

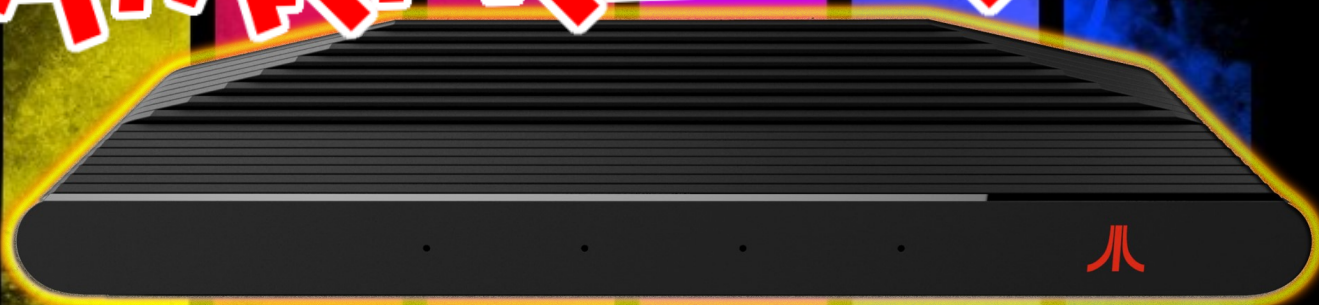
The Official

AMIGOS
Magazine

Issue 09 (July 2017)

Kick Start

ATARI RETURNS!!!

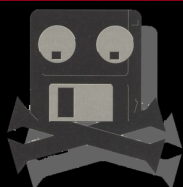


FOR USE WITH THE
ATARI® VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM™

Also inside...



Amigos Memories:
First Computer



Piracy
Feature



Box Artist:
Jerrol Richardson

Plus

- 'Digital Pictures' Lowdown
- Amiga, Music and Movie Charts
- News from September/October 1991

A Neil Mansell Production



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Welcome to the official Amigos podcast magazine. In this issue we attempt to keep up to date with the new Atari Box console as well as share happy memories with the start of a new feature; the Amigos Memories, in which our very own John Shawler shares his 'First Computer' memories.

As usual your comments are always welcomed;

Neil Mansell aka Spyhunter (spyhunter@amigospodcast.com)

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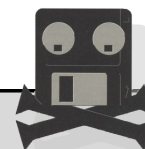
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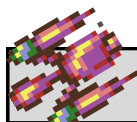
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KARAOKE CDTV

Sing a long Karaoke with the CDTV as Commodore have announced a line-up of 39 karaoke releases, each with 19 tracks.

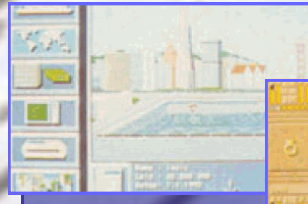
Also, In advance of the official Commodore release of the CDTV Keyboard, you can obtain an adapter to use a B2000 Keyboard from any Lightwave stockist. Prices yet to be confirmed.



RAINBOW REAPPEARS

Having been unusually quiet for the last few months, German developer, Rainbow Arts is about to re-emerge with a brace of new titles.

These include: Fate - Gates of Dawn, Transatlantic, Oil Imperium, and Centrebase.



NEW COMMODORE POLICY

Small Amiga dealers are furious at changes to Commodore's returns policy for dead on arrival (DOA) equipment which they argue is making them pay for Commodore's mistakes.

Before 1st July 1991, dealers returned DOA machines within 30 days and new units were received the next day. Commodore claim this system was open to abuse with equipment more than 6 months old being returned and resulting in a very high service bill.

The new policy cuts out the distributor, with dealers sending all faulty equipment directly to the firm's National Repair Centre. Machines proved to be DOA are replaced within 14 days and those more than 30 days old will be repaired. Only time will tell whether effects the Commodore or their relationship with their distributors.

MICRO PRINT



Citizen have unveiled their latest, and world's smallest, A4 printer. The PN48 Notebook weighs just 1.17Kg, including batteries and is only 6cm wider than the paper itself. It comes with two built in fonts (CTZ Times Roman and CTZ Courier) both in different sizes and styles. The printer can output at 53 characters per second at letter quality and the battery has an estimated life of 25-30 A4 pages.

Although a six hour stint in a recharger takes it back to full power. Another of its great features is its quiet operation, running at a mere 49Db. Complete with a 2 year warranty and a price tag of £325.



NEW PROJECTOR

NEC have a new range of projector TV's from 46" enclosed systems to 6" rear projection systems, costing a staggering £9,825

Also on its way to the UK is the 36" Mitsubishi large screen monitors, although these also carry hefty price tags.

COLOURAMA

Silica Systems have become the latest to jump onto the 24-bit colour bandwagon, with a pricey broadcast quality system.

Developed by US-based Great Valley Products (GVP), it is designed to give A2000 and A3000 machines 16,000,000 colours, flicker free.

It also contains a built-in frame buffer and Genlocks for RGB and Composite video signals. Included in the package is a 3D rendering package and a 2D, 16,000,000 colours art package; specially written for the hardware.

The total cost of the bundle will be £1,799

SPEEDY CD



If you're an A2000 or B3000 owner, who cannot wait any longer for the CDTV, Hitachi have come up with a workstation compatible CD Drive that leaves all others in its wake.

The CDR1750S has an access time of 320ms, which makes it the fastest drive on the market. It comes with a built-in SCSI Interface, making it compatible with most large computers. To combat the scourge of dust, it also comes with an air-tight chassis and a built-in cleaning gadget. Price TBC

MANSELL MANIA!

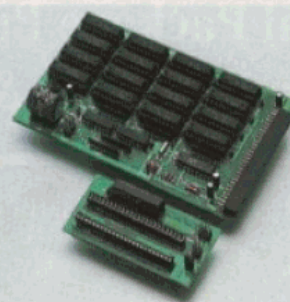


Gremlin have forsaken Lotus in favour for a big name driver as the subject matter for their next big racing game.

It seems Nigel Mansell has been signed up to star in a forthcoming Formula One sim. Gremlin's Paul Blyth has started work on the project, who is also responsible for FOFT.

The game will be based on the world championship circuit and could be out as soon as Many next year.

2Mb RAM CARD



- Fully populated board
- Plugs into trap door expansion and connects to gray chip. Populated RAM board with click

→ **£34.95**

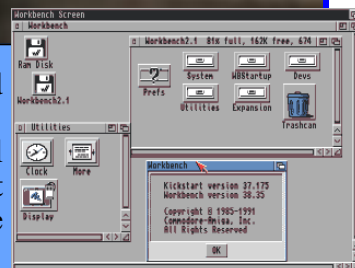
Ram card ½ Mb → **£59**

Ram Card 2Mb → **£99**

WORKBENCH 2.1

Since Commodore have shipped the Lowell card, they have also announced **Workbench 2.1**

I realise that Workbench 2.0 hasn't even shipped yet (apparently the final version of Kickstart 2.0 (Kickstart 2.04 v37.175) went to the rom burners about two months ago. The word is that 2.0 is finished and is only waiting on the marketing department to get round to packaging and shipping it.



Although now it seems that Commodore software engineers are busy working on Workbench 2.1 already! 2.1 will be a disk-update only and will add all the little extras that Commodore didn't have time to slip into the final 2.04 rom release. Among the new features are internationalization support and scalable Compugraphic outline fonts.

Watch this space for more news!!!!



GAME SOUNDTRACKS

Newcomer Digital Dreams has remixed famous Amiga game soundtracks into a series of CD collections for £8 each. Each CD features 45 minutes worth of music from leading software companies. K-Tel and Teledisc eat your hearts out!



SHORTAGE

Leading Japanese games companies such as Nintendo, Sega and Konami are apparently suffering from a shortage of top quality programming talent to take care of new software for the Super Famicom (SNES), Megadrive and coin-operated arcade video game systems.

Several schools and technical colleges have emerged in Japan over the past twelve months. The Human Creative School (HCS) was one of the first to be established. It currently runs a two-year course on the art of games design and production. There is also talk that Japanese education experts could be promoting a degree course within the next three years.

VIDEO PAINTER



VTech Video Painter is an easy to use electronic sketchpad for kids with a spare £80 in their piggy bank!

Connected to a normal TV set and operating on batteries (or 9v AC Adapter), it provides young artist with 12 bright colours and 6 different patterns to play with. It comes with an extensive library of 50 pre-drawn images including vehicles, fantasy, characters, animals and shapes. It can also be connected to a VCR for picture storage with no extra attachments required.

UPDATE

David Braben, best known for: Elite (BBC), Virus (Archimedes), Conqueror and Elite (NES) has Elite II in the pipeline. *(Hot off the press: Elite II has been signed by the Japanese giant Konami)*



BULLFROG GO IT ALONE

Rumours and speculation concerning Bullfrog's future were finally laid to rest when the firm signed an agreement with Electronic Arts to publish its next two titles, Populous 2 and Bob. Bullfrog also announced they would begin to act as a publisher in its own right, meaning that by next year, Amiga owners are likely to be playing games published on the Bullfrog label.

Managing Director, Les Edgar (pictured above) commented: "Basically, we have become a publisher in our own right, its just that we have decided to put our next two products through EA".



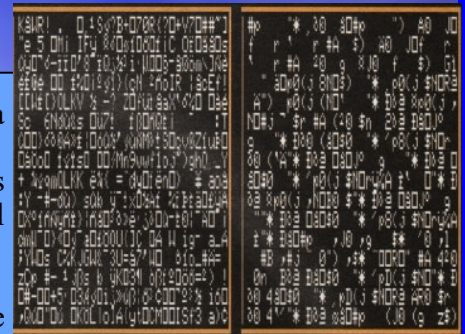


SADDAM VIRUS SCARE

A new virus called Saddam is threatening to ruin thousands of Amiga disks and is almost invisible to virus checkers.

Writing itself to the disk-validator file in the L: directory, it is disguised by being the same byte size as the validator and will prevent commercial games and other software from running.

Infected disks are unable to auto-boot because code is forced into the first line of the start-up sequence and it is also suspected of causing read and write errors. Unlike most viruses, Saddam enters the Amiga's memory whenever an infected disk is put into the drive and does not wait for it to be read. The virus will completely destroy the infected disk, with the best way to check for it using John Veldhuis's Virus Checker (v5.23). This program recognises the virus in action and comes with a new program called **FixSaddam**, which rescues damaged data blocks from a disk infected with the virus.





399.99
Amiga A500 Cartoon Pack

1 MEG RAM, LEMMINGS, THE SIMPSONS, CAPTAIN PLANET, DELUXE PAINT 3
FREE KIND WORDS 2.0 WORD PROCESSOR
FREE INFOFILE DATABASE
FREE MAXIPLAN PLUS SPREADSHEET
FREE SPECIAL RESERVE MEMBERSHIP



299.99
Amiga A500 computer with Lemmings

LEMMINGS, CAPTAIN PLANET
 MOUSE, TV MODULATOR
FREE PHOTON PAINT
FREE SPECIAL RESERVE MEMBERSHIP

SECRET STAR WARS PROJECT

Lucasfilm Games is secretly working on a Star Wars flight simulation based around the motion picture. Many of the best designers and programmers at Lucasfilm Games have been assigned to the project which focuses on the rebel X-Wing fighter flown by Luke Skywalker.

Although development is in early days, an insider suggested the game is already looking like a potential blockbuster. The graphics engine being used is the one from Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe, albeit heavily refined beyond recognition, used to create realistic imaging of the Imperial Fighters and Star Destroyers. The Millennium Falcon may even make a special appearance along with a few of the famous characters such as R"-D2 and C-3PO.

AMIGA VIDEO

Super Video Amiga is a solderless plug-in board that will enable live television or video to be watched through a monitor and grabbed for use with other applications. The display will be a digital 24-bit image with controls for volume, balance, bass and treble. The image is shown within a window which can be made any size on the screen, allowing for a graphic or text overlay.

Frames can be frozen and saved to common file formats for use in applications such as DTP or sent by model to another machine.

Requiring at least 2 Megabytes of memory and is hoped to be priced at less than £500 (SAI Technologies).



DIAMOND OPEN

One of the UK's largest Amiga dealers are set to open the doors of their first central London showroom. Southampton-based Diamond Computers are to have their Tottenham Court Road premises officially opened by a celebrity and have promised to devote an entire floor to the Amiga. Called Amiga World, it will have a range of hardware and software products and will be backed up by a second floor of general peripherals such as modems and printers.

Marketing Manager 'Jonathan Shirlow' said his firm chose that specific location road because it is the Mecca of the computing world. It would allow them to offer quality products within a pleasant shopping environment without high prices.

SKY HIGH VIDEO GAMES



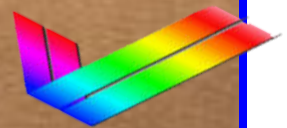
Flying Business Class on Japan's All Nippon Airways certainly has its benefits, namely free video games. Passengers on long trips from London to Tokyo are treated to luxurious seats with individual TV monitors and a wide choice of stereo channels offering high-quality CD sound. Konami has created six video games for the airline including a colour conversion of the Gamboy title, Quarth, and a popular golf simulator. Little is known about the gaming system apart from it running on Sony screens.



KILLING CLOUD

Looking up at the polluted red skies hanging over the streets of San Francisco, you begin to wonder whether you can master the 10 missions that come with the newly-finished 'The Killing Cloud' from Vektor Grafix/Imageworks.

As a cop in the year 1997 your tough assignment is to bring in the Black Angels gang. After sussing out the details of your next mission and the felon currently under investigation, it's time to place your net traps somewhere in the metropolis and visit the armoury to equip your pursuit vehicle. All this within an impressive display of 3D polygon graphics. Have you got what it takes to be a copy of the future?



Sega Megadrive

Official UK Version. Free extra Joypad and membership.



Megadrive + Altered Beast + Joypad 189.99
+ FREE extra TURBO Joypad
+ FREE Special Reserve membership

Megadrive Software

ARNOLD PALMER GOLF	27.49	POPULOUS	30.99
BUDOKAN	30.99	RAMBO 3	23.99
COLUMNS	23.99	REVENGE OF SHINOBI	27.49
ESWAT	27.49	SUPER HANG ON	27.49
FOOTBALL	30.99	SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL	27.49
GAIN GROUND	27.49	SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX	27.49
GHOULS N GHOSTS	34.49	SWORD OF VERMILION	38.99
GOLDEN AXE	27.49	TWIN HAWK	27.49
LAST BATTLE	27.49	WORLD CUP ITALIA 90	23.99
POWER BASE CONVERTER (Runs Master System Games)	28.49		
TURBO (FAST FIRE) JOYPAD	14.99		
SEGA MEGADRIVE ARCADE POWER STICK	34.99		

Sega Master System

Official UK Version. Free Special Reserve membership.



SEGA MASTER SYSTEM, TWO JOYPADS, ALEX KID 79.99
+ FREE Special Reserve membership
SEGA MASTER PLUS SYSTEM WITH LIGHT PHASER GUN, ALEX KID & MARKSMAN GAMES 99.99
+ FREE Special Reserve membership
QUICKJOY SG JETFIGHTER MASTER SYSTEM JOYSTICK ... 13.99



AMSTRAD 'ALL IN ONE' PC



Amstrad are set to revolutionise the PC games scene with the launch of the PC5286 Games Pack. For £899 you get a 16Mhz 286-based PC compatible with 1Mb onboard memory, 1.44Mb floppy drive and a 40Mb fast-access hard drive. The machine also features enhanced VGA. Also included are a 14" monitor, keyboard, PS/2 type mouse, DOS 3.3, analogue joystick, 100% Ad-Lib compatible soundcard and two external speakers... Oh and three games are included: Links, F15 Strike Eagle II and Prince of Persia.



CHANNEL 4 'GAMESMASTER'

Channel 4 have commissioned a series of ten 30 minute programs under the name, 'Gamesmaster', to start showing in January next year.

The series will feature competitions between top players, reviews of new games, international sales charts and tips showing players how to crack the tricky bits of their favourite games.

BBC Scotland's game show Catchword has also received a boost from the Amiga, courtesy of the Harlequin 32-bit colour card. The Amiga was used to produce animation links and graphics for the show, as well as stereo sound effects. Catch the programme on BBC this autumn!



1 MEGABYTE BASIC A500 TO STAY

Despite the fact that Commodore have now released two Amiga 500 packs featuring an expanded 1Mb Amiga (Screen Gems, Cartoon Classics), but still have insisted that this certainly did not mean the end of the 512k Amiga. However, it now appears that they are changing their tune, which can only mean good news for all future Amiga buyers.

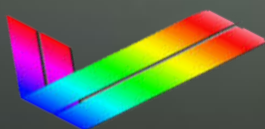
Until now the 1Mb Amiga packs have included an A501 RAM expansion to provide the extra 512k, but Commodore seem set on replacing that with board-mounted chips to save the cost. The current architecture of the A500 PCB allows for extra chips, but if they are fitted the trapdoor slot underneath the Amiga can no longer be used. Which would render 3rd party devices such as extra-large RAM expansions and possibly PC expansion cards as useless. Why Commodore? Why?

A500 CD-DRIVE

Despite the previous rumours of a CD-ROM drive for the Amiga 500 (World of Commodore Show), it now seems very likely that the device will not actually go on sale until immediately before Christmas.

Known as the **A690**, although the name is not yet confirmed will give the A500 owners access to all CD-based software that is available for the CDTV. The new drive is ready for mass production in the US, but the delays in the UK market will simply be a question of supply.

Pricing will be tagged at around £350-£400



WELCOME JPEG



ASDG are adding JPEG compression facility to the next release of Art Department Professional. JPEG compression is an image compression

standard created by the Joint Photographic Expert Group and is destined to be the new image compression standard across all platforms.

JPEG will allow huge reductions in file size, ratios as high as 80:1 can be achieved with little change in the quality of the image. In practice this means a 1Mb image can be reduced to less than 30k, just imagine over 30Mb of images all fitting on just a single 3.5" floppy disk!



SOFTWARE NICKER NICKED

A software pirate found guilty of illegally copying 1,300 titles; became the first leisure software pirate to be imprisoned by the Federation Against Software Theft (FAST).

Trading as A&J Software, Andrew Jayes (34) of Nottingham was found guilty of five offences under the Copyright Designs and Patent Act 1988, and handed a three-month jail sentence.

FAST commented that last year £2 million of software was seized by them and 12 successful prosecutions led to fines and suspended sentences.

DEALER STOCKS

(% of dealers)

- 1 A500 (83%)
- 2 Sega Megadrive (73%)
- 3 Sega Master System (72%)
- 4 Commodore 64 (70%)
- 5 Atari 520ST (65%)
- 6 Nintendo Gameboy (53%)
- 7 Atari Lynx (53%)
- 8 Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) (51%)
- 9 Atari 2600/2800 VCS (36%)
- 10 Amstrad CPC/Plus (29%)

CHEAP PRINTER

The world's cheapest and newest 9-pin printer has been introduced to Silica Systems' product range. The Seikosha SP-1900AI prints at 192 characters per second in fast mode and 40 characters per second in near letter quality. Epson-compatible, it has a buffer of 1K and can handle two-sheet multi-part paper, costing £125.



FLUFFY ALERT!

Three of the cutest games ever are to be re-released - in the same box. Ocean are launching a new compilation label, "Addicted To Fun" with the tempting offer of: Rainbow Islands (Bestest), Bubble Bobble (Cutest) and New Zealand Story (Cheep-est). All priced at £19.99



TURTLES ARE BACK!



After last year's nightmare Turtles game, Mirrorsoft are anxious to improve their image with the conversion of the popular four-player beat-em-up coin-op Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles, with Turtles II.

Early shots suggest they certainly the look right, although its early days to say how it will turn out.

WORSE CHARACTER?



Could this be the worse ever character license for a computer game? Jimmy Hill, the BBC's loathsome soccer analyst. He is to appear in Match of the Day, yet another definitive strategy management game courtesy of Impulze, the full price side of Houghton-Le-Spring's Zeppelin Games. It is said to feature all the things that you associate with the sporting media and will be kicking off next month for £25.99



DELUXE PAINT 4

Just when you thought you were getting the hang of DPaint III, Electronic Arts have announced the release of yet another enhanced version..

This latest version has been redesigned to incorporate the ability to paint and animate with all 4,096 colour in HAM mode. Other features include the ability to create 'inter-frames' for smooth animation, a VCR style control interface which enables the user to point and click instead of working through menus and lastly a 'metamorphosis' option which transforms the shape and image of one brush into another.

There's also some enhanced ingredients; a colour mixer, tinting and translucency options and 'stencil paints' mode for greater control when manipulating an image.

Also included in the package are two further art disks as well as a utilities disk with Instant Slideshow and Player, allowing you to create standalone productions.

To run you will need a 1 Megabyte Amiga and its available as a new package for £89.99 or an upgrade between £45 and £65 (depending on version upgrading from).



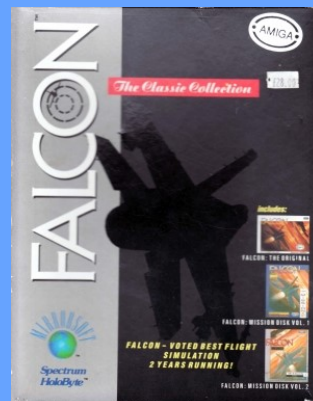
STICK IT!



Joystick Specialist Spectravideo has just begun importing one of the US' hottest joysticks into the UK. Priced at £39.99, the Gravis is undoubtedly expensive, but its makers reckon the durability and comfort which it offers make it worth the cost.

The stick's features include auto-centering, variable tension setting, three independent fire buttons and suckers powerful enough to rip off the top of your desk.

FALCON FLIES AGAIN



Spectrum Holobyte's well loved flight sim, Falcon is to be re-released along with two mission disks which came out after its original launch two and a half years ago.

'Falcon - The Classic Collection' offers flight fans a total of 36 missions and all for a price of £34.99 (Mirrorsoft)

CES CANCELLED

A major blow occurred to the computer games industry last week when EMAP International Exhibitions announced that it was cancelling this year's Computer Entertainment Show.

A spokesperson for the company claimed that the current economic climate has forced most of the major software companies to stay away from this year's event and, because of this, this year's show was no longer viable. Money will be refunded to all who have booked their ticket.



YO!

GET READY!

THE CONSUMER SHOW IS CANCELLED

BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE

THE INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER GAMESHOW IS BACK!

Don't forget you can avoid disappointment and queues by calling our information Hotline.

xperience the best gameshow universe and better than ever...
 Europe's Computer Entertainment Show...
 only show dedicated to the world of games...
 software and hardware from the...
 Get down to the live entertainment! Meet...
 you will hear the celebs on the radio! It's MEGA, MAN!

EARLS COURT 2 EXHIBITION CENTRE
 SEPTEMBER 6th - 9am-6pm
 SEPTEMBER 7th - 9am-6pm
 SEPTEMBER 8th - 9am-5pm
 Book your tickets in advance to avoid disappointment and queues - phone information Hotline now on 0839...
 All calls charged at 45p per minute peak time
 per minute off peak.

INFO HOTLINE 0839 500820



In the Arcades (Sep-Oct 1991)



G-LOC

DYNAMIC CC



RAIL CHASE 2



COSMIC GANGS (NAMCO)



VIRTUALITY CENTRE (TROCODERO, LONDON)

DIGITAL PICTURES



Digital Pictures know the tricks of the computer graphics trade. With headquarters situated in West London, producing stunning animations.

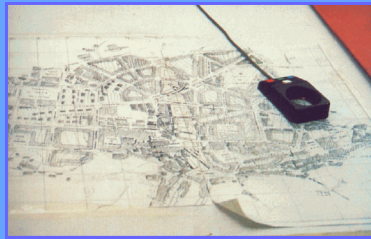
One of their recent projects is a computer-generated flight around Pola de Siero, a small town in northern Spain. The animation has been commissioned by Stop Films, and will be used in a tourism commercial to illustrate the attractive nature of the town and the surrounding countryside.



The animation starts with the 'viewer' high above the hills and plains surrounding Pola de Siero. You then swoop down, through a layer of fine cirrus cloud and fly low over a rugged countryside. The animation then cuts to a view above a long highway leading to the town. A dense forest stretches away in the distance, the furthest trees growing hazy owing to a thin covering of morning mist.

The 30 second animation is the result of 5 intense weeks by Digital Picture animations,

Jan Pinkava and Alec Knox. The first stage in the project is to talk to the clients and find out precisely what they want from the animation.



Next comes the task of collecting sufficient data on the town and its buildings, to accurately model it. This data can take the form of city plans, architectural layouts and occasionally modelling data already on disc (rare).

Reference photographs are taken so that the colouring and texturing of the final images matches reality as closely as possible.



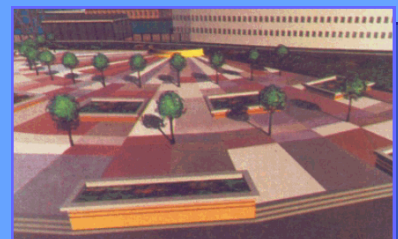
Then all this information is fed into Digital Picture's custom-written DigiPix software which runs on Silicon Graphics 4D20 workstations. This can be a fairly long and tedious process.

The animations then start planning how the animation will look, plotting the camera flightpaths through the city

and testing them. This is carried out using the ancient looking wireframe 3D - the 3D20s powerful as they are, can't generate objects in solid 3D AND animate them in real time, so wireframes are used for this task.



Once the animators (and the clients) are satisfied with the look of the wireframe animation, its time for the acid test: rendering, where the animation code is turned into fully detailed TV quality images. The time it takes to render each frame of animation depends on the complexity of the scene. Each object has a wealth of data related to it, such as its surface, texturing and reflectivity. A rendering time of 30 minutes per frame is typical.



After its render, that's it - all done into the beautiful breath-taking scenes. *Job well done!*

FIRST SAMURAI



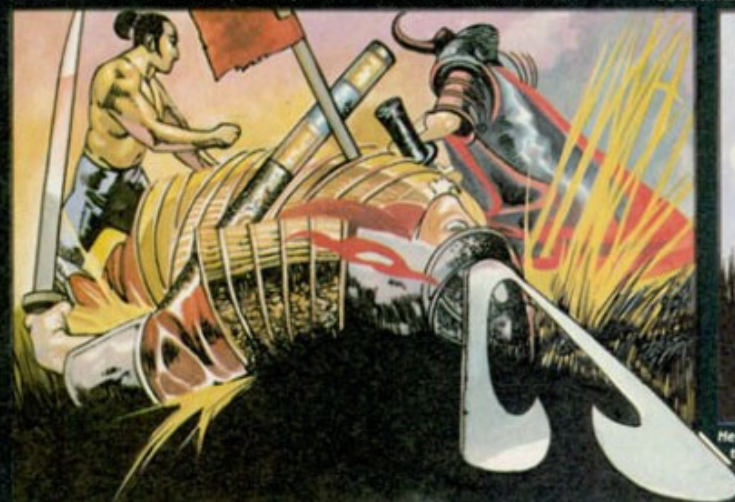
Long ago in a tiny village in Ancient Japan ...



a young Samurai lived and studied peacefully with his master the Lord Akira, until



a Demon King descended from his mountain to destroy the village and all its inhabitants ...



slaying the Warrior Lord and leaving only the young Samurai to tell the tale.



He called upon the Wizard Mage who forced the Demon to flee into the future leaving the Land at peace.



However, the Samurai vowed he would have no peace until he had avenged his master's death with the aid of the wizard.



So armed with a magic sword our hero followed the Demon through time to year 2523 and ...

AVAILABLE SOON!

MIRROSDIFF LIMITED IRWIN HOUSE 118 SOUTH LARK STREET LONDON SE1 0SW Telephone 071 928 1454 Fax 071 583 3494 Telex 9312131917 MSG

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Is piracy killing software? A good question one should ask.

Piracy has been a problem for the computer software industry for as long as anyone can remember. One of the main reasons why it is so difficult to eradicate is that a person committing piracy could be completely unaware that his or her activities are illegal.

Take the example of copying a disk for a friend. Often it's just a one-off incident, innocently undertaken with the best of intentions. Yet even that simple process is an infringement of the law. And if you multiply that one piece of copying by several hundreds of thousands, you get some indication of the real scale of the problem.

It's estimated that the leisure software industry loses

millions of pounds a year through the illegal copying of games.

"So what" you might think, "don't these companies make enough money anyway?" However, it's this misguided Robin Hood aura which surrounds the activity which opens the door for much professional pirating.

The most damaging forms of piracy are undertaken by people who know exactly what they're doing and are fully aware that it is against the law.

Something else to bear in mind is that lost revenue is only part of the story - Innovation and creativity been greatly hampered: over the years something is the that many a programmer has thrown in the towel when they found their hard work a typical stolen from under their noses.

But what about the end user - you - the games player?

Current prices are directly related to piracy. Software publishers claims that if software theft disappeared there would be a reduction in price. While all types of piracy are clearly illegal, the professional profiteer causes most harm. They are basically ripping-off merchants who make their money out of other's efforts.

Some operate as mail order outfits, while others tout their stolen wares as market street traders. Ironically this form of piracy is the easiest to detect, so this is where the bulk of

prosecutions are made.

Organised pirate rings are far harder to break - they're usually a law unto themselves, with the fruits of their labour remaining within a closed circuit.

When you first load a copy of a game that's been pirated by a team of crackers you usually see a list of names running across the bottom of the screen. These are pseudonyms the hackers give themselves. It's all part of the bravado, with messages being sent to fellow pirates and sly digs being made at the people who provide the technical protection.

Cracking teams seem to enjoy

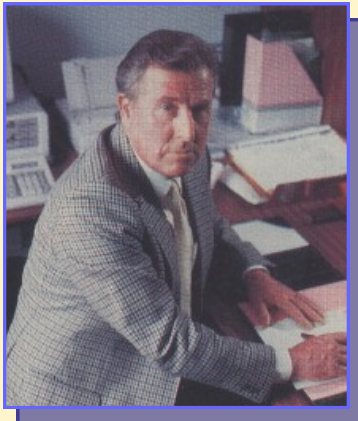
flaunting their illegal activities and some have become notorious within the business. Due to their assumed names and the fact that contact is usually only made through a computer, its extremely difficult to break the networks.

One organisation attempts this though: **FAST** - The Federation Against Software Theft.

This body acts as a sort of interface between the authorities and the industry: With the power of prosecution at its disposal and operates on both an investigative and informative levels.



Since its formation in 1986, it has done much to promote awareness of the copyright laws and it has certainly gone a long way in stamping out unconscious infringement. But there still remains a problem of professional piracy. Despite this, **FAST** has maintained its position as a vigorous watchdog body. This can largely be attributed to the efforts and determination of one man -



Bob Hay.

As Chief Executive of FAST, he is a man with a mission. His main goal is the eradication of software theft and it is an objective he takes very seriously.

When you talk to him, he soon makes short shrift of any defence a pirate could offer: "Software thieves are not heroes" he stated, "and they are certainly not some sort of modern day Robin Hood. The vast majority are simply moti-

vated by financial gain. They don't swap, they sell."

Pirates defend by stating they rip off the software because of the high street price and that otherwise they couldn't afford it.

Bob Hay goes on by saying that he cannot afford a Rolls Royce but that does not give him the right to go out and pinch one. Also, if that argument carried any weight then piracy would only occur with full-priced software, but that's not the case. It happens just as much in the budget market.

Bob believes he can pinpoint two basic characteristics of a software pirate. "It certainly seems to be people in their 20s and the majority have previous offences. As far as I can see, a thief is a thief."

They effect companies and the people. Jobs are affected and as a direct result, innovation is being lost.

He disagrees they are matching 'wits against wits' with the guys who write the protection. They just exploit the talents of other people.

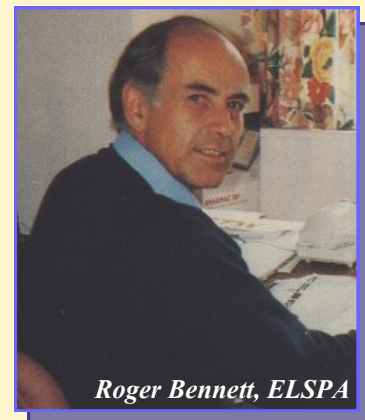
Mail order piracy is also a significant factor. Someone writes into a company advertising cheap software and what they get is a copy. The consumers often notify us and what we do is obtain the necessary proof. We then go to the trading standards authority or the police. Primarily it is the trading standards because consumer protection fails under

the local authority.

One example is that two months ago, 9,000 disks were seized from a company called 'Pick n' Choose'. The firm is now awaiting a court case, with the main instigator facing charges for 96 different offences.

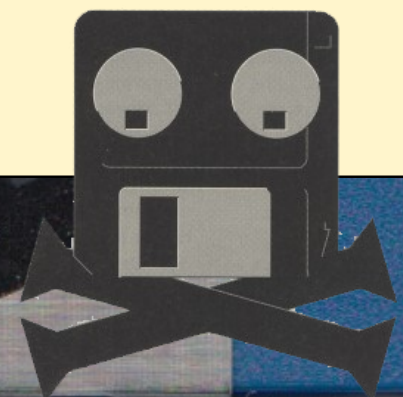
Prosecution may not always be a simple matter, sometimes it means going through thousands of disks to log their contents, which is very time consuming and resource hogging.

The European Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA) is also working closely with FAST, to help safeguard the interest of their own members.



Roger Bennett, ELSPA

Either way, will the pirates be happy when their sticky fingers have forced the publishers to move on to producing games for more sophisticated (and therefore more expensive) machines? It seems only the end user will take the brunt of efforts of piracy in the end.





AMIGA TOP 10 (UK)

Taken from Amiga Format 027

Full Priced Games

- 1 Manchester United Europe
- 2 PG Golf Tour
- 3 Monkey Island
- 4 F15 Strike Eagle II
- 5 Eye of the Beholder
- 6 Rainbow Collection
- 7 Lemmings
- 8 Armour-Geddon
- 9 Toki
- 10 Gods

Budget Priced Games

- 1 Full Contact
- 2 TV Sports Football
- 3 Fantasy World Dizzy
- 4 Pro Boxing
- 5 Lombard RAC Rally
- 6 Xenon 2
- 7 North and South
- 8 Little Puff
- 9 Ninja Rabbits
- 10 Defender of the Crown



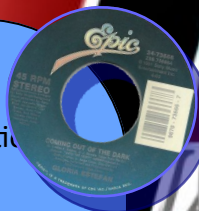
MUSIC TOP 10

UK

- 1 U2—The Fly
- 2 Vic Reeves—Dizzy
- 3 2 Unlimited -
Get Ready For This
- 4 Bryan Adams -
(Everything I Do)
I Do It For You
- 5 Kiri - World in Union
- 6 The Scorpions -
Wind of Change
- 7 Monty Python -
Always Look on the
Bright Side of Life
- 8 Oceanic - Insanity
- 9 Genesis - No Son of Mine
- 10 Moby - Go

US

- 1 Mariah Carey - Emotional
- 2 Natural Selection -
Do Anything
- 3 Karyn White -
Romantic
- 4 Extreme -
Hole Hearted
- 5 Bryan Adams -
Can't Stop This Thing
We Started
- 6 Prince & the NPG -
Cream
- 7 Jesus Jones -
Real Real Real
- 8 Bonnie Raitt -
Something To Talk About
- 9 Marky Mark & Funky Bunch
Good Vibrations
- 10 OPP - Naughty by Nature



FILMS

Top 10 Films based on Total Gross (£\$ million).

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--------|
| 1 | Curly Sue | \$33.6 |
| 2 | Other People's Money | \$25.6 |
| 3 | Little Man Tate | \$25 |
| 4 | Frankie and Johnny | \$22.7 |
| 5 | Ricochet | \$21.7 |
| 6 | House Party 2 | \$19.4 |
| 7 | Ernest Scared Stupid | \$14.1 |
| 8 | Shattered | \$11.5 |
| 9 | The Super | \$11 |
| 10 | The Butcher's Wife | \$9.6 |

Taken from Box Office Mojo figures (Oct 91)



As of 27th October 1991



AMIGA PD TOP 10

- 1 Virtual World
- 2 Phenomena Enigma
- 3 Sinking Demand
- 4 Silents Ice
- 5 Pure Metal Coders
- 6 Spasmolytic
- 7 The Simpsons
- 8 Life's A Bitch
- 9 Inspiration Is Non
- 10 Plasmutex

As taken from Amiga Format 27



TRACKBALL



(17 Bit, Disk 999)

A fairly old animation but still quite impressive. The ray-traced clip features a ball running around a strange machine, including whizzing up a lift, descending a spiral ramp, being catapulted in the air and finally dripping out of a tap to begin its journey once more...

VIRTUAL WORLD



Heralded as a sequel to 'Trip to Mars' demo and a tribute to Tobias Richter, Virtual World is one of the most imaginative demos to date. Split into two parts via a mixture of filled vector spacecraft and hand drawn backgrounds.

NO MANS LAND



A Tale of Two Men's desire to kill each other.

With 10 levels, a 'Cup' option to allow for league and with each screen from some sort of futuristic nightmare world: war-torn streets, military bases, they're all in there. The players start with 3 lives and a rifle - from then on they have to make effective use of the natural cover and pick up the bonus weapons as they appear.



ADVENTURES OF NORRIS

(Virus Free PD)

Another game in Virus Free's Exclusiveware series of non-PD; Norris is a platform game in the style of Jet Set Willy, involving much jumping around, collecting keys and avoiding bad guys.

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Holy Smoke (1 Disk) - Loads of Utilities
Kylie Minogue (2 Disks) - Excellent samples and Slide Demos
Madonna (4 Disks) - Vogue Sampler
Not the 9 O'Clock News (2 Disks) - Gorilla Sketch
Samantha Fox 2 (1 Disk) - Slideshow (18+) Star Trek Trivia Quiz (1 Disk) - Game

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Tel: 0634 30638



So Atari have announced, after decades of absence, that they have plans to go back into the console gaming business, albeit not the original Atari we grew up with.

Atari left the industry following the 1983 Games Crash, and the Jaguar console is nearly 20 years old. So what do they have plans to comeback with?

All we have to go on at the moment is some images of the upcoming console. Showcasing a modern system that supports the memories of the wooden finish (aka 2600 VCS).

The images did show us a bit of information regarding the system though: it appears to feature a SD Card slot, HDMI and 4x USB ports. Possibly a headphone jack with a network (Ethernet) port, which suggest 'downloading' of the games for the modern era.



It will also be available in two variants: black/red and the stylish wood finish.



But what games will it support? Should we expect a console to match the PS2/XBox One? Well Atari suggested that the future console library in a newsletter by stating, "we will be delivering classic gaming content, we will also be delivering current gaming content."

Atari CEO Fred Chesnais has stated that the decision to develop a new console was inspired by Nintendo's success with the NES Mini. Keeping this in mind, it's possible that the **Ataribox** will be a reasonably priced bit of kit designed to play classic games.

Others believe it could be a fully-fledged machine capable of competing with PS4 and Xbox One. Atari has confirmed the new system is based on PC technology, but is yet to disclose any actual specs.



Release Date?

We have no idea about a specific **Ataribox** release date, although the teaser trailer debut leads us to believe that further information is on the horizon. Perhaps it'll be here before Christmas?

We can only but hope as given the fact that Atari has no employees who can build a physical games console, that its biggest opportunity lies less than three months away – with only one shot to get it right – and that all we have right now is a series of pictures... well, if Atari pulls it off, it should be well congratulated!

Let's hope they don't rush an 'underpowered, over promised' console out to a market.

PHOBIA

By Amigos Dreamkatcha



Designers John Cook and David Bishop, and coder Tony Crowther were well ahead of the curve when they dreamt up their C64/Amiga shoot 'em up Phobia in 1989.



Arthropod-blaster Apidya was still three years away, and many of the major blockbuster movies we associate with being irrationally scared out of our wits by one usually harmless thing or another hadn't yet hit the silver screen; Arachno-

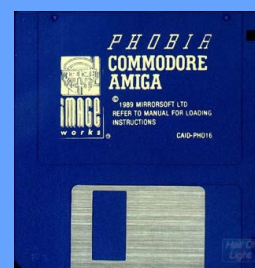
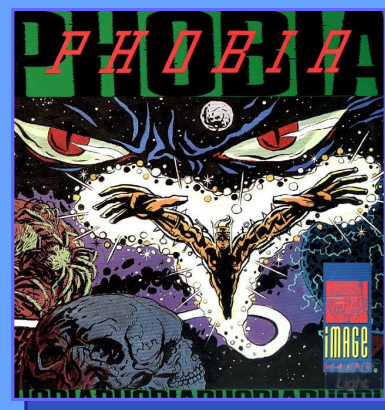
phobia (1990), IT (1990), Braindead (1992) and Cliffhanger (1993) to name a smattering of the most memorable ones from my childhood.

Of course phobia-fiction stretches back much, much further than the '90s, and phobias are as old as fear itself. The point is, with Phobia they pulled something a bit different out of the subconscious, I mean that.

No, I was right the first time surely. It's more than a game; if you can rack up a high score you're demarcated as a 'fear basher', making you - I suppose - your own intergalactic therapist. If cognitive behavioural therapy isn't cutting it, maybe it's time to think outside the box?

I can assert all this with a degree of authority because

I'm from the future; a time-traveller looking back into the abyss of '80s entertainment pop culture that has now had its day. It's all yet to come for you guys, you'll see. It'll be a blast! Anything you want to know, ask away.



A thumping energetic dance track from talented Ocean composer Dean Evans gets the game underway, though sadly only plays over the menu. In-game sound effects are perfunctory at best from then on.

From the opening menu screen you have the option to switch into high resolution mode, effectively enabling interlacing to turn on high definition graphics, albeit reducing the playfield.

If this monkeys with its position on your display you can rejig it with the cursor keys. In either mode, the game is presented in a palette of 32 colours, and visually isn't a massive upgrade over the C64 prototype, which also featured 32 colours despite the system technically only being capable of handling a maximum of 16. This was made possible via the C64's less powerful hardware through the magic of a rapid colour cycling trick, conveying the illusion that more colours are being engaged than they really are.

Scrolling is silky smooth on either platform, while no fancy parallax is in effect. In the Amiga port, instead sets of gradients are deployed, top and bottom, separated by an expanse of space void. On other levels where there would be gradients, 'rollers' seem to spin on their axis, or dance like the bars of a hi-fi equaliser.

Phobia, whilst borrowing heavily from coin-op schmutz classics such as R-Type and Salamander, *does manage to shake things up a bit* by introducing a selection of novel organic themes, as well as an imaginative cabal to stitch them all together.

Phobos, brother of Deimos and Greek god of phobias (although the manual fails to mention what would seem to me to be a pretty relevant detail), has kidnapped the Galactic President's daughter and is holding her ransom on the surface of the sun, the core of the Phobos planetary system, which - shock, horror! - is rather damn hot!

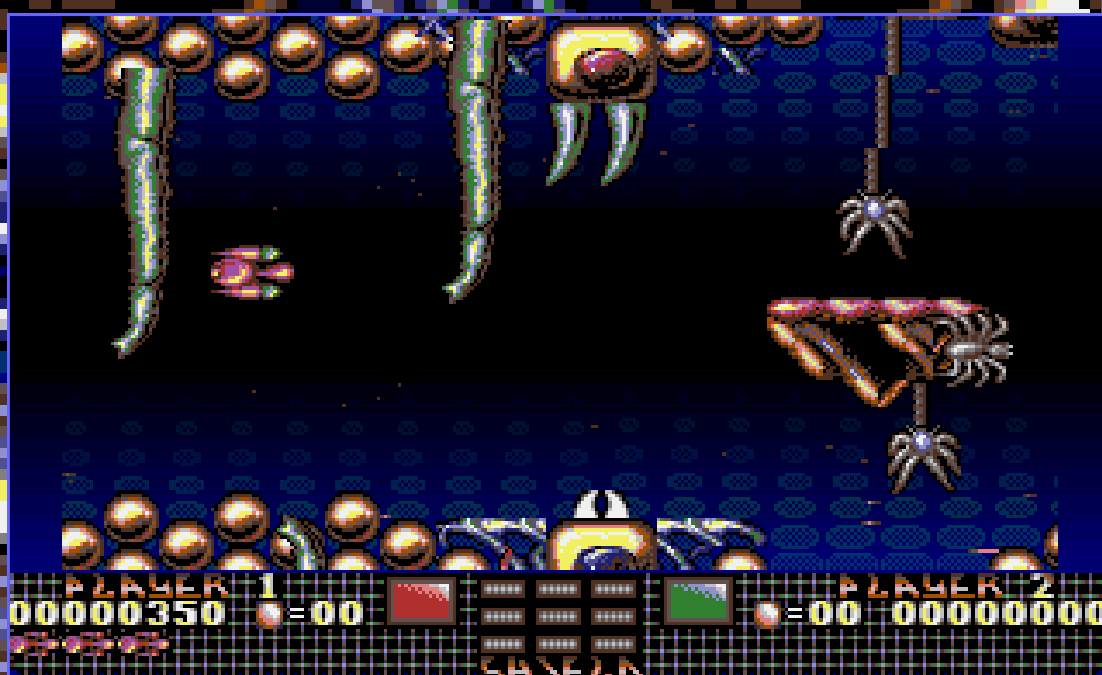
To be able to approach it without being burnt to a cinder and stage a rescue mission you'll need to amass nine components of a protective shield, acquired from nine different planets orbiting the sun, chosen from a potential assortment of fifteen in a semi-non-linear fashion, a kind of Blockbusters style decision tree if you will.

It's funny you should mention Bob Holness (*who did?*) because he once voiced James Bond in a radio adaptation of Dr No, and Roger Moore is known to suffer from 'hopophobia', the fear of firearms. *He* wouldn't be much use heading up a mission to annihilate Lord Phobos' army then.

It's a pity really because you'll need all the help you can get. This being a relentless, unforgiving, hard as nails shooter, the planets don't just roll over and say, "here, take my critical lump of sun shield". They're all in on the conspiracy so you have to take them by force.

Every thrust of the way is littered with environmental obstacles encroaching onto the ever shrinking, claustrophobic playfield, reducing your maneuverability to nigh on zero (you may recognise the jabbing spikes in particular from Salamander). More often than not you'll find yourself defeated by a ceiling to floor blockade rather than the hatchlings of a neurotic's overzealous fever, or the lack of an auto-fire facility.

On a positive note, the pain is somewhat alleviated by the very welcome and unusually benevolent 'keep your power-ups when you kick the bucket, and pick up where you left off' mechanic. Be grateful for small mercies - the measly three lives you begin with certainly won't offer any.





Each end of level guardian is protected by an energy shield barrier powered by a generator. Sabotage the generator by shooting all the tokens and you get to tackle the great fear-mongering lummoX and claim their chunk of the sun shade. That's if you can reach the end of each level in the first place, which is no walk in the park to put it mildly, unless that park is located on Elm Street and you're trapped in a deep, restless sleep being tortured by a Nightmare.

In most games your prize would be instantly awarded. Here it's dangled like a carrot on a stick... at the end of an extended subterranean post-boss battle rat-run sequestered inside a protective egg, posing as a question mark. Obliterate the egg and the planet implodes, preferably shortly *after* you evacuate with the booty.

For the sadists amongst us who haven't suffered enough, believe it or not there's a 'silly mode' that can be activated

before commencing the game that will make the AI that bit smarter and the baddies even denser, if that's not an oxymoron.

If you've ever been freaked out by anything from the 'Top 50 pointless things to be scared of because you haven't got enough proper stuff to worry about list', you can guarantee that Lord Phobos has incorporated it into a specific phobia and fashioned a planet's theme around it to jab a spoke in your wheel.

First up is one of the biggies; the arachnophobia level, chock full of eyeball-flinging spiders, which by David Bishop's own admission emanated from his loathing of the more typically web-spinning critters.

Conkers! He should have tried conkers, they work wonders to keep them at bay in my shed. It's not just an old wives' tale.

Where was I? Ironically the spiders themselves should be

the least of your concerns. Their webs are more of a threat than *they* are, given they can obscure the entire playfield, leaving you nowhere to turn to take evasive action.

To accompany them (the ones in the game, not my shed) you'll find all manner of other creepy-crawlies, insects, wasps, bugs and a garden-load of their freaky soil-fellows - enough to keep your typical towny wide awake in terror at night for several months.

If you can survive long enough to escape the stage you'll get to experience 'Snakes on a Planet', the unofficial prequel to Samuel L. Jackson's 2006 action flop-buster.

Even the thought of this level themed around fear of the slithering, appendage-challenged serpents aka ophidiophobia would have Indiana Jones quivering in his fedora!



Everywhere you look are twitching (ratt)ler tails, dancing, wiggling sand worms, Arabian palaces, coiled cobras, and a giant fire-sneezing dragon guardian.

If you squirmed your way through Alfred Hitchcock's The Birds then perhaps you might want to swerve the planet that revolves around ornithophobia. No doubt the pelicans, eagles, grasping prehistoric claws, mountains of feathers, detachable pecking beaks, and humming bird boss would have you tearing your hair out in hysteria faster than Bill Oddie could reach for his binoculars and camera.

Pulsating, fractured light bulbs struck me as a tad strange initially, until I remembered that these are often used to keep unattended eggs or newly hatched chicks artificially incubated. Chicks that will swiftly develop into fully fledged, vicious death-bringers!

Even the flouncy, 'harmless' butterflies look menacing when you know one collision is enough to send you to an early grave, though of course that applies to *everything* you

encounter in Phobia.

Speaking of which, the most imaginative level is modelled on the fear of death itself, known as thanatophobia. On planet morbidity you'll be hounded by such cheery delights as gravestones, skulls, coffins, bats, crows, gallows, haunted houses, ghouls, decapitated heads, guilloteens, and demons.

Another memorable stage features killer dentures and dental torture devices - I mean instruments - the correlation being odontophobia, otherwise known as fear of dentistry.

As if all that wasn't enough to keep you on your toes, Lord Phobos has sent out his Sun Troops to block your path with Light Barriers. While these can be broken with a sacrificial drone, you'll have to visit the moons orbiting the planets in the Phobos system to track them down first, and complicating matters further, not all of them harbour drones in the first place, only those that flash on the map screen.

Drones are activated via the return key by default, and will provide extra firepower, though bear in mind that if *they* sustain a hit, *you* die too,

so you must choose when to use them wisely.

This being a shoot 'em up you'll need to sustain yourself with a steady diet of power-ups if you're to accomplish anything, which you won't anyway because Phobia is evil and the odds are callously stacked against you rather like a coin-op cash-guzzler that only exists to turn a profit.

Regardless, spikey blue pods - left behind when you destroy enemies - can be collected to boost your ship's engine power and rate of fire, or confer extra lasers or an entirely new weapon such as the bombs that hug the contour of the terrain before impacting an enemy unit. In that respect it's much like Gadius or R-Type, which set the tone for all shmups that followed in so many ways.

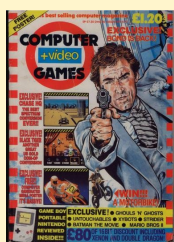
Another power-up is especially aberrant for a shooter - or game in general - given that snagging it affects the behaviour of your *enemies* rather than your own craft; as *you* begin to flash *they* cease firing, providing a limited period of respite from the tumultuous trepidation.

In two player mode - you're only hope of making any real progress - defying all logic you can shoot the rear of your partner's ship to unleash three interminable missiles. I can't say I've seen *that* particular strategy employed in any other shoot 'em ups... and probably with good reason. It makes no sense! Still, neither does blasting away irrespective of your partner's presence while your ammo sails right through their ship

without making so much as a dent... the defacto standard for practically every other schmup.

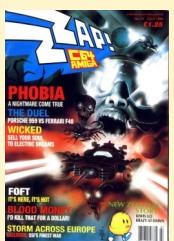
It appears to have been this sort of schismatic nuance that appealed to the reviewers at the time, especially those who assessed the Commodore 64 edition who were far more disposed to overlook the punitive difficulty levels.

"Apart from the lack of music, Phobia is superb - pretty graphics, extremely addictive blasting gameplay, even the multi-load isn't too intrusive. The best 64 blast since Armalyte."



88% Computer and Video Games (July 1989)

"A superlative shoot-'em-up chock a block with colour, graphic detail and scarifying levels."



92% - Zzap! (July 1989)

On the Amiga side of the equation reviewers set the bar that bit higher, and generally felt let down by what felt like a hastily polished C64 port. Disgruntled by the apparent lack of care and attention, they weren't nearly so amenable to turning a blind eye to its drawbacks.

"This has the looks and sounds of the top coin-ops from earlier this decade - which is pretty good going. Perhaps a few improvements in the gameplay and overall

difficulty could have pushed Phobia up to that 900 rating."



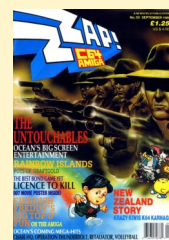
805 - ACE (August 1989)

"Phobia on the Amiga does not measure up to its predecessor on the 64, unfortunately. It is a horizontally scrolling shoot em up, and the scrolling is fine, the screen colourful, but there is simply too much going on at once on the screen. At times it is impossible to get through a wave of aliens, as there are so many, in addition to bullets, bombs and missiles all aimed squarely at your ship. A difficult game is fair enough, but this is crazy. Sound is about average, which pretty much sums up the rest of the game."



63% - CU Amiga (August 1989)

"Phobia on the 64 proved one good looking, highly playable blast and the Amiga version had the potential to do likewise but in even better style. The graphics are certainly detailed and everything is larger than life. But the simple parallax scrolling is unimpressive and the colour scheme isn't subtle enough to create the nightmarish atmosphere needed - it all looks garish and hardly frightening. Thankfully it's all very playable R-Type-ish shoot-'em-up fare, but not one to turn you into a nervous wreck."



73% - Zzap! (September 1989)

"The only possible criticism of the game is that it is terribly difficult. For experts like myself there is a "silly mode" which makes it even more impossible. Overall, a game that strikes a rare balance between playability and impossibility, providing entertainment which gives it a long lifespan. Real value for money."



76% - Amiga Computing (Sept 1989)

"Shoot-em-ups don't come much tougher than Phobia, and you'll be thankful it has a two-player option. But it's just a shoot-em-up and, though it's as good as most and despite a few nice touches, is not one of the best".



72% - Amiga Format (Sept 1989)

If you think we're exaggerating about the insane difficulty curve, why not get in your time machine and travel to the year 2017 where I live and check out the long-plays of Phobia on YouTube? You'd have a wasted journey if you did because they don't exist seeing as no-one appears to be capable of completing the game, even with the infinite lives trainer enabled. Aside from this unofficial hack, apparently no cheat has been discovered, if one was ever implemented.

Of the 15 levels on offer only a handful have been identified. It's hard to say if the remainder have ever actually been seen, let alone beaten - I couldn't even find a text walkthrough as evidence of their existence. Apparently there are planets inspired by hydrophobia and pyrophobia yet I doubt I'll live long enough to visit them.

Evaluating a game based solely on the two minutes in which you're able to survive is a tough call, and no-one enjoys a backside full of fence splinters! Conceptually it's a goldmine, gameplay wise it's an absolute nightmare. Appropriate then that this is the only way I'll get to experience it. Maybe you can join me on the other side for a two player co-op sesh? Good Nytol!

THE STORY

LORD PHOBOS , MASTER OF FEAR , has imprisoned the daughter of the Galactic President and is holding her captive on the surface of the Sun. Knowing that a rescue mission would be launched, Phobos has created a series of worlds which must be passed through before any prospective rescuer gains access to the Sun. After careful study of the a human mind and subconscious , Phobos has fashioned each planet in the form of a human Phobia - he knows that this is the most powerful human emotion, and the fear of fear itself is enough to deter any would-be. Situated in the core of each planet is a rare element which affords total protection against the heat of the Sun-nine of these are required to protect the entire ship and allow an attack on the Sun itself.

Phobos has other defensive systems to deter the rescue mission - his dreaded Sun Troops will start out from the opposite and of the Stellar System and attempt to cut off the routes to Phobos - they will leave light barriers between planets which will destroy any ship attempting to pass through of Light Speed. The only way through these is to either sacrifice a ship, or to collect a Space -pad from an obriting moon and sacrifice this. Space Pods will also produce firepower after sufficient power-ups have been collected.

Progress though the game is made by destroying a Phobic planet, travelling through to the core and collecting a shield piece, then progressing on to the next planetary system. It the moon on the planet is flashing this indicates that Space Pods are present , and you have the opportunity of fighting through the Lunar defences to collect these.

There components of the Phobic planet will leave behind power-ups when destroyed which can be collected to improve the fighting characteristics of your craft. Also present on every Phobic planet are the Key Generator which power an impenetrable shield at the end of each system - these must be identified and destroyed before the shield is reached.

CONTROLS

Game control : control is by keyboard, joystick or mouse.

- F1** - Select control method
- F2** - Redefine keyboard controls
- F3** - Select one or two players
- F9** - Abort game

The default key settings are :

- ,** - UP
- ?** - Down
- Z** - Left
- X** - right
- Space** - Fire
- Return** - Split ships
- P** - Pause (Fire to Restart)

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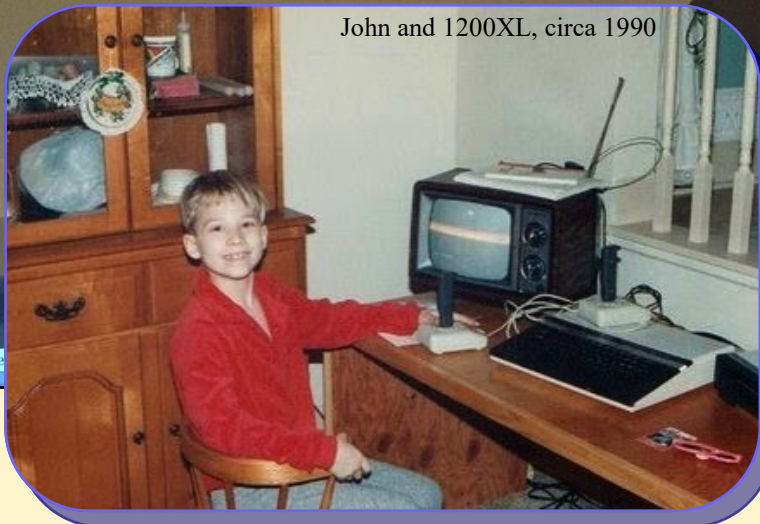
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Welcome to the start of a new feature series on the Amigos Team's memories. We will first be covering their memories of their first computer. To start off the walk down memory lane will be out very own Amigos, **John Shawler**.



John and 1200XL, circa 1990

FIRST COMPUTER

In the Summer of 1987, my father brought a new machine into our home, my family's first computer. He'd purchased an **Atari 1200XL** from a friend from our old neighbourhood for \$100.

Included in the deal was an Atari 410 cassette drive, an Atari 1050 floppy drive, and an Atari 1020 plotter, which I loved for about a week until all the pens went dry and were never replaced. Dad bought the setup ostensibly for doing work and for the family to play games on, but since it was so old by computing standards by the time he got it, the next year he bought an IBM 8088

spreadsheets and run engineering software. The 1200XL was relegated to the kids, which was just fine with me. My brother and sister were too young to get much enjoyment out of it, so for all intents and purposes, by 1988 I had my own computer, a big deal for a 7 year old.

The Atari 1200XL is something of an oddity. Released in 1982, it was Atari's next-generation 8 bit computer, following their hugely successful 400 and 800 models. Aside from shipping with 64k of RAM from the factory, the machine sported a sleek, futuristic colour-

ma-
chine
to do
his

scheme, all black, white and silver. It also compacted the size of the 400 and 800 by combining several of the dedicated boards from Atari's original 8 bits into one. A new operating system was developed for the machine that allowed external devices connected through the serial port to load their drivers directly into the 1200XL's memory, and the addition of Function and Help keys expanded the keyboard.

It is worth noting that the keyboard on the 1200XL was (and is) a dream to type on, spoiling me as I typed out virtual reams of paper in my online journal, which has sadly been lost.



My first car, which I used to drive to thrifts and flea markets: (1982 Volvo)



The machine was not without problems, however. Two of the four joystick ports present on the 800 had been removed, and were placed awkwardly at an angle on the left side of the machine instead of right up front, where they were located on its predecessor. Changes to the operating system meant that some older software titles would not work on the new machine. The 1200XL was also closed machine. Because of the decision to reduce the footprint of the machine, the multi-board inside the shell was not expandable, another change from the more hobbyist-oriented 800.

There is a much-repeated rumour in the Atari community that sales of the 800 system actually increased after the launch of the 1200XL, because customers feared losing the expandability they enjoyed with Atari's first computers. What is much more likely is that consumers gravitated towards the cheaper, more expandable system.

In 1982, you could buy an Atari 800 and upgrade it to the identical specs of a 1200XL without losing any expandability or compatibility for a few hundred dollars less than the newer machine. Atari quickly reacted to the poor sales numbers, and one year later announced the 800XL, a machine designed to replace both the 800 and 1200XL.

Of course, in 1988 in Hurricane, West Virginia, I didn't know about any of that. What I did know was that there were no software shops around that sold Atari

software, and my primary means of getting new software came from my dad's friends at work. In what is probably the most common shared story among all classic computer tales, my dad would buy a box of blank disks, and his buddies at the office would fill them full of games. So even though the 8 bit market had all but died off, I still had a near-limitless amount of games. In addition to the disk based games, 5 or 6 cartridges also were part of the initial purchase of the machine, and once a year at Christmas, Dad would let me choose a game out of the small brochures that came from who-knows-where that still sold Atari games.

From those one-paragraph descriptions and single screen shots, I made my one choice for the year on a game that I hoped was worth playing. 9 times of out 10, they weren't. I remember 3D Tic-Tac-Toe and Basketball in particular were huge let-downs. The one game that I actually enjoyed as part of this yearly tradition was the now rare Mario Bros. for the XE. Atari XE games were developed for the Atari's ill-fated answer to the Nintendo Entertainment System, the XEGS, but were compatible with the entire Atari 8 bit line. For some reason, a new version of Mario Bros was coded that was much more accurate to the arcade version than the previous Mario Bros. release.

During this time, I also was receiving photocopies of Antic Magazine, along with copies of the disks with even more games.

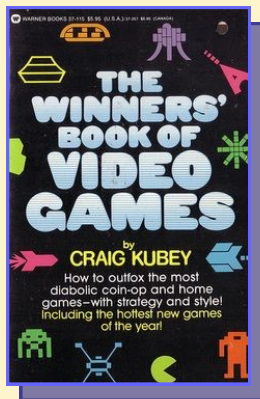


I also remember typing in programs from the book Kids and the Atari, and dipped my toe into programming, but I always enjoyed playing games rather than coding them.

Even though I loved my Atari, I was aware very early on that the NES was eating its lunch, and I could see why. There were no equivalents to Super Mario Bros, The Legend of Zelda, or Metroid. The Atari excelled at arcade-style games and text adventures, but once the other kids in my neighbourhood brought Japan's latest and greatest into their homes, I starting pining in a big way to get a Nintendo, to the point where I would frequently dream about the machine. In 1991, my parents finally relented, helped along by an outbreak of chicken pox that kept me out of school for a week or two, and the Atari sat vacant for many years, soon stored in the basement, along with Dad's 8088.



But something changed when I was in high school. I checked out a few books from the library, the most influential being the Winner's Book of Video Games by Craig Kubey.



Even though it was geared toward arcade games, it brought back a lot of happy memories of me playing those ports on the 1200XL. I also found out about some games that I never got a chance to try out, like Asteroids (well, I had played asteroids on the 2600, but the less said about that the better). It was around this time (1996-97) that my family got the internet, and I started to seek out more information about the Atari 8 bits on Usenet. I brought the 1200XL out of storage and into my bedroom (A computer in my bedroom! At last, the dream of my youth came true!). Somehow on the internet, I discovered an address you could write to get catalogs

of games, which were really just computer printouts of massive lists. For a nominal fee (I think it was a dollar a game plus a dollar for a disk) people would fill up disks with whatever you wanted and send them to you!

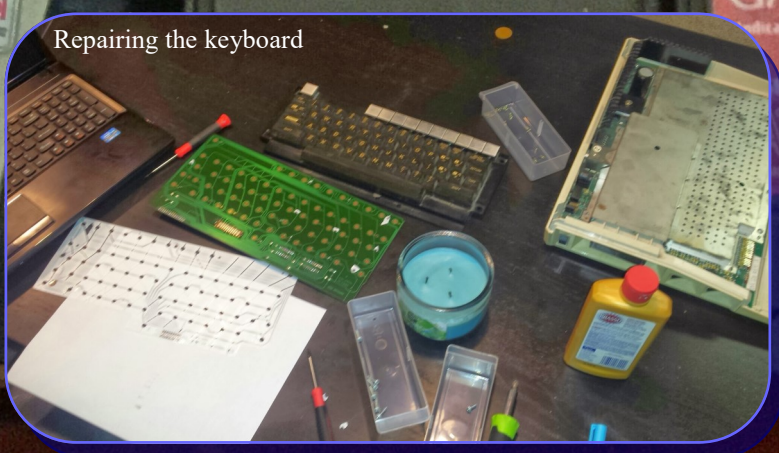


I remember sending \$5 or \$10 several times to a gentleman who provided me with Pong, Gauntlet, and other arcade classics I'd read about. I had gotten the retro bug. I could drive, so I went to the local flea market in Milton and bought boxes of old joysticks and wires (remember pre-eBay when stuff was cheap?)

I discovered Chris Cavanaugh's Classic Gamer Magazine from a blurb in EGM, and for the first time, I realized that there was a whole community out there who really, really liked retro games. A few years later in college, I stumbled upon the Digital Press forums, and that only

cemented my collecting obsession and expanded it to at one point having almost every classic system. I don't think I'll ever be a part of a better online community than in those pre-social-media days when forums ruled.

I can say for certain that without the Atari 1200XL coming into my life, none of that would happen. Just like many other early computers and consoles, it still runs like a top, though I did have to repair the keyboard by redrawing the traces between the keys with a circuit pen. The fact that the 1200XL was already outdated and obscure by the time it fell into my hands made me a retro gamer almost by default. Even though I spent the greater part of those formative years wanting a newer system that my friends had, I wouldn't trade it for the world. Over the years, my collection has grown and shrunk. Almost all my original systems are gone, including my first NES. But the Atari 1200XL and those cartridges I got with it will be the last to go. Long live the Atari 8 bit. **Long live retro.**



Repairing the keyboard



The 1200XL today

American Joystick specialist, **Beeshu**, have just released three new sticks via UK Distributor, **Euromax**.

THE ZOOMER

This is designed for people who take their flight sims and driving games very seriously. It's a yoke-type joystick which resembles a steering wheel with the top and bottom missing. To turn left and right, the stick is rotated one way or the other.

Back and forward movement is achieved by tilting the joystick up and down, although this can be rather tiring after a while, with badly aching wrists. There are two fire buttons, one atop each half of the wheel. Your thumbs naturally rest on these buttons, which help.

Although taxing on the runway with the Zoomer made it feel great, meeting a MiG in the skies stretch the Zoomer to its limits. Although it greatly enhances the realism of flight sims and driving games for you, because the up/down and left/right movements are so different to each other, it overcomes the problems of sensitive joysticks which dive when they should be turning and turn when you want them to climb. The variable speed auto-fire dial on the base allows you to unleash a near continuous stream of bullets when required. The addition of suction cups on its underside means that it will stay put through even the toughest of dogfights!



THE ULTIMATE

This is a true connoisseur's joystick. Featuring 4 fire buttons (which are grouped in pairs for left and right handed operations). It has a spherical hand grip, enhancing the feeling of sure-handed control. Its wide base means that the Ultimate can be used on a desk or a lap with equal comfort. Variable speed auto-fire is included and can be set to a scorching 30 shots per second! (bear in mind that many games can't react to auto-fire of that speed though!).

It has 5 suction cups on its base and a steel re-enforced shaft, it's obviously designed to take the roughest of treatment. It offers accurate control and feels rock solid at the same time.

HOT STUFF

This joystick is aimed at the budget end of the market, available in a variety of 'bright' colours. It's a lightweight stick that used leaf switches to detect your hand movements. Although this is traditional technology, many people prefer the quieter, smoother movement of leaf switch joysticks.

It features single speed auto-fire, flight grip handle and 4 fire buttons. It's situated for shoot-em-ups, although despite the fact it's perfectly well made, it feels a little flimsy.





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Which computer(s), if any, do you own?



BOX ARTIST



Jerrold 'Jerr' Richardson

As an on-staff employee at Mattel Toys, Jerr would be responsible for the catalogue and packaging artworks that adorned Barbie and various other children's toys throughout the 1970's.

In response to the runaway success of the Atari VCS in 1977, Mattel Toy's new subsidiary Mattel Electronics would design its own home console the Intellivision (1979) to compete with it. With Jerr being responsible for the consoles box art layout and design which helped early on to give the Intellivision a distinct branding.

By 1981 it looks as though Jerr's box arts stop at this point (following staff laid off at Mattel), with his final possibly being Advanced Dungeons & Dragons: Treasure of Tarmin (1983).

From 1983 onwards most Intellivision released games were third party titles and Jerr's involvement unlikely, but the artist by this time had produced a bewildering number of cover arts for APH Technological Consulting (whom early Intellivision game development had been farmed out to) and Mattel's in-house development team.

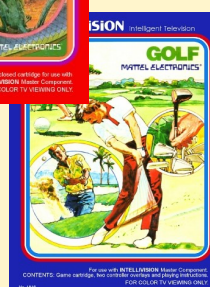
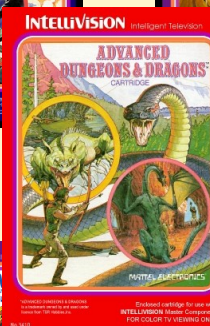
Little more is known about Jerr at present other than he was born in 1928 and died in 1991 aged 63.

1979

ABPA Backgammon
Armour Battle
Auto Racing
Checkers
NASL Soccer
NFL Football

1980

Golf
Las Vegas Poker and Blackjack
Las Vegas Roulette
Major League Baseball
NBA Basketball
Sea Battle
Skiing
Space Battle
Tennis



1981

Astrosmash
Boxing
Space Armada
Space Hawk
Star Strike
Utopia

1982

Adv D&D
Frog Bog
Night Stalker
Reversi
Royal Dealer
Shark! Shark!
Sharp Shot
Sub Hunt

1983

AD&D: Treasure of Tarmin



QUIZ ANSWERS



Quiz answers from Amigos Podcast Episode 100 and Kick Start Issue 08

YOU'RE NOT THE GAME YOU THINK YOU ARE



- 1) Alien Bash II, Battle Command, Curse of Enchantia
- 02) Alienstorm
- 03) Belial
- 04) Benefactor
- 05) Captain Planet & Black Shadow
- 06) Cyberpunks & Turrican III
- 07) Defender of the Crown
- 08) Fire & Brimstone & Base Jumpers
- 09) Football Glory
- 10) Fury of the Furries
- 11) Indiana Jones & the Fate of Atlantis
- 12) Katakis & Fatman
- 13) King's Quest II
- 14) Marvin's Marvellous Adventure
- 15) Premiere
- 16) Switchblade II
- 17) Tusker
- 18) Virocop
- 19) Wings of Death
- 20) Wiz 'n' Liz

KNOW YOUR AMIGA



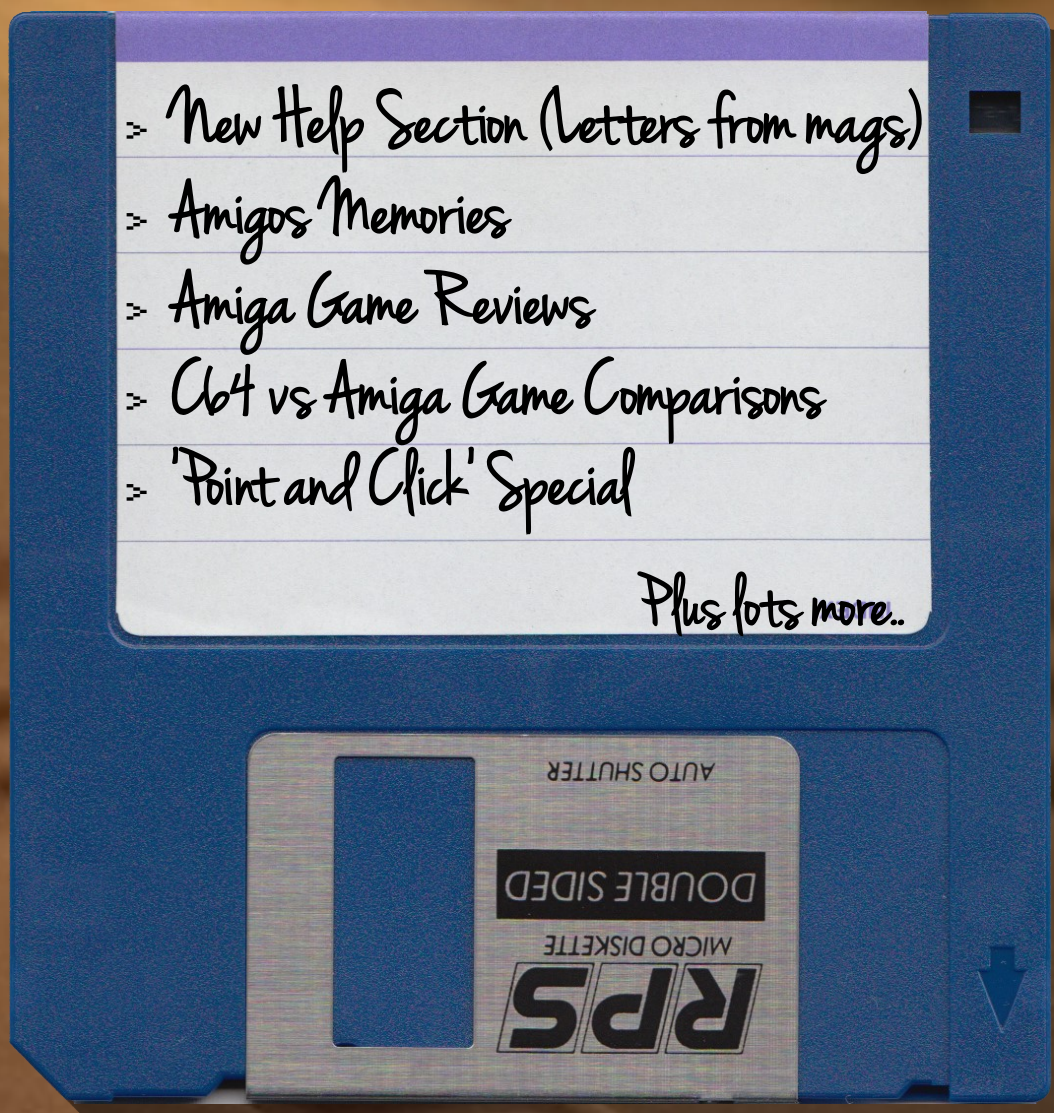
- A Afterburner
- A Airball
- B Archipelagos
- B Astaroth
- B Auburn
- A Barbarian
- A Battle Chess
- A Falcon
- A Fighter Bomber
- B King Tut
- B Starray





- > New Help Section (letters from mags)
- > Amigos Memories
- > Amiga Game Reviews
- > C64 vs Amiga Game Comparisons
- > 'Point and Click' Special

Plus lots more..



Sources of Information

This magazine would not be possible without the original sources of information:-

- > Amiga Computing (40,41), ACE (48,49), Amiga Format (26,27),
- > Amiga Power (5,6), CU Amiga (19,20), The One (36,37)
- > www.boxequalsart.com, Wikipedia, Hall of Light, Lemon Amiga

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