

QuestBusters™

The Adventurer's Newsletter

Vol. II, # 4

April, 1985

The of Kadash

The latest entry in the "shoot-'em-up in a maze game" category, The Sword of Kadash looks sharp and plays fast. The setting is Persia, where you have been captured by desert brigands who will spare your life only if you retrieve the enchanted sword of Kadash. It's stashed within the catacombs of the Fortress of the Dragon, a 200-room maze lined with monsters and treasure. Inside the maze...

...not so fast -- first you'll have to copy the main character disk onto a blank disk to create a scenario disk with which the game is actually played. The only choice you make in the process is to pick one of three skill levels, which determines the number of times you'll be resurrected after the monsters kill you. Commodore owners need only copy the master disk once, but Apple gamers will have to create a new character each time the current one dies -- which takes about three minutes with one disk drive (less if you have two).

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

Your warrior can be controlled with a joystick or keyboard. The eight keys surrounding the "K" key facilitate moving in those directions. In key mode, you hit the space bar to fire and the return key to cast a spell. With joystick control on the Commodore, the button fires and the space bar casts a spell. Apple owners enjoy the most convenient control: with one joystick button for firing and another for spell-casting, Kadash becomes a "lean back

in the chair and blast away" game that's great for lazy orc-slayers. From the keyboard, you can freeze the action while in either mode.

You must explore the maze for more weapons, spells, and treasure -- all instrumental in amassing enough experience and hit points to survive long enough to complete the main goal of finding the sword of Kadash. When your character moves through a door on the edge of the screen, the next room or tunnel is quickly displayed after a 2.5 second wait for disk access. You get an aerial view of the maze and a profile of your character as he runs through the green-bricked rooms and corridors. No sound effects accompany his steps, but the warrior's legs jog up and down and his arms swing frenetically.

DRESSED TO KILL

At the outset, he's armed with a dagger, a shield and five spells. Spells have only one effect, to temporarily paralyze the enemy. More powerful weapons -- morningstars, axes, +3 swords and the like -- can be found in the maze. To pick up a weapon, you just touch it. If the new one is more powerful, it replaces the old one. Some weapons and spell scrolls are cursed, and you must find an object that look like an Egyptian ankh to remove the curse. You'll also run across keys that open up secret doors and passageways. Chests full of treasure are worth more experience, and hit points lost in battle can be replenished by touching a "healer" box.

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Adventure • Hotline

King's Quest II for the IBM PC and jr should out in the next two weeks, according to Sierra's John Williams. Starring King Grahame (hero of the original game), the sequel features similar animation and hi-res graphics, but Williams says "it looks better because we got a better animator, Mark Crowe." The game will eventually be converted for 128K Apples. Already on the shelves, Sierra's Macintosh version of Ultima II recently scored as the first role-playing game to be converted for that machine.

The next one out of the maze will be Penguin's MacXyphus (May), which displays hit points with pie charts! (What's next, a war game with *exploding* pie charts?) Sir-Tech says the Mac version of Wizardry I probably won't be out until July, and the same goes for Wizardry IV: The Return of Werdna.

Other new conversions to look for: Penguin's Xyphus should be ready for the Commodore soon. Macintosh versions of a dozen of Scott Adams' earliest all-text adventures, including Savage Island I and II, have been packed onto one disk for \$49.95. Electronic Arts' Adventure Construction Set is being brought over to Apple, Atari and IBM, and should be available by mid-year. In addition to awarding three \$1,000 prizes for best games designed with ACS, EA will sell copies of the winning adventures and all other entries for "cost of disk duplication and handling."

Mark Blank says Infocom is making "continuing improvements" on their parser, not developing a completely new one. Speaking of parsers, the first Penguin game with their new full-sentence parser is aimed for July-August.

Rumor of the Month: Top secret negotiations for Questron II are currently underway at an undisclosed location in Geneva, Switzerland.

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Sword of Kadash

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

To help you lose those hit points in battle, scores of skeletons, snakes, warriors, spiders and other creatures haunt the maze. They're also well-animated: spiders scuttle, bugs crawl, and the warriors swing axes and brandish swords as they bear down on you. You can simply run for the nearest door -- the monsters never chase you into an adjoining room -- or stand your ground and fight. When you fire at a monster, three arrows fly across the screen. You've got to hit the enemy enough times to kill him before he reaches you and attacks. You lose hit points as long as your character is in physical contact with a creature. Until the first three arrows hit the monster or disappear, you can't fire again -- but a rapid-fire effect is possible if he's close enough. Your supply of arrows is unlimited.

The arrows ricochet off some walls and can inflict damage on your character as well, so you can't always just stand there and blast away. But this feature can be used against the fiends, by bouncing shots at different angles off the walls to shoot around corners. No matter which weapon you're using, the arrows show its effect. Simple sound effects punctuate the combat scenes.

Victory in combat nets you extra experience points. As more are earned, you advance through higher levels, in which case your armor rating and number of hit points are also boosted. A four-line text window at the bottom always tells how many experience points you've got, your current weapon and armor, and remaining number of hit points (2,000 to start with) and spells. It also shows experience points the name of the object you just picked up, but doesn't say how many lives your character has on hand.

Besides being protected by visible creatures, some rooms and treasures are also booby-trapped. When you grab a chest or scroll, a

batch of monsters may materialize, or a shower of arrows might shoot across the room at you. Another challenge involves getting past the tall, thin discs that move vertically up and down to block some rooms and halls. You'll often have to run a gauntlet of several such discs, moving at different speeds, so timing is crucial. A few rooms contain monsters, discs, *and* arrow-traps. And in some, there are invisible walls that you have to feel your way through.

BORN AGAIN, BUT NOT SAVED

Your character is reincarnated in the same room immediately after being killed. All the monsters and traps disappear from the room at this point-- but so do your hard-earned experience points, armor rating, and everything else except your original weapons. When all your lives have been exhausted, a skull and crossbones signals that the game is over. Though a game can be saved in progress and continued later, it is erased from the disk when you restore it, which means that Apple gamers will have to go through the entire three minute process of creating a new character disk. C-64 owners have a back-up option that allows them to resume a saved game without erasing it, but with the Apple version you face the arduous task of making it through the entire maze with only four lives. And don't think you can just yank the disk out of the drive when it looks like you're about to get killed, either. If this trick is attempted, the program clobbers your character disk and makes it useless.

Fortunately, the layout of the maze and placement of its contents and inhabitants never varies, so you can gradually learn how to defeat each room's monsters and traps, and where to find secret doors and use the keys. Mapping is a must. There's a lot of fun and excitement in doing so, but I'm not fond of having all my experience points and possessions wiped out at death in this "all or nothing" approach to role-

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Below the Root

By Ronald Wartow

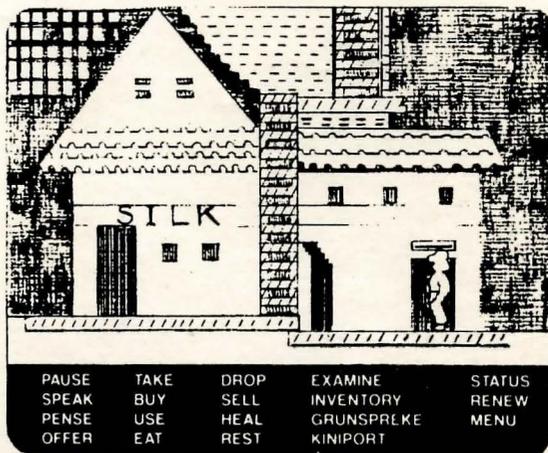
[Ronald Wartow is GAMESIG Chairman of Washington Apple Pi, a 5000-member Apple Users' Group in the Washington, D.C., area.]

Below the Root packs an impressive wallop, particularly considering the \$25 price. The game combines elements of adventure, strategy and fantasy role-playing, and throws in a few wrinkles of its own. The result is an integrated, cohesive program that's hallmarked by a welcome ease of playability.

It's a computer game sequel to the Green-Sky trilogy, Zilpha Keatley Snyder's series of future-fantasy novels. The story takes place in Green-Sky, a fantasy setting inhabited by a magical mixture of good and evil forces, all of whom live, work, play and scheme in an environment comprised of huge trees, dark tunnels, bushes, flowers, fruit and cuddly and not-so-cuddly animals. The Green-Sky world is depicted well with effective graphics and pleasing sound effects. As the game opens, Green-Sky is teetering on the verge of chaos unless a quester can embark and succeed on a precarious mission to save the land. Essentially, the mission involves choosing one of five pre-rolled characters, extensively exploring Green-Sky, interacting with the human and animal inhabitants, increasing your attributes, and discovering the secret to success.

Your character starts the game with relatively low spirit (magic) and stamina limits, which must be raised to complete the quest. Unlike many role-playing games, BTR does not reward the all-too-familiar "perseverance and constant monster-whomping to invincibility" syndrome. Rather, the increases in your attributes are tightly woven into the story line and evolve from direct contact

with the setting's many characters and objects -- which demands logic and strategy.



Playing BTR is a breeze, for the joystick controls all kinds of movement: walking, running, jumping obstacles, climbing vines and ladders, as well as an almost ethereal flying routine that is occasionally necessary to traverse the trees. (Keyboard control is also available.) The animation is very effective and realistic. Your character's movement is similar to that in Aztec, but this game's characters are larger and full-bodied. The joystick also operates a 19-command menu containing the typical adventure and role-playing actions like examine, speak, heal, inventory, status, rest, and sell. This is all reminiscent of Questron and lets you concentrate on the game without having to remember which keys to press.

Like many role-playing games, BTR requires you to get your rest and nourishment. However, rather than dying as a result of such neglect, you are unceremoniously whisked back to your home in a tree. In fact, you don't die at all in BTR. The worst thing that happens is that you may be temporarily imprisoned or stuck, in which case you choose "Renew" from the menu and it's back home again to continue.

Most of the characters start with the ability to pense -- read people's minds. As you increase

your spirit skills, pensing evokes messages, the ability to make tree limbs grow and form bridges so you can travel between trees, the ability to heal yourself, and finally, the ability to teleport objects or yourself. The Green-Sky world, where the trees have stores, pavilions, buildings and temples, has its own special vocabulary. For example, a shuba is the Superman-like cape needed to fly amidst the trees, a nid-place is a home, and a grund is a tree.

Although the concise but complete documentation comes with an unfinished simulated parchment map of Green-Sky for you to fill in as you explore, mapping isn't really necessary. There is some measure of inventory management required, but not much. The game has a "50-day" time limit to succeed but I found this no obstacle to playing (and both times I completed the game, I had over 25 days to spare). Real-time to complete would be five-ten hours for experienced gamers and about twice that for less experienced gamers. Five games in progress may be easily saved to the game disk. The game can be replayed using different characters and can be more challenging if you start with characters possessing low spirit and stamina limits, (although there are no real random changes from game to game).

I must mention what I consider to be the one major flaw in an otherwise tight game. The ending is much too abrupt. Given the smooth flow of development of the setting and characters throughout, I was hoping for something more elaborate. Though the game is recommended for players as young as 10, don't write it off as a kid's game. Because it's not overly simplistic, Below the Root is equally entertaining for adults.

COMPUTER: APPLE, IBM PC & jr, C-64

SKILL LEVEL: Novice/Intermediate

SAVES: 5 (on game disk)

PRICE: \$24.95

MANUFACTURER: Windham Classics
(Spinnaker)



SWAP SHOP

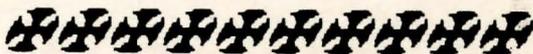
Got a houseful of old adventures? Trade 'em off with a free ad in the next issue. (And let us know when to delete it.)

Will trade Sorcerer or Gruds in Space for complete copy of Robots of Dawn, Fahrenheit 451, Shadowkeep, Dragonworld, Adventure Construction Set or Mindwheel. (Apple only.)
Mark Fujimoto, 1646 Komo Mai Dr., Pearl City, HI 96782.

Want to trade original copies (Apple) of Zork I, Zork II, and Starcross. Complete with documentation, but no boxes. Can also trade Infocom maps and clue hint books for these games. Looking for: Planetfall, Sorcerer, Hitchhiker's Guide, or Coveted Mirror. Write before sending game: Philip R. Christensen, Nairobi (ID), Department of State, Washington, DC 20520.

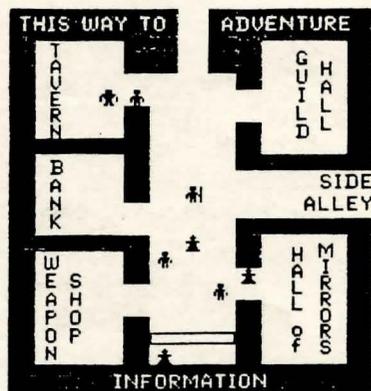
Xyphus (Apple) for sale. \$20. Write first: Gayle Ann Stanford, 3281 Foxgate Drive, Memphis, TN 38115.

I have the following games for sale: The Wizard and the Princess (\$30), Ulysses and the Golden Fleece (\$30), a complete Eamon set (\$5), Prisoner and Prisoner II (\$15 each), Sheila (\$10), Galactic Revolution (\$35), Wizardry (\$35), and ET Phone Home Adventure (\$10). All are for Apple. Scottie Freeman, Knott Route, Big Springs, TX 79720.



SuperEamon

Eamon, the all-text role-playing game system for Apple computers, is still going strong after eight years in the public domain. Eamon's Main Hall limits you to five "housekeeping" activities (such as creating a character and purchasing weapons) that are conducted via all-text menus. Super Eamon replaces the old Main Hall, adding color graphics and some convenient features to the basic activities and offering lots of new places to visit and things to do between adventures. Above all, Super Eamon gives you plenty of fresh and useful ways to spend your hard-earned gold.

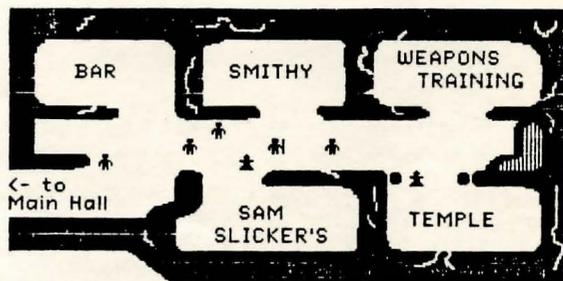


Welcome to the
MAIN HALL
of
Super Eamon

To move around,
use I/J-K/M
or Arrow Keys.

When creating a new character, you now get a dozen bonus points to distribute among the three attributes of strength, hardiness and agility (as in Wizardry and Ultima). And the Irishman who works the desk at the Free Adventurer's Guild, will display a list of all the characters on the disk if you type in *READ* instead of a name. Of course, your favorite characters from other Eamon disks can easily be transferred to Super Eamon's Main Hall.

After loading an existing character or generating a new one, you see an aerial view of the Main Hall. Little wizards, warriors and guards are constantly scurrying about from room to room. Cursor keys control the movement



This is Super Eamon's
SIDE ALLEY

Use Arrow keys
or I/J-K/M keys
to move around.

of your character, who must avoid bumping into others or run the risk of being pickpocketed. Enter any of the rooms, and a hi-res illustration depicts the new location. The clean, colorful graphics resemble those from Cranston Manor and other early Sierra adventures. Merchants use your character's name when addressing you, and a bit of spot animation is occasionally employed. The banker, Shylock McFeeney, smiles when asking if you want to make a deposit, then frowns if you say no. And he might offer to loan you some gold at 20% interest. There are also sporadic sound effects in some places.

Hokus Tokus hangs out at the tavern, where you'll finally get to buy a beer. Abby Cadabra may sell you a magic spell if Hokus is out. In the weapon shop, you can sell weapons as well as buy them, a convenience missing in the original Main Hall. A "Hall of Mirrors" displays your character's complete statistics, and you can hit the escape key any time to recall an inventory of weapons, gold and the number of spells. If you're ready to go adventuring, just move due north through the door marked "This Way to Adventure." You'll be prompted to insert the scenario disk, which should load at least 50% faster due to the custom DOS used by the program. (Playing speed is not affected.) Or you can return to the Guild Hall, where the Irishman will give you a free room to sleep in

until your next visit to the wonderful world of Super Eamon.

INSIDE THE SIDE ALLEY

Don't sack out yet, at least until you've visited the Side Alley. When you enter the Side Alley's door from the Main Hall, another overhead screen shows a half-dozen totally new locations, which offer some useful activities. The priests at the Temple of Tash will resurrect any dead characters (for a fee, of course). If you're running low on gold, steal some from the Temple. But beware the curse of Tash if you're caught: you may lose all your hardiness, or your weapons may crumble to dust.

With Super Eamon you can scoop up a handful at the temple and, if the gods of luck are smiling, turn it into a fortune by gambling at Shellie's. Then take the windfall to another stall right down the hall and pay the Smithy to strengthen your weapons or make them easier to wield. At Sam Slicker's, you can buy exotic weapons that can usually only be obtained on an adventure. One of the most practical new features is Weapons Training, run by YD038. After paying a deposit of 500 pieces of gold and a non-returnable fee, you can practice combat with an assortment of carnivorous houseplants, demons and other creatures. Victory results in a boost in your armor and weapon ratings. Die and you'll be revived, but YD038 keeps your deposit.

With the program, you also get an improved version of the Beginner's Cave, which runs a little faster and conceals some new monsters and treasures. Super Eamon is copyrighted but not copy-protected, so you can make back-up copies. The design team says they've found only one Eamon adventure that won't run properly with the new Main Hall, and that users should let them know of any that don't. They say "chances are we'll be able to supply you with an improved version of that adventure that *will* work."

Super Eamon is an excellent way to enhance character generation, management, and develop-

The Proprietor, Marcos Cavielli, greets you warmly: "LITTLE GREEN! Old pal! How are you?" You answer...



ment, and I highly recommend it to all members of the Free Adventurer's Guild. The only drawback? You may find Super Eamon's Main Hall so fascinating that you'll spend more time hanging around the Hall than you do adventuring.

COMPUTER: Apple with 64K

PLANNED CONVERSIONS: None

SKILL LEVEL: Not Applicable

PRICE: \$20 plus \$2 postage (NY residents add state sales tax)

MANUFACTURER: Little Green Software, POB 459, Glenwood Landing, NY 11547.



AND THE WINNER IS:

James Waldbillig, who won a copy of LUCIFER'S REALM in February's contest. You can win a new adventure, too. Just send in the name of your favorite adventure game programmer and kind of computer you own. Winner to be chosen at random, deadline May 15, 1985. Void where prohibited by law.

LEGACY

In the first Macintosh-only graphic adventure, Legacy's pictures cover the top two-thirds of the screen. Illustrations are much more finely detailed than those in Penguin's Transylvania. A text and command window appear below the graphics. The five-line text window names the current location. You'll hear no sound effects and probably won't find much to laugh about, for the text lacks that twisted sense of humor usually associated with a good adventure.

According to this variation on the classic "sorcerer seeks orb" scenario, you are Dagon Bathraal, a sorcerer whom the Wizards of the Universe appoint to recover a mystic orb hidden in the Drab Castle on the far side of the evil Secryll Forest. Your quest begins on a path that wanders through the friendly trees of the Frimlock Forest and soon leads across a rickety bridge over the Misty River. Along the way, you will discover assorted puzzles whose solutions generally involve magic.

Included as part of the documentation, a spellbook tells how to cast five spells. Beside the customary magic words, you'll have to gather certain objects needed for the ritual. To cast Mandukaal, for example, requires that you first draw a triangle on the ground with a certain type of powder, then say the magic word entragon.

SO ARREST ME!

The parser understands full and multiple sentences, and you can mix directions with commands: "n then e then open door". But its responses are often terse. When I said "put dust on tree," the program said "dropped." When I said "board broom," it replied "Illegal use of noun." I half expected the Parser Police to leap from the screen and arrest me. And the parser chews up about 12 seconds of disk access to respond to a command -- even with the pictures turned off. (Why bother turning off the

pictures, if it doesn't speed up the game?) This gets tedious after a few minutes and represents the game's real handicap. (Most graphic adventures run faster on the C-64 than Legacy does on the Mac.)

Another annoying situation involves resuming a saved game. A two-disk game, Legacy's Part Two commences on the far side of the Misty River. This is the source of another drawback. If you want to resume a game that was saved during part two, you must begin in part one and cross the river before resuming the saved game.

MAC-FEATURES

Some features of the Mac's operating system have been conveniently implemented. Options in on the menu bar include inventory, direction, and score. (Top score is 200 points.) Instead of typing in "n" or "go north," you can select a direction by moving the mouse down the menu to highlight "north" and releasing the mouse button. Unlike Infocom adventures, Legacy's text window has a scroll bar like MacWrite's, so you can scroll back to review the last thirty lines. The Note Pad and Clock, the most useful desk accessories to an adventurer, are available, but these are the only ones. What's missing: Copy & paste is impossible, so you can't copy a frequently-used command into the clipboard to avoid having to retype it every time. You can't change fonts, either. It's all in 12-point Geneva, take it or leave it.

Leave it, unless you're more concerned with the art than the adventure. Though it's not a bad little game, Legacy's story and puzzles simply aren't interesting enough to compensate for the fact that the program is so slow. **SA**

COMPUTER: Macintosh

PLANNED CONVERSIONS: None

SKILL LEVEL: Novice

SAVES: 1 (on game disk)

PRICE: \$39.95

MANUFACTURER: Challenger Software

AdventureDisk

Adventure Disk is a bimonthly, disk-based newsletter/bulletin board devoted to adventure and RPGs for Apple owners. After you choose an item from one of the menus, the appropriate file is loaded and then viewed one page (screenload) at a time. Some files are only one two pages long, while other may consist of eleven or more. Each issue also has one or two simple text games and other adventure-related offerings.

The AdventureDisk section begins with a message from editor Jeff Bianco that describes the current issue's contents. In issue #05, this section also tells about the hard copy AdventureBook that accompanies each issue -- with this disk, you get two maps of Eamon adventures. The various sections, such as Solutions, etc., are listed in the menu.

The AdventureCenter functions like a "Waiting for Duffy" on disk. First you type in your name. Then you can read the messages and requests for help from other subscribers or leave a message for the board for for the AdventureDisk staff. Hello, CompuServe? That's right, it works just like an electronic bulletin board, with the small hitch that you have to copy the disk and return it if you added message. Then your message shows up in the next issue's bulletin board, so other subscribers can read it and respond. You can run your address in the message.

THE EAMON CONNECTION

On the other side of each disk, you'll find one of the numerous Eamon all-text role-playing games, which are all in the public domain. In addition to Operation Crab Key (Eamon #71), issue #05 included a pair of Eamon utilities. One resurrects dead characters and the other enables you to create custom characters. There are also a number of bug fixes for the Eamon

master disk and the Beginner's Cave. One selection on the menu lists all 81 Eamon titles, which may be ordered from AdventureDisk. These are all user-written, and the Master 2.0 disk required for playing them has a Dungeon Designer program for writing your own.

SOLUTIONS, TOO

In the AdventureDisk section, you can page through a walkthrough of several games in each issue. Issue #05 had about a half-dozen solutions to games such as Zork III and the first half of Hitchhiker's Guide, while #04 had the complete solutions to all three Wizardrys. A list of adventures for which solutions are available is on-hand, so subscribers can request that specific ones be published in future issues.

While browsing through the disk, you can flip to the beginning or end of the current file, skip to the next or previous page, switch to a bolder, brighter font, print hard copy of the current screen and toggle the music on or off. The theme songs vary from issue to issue, with lots of well-orchestrated harmony and special sound effects each time you "turn" a page.

A unique assortment of adventure-oriented services and features in an unusual package, AdventureDisk will be most valuable to Eamon fans. Others may be more interested in the walkthroughs. "AdventureCenter" will interest adventurers who've always wanted to tap into an electronic bulletin board but who don't own a modem. AdventureDisk is weakest in its review section. Number 5 didn't review any games, and #4 covered only two: Ali Baba & the 40 Thieves, and a well-written and knowledgeable review of Questron.

Computer: Apple

Planned Conversions: None

Price: \$9 to start, \$6 a month,
\$69.95 a year, \$89.95 one-way

Manufacturer: AdventureDisk
POB 216 Mercer Island, WA 98040

Adventure Master vs. AdventureWriter

These programs allow you to create and incorporate graphics into a standard adventure with a two-word parser. AdventureMaster has a joystick-controlled graphics editor, with the stick directing a pen across the screen while it draws in any of four colors (if you count black as a color). The picture is saved to disk and will be displayed when the player enters the room it depicts. (With both programs, you can only use graphics to illustrate locations, not objects.)

AdventureWriter offers a wider range of colors and also call in the "fill" feature to quickly color in a portion of the picture. If you've got a Koalapad, you can draw a much more detailed picture faster, then select a menu option that converts it for use by Writer. It also allows you to put more pictures in a game and definitely outperforms Master in the graphics arena. (Sound effects and music are on tap with Writer, but not with Master.)

If you don't care about graphics, your choice will hinge on whether you want an easy-to-use program or one that's tougher to work with but produces more complex adventures. AdventureMaster is the fast and easy one, for it is set up like a familiar database program. When you choose "room description" from the 10-option main menu, it displays a form to fill out. You're prompted to key in the necessary information on what can happen there and under what conditions. To hide an object in a room, you specify the object or key phrase a player must use in order to discover the item, as well as a message that hints to the object's presence in the room. A different form is used for each command that can result in an action. Other steps in writing a game are handled in the same manner.

AdventureWriter is also menu-driven, but trickier. Its main menus lists 17 options. Instead of filling out forms, you have to master 36 codewords used to write "conditionals," which are like "IF THEN" statements in BASIC. These form a mini-language devoted to adventure programming, with words like AT, CARRIED,

GET, and MESSAGE. It differs from Master by requiring you to put all the conditions in a "vocabulary action table." For each two-word command you want to create a response for -- "examine tree," for example -- you type in the phrase, then key in the codewords that represent the conditions. "AT 4 CARRIED 2 MESSAGE 12" would mean: IF the player says "examine tree" and is at room 4 and carrying object 2, then display message number 12." Frequently used messages such as "I'm hungry" are already part of the database, and you can make up new ones appropriate to your adventure.

Both games have built-in vocabularies that may be edited or expanded with new words. Writer's allows you to indicate which words are synonyms for others, which is convenient. With this program, your game can have up to 255 words with the same definition, 252 locations and 255 objects. But with Master, you're limited to about 50 rooms, 50-100 commands with their respective messages/responses, and 32 objects. [But you can only place one object in each room.] If less than 10 rooms use pictures, you'll have room for more rooms, though.

Finally, games created with either program can be saved in a format so they can be played as stand-alones that don't require a player to own the original program. The big difference in the way they play is that Master stores everything on disk and accesses the drive after each command. Writer keeps everything but the pictures in RAM, so it plays faster. Both allow you to keep track of the score and save games in progress, but only Writer makes it possible to devise truly elaborate puzzles. Master is probably better for younger adventure-weavers. [The C-64 Writer is the only version with graphics, others are being converted. Master requires 64K for graphics, 48K for text-only.]

Computer: Apple, C-64, IBM PC, Atari

Price: Master, \$40; Writer, \$44.95

Manufacturer: Master, CBS; Writer, CodeWriter

Sword of Kadash

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3]

playing -- it undermines the sense of character development that's the true spirit of the genre.

When reviewing Gemstone Warrior last month, I said it lacked the depth and substance of a pure role-playing game. Well, Kadash is even shallower in this respect. The documentation consists of a single sheet of paper. Gemstone, on the other hand, has a 12-page manual. The key difference between the two is the degree of magic involved. And though both are shoot-'em-ups, Gemstone has more replay value. Kadash, however, also includes some arcade-style challenges like those in LodeRunner. Lots of dodging, running, ducking -- so timing and reflexes are important. And with the same layout of monsters, treasures and traps each time you play the game, it plays somewhat like Xyphus and Temple of Apshai: You might get kicked around the first few times you enter a new area, but will eventually learn what to do.

Apple owners should remember that they won't be able to truly save a game in progress, a serious disadvantage in any role-playing game. The same is true of Gemstone, but it doesn't require you to go through the time-consuming process of creating a new character disk when your warrior dies his final death] Kadash is a lot of fast-paced fun, but best-suited for two-drive Apple systems for this reason. The Commodore version, however, is much smoother, since you can save a game in progress with the back-up option, and only have to create the character disk once. **SA**

COMPUTER: Apple (48K), Commodore 64

PLANNED CONVERSIONS: Atari

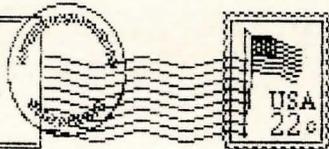
SKILL LEVEL: Intermediate

SAVES: 1

PRICE: \$34.95

MANUFACTURER: Penguin Software

Letters to
the Editor

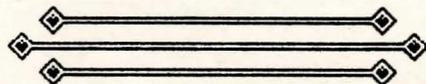


Dear QB:

When you do contests that are crossword puzzles, is it ok to Xerox the puzzle or reproduce it some other way so I can preserve the newsletter?

Mark Fujimoto

Sure, but the response to the crossword puzzles has been slow. That's why the last few contests have been simple random drawings. If you'd like to see more puzzles, let us know.



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KEY WAITING FOR DUFFY

Duffy's gone to the gelli for a liverwurst on rye, but if you're hopelessly stuck and need help, send in a brief description of the situation and it will appear in the next issue

Does anybody out there know how to get the last 50 points in Hitchhiker? I'm desperate!! P.S. I can help people on Sorcerer, Planetfall, Witness and some non-Infocom games. Mark Fujimoto, 1646 Komo Mai Dr., Pearl City, HI 96782.

I would like to know the correct combination of the last doors in the expert mode of Amazon. Also, I can help anyone with Mask of the Sun or Dark Crystal. Stanford Lin, 1702 Aftonshire Dr., Greensboro, NC 27410.

I'm a novice adventurer and need all the help I can get with Zork I. C. Raudonis, 45 Pelham Rd., Hudson, NH 03051.

I can help anyone with Zork I -- free! David Aultfather, 13209 Dossau Rd., Austin, TX 78753.

Can help anyone in Enchanter, Zork and Original Adventure for \$5 + map. Need a clue on Ice Maze in the new Adventure. And am looking for CP/M Infocom games for 8.5" disk. David Aultfather, 13209 Dossau Rd., Austin, TX 78753.

Zapped by Xyphus: Does anyone know best combination of characters, if there are more than one Xiphoid in the first scenario, and how to kill the Werefalcons to the south? Duane Zumwalt, 7216 Wakefield Ct., Highland, CA 92346.



FREE GAMES!

Every issue of QuestBusters™ features a contest in which you have a chance to win a new adventure game. (Grues, gruds and their relatives are prohibited from entering any QB contests.)

FREE ADS!

The Swap Shop section is the perfect place to trade or sell your old adventures. Subscribers can simply send in their ads and we run them free.

NEXT ISSUE:

The long-awaited Ring Quest, a graphic adventure from Penguin, is first on the line-up for the May issue. Then we'll look at a pair of role-playing games recently converted for the Macintosh, Xyphus and Ultima II.

If you're more interested in reading about *new* role-playing games, don't miss the in-depth review of Phantasie. From Strategic Simulations, it's for the Apple and Commodore 64 systems. We'll also take a close look at Swiss Family Robinson, a graphic game produced by Tom Snyder for Spinnaker's line of Windham Classics. Two new titles that will be reviewed *if* they show up in time, Moebius and Gateway.

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