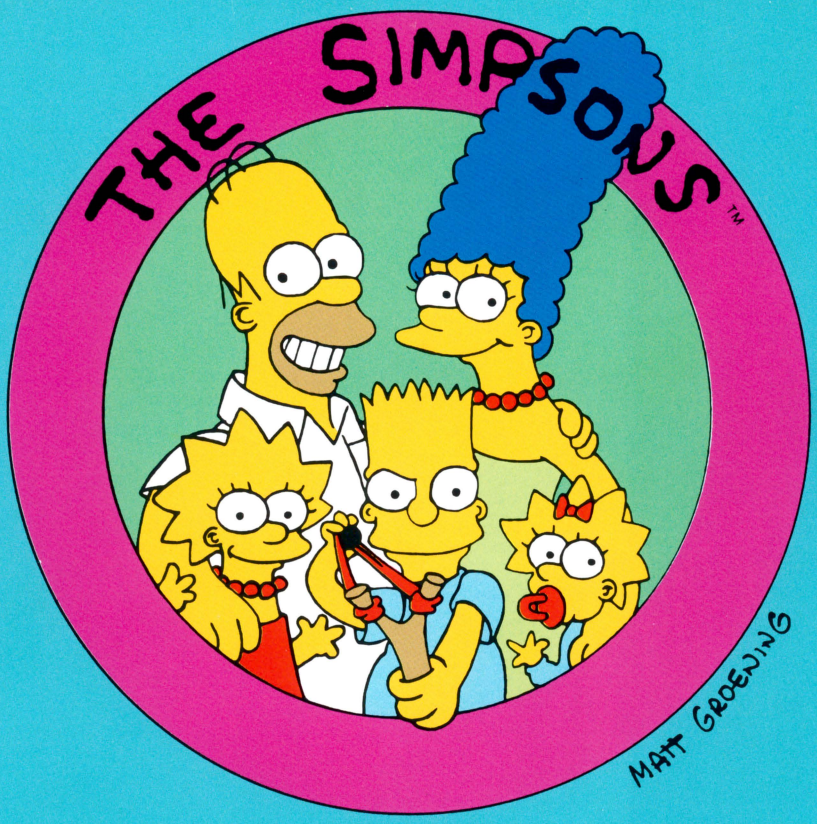

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Each family member has his own special attack technique. Bart uses his trusty skateboard, Lisa whips the enemies with her jumprope, Marge cleans up the hooligans with her vacuum, and Homer's arms & legs are his lethal weapons. Also, two family members can join together for a team attack. All through the game, the Simpsons fearlessly battle the evil hoods. Many of the enemies are in disguise, so expect the unexpected!

The fun never stops in **The Simpsons.** The game takes the family through different areas of their home town, including Downtown Springfield, Krustyland, the ghoulish Springfield Discount Cemetary, Moe's Tavern, scenic Springfield Butte, Dreamland, Channel 6, and Homer's place of employment, the Nuclear Power Plant.

The Simpsons packs all the action and humor of the T.V. show into a game that is sure to be a hit with players of all ages. Can our heroes rescue Maggie and reunite the family? Stay tuned to **The Simpsons!**

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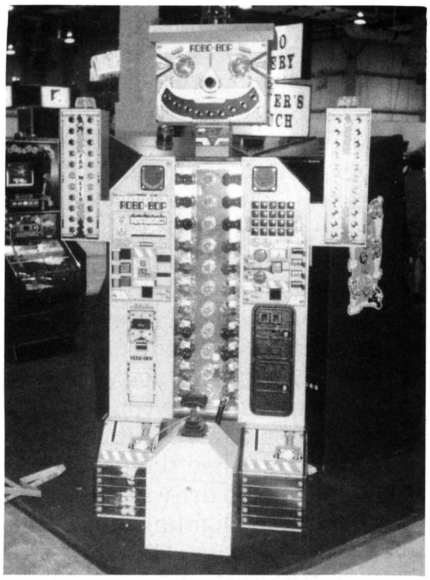

The SMS *Robo Bob* is a carny-styled striker with about a million lights. It is visually a spectacular redemption piece.

ket. This unit featured keno, blackjack, eight-liners and three different types of poker. The benefit of having one, two or six different games is that it's like having many games on location (remember, most legal states limit the number of machines per location).

Skee Ball highlighted *Skee Toss B.C.,* which lets youngsters toss (rather than roll) small rubber balls at a classic skee alley type target grid. It vends redemption tickets, of course.

Smart displayed two fine new products. *Super Pro Quarterback* is billed as "the first redemption football-passing game that features a moving target." The player must decide whether to go for a field goal, or to try to hit the receiver for more points. Two players may take turns. Also displayed was *Pro Block-A-Shot,* an electromechanical, two-player (simultaneous competition) game. Players manipulate basketball characters on the playfield, trying to gain control of the ball, pass, shoot, score, and block opponents from making baskets. "A hi-tech update of an arcade classic," said company prexy Gordon Smart. Don't forget the firm's line of basketball toss games, rotary merchandisers and other ticket-vending units.

SMS showed their new *Players' Touch* AWP machine with touch-screen software, adapted for the British market (Harry Levy is the distributor there). They also showed a new English-made AWP machine, plus a new redemption piece called *Robo Bob,* which is a colorful sci-fi themed variation on the old carnival "striker" style strength-tester. "With all the lights, bells and whistles, that game looked like an entire expo all wrapped up in one machine!" admired one tradester.

Taito made a splashy entrance into the redemption field with three games: a dedicated novelty video called *SuperSonic Blastman,* which invited players to don bright red boxing gloves (tied to the game), then to punch a padded red target bag, situated a couple of feet in front of the video screen. Tough-guy characters on the video screen react to the blows. Men in the trade were clearly fascinated by this novelty — they couldn't stay away from those gloves! A series of scenes takes you through progressive levels of difficulty. It makes one great attraction for the "right" location, including "yahoo" bars.

On the cute side of the redemption market, Dinoblast was a fun electromechanical number; players shoot rubber balls. *Rock 'N' Mole* was a campy, rock music themed animal-whacker. *UFO Mogra* was a cute sci-fi animal-whacker.

VariTech: This innovative firm showed three cute one-player reaction-tester games in lowboy-type cabinets, all with ticket dispensers.



VariTech's cute little *BeeWare* is a kiddie-sized reaction game using three light buttons in a bee at a picnic theme.

Treasure Hunt is available now and features a treasure chest-style cabinet and pirate theme; *Space Shapes* ships in late April and sports UFO artwork; *BeeWare* is themed on bees at a picnic and is available now.

In these games, players see a certain character or shape appear on the LED screen or light up on the playfield, then they must hit the corresponding button as fast as possible. Play speeds up as the player gets better (this feature is operator-adjustable). Art was nicely done and Vari-Tech has rendered three



The classic animal-whacker got a modern facelift with Taito's *UFO Mogura's* sci-fi theme.

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enjoyable variations on the classic reaction-test game.

Also from Vari-Tech at ACME *was B.C. Bush*, a two-player animal-whacker with prehistoric theme and art on its tall, lighted backboard. Rather than having the monkey's heads pop up from holes, the firm installed light-up plastic rings around their heads on the playfield. When a ring lights up, you hit the monkey with a big, soft hammer. Digital sound, verbal instructions and music add to the fun. As you whack the animals, two cavemen on the backboard ascend to rescue a pretty cavewoman; when they reach the top, the volcano drawing "erupts" via backboard lighting and sound.

SPORTS GAMES AND NOVELTIES

Adastra showed their classic fold-up basketball game *Hoops*, which can be ready for transport to a new location in minutes. The big craze for basketball games may be over, but we always knew this unit was one of the "keepers"... so keep it in mind, when you need to replace your current unit.

Alter Enterprises had their classic line-up of radio controlled cars and boats. For surprisingly little floor space, the arcade operator can add a real attraction to his place with Alter's long-lasting quality units.

American Shuffleboard brought back the "bumpa table," also known as rebound pool. This is a small pool table with bumpers in the center of the slate. The firm has put this game back on the production line, hoping the new generation of players will rediscover what the old generation had so much fun with 30 years ago.

Arachnid was grinning about *Galaxy Darts*, the new computer-smart dart game that does automatic league stats and offers a "top gun" feature for one-on-one, non-league competition. Soon, this innovative unit will allow operators to download player and league stats directly into their office computer, via modem. Another giant leap forward by this industry leader. Dedicated dart operators had just one word to say to the A Team: "Thanks."

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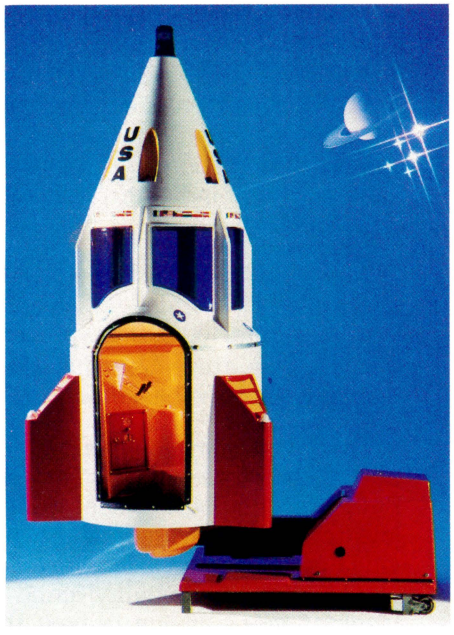

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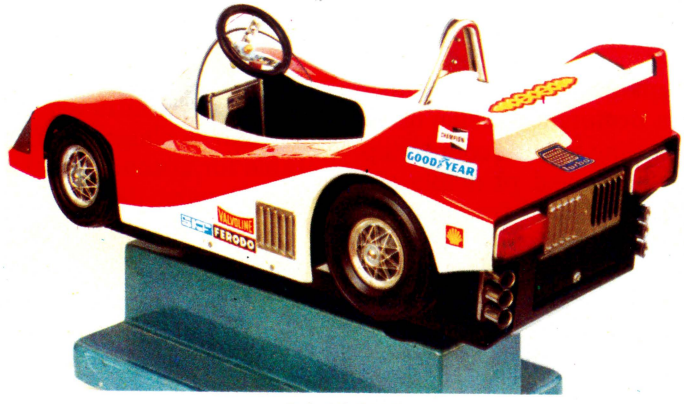

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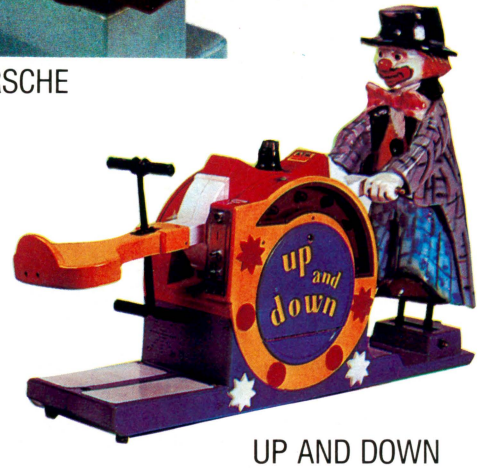
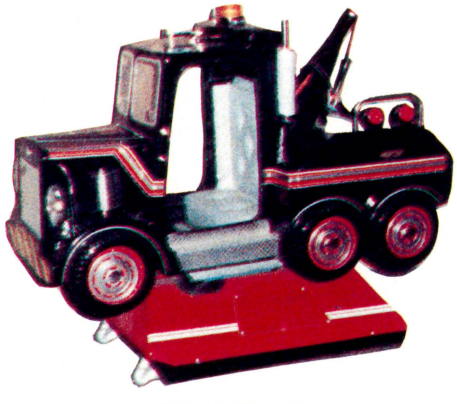


UP AND DOWN



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Bundra Games Corp. displayed a grip-tester called *Crusher* that's ideal for tavern locations: the game lets players squeeze the grip with right or left hand, but the grip itself is painted and shaped like a beer can. The more strength the player uses, the higher his score. Operators responded positively to this one, which becomes available in mid-June. Frank and Joey Bundra also showed a prototype version of *Ski Mania*, a skiing-themed countertop. This one borrowed principle elements from the old "booze barometer" — i.e., you have to move the lever down through a slalom course, without touching the sides. For production later this year.

Capcom finally got a chance to show off the full-size *Bowlingo* dual bowling lanes. It's available in regulation length and in shorter sizes. This coin-op attraction proved it's worth every foot of space in the right location.

Design Plus demo'd a new game called *Roll-R-Ball*. It's a mini-shuffleboard which looks just right for street locations (think bars and taverns). Players slide tiny steel pucks to the end of the slick wooden playfield for points; competing players can knock the first pucks out of the scoring area. Also displayed was their popular *Bozo Basketball*.

Dynamo Corp.: this Texas-based firm showed off their handsome *Deluxe Air Hockey* with overhead LED scoring and new overhead lighting unit. A classy oak-finished pool table for upscale locations is a big new Dynamo item, along with their other table games and universal cabinets.

Electro Games Industries: a mini-shuffle alley was shown by this Canadian firm. It's called *Shuffle Ball* and should do very well in taverns. Who can resist sliding that small metal puck down the shiny alley?

Mayoni Enterprises had a fine display, featuring their handsome line of venders and impulse machines. Their newest dual venders are the Canadian Mountie-style *Sergeant Major* and the sci-fi robot *Zord*.

Johnston Products displayed their *Kick 'N' Catch*, an intriguing little staple which just keeps chugging along. Why? Because it's fun!

Merit Industries showed their *Scorpion* wall-mount dart game, along with their *Pub Time Supreme Kit* which enables operators to update older games with the newest technology for four player cricket and a new "solo challenger" feature. Merit also featured their new *II + 2* dart game with new standard options (automatic player change, "missed dart" indicator, and solo challenge).

Nevis Inc. displayed a neat little novelty called *Thumb B-Ball*, a quirky little countertop that has players throw a miniature ball the same way they throw a basketball.

Quicksilver Development Co. displayed *Awesome* and *High Tension*. Both are solid-state, mechanical-joystick, ball-activated games. No video monitor is involved; instead, you manipulate a ball around a track or maze, trying to beat the

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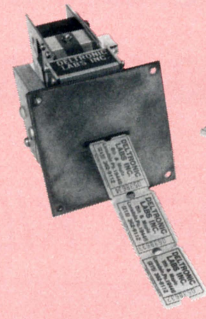
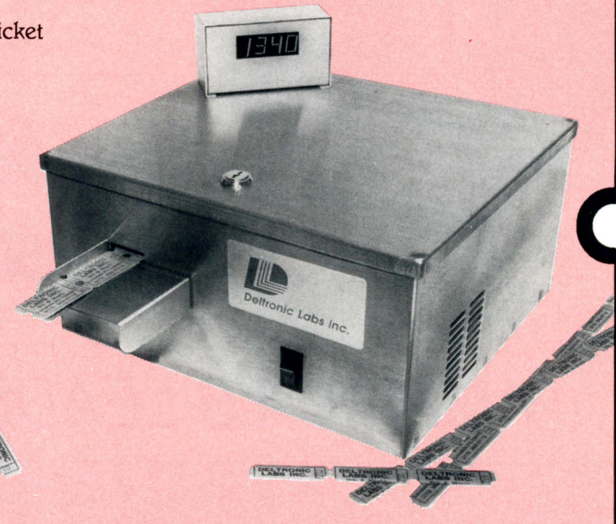


Redemption Machine

"The redemption 'hit of the show' was the 'Ticket Eater' by Deltronic Labs."
John Margold, *Play Meter* 12/90



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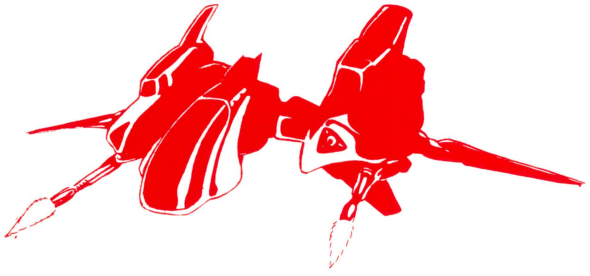

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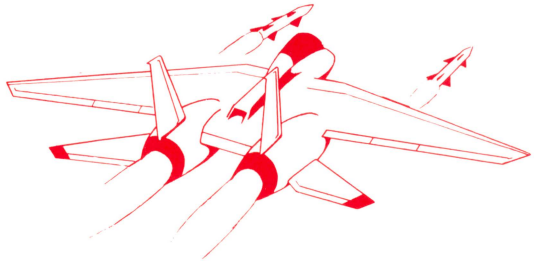

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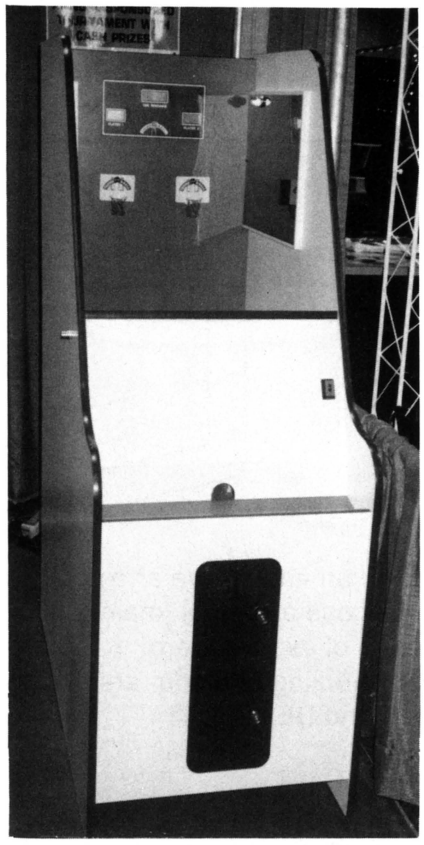

Nevis' *Thumb B Ball* (B for "basketball") brings new meaning to smaller versions of this sport. The balls are tossed into tiny baskets.

clock. The company describes this as a "system which gives operators a chance to change from one game to the other in less than an hour." Future boards are coming to provide updates for this system. Good sound and a ticket-vending mechanism round out the product. "It's a sweet little unit and we had excellent response from arcades and mini-parks," noted the firm.

Skill Games demo'd *Showdown*, a two-player novelty that answers the question, "Who's the fastest gun in the West?" (Or in whatever location you operate in.) This is a classic theme and it's sure fun to play over and over, as you try to better your time (shown in split seconds via the clock display) and beat the other guy to the draw.

Tornado Table Soccer had a new man and a new ball, made of durable materials which one operator said could really help the soccer market with more strength and longer life.

Valley Recreation Products displayed their usual superb line of pool and dart games. Quality throughout from this industry leader . . . always one of the first names on operators' lips, particularly in these times of "back to basics" tavern games and long-term investments. Valley also ran their popular dart finals in a Vegas hotel, while ACME was in progress!



Williams Electronics bowed a new, short-version shuffle alley called the *Mini Shuffle Inn*. It should

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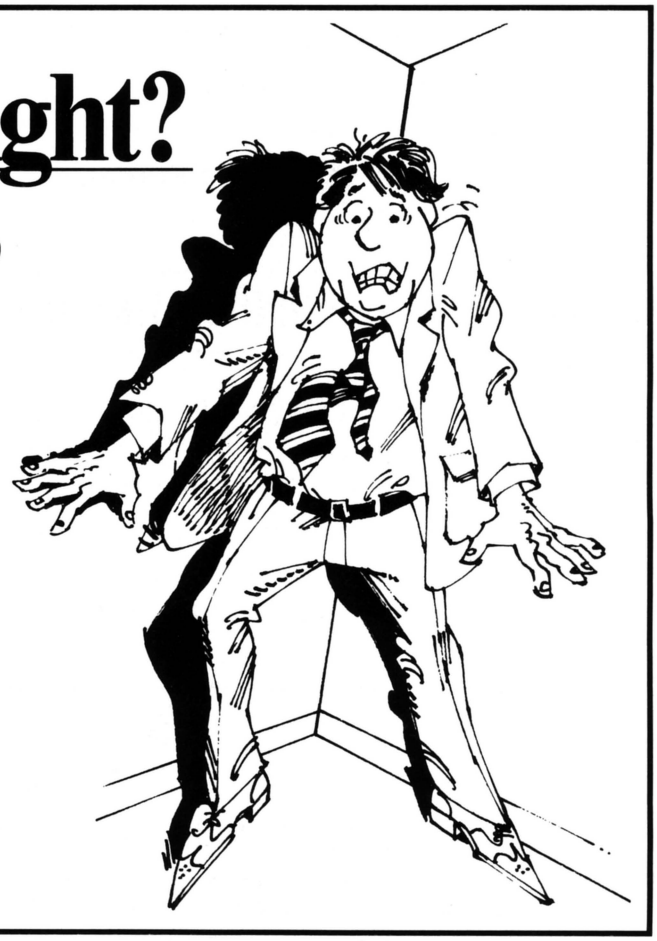

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allow operators to place this classic tavern games into cramped or limited-space locations which previously couldn't quite fit a shuffle before. Nice!

By the way, a wide variety of automatic photo booths was also displayed at ACME. They included standard snapshot booths, but some also offered selectable backgrounds (computer-generated or otherwise) from firms such as Auto Photo Systems, Foto Fantasy Inc., PVI Inc., Practically Perfect (People Postcards), and one from Nolan Bushnell at the Data East booth. Some operators in Southern California tell us these machines are earning big money in high-traffic locations . . . this trend may account for the surprising proliferation of this type of equipment at ACME.

MUSIC

Only one major new jukebox model debuted at ACME, but it was a beaut. Beyond that, some interesting peripherals and options made it crystal-clear that CD music is still hopping nicely.



Rowe's Joel Friedman demo's their new hand-held jukebox remote controller. Authorized location personnel can button-control volume, select tunes, etc. on this helpful device.

Aeries International/CD Jukebox Kit Co. got their first chance to show off their CD jukebox conversion kit to quite a few operators. It's a simple master computer, control panel and 12 CD-disc mechanism. You can buy and install multiple mechs to work off the same CPU. The whole magilla is low cost and can be installed inside a standard 45 vinyl juke, or inside any other container you wish . . . they showed one unit installed in a wooden barrel!

Digital Disc Automation is a name that's more familiar to British tradesters than to us Yanks. But the midwest's Sunshine Distributing has opened a U.S. subsid of this English firm, offering DDA's CD player mech in a conversion kit for vinyl jukeboxes. Called *DJ 2000,* its mech uses two Philips disc players for instant changeover, and can handle from one to 100 CDs. The control panel is already done for you, so execs said the product is inexpensive and easier to install than most video kits. Presently you can convert some old Rock-Olas (490 units and up), and many Rowes (482 units and up). A system which is compatible with other makes will be forthcoming.

Interest from showgoers in both CD conversion kits was strong, since this product fills an obvious niche.

NSM-America had prototype of new artwork for *Fire* CD wallbox, as a teaser for a total redesign of all their music product, promised to come this fall. By the way, NSM is also going into the consumer business with a multiple CD player for the home.

Rock-Ola, Pioneer and **Seeburg** showed their line-ups of products which were out before the show.

Rowe International was talking up their new management system, a portable unit which plugs into each juke, then prints out data on programming, play popularity, etc. Rowe also showed off their remote control which controls volume, selection, etc. and enables locations to run free play, with no money transaction. A simple CPU installation inside the jukebox can be added to *any* Rowe CD unit or model to create this capacity, said the firm's Music VP Joel Friedman.

Wurlitzer proudly unveiled a new CD jukebox which offered a combination of reliable, hi-quality technology with a nostalgia-style cabinet design. Sensational! Dealers loved it and so did we!

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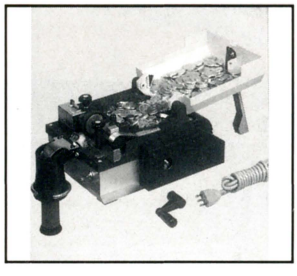

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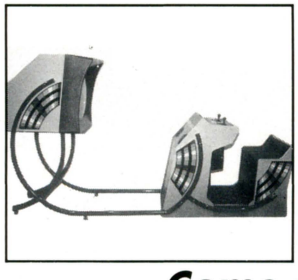

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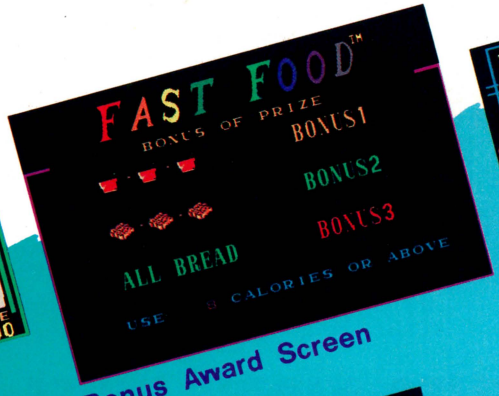
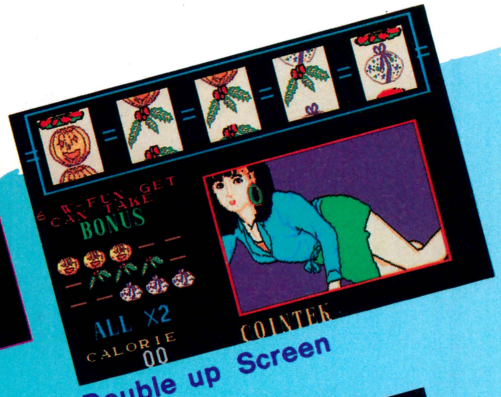


Bonus Award Screen

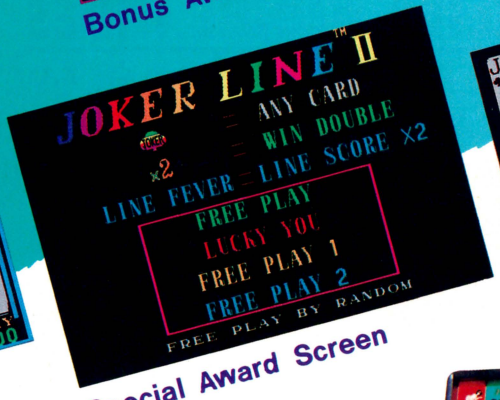


Double up Screen

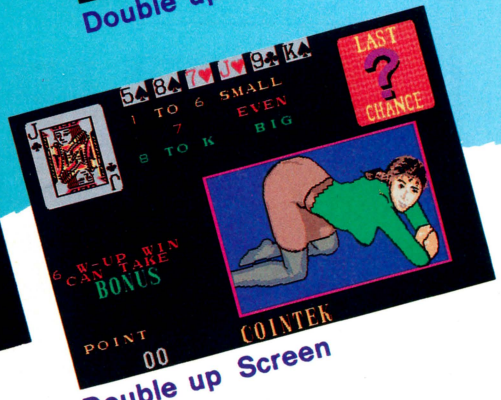
JOKER LINE II



Main game Screen



Special Award Screen



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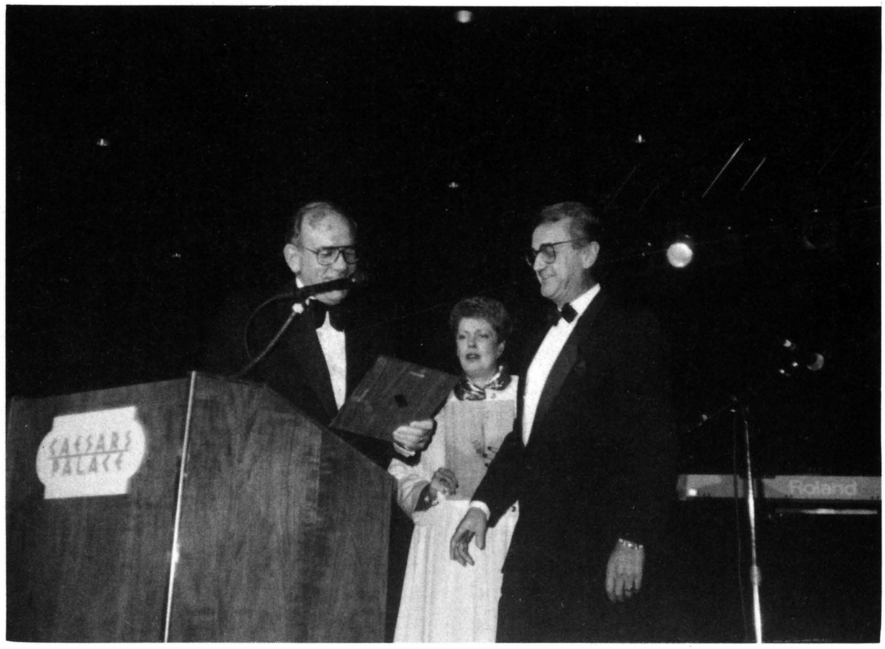
GALANTE & DUNIS HONORED BY THEIR PEERS

so are Atari and C.A. Robinson & Company

ACME '91 sparkled with social events. In the industry's "work hard, play hard" philosophy, hours spent inspecting equipment and chatting with sales reps on the show floor were complemented by after-hours relaxation. The highpoint of this and every ACME show is the AAMCF banquet and this year's was once again a winner . . . a dancing drum-pounder (Endless Summer Band) on one hand, a tear-jerker on the other as industry people rose in tribute to northwest distributors Ray Galante and his late friend Lou Dunis.

Partners in Music-Vend and Dunis Distributing (Seattle and Portland respectively), Galante and Dunis had been together for many years. Just after their nomination as guests of honor for this banquet was announced, Dunis (who was ill for a long time) passed away. This lent enormous poignancy to the banquet, for reasons all too obvious.

The banquet took place at the glamorous Caesar's Palace where members of both the Galante and Dunis families were ushered into the hall by "Roman Legionnaires" in costume. After a busy cocktail "antipasto," the seated guests (whose paid ticket receipts went in part for the charity selected by the honorees) were treatd to a fine meal. Then the formalities began.



Minneapolis distributor Steve Lieberman (left) presents the AAMCF plaque to Ray Galante while Lou Dunis's daughter Nancy holds the other given for her late father. During introductory speech, Lieberman touched on the "special chemistry" between the two northeast dealers.

Minneapolis distributor Steve Lieberman told the audience the history of Ray and Lou and about their unique business relationship. "They had a special chemistry between them," Steve said. He then called the honorees to the stage and presented the plaques. Nancy Dunis, the late dealer's daughter, said: "My entire family would like to thank you for loving Lou."

Ray Galante stepped to the microphone and said: "I'm very flattered and I know Lou is if he's watching. I miss him, you know, and I find it very hard to speak of him in the past tense. I thank him for his years of helpful advice and I also thank my wife Jeanette who's come down this road with me with her support and her smile," he added.

Bill Cravens, who was in charge of the foundation dinner as well as the exposition itself, advised that around $90,000 has been raised for the Galante/Dunis Endowment charity (and also said he's continuing to push that number over the $100K mark . . . son Todd is helping by sell-



Once again, the C.A. Robinson people of Los Angeles & San Francisco were named AAMA's Distributor of the Year. Mounting Caesar's stage to accept it from AAMA prexy Gil Pollock (left) are Adrea, Leah, Sandy and Ira Bettelman of this well-recognized California dealership.

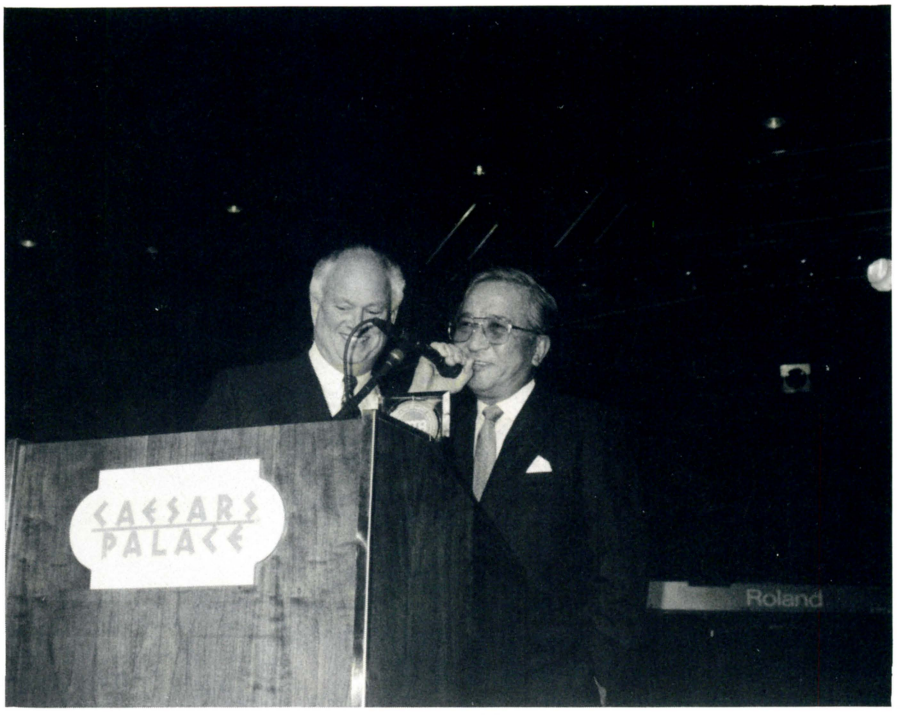
ing a special college fraternity calendar toward that end). Was there any downer to the evening? Just that Lou wasn't there to accept his honors. Otherwise, it was a special evening, made even more so by two extra honors AAMA passed out.

SPECIAL PLAQUES

Once again, Atari Games received AAMA's award as Manufacturer of the year, and once again, so did C.A. Robinson & Co. being voted Distributor of the Year. Plaques, presented by AAMA's President Gil Pollock, were handed respective winners on stage, after which the recipients made "thank you" speeches.

The very fact that both Atari and C.A. have been repeat winners gives great credence to the worth of the AAMA awards (i.e. there is no political footballing). The other fact that banquet honorees have been the likes of Sam Stern, Mike Kogan and Bert Betti gives that charitable honor an extra helping of pride.

This was a fine night in coinland and we'd like to give our own little "award"... our thanks to the banquet organizers for putting up a splendid evening. (In true "industry" talk, one of those organizers told us: "Of course the food was good... the manager of Caesar's was in the audience!") You can't beat honesty, and you can never beat the emotion these affairs wring from the heart.



Another year and another plaque for being AAMA's Manufacturer of the Year. Atari's chief Hide Nakajima and Shane Breaks are all smiles as they individually thank the membership for the high honor. Clearly, this "mother of the video game" continues to entice player patronage.

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cover story

IT'S ARRIVED! KONAMI SHIPS SIMPSONS VIDEO

After successfully previewing *The Simpsons* at ACME (where they wrote thousands of dealers orders), Konami, Inc. began shipping this awaited interactive upright just about a week before this issue arrived. And with operators having placed advanced orders with their dealers, the game should begin to hit initial locations within a week from now.

As with their *Turtles* smash hit, *The Simpsons* was designed at Konami's Japanese engineering plant. It's being built at both Electronic Sounds in Chicago and at Dynamo in Texas (although Electronic will be the primary builder). The cabinet features a wide apron to accommodate up to four players. Each wields a joystick (8-way) plus one attack and one jump button.

Konami has afforded operators a very flexible play-pricing system. For example, operators can set the game at 25¢ to start, 25¢ to continue, 50¢ start/25¢ continue and even 50¢ start/50¢ continue. There's a buy-in feature as well. (They did this flexible system in response to some operator requests during the *Turtles* period.)

The game is only available in dedicated form here and in Europe (where Atari/Ireland's plant will be among those building it for that market). The Japanese picture was still being decided at this writing (it may be dedicated there as well). However, if it is kitted, it will not be released into the Japanese market until the other territories get a good stretch of lead time.

GAME PLAY

Yes, Simpsons fans, all those animated madmen (and madwomen) seen on the weekly TV show are creating havoc on this video game. Game play involves a story which begins when Homer, Bart and the



dedicated 4-player puts "that family" on game screen

others witness a robbery. Naturally, Homer bumps into the thieves and little Maggie swallows a diamond they're trying to rip off. So, the meanies capture poor Maggie and a rescue mission follows.

Each Simpson has his or her own attack technique controlled by the players. For example, Lisa used the jump rope, Marge her vacuum cleaner, Homer does karate stuff and Bart employs his famous skateboard. Two family members can join up for one attack team as they battle the criminals.

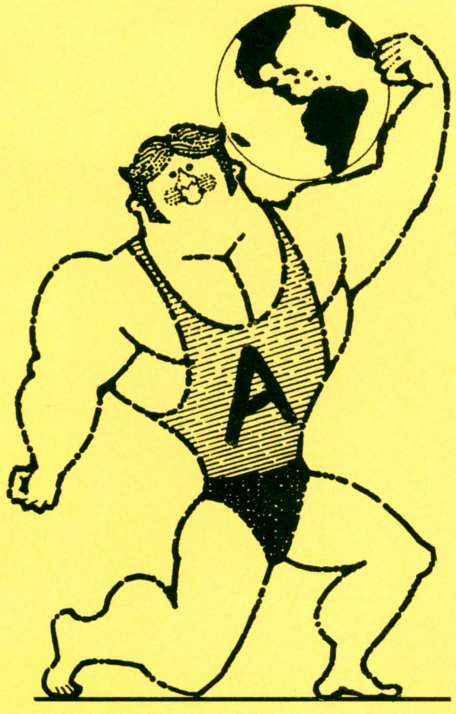
The setting is the Simpsons' home town of Springfield and many of the famous town scenes are replicated on the game (like Krustyland, Moe's Tavern, the Cemetary and certainly Homer's Nuclear Power Plant).

The whole idea is to rescue Maggie and reunite the family in a kick, punch, jump, vacuum, lasso story adventure requiring the video game player's talents. "It's got the magic of *Turtles* and the recognition value of America's favorite animated family," enthused Konami's USA chief Steve Kaufman. Test collection reports were distributed at ACME and the numbers shown were not only super but consistent.

If marketing runs as many expect it will, it would be wise for operators to place orders now if they haven't already done so. This could likely be a "demand game" (i.e. a waiting list). Without doubt, it's a clear font-runner for an industry that seems once again on the attack.



During the ACME show, Konami was awarded two sales plaques by AAMA, one for *Turtles*, the other for *Aliens*. Naturally, they're hoping for one on *The Simpsons* at next year's San Antonio ACME outing. In the photo (left to right): Sales Manager Frank Pellegrini, prexy Steve Kaufman (holding the awards) and salesman Mike Kubin (tradester Bernie Stolar and Malcolm Steinberg toast their success from behind).



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INCREASING PLAY PRICING

by Debbie Anderson

With 25¢ play considered increasingly archaic by the industry, more and more attention is focused on raising play pricing. Fear that the average player won't find it worthwhile to put more than a quarter in the coin box holds many back. Operators would rather stick with the tried and true than attempt a loss at an untested method.

But what about those who have tried it and been successful? Is there proof that there is life after quarter play? According to Frank Seninsky, Bill Beckham, Gil Pollock and Bill Cravens, many machines can survive an increase in play pricing — depending on a few variables.

"I could go on and on where the numbers prove that an increase in play pricing works," said noted operator (and *RePlay* columnist) Frank Seninsky. "I tried three for a dollar play in gameroom locations at colleges and bowling alleys and many brought a 50% increase in business. In one college location where 25¢ play was used, I tested 10 *Mad Dog McCree's* on one dollar with dollar buy-in and found that my location collections rose from $395.75 to $834.25.

"This can be done with pinballs also," Seninsky continued. "In a college location with pin leagues, I put all pins on 50¢ play. My revenues shot up, and the leagues practiced just as much as before."

Frank was quick to point out the increase works best in a closed environment (where the competing location is not right across the street) with games utilizing the newer technology. "The CD jukebox works on three for a dollar because the public perceives it as special and as worth spending extra money on," he explained. "The same thing happens with leagues and if new equipment is used. If the public sees it as new and innovative, they'll be more likely to justify the price increase in their minds."

Bill Beckham, an Ohio arcade operator, agreed. He put some simulators on 75¢ play and said, "If it's got something special, I'll increase play pricing and leave it there. Experience tells me, if I put it lower, there's no increase in revenue anyway." He has also tested a program where he put a dollar acceptor on video games (kits with the higher technology), but found it to be unsuccessful. "There was some confusion as to who got the extra credit and when joining in, someone else got to play on another person's money." The same thing happened when the bonuses were reduced to let the player have twice as much time on 50¢ play. "The players didn't perceive this as a value and so didn't spend the extra money on it. I think higher pay for play can work in certain circumstances in special locations, especially in seasonal tourist areas."



At the ACME seminar where play pricing was discussed are (from left): Seninsky, Pollock and Cravens. It was a thoughtful meeting.

In additional test runs, Beckham upped two of a location's six *Skeeballs* to 50¢ play combined with triple ticket output and watched his returns rise. The two modified games far out-earned the regular play tables. "Again," Bill reiterated, "if the player perceives the games' benefits as an added value, he'll be willing to pay more for them."

Does this psychology work in all locations? "No," stressed Premier Technology president Gil Pollock. "You have to be careful, especially in arcades. It's hard to put 50¢ play on machines when kids only have so many tokens and want to play as many games as possible. That's when the cost to play the game is more important than the type of game. In bars," he continued, "it's a different mindset. The people aren't there to play the most games for their money; they are there to have a good time. If a game gives them a good time, they'll pay for it."

So, obviously, the type of location must be figured into the play pricing equation quite heavily. But what if locations didn't have a choice... and they all had games already made to operate on two to start and one to continue? "Well," Bill Beckham surmised, "then the strong games would earn more, and the distributors and operators would buy more."

While standardization of pricing has its pros and cons, its most important drawback is that the industry could become vulnerable to accusations of price fixing... which, in turn, could lead to antitrust dilemmas. Also, it is important to look at the worldwide market. "Because we are in a world market," Leprechaun prexy Bill Cravens pointed out, "it makes it hard to go to the system we want. We need to have other options on the machines, because of other countries' preferences and pricing systems."

Back in the U.S., much can be done to make higher play pricing a reality without a standardization policy. "Go to Washington D.C. and lobby for the dollar coin. Write your congressmen and let him know what you want," Cravens urged the audience. "If we give our industry a voice and make it loud enough to be heard, things can begin to happen."

It seems that things have already begun to happen on the routes of the operators who spoke at this seminar. An extra push in Washington, D.C. may be all the industry needs. Realizing the needs of each location, as well as analyzing the games' appeal, is crucial to the success of a higher play pricing program. And, lobbying for the legislation to make higher play pricing work will guarantee its effectiveness in the long run.

So back to the original question — is there life after quarter play? We'd have to say the answer is up to you.



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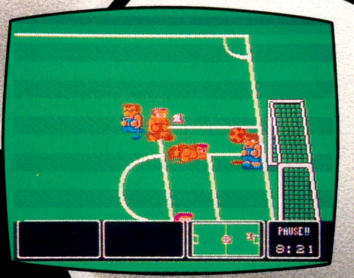

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A WEALTH OF GAMES

operator Gene Lewin says ACME offered "a wealth of good new games"; here are his picks for the very best new pieces in video and pinball

Trade magazines, distributors and manufacturers can say what they like... but when it comes to evaluating new equipment, many operators place their greatest trust in the opinions of their fellow operators. Here, then, are some "operator reviews" of new equipment shown at the recent ACME, from California operator Gene Lewin who runs Pinball Plus.

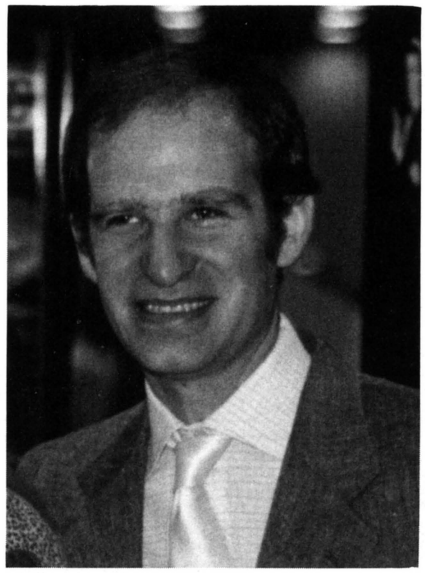
— the editors

The 1991 ACME had a wealth of good new equipment, ranging from Sega's new holographic technology to Capcom's top-earning kit and Konami's new dedicated game. It's hard to pick the "best games" from among so many winners, but here's my opinion of the strongest pieces:

Capcom's *Street Fighter II,* already a proven blockbuster before ACME, is an even better deal in kit form. I have never seen a kit earn the kind of money this one does! It's getting 50¢ play with 25¢ continue, without complaints at my locations. A 10-plus rating!

Konami's *Simpsons* dedicated four-player is a well-done translation of the hit cartoon TV series. Each game player controls a different member of the Simpsons family, who look just like they do on TV. Should earn big money up front... and for a long time to come!

Williams' *The Machine: Bride of Pinbot* features a special graphics effect, showing the title character's face in four different phases as she "comes to life." This action-packed unit should be a good earner, comparable to *Funhouse.* The same company's all-electronic *Slugfest* is described elsewhere in this issue, so let me just say I found it unique, novel, and loaded with excellent features. It uses the same electronics as Williams pins, and costs a little more, but has fewer moving parts to wear out.



Gene Lewin runs the Pinball Plus arcade in Glendale, Calif. and has reviewed new games for *RePlay* in the past. Gene's got a good head when it comes to game buying, and being relatively "young," also knows what it feels like when you play one of our inventions. Therefore, his advice is sound. And just because he didn't mention a game in his article doesn't mean he didn't like it. Then again, maybe that's why he left some of them out.

Irem's two-player kit *Gun Force* is a timely war-themed game featuring choppers and other military vehicles. Player control of these is quite good, and I recommend using a Perfect 360 joystick for increased earnings, since precise diagonal joystick action enhances the gameplay in many sequences. (If you do use a standard joystick, make sure it's adjusted absolutely correctly.) Should earn well!

Want something new and different? Data East's cute two-player kit *Caveman Ninja* is "not just the same old thing." You're a caveman fighting dinosaurs and other prehistoric beasties with various weapons. Probably not a mega-blockbuster but it should earn rather well for a kit.

Namco America's dedicated two-player shooting video *Steel Gunner* has a sci-fi, anti-terrorist theme. It should earn well, although it's "pricey" and obviously, high investment affects return on same.

Special effects graphics in Sega's *Hologram Time Traveler* were simply incredible, featuring live-action photography of real actors. The game itself (a *Dragon's Lair*-type scenario) is not as spectacular as the visual effects, and I can't predict earnings, but this is some of the "future technology" we've long waited for.

Premier's *Cactus Jack's* is their best pin in years. Great music, good gameplay, and cute animation combine for a pinball you can't overlook (check out that unique "shoot from either flipper" ramp, too).

Romstar's ACME exhibit of one-slot Neo•Geo kits (with custom control panels) were displayed in converted, used cabinets... certainly a first. A wide variety of custom panels makes the conversion work easier and the results better-looking. With the success of the Neo•Geo cartridges, this kit makes a lot of sense (it reduces the initial investment for the system, too, when you put it into a 19"cabinet).

Speaking of Neo•Geo kits, SNK's *Burning Fight* cartridge will earn well thanks to a good (and "different enough") execution of the classic street-brawling theme. *King of*

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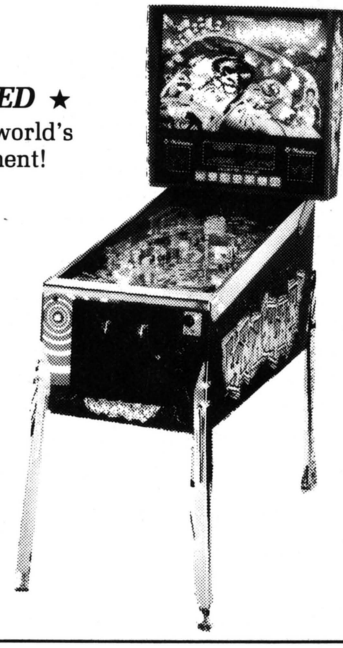

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the Monsters features two giant Godzilla-type critters, bashing it out in a big city which suffers lots of "collateral damage" (as the U.S. Army would say). It's already out and earning well. So far, SNK is proving that systems can work if manufacturers stick with them . . . and they sure are! SNK is doing extremely well at providing new and exciting kits for this system.

Sega's two-player kit *Clutch Hitter* is their latest baseball video, with gameplay featuring today's top players from the major leagues (arranged via license with the players' association). Timing is great, coinciding with the start of baseball season (are you other manufacturers listening?). Sega's *MVP* was last year's baseball "sleeper hit," so check out their latest! By the way, Sega's one-player driver *Rad Mobile* (moving sitdown simulator or dedicated upright) may be pricey, but the graphics effects are very good and of course, the category has long-term earnings.

That same logic holds for Leland's *Indy Heat,* a three-player dedicated driving game. I'd prefer it as an *Off Road* update, but nobody can argue with the appeal of doing laps around different tracks.

Midway's kit *Trog* is very different and very amusing. It's now simpler to play than when introduced at an earlier show, but still retains its original charm. A blockbuster earner? Perhaps not, but how many games can the whole family really enjoy? There's definitely a niche for this one.

Atari's one-player kit *Batman* features good digitized graphics and fine gameplay, although I'd have preferred to see it hit the market when the Batman movie was hot. Atari's *Ramparts,* now available in kit format, uses joysticks where the dedicated version employed trackballs. It's addictive: players get hooked and come back for more. Good ROI at this lower price, especially for arcades.

A final note: one manufacturer reportedly showed a CD-ROM game in their suite at ACME. I didn't see it, but I do believe this technology will play a major role in coin-op's future. Until then, the spread of goods at ACME offered plenty to keep operators busy . . . and profitable!

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STREET POWER!

"Capcom's new Street Fighter II *increased my route earnings by 50%," says California street operator Yogi Taylor*

I got the call — my *Street Fighter II* kits had arrived! The phone rang again, and another distributor told me that my allotment from him had arrived. I was prepared to go heavy on this kit, but I wondered if I was getting a little bit out of control.

Five weeks prior, when I received my dedicated unit with 25" monitor, I was skeptical (as usual). I had heard the hype — "kids lined for blocks, $100 a day collections," etc. I snagged my game, threw it on my truck, and headed right toward my best location (ironically, the spot was given to me by a very prominent local operator, claiming it just was not "his type" of account. This location currently grosses around $900 a week on three games; I wonder if he's got any more locations that don't "fit in" his operation).

I backed up my truck and the usual herd of kids clamored around my tailgate. "Oooh! *Street Fighter II!*" cooed one pimply-faced youth. "This one has a name on it!" cried another.

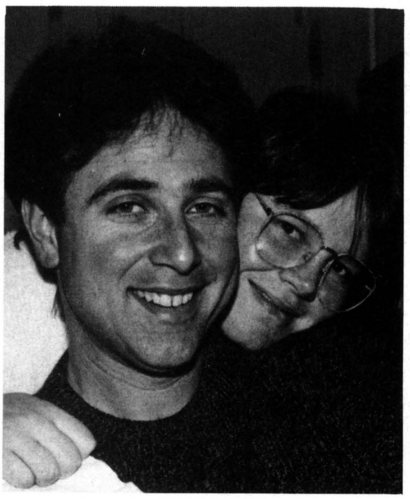
"Yeah, this is a rare treat," I barked back. (All of my kit games are run with black marquees and generic overlays.)

I wheeled the game into my number one game spot and plugged her in. *Kablang!* bellowed the game. I wondered who put the games out at this volume; are only deaf people employed on assembly lines?

I opened the instruction book: Attract Mode/Off. That was simple. I then tried to figure out how to make this game a quarter a play, instead of 50¢. Too complicated for this laymen. I paged my mechanic and he arrived shortly.

"Don't touch that board, Yogi!" he screamed hysterically as he stormed through the door. If you didn't already realize, my mechanical capabilities are very limited. Everything I touch seems to get a little bit worse. In 1978, I installed my brand-new Bally *Star Trek* pinball and tried to turn the volume down; I somehow adjusted the voltage instead and blew a set of boards. Needless to say, every time my mechanic sees me with my screwdriver, he confiscates it. In seconds, *Street Fighter II* was set on quarter play and its earnings life had begun.

The next day, I called the location and asked how the game was doing. "They play lot," quipped the owner. "I think is good game." I fought off the urge to check the coin box in a day or two, deciding that I'd wait a week.



Yogi Taylor (and wife Trish) are happy campers these days. The reason is obviously *Street Fighter II* (but we know he likes a few other numbers). As they might say on the street, Yogi is a "different breed of cat" because he doesn't mind sharing his ups and downs with the rest of his trade through the magazine. Matter of fact, this "bard of San Jose" gets so excited when something good happens he wants to tell the whole world. His enthusiasm and business savvy help make his Ultimate Amusements route the success it is in Northern California. We are grateful he's our friend.

$360 . . . that was the first week's take. I was happy, but wondered where we'd go from here. The second week's number was $380. Rare is the game whose earnings increase the second week. I now decided to go back to my 14-day collection pattern at this spot. I was thinking about how many of these kits I should buy, and wondering if the game would earn in a 19" monitor with no player instructions whatsoever. I also had to pull in my generic cabinets to install extra buttons (each player has six). I decided to get four cabinets ready for the upcoming kits.

Cut to several days later. *Beep! Beep! Beep!* blared my beeper. I jumped from bed; it was one o'clock in the morning. *No one* pages me at this hour. I groggily peered at the display: it was my power account calling (the one with my *Street Fighter II).* I stumbled to the phone and called. "What's up?" I asked.

"There's problem with game — people very upset," said the voice.

The baby had started to cry by now, awakened by my pager, and my wife was now up. "You're not going out now, are you?" she inquired.

I explained that if I didn't, I'd be up all night wondering what the problem was. You've gotta realize that this lady's been through late-night *Asteroid* and *Defender* locations, has tolerated a garage-full of old Gottlieb pinballs, and worst of all, has put up with me for the last 22 years. (We met in the third grade.) I burped the baby, played a quick game of *Buckaroo* with her, and headed towards the door.

"Aren't you forgetting something?" asked my wife.

After putting my pants on, I walked out the door. I arrived just after

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2 AM, and the game area was buzzing. I approached *Street Fighter* and was met by a huge, handwritten sign on the monitor: "Broken."

"How come it take you so long to get out here?" questioned the store owner. I can never figure out whether this guy is serious or not.

"What's the problem?" I said.

"No take money," he replied.

"Huh?" I looked at the cash door. I had requested a Happ door, the best in the business. Coin jams are rare with this door. Fumbling for a quarter, I dropped it in the slot. It went through, but sounded like it got stuck towards the bottom of the coin mech.

I winked at the store owner, opened the bottom door, and . . . yowww! The quarters were overflowing! I scurried to my truck, grabbed the bank bag and tried to empty the contents of the cash box. The truth is, I actually had to ask the location owner to hold the bag, because the cash box was so heavy with quarters. I finally succeeded, quarters spilling everywhere. Dumping the coins into my old Klopp counter, I started to crank.

I had to fill the counter three times. Total collection: $850 in just 12 days. I was in a state of total befuddlement. In a daze, I walked out of the store and sped home. I would not see my pillow for the next 48 hours.

My strategy was to get every available cabinet off the route and into my shop, to get them *"Street Fighter*-ready." At a three-game account, I pulled two games, leaving a big gap in the game aisle, explaining to the location that I had to do what I had to do . . . and that when I returned with *Street Fighter II,* they wouldn't be sorry.

My technician worked non-stop, and I promised him a free *Street Fighter II* kit for his hard work. The kits arrived, and I powered them into my locations. Four games to the truckload, I shuttled them north and south. This game has got to be in the street! Every day that it sits in the shop, you're losing $50 to $80 in collections.

I have never made such an intense effort to get a product into the street. The game brings excitement to my route. There's nothing like a full cash pan to get the ol' adrenalin flowin'! I decided to pull one week's collections. $380, $340, $420, $330 . . . the numbers were there.

In a completely crazy move, I placed four of these games side by side in one of my stronger accounts. Fact: these units did $290, $290, $260 and $270. A total of $1,110 altogether on four units of the same game, in a location which historically collects around $400 per week.

The word on the street now is power . . . *Street* power!

Don't miss out on the title that, in my opinion, is the best game I've operated in the last decade. If you don't have any, get some. If you have some, get more!

Sorry folks, I've gotta go. I'm writing this at 3 AM on a Sunday morning, and I really need some sleep. When I finally doze off, you know what I'll be dreaming of: *Street* power!

YOGI



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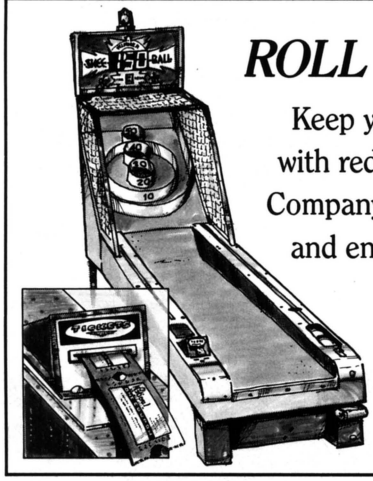

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C.A. ROBINSON PARTIES SCORE STRAIGHT A'S

It wasn't "California dreaming"...it was a return to high spirits (and more spirited equipment buying) at C.A. Robinson's twin operator open houses held after ACME in California. Hosting around 400 tradesters at their April 3 bash in San Francisco and another 600 at their principle HQ in Los Angeles April 5, the prominent distributorship fed and offered the new coin-op goods to a thousand Golden Staters.

VP Sandy Bettelman estimates the operator audience increased 15% to 20% over last time out with this party. More importantly, they did business at those affairs, and in all categories. "Two, three years back, we had a lot of tire-lickers at the open houses," Sandy offered. "This time, the order pads were busy. Sure, the hits were selling better, but all bases were covered and most factories we represent got some sales action," he added.

Sandy said the activity was the same at both affairs. Their sales vet Hank Tronick (now back at the Pico office in L.A. three days a week after serious hip surgery) was in his favorite spot...the sales saddle... and echoed Sandy's enthusiasm:



Another proud moment in C.A. history: Leah & Sandy Bettelman (with Leland's Ken Anderson) show off their past two AAMA Distributor of the Year awards at their April 5 party.

"I don't think I worked that hard in a year," he smiled. "It took me the weekend to recoup my strength but it was a super party. We did a lot of business...video, pins, street stuff, arcade product...a combination of everything. Our sales people were busy at their desks and not schmoozing out on the floor as was the story at some of our past shows," he added.

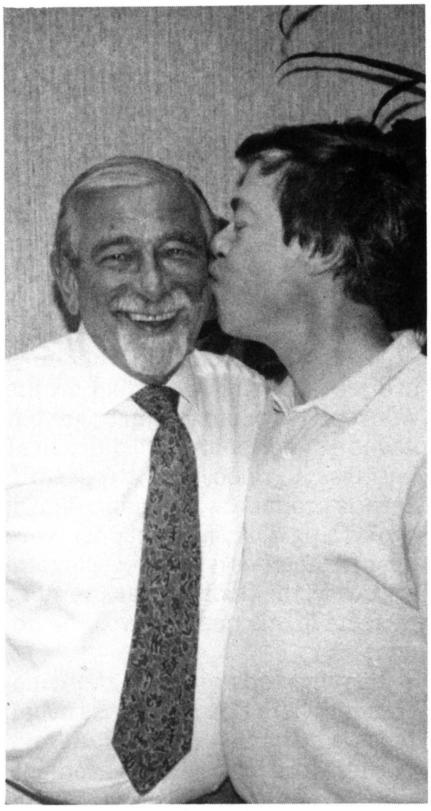
Factory reps manned their machines at both C.A. shows. As usual, those who came down to L.A. mid-parties were treated to an evening's sit-down dinner. This year, Leah, Ira & Sandy selected the airplane museum at Santa Monica Airport for the dinner venue. Cocktails were served in an atmosphere of ancient aircraft hanging from the ceiling and standing on the floor. Dinner followed in an adjoining restaurant where the traditional "Ira veal chop" was the main entree. Good cheer was the key there as well as at the twin open houses. Why not? Happy days seem to be coming back.



C.A. Robinson's courtyard between shop/showroom & warehouse once again provided delightful open air dining facility for the hungry trade. Langer's once again catered the food which, as usual, was first cabin.



San Diego operator Fred Gillmann (center, flanked by Sandy & Fred's son Charles) took a bad fall during the ACME in Vegas, busted up his hand and took 12 stitches above the eyebrow. Fred smiled anyway.



Hank Tronick gets a welcome back smack on the puss from his buddy Eddie Adlum. Hank's now working Tuesday thru Thursday at Pico; he works the phone from home on other days.



Adrea Bettelman and Kaneko's Marty Glazman behind the bar that was backdropped by mobs of Kaneko's *Berlin Wall* video game posters. Really very subtle, Marty!

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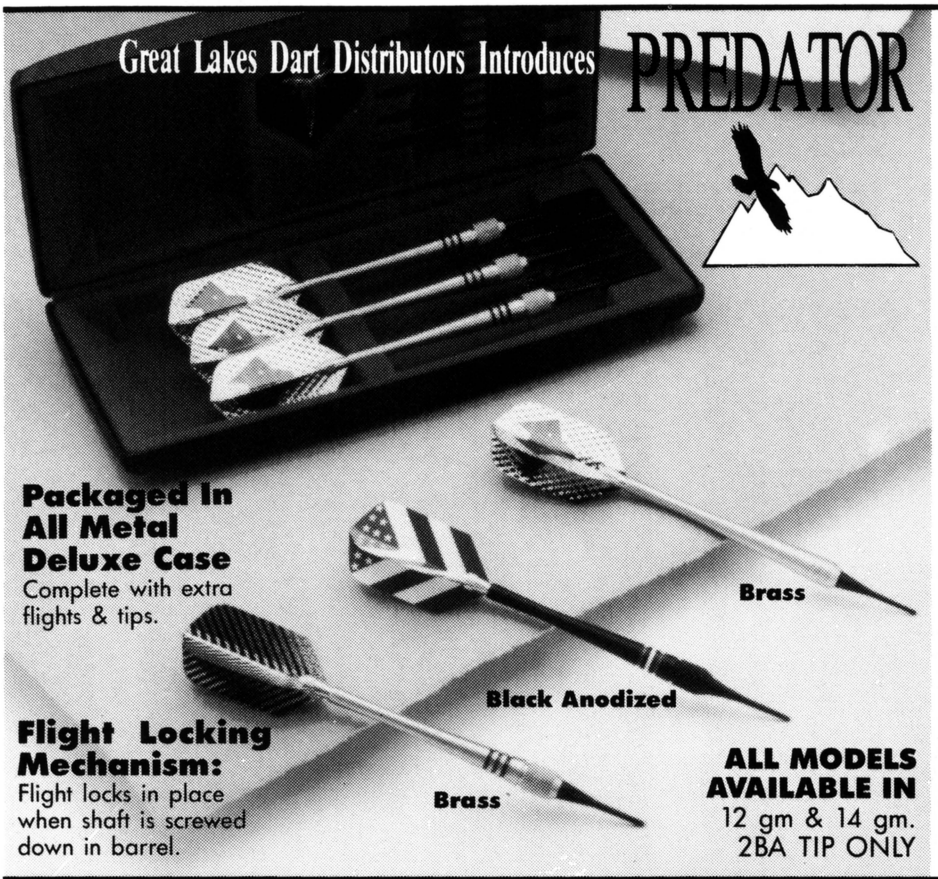

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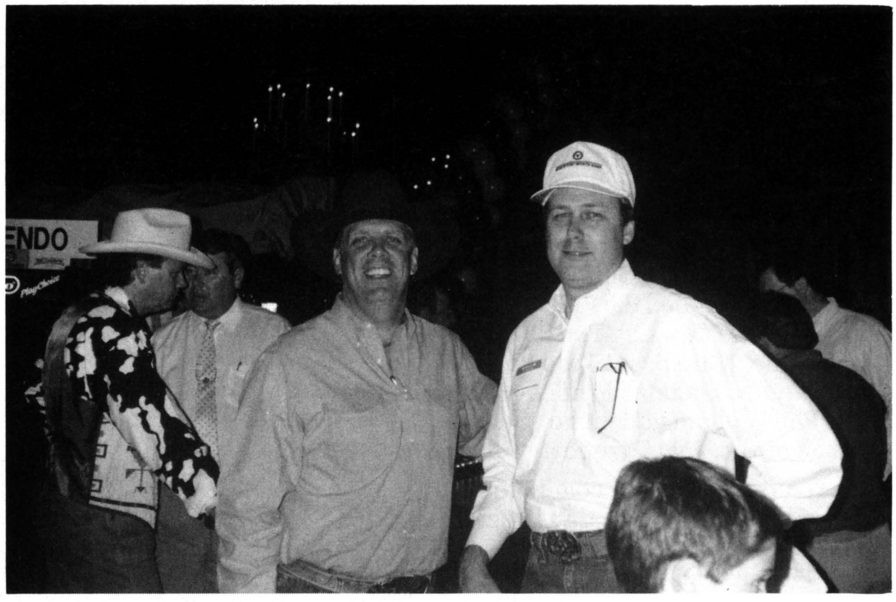
SUPER-SOLID SOIREE SERVED BY SUNBELT IN DALLAS

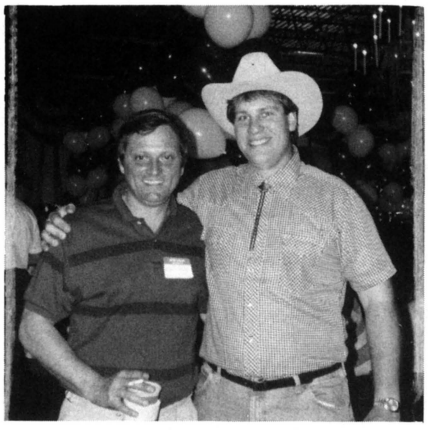
If you think the visage of cosmopolitan Dave Patterson in a cowboy outfit was fun all by itself, that was just one part of a day in the life of coinbiz that will be remembered for quite some time. On April 6, Patterson and his SunBelt Amusement & Vending staffers hosted a true Texas-styled open house at their Irving headquarters and it was a day marked by fierce fun, lots of chow and refreshments and, most important, equipment orders.

Called their "Fair & Rodeo Day," this 5th consecutive SunBelt spring spectacular took place in their warehouse, decorated to the hilt (spurs?) with all sorts of cowboy stuff (including a little jail cell and a western bar). For the truly serious operators, the dealership held service schools on Williams/Bally pins and NSM jukeboxes during the day. For everybody, the main topic was having fun while inspecting the new post-ACME goodies (along with the better machines that came out before the Las Vegas convention).

Including operators from outside Texas (that means Oklahoma, among others), SunBelt scored a whopping 550 trade people at this single show. Patterson estimated this crowd of guests represented 238 individual operating companies. "I think this show was the best one we ever had," said Dave. And yes, his sales staff was busy catching



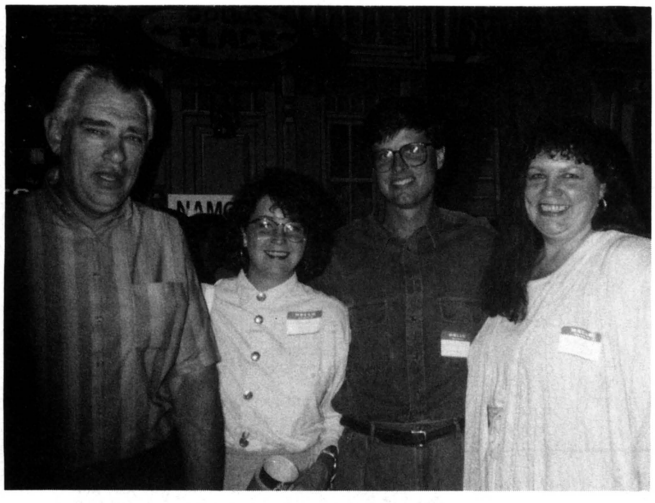
Diamond Dave Patterson (left), resplendent in cowboy duds, with banker friend Dan Coleman.



SunBelt Oklahoma's Marty (Man) Smith (right) hugs Modern Music's Larry Phillips. The "man's" star is rising! Good folks, these two.



One of the SunBelt ladies who made the party "work": Debbie Cherry, with everybody's friend, Romstar's ever-smiling Rene Lopez.



Ralph Fogler (American Vending), Carolyn Fee, Randy Chilton & Joanne Anderson were among the 500+ at the SunBelt "Rodeo."

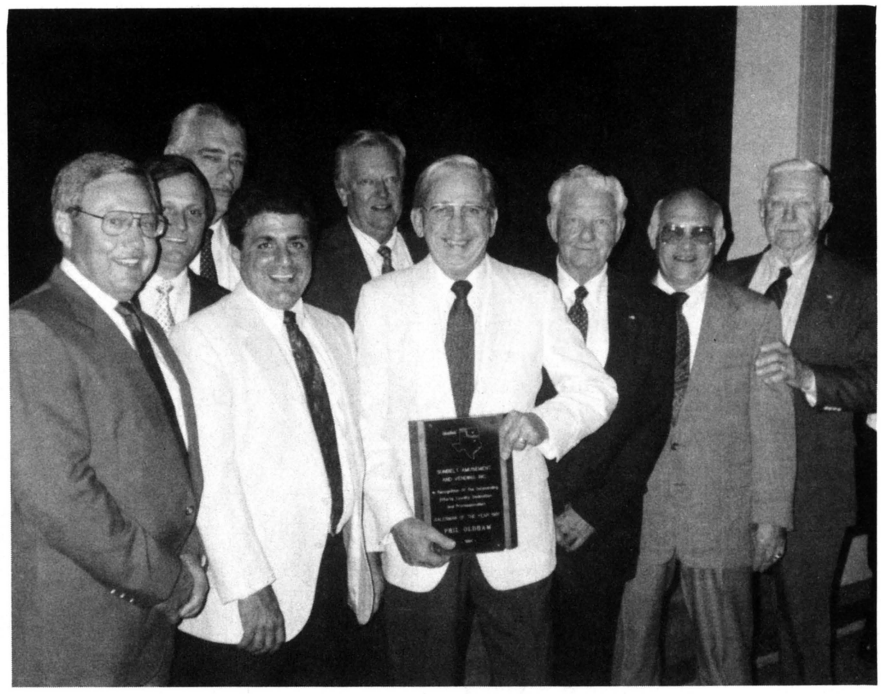


NSM's Rus Strahan (left), Dave Patterson, Carl Petry & Phil Wood take a relax in their "eastern" duds at the Four Seasons after party.

machine and kit orders on this, that and really on most everything on display.

That evening, Patterson hosted a private party for his key employees and a number of out-of-town factory reps at the Four Seasons Hotel. During the dinner, he took the microphone to announce some special company awards. Larry Legg got a plaque for putting in SunBelt's computer system called the "I Survived the Computer" award. Tim Roberts scored the "Employee of the Year" plaque and Oklahoma branch manager Phil Oldham nailed the "Sales Person of the Year" trophy.

"Thank you all for coming and sharing in this great day," said Dave at the conclusion of the evening. "Thank you for inviting us," was the appropriate response from folks in all sectors of the trade who enjoyed seeing the product, chatting with factory folks and consuming the consumables. It was nice to see so much real fun back in the business.



Universal applause greeted Dave Patterson's announcement (the evening of the "Fair & Rodeo Day") that Oklahoma City Branch Manager Phil Oldham won the company's Sales Person of the Year plaque. Above, friends and customers of that good old boy (center, holding the plaque) surround their amigo at the Four Seasons Hotel banquet hall. Tradesters include veterans Ben and Bob Hutchins (Lawton Novelty) and Tom Harris. Some of these "boys" have forgotten more about the business than you'll ever remember.

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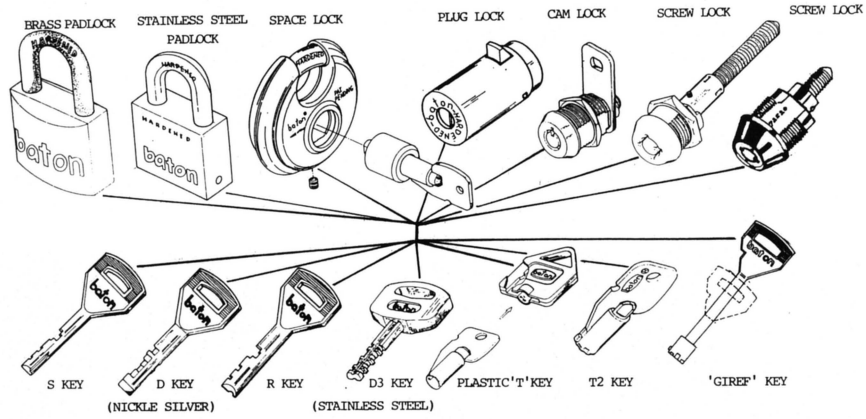

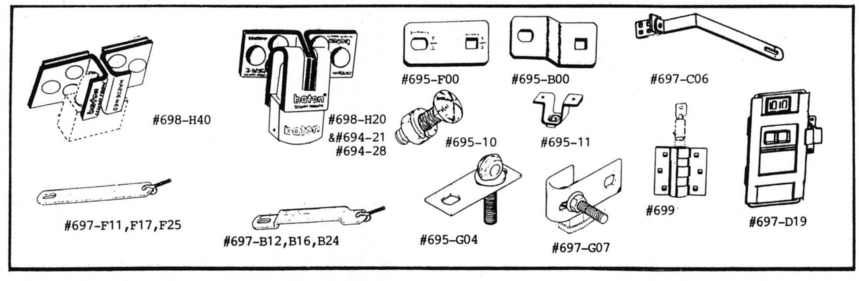

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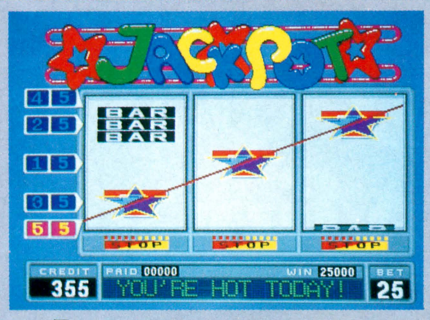

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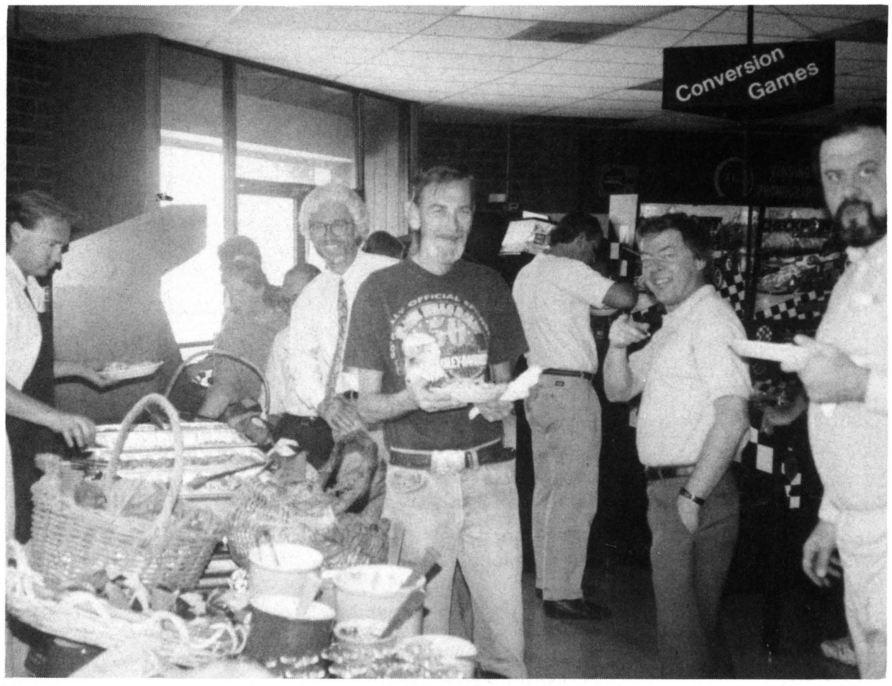
BETSON'S WESTERNS GETS 'EM FLEXIN'

Couldn't resist the headline, because Betson Pacific's two post-ACME open houses (April 3 in SFO and April 5 on Pico in L.A.) not only got fine crowds but pulled a pile of equipment orders. Peter Betti and staff poured on the chow and (with the aid of factory reps) laid out the new equipment as well. And the smiling crowds of operators "paid the pleasure back" with orders.

Since both Betson Pacific and C.A. Robinson hold their post-show parties on the same days at both of their respective offices, it makes it more than convenient for operators (often with family members and staffers) to hit them all. What may look competitive on its face is actually a great idea for the busy route and arcade people. All benefit, and with the upsurge in buying interest and in the product quality on stage, the story here was happy.



"Say hi to Marcus," says *RePlay's* Ed Adlum to Dan Cravens while getting a snapshot of the feed line at Betson Pacific's L.A. open house. Yes, that's Leland's John Rowe behind Dan.



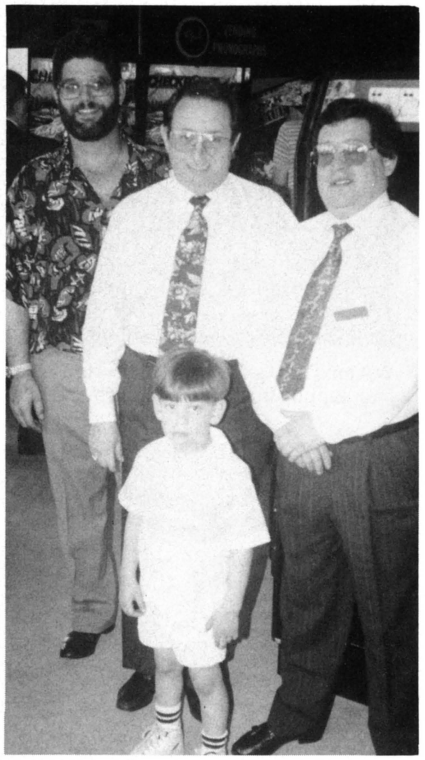
Mars Electronics reps Bill Millette, Gail Samota and Bart Shuldman are proud of their bill validators on Betson's hot *Mad Dog McCree* attraction on BP's Pico Blvd. showroom floor. This special game has certainly "validated" many a dollar on U.S. locations as it rolls along its profitable way. The game's software sequel, *Who Shot Johnny Rock,* has already been produced, demo'd at ACME, and will be coming along later this year.



Premier's Ron Zahler seems to be offering a bit of cactus meat as he shows off their new *Cactus Jack's* flipper at Betson Pacific.

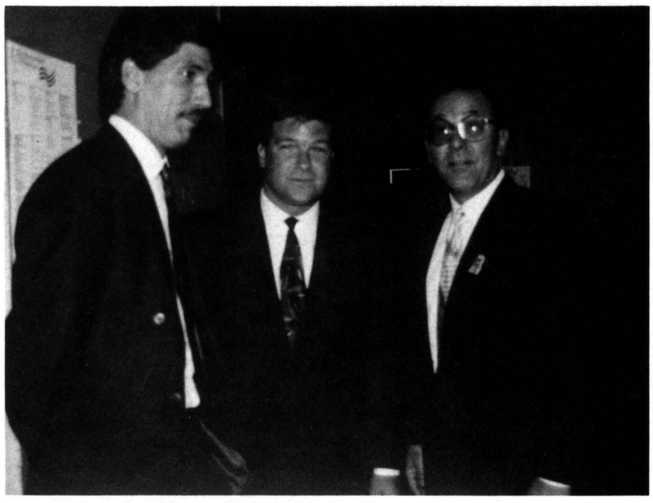


Business was done (naturally), including this private chit chat between Capcom's Geoff Walker (left) and Peter Betti (Betson Pacific's bossman). Why do we think the subject on the table was *Street Fighter II*? Maybe because it's about the hottest product on today's market. Peter himself has a full plate of product at both L.A. & San Francisco offices, including his own *Mad Dog McCree.* All in all, it was nice to see so many smiling faces along Pico Blvd.

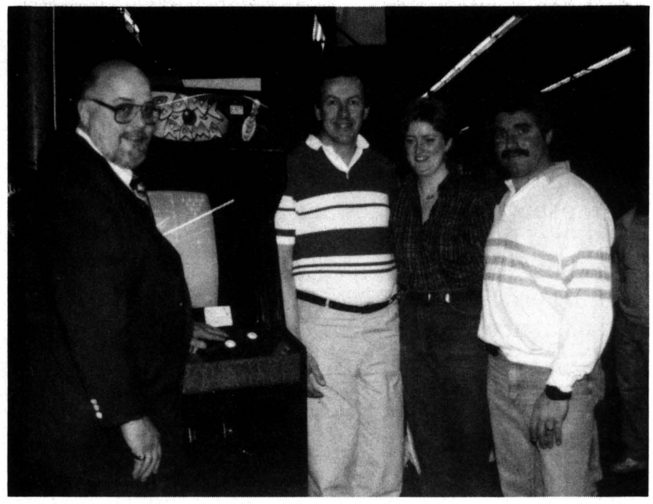


That's little Harrison Scheer in the foreground with dad Jeff (left), Betson's Irwin Knigin and Taito sales rep Emilio Cabrera, formerly with their engineering department and now loving the opportunity to meet new people in his new capacity. Jeff Scheer himself is an L.A. area operator and the son of Ross Scheer from the "old" Bally days. Concerning Irv Knigin, he's one happy dude working for Peter's company. "Great place to be," he chimes.

HEADING EAST TO BETSON/MOONACHIE



Betson Enterprises, the "nabobs of north jersey," held their open house April 3. Bob Boals (left) and Joe Cirillo flank Jolly Backer.



Leprechaun's Bill Cravens (left) shows off *Bowl-O-Rama* to Marty Murin (Rainbow Falls Video), Laura Showers & Phil Mulle (Phancy Sales).



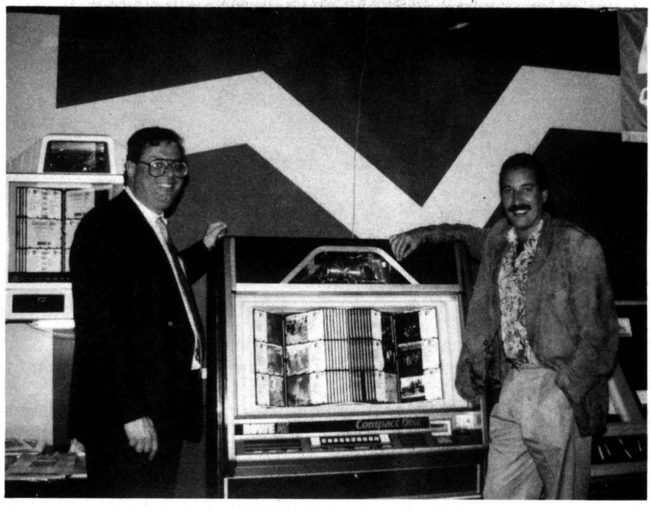
Williams' Leslie Ross, perhaps a tad weary from the show circuit, gets max support from her *Fun House* and *Harley Davidson* (Bally) flippers.



Irem's Drew Maniscalco (right) treats Jimmy Hoffman & Desi Derado to *Gun Force* action at Betson's April 3 soiree on the marshlands.



You've seen 'em before and you see them again. From left: Joe Bundra (rep'ing the Bromley *Ghost Town* rifle), John Margold & Robert Betti.



Ken Goldberg with Rowe's Joel Friedman (left) at the *LaserStar* CD jukebox. Betson also shows their wallbox and compact CD 51 units.

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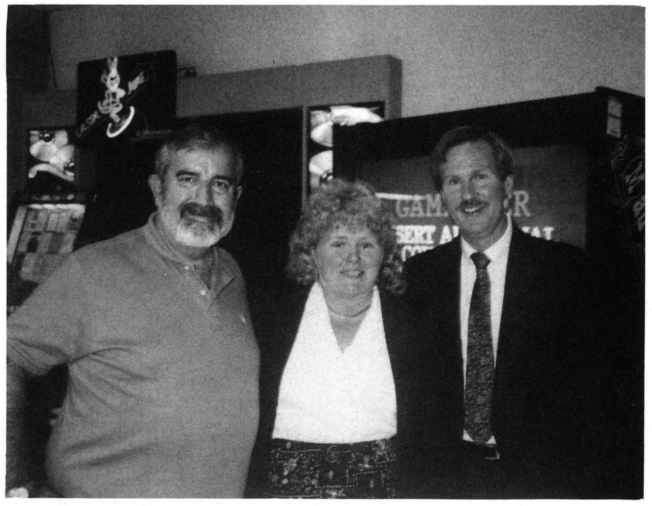
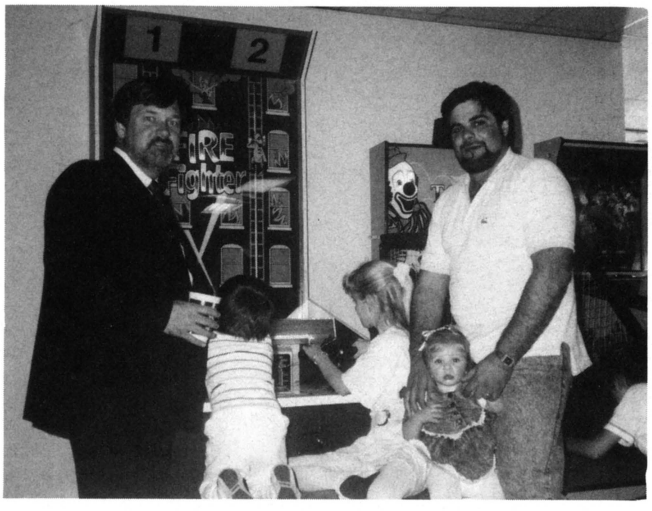
AT NEW ENGLAND OPEN HOUSES



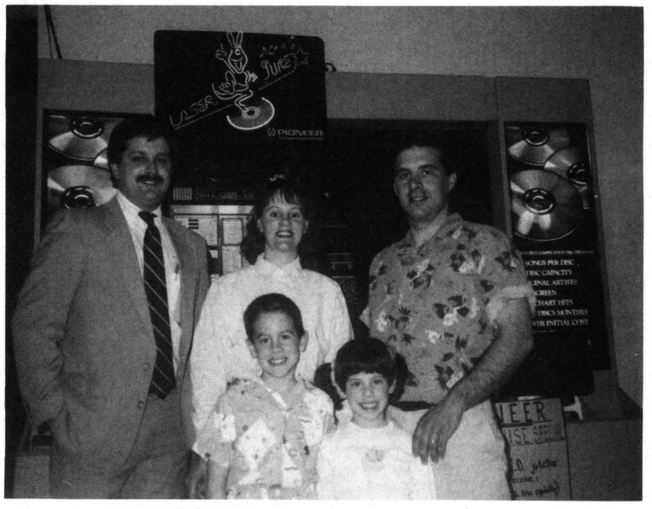
At Rowe's (Dedham, Mass.) open house by their new *El Dorado* are Grayhound's Dan Dinnebeil (left) with Dom Caruso & Norm Goupil.



Gary Burris (left) of Burris Vending joins Judy Polucci and NECO boss-man Rick Kirby for a snapshot in front of *Mad Dog McCree* at their party.



Joe Tunney helps Dave Gulezian show his kids Peter, Jessica & Kara how to play the *Fire Fighter* piece at the Rowe/Dedham April 7 affair.



Backdropped by the Pioneer CD display (from left): Tony Maniscalco (Pioneer), Tom & Susan Chambers with their youngsters Mike & Felicia.



The much-traveled Joel Friedman (right) shows Mike Cinquegrana (State Music, Pawtucket, R.I.) the CD *LaserStar* at Bob LeBlanc's party.



Al Pickert, eastern regional sales manager for Rock-Ola, joined other factory reps pumping their machines at the NECO open house party.

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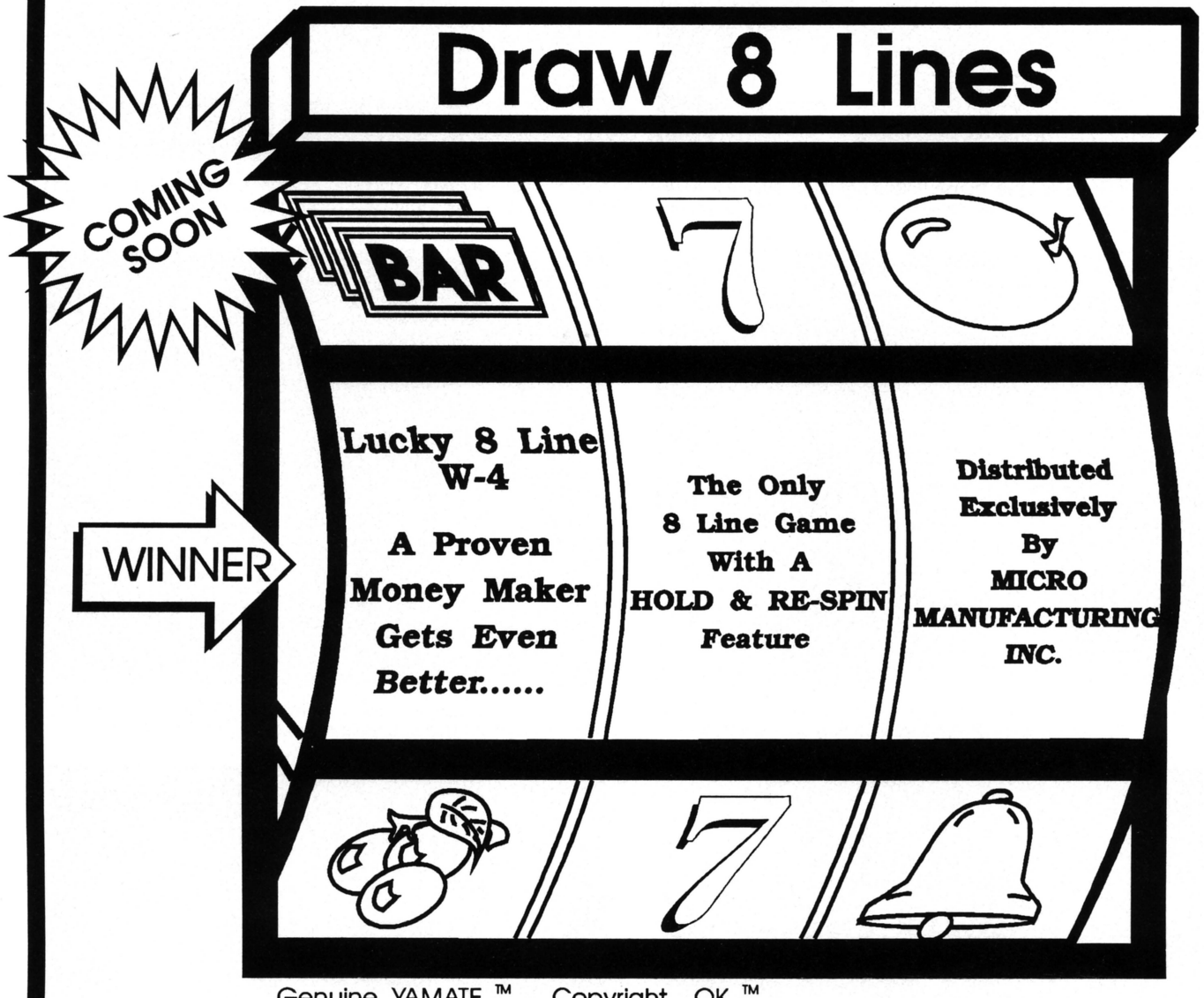

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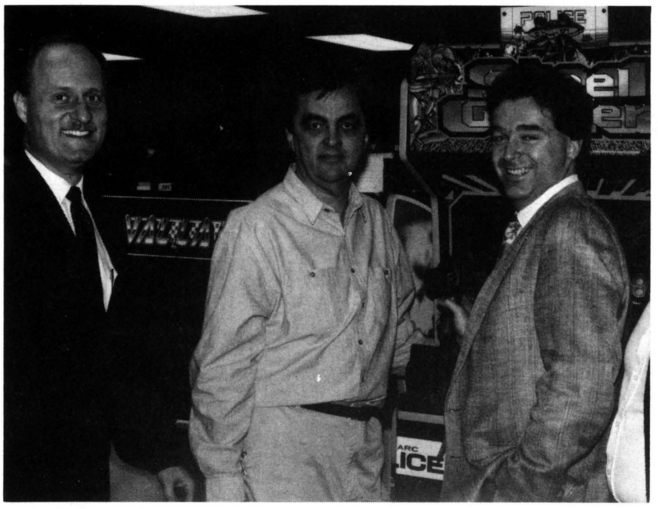
IN PHILLY WITH ACTIVE/MONDIAL



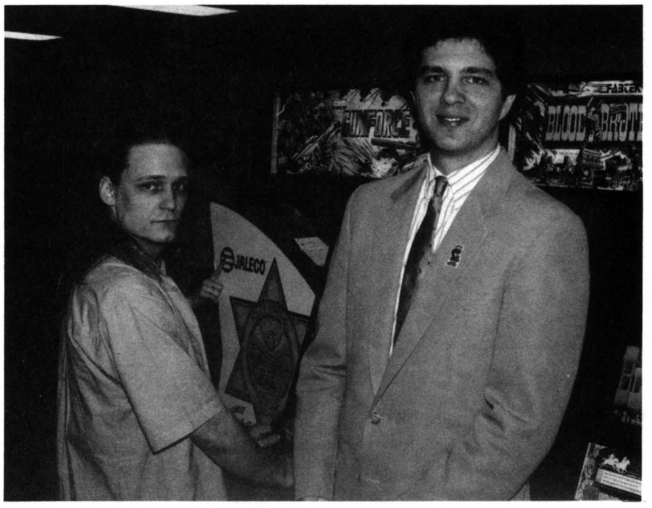
At the Active/Mondial open house (left to right): Irv Spinak & Nikki Arkelian (Mondial), Mike Kubin (Konami) & kids Jason & Phil Catagnos.



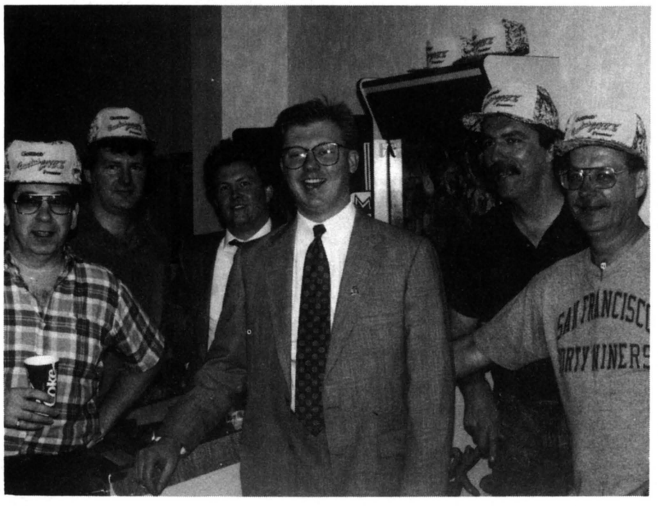
Well-known Philly area "vendress" Sharon Harris with Arachnid's Bob Mills. Sharon's dad's route was recently sold to Harv & Gerry Fisher.



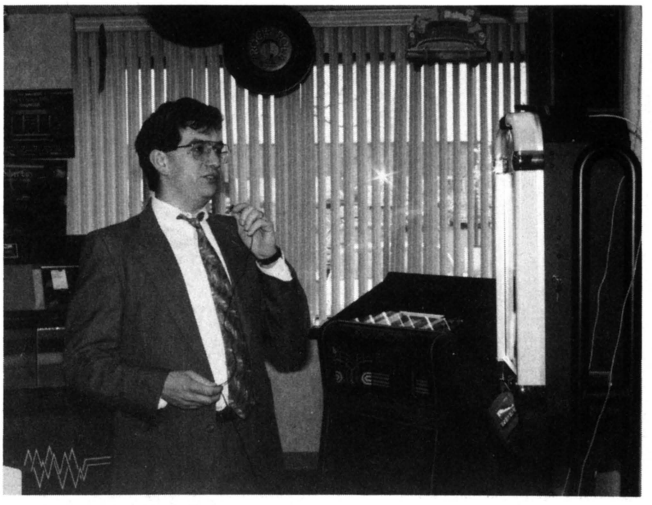
Namco's *Steel Gunner* backdrops (from left) their new sales rep Tom Siemieniec, Ron Lee (Automatic Vending) & Chris Vecchione (Mondial).



Irem's Drew Maniscalco (right) with Rich Boki (Caljean Amusements) by his *Gun Force* game. Drew's now working full-time for Irem.



Premier's Dan Clarton flanked by a lively group of guys including Bob Geller, Dan Domady, Joe Moffett and Joe & Ed Seamans.



Nikki Arkelian is doing a bit of Armenian karaoke with the assistance of an NSM wallbox. It's a good thing magazines don't produce sound.

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HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELER

"The video game of the future," predicted industry founder Nolan Bushnell "will look more like a movie, than it does like a video game." While Nolan chatted about "the future of coin-op" during his keynote speech at ACME in an upstairs suite at Bally's, part of that future had already arrived further down the street, on the ACME exhibit floor at the Sands Convention Center. And friends, the future looks grand.

Hologram Time Traveler, star attraction in Sega's booth, featured knockout new technology. Its full-color images seemed to exist in three dimensions, floating and dancing and talking and moving in the open space above a tabletop playfield. Delighted players swept their hands through the spacial plane where the images were focused, seemingly touching the floating images themselves.

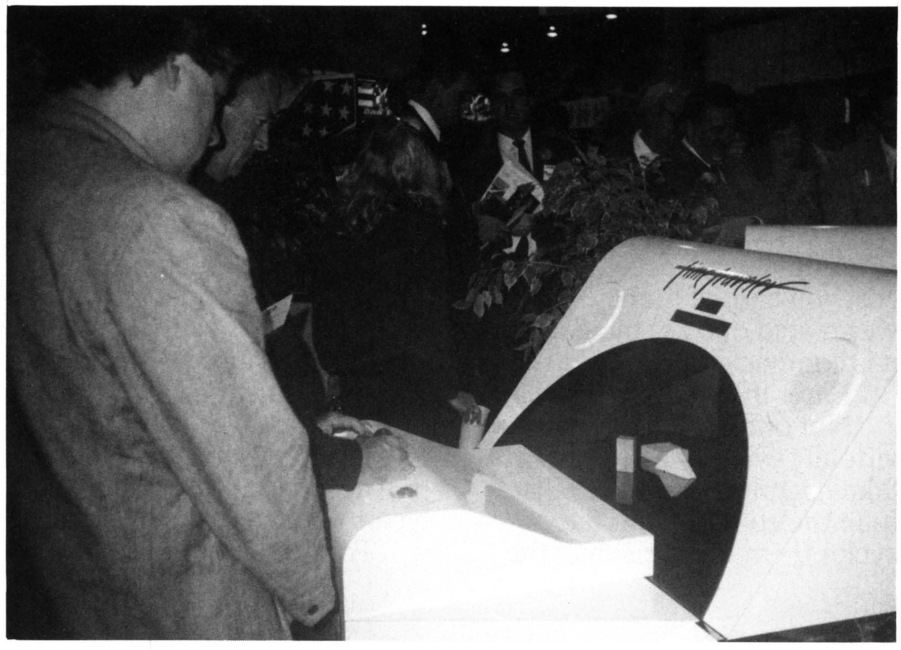
Those images depicted live actors who moved, and spoke, in real time and seemingly with holographic realism. Other exciting new elements: a full-blown, digitally-mastered soundtrack. Disney-type special visual effects. A non-linear, interactive storyline. All of these elements proclaimed the message: the future is here!

A NEW GAME CATEGORY

"Everyone is searching for the machine that will drive the stagnation out of this industry. Well, *Hologram Time Traveler* is it," beamed Sega USA prexy Tom Petit. "This game represents a quantum leap forward — the most radical departure in coin-op technology in 15 years."

The game's developers insist that *Time Traveler* is, in fact, the first game in an entirely new machine category — as different from conventional video, as pinball or redemption are. They call this new type of machine a "hologame"... and they say it's going to revolutionize the coin-op trade.

"Sega believes this is a whole new game category, just like when video games were first introduced, just like when pinball was first in-



troduced," asserted game inventor Rick Dyer. "We've tested it with focus groups of kids and adults. Public reaction is explosive excitement, unlike anything we've seen in years. The potential is equally explosive. What we're aiming for with this project," Dyer said boldly, "is to make the industry grow again — to bring new players to the games."

POSITIVE TRADE REACTION

Can *Time Traveler* live up to that breathtaking forecast? Quite possibly, yes. Even coin-op professionals (who are normally quite skeptical of unproven new technologies) reacted to *Time Traveler* with wonder, approval and optimism at the March 22-24 ACME show.

"The entire show was worthwhile just to see Sega's *Time Traveler,*" enthused Canadian operators Silvia Apostolidis and Howard Hunchak. "We're very happy simply to see that a new generation of technology is on the horizon."

"I think it's fantastic," exclaimed Mexico distributor Mike Kessler. "Certainly new technology is what the industry needs, and this innovative piece from Sega is a giant step in the right direction. And the price is right, too! I was surprised at how reasonable it was."

"Sega and Rick Dyer did a beautiful, quite skilled and professional job of developing and deploying this new technology," said an admiring competitor (who is the manufacturing chief at one of the world's top vidgame factories). "I know what is inside of that cabinet, and I can tell you: it is clean, it is rugged, it is extremely well-built and well-thought-out," he declared. "And, yes, it will be very reliable."

Some tradesters wondered if the actual game concept of *Time Traveler* was as strong as its technology. Others questioned whether some of the visual effects were too violent. But *RePlay* believes that anyone who takes the time to "walk through" the complete storyline will discover it is a compelling, fresh twist on the adventure-quest theme, with lots of fun and neat surprises for players to discover and enjoy. As for the violence, Sega says its "focus group research" indicates players (and parents) have no objections to the graphic action. (As one operator put it: "Too violent, are you joking? Kids love that stuff!")



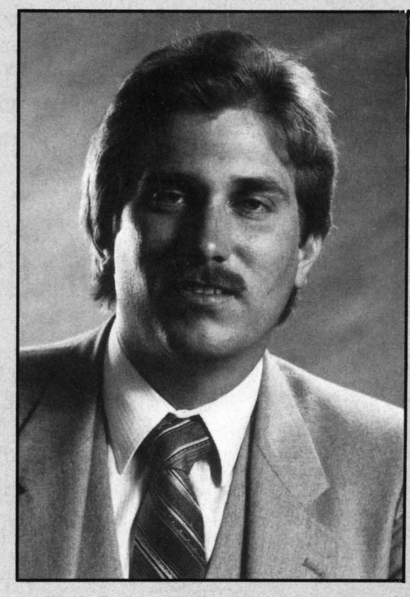
Sega's Dave Cantrelle with "Princess Kyla," Rick Dyer and ADG's Jim Masterson at ACME where the game previewed to the trade.

ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the ultimate compliment came from Leland and Capcom, who tried to obtain this hologram-type technology for their own product lines. As it happens, inventor Rick Dyer beat them to it. He saw a Feb. 1990 story in *RePlay* about the "Del Vision Micro-Theater" technology from a company called With Design In Mind. "I took one look at the Micro-Theater and said, that's a home run," Dyer recalled. "I phoned them right away, and a week later we had a deal."

Dyer's company (Allen Design Group, located in Carlsbad, Calif.) teamed up with With Design In Mind (Chatsworth, Calif.) in early 1990 to form a new concern called Hologram Ventures. They've got exclusive rights to develop this hologram-type technology for coin-oper-

Innovator Rick Dyer: One Step Ahead



Rick Dyer, 36, is the inventor and developer of *Hologram Time Traveler.* He has been inventing entertaining gadgets since he was 16 and tinkered together a cuckoo clock that quoted famous philosophers every hour, on the hour. While attending college (he took his electrical engineering degree at California Polytechnic in Pamona), he created "Fnork," a robot that obeyed 11 voice commands.

From there, Rick helped Mattel develop Mattel-O-Vision, and helped Coleco create ColecoVision. He also developed handheld video games for various well-known toy companies.

Rick's first brush with fame came in 1982 when he masterminded *Dragon's Lair,* the first coin-op laserdisc game. Using beautiful animation by Don Bluth and manufactured by the old Cinematronics, the game captured America's imagination and made a mint for operators. . . when it was working. Trouble was, the game was ahead of its time: consumer laserdisc players were simply too delicate for arcade abuse.

Rick has spent 1984 to 1989 on a successful $17 million project called "PowerCize," featuring programmable, robotic fitness equipment (think of a Nautilus machine that talks to you, by name, and guides and encourages you through your workout.) Rick's hi-tech exercise machines can speak multiple languages and have been a major hit overseas.

Now Rick Dyer is back where he wants to be: in coin-op, blending movies and computers and other hi-tech components to create a fantasy experience that the player can participate in. Happily, in 1991 the off-the-shelf laserdisc technology (and a brand new, patented optics system) has caught up with Rick's visions of the industry's potential. And, he's found powerful, ultra-professional partners in Tom Petit and Sega USA.

Obviously, a man of Rick's talents could find a home almost anywhere. "But this is what I want to do," Rick Dyer said of his new venture with Sega. "I can't think of anything else I'd rather be doing."

ated amusement applications. Sega signed on in late 1990 as a valued partner, bringing their world-class manufacturing and marketing expertise to the project. (Tom Petit says Sega will also have lots of creative input on future games using this technology, too.) By the way, Sega has the patents for *Time Traveler's* underlying technology, so it's doubtful you'll see any "me-too" games from competing manufacturers.

Dyer said his team worked 24-hour shifts for the last 10 months to get the game ready in time for the ACME show. Tom Petit said he "ate, breathed and slept" *Time Traveler* since last December. Altogether, a team of at least 100 people labored to perfect the game (and that's not counting the large cast of actors). Both men agreed that major resources have been invested in the project: "one of the biggest R&D commitments in the history of the industry," Dyer said. The final partnership of Sega USA and Hologram Ventures, buttressed by the personal friendship Tom Petit and Rick Dyer, seems like an ideal team and one that's destined to make coin-op history.

OPERATOR PRICE & PLAY PRICE

Operators who liked the game at ACME asked the two classic questions: how much does it cost? And, when can I get it? The answers are, this game looks like its price *should* run well into five figures, like a top of the line sitdown driver. Well, it doesn't. It costs a lot less. "I wanted to keep it at a price that will allow as much access into the market as possible," stated Tom Petit. "I think we've done that. It would have been easy to get very aggressive (i.e., demand high prices) based on this new technology and its impact, but we wanted to be very conservative so we could get maximum market penetration," he explained. "I think it will benefit all of coin-op if we can spread this game around. We see this game as suitable for arcades, the better street stops, bowling centers and even some convenience stores. Yes, it's an obvious arcade attraction, but we're also building it for the street and this game will make it on the street." An operator added: "This is well-spent money."

Play pricing calls for a $1 initial vend, reportedly with 50¢ to continue. The maximum play time will be four or five minutes, and the number of "continues" will be limited. Since there's 30 minutes of game programming, and quite a number of gameplay variations exist for individual scenes and final game outcome, players will have clear motivation to keep pumping in those dollars.

One final note about price: "It's too expensive for the home," Rick Dyer stated, "and it will remain so for some time!"

AVAILABILITY

As for availability, final touches on the gameplay were being completed at presstime, and some decisions had yet to be made about the precise nature of certain hardware components. Also, the game was slated to be contracted out for U.S. manufacture, although at presstime no final decision had reportedly been made on who would get the job.

Sega did say, however, that the



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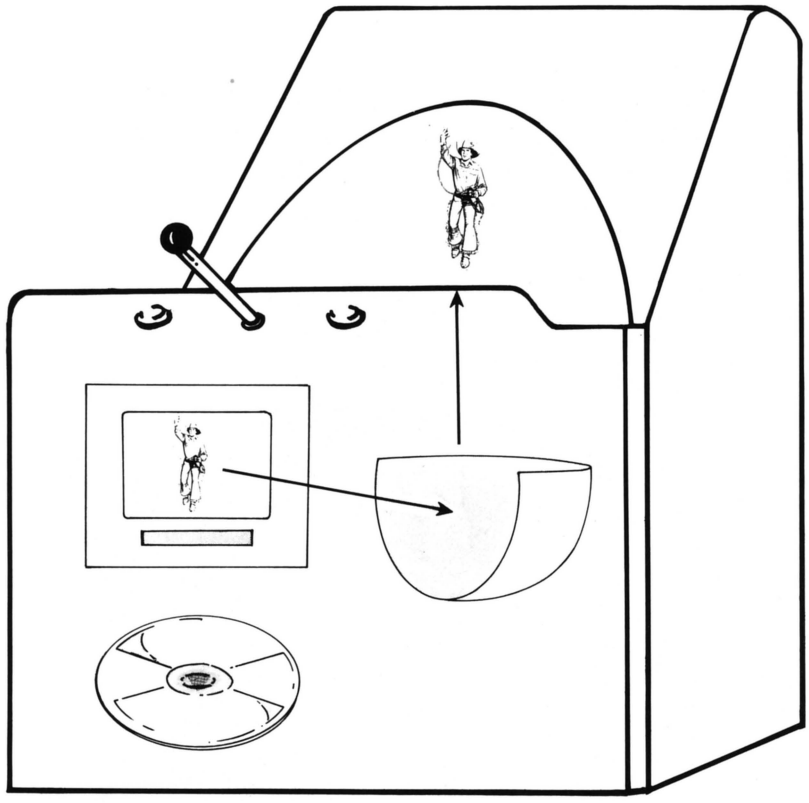

Hologram Time Traveler: filmed video of real actors is digitally stored on laserdisc. During gameplay, the laserdisc images are played on a color monitor inside the cabinet. A special mirror reflects images off the monitor & bounces them up through the playfield. Full-motion, full-color images are focused in space where they appear to be holograms.

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game was scheduled to start shipping in late May. One source high inside the Sega-Hologram Ventures partnership structure stated that Sega would ship games to dealers according to when orders were placed. "It's first-come, first-served with no favorites played among distributors," said this source, "so operators are advised to get their orders in early!"

"HOLOGRAM" TECHNOLOGY

At the heart of *Time Traveler's* new technology is a parabolic mirror with a black coating. This mirror reflects the images off a monitor which is inside the guts of the cabinet, then bounces the light upwards through the playfield surface, and focuses the images in space where the player can see them. Observers at ACME said you could walk around a 240-degree perimeter and still see the full-motion, full-color graphics quite clearly and vividly.

The precision-optics mirror mentioned above is shaped like a quarter of a sphere. It was created and first patented by a Japanese advertising firm called Dentsu, which uses this technology in Japan for ads and point-of-purchase displays. When it was made in Japan, the mirror alone cost $7,600 per unit, according to Rick Dyer. But he and Sega have found a U.S. aviation subcontractor (who makes fighter jet cockpit canopies) to produce the mirrors at a far lower cost. This defense firm can manufacture the optical mirrors to the exacting specs required to create the exciting 3-D illusion. "It's like the Hubble Telescope," Rick Dyer said. "The optics have to be perfect, so the tolerances are within an extremely narrow range."

Hologram Time Traveler uses a 12" laserdisc to store and play the video footage which is recreated on the monitor, then bounced off a mirror. However, the mirror projection system is flexible and versatile; it can work with today's laserdiscs, tomorrow's CDI discs, or no optical discs at all. Future coin-op applications may or may not use these other software storage systems in conjunction with the patented mirror optics, said Tom Petit.

One technical note: although we have been using the phrase "hologram-type" graphics . . . and

although Hologram Ventures has trademarked the word "hologram" for coin-op applications . . . the technology in *Time Traveler* does not project true holograms. The machine does not shoot a laserbeam through a holographic slide to create its images. More to the point, players can't walk around the images and get changing perspectives on them, as you do in real life or in a genuine hologram.

Instead, *Time Traveler* offers the same perspective, the same view of the characters and images, regardless of which angle you view them from. But because the images are *projected and focused in space* (not on a screen or other two-dimensional backdrop), they create a startling illusion of three-dimensionality. (By the way, Nolan Bushnell predicted it would be "many years" before the industry saw true, moving holograms employed in games.)

LIVE ACTORS, DIGITAL SOUND

As stated, *Time Traveler* uses live actors to play the characters in the game. Literally 1,000 actors auditioned for the 36 speaking parts. Actor and professional Hollywood stunt coordinator Steve Wilbur plays the hero, "Marshal Graham" (his name is a subtle pun on "hologram.") A pretty Las Vegas aerobics instructor named LeAnne McVicker portrays the futuristic Princess Kyla, who asks the hero for help. Watching the game, you could almost swear that real, 3" tall people were acting out a play on the game's tabletop surface.

Also depicted via the hologram-type images are animated special effects (comets, fire and electricity, for example), plus some visual prompts, backgrounds and props (these hadn't been added in yet, when the game was shown in Las Vegas). Rick Dyer pointed out that the game features the first digitally-mastered graphics: i.e., no analog stage between video recording and transfer to laserdisc.

Music, sound effects and recorded dialog are extensive and smoothly reproduced via an all-digital score. The game features an all-digital score. "It's the first time a coin-op game has been mastered that way, too," Dyer smiled.

ABOUT THAT LASERDISC

Meantime, the laserdisc and player mech in *Time Traveler* promises to be as reliable as the compact discs and player mechs inside coin-op CD jukeboxes, Sony Discmans and other rugged disc-based hardware systems on the market these days.

Nearly a decade ago, laserdisc games such as *Dragon's Lair* created tremendous public excitement, but also suffered legendary technical glitches. Why? Because the first generation of laserdisc games used delicate consumer player mechs in a commercial, industrial application. The hardware just wasn't tough enough for the knock-around playing style of the American arcade.

Today, the laserdisc industry has grown up. Optical discs have proved their reliability on the street and in the arcade many times in the past several years. Examples include Millennium's 1987 laserdisc video game *Freedom Fighter*, which got years of play in Malibu Grand Prix arcades and never had a service

Gameplay Offers Sci-Fi, Fantasy & Action

Okay, so *Hologram Time Traveler* has great technology and eye-popping special effects. But does it have an exciting, challenging game to play? Yes, it does. While the overall genre is the familiar adventure-quest "rescue the captive maiden" scenario, the game combines sci-fi story elements with Western shootout skills and clever bits of fantasy, humor and history to make up a varied and pleasurable play experience.

A comet flashes by and, in its wake, leaves words hanging in mid-air: "Hologram Time Traveler." The attract mode shows beautiful Princess Kyla traveling back in time . . . from the 26th Century, to the Old West . . . to recruit Marshall Graham, who seems to be the only guy in history with the Right Stuff to defeat an evil meanie named Vulcor. "We need your help!" she says.

Vulcor, she explains, has had the bad manners to disrupt the Time Continuum of the Universe. At this point, the attract mode is over and the player is launched into the adventure. Using a joystick and buttons to control the Marshal Graham character, the player can choose to enter any of 12 different eras from the future or the past. Each "era" contains five possible episodes, representing over 60 possible action sequences (over 30 minutes of film time) to experience.

Each game lasts just a few minutes, so the player experiences just a small percentage of the total "time traveler universe" with each coin-up. Players can choose which eras to enter, but within each era the sequences are randomly generated, so it's a different playing experience each time.

The object in each era is to defeat the bad guys and pass some unique test, with the Princess as your guide and partner. Visual prompts (not seen in the prototype shown in Las Vegas) give you some help in knowing what to do, and when.

At some point in the action, the evil Vulcor kidnaps the Princess, and you're on your own, Marshall. Eventually, the player must find and defeat Vulcor himself, in order to rescue the Princess and return the universe to its natural rhythm.

Individual episodes have a wild "Alice in Wonderland" imagination quotient to them; this is definitely not just another kick-punch game! For example, there are episodes where time slows down, speeds up, or reverses. There is a chance to "gamble" with your character's life, betting against a comical devil character. (If you win, the Devil smoothly asks: "Double or nothing?")

A large and varied cast of characters ranges from Amazons to punk rockers; from knights in armor to Japanese Ninja warriors; from cavemen to future men. After the climax, when Vulcor is vanquished and the world's set right again, the entire cast materializes on the holographic "stage" to celebrate your victory.

"It's not *too* difficult to win," Rick Dyer said with a twinkle in his eye. "You just have to survive four or five minutes to make it to the final scene. But there's no guarantee that if you win one time, you'll win the next time, since the path you travel will be completely different with all-new challenges. Besides, you've got to be a very good shot to get Vulcor!"

problem. Betson's current *Mad Dog McCree* laserdisc game is working "without a hitch," Tom Petit pointed out. "That issue is something I studied very, very closely on behalf of Sega to ensure quality and reliability," he added.

RELIABILITY & SERVICE

The prototype of *Time Traveler* shown at ACME contained a Pioneer industrial laserdisc player, although execs said production models might use Sony LD players, or both brands. A shipping screw locks the player down for shipment to keep the laser platform in perfect alignment during transport. But even without it, such proven devices as the Sony Discman, a portable CD player, work great every time!

Motors in past laserdisc games used direct-drive, which was prone to wearing out quickly. Today's generation of industrial laserdisc players use belts or gears, and last much longer. Reportedly, today's industrial LD players can go 18 months or 5,000 hours before requiring normal maintenance. And today, unlike 1982, an established nationwide network of experienced laserdisc dealers exists, who specialize in servicing, maintaining and repairing LD players. Tom Petit indicated that use of this existing network would probably be the fastest, cleanest answer to operators' service needs.

"Operators should realize that this type of game deserves and requires normal maintenance on a periodic basis, just like changing the oil in your car," stated California arcade operator Bob Szabo. "Would you drive your route truck for 30,000 miles without an oil change, then complain about the engine running rough?" Bob asked. "Of course not! Anybody who doesn't clean the optical sensor and other key parts of a laserdisc player and do other normal, routine maintenance, has only himself to blame for any service problems," this savvy operator concluded.



MARKETING PLANS

Sega is in charge of marketing "hologames," and while Rick Dyer and Tom Petit have been very forthcoming to *RePlay*, they have deliberately kept their game on a very low profile in the mass media so far. But that won't last forever. Major PR people will unveil the product with all the drumrolls and fanfare they can muster. That could include not only news reports on TV and in magazines and newspapers, but also merchandising such as dolls, t-shirts, etc. And, Rick Dyer hinted, some Saturday morning TV show tie-ins (using characters from *Time Traveler)* could be in the works.

"Operators are going to see a nationwide jolt of interest and excitement about hologames like they haven't seen since *Pac-Man,"* Rick Dyer promised. "Children, teens and even adults will be coming into locations, looking for this game. Moms and dads will recognize it from TV and the news media when they run across it in stores, and believe me, they will stop and insert some money!"

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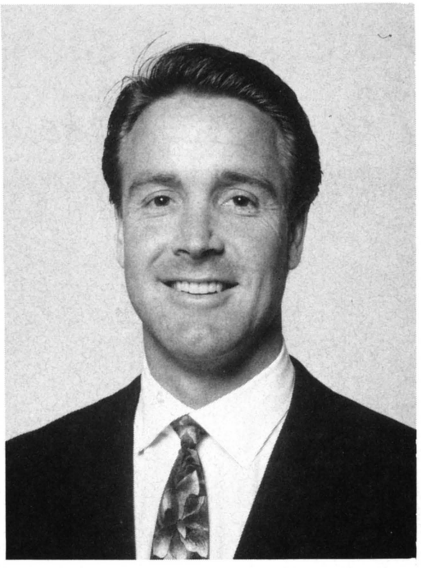
"Absolutely," smiled Tom Petit. "Future games and storylines will be a 'coalition effort' by Allen Design Group and Sega," he said. "It's been fun for me to lend creative support and Rick appreciates and welcomes that input.

"Naturally," Tom continued, "everyone in the industry has a suggestion for future games and applications. Some of them are great ideas, too. Of course, we've got some pretty exciting ideas of our own. Without revealing our plans, I'd just like to say that hologames are not limited to one type of storyline, theme or concept."

Petit cautioned, however, that the hologame platform and cabinet should not be considered a "system," since future games may not be confined to simple software changes, but could incorporate variable hardware/software interfaces (i.e. an optical disc plus a PC board, or just a board, etc.). "The hologame platform is an ongoing, convertible technology," Petit stated on this point. "And yes, we do intend to do updates. We will provide followup software."



TOM PETIT

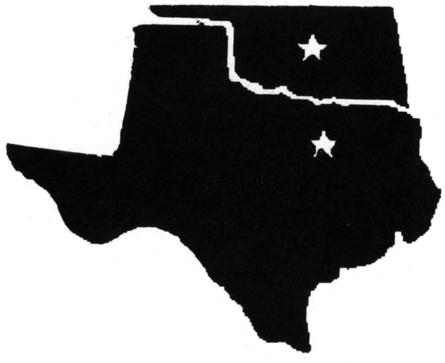
. . . AND THE FUTURE OF COIN-OP

The question everyone inside the industry (and many outside it) are asking themselves, is the crucial one: will *Hologram Time Traveler* be a hit?

RePlay's answer: oh, yes. Almost certainly. But more importantly, *Time Traveler* could be the doorway to coin-op's long-desired, hi-tech future. Sega helped lead the way to an industry revival in 1985 with its superb line of motion-simulators. Now, in partnership with Rick Dyer and the team at Hologram Ventures, they hope to do it again . . . bigger and better, this time . . . maybe even taking coin-op into that shining future outlined by Nolan Bushnell, where coin-op games rival the movies as a mass entertainment medium.

"We're really only in the infancy of this technology," Tom Petit said. "What you saw in Las Vegas was as dramatic a development as *Pong*, and it will have the same dramatic impact in the 1990s. The hologame will pave a new frontier for entertainment in this industry. And what makes it super special, is that the industry is ready and eager for that to happen. It's going to be a busy, ground-breaking, exciting era!"

As Rick Dyer said with a smile: "We're looking forward to having a lot of fun in the next few months. And years."



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Williams/Bally-Midway proudly claims that title at ACME;

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their booth was chock-full of excellent games of all types

Williams/Bally-Midway is the kind of company that General "Stormin' Norman" Schwartzkopf would love. The general — who recently proved the success of his "overwhelming force" doctrine in the Middle East — would probably recognize the same doctrine in action at this Chicago-based game factory.

At the ACME show in Las Vegas, the Williams exhibit booth was bursting with great new titles in every category: pins, video, novelties and staple games. Overwhelming force? Overwhelming product! Overwhelming creativity, quality and reliability, WMS has described its goal of becoming a "full-service company," supplying top quality products across the board. Well, congratulations, Williams/Bally-Midway. From here, it looks like an overwhelming victory!

THE MACHINE

Williams has long dominated the pinball market, and they reasserted their lock on that "franchise" at ACME with *The Machine: Bride of Pinbot.* Designer Python Angelo, WMS's resident "wild and crazy guy," was the creative fountain behind this one.



Ain't she a beaut? Pinbot's bride on *The Machine* is one weird sci-fi chick (note tubes coming from right wrist). But we ask ourselves: Would Python demand anything else?

The sci-fi theme invites players to "bring a female robot to life." The first shot up the left-hand ramp lands in the robot's mouth; her head spins and "vocal circuits" are "activated." Land the pinball on her eyes a couple of times to help her see. Then multi-ball play begins and targeting the robot's neck a couple of times creates "an amazing transformation that gives her life."

It's a theme as timeless as Pinnochio and as fresh as RoboCop. (By the way, an earlier Williams pinball character, Pin-bot, is in the playfield's upper right-hand corner. His area comprises a mini-playfield of its own.) Other game features include a small wheel, located in the playfield's lower center, and an upper central "heart ramp." Both areas offer big point rewards (even a billion-point shot) to players. Of course, the game comes complete with the usual dazzling Williams pinball package of dazzling vocals, sound effects, music and lighting effects.

We have only one question: did Python's own recent marriage help inspire this wonderful game? If so, Williams ought to send the designer and his wife on a second honeymoon (or third, or fourth) every time the company wishes to stoke his creative fires! Nice work, Mrs. Angelo! The design team was rounded out by John (Doctor Flash) Trudeau, Zofia Bil, Joe Joos, Brian Eddy, Dan Forden, Rich Karstens, John Youssi, Jack Skalon and Jon Hey.

As stated elsewhere in this issue, *The Machine: Bride of Pinbot* was the biggest seller in the WMS exhibit booth in Las Vegas . . . and perhaps the biggest seller from all of ACME. Get one and start making the kind of money that only a mad scientist could dream of.



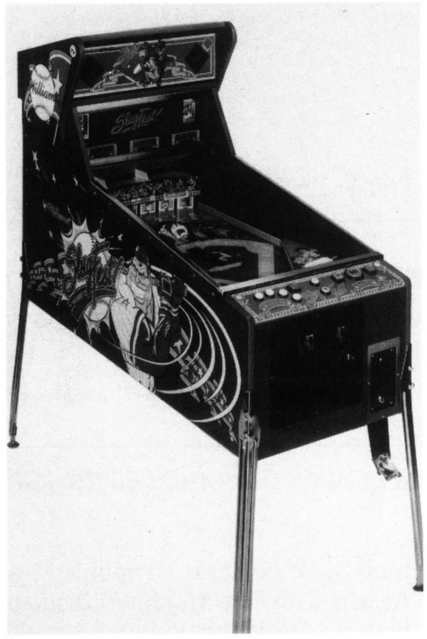
"Don't eat me, Trog!" hollers Joe Dillon as he reaches for his tranquilizer gun at the Williams/Bally/Midway distrib meeting at ACME. Note that Trog's butt is too big to fit page.

SLUGFEST

Baseball season is here, and Williams is knocking home runs all over the country with *SlugFest!* Remember the classic baseball games of the 1950s, which sent a smaller pinball-style ball for a single player to bat with a flipper "bat" at the bottom of the playfield? Well, this gorgeous game updates that concept with computer versatility of theme and gameplay.

It also vends tickets or, if you prefer, real Topps brand baseball cards! *RePlay* called this game "the hit novelty of the ACME show," and tradesters clearly fell in love with it. Designers Mark Richie and Bill Pfutzenreuter had help on this one from Pat McMahon, Sack Skalon, Win Schilling, John Tobias, Paul Heitsch, Joe Joos and Butch Ortega.

One or two (simultaneous) players may play *Slugfest,* since it offers



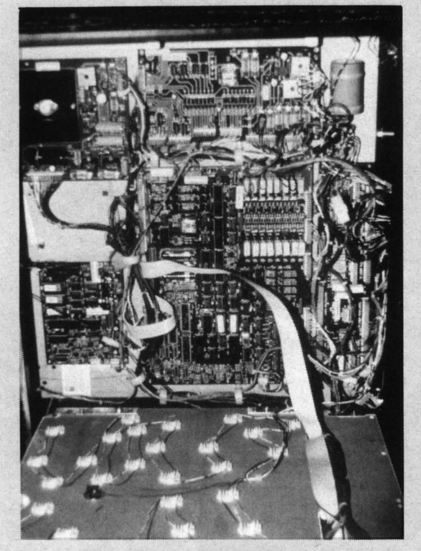
batting and fielding play. In a two-player game, the "fielder" can use buttons to select what type of pitch to throw, and when. The game can simulate fast balls, curves, screwballs and change-ups. (The defensive player should cover the buttons with his hand to prevent the batter from seeing which pitch is coming.) In a one-player game, the computer selects the pitches. Up to three "balls" may be called if the batter doesn't swing. The batter can strike out by missing three pitches, or by not swinging.

The interactive pitching feature alone is a major innovation for baseball novelty games . . . but it's just the beginning! Thanks to a host of other offensive and defensive options, very realistic baseball strategy is possible for players. For example, in a two-player game, the defensive player can also try to throw out the runners who are stealing bases, by hitting the "throw" button at the correct time. Again, a combination of lights, animated graphics and

Pinball Gets Smarter: New WMS Controller Does More With Less

If you look "under the hood" of a Williams or Bally pin these days, you may be surprised by what you see: less. It's one of those cases where "less is more," because WMS has simplified, reduced and updated the computer hardware and software that runs the machine.

The new cleaner, simpler system is called WPC (Williams Pinball Controller), and operators will be hearing about this new technology from company service chief Tom Cahill in his service seminars. From Tom, operators will learn how to interact with WPC to program their games. Operators will also find that WPC lets them sit back and enjoy new things pinball can do by itself! WPC was first installed in *Fun House* and did such things as animate the "Rudy" character. But that's only scratching the surface.

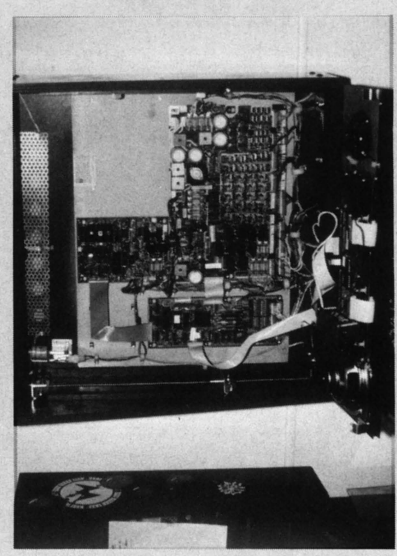


before: System II

"About two and a half years ago, we started saying it was time to move beyond our 13-year old 'system 11' computer system," said Chuck Bleich, manager of the electrical group. "System 11 was the technology that brought pinballs into the electronic age. With WPC, we're taking pinball into the computer age. The hardware system is the brains and the software is the intelligence. We've brought our system up to state-of-the-art components; added lots of new capabilities; and at the same time reduced the number and complexity of components, functions, wiring, connectors and other things which could become potential problems. The result will be more reliability and capability, with greater performance and easier troubleshooting. It's a technological breakthrough and we're very proud of it."

New capabilities of the WPC include things like dot-matrix graphics; much faster data transfer from the game to printer (by the way, laptop computer interface is coming, to allow downloading and uploading); much more sophisticated data collection on when games are played, how they're played, how long they last, etc . . . all of which can be used to set automatically-variable gameplay parameters for a single unit at different times of the day!

WPC consists of two main boards: a CPU and a power driver. Peripherals like a sound board, etc. can be added or changed as each game demands, meaning the system is flexible to needs of game designers, yet is simple for operators to maintain. Software programmer Larry DeMar and electronics engineer Mark Coldbella assisted Chuck in the unit's design and creation.



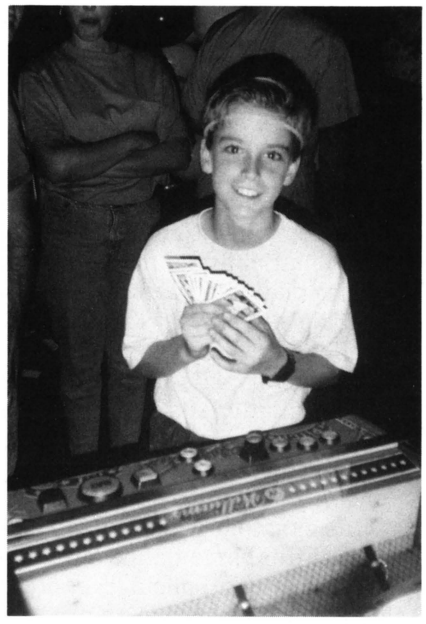
after: WPC

audio cues tell players which of them succeeded.

Batting is far more varied and realistic than in older baseball novelties, too. The 1950s models used to have stationary targets, but today's technology allows *Slugfest* to change the values of targets with each at-bat. Lights atop the playing surface correspond to seven playfield targets and indicate single, double, triple, home run, outs, etc.

The game even features an actual batting sequence with specific characters who rotate by name in the batter's box. There are nine players for each team per inning. As each hitter comes to the "plate," certain target lights are lit and the hitter's name is shown. Players must time their "swing" to direct the ball to the best possible designated target. After the batter hits his ball, depending on which target is reached (single, double, triple, home run, etc.), lighted images of runners on the playfield indicate their progress around the bases.

Players are allowed one pinch-hitter per quarter. The strategy required is in choosing the best time to deploy this option; you become the "coach" and must analyze the on-base situation, number of outs, etc. very closely! The player can substitute the pinch hitter at any time; no "outs" are lit on the playfield targets in a pinch-hitting option, so selecting this option guarantees a hit (unless you strike out completely).



Precious picture: young Shawn Bowles shows the joy of winning a handful of baseball cards from Williams' *Slugfest* at SunBelt's open house in Dallas. Of all the photos we snapped during this show season, this was our favorite.

Base stealing is yet another realistic feature. You can steal a base — including home if you have a man on third — by activating a "steal" button ASAP, just before the ball is released from the pitcher's mound. (A digitized voice says "He's taking his lead..." and then you get a visual cue from the dot-matrix display.) Successful base-stealing leads to crowd roar noises and dot-matrix animation of the umpire calling "safe!" Players who steal bases frequently will find that the game makes it harder and harder to accomplish this.

A low backboard features a dot-matrix display which is about 4" high and about 8" long. Basically, it is a simple TV screen with animated picture graphics comparable to those in a handheld video game. Orange-red dots light up on a black background to create animated words and fairly complex pictures. The game features umpires calling safe and out; runners stealing a base (and being chased by a ball); basemen tagging the runners "out";

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a heckler who jeers at players (and gets hit by foul balls sometimes); fireworks; skyline shots; an "exploding scoreboard" for home runs; etc. These graphics are closely coordinated to gameplay. Baseball cards and display lighting are incorporated in the cabinet next to the screen.

At the end of each game, the player can get performance stats on his "team" and on each fictional baseball team member! These are displayed on the dot-matrix screen. There's a "high run to date" table, a high-score table and an opportunity to enter your initials. Sounds include crowd reaction, organ music, popcorn venders, etc.

The game vends either baseball cards or tickets (operator's selection). Cards are the genuine articles from Topps (1991 is the 45th anniversary of this Brooklyn, N.Y. company, by the way). *Slugfest* can hold about 1,000 cards; operators can buy replacement cards through their authorized Williams distributors. The game can also be set for straight coin-op mode with no dispenser at all. A dollar bill acceptor is also optional.

Williams says the game should perform quite well in kids' places, bars, arcades, you name it. All we can say, is play ball!

TROG

Now we come to the video side of the company. Good videos used to automatically be made into expensive dedicated games. Not anymore. Not at Midway. They've made a policy decision that the market wants quality kits, so the market will get quality kits. (Of course, if you want to buy one of their universal cabinets, they'll be delighted to oblige.)

One example of quality in kits is a delightful game called *Trog*. An early (but still promising) version of this game appeared at an prior national trade show, and even received strong dealer orders . . . but Midway decided to fine-tune *Trog* to bring the game up to its full potential. They succeeded.

A delightful concept and uniquely appealing graphics are now complemented by simple, straightforward (yet challenging) gameplay. It's a JAMMA-compatible conversion kit for two-, three- or four-player cabinets (number of players is operator-selectable via dipswitch).

The game is also video's first unit to employ "PlayMation" (TM), which means stop-motion photography is employed to achieve animation of small models of the characters. (RKO pioneered this technique with *King Kong* in 1933; in this case, the characters are made out of clay . . . think of Gumby and Pokey.) The resulting film is then digitized and programmed into the computer, and the end result is a very appealing set of characters with lifelike movements, a range of subtle character expressions, etc., which provide great visual entertainment. Women and kids should love this game just as much as men and teens.

Fundamentals of gameplay are very easy and simple to learn. Kids get payoffs from the delightful animation and cartoon effects, while adults can also get into the competitive aspects. Players control dinosaur characters (named Rex, Bloop, Spike and Gwen). The dinos are introduced to various islands which are inhabited by tribes of humorous, one-eyed, dino-eating cavemen named "Trogs." Players try to trav-

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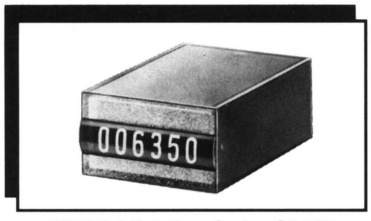

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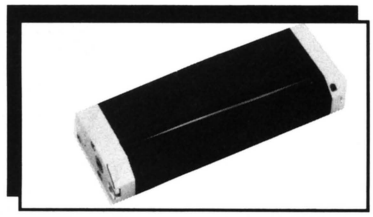
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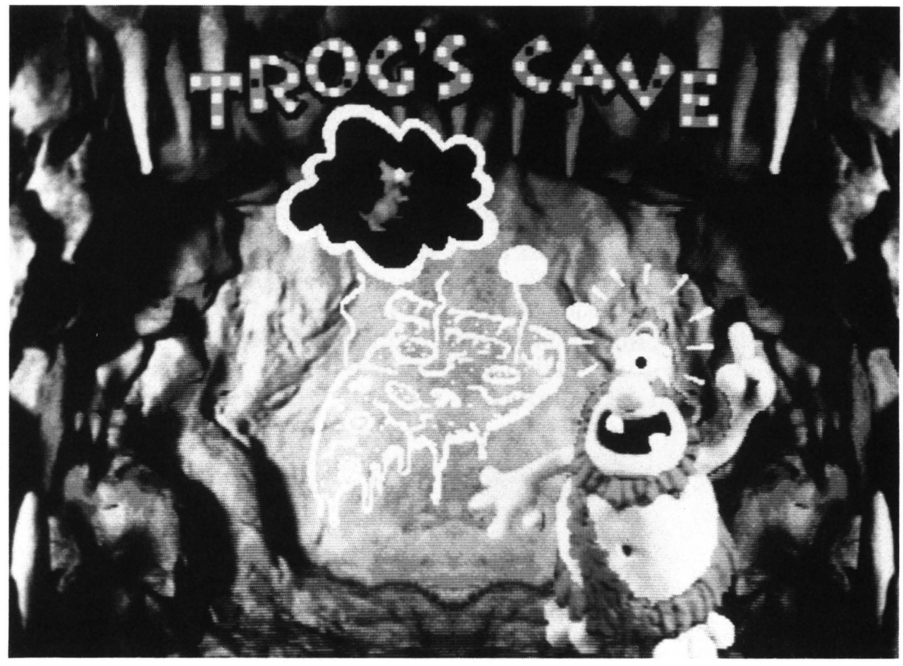
el around a maze-type "course" and (in competition with other dinosaurs) pick up as many "eggs" as possible. After several rounds, collecting enough eggs makes your dinosaur's "home" appear onscreen.

It's also a good idea to avoid those hungry cavemen. "Trog lives to eat," smiled designer Jack Haeger. Trog originally appears bare-handed and punches dinosaurs into submission (then eats them, complete with napkin around his neck, knife and fork in hand . . . when he's through eating, he belches rudely). As play continues, Trogs appear with a club, bouncing spring shoes, or other weapons — singly or in combination.

"A lot of sight gags are built around Trog," Jack added. "He invents fire with a stick, but if you can get your dinosaur to go around him at the last minute, he'll step into his own fire and crumble into dust so that just his single eye is left hanging in the air for a second."

Up to 25 Trogs can appear onscreen, all acting independently with different weapons, strategies, strengths, etc. Between rounds, players are treated to funny Play-Mation sequences of Trog in his cave, thinking of inventions (such as the first wheel, etc.).



Players acquire onscreen power symbols, then use their action buttons to exercise those powers. A red-hot chile pepper enables your dinosaur to breathe fire; a melting ice cube lets the dinosaur freeze all the Trog characters; a spinning pineapple transforms the dinosaur into a full-grown Tyrannosaurus Rex who eats Trogs and squashes other dinosaurs; etc.

The action button also lets dinosaurs punch each other, with comical results (stars circle the head of the brained lizard, etc.). Bonus

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waves allow dinosaurs to get even with Trog by eating him, collect jewels, etc. In higher rounds, players are introduced to varied islands which feature catapults and other weapons.

Designer/artist Jack Haeger, and designer/software programmer George Petro, both worked on *Narc*. Rounding out the team were Chris Granner (sounds and music), Ray Czajaka, Linda Deal, Mark Loffredo, Cary Mednick, Kurt Mahan, Sheridan Oursler, Al Lasko and Ray Gay.

The team wanted to veer from *Narc's* extreme violence and realism, to the opposite extreme of fantasy and child-like innocence. "We were trying to break new ground," George Petro commented. "Every game out there seemed to be punch-kick or sports stimulation, and the other end of the market was being ignored."

Players of all ages and both sexes ought to enjoy this game. We sure did!

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Another exciting new video kit from Midway offers a complexity and sophistication of gameplay that is usually only seen in home games or computer games. Additionally, Midway says their game has that indefinable, built-in element of showmanship, production values or "star quality" that makes American entertainment the most popular in the world, from Hollywood movies to Motown music . . . from Chicago pinballs to . . . innovative Chicago coin-op video!

StrikeForce takes players into a unique, fully-imagined fictional science fiction universe. "Interactivity" is the name of the game, since players have lots of opportunities to set their own course, determine their own strategies, improvise their tactics and interact with the game in a myriad of unique ways.

This kit is for one or two players simultaneously. It's horizontal oriented and features player-directed "wrap-around scrolling" (i.e. if you scroll to the extreme left, you eventually circle around 360 degrees to the same spot as if you had scrolled to the extreme right, and vice-versa). Sophisticated graphics lend true perspective to various scenes from ground settings to moons overhead, and even stars in deep space (the scrolling backgrounds have a sophisticated sense of depth).

The fictional environment consists of a single solar system comprised of 22 different and distinct planets. At game start, all 22 planets are under invasion by the "Saurians," an evil species of lizard-like creatures. Players have the mission of battling the Saurians, who are equipped with a "Mega-Star" space station, plus attendant fleets, fighters, etc. Strategy on many levels, as well as combat skills, determine the outcome as players battle the Saurian invaders for control of the planets. The more planets the player controls, the more easily he can defeat the Mega-Star.

Planets can be won and lost repeatedly in the course of a single game and the composition of the planets and their inhabitants will vary with each battle. The evil aliens mutate human colonists into small, mutant lizards. Players can "deprogram" (re-humanize) the mutated colonists to gain points and weapons. Players can also send out "ma-

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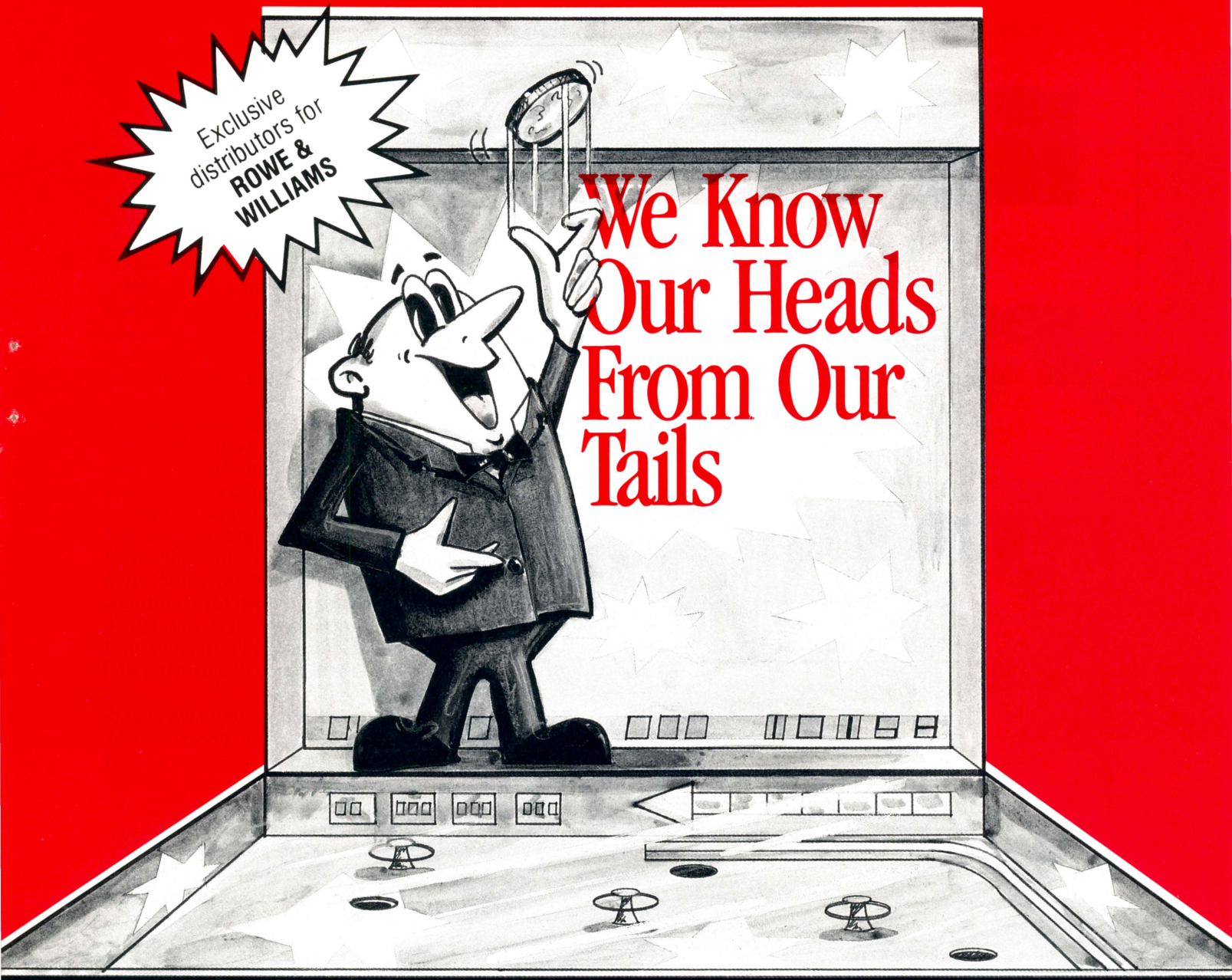

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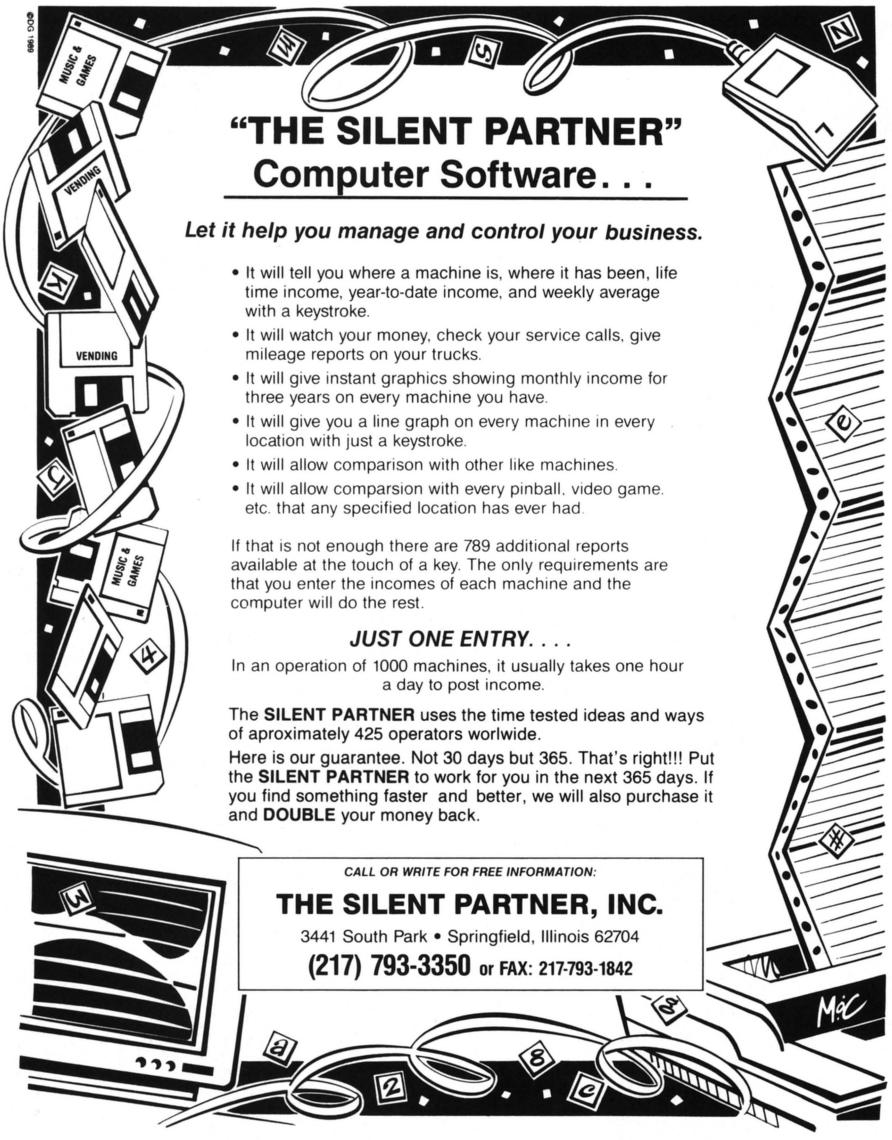


rines" in space suits who fight independently (so the player is setting a lot of grand strategy in this game, as well participating in combat himself). Players remain in their space ship for the most part, where they choose planet destinations, collect ship weapons, send out marines, etc.

Each planet offers unique opportunities and dangers; 15 different weapons are available, and each weapon has an ideal best deployment against variously-equipped Saurians. Allied evil critters also menace the human colonists, who in turn become enemies. As gameplay progresses, the Saurians get further and further in their mutation and conquest plans on remaining planets; they also acquire stronger and stronger weapons.

All the elements of the game are interactive with each other. Progress on one planet affects the outcome on other planets; multiple players can form true strategic alliances and enact genuine tactical cooperation. Also, the deployment of various weapons, interaction with various characters, settings, etc. all create nuances and variations of action and outcomes that players will enjoy discovering and mastering.

The *StrikeForce* team was headed up by Todd Allen (programmer), who also worked on *Narc*, and by John Vogel (artist); it was his first video game. Pat McMahon did artwork, Paul Heitsch did sounds and John Tobias did graphics.

Test reports and strong reaction from operators and distributors at ACME promise that this game will win a long-lived place for itself in players' hearts (and operators' cash boxes). After 30-plus weeks of arcade testing, the game was still earning 85% of its peak dollars, Midway execs said.

Self-adjusting features are also built in. And the game's programming allows operators to do enough tweaking at key points to keep the piece challenging for players as they improve their skills. "It's not something that players master and walk away from," said Williams marketing pro Roger Sharpe. "Our designers are giving operators the maximum return for their investment, something that will still be valuable on the route, still earning in future months and years." R



Leland INDY HEAT

Its official name is **Danny Sullivan's Indy Heat** but the trade will simply call it **Indy Heat.** They may be saying that name a lot, because this "successor to" Leland's successful **Super Off-Road** driver adds more skill-commanding elements, all housed in a gorgeous new dedicated cabinet with a unique eye-catching 3D display in its marquee.

Visually exciting, yes, but game play is the name of this trade's business and this item packs enough action to make you choke on the exhaust smoke (about the only thing missing). Like 'Off-Road,' **Indy Heat** is a 3-player where you can inject additional coins to buy goodies that give you the edge against the other players and the game's computer. For example, you can "buy" a better-performing engine, a faster pit crew, better brakes, etc. in the "shop."

There are 14 different race courses offered on the screen, all patterned on the tracks driven on the North American racing tour (e.g. the Indianapolis 500 and the Phoenix Raceway). Famous racing car driver Danny Sullivan is represented in a computer car. There are also computer trucks that pop out on the various speedways and the idea is to stay ahead of all these computer cars and avoid crashing. Its turbo button helps you stay ahead.

The crash scenes are great. As players race tire to tire, they must avoid hitting the walls or another car. If they hit, they can catch on fire. According to Leland's Brian Kopf, "the skill factors here are compelling . . . you've got to 'think' if you want to win consistently," he explained.

Designed at Leland's El Cajon, Calif. plant by a team led by John Morgan, the game employs an improved hardware system in order to do its tricks (e.g. background scenes of the race courses are quite realistic). The machine shown at ACME in late March had smaller cars than those on production models (which began shipping to Leland dealers April 10).

Driving games are always good investments and once again, Leland has shown it makes some of the best. Check **Indy Heat** out first chance at your local Leland dealer .

Sunshine CD Kit

Sunshine Distributing (Missouri dealers) has signed an exclusive agreement with Digital Disc Automation (U.K. makers of compact disc phono materials since 1985) to market their 100-disc jukebox conversion kits through new Digital Disc Automation of America subsidiary and have begun to seek territorial sales assistance from some other distributors.

According to Sunshine's Mark Loethen, the "average" coin machine mechanic can convert an old vinyl jukebox into a CD phonograph with this kit in about three hours, "two hours if he's speedy." Applicable old phonographs, according to Sunshine's Talih Ozturk, include Rowe models R-82 and up, Rock-Ola models 490 and up and Seeburg models SMC-1 and up.

Kit components include a 100-disc Phillips player, CPU logic board, a new push button selection control panel and a wire harness compatible with the original manufacturer's connectors. The existing title strip panel is used (title cards from one-stops slip in the place of the small vinyl strips). In addition, there's a CD advertising graphic that replaces the original manufacturer's to let players know they're looking at a CD phonograph. The kit also offers bookkeeping management system, flexible play-pricing and, of course, complete installation instructions.

Loethen says the Digital kit enables vinyl operators to get into the CD swing at around half the price of buying new goods. "I am not saying music operators shouldn't buy new CD phonographs, just that this is an alternate way for them to turn some old warriors they've already paid for into CD machines," he advised.

Talih Ozturk advised that the two-player system we spoke of earlier in this issue is not available but will be downstream. Meantime, this 100-disc kit can be ordered by calling Sunshine at 800/543-0032. Also check on delivery dates.



Data East's DESERT ASSAULT

Desert Assault from Data East USA is an upright video game in dedicated format for one to four players simultaneously.

Theme: Operation Desert Storm.

Gameplay: players lead American forces on a dangerous hostage rescue mission in the Middle East. Good guys are equipped with hi-tech weapons and battle it out with terrorists on land, sea and air. Players can trade in old weapons for more powerful firearms throughout gameplay; five levels of action keep the quarters coming.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Data East USA, 1850 Little Orchard Dr., San Jose, CA 95125; 408/286-7080.

New Redemption Merchandise from Monaco

HMS Monaco is right in the swing of baseball season with mini batting helmets and baseball cards in their **Baseball Collectors' Crane Kit.** This 72-piece capsule kit features three miniature team helmets and six 1991 Topps baseball cards. Average capsule cost runs 75¢ to 83¢, depending on size of your order.

Also from Monaco are some wild **Neon Sunglasses** in a butterdish capsule container. Three popular styles are "hot for summer," said the firm. Prices run from 91 cents to $1 per pair, depending on size of order.

For more information, contact HMS Monaco et Cie Ltd., 135 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011; 212/691-9000.

PEGGLE

Strata's first non-sports video highlights cute character; "redemption video" broadens play appeal to women & kids

Meet Peggle — the bubbly, charming, colorful character starring in Strata's new redemption vidgame of the same name. Called "adorable," "funny," and "lovable" by early test players, this one is sure to earn enthusiasm as well as dollars.

A strong introduction in Strata's move toward non-sports-themed games, *Peggle* is an appealing and unique one-player skill game. The player's objective is to give the title character the 30-second joyride of his life on two concentric circles of pegs. Each time Peggle hits a peg, the player earns points with eventually enough hits to clear the peg completely — all the while trying to avoid the moving carnival cars below (or aiming for extra points with the bounce or mystery cars.) And while this cutesy theme may suggest that *Peggle* would appeal to only small children, that has not proved to be the case.

"Thanks to skillful programming," says Strata's prexy Richard Ditton, "*Peggle* is cute and non-threatening, so women and children take to it immediately. But it's also challenging and funny enough to entertain boys."

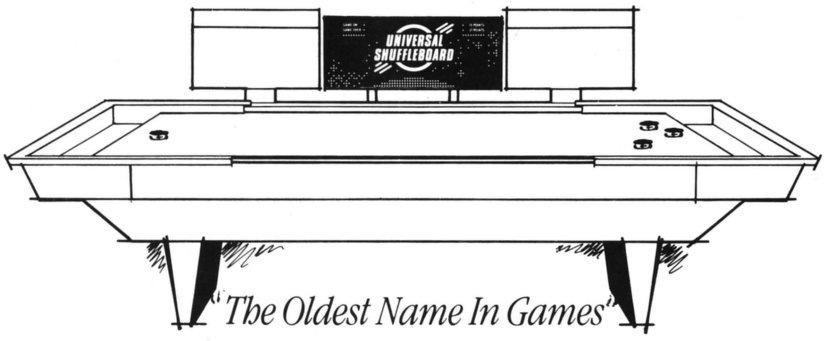
And entertaining it is. Thanks to Peggle's constant chattering and giggling, the game has a life of its own. "*Peggle* is unusual because," Scott Morrison, the game's designer explained, "instead of controlling the character, the player of *Peggle* controls the background in order to maneuver Peggle into scoring points. The game shows every indication of becoming a very popular location piece, as well as a good game for arcades."

This soon-to-be "popular location piece" is a vertically oriented, ticket redemption video that uses a spinner control and start button. The same kit can also be adjusted for use as a non-redemption piece which allows the player to reach multiple levels of play where new elements (such as Peggle's' girlfriend Peggy and baby Peglett) are introduced. Strata's got fun (and hopefully profits) pegged with this one!

For more information contact your distributor or Strata, Inc. at 708/437-2704.



Strata prexy Rich Ditton (left) and *Peggle's* chief designer Scott Morrison flank their invention at ACME. The other credit for designing this strategy video goes to Dave Thiel.



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ATLAS/CHICAGO: ONCE MORE, GREAT ATTITUDES PREVAIL

The newish showrooms of Atlas Distributing on W. Dickens in Chicago supplied the setting for another gala open house. Held Thursday, April 4, this Jerry Marcus/Ed Pellegrini party hosted around 190 trade folk (representing about 85 individual companies) to food, refreshment and a look at not only new "ACME" machines but a few never seen before (Atlas does testing for some of the game manufacturers.)

Operators' spirits and equipment buying were good, said Marcus. "The guys were peppy and really got into the new equipment. Our people wrote business that afternoon and evening and into the next day on the phone. Great party. Of course, great equipment helps," he smiled.

Many factory reps came by to help explain the play features of their new goods, including Howie Rubin (Jaleco), Rachel Davies (SNK), John Hill (Sega), Dan Clarton (Premier/Gottlieb), Brian Kopf (Leland) and Drew Maniscalco (Irem). After the open house, Marcus and Pellegrini treated some out-of-towners to dinner out by O'Hare Airport at Carlucci's Restaurant. Fine day capped by a fine evening.



Don Hesch (A.H. Entertainers), Eddie Velasquez (Velasquez Automatic Music) and Atlas/Chicago's Jerry Marcus schmooze over by Premier's new *Cactus Jack's* flipper at the April 4 party on West Dickens. Good crowd of upbeat trade people turned out for the affair.



Kevin & Frank Mundt (Spot Amusements) are about to try out Bromley's new *Ghost Town* rifle. This game got hot response at the ACME.



Ray Krottner (Leisure Time) & Wayne Segedie (E.M. Direct) at Konami's *The Simpsons.* Atlas/Chicago was a key "test distributor" of this video.

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by LAURENCE MERRITT & DAVID HAGEN

Deals, or agreements, are the foundation upon which any business is based. This is true with operators as well. Two of the types of agreements which operators should use, and be very familiar with are location agreements and employment contracts. One of the key elements in these contracts is the term. That is, how long will the agreement last? This is an issue which can be overlooked. Accordingly, we are taking this opportunity to discuss this sometimes neglected issue.

To start, an agreement can basically be for any length of time the parties agree. It can be for as short as one second, or for a period of many years. Normally, one party will negotiate for a longer term so as to protect their business interest while the other party will negotiate for a shorter term to allow for more flexibility and choice. Further, the courts have superimposed over this "anything goes" area of contract law certain guidelines or perimeters which must be taken into consideration when deciding upon the term of a contract.

LOCATION AGREEMENTS

Location agreements are so critical to the success of a route, yet, less than five seconds is usually directed towards choosing the term of the agreement. Obviously, the location would like a short contract term. For a location, a six-month contract is too long! Operators, on the other hand, usually want a longer contractual period. Many times an operator will put a tremendous amount of time and effort into building a location or purchasing a specific machine for that location. Obviously, because of the time and money invested, the operator wants to ensure that they will be in the location long enough to justify their investment. Because of this, we typically see location agreements that last for up to 10 years.

Given the above perimeters, and excluding any factors relevant to any particular deal, what is the best period of time for a location agreement? We recommend five years. Our feeling is that five years normally gives an operator a sufficient period of time to recoup their investment and protect their valued location from the competition. If your contract contains an automatic renewal provision, and it should, this five-year period will automatically renew itself every five years unless the location gives notice within a specified period of time.

Every once in a while, (but not often) we see courts striking down 10-year contracts as being "unconscionable." Essentially, the court feels that 10 years is too long a period of time and they simply strike the agreement down in its entirety. Because of this risk, we are most comfortable with the five-year period of time with an automatic renewal provision.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Employment contracts are usually entered into for a number of reasons. From the employee's perspec-

tive, employment contracts provide job security and specified rates of compensation. From the employer's point of view, they provide definitive areas of responsibility as well as stated reasons for discharge. Employees obviously want employment contracts with a long term. Five years or more would not seem unreasonable to them. Employers, on the other hand, usually hire at will, that is, on a month-to-month basis. If a longer contractual period is contemplated, it is usually for not more than one year.

It is interesting to note that we almost never see employment contracts in the five to ten year range. This is especially true in California. In California, the courts will generally hold, as a rule of thumb, that a personal services contract (that is, an employment contract) which exceeds seven years, is essentially an involuntary servitude. That is, the courts generally will not hold anyone to a contract for more than seven years. This was a much-discussed issue when Magic Johnson signed an agreement several years ago with the Lakers for the then unheard sum of $1,000,000 per year for 25 years. Legal scholars all speculated that the contract could be invalidated after seven years. When the owner of the Los Angeles Lakers, Dr. Jerry Buss, was approached about this issue, he indicated that he was not concerned for two reasons. First, he didn't feel that salaries would escalate that much and that after seven years his player would be very happy in staying with the team during the later years of his career for the salary of $1,000,000 per year. Second, he was confident that his relationship with his player would cause him to stay with the team. Dr. Buss was wrong on the first count in that many players' salaries now far exceed $1,000,000 per year. He has since torn up Magic Johnson's contract several times and given him additional monies. Dr. Buss was right on the second count, however, in that his personal relationship with Magic Johnson has probably been a significant factor in keeping Magic with the team, far longer than the seven-year period allowed by the courts.

Whether you employ an employee on a month-to-month basis or in yearly intervals depends to a large extent upon your relationship with, and confidence in, that employee. However, we do not, under normal circumstances, recommend employment contracts for a period greater than one year. This is true especially because of all the recent litigation regarding unlawful termination.

How long is too long? As with so many questions with law, it all depends upon the situation. The above rules of thumb should be helpful. However, give this matter some thought before dropping a number into your contracts.

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

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Tournament Highlights

ANNUAL VALLEY DART CUP PLAYED DURING ACME

The Las Vegas Imperial Palace Hotel was the setting for Valley's fifth North American dart tournament. Held right during the ACME show, it allowed operators to witness the heady experience of players "going for the gold" in one of the industry's national playoffs.

Over a hundred male and female darters, all finalists from qualifying local tournaments held by the operators earlier, were flown by Valley to Vegas and housed at the Imperial. The goal: to win this North American championship and an expense-paid trip to Austria for the World Championship itself.

This year (as at all other N.A. championships), the standard of play was excellent. Many virtually won their spot on last throws at local bouts as well (according to operators present). Player skill is tops, but so is the X-factor, and many a hair was raised on the neck watching the tourney come down to the wire.

As the field was narrowed game by game, eight men and eight women made the cut and (with hearts in mouths) stepped up for the ultimate contest. Those winners were Tammy Tjapkes, Cathy Perot, John Gray and Joe Beecroft (shown in the above photo with Valley chief Chuck Milhem). "They'll make a very strong team to play in Austria and, we believe, will hold onto the Valley World Cup," said Milhem.

After the grand finals, dinner was provided at the Imperial's Fuji Room where around 180 guests and players applauded the winners (who received medals, dart clocks and certificates to prove their playing excellence). They'll be departing for Klagenfurt, Austria rather quickly since the World Cup will take place there May 8-9. Around twelve countries will be represented in Austria (Hungary may field a team itself). While the USA won the World Cup three times, Germany took it in 1989.



Austria, considered by Valley to be the second largest market in Europe for electronic darts, is hosting the World Championships through its distributor Fun World. Industry VIPs expected to be at the bout include NSM's Ulli Kuennecke (Germany), Thomas Schoffman (Fun World) and Jim Griffiths (Valley International Operations VP).

Valley expects that national teams from other competing European countries will be accompanied by their distributors and operators as well as by cheering fans (which is normal at events over there). In Bingen, Germany, over 3,000 people attended the 1989 finals where that nation won the Cup away from the USA.

"We can expect no less vocal support by the host nation, Austria, and the sound of cow bells and ski calls will resound at the hall where not only the avid fan will participate in support of his or her favorite team but others too via the Championships on TV," said Milhem. "By the way, Austria will be hard to beat," Chuck added with a nod.



ATLAS FLIPS OUT

event raised dough for U.S. doughboy families

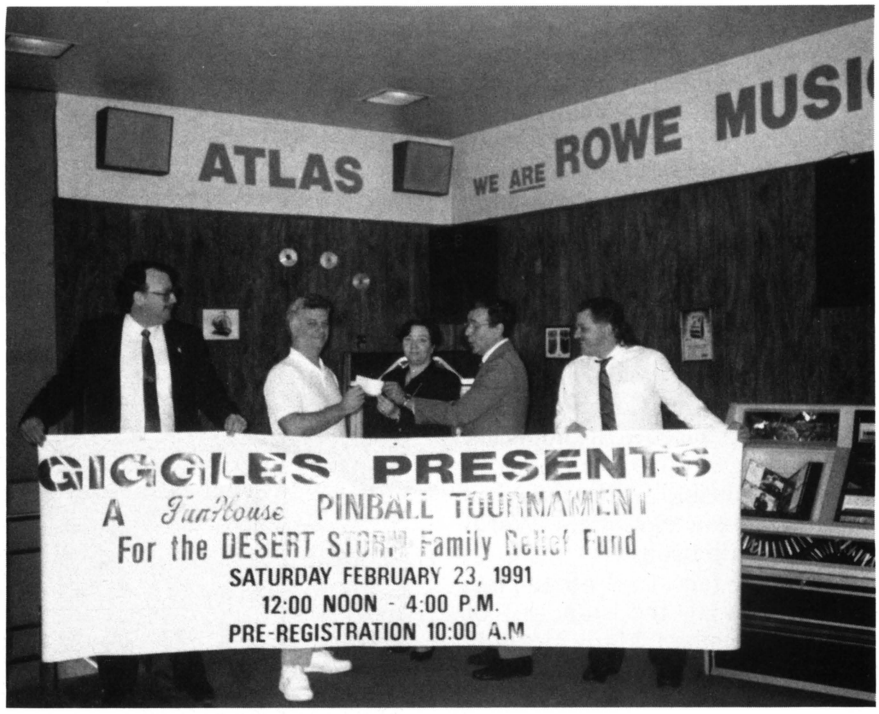
With brotherhood in their thoughts and patriotism in their hearts, the folks at Atlas Distributing helped support the homefront with a *Funhouse* pin tournament organized to help Operation Desert Storm families. Held Feb. 23 at the Washington Mall in Washington, Penn. Atlas got things jumpin' with their tournament with a cause.

That cause drew over 150 enthusiastic players competing in two divisions (open — all ages) and (12 years and older) and helped to raise $2,000 through entry fees and gameplay, which in turn, was donated to the American Red Cross for the Desert Storm Family Relief Fund.

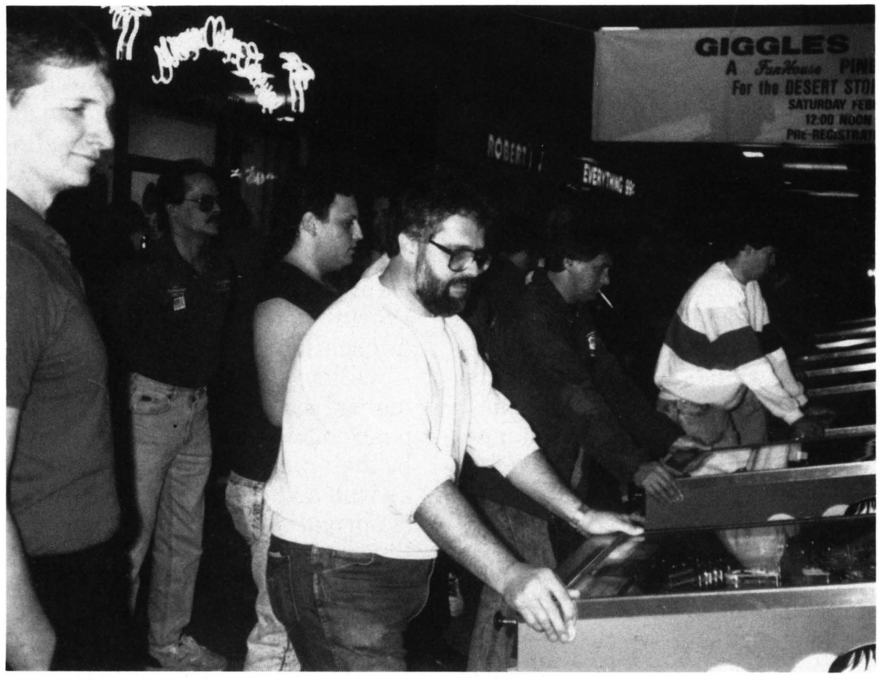
The Red Cross was not the only one who walked away with something. Tournament prizes were awarded for all winners and game qualifiers. Overall prizes were a color TV (1st place), $200 in mall money (2nd place), compact discs and two coke t-shirts (3rd place) and on through 15th place with prizes ranging from a Walkman radio to 12-packs of coke. Walking away with first prize in the open division was Dave Constant of Pittsburgh, with 9-year-old Brandon Brown of Washington, Penn. winning in the 12 and under division.

Deserving a prize for their time and effort, over 20 Atlas employees and six sponsors helped make the event a success. Sponsors included: Giggles Family Entertainment Center, Canonsburg Amusement, Williams Electronics, Cameron Coca-Cola, WDVE Radio, and of course, Atlas Distributors (Pittsburgh). Among the volunteers were Lou Larson and Jim Wittler (Atlas tournament directors) and Don Liberatore, owner of Canonsburg Amusement and the Giggles Family Entertainment Center.

We salute them all for their fine idea and a job well done!



Don Liberatore presents the check to Sandra Klinzing and Tony Gruen of the American Red Cross while Atlas' Jim Wittler (left) and Lou Larson (right) support the Giggles banner.



Bob Busche of Atlas Distributors does referee duties as the folks bang away at the flippers. Around $2,000 was raised for the Red Cross through entry fees & game play.



TOURNEY WITH A CAUSE — Over $1500 was contributed to the American Heart Association on behalf of C&N Sales' dart league members in Minnesota and Iowa. Two C&N Sales-sponsored tournaments donated funds. The "Winterfest of Darts" in Sioux City, Iowa paralleled Mankato, Minnesota's "Darts for Hearts" tourney. Each competition featured men's and women's singles and doubles plus a mixed doubles event. All finalists won themselves a place in the May Valley Cup International Tournament in Las Vegas. Seen here is the Womens Division A singles champ, Julie Feye.



ARACHNID TO MINNESOTA — The tournament trail is getting hot for darters. Arriving in Minnesota for the March 1-3 regional tournament, teams competed in the event sponsored by Lieberman Music and Arachnid. All participating teams are anxious to win their qualifying certificate to the BullShooter VI World Challenge of Champions competition in Chicago over Memorial Day weekend. Seen in the photo is the Minnesota pro singles champion Lane Helgeson (left). For more information on regional tournaments or the BullShooter World Challenge of Champions, call Arachnid at 800/435-8319.



ARACHNID TO ALABAMA — Birmingham Vending and Arachnid co-sponsored the largest English Mark Darts tournament so far this season on March 16-17. Darters from eleven different states traveled to Birmingham, Ala. to compete and try to qualify for the Bullshooter VI World Challenge of Champions in Chicago. Winning the prestigious Pro Singles event was John Thomas (above) of Marietta, Georgia.



ARACHNID TO CANADA — Laniel Canada and Arachnid co-sponsored the successful March 22-24 Canadian Regional held in Montreal. Players from New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Ohio, Illinois and Canada competed in eight events, attempting to qualify for the BullShooter Championship taking place in Chicago, Memorial Day weekend. Top pro singles winner at the Canadian Regional was Chet Caron.

MAY 11
Dynamo Air Hockey $2,500 Minnesota Amateur Championships. For more info, contact Mark Robbins at 817/284-0114.

MAY 18-19
Dynamo Air Hockey $4,000 Dallas-Ft. Worth Open. For more information, contact Mark Robbins at 817/284-0114.

MAY 24-27
Tornado Soccer Tour $35,000 Masters Open, Minneapolis Metrodome Hilton. For info, call Tornado at 817/572-3708.

MAY 25-JUNE 1
Valley National 8-Ball League Assn. 11th annual international singles and team championships, Riveria Hotel, Las Vegas. For more information, contact Gregg Elliot at 517/893-1800.

JUNE 1
Dynamo Air Hockey $3,000 New York Amateur Championships. For more information, contact Mark Robbins at 817/284-0114.

JUNE 22-23
Dynamo Air Hockey $3,000 NYC Amateur Championships. For more information, contact Mark Robbins at 817/284-0114.

JUNE 29-30
Dynamo Air Hockey $4,000 California Open Championships. For more info, contact Mark Robbins at 817/284-0114.

JULY 4-7
Tornado Soccer Tour $30,000 Nat'l. Championship, St. Louis Airport Hilton. Contact Tornado 817/572-3708.

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FRIDAY, JUNE 21ST

8:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Breakfast, First Business Session and Panel Discussions:

1) *"Profitability in Games"*
Moderators: **Bob Fay,** ***AAMA Executive Vice President***
Ken Anderson, ***The Leland Corporation***

2) *"Sales in Vending Today"*
Moderator: **Bob Tullio,** ***World Wide Vending***

3) *"How to Make Money in Today's Tavern Environment"*
Moderators: **Marvin Gray,** ***Silco of San Diego,***
Russ Love, ***Royal Vending Services***

11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch with Guest Speaker **John Pierce,** ***Staff Counsel, Alcohol Beverage Control Board***

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Lake Tahoe Sailing Cruise Aboard 55 Foot Catamaran

6:00 p.m. – Cocktail Reception Followed by Dinner

8:00 p.m. – CCMA Annual Auction

SATURDAY, JUNE 22ND

8:00 a.m. – Breakfast and Business Session

10:00 a.m. **James Trucano,** ***AMOA President,*** Will Lead Discussion on *Key Operating Issues in 1991*

Wally Bohrer, ***AMOA,*** Will Lead Discussion on ***The Video Game Lottery***

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Legislative Update and General Membership Meeting

11:30 a.m. – Annual Golf Tournament at the Incline Village Golf Resort Executive Course

7:00 p.m. – President's Cocktail Party Followed by Dinner

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'ROAD RIOT' RUMBLES IN AT ATARI CONFERENCE

Atari Games' distributor meetings usually find something special waiting behind a curtain, and this year's event (which took place at the Boca Raton Hotel & Resort in Florida) was no exception. They proudly pulled the drapes on *Road Riot* there and the machine is honeyed.

Not that Atari's "plate" isn't pretty full already now with *Batman, Panorama,* etc., but their spring lineup was completed with this two-seater sitdown dune buggy racer. Pricey, yes, but "such an attraction" (as mom would say). The seats look like a dune buggy and the racing on the screen completes the effect. Each of the two players faced a 25" monitor while seated within a realistic roll-bar cabinet.

Besides racing over the 10 tracks offered, there's shooting action as well. And, a new "rear thump" feature gives players an audible "kick" when shot. As with real dune buggy driving, there's skidding and bouncing and even rollovers (although the players are quite safe seated in their cockpits).

Mary Fujihara detailed the test reports: one 105-game arcade averaged $657 over four weeks, even beating out *Mad Dog* (although she smiled at Peter Betti in the audience saying "that was the small monitor *Mad Dog").* A three-week test in another arcade averaged $636. Nice numbers. Nice game, too, and it's complete and ready for shipment to dealers the end of May.



Fun? Looks that way by the expressions on Atari's Frank Pierce's and Frank Cosentino's faces as they demonstrate the new off-road game at the Boca Raton, Florida meeting.

Atari also previewed a very exciting future game to the dealers, hoping to bring it to market by AMOA showtime. While they asked the press to keep details under wraps for now, it's impossible not to applaud an idea whose time has come: a "marriage" of a physical sport with a video game screen. hardly finished at this time, the game could be completed and ready for display by fall. Even in prototype form, it looked like a winner.

All is not just business at Atari's or at some other factory distributor gatherings. The firm layered on quite a spread of fun activities besides the business buzz. Apart from the traditional golf, golf, golf there were airboat tours through alligator country, dinner on a yacht, shopping in the Boca/Fort Lauderdale area and general relaxing on the gorgeous Atlantic coast. It's always nice to be an Atari dealer, but especially at these annual get-togethers. Next year's conference (their 20th anniversary one) will take place on the French Riviera.



Enough good looks to crack a 33" monitor: 4 handsome gents enjoying boat cruise (from left): Peter & Bert Betti, Rick Kirby and Steve Shaffer.



Shane Breaks (aka Pepe le Peddler) with Linda Benzler by the *Road Riot* stage. Next year's distrib meeting will be on the French Riviera.

DATEBOOK

MAY 5-9
AAMA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. For more information, contact AAMA at 703/494-2758.

MAY 16-18
WAMO Spring Convention, Country Inn, Pewaukee, Wisc. For more information, contact WAMO at 414/529-4704.

MAY 19-21
AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/245-1021.

MAY 25-JUNE 1
The 11th Annual Valley National Eight-ball Assn. Int'l. Singles & Team Championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Gregg Elliott at 517/893-1800.

MAY 31-JUNE 1
Ohio Coin Machine Assn. Annual Expo, Columbus. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/486-8677.

JUNE 14-16
ICMOA (Illinois) annual convention. Drake Hotel, Oak Brook. For more information call Adonna Jerman at 708/369-2406.

JUNE 20-23
California Coin Machine Assn. annual convention, Hyatt Lake Tahoe, Incline Village, Nevada. Contact Cindy Urcan or Kathy Waldie at 916/441-5451.

JULY 11-13
8th Annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, Downtown Nashville Convention Center, Tenn. For more info, contact Continental Productions at 619/278-3877.

JULY 12-14
Amusement & Music Operators of Idaho host tri-state summer meeting. Cour D'Alene Motel, Cour D'Alene. For more information, call Steve Gregory or Steve McGrath at 509/326-6054.

JULY 19-20
PAMMA (Pennsylvania) annual convention & trade show. Seven Springs Resort, Champion. For more information call 717/232-5322.

JULY 19-20
AMOT (Texas) annual convention. Radisson Hotel, Austin. For more information, call Vancie Todaro at 409/776-8287.

JULY 19-20
OAMOA (Oregon) annual convention. Inn of the Seventh Mountain, Bend. Get details from Cheryl McCown at 503/343-6642.

JULY 23-24
AAMA's 2nd Annual Latin American Expo, Mexico City, Mexico. For more information, contact AAMA at 703/494-2758.

JULY 26-28
MCMOA (Montana) annual summer meeting. Site to be announced. Call Chris Warren for details at 406/442-7088.

AUGUST 15-18
MDVA (Michigan Distributors & Vendors Assn.) annual convention & trade show. Boyne Mountain Lodge, Michigan. For more information, call MDVA at 517/372-2323.

SEPTEMBER 12-14
AMOA Expo '91, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/245-1021.

SEPTEMBER 27-29
Rocky Mountain AMOA annual convention & trade show. Hilton Inn South, Denver. For details call Jo Anne Hackett at 303/289-6200.

OCTOBER 3-6
NAMA Convention & Exhibit, McCormick Place, Chicago, Ill. For more information, contact NAMA at 312/356-0370.

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine, May 1, 1991

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Alpha Mission II (SNK)
2	King of the Monsters (SNK)
3	Street Fighter II (Capcom)
4	Ultraman (Banpresto)
5	Quiz My YuYu (Taito)
6	Quiz Lord's Adventure (Capcom)
7	Hat Trick Hero (Taito)
8	High School Baseball (Taito)
9	Quiz My Homework (Sega)
10	Bells and Whistles (Konami)
11	League Bowling (SNK)
12	Raiden (Seibu)
13	Sengoku (SNK)
14	Growl (Taito)
15	World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
16	Tetris (Sega)
17	Final Fight (Capcom)
18	Columns (Sega)
19	Earth Defense Force (Jaleco)
20	Gun Frontier (Taito)
21	Super Masters (Sega)
22	Ghost Pilots (SNK)
23	Puzzled (SNK)
24	Lightning Swords (Irem)
25	Strato Fighter(Tecmo)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Final Lap 2 [del.] (Namco)
2	Driver's Eye (Namco)
3	Steel Gunner (Namco)
4	Final Lap 2 [standard] (Namco)
5	Hard Drivin' (Atari/Namco)
6	Space Gun (Taito)
7	Rad Mobile [del.] (Sega)
8	Big Run (Jaleco)
9	Winning Run '91 (Namco)
10	Cisco Heat (Jaleco)
11	GP Rider [ride-on] (Sega)
12	G-LOC [deluxe] (Sega)
13	Super Monaco GP [del.] (Sega)
14	Beast Busters (SNK)
15	Laser Ghost (Sega)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Funhouse (Williams)
2	Dr. Dude (Midway)
3	The Simpsons (Data East)
4	Phantom of the Opera (Data East)
5	Rollergames (Williams)

FRANK TALK INTERVIEW

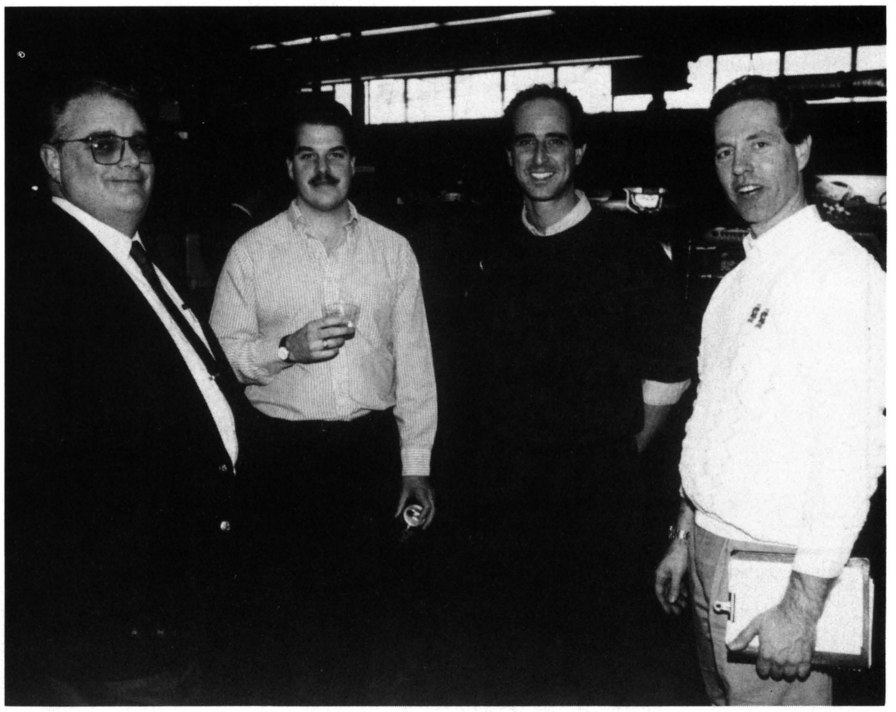
Editor's note: This month, instead of requesting a column from Frank as usual, we asked him to let us conduct an interview. He graciously agreed. RePlay selected the subjects and posed the questions; Frank simply spoke from the heart on a variety of industry concerns. We think you'll find his answers candid and educational. As always, this column lives up to its name! We began by acknowledging a recent honor accorded to "The Crank."

REPLAY: Congratulations on being named "Man of the Year" by the three associations which comprise the Northeast Regional group.

FRANK: Thank you.

REPLAY: How did you get the word?

FRANK: Well, that was kind of interesting. As president of AMOA-New Jersey, I've helped run our regional show for the last three years together with the leaders of the New York state and city associations, Ralph Ceraldi and Bobby Herman. This year, I was asked to sample our board and come up with a "Man of the Year" nominee from New Jersey. We nominated an operator for the honor and submitted his name to Curtiss Matterson, executive director of all three Northeastern associations. Curtiss also coordinates our regional show. Well, after three weeks nobody on the awards committee was returning my calls and I started feeling left out of the loop. I contacted Curtiss and said nobody is copying me with the latest paperwork. He apologized but said, "We had a good reason — you were chosen!" I was shocked, because we had nominated someone else. The New Jersey members had gone through the motions on purpose. Everyone knew what was up, except me!



Cranky Franky Seninsky (right) doesn't always live up to his nickname (he's really a friendly gent). Here we found him at Betson's open house with Bill Treger, Bob Ritterhoff & Ken Gatsik.

REPLAY: We're looking forward to seeing you formally accept the honor at the regional trade show's banquet. How is the New Jersey AMOA doing overall?

FRANK: We had a very successful auction April 13 in conjunction with U.S. Auctions. This has become an annual event for us. We were able to sell over 400 games at very good prices . . . equipment that didn't make money in our area, but which will earn well for operators elsewhere. The association made several thousand dollars; we had a lot of fun; and my company bought some used games at good prices.

REPLAY: What's happening with your state's video lottery initiative?

FRANK: At this point, we have spent almost two years with it. Our video lottery committee is made up of myself, Betson's Bill Treger, and Bill Englehart of Bill's Vending. Our attorney is Dennis Riley, an ex-assemblyman. At the outset, the tavern owners had a bill that was competing with the operators' bill. Senator Tom Foy was the sponsor of both bills, and under his leadership, the two groups spent about a year negotiating. Together, we have crafted a bill which we feel is perfect for New Jersey. Senator Foy did a heck of a job, and now the single bill has been introduced in both houses.

REPLAY: What are your prospects?

FRANK: I feel very confident. But for the record, let me just say that we have invested a major effort in this project and will continue to do so, until it becomes law. I think we will all have something to be very proud of.

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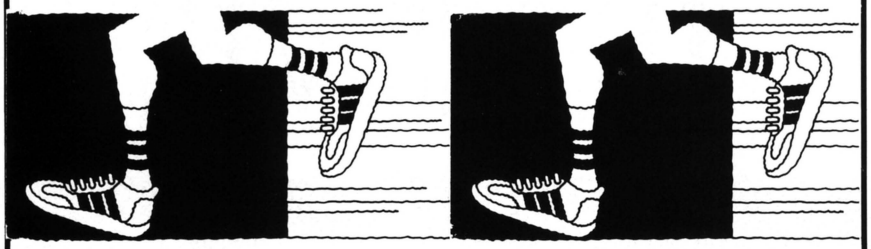

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REPLAY: If your lobbying effort does succeed, to what will you attribute its success?

FRANK: We delegate a lot of responsibility and it is my job to follow up and keep everyone focused. The whole board pitches in and helps make decisions. We all coordinate closely with each other; it's not just a one-man show. Using this approach, I'm amazed how much work can get done in a very short time. I'd like to see more industry groups emulate it.

REPLAY: That leads neatly into lobbying at the national level. What is your involvement in this year's AMOA Washington, D.C. conference?

FRANK: For the fourth year, I'm running the Congressional tournaments. I had done this the past three years and thought perhaps it was time for others to step to the fore, but about a month ago AMOA Government Relations Chairman Wally Bohrer called and asked me to handle it again. I'm very happy to do it, although it's been something of a challenge fitting this responsibility in with our video lottery lobbying, and also running that entity I must sometimes put in second or third place...my business, Alpha-Omega Amusements.

REPLAY: This is at least the fifth year for AMOA's overall government meetings in Washington. Lobbying does require considerable time and effort. Is it worth it?

FRANK: Yes, definitely. If you went to all those conferences, by now you must know dozens of senators and maybe 100 congressmen on a first-name basis. To me, that's quite a feat...considering that five years ago, most of us didn't know any! Now I'm turning my attention to our state government, and it's amazing how much you can accomplish on this level also, if you simply put some effort into it. More operators should be doing this, but I'm afraid they just don't realize how valuable it can be.

REPLAY: Why not?

FRANK: Regrettably, too many members of our industry lay back until they get good word of mouth on something. That goes not just for lobbying, but also for things like our auction and even good new games.

That's one way to do business, I suppose, but you get left behind in the dust, and you miss making the most of many good opportunities. You're making a living, but that's about it. Many of these operators, I'm afraid, won't make it to the year 2,000.

REPLAY: How do you feel about AMOA and AAMA having two separate lobbying events in Washington this year?

FRANK: In my gut, I cringe. I feel it's a mistake, because government officials who see this division must inevitably conclude that something is seriously wrong with our industry. Government affairs is one area where, no matter what our differences, we must cooperate. I'm glad there is some enlightened leadership in both associations working to overcome personal conflicts and focus on our common interests, like the dollar coin.

REPLAY: What did you think of the ACME show, and what's your assessment of the state of industry right now?

FRANK: In my niche, I've noticed that your average video game is no more. You've got to buy big, expensive novelty games and sitdown games that make a statement, games that make a splash. For example, Sega's *Rad Mobile*. I've also bought over a dozen *Mad Dog McCrees*. Just about everywhere I put them, the location gross goes up substantially. Also, some great product came out of ACME, games like Capcom's *Street Fighter II*. We bought dedicated versions with big screens, so I could get them out faster. It's a great piece and is earning big bucks. The equipment from ACME is the best I've seen in a long time. There are many great games: *GP Rider, The Simpsons, F-15, Final Lap 2*, the Neo-Geo games . . . the list goes on.

REPLAY: What's your opinion of the current controversy about strict dealer territories as a form of price enforcement?

FRANK: I think you've got to look at it from two or three perspectives. Selfishly, the more dealer network disarray and competition, the better for me as an operator, because the price I pay can drop to as low as zero over dealer cost. But long-term, this can come back to bite you in the foot. I strongly support my distributors and I want them to be profitable. They're in business to make money and I want them to succeed. After all, when I need big credit, they're the ones I go to! So when you find a good distributor, you "get married." Working together is how you grow, not by fighting each other or buying from another distributor in another territory . . . unless your authorized distributor operates and that's a whole different ball game.

REPLAY: So you see some long-term advantages in this form of market discipline, even if it might mean higher prices in the short run.

FRANK: Potentially, yes. When you go into an auto showroom to buy a car, you never really know what the dealer cost is. In our industry, everybody knows the price and that makes the industry weak. Dealer price enforcement helps prevent us from undermining our own strength as an industry.

REPLAY: And does that also hold true when a manufacturer or game is clearly the hottest in a certain market segment?

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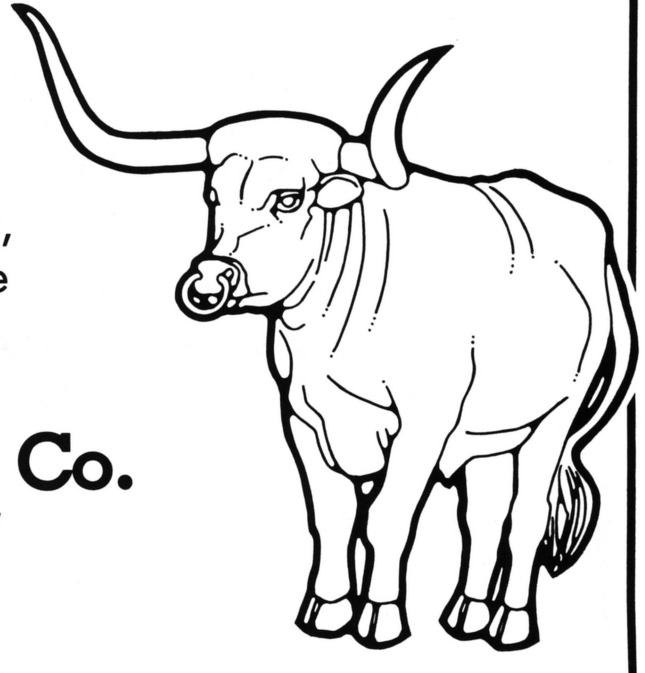

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FRANK: As long as there's enough product to choose from, I assume competition will come along to prevent this kind of "price policing" from getting out of hand. That is happening today in every market segment of coin-op, every game category. We can all come up with examples in a second, if we think about it. Besides — investing in a strong product on the front end, often means you have protection as an operator for higher resale value on the back end. Basically it's all a matter of your business philosophy. From an emotional point of view, no, I don't like this method of controlling prices! But from a logical point of view, when you step back and take a look at it, then it's not as bad as it may appear at first.

REPLAY: What if the whole industry reverts to this 1940s type policy of strict territories for dealers?

FRANK: You know, it just might help the whole marketplace. It would mean that the big distributors would have to concentrate on their top lines. They would have to make choices, and that in turn would open doors for other people to carry the second- and third-tier lines, which would then get better representation. Right now, those products are getting lost. In fact, this problem is so pervasive in our industry today, that when I go to trade shows I try to pick out the "sleepers" — good games with great ROI that don't make the charts. There are so many of them! Solving that would be good for everybody. And, when more products get more sales, what happens? Prices drop! Again, however, strict dealer territories can only work if distributors aren't allowed to operate...that's unfair competition.

REPLAY: For what it's worth, we notice that a "no vertical integration" policy is enshrined in law when it comes to video lottery in Montana and South Dakota. In that market you have to be either an operator, or a manufacturer, or a distributor; you can't be active on two levels. Obviously, then, some influential elements inside and outside our industry agree with you about the desirability of keeping the three tiers separate. Let's turn to another subject that benefits everybody in the industry: standardization. You are co-chairman of the AMOA Standardization Committee. What's happening with standardization?

FRANK: Some 30 or 40 people attended the standardization meeting at ACME. The committee is growing and manufacturers are working very hard on this issue of equipment testing and getting approval that satisfies the FCC. The whole future of the video game industry could depend on how we handle this question. Without going into detail, let me just say that it's getting more complicated; it's very serious and is taking a lot of work. But we're on top of it.

REPLAY: We realize you don't want to oversimplify complex issues, but can you give us an overview of the committee's latest thinking?

FRANK: Briefly, we may want to use "UL 22," a lengthy regulation for electronic components, as our industry's basic standard — something that Applied Research Labs can use to do their inspections. We think that a very high percentage of current product already meets this



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standard, or can be addressed by it. So if the FCC were to adopt this standard for our industry, it would represent a good shot at getting industry-wide compliance with all federal regulations.

REPLAY: A very worthy goal. What's required to make it work?

FRANK: To do this, we will need cooperation and communication from manufacturers, distributors and operators. I'm glad we have so much joint effort taking place on this. Standardization and government affairs are two key areas where cooperation between AMOA and AAMA is absolutely vital. As long as I'm on this committee, I'll work hard to keep the two groups together in this area.

REPLAY: You're also talking about getting cooperation from Uncle Sam. Any standardization initiatives that are strictly inside the industry?

FRANK: The manufacturers are working to come up with a new pin-out to add onto the standard JAMMA connector. Out of respect to the manufacturers, we're going to call it the AAMA edge connector! It will make it much easier to pull third and fourth players off the PCB. Working this out will take a while, but it's one of the most exciting things we'll be working on. Also, we're ready to do color-coding on the JAMMA and AAMA connectors. We've pinned down standard marquee sizes and control panel overlay sizes, so that operators don't have to worry about these items being too small when they do conversions. The AMOA board will be voting on several new standards via mail ballot, very shortly.

REPLAY: Sounds promising. Final question: you're a man who spends a lot of time looking ahead, thinking and planning for the future. But this year, this month, you've also reached a new level of respect in the industry where your friends and colleagues have bestowed a major honor on you. How about looking backwards a moment and reflecting on what you have been through in coin-op so far?

FRANK: From my perspective, as you get older in this industry you can learn from associating with other operators. This happens in countless ways: in seminars, at the Notre Dame educational sessions, and just from hanging around with industry veterans. If you take advantage of these opportunities to learn more about our industry, life gets easier! You stop chasing your tail and putting out fires . . . which is what some think our industry is all about. Instead, your business can grow and grow, becoming steadily more profitable. It's no mystery to me why some companies are so successful. They work at it!

REPLAY: So you appreciate what others have given you . . . but allow us to point out that you have given a lot back to the industry, as well. Your columns in the trade magazines, your educational seminars, and your tireless association work all prove the truth of that timeless saying: "What you get out of it, is what you put into it." Congratulations again, Frank, and best of luck.

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THE "13" GENERATION

A common complaint in our industry is that nobody has ever commissioned a serious study of our younger players — the people who put so much of the money into our machines, especially in arcades and non-alcoholic street stops. We're talking about the kids who are 10 to 20 years old . . . the customers who, when you come right down to it, make this industry profitable.

Who are these kids? What do they think? What do they like and not like? How do they see themselves? What do they want?

Some fascinating answers are contained in a new book called *Generations*, by William Strauss and Neil Howe. The authors have analyzed every major generation in American history, from the Puritans to today's "golden child" superachieving first-graders. Their demographic approach contains some intriguing insights into the $200 billion market of kids between 10 and 20 years old, who make up the vast majority of amusement game players.

"SILENTS" & "BOOMERS"

Everyone has heard about the "Silent Generation" of conformist 1950s college students: serious students who graduated, married early, and then started right into having families, buying suburban houses and wearing gray flannel suits. Likewise, everyone has heard of the "Baby Boom" generation, which started out as radical hippies, then grew into materialistic yuppies or New Age corporate reformers and Whole Earth Computer Catalog users.

But what about the next generation? Our players? The kid brothers and little sisters of the "Baby Boom" generation have never even rated their own name — until now. Some sociologists have inaccurately tagged them "baby busters" because of the declining birthrate of their era, but historians Strauss and Howe say that's wrong: this generation already outnumbers the Baby Boomers by 10 million. As new waves of immigrants continue to arrive, that gap will widen still further.

The authors of *Generations* dub these kids "13ers," both because they've been an unlucky generation, and because they are the 13th generation to live under the American flag. Who are these "13ers," and what are they like?

THE UNWANTED GENERATION

First of all, they were largely unwanted. The 13ers came into being after birth control and abortion laws were liberalized. Strauss and Howe call them "the kids American women first took The Pill not to have . . . the most aborted generation in American history."

The 13ers were also unlucky enough to be born into an era which celebrated "youth" (i.e. the culture of teens and college kids), but which clearly disliked children. The '60s and '70s saw a decline in the birth rate and a sharp rise in the number of "no children allowed" apartments and housing complexes. It saw children used as guinea pigs in "experimental" schools. In regular schools, this generation got 10% fewer As and Bs, and 10% more Cs and Ds, according to the authors.

While these kids were growing up, popular entertainment — always a significant cultural barometer of public attitudes — inaugurated a 15-year-long string of "anti-child" movies where kids were portrayed as the bad guys or even as demons from hell: everything from 1968's *Rosemary's Baby* to *The Omen* and its sequels into the mid-1980s.

Similarly, in the ground-breaking TV shows of the 1970s, children were simply invisible. The hit TV series of this era were not the classic family sitcoms of the past, but shows with 100% adult casts: *All in the Family, The Mary Tyler Moore Show, M★A★S★H.*

In addition to not being terribly appreciated themselves, the 13ers grew up in an era when America seemed to be unravelling before their eyes. To the 13ers, America's gigantic victory in World War II, and its claim to being the world's Number One economic power, were only hearsay. One of their earliest memories is probably the Kennedy assassination.

The first wave of 13ers were eight years old when Woodstock symbolized an ongoing social breakdown; they were 13 years old when Watergate rocked the American political system. They were 17 when America lost its first war in Vietnam.

The kids born in 1961 had just turned 18 when America was humiliated economically and politically by the energy crisis and Iran hostage crisis. About the same time,



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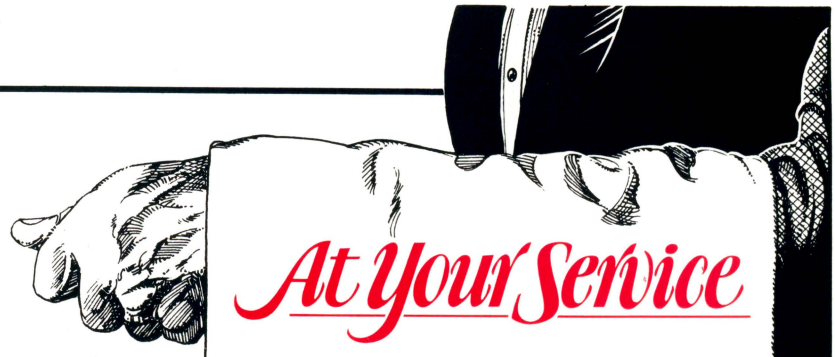

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America was also technologically burned by the Three Mile Island disaster. These kids watched America fail and falter at every turn, say the authors.

Talk about having the deck stacked against you. The odds were fixed to start with, but they skewed against the 13ers even more when economists began saying: "By the way, this generation will probably be the first one in American history that will have to struggle mightily, just to keep up with the level of wealth and education achieved by their parents. Due to increased global competition from Europe and Asia, plus domestic competition from the Baby Boomers, and a declining U.S. economy, the standard of living for many of these kids will probably slip backwards."

BLAMING THE VICTIM

Adding insult to injury, the 13ers got blamed for whatever went wrong with them! Strauss and Howe point out that after a decade of experimental, non-traditional schools had messed up their education, a blue-ribbon national commission put out a report in 1983 saying that today's kids represented *A Nation At Risk* because they didn't know who Joseph Stalin was and couldn't find Canada on a map. Scholars, sociologists, newspapers and humorists made these kids targets, howled about their declining SAT scores, and labeled them "hopeless dummies."

Sociologists called them "latch-key children" because their mothers worked and they came home to empty houses. Columnist Russell Baker sneered at these kids who kept a glacier-like emotional distance, hiding behind Boom Boxes and Wayfarer sunglasses: he called them "the dumb and numb generation."

After being told they would be the first generation in American history to have a smaller percentage of college graduates than their parents, and a were facing far worse economic outlook, the 13ers were criticized for turning to drugs, gangs and crime. (By the way, Strauss and Howe say the 13ers actually reversed the drug and crime rates of the Baby Boom generation . . . but when the Boomers did it, it was "chic" and "anti-establishment"; when 13ers did it in far fewer numbers, it was "dangerous" and "anti-social").

After growing up watching their country self-destruct in politics, technology and economics, the 13ers got blamed again for being too negative and pessimistic, for being apathetic about politics, and for not believing in anything.

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In sum, they are "a lost generation, an army of aging Bart Simpsons, possibly armed and dangerous," *Generations* quotes Felicity Berringer as saying in the *New York Times*.

A LOUSY SELF-IMAGE...

Well, ladies and gentlemen of the coin machine industry, these are many of the people who are playing our video games and pinballs. How many? Strauss and Howe say there are 79 million kids alive now in the U.S. between 10 and 20 years old.

Not surprisingly, many 13ers have low expectations for themselves and for the others of their generation. Strauss and Howe say it's no accident that the 13ers identify with heroes like Bart Simpson ("underachiever and proud of it") and with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (who began their lives by being flushed down a toilet, then were mutated by toxic wastes in the sewers). This is the generation that made a brief fad out of the Garbage Pail Kids. "They tend to agree with their elders that, probably, they *are* a wasted bunch," write Strauss and Howe.

...BUT SOME SURPRISING STRENGTHS

However, the news isn't all bad. Far from it. Strauss and Howe say the 13ers are psychological realists who know how to cut through the bull and get to the essentials. They aren't subtle, but they do call a spade a spade — not an "environmental tool" or a "digging implement."

When a 13er wins an Olympic medal, like Mary Lou Retton, he or she is likely to say, "The glory is nice, but let's talk about the cash: what products can I endorse, and for how much?" Strauss and Howe suggest that this isn't greed; it's the simple honesty and pragmatism of a generation which understands what our society really requires, before it grants power and respect.

Perhaps paradoxically, the 13ers have greatly improved on Me-First yuppie values, say the authors. They are into "platonic relationships, group dating and a youth culture... in which kids watch out for their own safety and for the physical integrity of their circle of friends."

Most surprisingly of all, 13ers are patriotic. They're the ones chanting "USA! USA!" at international sports events. They're the ones who (in some cases because they couldn't get a fair shake in the job market) became the All-Volunteer Army which performed so well in Granada, Panama and the Persian Gulf. They're the ones President Bush calls "the finest fighting force in American history... first-class talent." They're the ones who came back from Iraq and Saudi Arabia, saying: "I'd go again in a minute if my country needed me."

CULTURE & COIN-OP

Whatever their strengths and weaknesses, the 13ers comprise a huge slice of this industry's customer base. And they have had enormous impact on our economic fortunes. The "first wave" (born from 1961 to 1968) were the arcade fanat-

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ics who powered our first video boom. The "last wave" (born from, say, 1975 to 1981) are the Nintendo fanatics who find home games just as normal as coin-op games.

Culturally, 13ers respond to the "born in the garbage" characters mentioned above, but notice: those characters overcome their rough backgrounds to achieve heroic stature. 13er movies, say Strauss and Howe, feature actors like Tom Cruise and Michael J. Fox: wise-ass, cool, heavy on a flippant, anti-authority attitude, sharply critical of hypocrisy and pretentious posing . . . and more than willing to break some rules in order to win. At the same time, notice that these characters are basically loyal to "the system" and in step with bedrock American values: fair play, individual initiative, truth and justice for all.

Strauss and Howe point out that 13ers place heavy emphasis on outside appearance. They dress expensively in gold chains and $150 Nike "Air" running shoes . . . not in jeans and t-shirts like the Baby Boomers did. A sharp-looking exterior, lots of style, is a status symbol to the 13ers. Other market analysts have pointed out that despite suffering from "information overload," this generation of young people also responds more than any other to slick advertising . . . especially on TV. If it's on TV, it's real. If it's not, it's nowhere. The 13ers are the true TV Generation.

HOW COIN-OP CAN REACH THEM

How can coin-op can focus in on these trends, preferences and cultural habits? Some of the answers are obvious: slick game presentation. High production values. Video game characters with an "attitude," who become heroes despite unpromising backgrounds. Group-oriented game experiences. Advertising!

More insights and answers are undoubtedly available to anyone who takes the time to read and study this ground-breaking new book. *Generations,* by William Strauss and Neil Howe, is published by William Morrow & Co. For anyone who wants to understand today's generation of game players, it's must reading!

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6. ***HEROES AND FRIENDS,*** *Randy Travis, Warner Bros. 19469*
7. ***I'M THAT KIND OF GIRL,*** *Patty Loveless, MCA 53977*
8. ***THE BALLAD OF DAVY CROCKETT,*** *The Kty. Headhunters, Mercury 86812*
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Lorrie Morgan - RCA 2748

BLAME IT ON TEXAS
Mark Chesnutt - MCA 54053

R&B

★ 1. ***HOLD YOU TIGHT,*** *Tara Kemp, Giant 19458*
★ 2. ***WHATEVER YOU WANT,*** *Tony! Toni! Tone!, Wing/Mercury 5904*
3. ***YOUR LOVE - PART 2,*** *Keith Sweat, Elektra 64894*
★ 4. ***GONNA MAKE YOU SWEAT,*** *C&C Music Factory, Columbia 73604*
★ 5. ***I DON'T WANNA CRY,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 73743*
★ 6. ***GET HERE,*** *Oleta Adams, Mercury 4764*
★ 7. ***I'LL BE BY YOUR SIDE,*** *Stevie B., RCA 2758*
8. ***ALL TRUE MAN,*** *Alexander O'Neal, Tabu/Epic 73627*
★ 9. ***HERE WE GO,*** *C&C Music Factory, Columbia 73690*
10. ***SHORT BUT FUNKY,*** *Too Short, Jive/RCA 1434*

R&B PICK HITS

I NEED A GOOD WOMAN BAD
Latimore - Maleco 2170

NEVER LET YOU DOWN
Surface - Columbia 73643

POWER OF LOVE
Luther Vandross - Epic 73788

CAN YOU STOP THE RAIN?
Peabo Bryson - Columbia 73745

I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
Tyrone Davis - Ichiban 226

CDs

1. ***NO FENCES,*** *Garth Brooks, Enigma/Capitol 93866*
2. ***SHAKE YOUR MONEY MAKER,*** *The Black Crowes, Def American 24278*
3. ***PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES,*** *Clint Black, RCA 2372*
4. ***MARIAH CAREY,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 45202*
5. ***INTO THE LIGHT,*** *Gloria Estefan, Epic 46988*
6. ***WILSON PHILLIPS,*** *Wilson Phillips, SBK 93745*
7. ***GONNA MAKE YOU SWEAT,*** *C&C Music Factory, Columbia 47093*
8. ***HEART SHAPED WORLD,*** *Chris Isaak, Reprise 25837*
9. ***THE SOUL CAGES,*** *Sting, A&M 6405*
10. ***RUMOR HAS IT,*** *Reba McEntire, MCA 10016*



the Big Ticket

At ACME, Redemption Equipment Sold Briskly. . . For Good Reason!

I've just returned from the ACME show in Las Vegas, where my firm was one of the exhibitors of redemption equipment. It was a successful show, even though most arcade operators I spoke with reported a drastic reduction in revenue from their video game income, compared to earlier years. Many concerned operators visited us at Coin Concepts because they felt that to survive, they must introduce a new source of entertainment at their facility.

Naturally, at conventions, people exchange ideas and thoughts on how to prosper. Most operators felt that now that the Iraq War is behind us, and consumer confidence is building, proper preparation and strategies can bring a strong spring and summer season. Interestingly, most of the operators with just video arcades made commitments to introduce redemption skill games in their facility.

Operators already operating redemption games reported steady income from the equipment. But, the percentage of income derived from redemption increased dramatically, in proportion to the total income of the entertainment center. Thirty percent of the equipment produced seventy percent of the revenue!

Good news travels, and the result of all these high redemption earnings was that most redemption manufacturers had an excellent selling show. Again, I must remind you that I believe suppliers' inventory levels will be inadequate to meet the demand. Therefore, long load times may exist for redemption product. Anticipate at least a four to six week wait!

There's more good news in the larger economic climate. With retail sales up, malls are again experiencing traffic. Seasonal resort areas report reservation bookings are ahead of last year's levels. Newspaper reports indicate that with the weak dollar exchange rate, people are less likely to travel abroad. These people are staying home and need to be entertained. Your family entertainment center has all the right circumstances to prosper.

You have the right circumstances . . . but do you have the right equipment? Unless you're freshening your locations with new attractions, you may be in trouble. After all, how many times do you go to see the same movie? Not very often! Well, coin-op game players are the same way. They like to see new things. New equipment. New concepts!

The few operators who said they might not introduce new equipment this year, are in for a big surprise. The expansion of fun centers across the country has been quite unbelievable. Many new facilities have been opened. The established arcade must take some good defensive action to maintain their market share of the business. They cannot afford to be complacent when everyone around them is on the offense.

Further good news was the tremendous increased interest which distributors took in redemption equipment. It's taken three years, but they have been convinced that skill games should be part of their product line. As redemption expertise and commitment grows among the nation's dealer networks, the operator can only benefit.

The lesson to draw from all of the above observations is simple: as always, keep thinking redemption!

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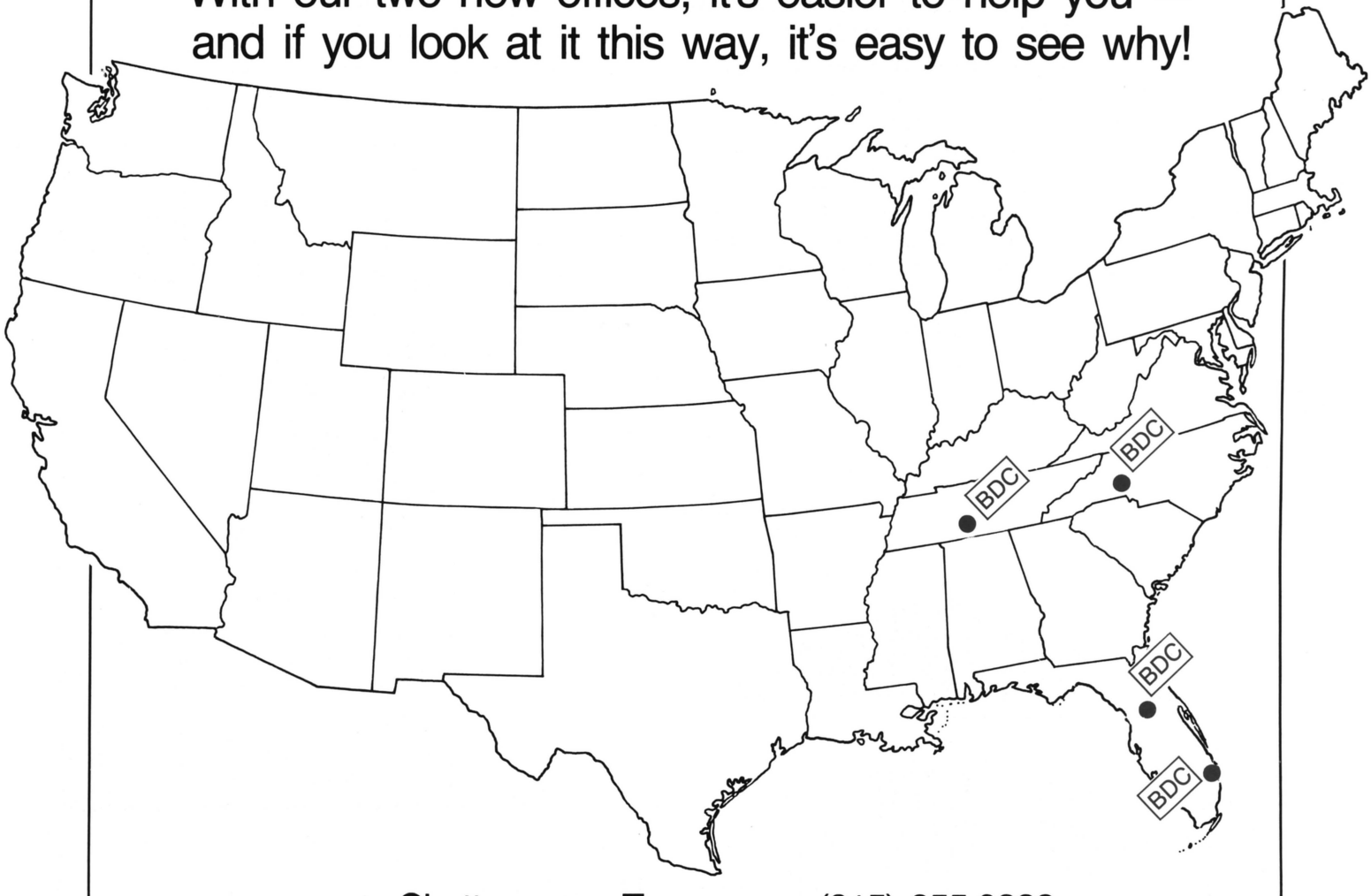

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If the accompanying technical feature from Randy Fromm looks familiar, that's because it ran last issue (or, sort of). Several of the paragraphs got glitched out of position when the original article was set up and clearly confused the heck out of readers. Bob Sokol of Austin, however, figured out the proper order and sent the following response. Randy himself, quite used to solving glitches, ought to appreciate Bob's remarks (and hopefully the fact that we re-did the original piece iself). Sorry, Randy, but you know how it doesn't *go sometimes, and this time, we got bit. ed.*

Your typesetter owes Randy Fromm an apology for mixing up the second page of his fine article on Williams High Voltage Power Supplies (April '91 p.130). Once I unscrambled the final paragraphs, I enjoyed his straight-forward explanation of this circuit, one which has gone virtually unchanged since the first solid-state pins were introduced in 1977. One very important fact that is not mentioned in the article is that the regulator transistor originally used in this circuit is no longer available. The technician who has to replace one of these transistors will draw a blank stare at his local Radio Shack if he goes in armed with only the old part numbers. Some currently available replacements which most repair shops should already have on hand are shown on the chart to the right. The transistors listed to replace Q2 and Q4 are exact replacements. The new transistors for Q1 and Q3 (MJE 15030 + 15031) require modification to work properly in the old style board. Williams issued a Technical Bulletin (No. SS44 dated Oct. '87) explaining how to bend the legs of the new transistor and use it on those early boards. Unfortunately, the diagrams on that bulletin are printed backwards. I admit to spending one long afternoon this past year replacing all the regulators and zener diodes on one of these boards only to have the entire circuit blow-up on me. Instantly. Twice. After reading Randy's article I was moved to share my discoveries in hopes of saving some other good-hearted soul from a similar afternoon.

Yours Truly,

Bob Sokol

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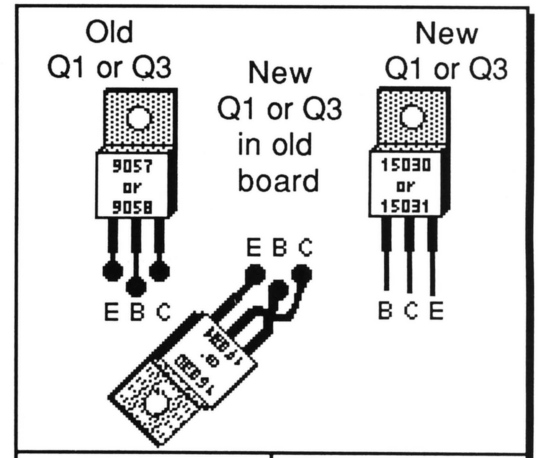
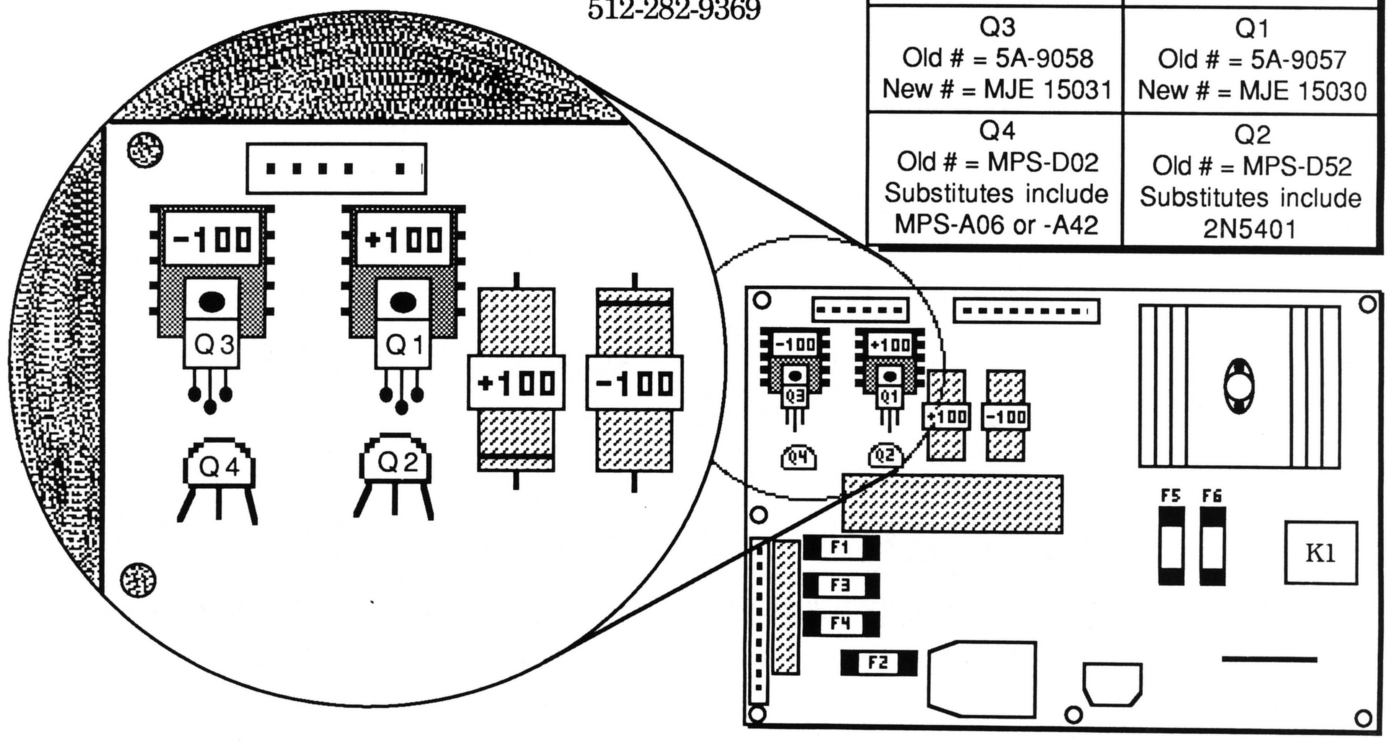


NEGATIVE	POSITIVE
Q3 Old # = 5A-9058 New # = MJE 15031	Q1 Old # = 5A-9057 New # = MJE 15030
Q4 Old # = MPS-D02 Substitutes include MPS-A06 or -A42	Q2 Old # = MPS-D52 Substitutes include 2N5401



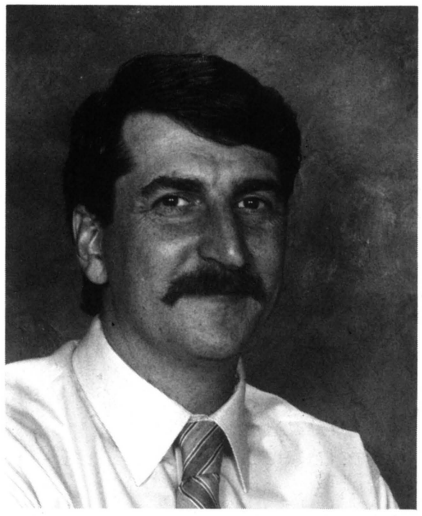
TECHNICAL TIPS

PINBALL'S HIGH VOLTAGE POWER SUPPLY

by RANDY FROMM

There are lots of electronic repairs that can be made in the field. Finding a bad logic board or power supply doesn't automatically mean a trip back to the shop for a replacement board. Nowhere is this more true than with Williams pinball machines. In a previous issue of *RePlay Magazine* we looked at how easy it is to repair the Williams solenoid driver circuits (see "Do It Yourself Logic Board Repair," Nov. 1989.) This month, we'll look at the power supply for the score displays and a common failure that you can repair on location.

The score displays used in the Williams pinball are gas discharge display tubes. These displays glow by ionizing the small amount of gas that is inside them. It requires approximately 200 volts to fire the

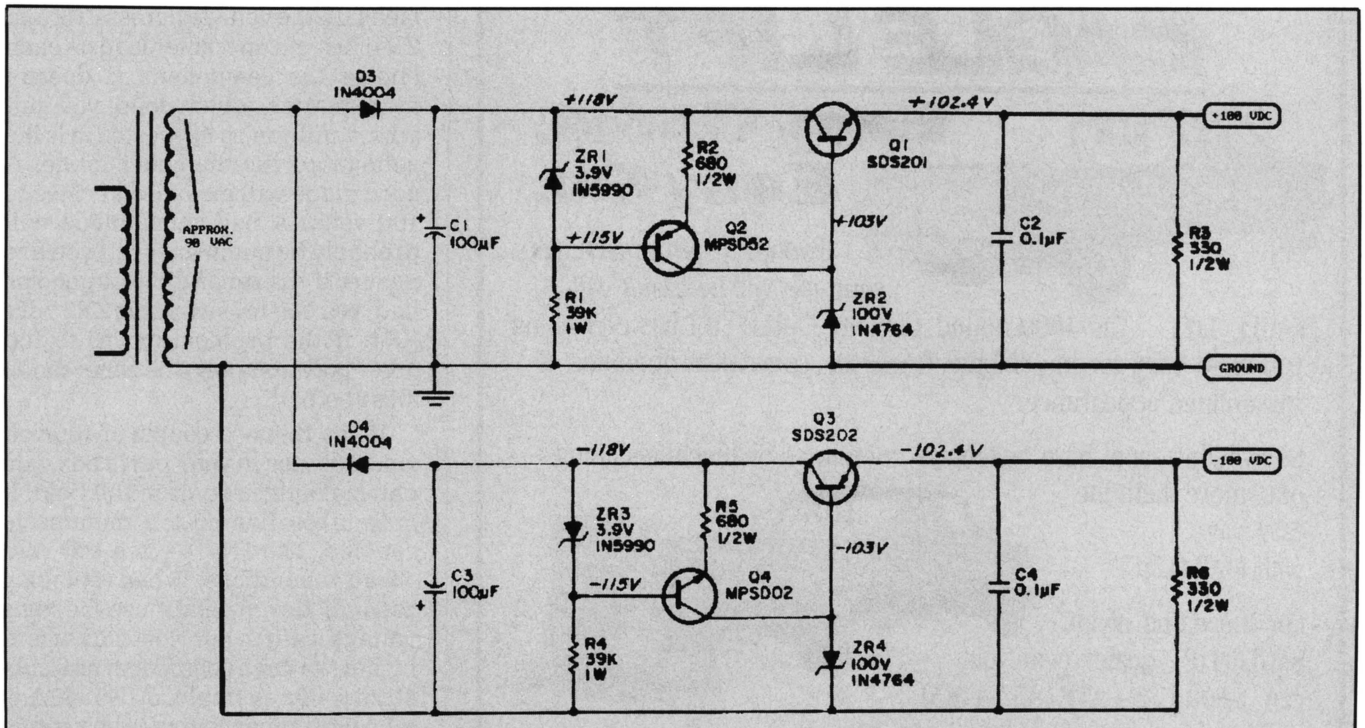


tube. The power supply for the score displays is actually a "split-supply" made up of two, nearly identical power supply circuits. One of the circuits has an output of + 100 VDC while the other provides an output of the same voltage but the opposite polarity, -100VDC (see figure 1).

Notice the similarity between the two circuits. To create the split-supply, the NPN transistor in the positive supply (Q1) becomes a PNP in the negative supply (Q3). Q2 and Q4 are also of opposite polarity. The diodes and capacitors are turned around as well.

The power supply design is simple. There are only 10 components in each of the two circuits. The power transformer in the game has a secondary winding with an output of approximately 90 volts AC. This transformer output is used to power both the + 100 VDC and -100 VDC power supplies. Since the two circuits are all but identical, let's look at the + 100 VDC power supply.

Diode D3 rectifies the alternating current output of the transformer, converting it to direct current. This is one of the few places we see a half-wave power supply (one with



± 100 VDC SCORE DISPLAY POWER SUPPLY

just a single rectifier) in coin-op electronics. For something as simple as a score display, full-wave rectification (using two or four diodes) just isn't necessary.

The rectified output of the D3 is filtered by capacitor C1. This "filter capacitor" is used to provide a constant flow of DC to the voltage regulator circuit that follows. Although the AC output from the transformer is only around 90 VAC, the voltage across the filter capacitor is now around 118 VDC. This apparent boost in voltage as it changes from alternating current into direct current is perfectly normal. We see it in virtually every power supply. It is a function of the difference in the way we measure an ever-changing AC voltage when compared to a DC measurement.

The main 117 VAC power from the wall receptacle can vary quite a bit (fluctuations of plus or minus 10% are not uncommon) so before the power supply is sent out to the score displays, its output voltage must be regulated. This is done for a couple of reasons. A change in voltage would cause a visible change in the brightness of the score displays. Also, excess voltage would considerably shorten the life expectancy of the score displays themselves.

The entire voltage regulator circuit for the + 100 VDC power supply consists of ZR1, ZR2, Q1, Q2, R1 and R2. But, the main circuit to consider here is made up of Q1 and ZR2, because this is where the problem usually lies. Q1 is the main regulator transistor. It's called the "series-pass regulator." This transistor takes in the unregulated, filtered DC at its collector terminal and spits out 100 volts of regulated DC at the emitter.

How does the transistor "know" how much voltage to put out? The base is the controlling element of a transistor and the base voltage of the series-pass regulator transistor will determine how much voltage comes out of the emitter. That's the job of the zener diode, ZR2. A zener diode is a "regulator diode" and each zener diode has a very specific voltage rating. In this case, ZR2 is a type 1N4764 with a zener voltage of 100 volts. By connecting ZR2 to the base of the transistor, the base voltage is pegged at 100 volts and the output of the power supply is regulated accordingly. In actuality, there is a .7 volt difference between the base voltage and the output voltage at the emitter, but this is negligible.

If you are working on a Williams pinball where all the score displays are out, start by checking the output of the + 100 VDC and -100 VDC power supplies. You will undoubtedly find that one of them is much too low in voltage. The common problem in this power supply is failure of ZR2 or ZR4, the 100 volt diodes. When the zener diodes fail, they usually drop way down in voltage, thus a 100 volt zener diode might suddenly become a 20 volt zener diode. Since the zener diode controls the series-pass regulator transistor, the output voltage would drop to around 20 volts as well.

Although a good zener diode will often test just like a conventional rectifier (when you use a digital multimeter on the "diode" test setting) a voltage shift may not be readily apparent unless you perform a "power-on" voltage measurement. With the game turned on, carefully measure the voltage across ZR2 and ZR4. Just put one meter lead on each end of the component. It doesn't even matter which lead you put where. All you're interested in is the voltage across the zener diode. A good diode will measure at close to 100 volts. A bad zener diode will probably be much lower. If you are unsure if the zener diode is good or bad, you can try swapping ZR2 with ZR4. If the problem moves to the other power supply, the zener diode must be bad!

If you throw a couple of 100 volt zener diodes in your parts box, you can make this repair in the field. It only takes five or ten minutes to replace. The 1N4764 is a 100 volt, 1 watt zener diode. When replacing zener diodes, you must use the same voltage rating but you may use a higher wattage component as a substitute. For example, a 1N5949A is a 1.5 watt zener that may be used as a substitute for the 1N4764.

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ITALY'S SMILING

third annual ENADA creates enthusiasm as growing Italian trade visits Rimini expo

by Martin Dempsey

Mamma mia! The 1991 ENADA, Italy's third such international trade show, has now become a well-established reference point for the industry in this country. This year's show drew an enthusiastic crowd of national and international tradesters to its four days of exhibits (March 7-10). Sponsored by the Italian trade association SAPAR-AGIS, the expo featured 140 modestly-decorated exhibit booths, ranging from the small to the very large. The event showcased a wide variety of current coin-op equipment from home and abroad. No attendance figures were available at presstime, but show organizers and most exhibitors seemed happy with the steady stream of visitors.

This year's show occupied two large halls of the Rimini Exhibition Center. The largest volume of equipment displayed was video, and big-screen games received much attention . . . beginning with *Mad Dog McCree,* represented in Europe by Atari, and much touted here by Tiziano Fagioli at the Elettronolo stand. (His booth also displayed goods from Sega and Leland.) Another big-screen method of presenting video games included "Mega Show" in the COEL booth, a system which can display either standard TV broadcasts or video games, on a large-screen TV. A number of other firms displayed large monitors or big-screen games, as well. In the realm of more conventional video presentation, Generalgame showed SNK's Neo•Geo system, while Negro had the Taito and Jaleco lines.

Video support items such as monitors were displayed by such as



Sabrina Mortillaro with SNK's *Neo•Geo* system games at the Generalgame stand (the firm has the product exclusively for Italy). The display was shared with their two sister companies Intervideo and Effeto Gioco. Between them, they represent an operation that includes manufacturing, assembly and distribution in Italy and abroad.



Bowlingo is amply demonstrated on the Marsilio stand, which also showed a wide range of equipment from NSM/Germany including video games and the ever-popular dart games for which they seem to becoming as well known for as their jukeboxes.



Ermes Giorgi demonstrates his *K-1* which is used to evaluate, test, realign and adjust video game monitors, resulting in better picture and longer monitor life.



Vittorio Gallarti, of Hantarex in Italy, displays monitors and other electronic systems manufactured by the firm for the Italian and overseas markets right there in Italia.



David Wilcox of Associated Leisure (left) with Marino Zaccaria (Technoplay) and the new Data East flipper *Checkpoint*. Technoplay also displayed video games and novelties.

Hantarex and Intervideo (their Ermes Giorgi also showed his "K 1 regenerator" and other technical instruments at the COEL stand). A full range of spare parts, accessories, coin handling equipment and other items were also displayed by such as Maggi Coniature.

The BONDEAL CHART

top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending April 13, 1991

TOP KITS	Apr. 13	Apr. 6	Mar. 30	Weeks on Location
Street Fighter II	1	1	1	8
Earth Defense Force	2	2	—	3
Hot Shots	3	3	2	3
Hat Trick Hero	4	5	3	3
Super Pinball Action	5	4	4	5
Growl	6	10	5	9
Columns	7	8	9	54
Super Pang	8	—	—	22
Cycle Warriors	9	—	—	9
Passing Shot	10	—	8	105
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
F-15 Strike Eagle	1	1	1	3
Hard Drivin'	2	2	2	104
Cisco Heat	3	4	4	15
Big Run	4	3	3	63
Four Trax	5	5	—	19

Pins were much in evidence at the show, with two from Data East proving very popular: *Checkpoint* and *The Simpsons*. Likewise, plenty of booths offered coin-op music, most notably NSM and Wurlitzer jukes. Different ways of presenting music were offered by the *Master Video Jukebox* (on the Pedretti stand) and the U.S.-made *SongBird* juke from Carson Mfg.

Billiard and snooker tables, along with related accessories, comprised another major category — one of the most formidable sections of the fair, in fact. The Norditalia stands carried products from Brunswick, Valley, Viking, Joss, McDermott, Conilleau, Saluc (Aramith) and others. Regarding other table games, soccer remains quite popular here due to low prices and low maintenance needs, combined with high player appeal. Many of Italy's tradesters automatically think of Garlando for table soccer and they had a handsome version of this game on display.

A vast array of kiddie rides (from various manufacturers) also appeared on display, indicating that this market is indeed healthy in Italian coin-op. Spain's Falgas showed a particularly versatile range of both kiddie rides and novelty equipment, while Zamperla displayed strength testers and roundabouts for permanent locations and travel-



Mr. Pedretti and Rupert Mosinger with the *Master* video juke on the Pedretti stand where NSM jukeboxes were also shown (Pedretti imports them into Italy from Germany).

ing fairs.

Sports-themed equipment included *Bowlingo*. . . on the NSM stand this time, along with NSM dart games. Wellow Darts appeared on the Technoplay stand, while the coin-op boxing theme of Taito's *Sonic Blastman* combined video game and strength-tester genres at the Negro booth.

Italy's trade group SAPAR had an information stand at the show. They were celebrating their receipt of an award from the President of Italy for their study center for research and documentation of the industry. The recognition from top authorities is important, since a key association goal is improved regulation and laws governing coin-op here.

From that SAPAR research center, by the way, come the following vital statistics: Italians spent over $350 million playing amusement games in 1990. Italy boasts over 80 major manufacturers with an annual gross of about $270 million, exports of $179 million and imports worth $46 million. Italy's industry includes 3,750 operators. There are 2,100 amusement centers and 300,000 coin-op units in the country. These include 190,000 videos; 40,000 pins; 20,000 jukes and 50,000 others.

A final note on the Italian show: this affair is always held in the city of Rimini on the Adriatic Coast, rather than in the world-famous sites of Rome or Milan. Despite the lack of direct air flights into the



Mega Show from COEL can be used as a large screen video game with 4-player console or as a big TV screen to show the latest soccer match or other sporting event.

locale, Italian tradesters like it and Rimini proves to be a good venue, especially since the trade association provides a complimentary bus to meet all international flights into Bologna, the closest major airport! Another friendly touch is that Rimini's mayor, Roberto Moretti, officially opened the expo himself.

In all, the '91 ENADA provided a variety of evidence that Italy's coin-op trade is alive. . . and growing.

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GAMING LAW DISCUSSION — Taking a good look at the gaming business in Europe, Michael Shefras of 1st Administration Management Services Ltd. (Surrey, England) felt that a conference was in order to put things in perspective and to discuss improvements. Scheduled for June 4-5 in Amsterdam, the "Step by Step to Eventual Harmonization of Coin Operated Games of Chance" conference has gained wide support and should offer some food for thought. Topics discussed will include an overview of operating conditions in Europe, gaming law and possible elements of a single European body of regulation. A mini-exhibition will run alongside the conference. For more information contact Shefras at 372743200.

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR — R.H. Belam and Namco America have announced an exclusive sales/marketing agreement for Latin America effective with the introduction of Namco's *Final Lap II*. According to the agreement, Belam will assume full distribution responsibilities for Latin America (except Mexico) and the Caribbean.

BONDEAL MOVES — Bondeal Ltd. of Hong Kong runs that super-arcade which supplies us with the comprehensive "Bondeal chart" we print every month (all game rankings are based on side-by-side comparisons in a single mega-location). Bondeal is also one of the world's largest suppliers of PCBs and parts, and this part of their business has expanded tremendously in recent years. Well, as of April 29, Bondeal moved its offices to bigger and better premises . . . in Metro Plaza, Kowloon. That just happens to be the tallest skyline and most prestigious office block in all of Hong Kong, friends. The new digs are triple the size of the old place, and are served by the MTR (i.e. the Hong Kong metrorail: the city's fast, efficient underground subway). Matter of fact, Bondeal's building is directly opposite the Kwai Fong MTR Station and a covered overpass will connect the station directly to the Metro Plaza building. As you can tell, they're very proud of their new place and Fred, Joe and W.K. invite all trade members who are visiting Hong Kong to drop by and see them! Bondeal's new address is: Bondeal Ltd., 1512-1517, 15th Floor, Metro Plaza, Tower 1, 223 Hing Fong Rd., Kwai Fong, N.T., Hong Kong. The telephone is 852/487-9089. Fax is 852-428-1533. Telex is 57214 BONDL HX. Cable is ARCADE. Congrats to a fine company and good luck in your new location.



AUTOMATIC MUSIC DISTRIBUTORS has approached a different angle in their business. The long successful South Australian machine operating company has now entered the distribution business. A CD Jukebox Open House was held in March to launch their new product models available. AMD is now sales and service agent in South Australia for NSM jukeboxes, the Pioneer Laser juke plus commercial and home coin-op pool tables.

MARY OPENSHAW fans will be happy to know she's having a ball living in Ireland. "It's a dream come true and I simply love it!" she wrote us recently. "People ask why I chose to live in Ireland rather than England, which is, after all, my native country. The answer is quite simple. I've traveled a lot, visited nearly 50 different countries, and at the finish, I chose the one I liked best. Ireland is quite different from any other country. Yes, I know you hear about the troubles in the North, but for me, I must say things are fine." Mary went to the Dublin coin machine show early in March and said it was grand to see a lot of old friends. "But I didn't wish I was back at the old reporter's grind again," she quickly added. Everyone wishes their friend good times in Ould Sod (we may be visiting you some day, Mary O!).

LISTEN TO THE PROS — ATEI, Europe's leading amusement and gaming exhibition, is continuing its policy of gathering input from exhibitors and visitors on ways to make the exhibition work even better for them. Through a series of focus groups, constructive information is offered ensuring the show continues to provide the best possible service for everyone. Each group involves a cross section of exhibitors, visitors and show organizers and will concentrate on different sections of the show. For more information on how you can be a part of this, contact Margaret Turner at 071/839-1461.



"N" IS FOR NEW — Honoring those distributors with the highest sales, NSM-America's ACME distributor meeting paid tribute to those who helped make 1990 a record sales year for the company. Receiving awards were: Mondial's Tony Yula for number one distributor; Michael Riquier (T & M Dist.), number two; Ron Gold (Cleveland Coin), number three; and, as "rising star" distributor, Dave Patterson (SunBelt Amusement). And looking towards 1991 and beyond, NSM-America also announced its initiative to create an entirely new company with new equipment, new parts and service availability, and marketing support. Here's to the award winners and the new NSM-America!

southeast

CONDOLENCES — Kentucky Coin's Harvey Weingarten lost his dad Felix on April 11. Pop was 92 when he passed, and Harvey tells us his mom died three years ago at the age of 88. Others in the family have also lived to a full long life. Happily, Felix Weingarten lived in his own Brooklyn, N.Y. apartment when he passed on, rather than in a nursing home. Still in all, Harvey was trying to come to grips with it when we chatted with him. May Felix rest in God's peace.

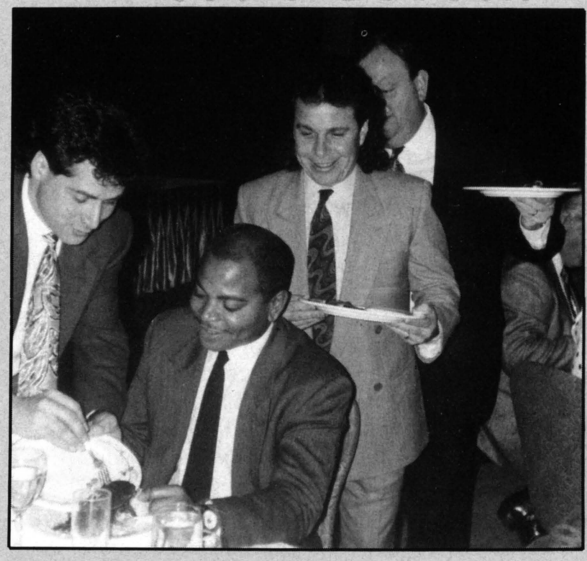
USEFUL INFORMATION — *Amusement Business* has published the 1991 edition of the *Funparks Directory,* a comprehensive guide to international tourist attractions, theme and funparks. This annual sourcebook contains the addresses, phone numbers, management contacts, operation dates, facility and ride/attraction descriptions of over 2,500 funparks in the U.S., Canada and overseas. The directory also contains a section on parks and attractions under development or construction. Copies of the *Funparks Directory* are available for $48. Call 615/321-4250 for more information.

LAMOA OFFICERS — The Louisiana Amusement and Music Operators Assn. has elected the following officers for 1991: Nick Putch, President; Fred Boyd, Vice President; and Kevin Craighead as Secretary/Treasurer.

NEW SALES REPS — The CD Jukebox Kit Co. (Dresden, Tenn.) advises that four new sales reps have been added to their list. They are: Renegade Dist., Morehead, Minn., 800/525-6135; 1002 Distributing, Delevan, Wisc., 414/728-1477; Coast to Coast Dist., Roseville, Calif., and North Central (rep: Jack Deming), 612/933-1041.

southwest

NOT RETIRING — Sal (Betson/Phoenix) DeBruno seemed to be thinking of retiring after he trained Larry Toorock these last months to become manager of Betson's Arizona outlet, but he's had second thoughts. Besides, who wants to stay home bugging Gloria all day? Anyway, Sal's buddy Bob Rondeau says the Lion of Phoenix talked with Peter Betti (Betson's bossman) and will continue working out of his home doing special assignments and still calling on customers. Rondeau says he talked with Gloria DeBruno who stated: "This business is not a job for Sal or us, it's a lifestyle, something he loves and cares about. I'm glad he and Peter had that talk." Therefore, Sal will continue as an asset to Betson Pacific and a great help to their new manager Larry Toorock and staff. "I'm glad I trained him well," said Sal of Larry, "because he'll be my boss now."



YUM, YUM — That picky, picky Tim (Romstar) Jackson finally got his "just desserts" at SunBelt's Dallas open house dinner party. His peers Frank Cosentino, Rene Lopez and Joe Dillon finally got "fed up" with Timmy's nattering when it comes to ordering chow at a restaurant and performed a little waitering "coinbiz style" (Tim's lucky Cravens and Blatts weren't in the serving line, else the next stop would be the dry cleaner). The point: do not eat with Jackson unless you don't mind hearing him tell the waiter "the peas are about nine degrees too cold." Picky, picky!

midwest

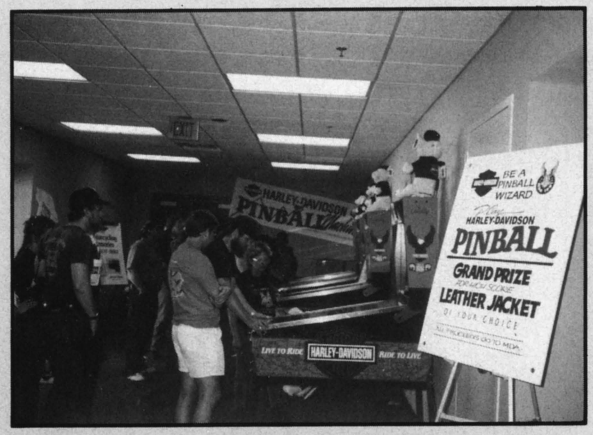


RETIRING GENT — Our old and good buddy Stan Jarocki (Grand Products) is actually planning to retire after "only" 41 years kicking the bricks in the coinbiz. Correct. Old Stan, who put in his years with Seeburg, Elektra Games and Midway before Grand, plans on selling his and Diane's house in Rolling Meadows, Ill. and moving to (get ready) Albuquerque. Apparently the exact retirement day depends on the house sale, so he could be around at Grand for a couple more months at least (Grand is currently building *Ghost Town* for Lauran Bromley and Stan says it's a beaut; they recently finished a batch of *Rad Mobile* uprights for Sega). Stan's friend Fred (World Wide) Skor called him to say, "I hate to hear you're leaving the business, especially since I've been in it the same amount of time." True. Fred's been at World Wide for 41 years.

VIDEO LOTTERY PANEL — The Ohio Coin Machine Assn. (OCMA, Columbus, Ohio) has everything set for their May 31 expo seminar on the video lottery. Areas to be addressed include what steps each state in the region has taken toward the legalization of video lottery, as well as pitfalls to avoid and costs involved in legalization efforts. All panelists have been confirmed and they are: Hy Sandler, Executive Director, Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements; John Milliron, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Operators; Adonna Jerman, Executive Director, Illinois Coin Machine Operators Assn.; Candice Super, Executive Director, Michigan Coin Machine Operators Assn.; Leoma Ballard, president, West Virginia Music and Vending Assn. and Paul Corey, OCMA's Executive VP serving as panel moderator. The seminar is being held in conjunction with the association's 17th Annual Music and Games Exposition taking place at the Radisson Airport Hotel in Columbus May 31-June 1. For more info, contact Judith Martin: OCMA, 2011 Riverside Dr. #450, Columbus, OH 43221-4025; 614/486-4025.

GOING, GOING — The equipment auction held at 1002 Distributors (Delavan, Wisc.) April 18 was actually conducted by "retired" operator Joe Fox. Under Bernie Powers' auspices, a bunch of used stuff was auctioned off that day. Donated pieces were also requested (with proceeds going to the WAMO associaton's legal fund).

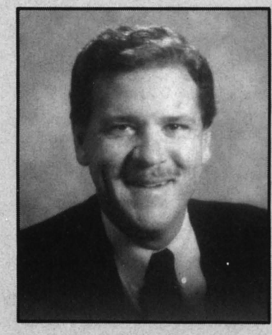
WAMO TRADE SHOW — The Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Assn. is readying their state show for May 17-18 at the Country Inn Resort Hotel in Pewaukee, Wisc. According to WAMO's sources, the focus of the convention will be on the potential of video poker operations. For more information contact them at 11801 W. Janesville Rd., Hales Corners, WI 53130; 414/529-4703.



MIDWAY'S 'HARLEY' PROMO — Midway Mfg. gained enthusiasm for their *Harley Davidson* pin with a tournament staged at the famed "Bike Week" festival (drawing over 500,000 visitors) in Daytona, Fla. The competition generated enthusiastic support for the game as well as dollars for the Muscular Dystrophy Association to which all proceeds were donated. In a related promotion, Midway says operators can promote their new *Harley-Davidson* pinball with lots of merchandise from companies licensed by the famed motorcycle maker. You can offer to your players such items as: embroidered patches; CDs and cassettes; books; t-shirts; towels; athletic wear; plush toys; buckles, ties, keychains; and other fun items. Contact your local authorized Midway dealer for details or call Midway's Roger Sharpe at 312/267-2240.

TOM KRAMER is the new national sales manager at Kaneko, the Buffalo Grove, Ill. vidgame factory (which is the new U.S. subsidiary of a major Japanese firm). He arrived in March after a stint at the Sanyo Fisher USA Corp. Kaneko's U.S. prexy Marty Glazman said Tom's eight-plus years of electronics industry experience would be a major asset.

VALLEY AWARDS DISTRIBUTORS — At the recent ACME show in Las Vegas, Valley Recreation Products (Bay City, MI) announced its awards for superb distributor efforts in the marketplace. The electronic dart and pool table manufacturer recognized the following outstanding distributors: winning for the distributor of the year was Brady Distributing (Charlotte, NC) and both Cleveland Coin (Cleveland, OH) and Atlas Distributing (Chicago) for most improved distributors. Congrats!

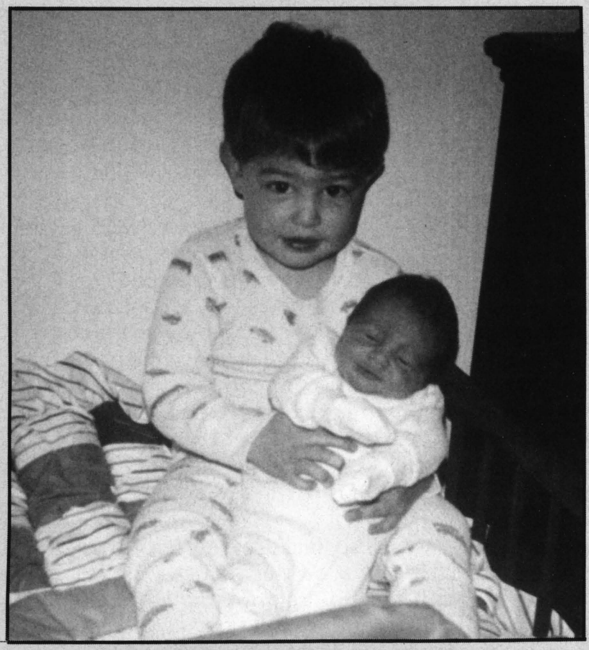


GEORGE McAULIFFE has been named vice president and general sales manager of Edison Brothers Mall Entertainment (St. Louis, Mo.). He officially joined the company last year when Edison Brothers acquired the Time-Out chain of family entertainment centers. George began his career at Time-Out some 12 years ago. Promptly named director of anchor entertainment centers, he's succeeded from there and we wish him all the best in his new position.



FORE! Or, shall we say "fore-ty" AMOA board members participated in AMOA's 13th annual Bob Nims Golf Classic at the Camelback Golf Course in Scottsdale, Ariz. during the board's mid-year meeting. Ten four-member teams participated in the event and prizes were awarded for first thru fourth place. Seen here is the first- place team: Richard and Susan Scherer (Oakland Cigarette Service), Jim Reed (Patton Vending, Modesto, Calif.) and Jerry Derrick (Derrick Music, Charleston, W. Va.).

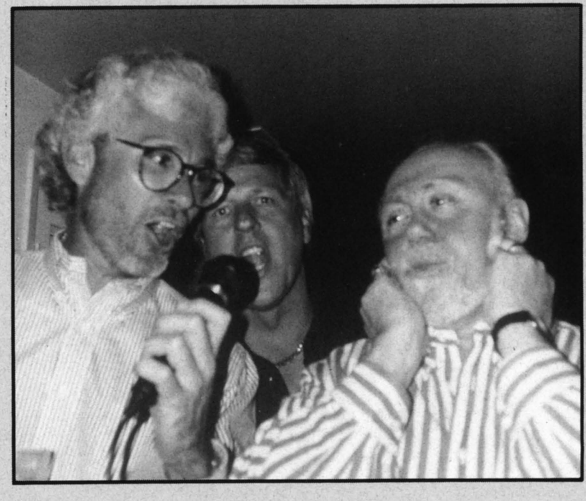
LAMAR FORQUE is the new West Coast regional sales manager for Merit Industries. He is a sales pro with 20 years of coin-op experience (including working for Music-Vend, Seattle) in the industry. "While making new and impressive strides in our markets," said Merit, "we feel strong toward our people who make it happen. We're thrilled to have Lamar as part of our sales team and are sure you'll join us in welcoming him aboard."



BUNDLE OF JOY — Debbie Austin Ferguson (Leland Corp., El Cajon, Calif.) is pleased to announce a new addition to the family. Joining the Fergusons on March 13, little Matthew is shown smiling for the camera with big brother Andy. Looks like the crib's back in the office.



ANGIE'S 50TH — Ken (Leland) Anderson's popular wife Angie was treated to a super 50th birthday party the night of April 20 at her San Diego home by Ken, relatives and friends. Some friends hailed from the coin machine business, including Ken's boss John Rowe and his former partner (and present Pioneer sales topper) Paul Scribner. The entertainment highlight was the karaoke setup Paul brought in and the folks had a ball making jerks out of themselves trying to sing. Coin people at the party above (from left) are Bill Cravens, Angie, Ken, Marilyn Cravens, Paul Scribner and Leland's Debbie Austin. It was a great night for a special lady! The photo below shows John Rowe (left) and Paul Scribner butchering "Macho Man" (Kenny's non-verbal critique of the noise needs no further explanation). Fierce fun in San Diego!



REDEMPTION REGULATION — Taking a definitive step in resolving interpretation of the laws regulating redemption machines in California, a March 13 meeting was held to discuss proposed legislation that would regulate cranes in San Diego. Meeting at the HQ of the San Diego Bar Association were enforcement agency representatives, prosecutors and members of the Amusement Assn. of California (AAC). A list of proposed legislation was submitted and left in the hands of the AAC who were given approximately 30 days to respond. Any questions regarding the legislation can be directed to the AAC by contacting David Jackson at 818/775-1935.

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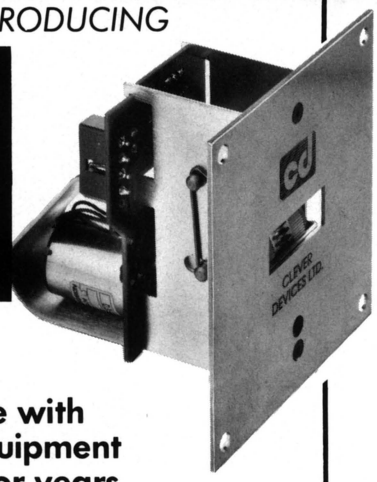

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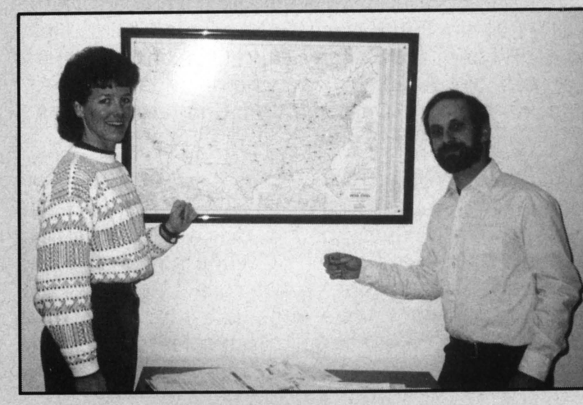
TEAMWORK — Last month's issue had a fine interview with *Air Hockey* maven Mark Robbins. But this month, we'd like to show off his manufacturing and support team down at Dynamo that gets product out and running smoothly. That's Mark (second from right) with his team; also below with Blenda Selvey (parts & service manager).



COMING ABOARD — Paul Wiederaenders has exited his post as Capcom's midwest man to join Bill Cravens' Leprechaun Games. Paul will perform the company's sales functions in the eatern half of the country, while Aldo Donnaloia and Glen Kahler do likewise in the west.

QUICK DRAW — The "pardners" at Skill Games, Inc. have rustled up a promotion sure to corral increased location support and players for their competitive *Showdown* skill game. The "Showdown Weekly Shootout Tournament" rewards the fastest draw with the player's name and score marked on a list above the game (with an additional list kept behind the bar to eliminate the cheatin' kind). For the promotion package (four *Showdown* t-shirts along with a marker board to record winners' names), call Skill Games at 213/988-8977.

BIGGEST IN THE WEST — The largest pinball-only show in the west will be held in sunny Scottsdale, Ariz. June 14 and 15. The show will feature a pinball extravaganza complete with a pin tournament (chance to win a game), a banquet with a special guest speaker and the opportunity to play the newest (and the oldest) games. Registration and exhibit rates are obtained by calling Mark at 602/264-1217, Jan at 602/894-1034 or Bruce at 602/831-9699. Special hotel rates are also available by calling the Safari Resort Hotel at 800/824-4356. Make sure to mention the Pinball Show!

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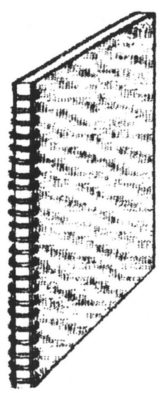

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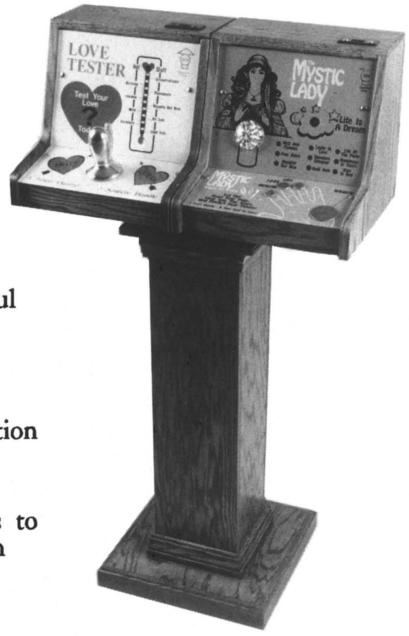

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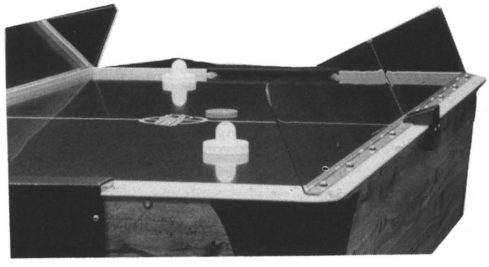

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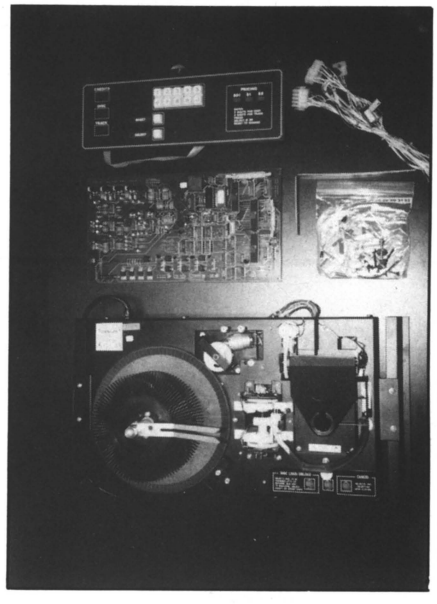

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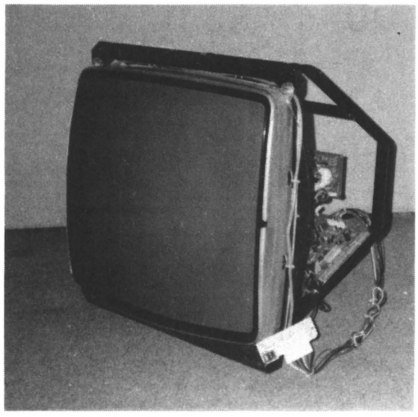

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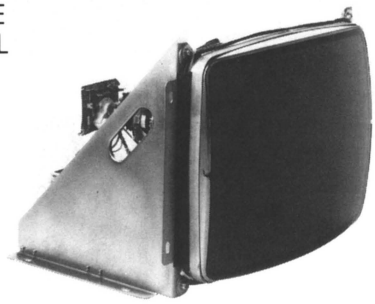

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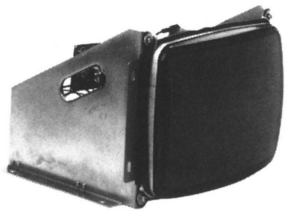

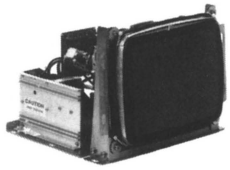

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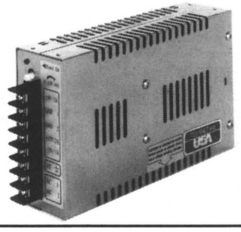

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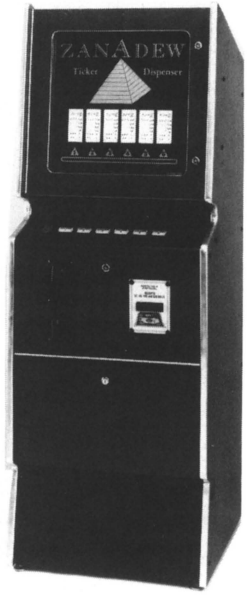

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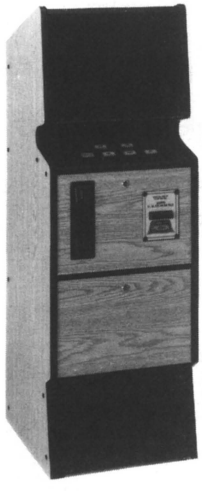

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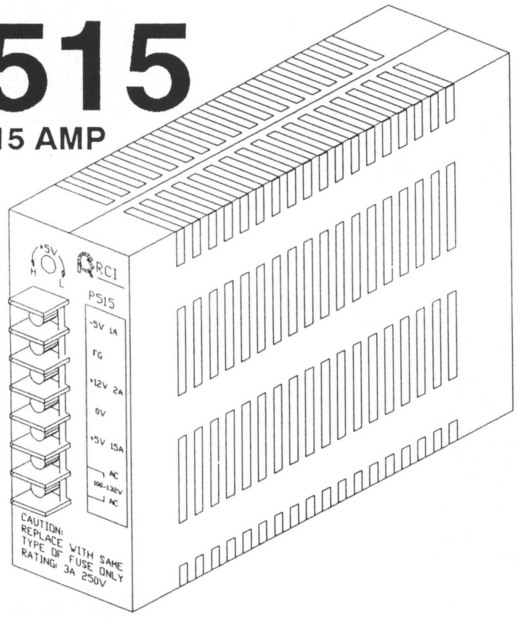

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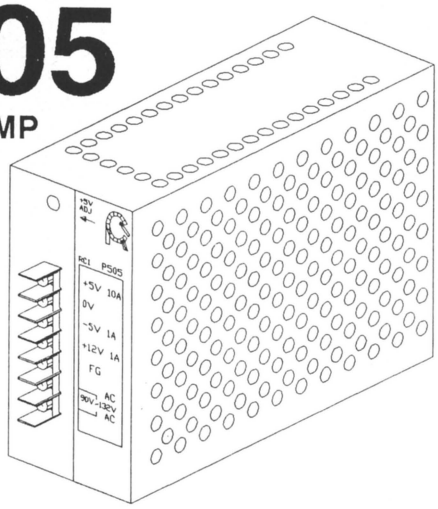

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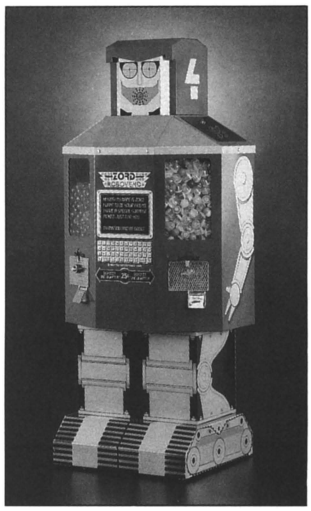

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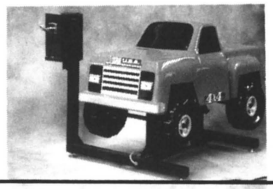

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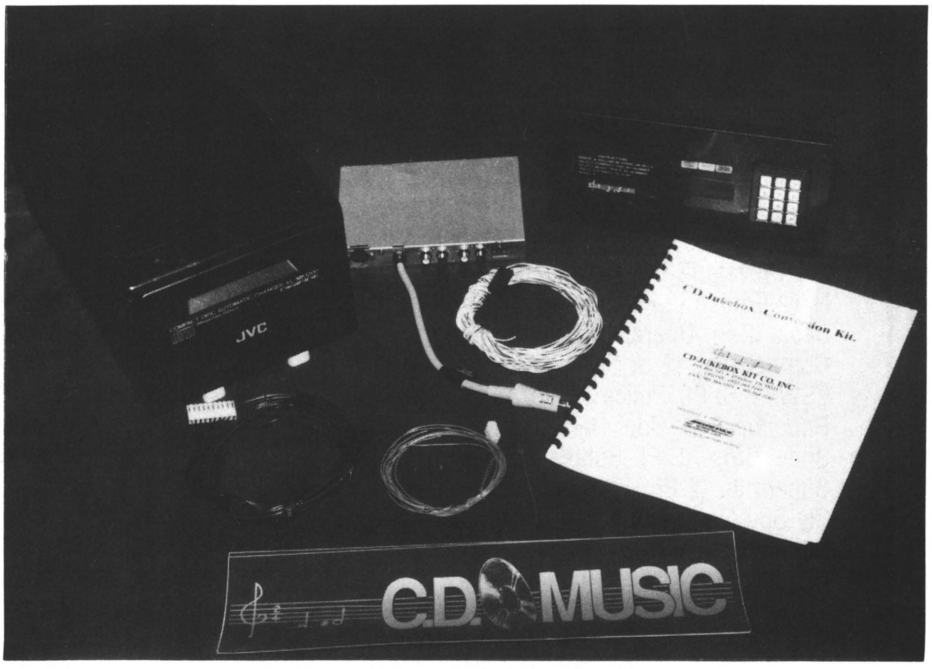

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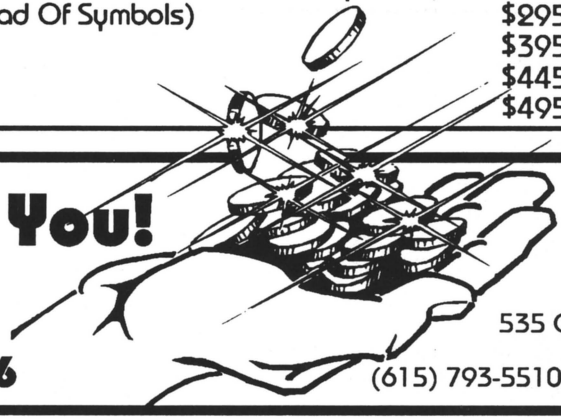

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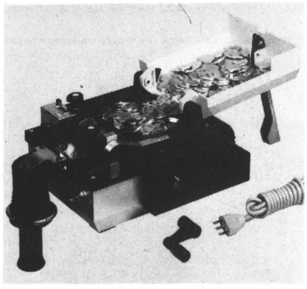

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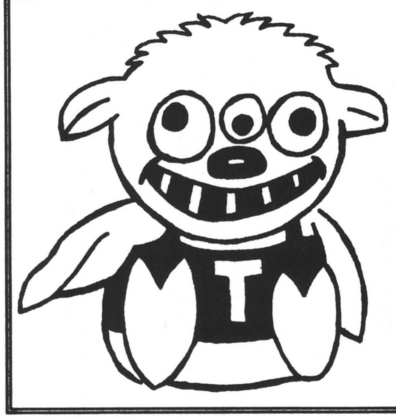

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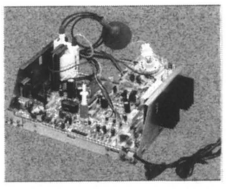

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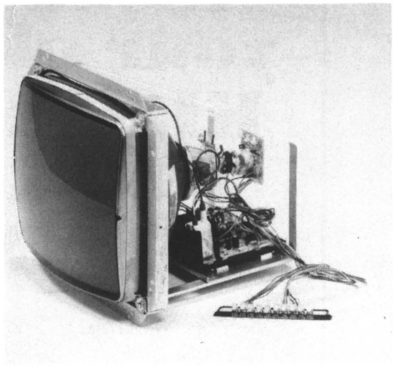

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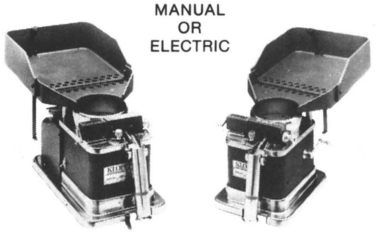

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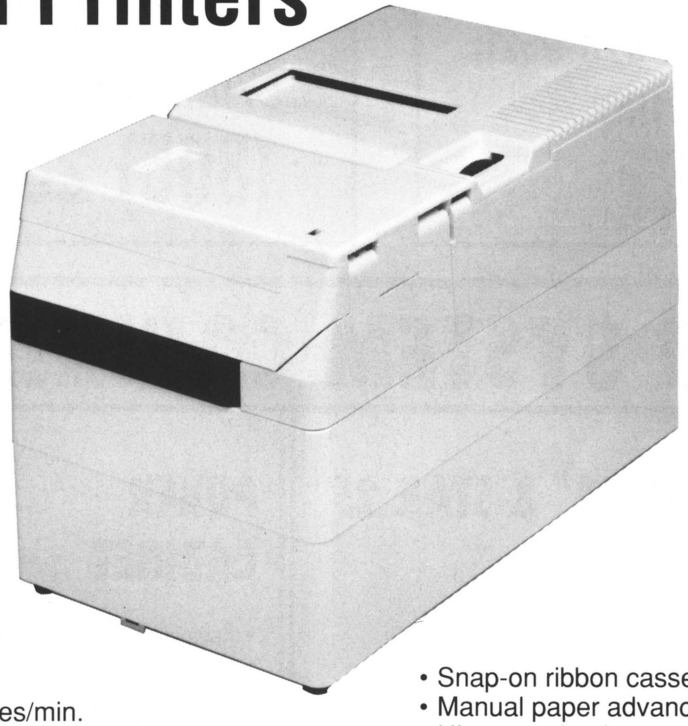

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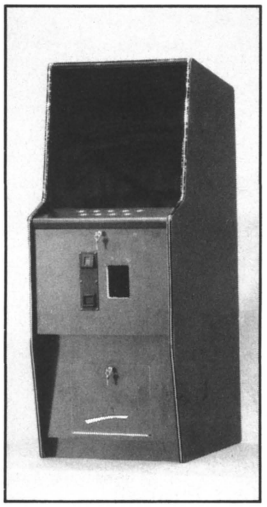

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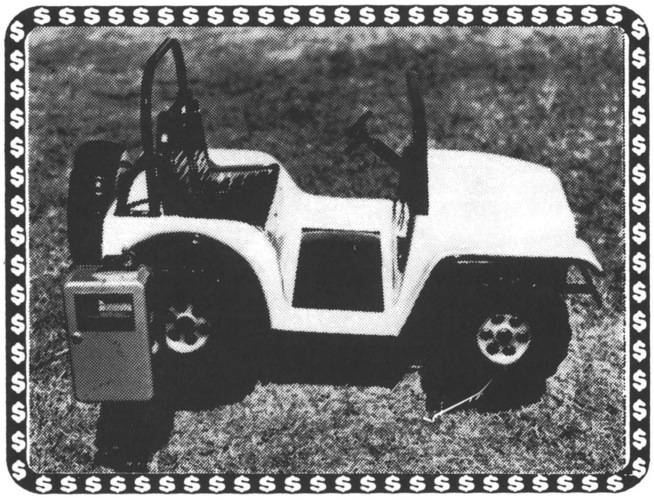

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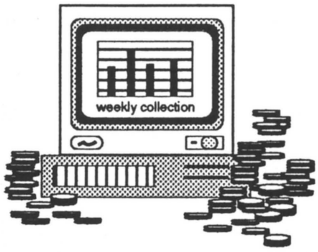

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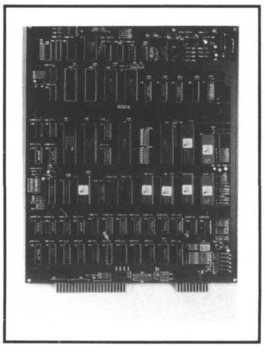

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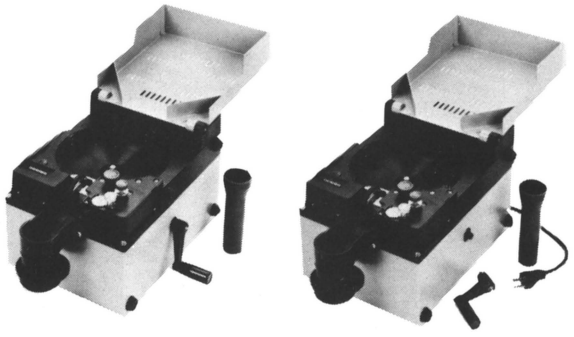

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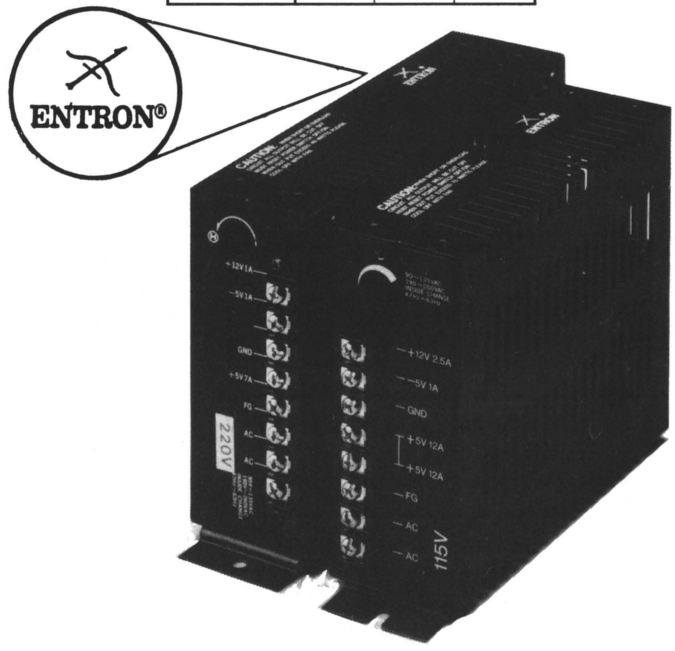

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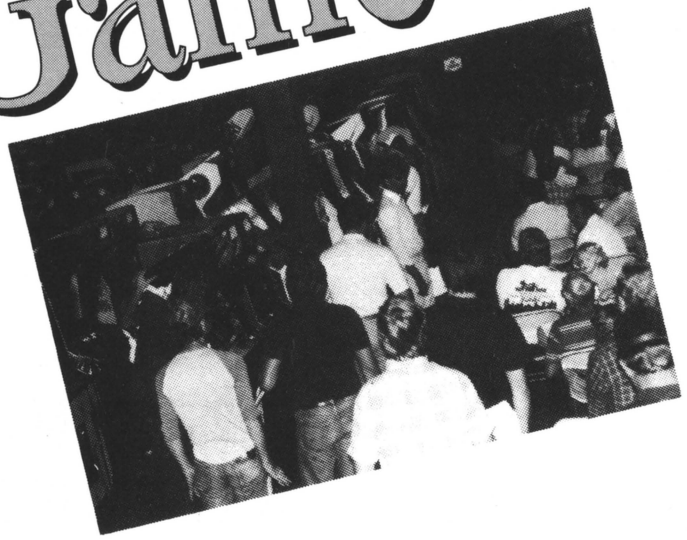

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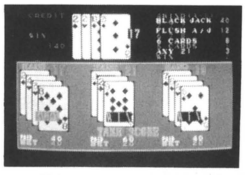
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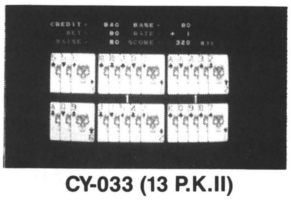
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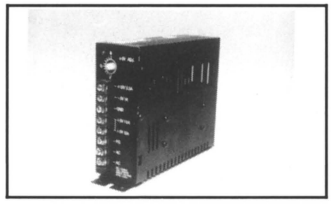

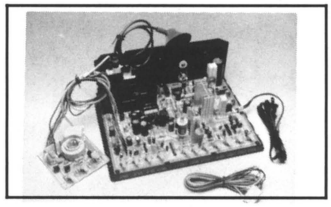

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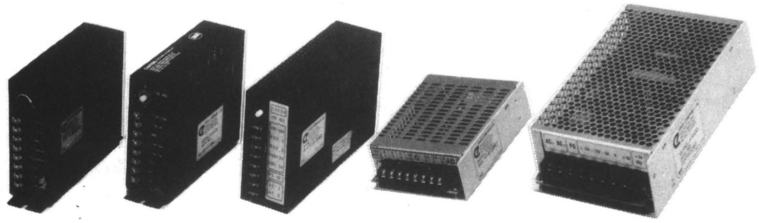

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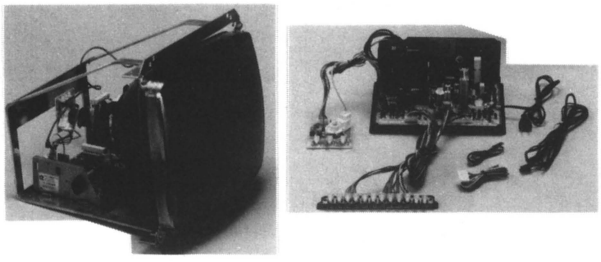

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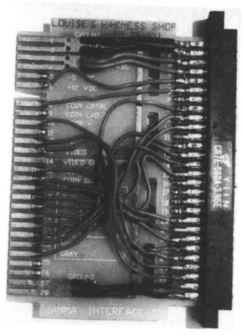

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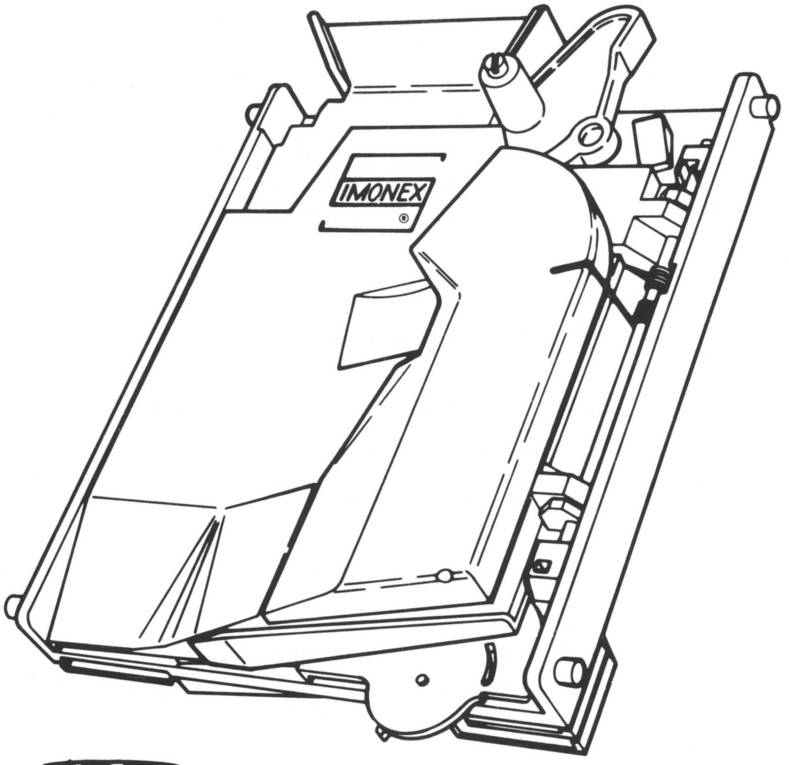



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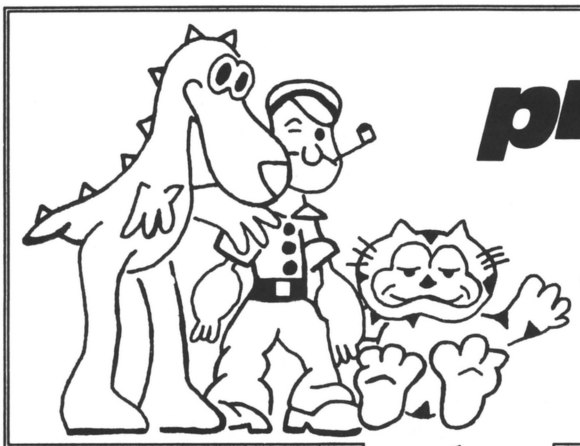

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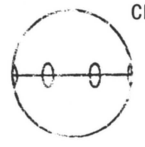



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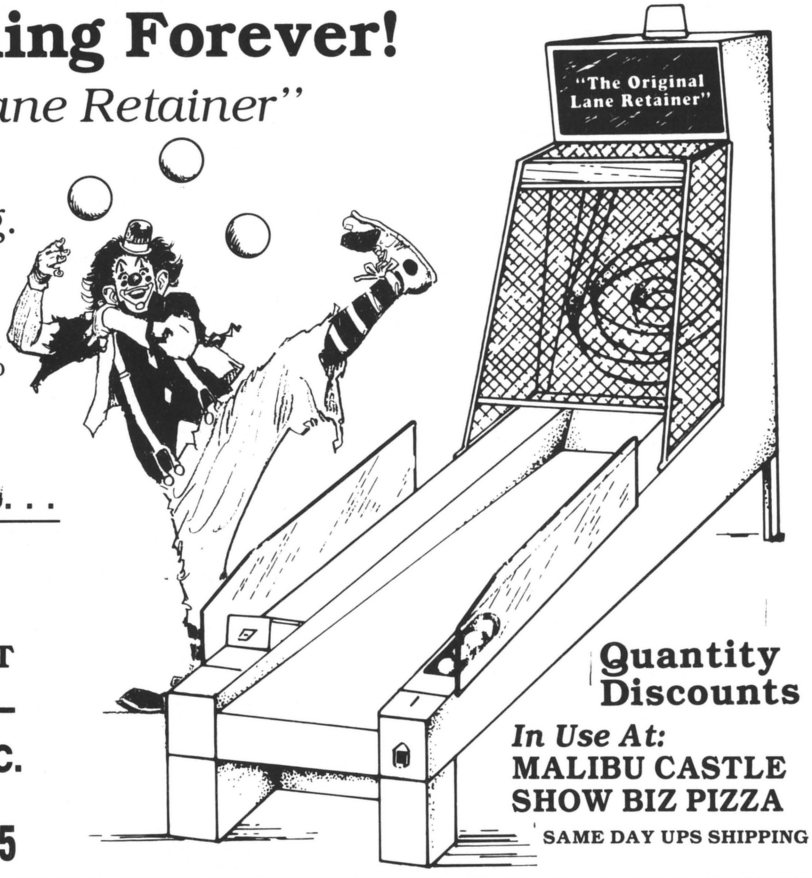

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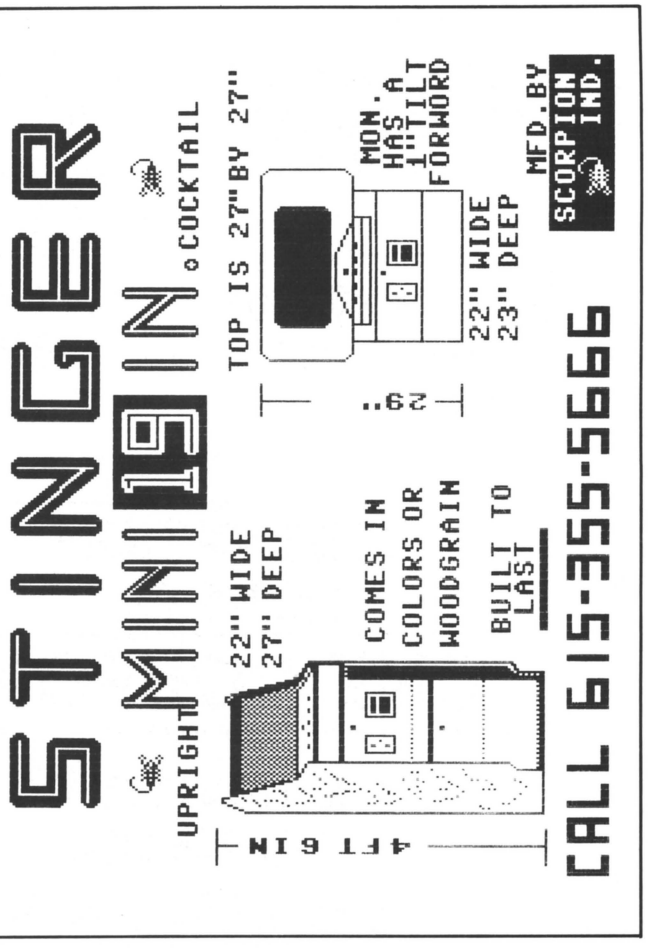



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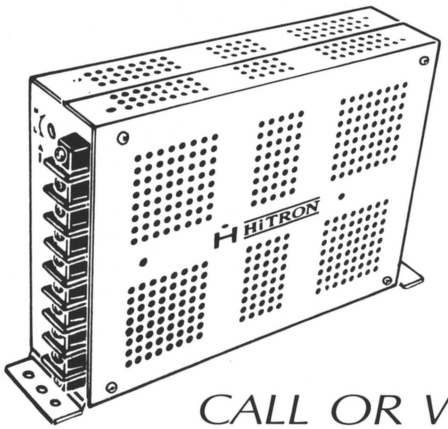

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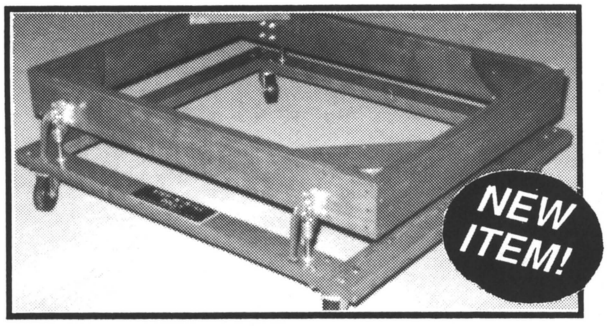

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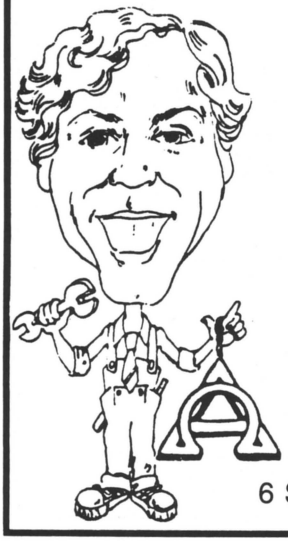

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NOTICE OF UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT ORDER IN YAMATE U.S.A. CORP. VS. MYRON SUGERMAN AND ATLANTIC & PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORP.

COURT ORDER AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE EQUIPMENT AND ORDERING RECALL OF COUNTERFEITS

On March 6, 1991, the United States District Court, in the case of Yamate U.S.A. Corp. vs. Myron Sugerman and Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corp., Civil Action No. 89-763(HAA), vacated its prior ruling denying Yamate's request for a preliminary injunction and granted Yamate's request for a preliminary injunction and impounding order against the defendants.

PURCHASERS & USERS OF POSSIBLY COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE GAMES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE COURT PRELIMINARILY ENJOINED DEFENDANTS SUGERMAN AND A&P IN THE CASE AS FOLLOWS:

- No more manufacturing, buying, selling, importing, using, performing, displaying and otherwise dealing or trafficking in PCBs for Lucky 8-Line W-4 or any games substantially similar to it.

- In addition, the Court authorized the United States Marshal to impound from the defendants all PCBs for Lucky 8-Line W-4 or games substantially similar to it.

Anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of the ruling should contact

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MR. M. MARUYAMA, THE SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR OF EAGLE COMPANY, LTD. OF TOKYO JAPAN, WHICH IS THE MANUFACTURER AND EXPORTER OF VARIOUS WELL-KNOWN VIDEO GAMES CREATED BY WING COMPANY LTD, SUCH AS LUCKY 37, LUCKY 21, LUCKY 57, LUCKY 89, LUCKY 75, LUCKY 77, LUCKY 25, W-7, W-8 AND LUCKY 74, IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE EAGLE COMPANY'S APPOINTMENT OF ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORP. AS AN AGENT FOR EAGLE COMPANY FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THEIR WING BRAND PRODUCTS IN BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

MR. M. MARUYAMA STATES THAT HE FEELS THE APPOINTMENT OF ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORPORATION, HILLSIDE NEW JERSEY, WILL STRENGTHEN THE EAGLE COMPANY AND THEIR WING PRODUCTS IN THE MARKETPLACE OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND STATES THAT ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORPORATION HAS BEEN NAMED AS AN OFFICIAL AGENT FOR EAGLE COMPANY LTD. BECAUSE OF THEIR HIGH STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE.

MR. MAX HINKES, THE PRESIDENT OF ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORPORATION, IN A JOINT STATEMENT WITH MR. M. MARUYAMA SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE EAGLE COMPANY LTD. OF TOKYO, JAPAN, ADDED THAT HE IS EXTREMELY PROUD TO ENTER INTO A NEW PHASE OF BUSINESS RELATIONS WITH THE EAGLE COMPANY, AND THAT HE PLEDGES THAT ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORPORATION WILL CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN GOOD JAPANESE AND AMERICAN RELATIONS THROUGH THIS INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP.

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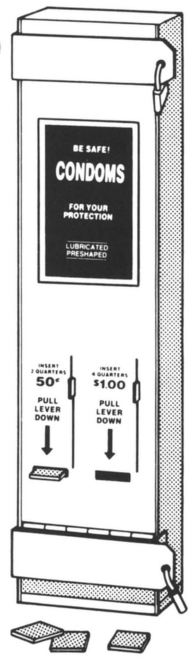

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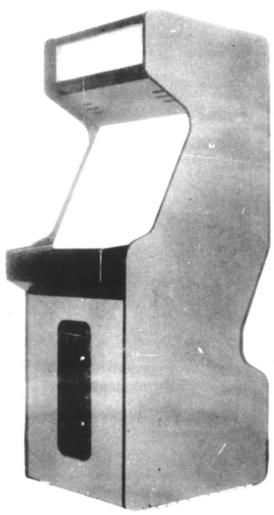

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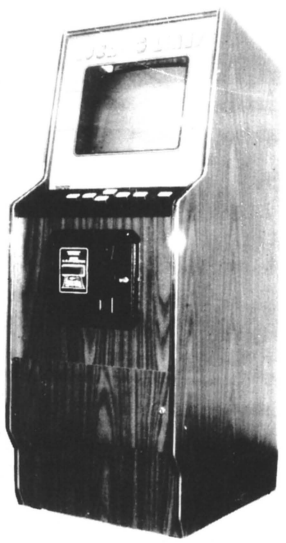

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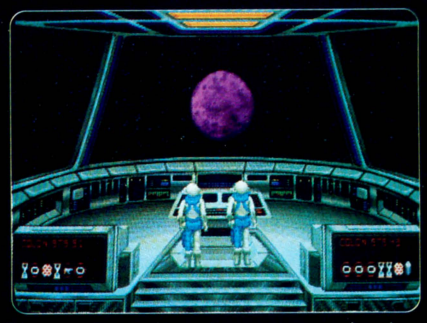

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