

QuestBusters™

#112

The Adventurer's Journal

Not sold in Brentwood

Industry DOOMed at CES

This Summer CES was more exciting than most because it was potentially the last time I will ever have to set foot in the Windy City (with its traffic jams and expensive cab rides) for CES. Next year's summer show will take place near my home in Philadelphia, so I can take the industry folks from California out for a real cheesesteak, not the pap they pass off as Philly cheesesteaks out there.

Unfortunately, there were some notable absences at the CES. Activision, Electronic Arts (and affiliates) and Origin did not show up. Although it saved me some time on my schedule, I missed these folks and a chance to see their new products. Still, this CES was more exciting than it has been for years because absolutely everyone ramped up their graphics and sounds for their games and most companies concentrated on designing exciting game play rather than using a formula approach. Doom-type games were all the rage! I counted at least fifteen! Also, if you don't have a CD drive you had better get one soon, because the best games of the show were on PC CD or MAC CD. Floppy games are decreasing in numbers in comparison. Without further ado, let's get the skinny from Lake Shore Drive....

ACCESS

Yes, I know that *Under A Killing Moon* has appeared in more CES reports than most other games, but this will definitely be the last time since the game will be out VERY soon - by August or September. This Tex Murphy mystery CD was much further developed for CES, boasting an extremely smooth first-person perspective travel mode and nice video segments mixed in conversations and cinematic scenes. The tense music will get you hopping, as will the many twists and turns in the game's plot.

ACCOLADE

Since Accolade jumped head first into the video game market, they have released

fewer PC products, but when they do it's usually a good one. *Zero Tolerance* is Accolade's take on the first-person perspective action game.

You run around a number of areas and take out the enemies with a variety of weapons. The screens are laid out nicely, the enemies are intelligent and the block-based automap ranks as one of the most informative for this type of game. Look for it in the fall.

CAPSTONE

Corridor 7 really raised Capstone's rep with the many people who had grown tired of a string of mediocre titles. Well, the guys and gals from Miami are continuing their winning streak. The *Corridor 7* PC CD version will be out soon and boasts enhanced audio and network/modem play for a really exciting game.

Zorro is a *Prince of Persia*-like PC adventure based on the upcoming movie that crosses genres, but should be a nice challenge for action-adventure fans. Finally, although there was nothing to see, Capstone will produce another PC game using the *Wolfenstein* engine — appropriately called *Body Count*.

by Russ Ceccola

DOMARK

DoMark will release *Lords of Midnight: The Citadel* for PC through Spectrum



Lords of Midnight: The Citadel

Holobyte. *Lords* was designed by Mike Singleton, who was responsible for some MicroProse games, among others.

Lords is a vast first-person perspective

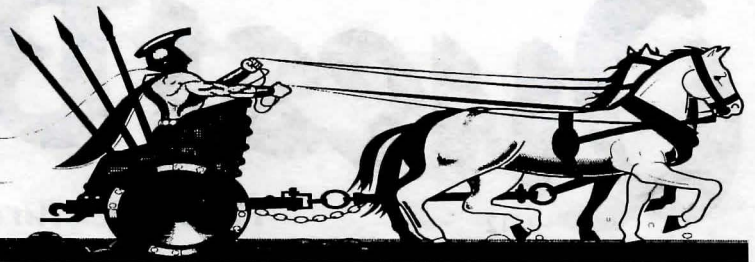
indoor/outdoor RPG in which you can control multiple parties in your quests on a fractally-rendered landscape. Battles are in real-time against animated enemies. *Lords* is most notable for its great use of artificial intelligence and online bestiary and game almanac.

Continued on page 6

Contents

Summer CES	1
Adventure Road	2
Al-Qadim	3
Inca 2	4
CES Party Report	7
Inherit the Earth	8
Disciples of Steel	9
Walkthru: Goblin's 3	10
Keys to the Kingdoms	12
Swap Shop	15

Adventure Road



New Releases

Return to Ringworld is on the shelves. *Alien Legacy*, from Dynamix, is more of a sim/strategy game than a quest, but the story line is worth pursuing.

See you, in September

Lots of titles lined up for next month. Access' *Under a Killing Moon* is due in the middle of the month (rumors are you will need a Pentium to play it, though we didn't a chance to ask Access about this one due to deadline mania). Origin has *Lost Vale* (an *Ultima 8* add-on disk) and *System Shock*. Domark will ship their first major RPG, *Lords of Midnight*.

Later this Fall

Look for Legend Entertainment's *Death's Gate* (though the name game may change) on CD and Spec-Holo's *Star Trek: The Next Generation — A Final Unity* for PC. Hell, featuring Dennis Hopper, from Merit, which will also ship *Harvester* on CD around November.

Christmas Questing

Voyeur, Kingdom: The Far Reaches, Stonekeep and *Cyberia* are lined up for Christmas at Interplay. Lucas should have *Dark Forces*, a *Star Wars* adventure, ready.

Westwood Update

Kyrandia 3 should arrive in October, the first in which you play a villain in the lead role. But *Lands of Lore 2* won't show up until at least Christmas of 1995.

Thank your for using...

AT&T, who may soon own 100% of what was formerly known as The Sierra Network. Sierra On-Line announced in July that they are discussing the possibility of AT&T acquiring all of Sierra's shares in The Imagination Network, as it is now known, and a possible multi-year contract for Sierra to provide entertainment and editorial content. INN, which recently relocated from Oakhurst to Burlingame, is

on the verge of introducing version 2.4 of the system and user software (which rumors have it will include a special section exclusively for Russ Ceccola, who has racked up more free time on INN than most other reviewers combined).

New CDs

As you may or may not notice, Paul Shaffer's CD *Central column* does not appear in this issue. Paul will be back with a vengeance in September, but meanwhile, here's the latest CD news..

Sierra has shipped two Collector's Editions with all the *King's Quest* and *Space Quest* games on them. *Psychotron* is out from Merit. *Leisure Suit Larry VI CD* is Sierra's first with SVGA animations and backgrounds throughout, not to mention the voice of Larry. (But Al Lowe's next game, a political satire called *Capitol Punishment: Running from Office*, will be an "arcade game for non-arcade gamers," according to Lowe.

Shadow of the Comet was set to ship by the end of August. Legend's *Companions of Xanth* is in, boasting full-voice support and other CD enhancements. And New World Computing's CD version of *Inherit the Earth* has over four hours of voice.

MacQuesting

A few great MacQuests are now out or on the way. Interplay has a whole pack of 'em: *Wolfenstein 3-D*, *Star Trek 25th Anniversary Enhanced*, *Alone in the Dark*, *Voyeur*, and *Flashback*. (Interplay is one of the few game companies with a distinct Macintosh division, MacPlay.) Sierra's *Police Quest IV* is on the street right now.

Eh?

Canada's Readysoft has a great-looking sci-fi quest. Originally published in Europe, *Robinson's Requiem* challenges you to escape from an alien planet, after first chopping off your own leg and experiencing real-time pain, stress, gangrene and

Dear QuestBusters:

You dogs! I subscribed in May, but only got one lousy issue so far! (Actually, it was pretty good, but that's not the point.)

Audrey Browning

So many people signed up about the same time that you did, that we ran out of the current issue (#110, now a real collector's item worth far more than the cost of a single 800 number call to any major game publisher) for the time in our ten years of publishing. Instead of start you off with an old issue, we put you down to start with #111. Unfortunately, the annual summer slowdown in game releases kicked in, so we are just getting #112 out the door (kicking and screaming!). We have also been slaving away on the next clue book, *Keys to the Kingdoms 2*, which is coming around the bend as we speak. Fortunately, there are tons of adventures lined up for release through the rest of the year, so we'll be back on schedule faster than you can say "Where's my QuestBusters?" to the mailman. @

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Continued on page 14

Al-Qadim: The Genie's Curse

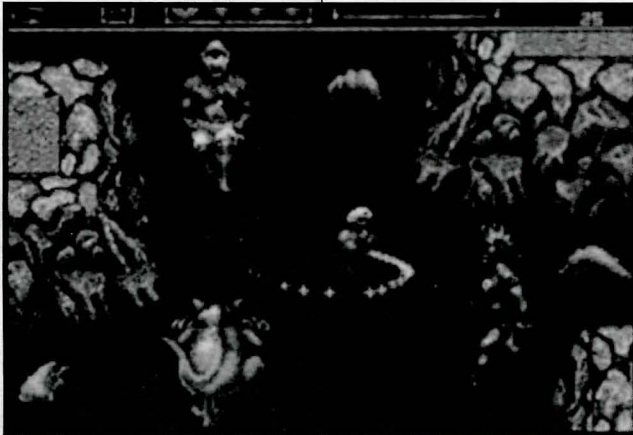
In an attempt to capture a wider audience of arcade-oriented young computer game players, Strategic Simulations and TSR Hobbies have introduced *The Genie's Curse*, set in TSR's *Al-Qadim* game world. It is a land similar to the settings of the *Arabian Knights* and *Sinbad the Sailor*, full of high magic, Corsairs and Genies.

Al-Qadim uses an interface similar to the one used for *Ultima 8*. While there is no jumping or climbing involved, a traditional, well-scripted, SSI story is hidden within a world of real-time combat and repetitious lethal situations, making the limitation of nine save games even harder to take.

Corsair training

You have only one character in your party, Ali, the elder son of the Al-Hazrad family. The plot lives up to the excellent standards set by SSI in previous *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* games. Ali finishes his Corsair training under the tutelage of master

Wassab ship carrying the Caliph. Blamed for the crime, Ali's family has been imprisoned by the Qadi, the ruler of his home city of Zaratan. Ali is charged with the task of rescuing the Caliph and the Caliph's daughter, who is engaged to marry Ali, while proving his family's innocence. Along the way to solving the mystery of the Genie's Curse, which allows Genies to disobey their masters, Ali must slay thousands of enemies and traverse 23 map areas of



towns, dungeons and islands before the final confrontation.

No dice rolling

Character generation does not exist in *Al-Qadim*. Gone are SSI's elegant systems for selecting race, sex and profession. No longer can you choose to roll up the statistics of your character or to modify them to conform with characters that you have used in other computer or paper-and-pencil role-playing games. There is only one character: a human male Corsair with set statistics who can progress to only to level eight by killing monsters and completing experience point quests. Ali can also gain three levels of sword proficiency by training with a trainer in one of the cities he frequents.

Al-Qadim is a treasure hunt game, requiring you to acquire artifacts and gold to be exchanged for other artifacts. Illogically, heart-shaped, life-giving potions are needed to restore health, since Ali cannot rest to restore his hit points. Other important artifacts include the eight types of magical shards, such as Cone of Cold and Sunfire, that make the Sling of Seeking obtained earlier in the

game a more effective weapon in close combat than the magical scimitar given Ali by his father.

Real-time combat

Combat is real-time, with eight magical spell shards for the ranged weapon, and a magical scimitar for melee combat. Your character is shown in the approximate middle of the overhead or top-down display, with the maze and monsters ranged around him. The combat view is identical to the normal overhead view for exploring cities, islands and dungeons. Thankfully, the real-time combat and time can be suspended while Ali selects a healing potion or other item from his inventory list. Many monsters, such as those in the Western Desert, are created by infinite monster generators that cannot be turned off. Inexplicably, one monster, the Copper Automaton in the Caliph's New Dungeon, cannot be destroyed.

Few hotkeys

The interface is fully mouse-controlled, with an oblique, overhead perspective of about 10 x 18 movement squares. The box claims that you can use joystick, mouse, and keyboard, but I was unable to confirm any convenient use of anything except the mouse in conjunction with some keyboarding. Woefully, there are few hotkey or keyboard equivalents for actions such as moving through inventory lists and menus. The many map areas average 38 x 38 movement squares, which is abstracted for the top-down display window screen. Going off one map causes the disk to access and load the next map area.

Ye magic ship

Movement from one island to another is accomplished via a magical ship with a Genie steersman that you free from imprisonment on the Unknown Plane at the end game. The Genie and ship become your slave and transportation

Continued on page 5

INCA 2

If it's new on the market, it's CD format, and it's less than \$30 — it's got to be another Coktel Visions game put out by Sierra. So now we have *Inca II*, and all my old trepidations of playing another Coktel game have come back to haunt me.

It's not that I don't enjoy Coktel games: I've played every one that's come out. I'm never just quite sure that if the cost weren't so low, I would ever get the next one. My experience is usually mixed. I enjoy some of it, I'm really frustrated with other parts of it, and generally I just don't get some of the "logic" behind it.

Son of Eldorado

The story starts where you are in the role of Eldorado's son, Atahualpa. You are a hot-headed, arrogant, ugly, nasal-sounding man who very quickly makes some rash decisions and starts an interstellar war that puts all your loved ones lives in jeopardy. Mister sensitive you're not. (There is some justice in this game, however, since Atahualpa will get what's coming to him around the middle of the story.) The goal is basically to survive the

Type Animated adventure & limited space combat sim

System IBM CD-ROM Required 386DX25 MHz+, 4 MB RAM, mouse, hard disk

Supports SoundBlaster, ProAudio

space attacks that Atahualpa has put in motion and, in the process, place three stones of power around a mysterious asteroid that is supposedly

causing natural disasters to occur.

Gameplay

Remember *Inca I*? Then you pretty much know *Inca II*. The game consists of a mix between doing some basic puzzle-solving on the surface of a variety of planets and surviving space combat in between. *Inca II* seemed much shorter than *Inca I*. The puzzles seemed simpler and fewer, but there were two or three that are just too

weird to understand.

For example: you have eight different prayer scrolls, each playing a similar tune and creating a spiraling pattern in the air. You're supposed to pick the combination of scrolls that, when played together, please the gods. Huh? Where's that hint line number?!

The parser is very simple. When you move your mouse icon over objects, it identifies the objects underneath it, and only these objects can be picked up or used in the

story. You can no longer use objects in your inventory on each other, which seemed to be a step backwards from past titles but again makes puzzles simpler.

Space combat

The space combat sequences have a lot of little extras that I found totally unnecessary in getting the job done. You have a number of different weapons (depending on which ship you're in) that you can scroll through and use on the various ships coming after you.

Most of the combat is spent targeting a ship and then trying to track far enough in advance of it that your shot will hit. Control was very difficult, since my every move seemed to be overly sensitive and I always seemed to overshoot the mark I was trying to steer towards. The radar allows you to keep track of everything in front and behind you. Your guns use up energy, so you will have to wait for them to recharge if you fire heavy bursts.

At one point you will have a sort of nuclear missile that blows up vast expanses of space in a satisfying way. This weapon is best used when you have the

choice to help one of your people who's trying to build a space fleet, by buying him time and cutting off an entire attack force before they get to him. You should definitely agree to help or you probably won't be able to finish the game later on. There will be a massive fleet in front of you, but if you're quick and use the



nuclear missiles, you can take out most of the fleet before they pass. You can access a space map to see where you are in relation to the rest of the hostile universe,

but I never found this very helpful.

The most frustrating part of the game for me was when Atahualpa meets his maker. At one point you're unable to take out a second ship coming after you, which turns out to be commanded by Aguirre, the nasty pirate from *Inca I*. Upon your (Atahualpa's) death, the story automatically shifts back to Eldorado, who becomes the central character from that point on. I thought the battle had been lost because I hadn't gotten enough shots off, so I went back and played it again and again. It was not until I changed my targeting system to attack Aguirre first, not the other ship, that I was able to see that Aguirre's ship could not be harmed no matter how many times I hit it — ah, so Atahualpa's death was supposed to occur. I wished there had been some clue that was supposed to happen, or that it was OK to die (I'm too concerned about following the optimal story line with branching plots).

Naturally this stubbornness on my part is probably experienced only by those other graphic adventurers playing *Inca II* who can't accept any of their characters dying and will restore saved games

by Paul Shaffer

Continued on next page

CES Parties ... from 7

of conflicting times and no new giveaway hat to protect me from the rain, I attended only three. First off was a tiny on-the-floor reception for Sid Meier's *Colonization* game. Sid did a funny little skit before he demoed the game: a voice from on high (AKA God) complained about Meier's "God" games, but confessed to liking them.

After my brush with the Almighty, I trudged downstairs to Interplay's *Cyberia* introduction/party. Everyone sat in amazement as the demo played and we had the chance to witness some game play. The graphics were so good, they would look at home in a *Terminator* movie.

The last party of the evening was also the most fun party of the show: Nintendo's Red, Hot & Blue gala on the Navy Pier. Ignoring the giant inflatable Donkey Kong peering into the second-floor window, most of the video game crowd and just about all of the press folks streamed through the large building and eventually saw Michael MacDonald (ex-Doobie Brothers) put on a loud, raucous show. Afterwards, Nintendo provided shuttle buses to take people back to their hotels. Is this class or what??!!

FRIDAY, JUNE 24th

A year ago Disney wowed the press and anyone else they could cram into an auditorium to see their *Aladdin* video game presentation. This year, Disney and Virgin premiered their *Lion King* game (coincidentally, the same day as the film opened nationwide).

They topped their *Aladdin* breakfast with African drummers and chanters, addresses by key Disney people and a finale rendition of the film's "Circle of Life" number that featured a few hundred people: dancers, singers, drummers, the singer of the song in the film and a bunch of slim gals in animal costumes. Rashiki, the wise old monkey from the movie, led the crowd in a goofy chant. These guys get a special award for the most mindblowing, extravagant show. Few will forget it.

The night was tame by comparison. I boarded Software Toolworks's chartered cruise ship expecting a night of fun with the stars of *Thunder in Paradise*, but Hulk Hogan had already put in his ten hours

that day, Carol Alt was in New York filming a pantyhose commercial and Chris Lemmon played the piano until the gals from the Penthouse booth showed up. Hmmm.... It was still a great time, especially for those who'd never been on a cruise ship before.

The next and last stop was Virtual World for a multi-company sponsored party. It was too hot and the drinks were NOT free. Need I say more?

Rather than pay \$30 cab fare round trip to attend a Lords of Midnight party at a blues club way across town that went until 4:00 AM (yes, AM), I decided to call it a night and went back to the hotel. Sure enough, King Kong was on the late-night channel. I knew I wouldn't escape this monkey theme until I went back to Philly.

Then again.... @

Al-Qadim ... from 3

once you learn the locations of the islands, and they are added to a conversation pick list. When you are traveling from one island to another, random encounters with various evil human and undead pirates can yield additional artifacts, shards and gold should you defeat them in combat; otherwise you lose the game and get to restore one from Davey Jones' locker.

Game utilities include storing and restoring a woefully inadequate nine save games, and the usual complement of other game options. Difficulty settings of hard, easy, very easy and very hard increase or diminish the senseless combat with random beasts. The attractive look and feel of the game is right out of the Arabian Knights, with a character who can choose at any point in time to be rude, honorable or impatient. However, straying from the honorable persona can cause you to lose the game, so the freedom to choose these other personalities is an empty option. There is no human speech.

Conclusions: Weak points include the lack of autocombat and automapping, a system to keep track of the missions and plot, companions as party members, spells other than spell shards, not enough save games, arcade elements mixed with the traditional role-playing format, and no character creation routine. While you are waiting for a true arcade or

role-playing game to be released, however, *Al-Qadim*, with its excellent story, may prove a good diversion. But if, on the other hand, mixed genre programs make you schizophrenic, killing millions of monsters makes you morbid or simply bored, and struggling against illogically hard and arbitrary difficulties leads to terminal dementia, you should avoid this game like the plague. @

Skill Level: Intermediate

Price: \$70

Company: SSI

Inca II ... from previous page

forever until the solution to staying alive is attained. Normally I don't like to accept death like that, but for some reason when I realized the kid was supposed to get it, there was some satisfaction in knowing the arrogant brat paid for his ego.

As with most of the Coktel games, music was very well done. Sound effects did seem somewhat sparse during actual play, however (except for combat). Graphically, *Inca II* is still played in VGA. *Inca I* had great graphics, and so does *Inca II* — most of the graphic improvements are with the in-between space sequences. More work could have been put into creating visually appealing characters rather than visually shocking. The characters are all so bizarre-looking it's hard to feel like you can relate to anyone — a factor that prevented me from getting into the game more.

Conclusions: If you liked *Inca I*, you'll probably like *Inca II*. It's more of the same. I was left just as lost with the ending as I was when I played the first game (and, hey, didn't Eldorado die at the end of *Inca I*? What's going on?). Once again I'm left with the strange sensation of not knowing whether I liked another Coktel game or not. I know there were times when I was satisfied with my successes in space or with completing a puzzle, but then I'd come up against something too weird or incomprehensible and think about just wrapping this one up. In that respect, *Inca II*'s shortness was quite satisfying. Good graphics, weird plot, strange mix of frustrating space combat and short puzzles. You decide. @

Skill Level: Intermediate

Price: \$35

Company: Coktel Vision/Sierra

DYNAMIX

Even though it's not an adventure, those old-time fans of *Lode Runner* will love Dynamix's updated PC version, which includes a construction set and a variety of tricks and tools to get around the enemies. Joe Ybarra and his folks have designed a PC space colonization game for Dynamix called *Alien Legacy*. It has a look that will remind you of *Dune* and *Dune II*, but game play is closer to Sierra's *Outpost*. Those who like these strategy/adventure hybrids will find a lot to enjoy in *Alien Legacy*.

EMPIRE

Dream Web is a PC adventure that uses different styles of game play and a few unique features. The "dream web" is part of the psyche — without it, everything would collapse. You go on missions to kill people and keep the dream web intact in this futuristic world.

The main view is an overhead perspective much like Infocom's *Battletech* games. There are object-oriented puzzles like those in many other graphic adventures, and a closeup window that lets you blow up small parts of the screen.

IMAGITEC

The same folks who brought us *Daemonsgate* have an exciting first-person perspective PC game on the way. As a mercenary, you must track down criminals while avoiding other enemies. Backgrounds are very detailed, and you can aim your weapon and move independently. The cinematics are incredibly modeled scenes that punctuate the action.

INTERPLAY

Interplay has really grown so much in the past few years, that its products are no longer limited to the PC market. Besides their creative video games and other PC titles, Interplay had a few adventures to show. *Dungeon Master II* is a highly anticipated sequel because the people who designed the original game are involved. Expect the same kind of exciting dungeon RPG, but now in 256-color graphics and a more interactive environment where if something isn't nailed down, you can move it. Creatures are also more intelligent this time around and will follow you

if incited.

Stonekeep is really on the way, so you'll finally be able to try out this randomized PC CD dungeon game with photorealistic walls and intense action.

Cyberia was Interplay's incredible hit PC CD game. It combines adventure, simulation and action games like the *Inca* products from Coktel Vision/Sierra, in a beautiful 3D-rendered environment in which you must save the world from a highly powerful bomb.

LEGEND

Legend has certainly kept up with the competition with their next products.

SuperHero League of Hoboken should be out soon, but *Death Gate* and *Mission*

Critical were Legend's real showstoppers. *Death Gate* uses a *Xanth*-like interface to present a story based on the Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman source books. *Death Gate* [name may be change] is a warp between different worlds where you have to put together pieces of the plot.

Graphics are beautiful, and the sound effects, music and speech play all at once. The same is true for *Mission Critical*, an original sci-fi story in which you must escape a space ship. There is lots of action, the game uses a *Xanth*-like interface, and Legend actually had architects from Philadelphia design the ship.

LUCASARTS

LucasArts had three very different, but very exciting, products on the way. *Dark Forces* is their take on the first-person perspective craze, but they used their creativity and put you in the role of a Rebel soldier out to find the secret Death Star plans. This PC game fits into the whole *Star Wars* story and you get to visit a lot of highly-detailed levels in and on spaceships and planets as you blow stormtroopers away.

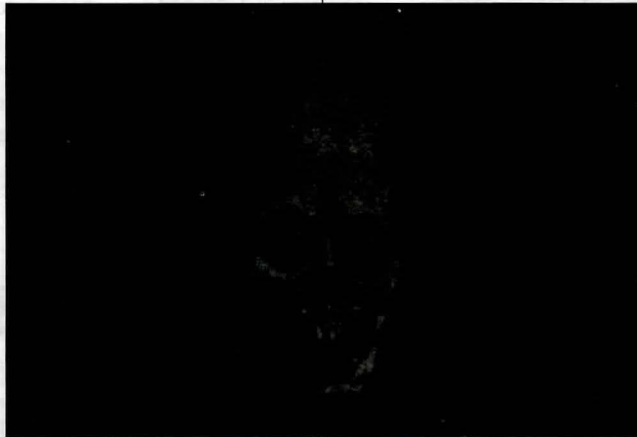
Set in a *Road Warrior*-type future, *Full Throttle* is a more traditional PC adven-

ture. You control a biker who was framed for murder. The graphics mix 3D rendering and 2D hand-drawn art. The Dig is further along than before, but still has a 1995 release date. Industrial Light & Magic got involved to provide special effects for the PC CD game that was once to become an *Amazing Stories* episode.

MEDIA VISION

Tia Carrere stars in *Daedalus Encounter*, a strange PC CD space adventure hybrid in which you control what goes on in the

game through a button interface that affects different tools. There is a lot of video interaction and a tutorial from the game's actors that walks you through the interface.



Stonekeep

NEW WORLD COMPUTING

The only PC adventure New World had to mention was *Heroes of Might & Magic*. It will not be *Might & Magic VI*. Instead, this game will have a *King's Bounty*-like icon interface, Super VGA graphics throughout and a random world generator.

SANCTUARY WOODS

Besides the news that these guys will publish Disney's highly original PC *Wolf* game, they will also release *Buried in Time*, a sequel to *The Journeyman Project*. It takes place six months after the original game and features the same kind of photorealistic art and game play as *Myst* and other PC CD open-ended adventures.

SIERRA

Roberta Williams' *Phantasmagoria* is sure to be the hit graphic adventure in the fall. As in most graphic adventures, you move around a character on the screens and click on objects and characters — but every scene is rendered and every character is digitized video. The story is a thriller in which something's not right about the main character's house. It will have two

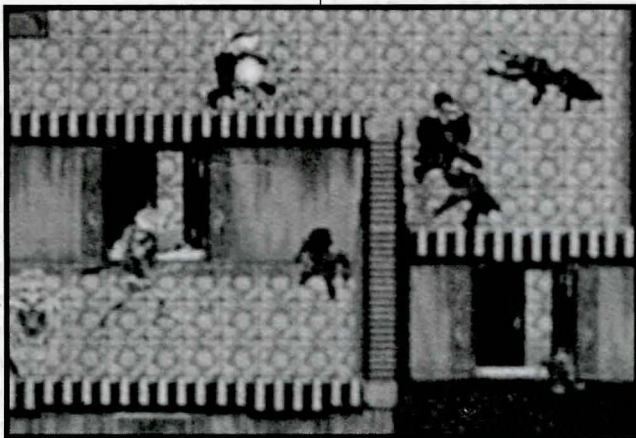
versions of some horrific scenes, one toned down so people with queasy stomachs can still enjoy being scared.

SIR-TECH

A new *Wizardry* spin-off is on the way! It will not be a numbered sequel, but it will have new skills and characters, an auto-heal feature, an advanced automap and photorealistic backgrounds. *Realms of Arkania: Star Trail* looks like it could pass *Arena* as my favorite RPG. It has full speech, a detailed map that looks like a

smaller version of your terrain, an automatic diary that keeps notes as you play and fully animated first-person views outdoors and indoors. The European designers really thought this

RPG through.



Dark Sun II

voice cast. *Bureau*

13 has an interesting slant as you investigate paranormal events *a la Ghostbusters*.

SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS

Dragon Lore (formerly called *Dragon Tales*) combines a *Myst*-like exploration engine with real-time animated combat and RPG elements. The mixture really works well. Cryo did the 300 rooms of beautiful visuals and the story was developed by D&D inventor Gary Gygax's original partners.

SSI

SSI has so many products coming out that it's tough to get into any detail here. Very simply, all looked promising, especially *Menzoberranzan*. *Cyclone* is a PC/PC CD Raven Software-designed first-person action game in which an isometric map helps you along and modeled graphics define the characters.

Dark Sun 2 will be SSI's next-to-last AD&D game for PC. It has a similar engine, larger characters and more digitized voices. *Alien Logic* is an overhead view PC RPG based on the *Skyrealms of Jorune* paper-and-pencil game and sporting fractal terrain.

DreamForge went all out on *Menzoberranzan*, SSI's last AD&D project. It's a PC CD game that has adjustable

adventure windows, a sideview map that saves even if you die in the game and a huge character generator.

Finally, *Slayer* is SSI's randomly generated first-person perspective 3DO hack 'n slash game. It has smooth-scrolling levels and huge final monsters.

TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE

Paragon got sucked up into the MicroProse organization before MPS was sold off to Spectrum Holobyte, but their people regrouped and formed Take 2

Interactive. They only had videos to show, but two games will be of interest to adventure fans. *Hell* is a dark cyberpunk story with beautiful rendered graphics and an all-star

VIRGIN

The 11th Hour should be out by summer's end and will feature much better video segments, fairer puzzles and a deeper story than *The 7th Guest*. Westwood only had a videotape of their future games, but the next *Land of Lore* and *Legend of Kyrandia* games have totally rendered graphics and an intense mixture of music and sound effects. These graphic adventures will really satisfy Westwood's fans, including those who clamored for Malcolm's return to *Kyrandia* games.

BEST OF THE SHOW

Because all adventures at the show were of B quality or better, it's tough to pick the best showing. Still, there were three games that stood out among the masses, but in different categories. The Best Quests of CES are: *Phantasmagoria* as the Best Graphic Adventure at the show, *Realms of Arkania: Star Trail* as Best RPG, and *Cyberia* as Best Hybrid. ©

Exclusive!

CES ParTy REPORT!

You could sense the elation of the partygoers at CES as they realized that at 1995 Summer CES in Philly, they won't have to spend \$20 on a cab ride anymore to get to a party that may or may not be hopping. The hotels are scattered all over Chicago, so you never know where the best parties might wind up — but in Philly they will all be within walking distance. Some hosts had shuttles for their guests from the show floor — the ultimate in convenience. [And New Jersey is so convenient.]

Wednesday, June 22nd

The day started off with a Nintendo charity event in which people threw plastic bananas into Donkey Kong's barrel to raise money for the Lincoln Park Zoo. It was a harbinger of the wacky events that the peppered the rest of the day. The first evening party was Acclaim's biannual pre-CES event, in which you can check out their new games while munching food and drinking cocktails with old industry buddies. The party was as chummy as usual, and the bags at the door included all kinds of goodies, including Valiant comics and the *Mortal Kombat* soundtrack CD.

A whole band of us press goofballs (including the Video Games staff) headed over to Time Warner Interactive's riverside party and played their hot new arcade game *Primal Rage*. For whatever reason, they gave out fezzes to those at the party, so now the same bunch of goofballs looked like delegates from some Middle Eastern country. The last stop of the night was Sega's party. They had all their new games set up on game systems like a booth, and lots of people milled about until late at night. It was time to head home and cram that fez into the suitcase before getting mistaken for a Shriner.

Thursday, June 23rd

There were many more parties than usual on this warm rainy evening, but because

Continued on page 5

Inherit the Earth: Quest for the Orb

Many of today's role-playing and adventure games are very difficult. A beginner doesn't have a snowball's chance in the Arizona desert to solve some of the puzzles — let alone the entire game. New World Computing has addressed this dearth of beginner-level games with their new adventure, *Inherit the Earth: Quest for the Orb*. Though it will appeal to more than just adventure game addicts, there are some quirks that everyone might find annoying.

Where have all the people gone?

The most unusual aspect of *Inherit* is the absence of people. Every character is a member of one of many animal tribes. Veteran adventure fans might laugh at this approach and think it's a children's game, but will soon discover a good story and a lot of solid adventuring. Besides, it only takes a little while to get used to the animals and accept their world.

Commencing with a rather lengthy animated introduction in which spoken dialogue plays like a cartoon, the story involves Rif the fox and his girlfriend

(foxfriend?) Rhene. They are accused of stealing the magical Orb of Storms, a device that foretells the weather. (A greedy animal could

make a fortune from the Orb's power by selling the information to a tribe that doesn't get the Weather Channel.)

The animals accuse Rif and Rhene because they're, well, sly foxes, and capture and hold Rhene prisoner until Rif can return the Orb or discover the real culprit. Two animals of other tribes join Rif on his adventures: Eeah the Elk and Okk the Boar. Their journeys take them all over the valley and involve a lot of plot

twists and surprises.

Inherit's interface is nothing new, but does make a point of using large characters and colorful graphics to appeal to both the children who might play the game and to other beginners not accustomed to moving tiny characters all over the screen. The upper part of the screen is the main window in which you move Rif, Okk and Eeah in an angled three-quarters view.

Below the picture window are spaces for inventory objects and a number of

basic commands. Click on a location in the main window to move the trio. Click with the right mouse button in the main window to perform the most common actions (talk, open, etc.). You can also put together sentences with the commands by clicking on them and their objects like the earlier LucasArts adventures. From time to time, a conversation menu will pop up; from here you click on questions or comments for one of the characters. Interiors also pop up in a window over the picture window. You scroll the terrain as you move; a main map connects the individual locations.

Sounds and graphics

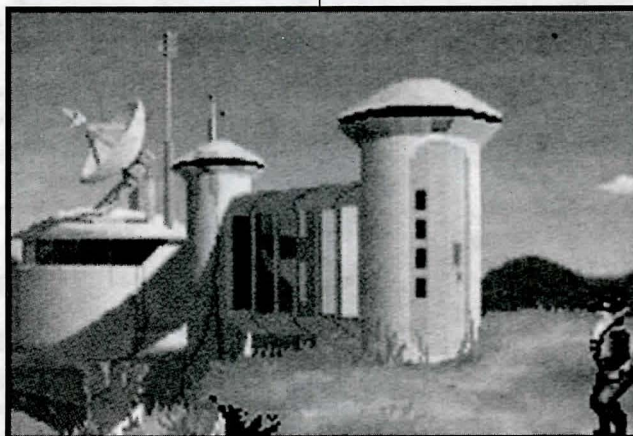
The scenery is quite good. There are a number of graphically different locations that reflect the many tribes in the game. *Inherit* looks like a finely crafted cartoon and would perhaps make a nice one. The spoken dialogue in the introduction teases you, because the silence afterwards is melancholy. Sound effects and music carry the game, but much like *Day of the Tentacle* you should buy the CD-ROM version of this game instead of the disk ver-

sion for the full experience, as it will feature full-voice support.

Wandering around

The major complaints I have are the very beginning of the game and the lengthy scrolling paths you need to follow to get to the main character or room in a loca-

tion. When you first start out, you have to wander all over to find some direction. Even the characters you ask don't give you any specific hints until



you stumble upon the idea to investigate the theft of the Orb and visit its Sanctuary.

Leave the Faire and go there first to get on the right path to the game's solution. When you visit the many locations in the game, you always have to enter and exit them from the same point. That means that you have to traverse many scrolling screens in some cases to get back to the entrance/exit. You should really be able to jump right to the main map if you so choose.

Conclusions: *Inherit the Earth* is a great game for beginners, and its length reflects that fact. Those looking for a unique diversion between major quests should try this one. The animal tribes help develop the plot much like the various guilds in *Loom*. The puzzles are the right difficulty. You can play it in bite-size chunks, so don't worry about getting stuck in front of the monitor for hours (unless you want to). Ultimately, the story and characters are captivating and presented in the context of a basic adventure game that most players will enjoy. ©

Skill Level: Novice

Price: \$59.95

Company: New World Computing

by Russ Ceccola

Disciples of STEEL

Until a few years ago, almost every computer RPG was built around a turn-based, party-combat model. In combat, you would input actions for each of several party members in turn. *Wizardry*, all the *Ultimas* past II, and about a million different games from SSI are perfect examples.

But recently, there has been a major shift toward a model where the player controls only a single character and fights in real-time, as in *Ultima Underworld*.

I'm convinced this was a turn for the worse. I enjoyed planning out different combat strategies to deal with different groups of monsters — but these days, fast reflexes are more important than strategy. *Disciples of Steel* is a return to the old combat model, and I found it a welcome change of pace.

A return to party-ing

You control a party of eight characters, members of a mercenary guild called the Disciples of Steel. They travel throughout the nine kingdoms of the continent of Lanathor fulfilling quests for the rulers. Their eventual goal is to become strong enough to defeat the rulers and take over their cities, forging the kingdoms into a single nation with themselves at the head.

There are nine character classes: two types of pure Fighters with different weapons specializations, four sub-classes of Fighters with weaker weapon skills and stronger secondary skills, and three Magician classes, each with access to a unique list of 20 spells.

The skill system is particularly interesting. There are 22 different skills, which include weapon specializations, defensive skills, the different types of spellcasting,

and some miscellaneous skills such as haggling and first aid. Experience points are used to increase skills, and any character can train in any skill.

The classes differ only in the experience cost per skill level. Also, the cost is determined on a sliding scale. If a character is relatively untrained, then it never takes more than sixteen experience points to learn one level of a skill. Once the skill has reached level 50, though, the cost increases.

(The maximum level for a skill seems to be around 500.) This leads to some interesting trade-offs; is it better to buy a few levels of a primary skill, or many levels of a secondary skill?

Taking the high road

You travel around the continent on a scrolling overhead map. In addition, a continental map shows your current position; it can be used to find the names of the towns and major geographic features. The "well-known" dungeons are also shown on the map, but there are some additional hidden dungeons that you'll have to find for yourself.

Towns are also shown as scrolling overhead maps; there is no automap in towns, but they're small enough that you can find your way around fairly easily. Dungeons are presented in the classic 3-D forward view, and an automapping feature is available.

Combat takes place on a 2-D tactical map similar to SSI's Gold Box games. Monsters have widely differing strengths, speeds, armors and magic resistances, so figuring out the appropriate strategy for

each battle is not a trivial task.

My only complaint is the party's combat formation. This formation can only be changed from the "camp" menu, and the eight characters must be placed inside a 3 x 3 square. Monsters can usually engage in the first round of combat, so it's easy to get Spellcasters killed before the fighters can advance to guard them, and it's almost impossible to use terrain to protect the party's flanks.

Combat & quests

Combat is the game's focal point; there's not much in the way of interaction with townspeople. It's possible to talk to the various shopowners, but they never seem to do anything but praise the King and complain about taxes.

The Kings' sole function is assigning quests, but there's a pretty good mix of these. You may be asked to deliver a package, find a long-lost dungeon, recover a lost item from a dungeon, or any number of other things.

After completing a quest, you can collect your reward and get the next quest in the series. All the Kings are available from the beginning of the game, so at any given time, you can have nine quests assigned to you.

Unfortunately, there are some bottlenecks. A delivery mission is actually two quests that get performed at the same time. So, King A might give you a package for King B, but you won't be able to deliver it until King B asks you to do so. At one point, I had delivery missions from six kings, and I couldn't complete any of



Disciples of Steel

Type Role-playing
System IBM
Required 386SX+, 2 MB RAM with 512K XMS free, VGA, 100% hard disk with 7 MB free
Optional mouse
Supports SoundBlaster and compatibles
Planned ports none

by Charles Don Hall

Continued on page 14

WALKTHROUGH

Goblin Quest 3

VESSEL

PARROT

Untie the knotted rope on the top deck. Hit the parrot with the golf club. Unscrew the hook by the doorway with the coin. Get hook and attach to loop. Open toolbox and get pepper and plunger. Use plunger on Chump. Put Blount by hook. Use Chump on weight. Have Blount take umbrella.

TOOTH

Put Blount on right hand at front of ship. Put Chump on spring board at front corner of boat. Have Blount get tooth. Put Blount in barrel and put umbrella in hole in barrel. Cut rope with tooth.

IDOL

GUARDS

Use umbrella on hot air hole then click on crevice to look at Wynnona. Hit Hercules and Gromelon with the golf club. Pick up the toast. Use coin on Mac, and when he picks it up, hit him with club.

WYNNONA

Put piece of toast in helmet and crush to crumbs with club, get crumbs. Use springy stone by Idol to bounce behind Banzia. Put crumbs in Banzia's collar, and when he squirms, hit him with the club and pick up his shield. Use stone hand on Kendo, and while he is distracted, hit him with the club.

Put shield on branch by Zembla. Go behind Zembla and use the pepper on him. Pick up wooden club. Use Chump to distract Django. When guard sticks out his tongue, have Blount grab it. Use wooden club on ladder. Put Blount up ladder behind stone. Have Chump distract Punky. When he moves one step forward, have Blount push the stone.

by **F. J. Philipp & Clancy F. Shaffer**

DEATH

DARKNESS

Find the matches and strike them on the rough surface toward the top center of screen. Get piece of scythe. Set 3 wisps free by using scythe on dens.

BLUE WISP

Cut clown's water tube with scythe. Take spectacles from clown's pocket and put them on skull. Open top of skull. When the blue wisp enters, close skull. Open skull to get blue wisp.

YELLOW WISP

Set Pirates wooden leg on fire with matches. Put fire out with water from tube. Get yellow wisp and put in bowl. Press button near blood inscription and get mirror. Put blue wisp in bowl. When screen turns green, get cork from the hand. Use mirror on green hand.

RED WISP

Use ladle on inscription to get blood. Pour blood in bottle Pirate is holding, then get bottle. Use blood on pedestal, cork on bottle. Remove blue wisp and yellow wisp with ladle. Put red wisp in bowl. When screen turns red, hit vampire's head with scythe. Put blue wisp in bowl. When screen turns purple, put spectacles on ghost skull. Put yellow wisp in bowl.

COUNTRYSIDE

CASTLE

Pick up Dolmen, then the stone at left side of castle. Take haystack and plunge into water basin. Get sponge and use on fire. Take pitchfork. Put Chump on lever. Have Blount use stone hand on meat. Put Blount on lever.

Have Chump jump down. Talk to king. Open castle roof and talk to

princess. Jump down and use pitchfork on meat. Put Dolmen on thorns blocking Knight's way. Talk to Knight, he will give you memorum potion. Pour potion into basin. Go to Inn at right of screen.

INN

Get spoon and put it on stone near exit to Countryside. Enter crack in wall near Korin's sword. Get sugar cube. Click on coffee mug to get down. Put Chump on spoon then have Blount use sugar cube on end of spoon.

Put Blount by Captain's right arm. Use Chump on paprika then use Blount to place meat under paprika cloud. Return to Countryside.

DRAGON

Put gold coin in ear hole of den. Put pitchfork in nostril hole. Put spiced meat on pitchfork. You now have the dragon. Retrieve the coin and back to the Inn.

Put Chump on right hand of customer and give customer the sugar cube to get leash. Use plunger on base of Othello's cage. Use leash on plunger then climb leash. Give the coin to Othello, and he will give you a key. Use key to open door under cage.

Use dragon open doorway to get lost note. Get key, return it to Othello, get coin. Talk to Captain and give him the note. He will give you a message. Give carved stone to Korin then look at Korin's sword handle.

WYNNONA

DYNAMITE

Get gun powder at upper left. Get hair off orange animal to use as fuse. Pick up stick. Use stick to reach flint behind Monk. Ooya will appear. Use flint on flute that Inca is holding. Click on pipes that used to be flute to place them.

Put pipe in hole. Put powder then fuse in pipe. Use flint on stone head to light dynamite stick. You can blow up the beam and bricks this way.

Use stick on skull to remove helmet

then get helmet. Use flint on bark and put the glue in the helmet. Make another stick of dynamite, but add glue to fuse before you light it. Throw this on the door to explode.

LARGE DYNAMITE

Put another pipe in place and use flint on pipe to create flute and give it to the Inca. Put Ooya on gold tree stump. When condor appears have Ooya jump on it. Use dynamite to blow up rock at bottom right exposing bamboo shoot. Use Ooya on bamboo shoot to grow. Have Wynnona pick up bamboo.

Using bamboo to make large sticks of sticky dynamite blow up the basement window, grate and wall. When you run out of fuses use Ooya on skull to grow hair to use as fuse. After everything is blown up talk to Fourbalus. Wynnona will turn into a butterfly. Have Blount use exit in middle of screen to go to town.

TOWN / LAB

TOWN

Talk to Nanny, then put umbrella in hole on roof. Talk to Nanny again to get a hot water bottle. Put it on Boucassier egg to hatch.

SHOP

Enter shop and give coin to shopkeeper then the message from the Captain. Get egg and key from left shelf. Use key on moon lamp to turn Blount into Wolfy. Use Wolfy on cupboard to throw it down. Climb on cornice by moon lamp and jump on cupboard. Take hammer from crack in cupboard.

Jump on sofa to produce spring. Use spring to fling Wolfy up to shelf. Use hammer on horn, get horn. Use hammer on storage chest and get bird decoy from hole in chest. Get spaghetti. Go to the Lab.

LAB

Ring door bell twice, then enter. Use left hand to read spell book. Click on switch just left of spell book to turn the pages. First potion to be made is Growixir. Use right hand to pick up boa-boa egg and put on hot water bottle. Crush eggshell in mortar with pestle. Burn horn with a lighter in ashtray. Use left hand to turn on faucet. With right hand use cup of water

on kettle and put spaghetti in. Use lighter to light heater under pot. Get cooked spaghetti.

Put all three ingredients in the mixer. Press on/off switch with left hand to start the mixer. Get the Growixir Potion. Use potion on baby boa-boa to create Fulbert. Make some more Growixir and pour into bottle on shelf.

GROWTH ELIXIR

In town use potion on plant outside store. Click on lever, put Blount on cannonball and use Fulbert on lever to send Blount to roof.

Have Fulbert climb plant outside store. Use Fulbert across gap in roof to walk across. Get sole and enter chimney to get down. Use potion to grow bud at foot of young woman.

SPEED ELIXIR

Have Fulbert climb stem so young woman will drop love letter. Have Blount pick it up. Have Fulbert climb stem again to loosen flower. Grab it before it enters gutter. Enter store and have Fulbert push button on shelf. Have Wolfy use hammer on trap to get bone. Have Wolfy lift night stand while Fulbert grabs soap underneath it. Hit shopkeeper with hammer to retrieve coin.

Go to Lab. Crush bone in mortar with pestle. Fill kettle with water, put in sole and light stove. Get boiled sole from pot. Put flower in still, use lighter to burner. Take essence of floriane, boiled sole and crushed bone and put in mixer. Turn mixer on, get Speedixir and pour into bottle on shelf.

FAST FORWARD

In Town, use this potion on Blount to make him move fast. Give baby Boucassier some Growixir. Use Fulbert like a plank to get to the bell. Use bird decoy on bell. Position Fulbert over the gap, run an tap Boucassier's shoulders, then *quickly* run down and grab feather before it enters grate.

Put love letter in front of mirror twice to see ingredients for Wingixir.

WING ELIXIR

Go to Lab. Put memorum in still and light burner to get laughing tears of joy. Burn the feather in ashtray with lighter. Pour water into bowl on window sill then add soap. Turn on fan with coin. Use key

in soapy water then use key on fan. A soap bubble will float into mixer. Mix the 3 ingredients. Pour potion into bottle.

CLOUDS

OOYA

Pick up knife. Use golf club on fishing thread to assemble fishing pole. Talk to Ooya, then pull the cloud over the tuft of hair using the pole. Exit screen to the southwest to go to Foliandre, and use the pole to get the scope, then back to clouds. Have Blount push air pump, and have Ooya grab it when it is within reach. Have Ooya let go of balloon at next island. Use Ooya on tuft of hair. If Ooya should land on goat island or by exit, use him on rock to build a bridge back to giant.

METEOROLOGIST

Put sandbag in basket of balloon. Use knife on sand bag from ballast to knock out goat. Blow up another balloon with pump, then hurry to the cloud. Have Ooya grab balloon when it is within reach. Use knife on cloud over Giant while Ooya is holding balloon. When Giant sneezes, Ooya lands on island with geysers. Put Ooya on upper geyser by anchor. Use Blount to block lower geyser. Ooya will be thrown to the next island.

Cut ballast from balloon until Ooya can enter it from upper ledge. Add sandbags until Ooya can get off at glacier. Use scope on speck on glacier's island. Use Ooya to defrost Bizoo and pick her up.

FOLIANDRE

Place Ooya on shovel and use button to swivel catapult to front. Use telescope to activate catapult. Ooya will land next to cheese. Use Ooya on cheese to produce worm. Walk Ooya to left. Press catapult control button twice to center position.

Put Blount on shovel to land him on catapult. Have Ooya push button once to turn catapult to right. Use Ooya on ship painting above Colossus. Blount should land next to cheese. Have Blount use fishing pole on worm in cheese. Go to Clouds and use pole on hole in clouds to get sawfish.

Continued on page 14

Keys to the Kingdoms

Arena: The Elder Scrolls

Sorcerers are the most powerful class to play. Besides being able to use chain armor and any weapon, the Sorcerer's need to absorb spells cast at it for spell points is its biggest strength. This ability makes Sorcerers with high INT and WILL almost invulnerable to most spells. Also, if you buy potions of restore power at Mage Guilds, you will never run out of spell points.

Each potion costs 75 gp. and restores 25 sp. The 40 item carry limit doesn't apply to potions of the same type (you could have 50 potions of restore and 39 other items). For maximum spell efficiency, create health, stamina and shield spells that have no base effect, but moderate level - determined effects. A Mage with many potions of restore power and a good shield spell can essentially take unlimited amounts of damage without slowing him/her down. A Sorcerer with a shield spell can absorb touch damage spells that it casts on itself.

Therefore, any item of shocking can be repeatedly used on a sorcerer to recharge magic points. After you select the item to use, click on your character's portrait. Recast the shield spell when necessary. If a character is attacked while swimming and becomes paralyzed, the character will automatically drown.

Magic items can have their charges restored by being repaired at equipment shops. Treasure is often restored while traversing between levels of dungeons or buildings. Find a building that has a one room top floor with one or two treasures and repeatedly move between the floors, collecting the treasure each time. The selection of items at Mage Guilds, and maybe equipment shops, is sometimes different from game to game. The selections may be somehow randomized depending on your character.

The following items were found by both a Redguard Assassin and a Dark Elf Sorcerer: Ebony Battle Axe, Basic Merchandise, Rihad, in Hammerfell;

Amulet of Intelligence +25, Mage guild, Rihad; Adamantium Dai - Katana of lightning (300 charges), The Adventurer's Accoutrements, Torval, in Elsweyr. Only checked by a Dark Elf Sorcerer: Ebony Claymore and Ebony Broadsword, Sorarke's Equipment Store, Whiterun, in Skyrim.

Robert Breezely

There are magical artifacts that can be obtained. Artifact rumors are random and you can only possess one artifact at a time. Keep asking the people in a town about general rumors until they tell you of an artifact that you want. You must first find the map to the artifact and then the artifact itself. Both are always located in a chest on the 4th level of their respective dungeons. The Oghma Infinium is a book which leaves you with 50 bonus points after it is used and it can be found more than once. Another good artifact is The Ebony Blade. Every time you strike an opponent with the blade part of the damage is transferred to you as an increase in health points.

Jim Gunter

In Towns: All buildings in each city are basically one color. The locations that are of a different color are where the shops and inns are located. On the overhead map the red squares are the doors, and the ones with the brown square in front of the red square are the aforementioned shops and inns. Temples are the buildings with the bright colored logos on all sides.

Advancement: Do not advance your character. Advancing your player through combat will cost you anywhere from one to three bonus points for each level. To receive the maximum of six bonus points for each level, pay close attention to your current experience point level. When you are within one kill to advance, save your game.

After the game is saved, camp for about 222 hours and this will force immediate combat. Make the kill and then assign, mandatory, your bonus points. If you did not have **six bonus**

points, restore your game and do it until you have received **all six bonus points**.

Treasure: When you come across a **gold treasure symbol** or a **Loot symbol**, save your game before taking the treasure. By saving the game you may restore the game and try again if you don't like what you received.

Bill Kaple

X-Com: VFO Defense

Recruit as many soldiers as possible (at least 30, so you can have a commander). Send the best soldiers on about 5 or 6 missions until they are fully promoted. Then, whittle down your force to about 15 to 20 soldiers. Use about 10 per mission, the rest being replacements for the wounded. Avoid killing with heavy weapons platforms, since your soldiers get no experience that way. Use the platforms as scouts while giving your soldiers the kills. Engineers can earn their monthly salary by producing and selling motion scanners. Try to get at least 200 scientists. Never assign scientists at different stations to the same project; they only each other's work. Lasers are very useful since they never have to be reloaded.

Avoid heavy weaponry. Pistols and rifles don't do much less damage and allow a lot of shots and movement. **Exception:** The blaster bomb has an immense area of effect and will punch a hole in anything, even alien vessels. **Never sell Elerium.** It is crucial later in the game and cannot be produced. Keep only about 200 alien alloys in stock, sell what is not needed. You only need one of anything to research it, sell what is not needed.

Alien Surgery, food, entertainment, and corpses are worthless after they have been researched. Don't waste time and resources building defenses at your bases until you can build the plasma and/or fusion ball defense. Build about 5 plasma or 4 fusion ball defenses to be relatively safe from the larger alien vessels. The alternative is to build around 10 to 25 missile defenses, for which you do not have room.

Robert Breezely



Dragonsphere

Sanwe's Castle: Throw mud into the sentinel eye. Go east and take vortex stone and flask. Go east and use vortex stone to defeat rope. take rope. Release rat and take dead rat. Put dead rat into freezer, retrieve ratsicle. Place flask under nozzle and turn petcocks to allow acid to flow into flask.

Take flask of acid. Go west twice. Go north and retrieve torch. Go south. push button to go down. Go north and use torch. return to elevator and go up. Go north and use acid on west-central floor. Use rope to retrieve fourth power stone. now you have all four: one each from the fairy king, shape-shifter, and Soptus Mage. Return to elevator and go up. Use ratsicle on door frame. Use tentacles on door frame. Take door frame north and use on water flowing from machine. Now you can enter hallway to Sanwe's chamber. Enter chamber. use shapeshifter globe to imitate last poser stone once you are able to move. Throw powerstone at spinning objects in southeast area of room. Take black stone, spirit stick, and everything else in room you are able to find (check chest).

Return to birdman. Use map from Sanwe's castle to jump across pillars. (this map can also be used in dream world to cross fire pillars, but it must be reversed). Take belt. Return to hermit's cave to revive woman. Use spirit stick on her. Say to her: "Thou art a rose, but no! For no rose as fair did ever grow in any land." Use doll to heal her. Return to desert.

Caliph Again: Get 2 more prizes from Caliph, using healing powers after drinking. Go to fairy land and use one of the prizes to get past toads and get crown. Go to shifter land use other gift to get past guards at station, again using healing powers. go to shifter village by using doll to prove shifter abilities. Get ring from old woman. return to desert and make new spirit stick by using feathers, bone, and something with magic in it. Give spirit stick to magi and go to dream world. Shift to snake form to get past pit. Use map again to cross pillars. Use vortex stone to take magic from grape vine. Throw dates to roc. Take spirit stone and replace it with black stone. Return to magi.

Castle Well: Return to market near castle, and persuade guard not to kill you by healing her scar. Jump into well, take coin. shift into seal and swim upstream to

talk to queen. Return downstream and go west. Use crystal ball to destroy ward and get emerald. Enter the trap door, and go down stairs. Place statue on stairs to keep them down. Go west and use name/paper to defeat beast. Go west, use spirit stone on king and shift into bear to release king. Go up stairs and push button, then wear crown and door will open. Enter room and use sword. After king's brother says you're already dead, use amulet.

James R. Davis

Disciples of Steel

Starting strategies: The first 1,000 experience points are very tough to get, but these approaches were successful: 1) even though the manual suggests getting initial points by fighting bats in the forest, south of Farnus, they provide few points and no equipment.

Walking back and forth around the Farnus ruins brings better encounters that you can still handle. Save after each victory! 2) Attacks are more effective when aimed; 3) Killing off a good number of enemies usually puts the rest to flight, so you don't have to worry about them hitting you; 4) All characters **do not** get an equal share of victory points, so try and have your spellcasters finish off as many monsters as possible to ensure fastest development; 5) The object of the first Farnus quest, Ethan Sistan, is in Teal; 6) Take and sell all equipment you come across, and then buy great magical weapons and armor in Teal; 7) Get into the various caves as soon as you can handle the encounters (more points and better equipment); 8) good treasure items at 12, 157

Mike Prero

General hints: When searching rooms, be careful that nobody can see you. Look for weapons and armor first; you will need it. Look for guardhouses for a longsword and a 'key ring'. Double click keys on it.

How to find Serpentine Dagger: Go to Necromancer's just outside the town walls in the graveyard. He will tell you to get a key back from the queen. Accept the job. Go to the throne room in the castle. Make sure that the queen is not there. Look under a pillow in the bottom left part of the room for a key. The key opens the bedchamber of the queen.

Barclay Henkel

Companions of Xanth

The Censor Ship: Find buttercups under Cherrybomb tree at crossroads. Catch firefly in empty buttercup. Use Lampshades (town) to divide solution.

Ancient Barrow: Turn on the map when walking around. The Nada finder is worthless. In the switch room after all of the switches are revealed (16), flip them again to reveal a button. Press the button to find the stairs to Nada. Talk to Manacles to get her released.

Water: The matches puzzle is the easiest of the 3 to complete. Squares with sides 2 matches in length are ok.

Castle: Run pointer over the wall, on the right side until one of the bricks is identified as a loose brick.

Bob Shumaker

Iron Helix

Moderate Difficulty

DNA Locations

Parrish: D 2 / Restricted access

Ingram: D 5 / Weapons Control

Semenovsky: D 5 / Engineering Lift

Geist: D 1 / 1st Officer's

Zzyinski: D 2 / Lounge

Ichikawa: D 4 Hall

Benedetti: D 2 / Medlab

Hendryx: D 1 Bridge

Garrett: D 3 / Shuttle Control

Message Locations

D 2: Crew's Quarters

D 2: Medlab

D 5: Engineering

Defender Strategies

Go to Loading Dock control room. When defender enters loading dock, access panel. Access local Access. Select Loading dock. Code 0142.

End Game

Go to Engineering. Access Panel. Select Engineering. Select Warp Modulation. Code 4455.

Paul Shaffer ©

This issue's contributor's received \$5-\$20 each for their clues, so send in yours today. That stamp costs a lot less than a lottery ticket, and you have a much better chance to win! (All submissions become property of Eldritch, LTD. until May 12, 2317. AD.)

COLOSSUS

catapult button twice to get to center position. Press loader control button once to get a rock on catapult. Press control button twice to left position and fire it by using telescope. A rock will knock off Colossus' helmet. Put Bizoo on Colossus' face. Enter mouth through loose tooth to get toothpick. Put pick on eyelid, then look at eye. Go through ear on left side of screen to remove grain of sand. Pull on nose hair to get a tear from eye. Throw grain of sand at tear. Get toothpick.

Put Bizoo at top of scar in Colossus' beard. Using toothpick, get rid of family of fleas in this order: Junior, Chubby, Meme, Gege, Mama and Papa. If you are not fast enough, start over with Junior. Produce another tear by pulling nose hair. Put Bizoo on it to cross the hair barrier. Click on sand grain to kick it off.

GRAIN OF SAND

Jump on nose. When hand gets close to nose, walk back down to nose. Get fleck of pollen from headband. Put toothpick in nostril. Put pollen in ear on right side of screen. Jump on collar to push pollen through.

QUEEN/KING

QUEEN

Talk to Queen. When her bodyguard appears, hit him with the hammer and take his gun. Talk to Queen again. She will kiss Wolfy. When Mrs. Pyphie hides her eyes take the wand. Put Fulbert on plate on table. Have Wolfy click on vegetables. Have Wolfy click on chandelier that is not moving to reach fireplace. Pick up fennel.

Have Wolfy and Fulbert go through door at far right and place Fulbert in front of bookcase at far left. Move Wolfy up by bookcase. Have Fulbert climb the colonnade. While Wolfy is trying to get spectacles, quickly send Fulbert through the door to the flagstone below to intercept spectacles. Have Wolfy get spectacles and use them on onion. Have Fulbert climb candle holder by Queen. Have Wolfy get candle.

EXITING QUEEN'S THRONE ROOM

Put candle on one of three candelabras next to fountain. Use wand on candle to light. Blount's shadow appears and says portion of sentence. Move and light candle in proper order to form a complete sentence. Order is 2, 1, 3. A mouth will open in the fountain. Enter opening. ☺

*For the conclusion of this solution send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to
QuestBusters, PO Box 85143,
Tucson AZ 85754.*

Disciples of Steel ... from 9

them because their other halves hadn't shown up in the list yet. The other three kings gave me dungeon quests that I was too weak to finish, so I spent a considerable amount of time wandering around and trying to build up experience. Once I finally broke through, I wound up being assigned eight or nine trivial quests that I could have done much earlier.

Another potential problem is that you can screw up and make it impossible to complete a quest. You'll frequently be asked to go to a particular dungeon, kill the boss monster, and bring back its body as proof of your success. If you don't pick up the body at the end of the battle, then it's lost forever, and the quest can't be completed.

This is a real danger: if you're randomly exploring dungeons to gain experience in combat, you might discard a body without realizing its importance. The moral is to be sure and save the bodies of boss monsters, especially if they have proper names. You can store items in Guild Halls, so you don't have to worry about wasting inventory slots.

It's still possible to win the game if you screw up a quest. You simply ignore that king for the rest of the game, and hope that this doesn't block off quests for too many other kings. Even if all the quests are blocked, you can just wander around and build up your characters until you're ready to start taking over cities.

The only other flaw is the documentation. Spells and skills are explained well enough, but the documentation for the actual mechanics of playing are a little

sparse. In particular, the combat menu isn't described at all, and it can take a few minutes of experimentation to discover the effects of some of the more obscure options.

Also, when I first started playing, I must have wasted fifteen minutes trying to figure out which icon would let me enter the nearby town. It turns out that you have to ignore the icons and click the right-hand mouse button, then select "Enter" from the menu that comes up. This is completely undocumented, except for a sentence in the READ.ME file that says that right-clicking will bring up "a menu of options".

Conclusions: *Disciples of Steel* is one of only two strategic-combat based role-playing games that have come out in recent memory. (The other is SSI's *Dark Sun*). As such, fans of that genre should certainly look into getting it. Although it has some annoying design flaws, it's still fun to play, and I look forward to the sequel. ☺

Skill Level: Intermediate

Price: \$59

Adventure Road ... from 2

hallucinations. Those Europeans really know how to have a good time!

Charlie's Angels: The Next Generation?

Sanctuary Woods recently brought in a Hollywood screenwriter to write upcoming adventures. Over 200 of Lee Sheldon's TV scripts have aired, including shows for such notables as *Charlie's Angels*, *The Edge of Night* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Another one bites the dust

Compute Magazine, one of the first computer magazines ever, is no longer with us. Ziff-Davis bought it from *Penthouse* and folded *Compute*, because they've introduced their own home-oriented computer magazines (which are not likely to last half as long as *Compute*.)

Unlimited Address Changes

David Young reports a new address for the Unlimited Adventure Club, which supports the SSI quest construction set. Contact him at 473-650 Audrey Dr, Susanville CA 96130. ☺

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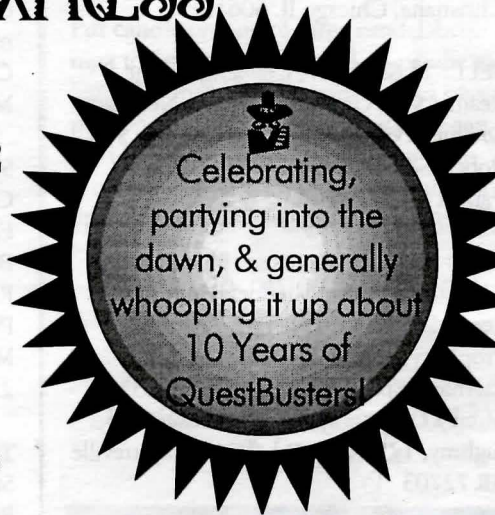
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