



The Adventure & Strategy Club

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AMENDMENT AND UPDATE SERVICE

MEMBERS' PACK No 30 - NOVEMBER 1994

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HELP-LINE DETAILS

* BY MAIL:

Sue Roseblade will deal with requests for help by mail. Please write to her at 22 Pembroke Avenue, Eynesbury, St Neots, CAMBS PE19 2SW, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. State the title and version of the game, and details of your query. She will usually reply to you on the day of receipt of your letter. Overseas Members using the Mail Help-Line should enclose an International Reply Coupon (I.R.C.) for a speedy reply.

* BY TELEPHONE:

Sue Roseblade can also be contacted by telephone on 01480 380608 at the following times:
Seven days a week between 9.00 and 21.00
For help with all text and graphic adventures on all formats and for further specialised helpline contacts for other types of game.

An extensive adventure help-line is run by Joan Pancott on 01305 784155 at the following times:
Seven days a week between 13.00 and 22.00
For help with all traditional adventures, especially on the 8-bit formats.

Call Jacqueline Wright on 0161 339 0092 at the following times:
Seven days a week between 19.00 and 22.00
For help with a wide range of adventures and RPGs on PC and most other formats.

Call Debbie Lawford on 0181 859 8531 at the following times:
Seven days a week between 19.00 and 23.00
For help with many PC and 16 bit adventures and RPGs.

Call Mike Barton on 01423 324917 at the following times:
Weekdays between 18.00 and 20.00 except Thursdays
Saturdays and Sundays between 12.00 and 20.00
For help with AMIGA adventures and RPGs.

Call Hazel Miller on 0181 470 8563 at the following times:
Weekdays between 20.00 and 24.00
Weekends between 12.00 and 24.00
For help with PC and 16 bit games, all categories.

Please ALWAYS quote your Membership Number when you contact us.

PUBLICATION DATES

22nd January, 22nd March, 22nd May, 22nd July, 22nd September, 22nd November.

BACK ISSUES OF PACKS

The Reference Book of Adventure is constantly amended and updated, but you should make sure that you do not miss out on reference material previously published.

Packs 1 to 10 were published by the Adventurers Club Ltd, and we are able to supply these as follows:

* **MEMBERS' PACKS Nos 1 to 4**

Price: U.K.....: £1.50 per Pack.
Europe (Air Mail).....: £2.00 per Pack.
Rest of the World.....: £3.00 per Pack.

* **MEMBERS' PACKS Nos 5 to 10**

Price: U.K.....: £2.25 per Pack.
Europe (Air Mail).....: £2.75 per Pack.
Rest of the World.....: £4.00 per Pack.

* **MEMBERS' PACK No 11 ONWARDS**

Price: U.K.....: £4.00 per Pack.
Europe (Air Mail).....: £4.75 per Pack.
Rest of the World.....: £6.25 per Pack.

ACL MEMBERS' DOSSIERS TO COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION

Prior to producing the Reference Book of Adventure, the Adventurers Club Ltd published 38 Members' Dossiers which you may wish to purchase. Since 1985, these magazines have included reviews of 248 adventures, complete solutions and mini-solutions to 33 adventures, interviews, guest writers, hints and tips, basic adventuring and many other features.

PLEASE NOTE: Dossiers numbers 17/18 and 21 to 38 (incl) are double issues, and therefore count as TWO DOSSIERS EACH.

MEMBERS' DOSSIERS Nos 1 to 13

Out of print until further notice.

MEMBERS' DOSSIERS Nos 14 to 38

U.K.....: £1.50 per dossier.
Europe.....: £2.00 per dossier.
Rest of the World (Air mail).....: £3.00 per dossier.

* PLEASE REFER TO PAGE A-3 FOR SPECIAL DISCOUNTS !!!

NOVEMBER 1994

* Around Christmas a CHEET SHEETS PC CD-ROM will be in the shops (£19.99). The CD will be packed with 34 issues of CHEET SHEETS plus many extra text files. There are 180 game reviews, hints, cheats and solutions to most of the popular adventures, role-playing, strategy, simulation and arcade games, lots of maps and utilities, plus 150 shareware games.

* ACCOLADE EUROPE LTD. are just about to release LEGEND's dark fantasy adventure DEATH GATE for the PC and PC CD-ROM (£39.99). The game is based on the DEATH GATE series of books by the New York best selling authors Margaret Weis and Tracey Hickman which sold in excess of two and a half million copies.

Long ago the Sartan race smashed the World Seal and split the world into separate magical realms, each sealed from the other by a Death Gate. Magic was corrupted and common humanity forgotten, but Lord Xar has escaped and his quest is to re-unite the pieces of the World Seal and take revenge upon the hated Sartan. The CD-ROM version includes character voice-overs from a professional cast of over 30 actors.

There are three new releases set for November on the SPORTS ACCOLADE label. LIVE ACTION FOOTBALL is for the PC CD-ROM and was provisionally entitled VIDEO SPORTS FOOTBALL CD, (see page C-125 for full details). Price to be agreed.

UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS '95 is gridiron action at its greatest. The game features the pros and superstars of the NFLPA using the real NFL teams and logos. The CD-ROM version includes detailed player biographies and Al Michaels gives play-by-play commentary. For the PC Disk and CD-ROM only. Price to be agreed.

HARDBALL 4 is a one or two player game in which the player can either control all the action or play team-manager over a 162 game season or just an exhibition game. There are 28 realistically rendered ballparks to play in and players can use the panning and zooming feature that moves with the runner so he is always in the viewing window. The game will be available for the PC and PC CD-ROM but the price has yet to be agreed.

CYCLEMANIA, a motorcycle racing simulation has just been released for the PC CD-ROM (£39.99) and features real backdrop video footage for added realism to the racing experience. There are over 400 megabytes of digitised roads and scenery over five treacherous tracks using one of six high-spec bikes that gives a new dimension to the racing experience.

The adventure/role-playing game SUPERHERO LEAGUE OF HOBOKEN is in the shops now for the PC (£39.99). See page C-125 for scenario details).

* MINDSCAPE INTERNATIONAL have just purchased ATREID CONCEPT, a privately held entertainment software development company located in Bordeaux, France. ATREID CONCEPT will become part of MINDSCAPE's international development organization which includes three development divisions in the USA, England and China.

On the 21st October MINDSCAPE also acquired STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS INC. (SSI), developers of wargames, sports simulations and some of the very best fantasy role-playing games including the Gold Box series which have been reviewed throughout the Reference Book of Adventure. Forthcoming titles include ALIEN LOGIC, set in a science fiction world and the strategy game PANZER GENERAL. Scenario details and prices to follow.

The first SSI game to be released DARK SUN: WAKE OF THE RAVAGER is the sequel to SHATTERED LANDS and should be in the shops now. This role-playing game features full-screen graphics and cinematics, an orchestrated musical score and digitized sound effects. The CD-ROM version includes 45 minutes of music. PC (£44.99), PC CD-ROM (£49.99).

CRYO's DRAGON LORE will now be released for the PC CD-ROM mid-November (£44.99). There will be a 3DO version next year.

COMMANDER BLOOD, a CRYO adventure game is set in the year 432543. Bob Morlock runs a huge multi-planetary company employing millions of employees all manufactured by and for the purpose of the company. Bob, who lives in a semi-vegetative state has run the company for 300 years and only gets woken on his birthday to approve accounts and blow the candles out on his birthday cake. Bob has the technology to go back in time to discover the beginnings of everything but is too old to make the trip so he sends his new invention the 100% bio COMMANDER BLOOD. He will travel through 5 different universes via a black hole and encounter many extra-terrestrials and adventures in this humorous game. Available in December on PC CD-ROM, price to follow.

SIM CITY ENHANCED will be released in November for PC CD-ROM (£49.99), PC Windows (£39.99) and Amiga (£34.99).

METAL MARINES will be out for PC Windows in December (£34.99).

TICONDEROGA is set for a January release on PC CD-ROM (£44.99).

MINDSCAPE will release TOTAL DISTORTION, a music video adventure game from POP ROCKET in November for the PC CD-ROM and MAC CD-ROM. The game features over 50 original songs, pro voice overs and over 500 megabytes of top quality custom-created interactive media. You play an adventurous music video producer with a fortune and travel in your customised tower to the Plane of Distortion where you can visit Hell's Garage for some bone-crunching garage grunge, hear Edgar Death and his devil guitar at the Sonic Cemetery and the supernatural rock stars at the L.A. Stage.

* US GOLD are set to release DOMINUS a strategy war game with role-playing elements for the PC and PC CD-ROM at the end of November (£42.99). In the game you will be able to create hybrid monsters to reinforce your army, cast spells and set traps. The game will be different every time you play.

The PC CD-ROM price of DELTA V is (£45.99).

THE ELDER SCROLLS II - DAGGERFALL will be released in February probably on the PC and PC CD-ROM only.

* ADVENTURE PROBE magazine are increasing their Spectrum software range. They are now distributing all FSF ADVENTURES titles on tape as follows:

MAGNETIC MOON, STARSHIP QUEST, AXE OF KOLT, 48k or 128k versions (£2.50).

RUN BRONWYN, RUN!, 48k only (£2.50).

SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS, 48k or 128k versions (£2.00).

REVENGE OF THE SPACE PIRATES, 48k only (£2.00).

All six of these adventures are also available for Amiga on two disks together with a free Spectrum emulator (£7.50).

Spectrum tape versions of Bob Adams' adventures GRUE-KNAPPED! and HELVERA - MISTRESS OF THE PARK, are also available from ADVENTURE PROBE (£2.00). The above will also be available soon.

ADVENTURE PROBE has a number of C64 Public Domain adventure compilations on disk (£2.00) or tape (£2.50). Under licence from Big Sky Software is TIME THIEF on C64 disk only (£3.00) and six adventures from author Walter Pooley, also under licence, in a compilation on tape (£8.00) or disk (£6.00).

* The MAXIS graphic adventure WRATH OF THE GODS is in the shops now for the PC CD-ROM for windows and MAC (£44.99). In this tale of Greek mythology you play the rightful heir to the kingdom of Mycenae in search of your destiny.

SIM TOWER will be released at the end of January for Mac disk and PC Windows.

The end of March will see a further MAXIS simulation for the PC CD-ROM. SIM RAINFOREST is set in the jungle and your aim is to keep an ecological balance while making a profit. Price and further details to follow.

* PSYGNOSIS are planning to release the adventure VICTORIANA for the PC CD-ROM in February/March. In the game you will play Piers Featherstonehaugh who must try to stop an evil Professor from dominating the world. The adventure will take you to the centre of the Earth, Atlantis and the moon. The game will feature hand-drawn graphics and will have full speech throughout. Prices to follow.

1994 ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION AWARDS RESULTS

NB: These awards are restricted to the homegrown text adventure market.

BEST ADVENTURE:

- 1st The Twelve Days Of Christmas (Diane Rice/Zenobi)
- 2nd The Final Demand (Steve Clay/Wow Software/Zenobi)

BEST AUTHOR:

- 1st Jack Lockerby
- 2nd Steve Clay
- 3rd Peter Clark

BEST NEW AUTHOR:

- 1st Sharon Harwood
- 2nd Diane Rice
- 3rd Marlon (Margaret Crewdson and Lorna Patterson)

BEST PLAYTESTER:

Lorna Patterson

MOST HELPFUL ADVENTURER:

Barbara Gibb (Adventure Probe helpline)

BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE:

- 1st Zenobi Software
- 2nd WoW Software
- 3rd The Adventure Workshop

* INTERPLAY will release DUNGEON MASTER II - THE LEGEND OF SKULLKEEP during the second week in December for the PC and MAC disk and PC CD-ROM (£39.99) and Amiga A1200 (£34.99).

STONEKEEP will also be available from 1st December for the PC CD-ROM (£49.99).

WOLFENSTIEN 3D will be released for the MAC disk during the second week in December (£39.99).

* SERENDIPITY is a new game from DREAM WORLD ADVENTURES in which you play the part of Willy Winker, a down-on-his-luck adventurer. While wandering around a northern town Willy spots a poster offering a large reward to anyone who can find a long lost son, so Willy sets off on his trail. Available on Spectrum tape and +D disk (£3.00), +3 disk (£2.50, please send own disk). Also available for Amiga with free Spectrum emulator (£3.00).

* OCEAN SOFTWARE will release the following games on their HIT SQUAD label. DUNE II for the PC and Amiga (£14.99) available 15th November, ULTIMA UNDERWORLD for the PC (£14.99) also available 15th November and the double pack INDIANAPOLIS 500/WING COMMANDER for the PC (£19.99), available now.

* SIERRA ON-LINE LIMITED are planning a number of releases during the next few months.

The ACES COLLECTION is due for release during the second half of December for the PC CD-ROM (£44.99). This collection contains the entire Great War planes series of RED BARON, RED BARON MISSION BUILDER, ACES OF THE PACIFIC, WORLD WAR II 1946 and ACES OVER EUROPE.

THE LAST DYNASTY, set for release in mid-December is a fast-paced action movie in a futuristic science fiction setting. A young man raised on Earth is pulled into a cosmic war across the galaxy to save the Ultimate Knowledge from Evil Masters. For the PC CD-ROM (£49.99).

PHANTASMAGORIA has been put back until mid-March and will be released on the PC CD-ROM only. This game is a psychological thriller designed by Roberta Williams and concerns a young couple who come to possess the island home of a famous turn-of-the-century illusionist. Their occupation disturbs an evil, malignant force that has been trapped there for over one hundred years. The Entity is slowly consuming Don, the husband. You, playing the part of Adrienne the wife, must fight against the forces of evil. The adventure features 20 live actors, 500 camera angles and will be released on 4 CD's. The price has still to be agreed.

KING'S QUEST VII: THE PRINCE-LESS BRIDE, written by Roberta Williams, is set for a November release on DOS and Windows and will probably be for the PC CD-ROM only. This episode in the saga is cast in a world of fairies, trolls and magical lands where a young princess and her mother must save the Realm of Elviridge from a wicked fairy. The game was developed by over 100 artists and animators and uses high-resolution animation and backgrounds plus a fully orchestrated musical score using different themes for over 20 characters. Price to follow.

LOST IN TOWN, a mystery thriller, is set for a mid-January release for the PC CD-ROM only. You play the part of Max, a reporter investigating a famous political figure. When a mutilated corpse is found, Max is the suspect and he has to clear up the crime while avoiding the police and a gang of vicious killers. This game is the first inter-active thriller developed entirely from film. The filming took place in Paris and its outskirts over a two month period, and stars a cast of professional actors. Price to follow.

FRONT PAGE SPORTS: BASEBALL from Dynamix has just arrived in the shops for the PC disk with a PC CD-ROM to follow shortly (£39.99) for both versions. This simulation is from the programming team that produced the award winning FRONT PAGE SPORTS: FOOTBALL PRO and actual players have been filmed and rotoscoped to provide realistic player movement animation in some of the world's most beautiful ball parks.

ALIEN LEGACY, a space simulation also from DYNAMIX is in the shops now for the PC disk (£39.99).

You play the captain of the seedship Calypso and have just awoken in Beta Caeli after years of cryogenic sleep. Your mission is to continue the human race in this unknown quadrant by exploring planets and moons to find colony sights, mine for ore and energy and populate and research new technologies while facing natural disasters and many hostile life forms.

The World War II German U-boat simulation **ACES OF THE DEEP** also from DYNAMIX has been released for the PC disk (£39.99). There are plans for a PC CD-ROM version to follow during the first part of November (£44.99).

This game features 7 different U-boats, over 20 different warships, 8 different aircraft and 4 different torpedo types. Apart from training missions you can take part in a large selection of historical missions such as "Night of the Long Knives", "Little Big Boat" and "Block Island Line". Special effects include digitised German speech, depth charge explosions and the sound of twisting metal. The game includes full length windows video of interviews with actual World War II U-boat captains.

* INFOGRAMES have just released **ALONE IN THE DARK II** for the PC CD-ROM (£44.99). The game, which will be reviewed in pack 31, features speech from professional actors and an audio-quality soundtrack with original scores and adaptations of Irish folk songs totalling 22 different tracks and themes.

ALONE IN THE DARK III is due to be released and the end of January for the PC CD-ROM with a disk version to follow. This last game in the trilogy takes place on the film set of a western. Unfortunately the set is built over a Navajo Indian burial ground and soon strange things begin to happen. Prices to follow.

PRISONER OF ICE, the follow up to **SHADOW OF THE COMET**, will now be released in April for the PC CD-ROM.

* **THE TAXMAN COMETH** by Steve Clay has now been rewritten for the Amiga. This excellent text adventure was originally written for the Amstrad, then later released for the Spectrum. (Reviewed on page U-31). Can you deal with Phoebe's staircase? Outwit a determined Dwarf? Try out the infamous moving blocks? Work your way out of Halfpint's dumbwaiter? This new Amiga version is not an emulation (£3.00). Available from Steve Clay, 17 Stanlaw Road, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L65 0EY

* DIGITAL INTEGRATION LIMITED have released a twin pack containing two best selling flight simulation games **TORNADO** and **FALCON 3.0** for the PC disk and PC CD-ROM (£39.99). **THE ROYAL NAVY HELICOPTER SIMULATION - MERLIN CHALLENGE** is also included in the PC CD-ROM version.

* THE ARMCHAIR ADVENTURER PC fanzine (see page C-132 for details), is changing format to become a disk based magazine with VGA (256 colour) graphics. From the disk you will be able to print your own help sheets and solutions. Purchasers of THE ARMCHAIR ADVENTURER will be able to choose a free Shareware game with every issue. The prices are for a single issue £2.00 U.K, £3.00 Europe and £4.00 rest of the World via airmail. If you would like a copy please send a cheque to Tim Kemp, The Armchair Adventurer, 36, Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2SQ.

* THE ADVENTURE WORKSHOP now distribute an extensive range of text adventure titles for Commodore 64, Amstrad and Spectrum machines.

On Amstrad 6128 and 464 there are well in excess of 120 titles on tape and disk. Latest releases include games by such well known authors as Gareth Pitchford, Larry Horsfield (FSF Adventures), Martin Freemantle (Dream World Adventures), Jack Lockerby (River Software), Jamie Murphy, Clive Wilson, Ken Bond and many others. Prices range between £2 and £6.

Disk compilations and a Pick'N'Mix selection are also available on request. Full solutions and maps to all games can also be supplied at 50p each.

On Spectrum 48 and 128 there are over 90 titles now available on disk and tape. These include all of the adventures from Compass Software plus adventures from well known authors such as Peter Clark, Dorothy Millard, Ken Bond, Pegasus Software, Simon Avery and many others. Prices range from £2 to £4 for single games. Compilations and Pick'N'Mix disks are also available.

For Commodore 64 there are 13 titles available on tape and disk. Adventures by Simon Avery, Michael Hunt and Sue Medley can be obtained at £2 or £3 each.

As THE ADVENTURE WORKSHOP now has such a large catalogue we suggest that 8-bit text adventure enthusiasts send for the catalogue for their specific machine, which will include game scenarios as well as prices and formats. A great many of the games have been reviewed in the Reference Book of Adventure. The address can be found on page A-13.

* EMPIRE SOFTWARE are planning to release CYBERJUDAS the sequel to SHADOW PRESIDENT early in 1995 for the PC CD-ROM. Set in the future, you play the President of the United States and discover there is a traitor among your advisers. It is up to you to find him before it is too late. Price to follow.

EMPIRE have just released DAWN PATROL for the PC and PC CD-ROM (£45.99), an Amiga version is also planned. DAWN PATROL is a flight simulation from ROWAN, the same team who developed OVERLORD and is set in World War I where you fly a series of one-off missions.

* ZENOBI SOFTWARE have released the following new text adventures.

THE SEARCH FOR THE NETHER REGIONS by Gareth Pitchford is set in the magical kingdom of Kwargz where the peace and quiet has been shattered by the arrival of orc-lord Beydm. After a particularly nasty bout of hobbit-bashing, you are called in to sort him out. Your quest is to find Jeremy's Fabled Golden Camcorder, the most orc-terrifying object in the entire universe. Unfortunately it is somewhere in the Nether regions, a place from which no one has ever returned. Spectrum tape (£2.49), +3 disk (£3.49), PC and Amiga with free emulator (£2.99).

THE UNEXCELLENT ADVENTURES OF SAM by Ian Osborne concerns Sam, a nice enough little robot - as robots go - always full of the best intentions and eager to please. Sam is asked to buy a plug for Alan Miles' toaster but due to it being early closing day he decides to borrow one instead from Colin Jordan's office. Unfortunately Colin is returning to do a spot of programming so Sam must find a way to replace the plug before Colin arrives. A free game also by Ian is included on the back. Spectrum tape (£2.49), +3 disk (£3.49), PC and Amiga with free emulator (£2.99).

In THE WELL OF ZOL by Laurence Creighton a virulent virus is plaguing the Earth and killing thousands of people. From notes made by Professor Zoster years ago, a fungus growing in a well in some far-flung corner of the globe could make a vaccine and save the Earth. You have been chosen to find it. Spectrum tape (£2.49), +3 disk (£3.49), PC and Amiga with free emulator (£2.99).

THE SONG OF TALIESIN by Dennis F. Francombe is set in the world of legend and fable. On a warm balmy night as the Druids sit around the fire after a night of story-telling the cry goes up for "Taliesin of the Shining Brow." As the Bard of Cymru raises his voice and begins the story suddenly you become a boy again - trapped by Hag Ceridwen and evil spells. Spectrum tape (£2.49), +3 disk (£3.49), PC and Amiga with free emulator (£2.99).

JENNY'S NEXT BIG DISK is a compilation of Laurence Creighton adventures for the Spectrum +3 Disk, Amiga and PC (£5.99) featuring: CURSE OF CALUTHA, LEGACY, MAROONED and LASKAR'S CRYSTALS.

Please add 25p to to every game ordered from Zenobi for p & p.

* MICROPROSE have just released TRANSPORT TYCOON an isometric 3D strategy game for the PC disk (£44.99) and a PC CD-ROM version will follow at the beginning of December. The game begins in 1930 and starting with a small amount of working capital your aim is to build a transport empire. You have control of transport on road, sea and air.

* DOOM II from VIRGIN INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT LTD. is in the shops now for the PC (£49.99) and PC CD-ROM (£54.99).

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THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS	Ad	029/D-309
UFO - ENEMY UNKNOWN	St	028/D-303
ULTIMA VIII - PAGAN	Rp	028/D-297
WARLORDS 2: SCENARIO BUILDER	Si	030/D-324
WAYNE GRETZKY ICE HOCKEY 2	Si	026/D-274
WING COMMANDER 2: VENGEANCE OF THE KILRATHI	Si	029/D-314
WYSIWYG	Ad	027/D-287

PLANET FOOTBALL

FROM : Condor Software/Infogrames
CATEGORY: Simulation
VERSION : PC (386+, 4MB RAM, 20MB Hard disk required)
FORMAT : PC
PRICE : (£39.99)
REVIEWER: Stuart Whyte

PLANET FOOTBALL is essentially an arcade football game with a little bit of a management edge (in which you can vary your line up, formation, play strategy etc). Each player on your team has five different attributes - speed, technique, fitness, aggressiveness and ball skills, which supposedly effect how the player reacts.

The main game of PLANET FOOTBALL is the on the pitch arcade action section. Infogrames have chosen to use an original viewpoint for the game - unlike other football games which usually use top down or pseudo-isometric views for the pitch, PLANET FOOTBALL uses 3D graphics for an 'in the action' sort of feel. The viewpoint moves up and down the pitch with the ball but is always facing the opposing goal. This system looks like it has potential until you find that playing the game from this viewpoint is very confusing - even though a 'scanner' has been included in the top left hand corner to help.

There are very few combined football arcade/management games around (the only other I can think of is PLAYER MANAGER) and the programmers of PLANET FOOTBALL have obviously tried to take an original approach. Unfortunately the management side of the game is very weak (I think it's meant to be though so that anyone can use it) and the arcade part of the game is just frustrating. Graphics are poor and sound effects, when heard, aren't amazing either.

Finally, as with all the recently released football games, PLANET FOOTBALL includes the USA World Cup - however I recommend playing ON THE BALL - WORLD CUP EDITION instead!

Finally if you do buy the game a word of warning - the boot disk recommended setup in the manual does not work for DOS 6 Doublespace! You need to add the following line to your CONFIG.SYS:- DEVICE=C:\DOS\DBLSPACE.SYS /MOVE.

ATMOSPHERE : 10/20
PLAYABILITY : 6/20
PSR : 5/20

STRATEGY : 7/20
REALISM : 5/20
STAR RATING : ?

RETURN TO RINGWORLD

FROM : Accolade/Tsunami
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : PC
FORMAT : CD-ROM
PRICE : £44.99
REVIEWER: Geoff Hyman

RETURN TO RINGWORLD is based on the science fiction stories created by Larry Niven. The setting is the late 29th Century and all life forms in the galaxy are threatened by the explosion of the galactic core. The Puppeteers have already embarked on their escape plans. You play the parts of Quinn (a male human), Miranda (a female human) and Seeker (a male Kzin). In the previous game RINGWORLD: REVENGE OF THE PATRIARCH, you saved the Puppeteers from the evil Patriarch and averted a major war, but you now appear to be outlaws, hunted by the Amalgamated Regional Militia. Your only option is to return to Ringworld.

You start the game in Quinn's quarters, aboard the stolen starship the Lance of Truth. On the Bridge of the starship, Quinn converses with Miranda and Seeker and discovers that he must first solve two major problems. Problem number one is that the Quantum Drive is not online, so you can't travel. Problem number two is that the location of Ringworld has been erased from the memory of the ships computer. Also, the ships elevator does not reach the floor where the Quantum Drive is located, so you will need to find another route.

Well, eventually you all get to Ringworld where you must escape from the ARM, land on the Ringworld Ledge, board a mag-lev car and elevator system on the Rim of Ringworld and encounter the Spill Mountain Folk. Quinn must then take a balloon ride, cross desert, then a forest and get into the hidden ARM base.

Meanwhile Seeker and Miranda have their own problems to deal with. Seeker will need to enter and dispose of a lair of vampires, whilst Miranda has been captured by the ARM and must escape from her jail cell. The finale takes place in an underwater city.

You can switch between Quinn, Seeker and Miranda at any stage in the game. Controls are all mouse driven and there are icons for walking, looking, using, talking, switching characters and for saving and restoring games. Separate icons are used for accessing your inventory. The conversations can be in text, speech, or both combined. The music and sound effects are simple but effective. The hand-painted graphics are pleasant and some nice cut-scene sequences are used with good effect between episodes.

ATMOSPHERE : 14/20
VOCABULARY : N/A
PSR : 15/20

GRAPHICS : 15/20
PUZZLES : 16/20
STAR RATING : **

DRAGON QUEST

FROM : Jack Lockerby/Zenobi Software
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : Spectrum 48, Commodore Amiga, PC
FORMAT : Tape or disk
PRICE : £2.49 (Spectrum tape or Plus D disk), £3.49 (Spectrum +3 disk), £2.99 (Amiga, PC). Both Amiga and PC versions come with free Spectrum emulator).
REVIEWER: Jenny Perry on Spectrum +3

Smaegor, a dragon with a fiery reputation and breath to match, has been a thorn in the king's side ever since he stole the Staff of Office, the symbol of power, many years ago. Many would-be adventurers have set off to retrieve the Staff but none of them have ever been seen again. Now you have "volunteered" to render Smaegor powerless and return the staff to the king.

You begin, as you did in Jack's last game THE CIVIL SERVICE, with not a stitch of clothing on but you are carrying a cloak which you can wear if you are modest like me. On your way to the nearby native village you meet a thirsty traveller - but in this case too much generosity will seriously damage your health later in the game. There's plenty to discover when you reach the village. I failed to find a lot of essential equipment here as I hadn't examined everything carefully enough.

Keeping alive whilst navigating the desert beyond the village was a hair-raising task. If you manage that you can catch a ferry to take you to town. This reminds me of a wild west frontier town as it has a saloon, stables, a barber and a bank (but no ladies' clothes shops!). I got quite frustrated here as I needed money to prevent being flung into jail and I hadn't found any yet. After eventually overcoming this obstacle, you can explore the town. The saloon contains some helpful items - it will pay to be both noseey and dishonest here.

Soon you can make the trek to the volcano where Smaegor lurks in the crater, guarding his treasures. Even though I had found a rope, getting down was still a problem. The way was blocked first by a lion, then by a slide with jagged sides which slashed my head to ribbons, despite wearing protective headgear. After imitating Indiana Jones I finally reached the dragon, whose favourite midday snack is crispy fried adventurer.

At first I was lulled into thinking that this adventure was relatively simple. I soon discovered, however, that it was very easy to miss essential objects and equally hard to discover the correct inputs, especially towards the end of the game. This is a good one to occupy a rainy afternoon or two.

ATMOSPHERE : 15/20
VOCABULARY : 14/20
PSR : 15/20

GRAPHICS : N/A
PUZZLES : 15/20
STAR RATING : *

ON THE BALL - WORLD CUP EDITION

FROM : Ascon/Daze Marketing
CATEGORY: Simulation
VERSION : PC (386+, 4MB RAM, 13MB Hard disk required) Amiga 1200,
Amiga 500 and Atari ST
FORMAT : Disk
PRICE : £34.99 (PC), £32.99 (Amiga 1200), £29.99 (Amiga 500)
REVIEWER: Stuart Whyte on PC

ON THE BALL - WORLD CUP EDITION is a football management game based on this years World Cup (although you can modify the teams in the game to include your favourites which weren't in the World Cup by using the built-in game editor). The game is limited to the World Cup and the qualifiers - if you want to play the league as well you'll have to wait for the forthcoming sequel (although the manual states that the two products will be compatible with each other and thus you should be able to qualify for the World Cup in the League version and then continue the World Cup in this game).

ON THE BALL is one of the most polished football management games I have seen - the graphics are high quality and cartoon like and, although not featuring the level of detail and statistics of other management games (such as PREMIER MANAGER II), it does feel more rounded - you can hold press conferences, have one to one chats with your team members and a daily newspaper has headlines which are pertinent to the game - I even had my ex-wife selling stories about me at one point! The only downside is the music - it may have been my sound card but it did sound pretty awful (luckily you can turn it off).

The manual is well written and easy to use and guides you through the various areas of the game well. It is also possible to play the game with up to three other people but it can get quite competitive - especially when you are playing against each other!

Overall, if you enjoy soccer and management games but don't want to get bogged down in excessive number crunching then ON THE BALL is for you. Much thought has obviously gone into the game to polish it - there's even a screensaver built in and even though the English translation from the German is a little ropy in places it's an excellent game. Definitely recommended over PLANET FOOTBALL (my other review this issue).

ATMOSPHERE : 16/20
PLAYABILITY : 16/20
PSR : 15/20

STRATEGY : 15/20
REALISM : 14/20
STAR RATING : *

SYSTEM SHOCK

FROM : Origin/Electronic Arts
CATEGORY: Role-playing Game
VERSION : PC (486 DX33, 30 MB Hard Disk required)
FORMAT : Disk
PRICE : £44.99
REVIEWER: Hugh Walker

SYSTEM SHOCK is a role-player in which the variety of weapons and opponent beasties plus the ability to jump, look up, down or straight ahead whilst crouching, crawling or walking tall as you stroll (or run) serenely through mutant, robot infested corridors, or leaning around corners to see what is lurking in wait, do so much to create the sense of being there. After a while it is ME creeping around those catwalks and my neck muscles are stiff with tension. I have reached Level 7 (of 9) and I am SCARED!!! The future of personkind is depending on me - and I'm not sure I can take any more!

...er... I am a hacker, caught in the act and taken to the Citadel (the space station of The TriOptimum Corporation) where the head of security orders me to remove the ethical constraints from SHODAN, the super computer which runs the place, in order to cover up his misdemeanours. In return I have been fitted with a neural implant, a computer device which allows me to do all sorts of useful things, including access to a Tron-like netherworld of Cyberspace which defies description.

Whilst I am in 6 months blissful repose of post-op healing coma, SHODAN, now devoid of social conscience, decides that the human race is a pathetic shower who would do much better with a bit of mutation and a few robot bits grafted on. So, when I awaken much is not as it should be!

The game is reminiscent of CAPTIVE with (much improved) UNDERWORLD type controls and overtones of DOOM-style shoot anything that moves (preferably before IT does!). You can choose any permutation of 4 levels of difficulty (0 to 3) in each of Combat, Mission (ie. plot), Puzzles and Cyberspace. The default, "Normal", is 2. Zero in each would rather remove any point in playing the game, whereas 3 is for masochists who enjoy being humiliated.

I started on 2 overall but soon restarted with Cyberspace on an easier setting. Perhaps zero for each would not be such a bad thing after all! Apart from the usual hardware requirements one essential piece of equipment is a computerphobic wife who frequently says, "You're not STILL playing that silly game!" It reminds one that it is just a gameIT IS, isn't it?

ATMOSPHERE : 20/20
PLAYABILITY : 18/20
PSR : 19/20

STRATEGY : 18/20
PUZZLES : N/A
STAR RATING : ***

WARLORDS 2: SCENARIO BUILDER

FROM : Strategic Simulations Group (SSG)
CATEGORY: Strategy/Wargame
VERSION : PC
FORMAT : Disk (Minimum 386, 2MB RAM, VGA)
PRICE : £40.00
REMARKS : Requires Warlords 2
REVIEWER: Graham Perry

SSG are a modest Australian software company that have consistently produced quality games including CARRIERS AT WAR, DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, HALLS OF MONTEZUMA and of course WARLORDS 1 and 2. This latest addition breathes fresh life into a popular and excellent multi-player strategy game where the aim is to defeat up to seven opponents through the capture of cities, quests, exploration and diplomacy. The map displays are clear and detailed, the commands quick and readily accessible, the gameplay varied and stimulating, while the computer opponents provide a tough challenge, particularly at the higher levels. Strategic Simulations Group have transferred the artificial intelligence developed in their earlier authentic wargames to this fantasy alternative and have implemented it to imaginative effect.

The add-on comes with 24 complete scenarios (considerably more than in the original), plus a range of new army sets, city designs and terrain types. The majority of settings are purely fictitious but Arthurian Britain, World War I Europe, the American Frontier and Classical Rome are among the familiar themes.

The scenario builder allows you to edit just about any aspect of any scenario you like, from minor adjustments to major re-design. Alternatively you can start from scratch and create entire worlds, requiring map conception, the placing and naming of cities, ruins, temples, ports etc. This latter option is very time-consuming, particularly if you consider the number of choices available within each command. For example the 'edit army characteristics' allows you to select names, combat strengths, terrain bonuses, movement points and production values. If you're feeling especially ambitious and artistic, you can design your own units down to the last pixel. Whether you choose to create whole scenarios, edit existing ones or select randomly generated worlds, the game format must operate within certain set parameters otherwise it will become unbalanced. However the limitations are in no way restrictive and do not detract from the game's flexibility, accessibility or enjoyment, which added to the screen presentations, ease of commands and artificial intelligence makes for an effective and challenging package.

ATMOSPHERE : 18/20
PLAYABILITY : 18/20
PSR : 17/20

STRATEGY : 17/20
PUZZLES : N/A
STAR RATING : **

THE BARDIC RITE

FROM : Jamie Murphy\Zenobi Software
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : Spectrum 48, Commodore Amiga, PC
FORMAT : Tape or disk
PRICE : £2.49 (Spectrum tape or Plus D Disk), £3.49 (Spectrum
+3 disk), £2.99 (Amiga, PC with free Spectrum emulator)
REVIEWER: Jenny Perry on Spectrum +3

If you've played Leopold's previous adventure (reviewed on page D-277) where he had to mend his master's lute, you may not be too surprised to find that he's in another muddle. This time he has entered for the Bardic Rite, where he has to play some original music on an unspecified instrument. Leopold would dearly love to win this contest and become a Bard but, like a lot of artistic people, he's not very well organised and he wakes up on the morning of the contest to discover that he not only hasn't any original music but he doesn't possess an instrument either. To cap this he has an older rival, a sneaky weaselly but talented lad called Thomas. Thomas is confident that he will win and has kidnapped one of the three judges to make sure that he will succeed by default, unless Leopold can find and release him.

This may sound like more than enough tasks for the average adventurer but Leopold is incapable of solving them unless he helps other people along the way. Those he meets include Fred the guard who's lost his helmet, some jolly servants, Borris the temperamental chef who must be distracted, the two remaining judges (one of whom is up to no good), Blodgit the gardener who's trapped in a cell, Bertrum the monk who's locked himself out of the chapel, Captain Woburley who reminds me of Captain Mainwaring from Dad's Army and Harumpho, an eccentric alchemist who needs help with his experiments.

Leopold must also play a coin game with a bored guard, brave a booby-trapped bedroom and befriend a fierce dog. He will need to be somewhat destructive at times too as he needs to blow up a safe, smash an antique, commit arson and cut various items with an extremely sharp knife - an illegal possession in the castle where he resides. If he's caught doing any of the above, he will be flung into the cells for eternity. Thomas is eager to inform the authorities of Leopold's wrongdoings, so he has to put himself as far away from the scenes of his crimes as possible.

Jamie Murphy has included a fine range of unforgettable characters in this adventure, not least the kind but muddly Leopold. This complex, hair-tearing, infuriating, wonderful game will warm any adventurer's heart.

ATMOSPHERE : 17/20
VOCABULARY : 16/20
PSR : 17/20

GRAPHICS : N/A
PUZZLES : 17/20
STAR RATING : **

LYCANTHROPY

FROM : Jonathan Scott & Stephen Boyd/Zenobi Software
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : Spectrum 48, Commodore Amiga, PC
FORMAT : Tape or disk
PRICE : £2.49 (Spectrum tape or Plus D Disk), £3.49 (Spectrum
+3 disk), £2.99 (Amiga, PC with free Spectrum emulator)
REVIEWER: Sylvia Parry on Amiga

Passed down through the centuries from generation to generation are the blood-curdling tales of LYCANTHROPY - the tragic disease that turns a man into a wolf, causing death and destruction to any unfortunate being who happens to wander into his path.

Oh, how I looked forward to playing this game as it seemed years since I played a full blooded text adventure, but it wasn't long before I knew I was going to be sadly disappointed mainly because of a frustratingly poor parser.

Anyway LYCANTHROPY is a text adventure with a tried and tested formula, that of having to scour the realm, encountering a variety of beasts and humans along the way, in order to procure a list of ingredients and artifacts in order to mix a recipe to cure your illness. Needless to say, some of these creatures are a help, others are a hindrance. Also on hand is Prince Oedipus, a relative, whose help you must secure to progress with the adventure.

If this is your first text adventure beware! The first nine moves you make have to be typed in accurately, otherwise you will die. I found this very off-putting as it does not give you any time to explore and feel the atmosphere of your surroundings in any great detail and any incorrect input costs you dearly.

As mentioned earlier, you must be very careful and concise with your typing. Also do not type the most obvious choice of words as this is not always the right path, although I must add, I do not think this was the writers intention. For example, and without giving too much of the game away, after collecting a herb called St. Johns Wort, you must administer it to a young centaur by placing it on his tongue. After numerous attempts to do this logically the command turned out to be PUT JOHN'S ON TONGUE, most unsatisfying.

With a bit more thought and effort LYCANTHROPY could have been an excellent adventure to pass the long winter evenings. As it turned out it was very disappointing and lacked any atmosphere. Even though it is a budget game my advice is don't waste your money.

ATMOSPHERE : 6/20
VOCABULARY : 8/20
PSR : 4/20

GRAPHICS : N/A
PUZZLES : 8/20
STAR RATING : 0

SHADOW OF THE COMET CD

FROM : Infogrames
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : PC CD-ROM
FORMAT : CD-ROM
PRICE : £39.99
REVIEWER: Debbie Lawford

John T. Parker travels to the small New England town of Ulsmouth to re-trace the steps of Lord Boleskine who, 76 years ago died in an asylum after an encounter with Haley's comet that left him completely insane.

SHADOW OF THE COMET is an adventure game in a style that you will be used to, travelling around town, talking to people generally, picking up clues and also picking up anything that isn't nailed down. You don't have to hunt around too much either, a dotted line from eye to object appears when there is something you need of importance. Infogrames have been kind enough to throw in a free mouse mat. This is good news as the disk based version didn't support the use of a mouse, so you can guess what the free mouse mat is for.

This being a CD version there is of course speech, which is clear and well acted (although rather too like Sherlock Holmes for my taste). There is an option to have speech and text displayed on the screen which in some games I've played would have come in very useful as I wasn't too sure whether they were speaking the same language as myself, but this isn't to be said of SHADOW OF THE COMET. The graphics and sound effects are of a very high standard, the sound effects setting just the right mood for whatever situation you are in.

Puzzlewise the game wasn't too daunting but a few tricky ones were thrown in now and then to keep you on your toes. Something that I found useful was that you had a map of the area and once you had discovered a new place it appeared on the map and you could travel to that area again by just a click of the mouse which took out a lot of the boredom that you get in adventures when you have to traipse all through the same areas again and again.

As SHADOW OF THE COMET is based on the writings of H.P. Lovecraft, Infogrames have added a visit to the Lovecraft museum to the CD version where you can look at a collection of objects from Lovecraft's stories. SHADOW OF THE COMET is a very good adventure with good speech and graphics and excellent sound effects with an interface that is quite easy to get to grips with (and let's not forget that free mouse mat). Overall a very enjoyable game.

ATMOSPHERE : 18/20
PUZZLES : 14/20
PSR : 17/20

GRAPHICS : 17/20
PLAYABILITY : 14/20
STAR RATING : **

SAM & MAX HIT THE ROAD

FROM : LucasArts/US Gold
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : PC
FORMAT : Disk, CD-ROM
PRICE : £42.99 (PC), £45.99 (CD-ROM)
REVIEWER: Geoff Hyman on CD-ROM

After the success of previous LucasArts hits, SAM & MAX has a lot to live up to - and this game is spot on target. Greatly aided by the hilarious digitised speech (on the CD-ROM) and dead-pan humour, this game is a joy to play.

Sam is a dog and Max is a rabbit. Sam and Max are freelance police, hell-bent on fun and mayhem. Whilst fooling around in their rather tacky office they get a phone call from the chief of police. Two of the carnival's prize exhibits have gone missing: Bruno the Bigfoot and Trixie the Giraffe, so Sam and Max hop into their beaten-up roadster and head for the Carnival where you get to go on all the fun rides as you build up your inventory. Make sure that you visit the Tunnel of Love and gain entrance into Trixie's caravan.

Well, the locations just get weirder and weirder after this. There is the Giant Ball of Twine, the World of Fish, Golf in an alligator swamp, a Vegetable Museum, a Mysterious Vortex where all the perspectives are distorted and the Bigfoot Convention where you may finally catch up with Bruno. Then there's this seedy popstar Conroy Bumpus who keeps popping up. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he was the cause of all the trouble...

But wait, there's more! Not only do you get a free SAM & MAX Crimestompers Colouring Book (actually it's the game manual) but also there are lots of fun mini-games within the main game. There is Wak-a-Rat: a rather vicious game at the Carnival, Hiway Surfin': a dangerous little number with Max on top of the roadster, and Gator Golf. Plus, stop off at any of the three roadside diners and you can get: Car Bomb (a bit like Battleships), a Sam & Max Dress-up Book and Max's Wax Paint by Numbers Book.

Don't be deceived by all of the fun, this game is no walkover. The action is mainly conversations with characters and collecting and using objects. There are just four key objects that you will need at the end, but you'll have to figure out for yourself what they are and how they are used. Good hunting!

ATMOSPHERE : 17/20
VOCABULARY : N/A
PSR : 17/20

GRAPHICS : 15/20
PUZZLES : 17/20
STAR RATING : ***

ISHAR 3 - THE SEVEN GATES OF INFINITY

FROM : Silmarils/Daze Marketing
CATEGORY: Role-playing Game
VERSION : PC, Atari ST, Amiga
FORMAT : Disk
PRICE : £39.99 (PC), £32.99 (Atari ST), £34.99 (Amiga)
REVIEWER: Hazel Miller on PC.

At the end of ISHAR 2 - MESSENGERS OF DOOM Shandar the sorcerer was finally dead - well at least his body was, his spirit lingered on. Soon there will be a great conjunction of the planets and Shandar's consciousness will take over the body of Wohratax, the last black dragon. This reincarnation will make him the most powerful being of all time and the only way to foil Shandar's plan is to go back in time and kill Wohratax. Luckily seven time gates are due to appear that lead back to different times in local history and eventually to the great Wohratax.

Your party of five adventurers can either be pulled over from ISHAR 2, generated individually, or recruited from the many inns scattered around the city. As usual in this series your party should be as compatible as possible, but sometimes a character you particularly want to recruit will get the thumbs down from the present party members so the set up is not entirely in your own hands.

Much of the game is centred around the city which has two distinct sections. In the poorer suburbs you can wander anywhere but entry into the rich town requires you to buy an expensive pass. This area has very lavish buildings with beautiful people wandering about. There is only one entrance to the rich town and the city is laid out in such a mazelike way sometimes you have to go on quite a route march to get to a place that seems to be on top of you when you look at the map. In fact there is a lot of wandering around in most areas which can be quite frustrating at times.

The gameplay is more of a continuation from the previous game and I don't think anything new has been added except that the shops now buy your unwanted goods, albeit for a pittance. In the town there are only a few robbers to kill for their loot and some chests to collect, so it is very difficult in the early stages to equip the party with all the wonderful armour and weapons that are sold in the shops.

Although I got bored at times from tramping around and getting lost I enjoyed the storyline and the anticipation of entering a new time gate but overall I enjoyed MESSENGERS OF DOOM a great deal more.

ATMOSPHERE : 15/20
PLAYABILITY : 16/20
PSR : 16/20

STRATEGY : 16/20
PUZZLES : 17/20
STAR RATING : *

A PROMOTIONAL PROSPECT

FROM : Sharon Harwood/Dream World Adventures
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : Spectrum 48/128, Commodore Amiga
FORMAT : Tape or disk
PRICE : £3.00 (Spectrum tape, Plus D disk), £2.50 (send your own
+3 disk), £3.00 (Amiga disk with free Spectrum emulator)
REVIEWER: Mike Barton on Amiga

Lois Lane, Clark Kent, eat your hearts out. You know that their sun is setting, while yours is about to leap forth from the clouds. Too long have you searched for the story that will put you on the international front pages. All your life you have wanted to be a great journalist, all through school then college and finally landing a job with your local newspaper. Sadly that is as far as you got and you have been marking time since then, searching in vain for that one story that will catapult you to fame and glory. Too long have you been covering flower shows and bonny baby contests, it's the big time for you.

Your task is to first find the story by using all of your journalistic skills (the Editor gives you the story), then by using your masterful questioning technique and powers of observation and deduction, solve the case of the missing boy Timothy. Although you are cast as a journalist and not a detective, this game has more of a private eye feel to it than that of a reporter. You spend your time (in good adventuring time honoured tradition) switching from examining and searching objects (both required as both produce different results) to talking to and asking about people and places. It is a little annoying that once you have asked someone about something they go blank faced on you if you ask again. You must pay attention the first time so that you do not have to replay that piece of the adventure again.

I must admit to problems early on with this game. My problems - not the game's. After re-training the "Leettle Grey Cells" with the command READ THE TEXT ON THE SCREEN DUMMY, I proceeded to get quite involved with this interesting puzzle. The previous phrase says it all really. Sharon (the author) takes great trouble to weave pointers and clues into the text to help stuck adventurers and guide them in their search for the missing Timothy. A few pointers for this game are: Talk to and ask about everything. Everything you can pick up has a purpose. Search and X-Examine everything (both have different results). An Investigative Journalist might need to do a little house breaking once in a while. Read notebook regularly for driving destinations and telephone numbers.

This is a nice game with logical puzzles.

ATMOSPHERE : 13/20
VOCABULARY : 13/20
PSR : 14/20

GRAPHICS : N/A
PUZZLES : 16/20
STAR RATING : *

ROBINSON'S REQUIEM

FROM : Silmarils/Daze Marketing
CATEGORY: Simulation
VERSION : PC, Amiga, Atari ST
FORMAT : Disk
PRICE : £34,99 (PC), £32.99 (Amiga, Atari ST)
REVIEWER: Geoff Hyman on PC

ROBINSON'S REQUIEM is a Survival Simulation with a strong adventure/RPG storyline. On your last mission as a member of Alien World Exploration you approach an unknown planet and are forced to eject and land on the planet's surface. By now it's high time you studied the AWE White Booklet and learn how to operate your portable Sesame computer and life support monitor.

Survival on this hostile planet is your first imperative and escape is your final objective. The threat of sudden death is ever present, often due to dehydration, but attacks by predators, disease, poisoning and exhaustion must all be avoided. At the site of your crashed ship there is a vital medical kit, then you need a regular source of pure water. How should you deal with all these other Robinsons, they don't seem to be very friendly, but they can often provide you with clues as well as vital additional Sesame computers. You will need to collect all twenty of these.

You can use an overhead map to obtain your bearings and once you manage to equip yourself for survival, a vast area opens up to be explored. Starting in a forest region there are several cave systems - torches can provide you with light but your supply of matches is limited. Beyond these caves you discover swampland, scrubland, desert, a fertile plain and more cave systems.

Save often, backtrack often and persevere and you may eventually reach a volcanic region and the robot cave containing the master Sesame computer. You will need to hunt down a werewolf, tigers, centaurs and prehistoric monsters, befriend a tribe of horsewomen and make a Molotov cocktail before you can even get close to this objective, and that's just at the easy level of the game!

I found this game difficult to get into at first. This was partly because the limited graphics resolution made it difficult to see things when close up, but the graphics engine was surprisingly effective when it came to moving - it all scrolled very smoothly and the 3D perspectives seemed to work well. Another problem was all of the sudden deaths that occurred. Was I attacked from behind or did I fall off a cliff? A message indicating "extreme traumatism" is just not very helpful! This game could almost have been highly recommended but for such minor flaws.

ATMOSPHERE : 16/20
PLAYABILITY : 13/20
PSR : 13/20

STRATEGY : 13/20
REALISM : 15/20
STAR RATING : *

THE FABLED BLACK ROSE

FROM : Martin Freemantle/Dream World Adventures
CATEGORY: Adventure
VERSION : Spectrum 48/128, Commodore Amiga
FORMAT : Tape or disk
PRICE : £2.50 (tape, Plus D disk), £2.00 (send own +3 disk)
£2.50 (Amiga disk with free Spectrum emulator)
REVIEWER: Sharon Harwood on Spectrum +3

This PAWed adventure for the Spectrum would appear to have a simple objective - find the Fabled Black Rose. I'd tell you the storyline behind it but, unfortunately, I'm completely in the dark as to that side of things. My copy of the game came in a simple cassette case that stated the name of the adventure and carried a picture of the said rose. Loading the tape did little to enlighten me as, following a little graphic sequence, I found myself thrust into the first location.

That said, it was immediately obvious from the title alone, that THE FABLED BLACK ROSE was the object of my desire - not the buried treasure - not the Golden Fleece - but THE FABLED BLACK ROSE - a nice simple errand that led me through forest, over rainbow, down hole, onto cloud and into prison amongst other things. I particularly enjoyed the maze-like puzzle at the beginning of the game where pressing buttons in the correct sequence had me stumped for some time but I have to say that there were times further on where I was stumped purely from an input point of view.

I have a fervent dislike of puzzles that I could solve if only I could find the correct input! These came to light on, I'm happy to say, only a couple of occasions but they were enough to stop me from getting back to the game for a few days and did leave me a little aggravated when I did manage to solve them. I'll even admit here that at one time I actually broke into PAW for the help I required. A long drawn sigh escaped my lips when I discovered that I was right but had only used the wrong words to achieve the objective.

For reasons beyond my control, coupled with the times I just couldn't face the game, I still haven't managed to finish the adventure but I reckon I'm well on my way and can quite positively say that if you like Martin's style - a mixture of short locations, short messages, trolls, goblins, giants, dwarves, masses of puzzles and a few extreme inputs, you'll like this. Personally I've found my preference to lean toward atmosphere and storyline recently but I'm trying to quench this thirst by ploughing through a few good books - maybe then I can go back to playing adventures for adventures sake.

ATMOSPHERE : 13/20
VOCABULARY : 11/20
PSR : 12/20

GRAPHICS : N/A
PUZZLES : 15/20
STAR RATING : ?

CONVENTIONAL MATTERS (by Sue Roseblade)

Back in the early 1980's, when home computers began to infiltrate our lives, there evolved a strange and solitary new lifeform. It became apparent to some families that one of their number had developed a habit of retiring to the corner of the living room (or worse, an upstairs attic) for hours at a time and becoming silently engrossed in some sort of typed communication with this new machine.

Silent, that is, apart from the odd shrieks, groans, head banging or the occasional yell of jubilation. These noises were issuing from the lifeform and not from the machine itself, which indicated that they were NOT playing an arcade game as one might expect. Further investigation revealed that neither were they writing letters, processing the home accounts or even transferring the Christmas card list - no, none of these activities for which the computer was supposedly purchased. What we had here was that strange new mutant of the human form, an Adventurer!

Most early adventurers were very isolated creatures. Not only were they normally the only one in their family but the only one in their street, the town and, some of them suspected, the only one on the planet. Sadly seeking just one fellow adventurer, they began writing to the only possible source of contact at that time, the computer magazines. Miracles occurred! Other adventurers WERE out there! Columns were set up in various magazines especially to cater for these new beings. Gradually, out of the wilderness, like-minded people found each other and various clubs were born.

One of the earliest of these was aptly named The Adventurers' Club Ltd which became our own Adventure & Strategy Club. Very shortly afterwards, in 1986, a magazine called Adventure Probe emerged. It wasn't until sometime later that someone hit upon the excellent idea that members of the adventuring fraternity should get together at a suitable venue and thus be able to come face to face with all those to whom letters had been written and phone calls made for so long. (Most of the phone calls could be described as "so long" too)! Thus in 1990, the first Adventure Probe Convention was held in Birmingham.

The fifth annual Adventure Convention has just taken place, no longer organised by the Probe magazine but now running wild and free in the hands of those most devoted to the art of computer adventuring. Since those early beginnings, adventuring has moved a long way. Even the most die-hard text adventure players have almost all moved on to more powerful machines and now play graphic adventures and role-playing games, where sound effects and music can be heard accompanying the previously mentioned adventurer noises. Text adventures are still played avidly by many, still written by a fair few and, most importantly of all, still loved by the hard core of adventurers who attend this annual event.

So, if you weren't there, what have you missed? Read on....

The venue for the Convention was the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel in a pleasant conference room conveniently situated close to the bar. Upon entering, new arrivals were welcomed by Convention organiser Vicky Jackson and issued with a name badge. As these were printed upside-down, the first puzzle of the day was to work out why one was greeted with unnatural contortions of the head and neck by anyone who didn't already know you!

The next step was to move around the room and explore the various tables lining the walls. Most of these were dominated by a computer of some description and on a quick investigative trip I noted that Amstrad, Spectrum, Commodore 64, Atari ST, Amiga, Sam Coupe and PC (with CD Rom) were all represented. On the far side of the room, a long table displayed an array of second hand software for sale at prices ranging downwards from £10, an excellent opportunity to fill some gaps in your collection. Almost all of the surviving homegrown text adventure companies were in attendance, with software for sale and the chance to "try before you buy", including FSF Adventures, Dream World Adventures, Wow Software and The Adventure Workshop.

As everybody was well labelled, it was relatively easy to pick out a number of adventure authors, whose names may be familiar from the ASC reviews section, including Simon Avery, Larry Horsfield, Martin Freemantle, Jean Childs, Sharon Harwood, Bob Adams, Peter Clark, Gareth Pitchford, Margaret and Mike Crewdson, Damien Steel and one they call The Grue (apologies for any omissions, blame jetlag!).

At some stage of the day, most people found themselves dragged off to a corner to take part in the Megapoints Competition, in which each competitor is allowed 20 minutes playing a text adventure. The adventure this year was The Long Journey Home specially written for the occasion by Sharon Harwood. The winner was the person who achieved the highest score, everyone else spending the rest of the day concealing their scores, as most of them were far from "Mega"!

Shortly after 2pm the sounds of clattering keyboards and chattering voices ceased temporarily while Bob Adams made a blissfully brief welcoming speech. The winners of the Awards were then revealed, voted for by post when Convention ticket application forms were sent out. The results of the awards can be found in the News section in this pack. Finally, the winner of the Megapoints Competition was announced, Nancy Finnigan stepped forward to claim her cash prize, very well earned as she had travelled all the way from Scotland. Runners up were Gareth Pitchford and Vicky Jackson.

Almost thirty of those attending the Convention also stayed at the hotel on both Friday and Saturday nights and so celebrations continued well into the small hours, helped by the fact that the clocks went back! A meal at an Italian restaurant (table for 26 please!) and a giant game of Trivial Pursuit, North versus South, were part of the Saturday evening's entertainment. The South won needless to say! General verdict - a most enjoyable weekend. Maybe we will see YOU there next year?

SCARED (by Hugh T. Walker)

Once upon a time things were much more orderly in the Mystic Realm of Adventuoredom. We could sit for hours pondering over the philosophical nuances of the question, "What now?" - secure in the knowledge that until we put our eager little paws to the keyboard then nothing bad would befall us. That nothing good would happen either is beside the point and, anyway, half the time the response came back, "You can't!". Sometimes, we might get, "You cannot do that yet!", beckoning its siren call of unfulfilled promises needing only just a little more effort on our part to unlock vast acreages of untrammelled game-playing-area.

All this has changed. Even in that corner of the Mystic Realm where time has stood still - where the denizens hold steadfast to the conviction that, "Text is the pure form, text is all that there should be and text is all that there will be!" - even there the 'Time Out' has reared its ugly head to ensure that things may fall on our heads even whilst we ponder.

Elsewhere, all is chaos! Oh! It began simply enough. We called it "Interaction" with Non Player Controlled characters (NPC's) - but we coped, we were still in control! Just wait for the message that told you that the guard had gone past before stepping out - and they never looked round to see that you were following. GARGOYLE even showed us pictures of them MOVING!!!funny little fellows in TIR NA NOG - looked a bit like monkeys - nice game, though.

It couldn't last. We even bought better computers to allow Them into our homes. DUNGEON MASTER is where things really started to get out of hand. Now we could see where we were going but what we weren't ready for was that They could see us coming! There you are, strolling along admiring the view, and all of a sudden you've got company! There are Things(!) inside the computer doing things when you aren't looking, let alone pressing keys. I bet those Blue Meanies had really good parties behind your back - then you walk in and they hide the beer and sandwiches, put away the cards and start hitting you with their clubs!

Many a time I was caught unawares whilst lighting my pipe and I even recall going into a nice empty room, closing the door and settling down for a rest when this Beholder OPENS THE DOOR!!!
..... I do the doors, OK?!

Dancing round the pillar fighting the Dragon on Level 14 was a traumatic experience. The mouse was all clammy with perspiration and my hands were shaking. This wasn't the way it was supposed to be. This was reality without me making it be. CAPTIVE was worse! At least in DUNGEON MASTER 'They' weren't very bright.

Once we get onto the PC all hell lets loose. LANDS OF LORE, RAVENLOFT, ELDER SCROLLS - ARENA, DOOM, SYSTEM SHOCK 'They' just don't know the rules! Look, if anyone is going to creep up on

anyone and hit Them then it is I who does the creeping. I'm supposed to take Them by surprise! Not in these games, oh dear no! ...and another thing, when I work my way through an area, systematically spreading mayhem and desolation I don't expect to get ambushed by worse beasties than were there in the first place when I am strolling back to the entrance later.

SYSTEM SHOCK is getting to me. I HATE MUTANTS!!!! I am also not entirely enamoured of Enforcer Cyborgs. They are ganging up on me. I am convinced that they are plotting against me after I have switched off and gone to bed ... and just because I am paranoid it doesn't necessarily mean that they aren't out to get me! One day I'll wake up to find a Security Robot sitting on the end of my bed!

On the other hand, it is much more fun these days well, perhaps FUN isn't quite the right word for it. The emotions which accompanied potting plants in plant pots (with or without trowels) never quite got into the same league as the nerve tingling experiences offered by SHODAN (the megalomaniac super-computer in SYSTEM SHOCK) when in 'Hunt down the intruder' mode.

The Holy Grail of adventure game writers is to create the illusion that the player is really THERE, in the thick of the action. The illusion that you have been drawn into the monitor was never quite achieved by text or top-down perspective, albeit always part of Origin's introductory scenarios in the Ultima series 1 to 7. Even in Ultima VIII you can see the character whom you are battling with the game interface to control but once you get into first-person-perspective the illusion begins to take shape and the gliding movement introduced in the UNDERWORLD games makes it all the more tangible.

The first game where I began to feel actually threatened personally was ELDER SCROLLS - ARENA. I well remember the shock of going up North to explore and after spending the night outside a town (to save the cost of a night's lodgings) being attacked by a couple of wolves. "Aha!", I thought, "It's just a couple of wolves - easy!" ...er... two slashes of the jolly old Dwarven Longsword of Agility and there I was DEAD!

I rang a friend, "What was that?", I sobbed. "Ah!", he muttered sagely (if not actually smugly), "These northern white wolves are not quite the same as their southern grey cousins". You can say that again.

It took a couple of days to screw up the courage to boot up the game again and, restoring a save position from before my northern jaunt, I set off for the tower outside Firsthold and proceeded to rest with my back to the stairs to the first floor (the walls of the passage there stop Them getting behind you - one can be generated on the same square as you, which is a touch difficult as you may not be able to see it although you can feel it - hitting you, that is). Then I just kept turning and hacking until I hit

something, then continued to hit until one of us was dead.

For those who haven't played this game, resting in a tower is ALWAYS interrupted by Enemy Encounters ...furthermore, every time you leave a tower level, say to go outside for a proper rest, back to town to sell some loot or just go up- (or down-) stairs, the piles of goodies lying around are replenished on the level you have just ransacked.

The result of this was the accumulation of an immense amount of cash and an enormous boost to Wilamena's experience score. (For some reason, when given the choice, I seem to favour a female character who can't spell - it's probably terribly Freudian but its significance eludes me!) Anyway, I discovered that the hit-points and attribute bonuses awarded when going up an Experience Level are random so that by saving before an encounter which is likely to boost her to new heights, Wilamena was able to reject the more paltry bonuses and try again for a better offer. All this desperately character forming stuff lead to the slightly embarrassing situation of having a Level 17 Spellword with 100,000 gold, 170 Hit-Points, 150 Spell Points and ONE PIECE OF STAFF. (Those who haven't played will just have to accept what the others know - that this is just plain silly!) I then went touring and found a town down South with an armoury which sold an Ebony War Hammer, by which time I felt just about ready to venture up North!

The point is that in ARENA your character's powers increased with his or her prowess. What I had done was to enhance my character in order to create a situation where I felt I was getting on top of the game. However, I must admit that for the rest of the game I went in mortal dread of meeting a White Wolf. Five Iron Golems in a room - no trouble; one White Wolf and a fit of the shakes threatened to overwhelm me. What is remarkable is that although Wilamena was female, by the time the game had booted up and the tune began to play I found that my identity had merged with hers. I don't mean that I started wearing dresses - that would be silly! I was no longer aware of the game-interface between us.

Somehow, DOOM has never quite done this - well, not since every magazine has published those awfully useful cheat codes (which don't work on Nightmare Level!) but SYSTEM SHOCK has it in Spades (technical Bridge term which, for the uninitiated, means it has quite a lot of it - Hmmm? Loses something in translation, doesn't it.)

The main difference with SYSTEM SHOCK is that your character - (I am RekLaw, thoroughly male and, apparently, totally gutless wimp for the purposes of this game ... I think it is a game, but I begin to have my doubts!) - may find better weapons and natty devices to bolt onto his/her neural implant but the basic total Hit-Points and Energy-Store does not increase, as far as I can see.

Another difference is that at no time have I felt that I was getting on top of the game. The constant feeling is that IT knows something I don't and that whatever cunning plans I make will just be playing into IT's hands. Having now completely explored Level 7 and completed the task for that Level the Security Robots and Enforcer Cyborgs seem to be breeding faster than I am killing them. When I went back to the elevator from whence I had entered the Level, a Security Robot was standing right by the pile of Batteries and First Aid Kits which I had dumped there after killing everything in sight and before setting off on a tour of the establishment.

The problem with this is that if I threw grenades at the robot then I would blow up my supply dump. So I had to shoot it with non-explosive bullets - and getting close enough to do this is like taking afternoon tea with a tyrannosaurus rex. Now, I ask you, is it just coincidence that this robot should just happen to choose this somewhat sensitive spot to lie in wait? Could it really be just bad luck that I happened to choose a spot for my supply dump which would be an excellent vantage point for a robot to stand guard on the elevator?

SYSTEM SHOCK is an enormously invigorating experience. I cannot call it FUN. It is too unnerving and my inferiority complex and paranoia are thriving too well for that.

Perversely, I am enjoying it. The adrenaline rush and satisfaction are enormously rewarding BUT I am still scared. I think I might prefer taking my newly-17-year-old son out in the car ... with him driving ... than to boot up SYSTEM SHOCK again today - it's a close run thing, but I might!

CD-ROM GAMES

(By Wayne Roberts of CHEET SHEETS)

Well here I am again with another look into CD games available for the PC. As usual I will give you a brief idea of what the game is about and whether it's worth purchasing. In the case of games that have been released on both medias I'll give a brief insight into the enhancements in the CD version (if any).

DARKSEED

£44.99. Cyberdreams

Released back in the later half of 1992, it brought the artistic work of H. R. Giger to the computer screen in a graphical adventure. The release onto CD sees the usual additional digitised speech and moody soundtrack.

If you haven't bought the original disk version then this may be a good choice if you're looking for a graphic adventure with some weird but wonderful artwork.

THEME PARK

£39.99 Electronic Arts

This is currently the top selling CD-ROM. With the long awaited release this game is well worth the purchase. The cost of the CD is five pounds less than the disk version, so I've no need to tell you to buy the CD version. There are not many enhancements within the CD version, just a few extra animations, the ability to view rides once complete, plus a few other enhancements that I may not have realised. If you like a challenge and a good time then you'll love this!

BATTLE ISLE 2

£44.99 Kompart

The gameplay is identical to the disk version, the main difference being the additional animation sequences plus a bit more speech. No extra missions, just simply the same game spiced up with the small extras. If you like strategic games, then this is a very good choice - it will keep you active for hours.

SIMON THE SORCERER

£44.99 Adventursoft

The CD version is a FULL talkie version with voices of actors like Chris Barrie (Red Dwarf) and Roger Blake (Spitting Image). If you haven't got the disk version and you like a good fun adventure then this would be well worth purchasing.

STAR CONTROL CD

£19.99 Accolade

This compendium includes both episodes of this great action strategy game. A good buy for £20. It will keep you amused for hours and with the two-player melee battle, you can put aside all the serious stuff within the game and have a good old laugh.

UNDER A KILLING MOON (CD only)

£59.99 Access/US Gold

This game fills all the gaps that The 7TH GUEST didn't fill. Yes, another fully movie-like game with excellent graphics and sound. Most of the characters are well known actors and the gameplay is of a high standard. This game will show you what's to come in the world of CD-ROM. A game that should be in your CD collection.

QUEST AND FUN

£29.99 Sierra

Two or three years ago Sierra were probably the top software company for the PC and this package contains three of their more popular games. Though a bit dated this package is a worthy buy if you would like to play some games that were at the introduction of the CD-ROM.

The games included in the package are LEISURE SUIT LARRY V, KING'S QUEST V and RED BARON. The first two are fully enhanced CD versions with RED BARON being a nice fast action packed flight simulation. Good package but it may be an idea to look around and buy the games separately if you only want one or two of them, as KING'S QUEST V can be obtained on its own for £20 and RED BARON could probably be found for less!

SIM CITY ENHANCED

£49.99 Mindscape

With the great success of SIM CITY 2000 I thought they might have given up on the old style of the game, but no, the difference being the fancy introduction, animation and film sequences throughout and digitised sound. It boasts over 45 minutes of video footage but it doesn't boast anything new over the gameplay. If SIM CITY 2000 is too complex for you then this should be your second choice but if you have the original SIM CITY, then the enhancements are worth the pennies you pay.

SYNDICATE PLUS

£39.99 Electronic Arts

This is a nice bundle for those who haven't bought the original SYNDICATE or the AMERICAN REVOLT data disks. The game itself has a few enhancements in the sound department with the support of Soundblaster 16, plus 10 new levels specifically for network players. With both the original and the data disks, this is a good package for those who like a fast, furious, action packed game.

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 1 AND 2

£49.99 Electronic Arts

This compilation is simply the disk version chucked onto CD, but if you're a fan of RPG's, and love the ULTIMA series, this one is well worth the purchase. Two excellent RPG's for the price of one. Even though a few years old now, they are still a BIG challenge compared to some of today's RPG's. I'm not too sure whether there are any enhancements, I very much doubt it. How can you spice up a game that is already as good as ULTIMA UNDERWORLD? The main advantage in buying this, as well as having two games for the price of one is you'll save a fair bit of Hard Disk space.

ULTIMA VII

£44.99 Electronic Arts

Again another bit of shovelware but this is also a good buy, as with the ULTIMA UNDERWORLD pack. You'll get all four episodes of the game, ULTIMA VII parts 1 and 2 plus the two expansion disks. If you are a keen Role Player then this will definitely keep you glued to your PC for months, not days or weeks with the huge amount of puzzles to get through. Definitely worth buying. There are probably no enhancements over the disk versions but there is no need to use up any precious Hard Disk space.

Return to the palace in Bandar-Al Sa'adat and attempt to see your father. You will be invited to eat a meal with Sumia. Find her north of the kitchens and she will tell you of a key that will let you into the old dungeons where you will be able to pick your way through to your father's cell if you can kill the monsters that dwell there. Follow her instructions and get the key. Enter the dungeons and in one of the first cells you will meet a friendly cyclops who has been imprisoned there for years. The only way you can search his cell is to take him out of the palace to freedom. Save the game before you attempt this in case you bump into any guards, then go through the main entrance.

Return to the dungeon and push a rock over every moveable floorpad. Hit the moss covered walls 8 times then pull the levers that appear. You will be left with two locked cells. Go back upstairs, talk to Sumia, then return. You will now be able to enter the northern cell. Find the lever on the northern wall which will open the large cell. Moving the table and rock south to cover the floorplates will reveal eight levers in the eastern wall and the main cell door will open. Each lever opens one cell door. Collect the gold and kill the monsters. The Etin is the only monster who is hard to kill. Use spells and the sling from a distance on him. Go through the tunnel in the Etin's cell and after a long walk you will be able to pinpoint your father's cell. Make your way to him watching the pattern the guards patrol in, using empty cells to dive into for cover. Speak to your father then leave and return the key to Sumia.

Walk out through the main entrance and you will find a note from Obdel. He is the old gentleman sitting at a table in the south banqueting hall. He will tell you the Vizier is the enemy who masterminded the plot against your father and placed a curse upon the Caliph. He will tell you to find the Vizier's secret journal and your families possessions then expose the Vizier. You will be given a teleport ring that will get you into the northern wing of the palace. Go to the meditation chamber in the southwest wing (this is the small empty room with a purple floor). Use the ring then hug the west wall to avoid being seen. Exit west down the corridor and at the end go north to the Caliph's chambers hiding behind the columns to avoid the patrolling guard. From the Caliph's doorway wait until the guard moves away then go south to the harem. Push the tea trolley to distract the two guards, then run south. Say CATSPAW to the Caliph's wife then hide behind the door (don't go behind the urn or you will be detected). Walk INTO the door from the front to get behind it. While the guards are talking to the Caliph's wife run back to the bedroom. Don't take any of the Caliph's treasure. The secret door is in the room to the east. Take your family's treasure and the journal, put the key under the mattress and return to the room where you arrived. The ring will activate and transport you back to the meditation room. Go to the city gates and CONFRONT Obdel. He will say he is meeting a guard from Al'Katrax. When he disappears return to the Vizier and tell him your story. He will sympathise and seem to be on your

side. Buy some potions of invulnerability and return to your ship.

Sail to Hajar where the Nameless Ones treasure is kept. Walk the maze of columns and drink the invulnerability potion before chasing the chest. Follow it around trying to open it and eventually you and the chest will be thrown outside onto the sand. Sail to Al'Katrax and go west. Enter the house near the two Ganlet guards and tell them who you are. Go to the Ganlet leader in the South. Listen to his story and refuse to kill the Razif leader. Now go to the Razif leader in the southeast and hear his story. Tell him your story and offer to help the two clans make peace. Return to the Ganlet leader and ask why they are feuding. Tell her the Razif want peace. Say the same thing to the Razif leader and the two leaders will meet at the well to talk. Follow them and tell them you are seeking a mercenary and they will tell you how to collect the keys to the prison.

Inside the prison search the first simple rooms then make your way to the western locked wing where the Etin is held and break the gates down. I don't think anything is gained by killing the Etin. Take the treasure, go back through the gates and walk north. This area has many enemies so be prepared. In a cell you will find your brother who has had his voice stolen and other prisoners who you must free. Go north, break the gem then go to the Mage's bedroom in the north. Search the bed for a key to more cells. Make sure your brother is following you then leave the prison.

Return to your ship and sail to the Isle of Aballat. This is a very easy area where you will find your brother's voice. Reunite your brother with his voice and he will summon your family genie who unravels some plot. Sail to the Nameless Ones Isle. Collect all the treasure hidden around and look for secret walls that lead to other rooms and more treasure. When you are ready and fortified with protection spells, go west past the wall hangings with eyes. Hug the west wall and go north looking for an illusion wall. Go through and in this new area you will find a Nameless One. Kill him and read the scroll and book. You will now be able to walk through the southern wall of this room then south again across the corridor. Keep going south looking for an illusion wall to the west. Open the chest and enter the transporter. Walk around the edge of the disk and it will connect to the next disk. Smash the crystals then kill the monster that appears. Some will turn back into their former shape once the spell is broken. You will find a moonstone which will heal your wounds. Eventually you will free your ship's captain and be returned to your ship. Your portal has disappeared. Speak to the captain and tell him you want to return through the portal to kill the Nameless One. Go through and when you reach the disks go right (the left path leads back to your ship). Eventually you will meet your twin who must be killed. One monster will turn back into Kara. Leave her and kill the Nameless One. Sit back and watch the grand finale.

Compiled by Hazel Miller

ALONE IN THE DARK II

Infogrames

Save your position regularly. Keep your guns loaded. Drink from the flasks but don't drink the whisky. You can eat the fried eggs and the sandwich.

The Maze

Kill the zombie and get the Thompson gun, clip and flask. You can use the flask to regain health. Reload by using the clip. There are four zombies near the house. After killing them, push the stone block (the one with the anchor on it) to gain access to the maze. The first zombie has a photo, the next leaves a clip and flask when killed. Get the rope lying nearby.

At the cross-road junction, there are zombies down two of the lanes, one ahead and the other to the right. Kill the zombies, the one from the right turn leaves a book. Take the left lane and turn right, kill the zombie, turn left and get the clip at the dead-end. Go back to the cross-roads and continue on before turning right (top right of maze). Get the grappling hook and touch the ace of diamonds on the ground, this opens up to lead down. Don't touch the other cards, they kill you.

Beneath the maze go right, kill the zombie, get the torn notebook. Push the chest and get the metallic jack playing card. A ghost shadow-like creature will come towards you; shoot the ghost and it leaves a sabre. Go to the 'altar' which has just risen and use the card at the altar. Go to the ladder opposite the altar and climb up and out (the trapdoor is unlocked by using the card on the altar) - you get out where the rope and other ace of diamonds were.

Head back towards the cross-roads, turn right, left, right to reach the zombie at the bottom middle of the maze. This zombie leaves a flask. Use the sabre to chop the vines. Go forward but watch out for the peg-leg. Kill him and he leaves a newspaper, which you need for later. Now use the rope/hook and they will be combined, stand in front of the statue and throw the hook. Watch the animation, the statue opens up and you go down to the next stage.

Secret passage under the statue

You will lose your weapons. Save often, as you may need to do this a few times - you can easily fall. Go back towards where you came down and get the nickel. Get the crank on the plank and get the paper bag. Continue forwards and you will reach Striker's body. Get the other half of the notebook (use notebook to join them together) and the pipe cleaner from the body. Go to the locked door and use newspaper at the door. Watch the animation and the door is opened. You can save here.

In the storeroom, go to the lever and save here just in case. Use the paper bag (the bag gets blown up) and then use it again (you pop the bag).

The zombie will then get up and go towards you. When it is opposite the opening in the wall, push the lever and a hanging barrel should knock it over the cliff, out into the sea. Get the book, flask and riot gun. Go to the side of the grandfather clock and use the crank there to move the crates to reveal the secret passage. Get the book and cartridges. Go in the lift to the next level.

Basement area

Tear the Dead man's pact (which used to be the newspaper) in front of the zombie and the music man should die. Get the hook he leaves behind, go through the door and get the battledore on the floor, but DO NOT GO UPSTAIRS YET !!! . Instead, go through the doors into the next room.

Shooting gallery and connected room

Shoot the two zombies in the room, and get the cartridges on the table by the door. Use the battledore to turn the blocks/rotating cards at the end of the room. Just whack the cards to rotate the faces by two. For one rotation, stand with your back to them and use the up cursor key and space to whack it.

When all the faces showing are diamonds, the nearby door will open and another zombie will come out. Go inside the room, get the books, whisky and flask (don't drink the whisky), and use the nickel on the slot machine for the two tokens.

Leave the room and check the far wall near the coat rack and cards on the wall. Shoot the zombie (if you put the whisky in front of the zombie, he will drink it and won't be able to shoot straight). Get and open the sack to get the Santa suit. Wear this suit before going upstairs.

Ground floor of house

I suggest saving the game here. Don't try shooting or killing the little cook/chef. Don't go upstairs yet but follow the little chef's footsteps into the kitchen. If you don't follow the correct squares on the floor, the statue of 'Neptune' will throw his harpoon at you. This harpoon follows you so there's no escape.

Kitchen

In the kitchen, get the fried eggs (which you can eat) and the frying pan. Wait until you hear the ping and the large chef will head to the dumb waiter. Kill the big chef with the frying pan. Get the poison and wine, use the poison to get poisoned wine.

Room with organ

Go to the double doors opposite the Neptune statue (be careful not to set the harpoon off) and put the poisoned wine at the hatch of the door. Step away from the door (be careful where you step) and two zombies should open the doors, come out and die (poisoned by the wine). Use both the tokens at the front of the organ, which causes the door at the far end of the room to open and a doubloon to appear near you. Get the doubloon and go through the door.

Get the bullet-proof vest and clip. The Thompson will jam later on, so don't use the clip - save it for later when you will find another Thompson. Get the crown from the top of Neptune statue and go upstairs. Don't go to the other rooms on the ground floor yet. Kill the zombie at the top of the stairs. Go through the door.

Billiard room

Go to the door in the opposite wall through to the leisure room. Kill the zombie near the billiard table. You may need to use the derringer to kill it (the zombie threw it when you came in). The zombie leaves a sword-stick. You can get the book and half a parchment from the bookshelves. Go out the room and turn left into the bedroom.

Bedroom

Use the sword-stick to get rid of the two arms on the wall opposite the door you entered by. Get the other part of parchment, use parchment to join them together. Use the crown on the white bust near the other door of the room. Go into the connecting room and get the amulet. This transports you to the attic.

Attic

Get the flask and message. Leave the room, go left and go to the small chest round the corner. You are given a Thompson and a clip when you open the chest. Kill the two zombies, get the grenade and key. Go through the opening to what looks like a store room. Use the doubloon on the Jack-in-the-box. Get the pom-pom.

Go through the door in the other room and stand in front of the opening to Carnby's right. Throw the pom-pom into the observatory and move out of the way of the opening. The 'Jumping Jack' will go after the pom-pom into the observatory, where the snakes will kill him.

Go into the observatory, stand in front of the chimney and throw the grenade into it. This will eliminate a zombie downstairs. Use the bullet-proof vest, and get your Thompson ready for some heavy use. Now go down the chimney.

Room with a Piano

You tumble down out of the chimney to a hostile welcome. There are three zombies with Thompsons. Get the red billiard ball from the Christmas tree. If you quickly leave the room, you don't have to kill the zombies. Head upstairs to the room with the billiard table.

Billiard room

Insert the red billiard ball into the Billiard Game machine. To do this you have to be standing in front of the game's front glass panel. You should see the ball go down then a secret door is revealed to you. Unlock this door using the key you took from the Attic. Go in....

How to get captured

It's so dark you can't see your hand in front of your face. You hear some noise, you feel someone pushing you. You don't have time to fight, you stumble, you hear what sounds like a rusty door. The lights come on, you are now a prisoner of One-eyed Jack, well done. You see One-eyed Jack and Grace, the one you have come to rescue. He tells you his story, Grace makes a run for it. One-eyed Jack (or Patchie to his friends) goes in pursuit; leaving you to your fate.

Wait a minute, what about using the hook from the music man to pick the lock. Yes, success, it opens, you're free. Now head down stairs to the statue of 'Neptune'. Everything's fine until you go past the stairs. Elisabeth comes in from the front doors, you take your chances and make a dash for it. No good!

Brig

You come around chained up in the brig of One-eyed Jack's ship. Elisabeth tells you her life story. She goes off. You now become an innocent eight year-old girl, Grace - strange world huh?? First things first, get her to push the boards out of the way. Go through to where you find a parrot. Take everything, feed the parrot by using the bird seed. It tells you where to find the Captain's staff, in the Captain's cabin. This is a good place to save the game if you haven't done so already. Poke your head out the door, you hear some foot steps so you quickly go back inside. Once you see the guard go past, you can quickly go out and turn right. You see a ladder which you scramble up before the guard turns back. There is another ladder right next to the hole you come from. Climb this ladder to the deck.

Top Deck

Once you get to the top deck, you see you have come across what looks like a party. (This is not the time to join in!!). Save here. If you fail the next part you can load from here. Take Grace around the Pirates, take the route around the barrels so you go to the far side of the deck. Go all the way, you should see an opening on the deck and something on the deck. Pick this up and you find out it is a Tinder-box. Be careful not to go too far forward. Head for the opening and climb down.

Captain's Cabin

You end up in the Captain's Cabin. Look in the small chest and take the small cannon. Get the vase and the Captain's staff from the side of the bed. Put the small cannon down. She will put it down in the correct place. Use the pepper pot on the small cannon, then throw the vase to attract the attention of the guard from outside. Use the Tinder box when the guard opens the door. He should sneeze and die, a bell is left behind. Go and pick it up and head for the galley which is directly opposite the Captain's Cabin.

Galley

Get the chicken foot from the table, ring the bell and climb into the dumb waiter, make sure you get the key from the dumb waiter.

NOVEMBER 1994

SOLUTIONS GUIDES AND HELP:

In the last pack we asked members to tell us what games they would like to see solutions, guides or help for. We had a very good response with Alone in the Dark II and Myst being the most requested. As these are very large games they will be printed over two issues. Please keep your requests coming in by mail or telephone. Remember we will print solutions for any format.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY:

Please note that the main office will be closed from Monday 19th December, until Monday 2nd January.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

CONTRIBUTIONS:

Our thanks to all the members who have sent us solutions and tips recently. All contributions are added to our main helpline databases which now have over 2000 solutions and guides. Please keep them coming in.

ADVERTISING:

If you have something for the buy/sell/swap section and wish the advertisement to appear in the following issue please leave a message with the office not later than three weeks before publication.

PUBLICATION DATES:

Due to printing problems we have moved the publication date forward one week (See page A-1 for details). We have always sent the packs to members before the publication date and will continue to do so whenever possible.

AMENDMENT:

We would like to apologise to Hugh Walker for the error in the last paragraph on page T-49 of his article A VIEW OF CIVILIZATION. The paragraph should more correctly read:

With taxes at 100% you might as well sell off your Libraries and Universities. You can rebuild later if needed. Then each city with Barracks builds units to send down the railway to your chosen city for adoption and return. Because it is from a city which is immune to unhappy faces it can go out of the city it defends with impunity.

BUY - SELL - SWAP:

FOR SALE: - I would like to sell a new copy of Pagemaker 4, 3rd edition for the PC. Please telephone for price.

I have a large number of new blank disks for sale at very reasonable prices.

I also have a number of new copies of my book PC GAMES, HINTS, CHEATS & ADVENTURE SOLUTIONS for sale at £8.50 each. (See pack 28 J-13/14 for details of contents). Wayne Roberts, CHEET SHEETS, Tel: 0822 833765.

FOR SALE: - I would like to sell Ravenloft and Al-Qadim for the PC (disk) £15 each and Railroad Tycoon for the Amiga £10. Please leave a message on the club number for David.

WANTED: - I am looking for a second-hand Amiga A1200 which must be in good condition. Please leave a message for Robert on the club number if you wish to sell.

FOR SALE: - Amiga 500+ and Phillips 8833 stereo colour monitor. The Amiga is almost new and has been upgraded to 2 meg. and fitted with a ROM sharer. It has a second external disk drive, two mice, some games and manuals. Both have their original packaging. £200 including postage, packing and insurance. Please telephone the club for details.

FOR SALE: - I have a number of adventures for the Atari ST for sale at very reasonable prices. If interested telephone Sue Roseblade on 0480 380608 or write for list to 22 Pembroke Ave, Eynesbury, St Neots Cambs PE19 2SW

WANTED: - I would like to buy World of Xeen for the PC CD-ROM. Please leave a message for David Gordon on the club number if you have a copy for sale. Thank you.

FOR SALE: - I have a number of PC floppy and PC CD-ROM games for sale. Telephone Debbie Lawford on 081 859 8531 any evening if interested.

Thanks to Bravo for providing the following help.

The Island of Myst

You arrive on the island at the dock. You will find a note on the grass in front of the round granite building. The note tells you about a chamber near the dock and what to do there. You need to know how many marker switches are on the island. The switch at the end of the dock was a marker switch and they all look the same. Explore the island and count the switches, turning them ON as you go. You should be able to turn on all but one of the switches.

Return to the dock and look for a small door near where you first entered Myst. Clicking on the door will open it. Follow the corridor to a chamber. In the chamber is a large round device with a button on it. Turn until you are facing back toward the stairs and notice the small panel to the left of the stairway. Click on it to move closer. There is a list of settings on the panel, and a small button in the top left corner. Pressing the button causes the panel to open, revealing two numbers in windows and two sets of small up and down arrow buttons. Clicking on the arrow buttons allows you to set the two digit number in the windows. Set the two digit number to the number of marker switches on the island, then press the button in the lower right hand corner to close the panel. Go to the large round device and press the button on it. The message will then play, giving you part of the story.

Exit the chamber the way you entered and make your way to the Library, the square granite building next to the round granite building in front of which you found the note. Inside the library you will find a red book and red page, a blue book and blue page, three paintings, a bookcase and a fireplace. Take the red page and put it on the red book. Reading the book will give you part of the story. Do the same with the blue book and blue page.

Examine the painting of the island. There is an outline of the major structures and features of the island on the painting (if you turned on the marker switches) and a flashing circle. Click and hold on the flashing circle and a line will begin to rotate around the circle. The line will turn red and pause at these points: the large gears on top of the hill near the dock, the sunken boat's crow's nest, the large tree, and the rocket ship. Stop the red line on the large gears. You will hear the sound of the tower rotating.

Go to the painting that shows stairs leading to a corridor and click on it. The painting will swirl and the bookcase will open to reveal a secret passage. Follow the secret passage to an elevator and take the elevator to the tower. In the tower you will find two ladders. One leads to a narrow window that shows you what you have aimed at. The other, located behind the elevator, leads to a clue,

bolted to the wall, that is needed to access the Myst book at the location the tower is aimed at.

Return to the library, rotate the tower to the next spot where the line goes red and pauses, return to the tower through the secret passage and get the clue for this Myst book location. Repeat this process until you have all four clues.

Once you have all the clues and are back in the library, click on the painting that shows an open doorway. This closes the secret passage and reopens the library exit. Before leaving, examine all the books in the bookshelf. While most are burned, some are not. The ones which can be read contain valuable clues and some actual maps which you will need during the various Ages. One book contains hundreds of drawings of squares in patterns. Leave this book alone for the moment. The last item in the library, the fireplace, comes into play later during the endgame.

The Channelwood Age

You begin facing a tree on a series of wooden walkways. Find your way along these walkways until you have found an elevator, a circular stairway you can't enter, a pump-like device with a handle, and the windmill building. In the windmill building, turn on the faucet at the bottom of the large tank. The pipes along the walkway have switches that direct the water flow to different routes. Set these switches so that water flows to the pump by the elevator. Enter the elevator and close the door by clicking on it. Pull the handle and ride up to the lower tree level. Find your way to the circular stairway and go down it. You can open the door from the inside and it will stay open. Reset the pipe switches so that water flows to the pump device at the bottom of the circular stairway. Walk up the stairs to the elevator next to the stairs and ride it to the upper tree level.

There is a red page, a blue page, and the right half of a note to be found here, along with various clues to the behaviour of the former occupants. When you are ready to leave, make your way to the wooden walkways and reset the switch so that water flows to the pump device at the end of the dead-end walkway. Pull the handle on the pump and the bridge to the other section of walkway will appear. Follow it to another elevator. Follow the wooden walkway (not the one you came here on) until you find a crank. Turning this will extend the pipe across the gap. Go back to the pipe switches and direct the flow of water to the path that leads to the temporary pipe across the gap, which leads to the last elevator. Take this elevator up to a small room where the Myst book that transports you back to the Library can be found. Put the page in the same coloured book and read it to get more of the story. Return via the Myst book in the Large Tree to get the other page. Don't forget to copy down the right half of the note so you can match it up with the left half when you find it.

BATTLE FORCE

Zenobi Public Domain

Amiga (£1.49) including postage and packing

Unknown clandestine terrorists have captured moon station Alpha, vital to the defence of earth and all attempts to reach it have failed. Now all communications have been lost. It's up to you as the nearest agent, to restore communications and allow an assault craft to land to retake the base.

A promising enough start to this Amos created adventure and after an opening screen with music you're presented with an outline of your task and then the first location - Hmm let's see, nicely laid out, good description I'll try NORTH - AARGH! instant death. "Game over, Man" screams the sound fx, and skulls fill the screen. Unfortunately the game crashes if you die so I have to reload. I'll read the document that comes on the disk to see if there are any special commands I should know about - I see, all pretty straightforward - Hang on - What's this? NO SAVE FACILITY? Can I really be bothered to play an adventure with no way of saving my position? Well in the interest of science (and ASC members) I persevered. Actually the lack of a save facility isn't really a problem because the game is so easy that you could finish it in one sitting. Any sudden death areas are so obvious that you'd be a fool to die except at the start (hint: don't hang around). Excellent location descriptions and a great sense of humour however show that the author, Mark Reynolds, is capable of writing a great game - this isn't it but with encouragement AND a save routine that would allow him to create a larger game with tougher puzzles I'd certainly be interested in seeing his next offering.

ATMOSPH 15/20 - GRAPHICS 10/20 - VOCABULARY 15/20 - PUZZLES 12/20
PSR 13/20 - STAR RATING ? Reviewed by Simon Hurrell

THE BLACK CAULDRON

Sierra

Atari ST, Amiga (£24.99), plus on special offer in selected shops.

If the full name sounds familiar, it's because of the Walt Disney link to the full length animated film of the same name. The tale starts at the cottage of Dallben, the Wizard of Prydain. You are Taran and you have to care for Hen Wen the pig. "A pig?" I hear you cry! This is no ordinary pig, this is a psychic pig who can see into the future. Now the evil Horned King wants this pig for his terrible plans and it is your job to find and destroy the Black Cauldron and take the pig to the Fair-Folk to thwart the Horned King's plans. There are seventy scenes to unfold and explore and some hidden arcade sequences and, even if you have seen the film, it does not stop you from being drawn into the atmosphere of the game. There is a large cast of characters for you to interface with and you do not have to follow the film plot as you may develop your own path to the solution.

ATMOSPH 16/20 - GRAPHICS 10/20 - VOCABULARY 12/20 - PUZZLES 10/20
PSR 14/20 - STAR RATING * Reviewed by Mike Barton

THE END IS NIGH

Zenobi Software

Spectrum 48 tape (£2.99), +3 disk (£3.99), Amiga and PC (£2.99)

Once in a while a game comes along that has "CLASSIC" written all over it. This is not one of them. This game has "DO NOT DISTURB" written all over it! Another way of describing this game is to say it employs (and I'm sure the wages are minimal) schoolboy humour and it left me hoping that if I ever have kids they come up with something better than this. Ouch!

In an immature way I did actually enjoy the game but it could have been so much better if the bad jokes and double entendres had been left out and something else put in - humour for example. The gameplay is actually pretty good and I did enjoy solving the problems, although the vocabulary is very limited and there are some bad bugs in part two.

It's a three part adventure, with all the usual features, no graphics and a plot that takes you behind the bike sheds and back in time in a search for some spares to fix the Ultimate Teleport System. Some solutions are easy, others so obscure as to leave you frustrated. I hope the author IS young. If so then maturity is just around the corner. If not, well

ATMOSPH 10/20 - GRAPHICS N/A - VOCABULARY 8/20 - PUZZLES 12/20**PSR 9/20 - STAR RATING ?**

Reviewed by Simon Husbands

THE BOYD FILE

Zenobi Software

Spectrum tape and Plus D disk (£1.99), +3 disk (£3.49), Amiga (£2.49), PC (£2.99)

"Mr Ford sat there wringing his hands. His sister was missing. I needed this case like I needed toothache, but the rent wasn't paying itself." It's a shame our hero Luther Bailey, Private Eye, didn't settle for the toothache and go to the dentist instead of accepting the case as it would have saved me reviewing what can only be described politely as a very dull game.

You play the part of the aforementioned Mr. Bailey in search of his client's relative in a kind of downtown Chicago type setting. However any attempt at atmosphere is destroyed by some truly awful graphics which, despite all my efforts, I couldn't turn off. Add to that an unresponsive parser which constantly told me "That wasn't possible, Mac" and I'm afraid you've got a candidate for the oven at Christmas time. I know this sounds harsh as the game will only cast you a couple of quid, but I've played quite a few Zenobi adventures recently and have got a rough idea of the general standard expected. THE BOYD FILE, I'm afraid, doesn't meet them.

ATMOSPH 7/20 - GRAPHICS 8/20 - VOCABULARY 8/20 - PUZZLES 12/20**PSR 8/20 - STAR RATING 0**

Reviewed by Simon Hurrell



