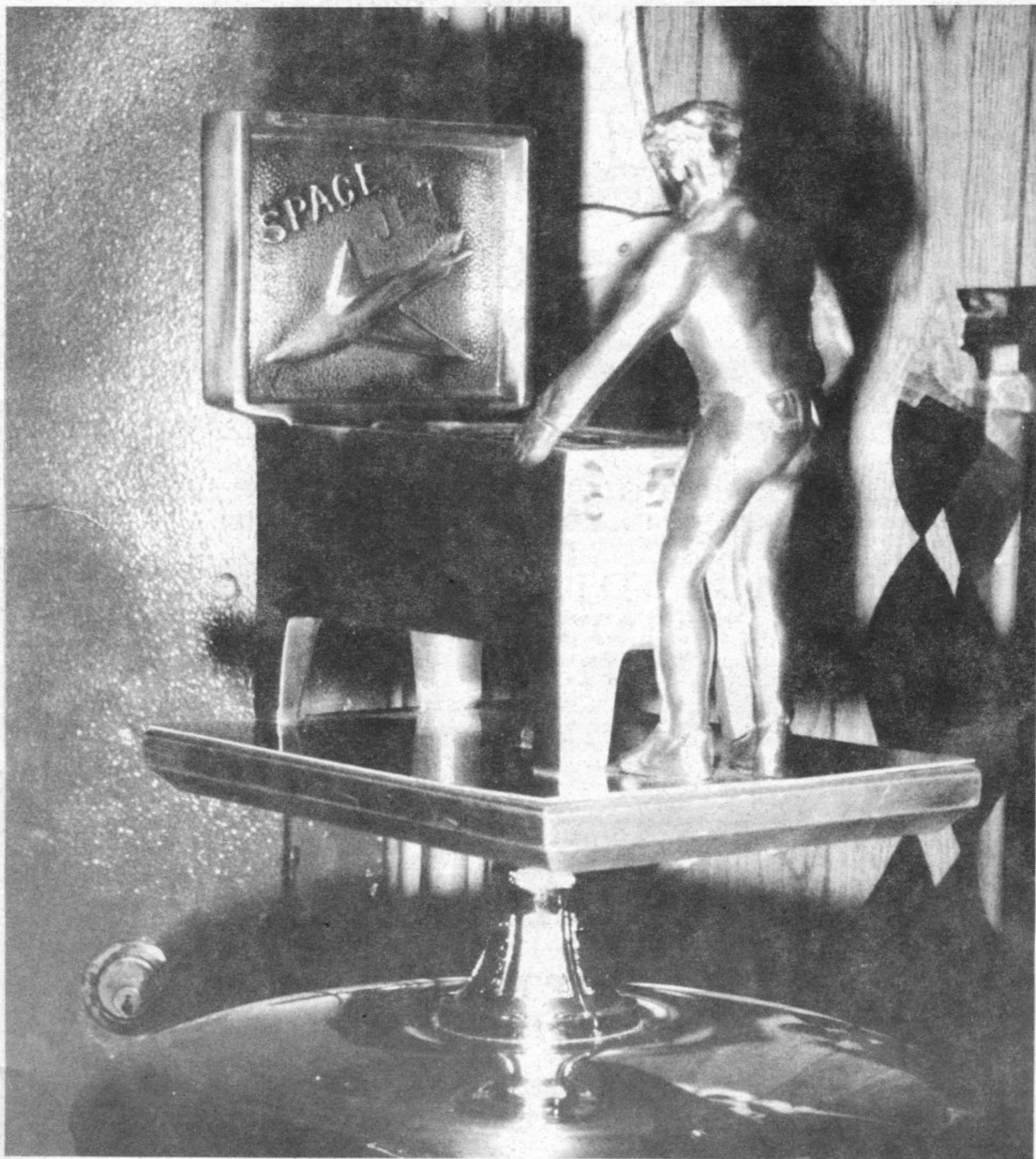


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SPECIAL WHEN LIT

I live and dream pinball 24 hours a day. That's why I've decided to publish this newsletter. I know that there is a community of pinball players who feel the same way that I do about the game. A large and enthusiastic community. **THE FLIP SIDE** will be for you. It will be about pinball, and only about pinball. It will create, for the first time, a forum for the players and lovers of the game to state their ideas, perspectives and accomplishments. **THE FLIP SIDE** will be up to date and as interactive as pinball itself. So, if you have something to say about pinball, I want to hear it, and put it out there so that other players or designers can hear it and respond to it. In addition to the open exchange of ideas, I hope that **THE FLIP SIDE** can meet the goals I envision for it:

- To explore the conception and design process of pinball games by initiating a dialogue with the legendary game designers.
- To inform players of important national and regional developments in the pinball universe. What are the release dates of the new machines? Where are the best leagues? What are the upcoming tournaments and charity events? What's the prize money? If there's pinball gossip, we'll share that with you, too.
- Want to know who's got the high score on any game? High scores faxed or sent to **THE FLIP SIDE** will be published and updated regularly.
- An important feature of **THE FLIP SIDE** will be the game dissections by some of the best in the business. We'll ask pinball aces from New York to Hawaii how they put together killer sequences and monster scores. In this issue, check out PAPA runner up Rob Rosenhouse's review of **FISH TALES**. We'll also ask designers like Mark Ritchie how to play their game.
- **THE FLIP SIDE** will publish reviews of total family amusement centers, arcades and other places to play. If players want to sound off about playing conditions, or compliment location owners or operators, **THE FLIP SIDE** is the place to do it. You can bet the operators will be reading it.
- We'll present historical perspective on "America's Classic Game". Industry giants like Alvin Gottlieb and Steve Kordek will recount the story of the early days, and pinball's colorful rise to its present pre-eminence.
- Most importantly, **THE FLIP SIDE** will exist to be a medium for its subscribers and readers. Tell us what you want to read, what features work and what could be improved. I hope that every reader has an opinion and shares it with us. I hope that every pinball player thinks of themselves as a contributor, or even better, as an editor. I'll be glad to make room for you.

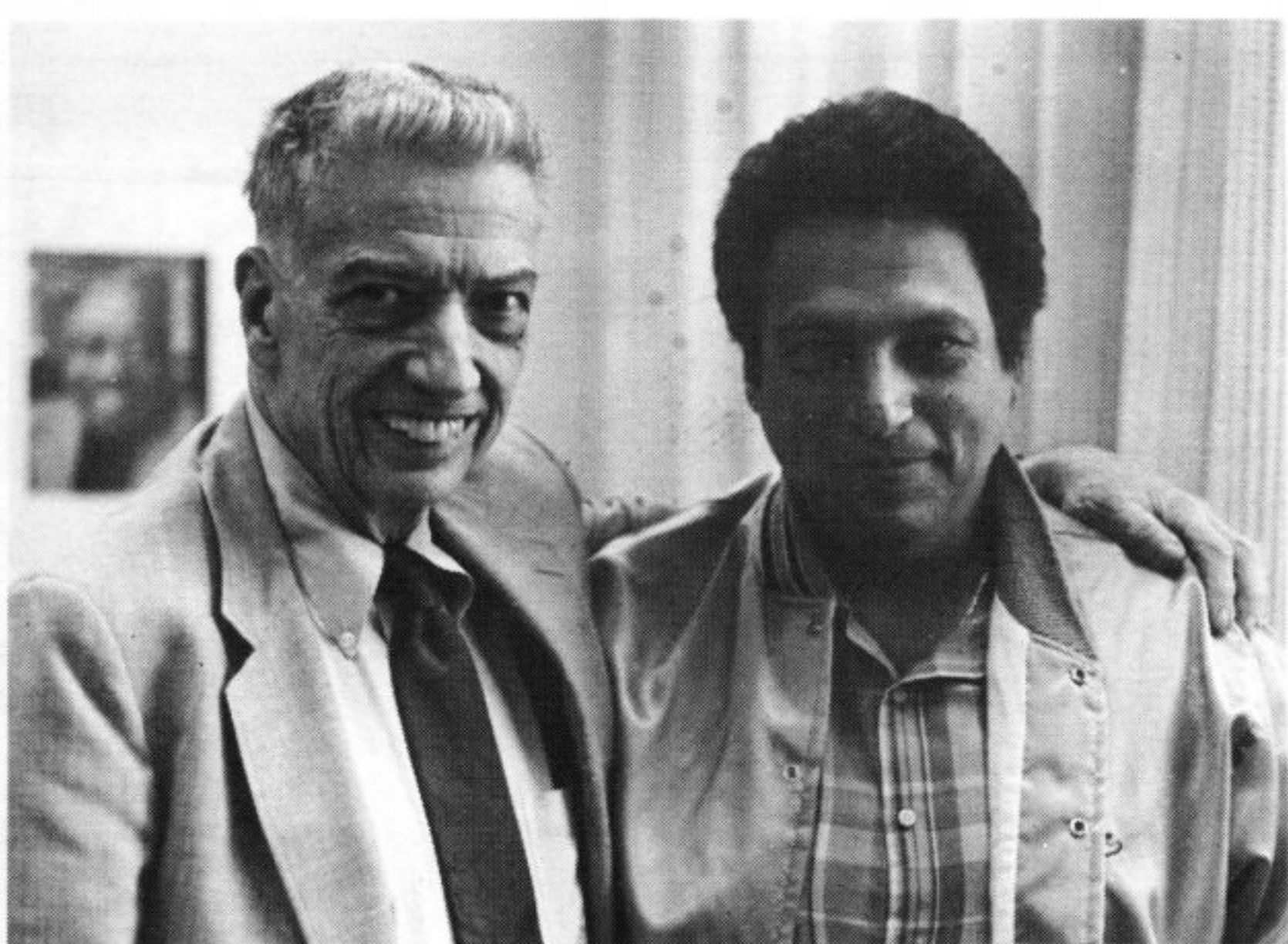
That's the idea. With your support and subscriptions, I promise a lively, exciting and informative look inside the world of pinball, from the point of view of the player. I'm looking forward to it myself.

Steven Epstein

FLIPPER TALES

The influence of pinball on life and friendships

By Steve Epstein



Steve Epstein and the legendary John Hammond

My pinball adventure dates back 35 years ago when I first stepped up to the silver ball at the age of five. A cosmic connection developed almost immediately that has followed me to this day. Not only did I become an avid player, this pleasant diversion became my occupation.

Operating an amusement arcade on Broadway in New York City opened up unique opportunities for me. Through my playing and the business, I have made some wonderful and lasting friendships. The game of pinball has been instrument in all these adventures. This common thread binds me and the other silver ball travelers together.

The first connection was with Roger Sharpe, author of the book *Pinball*, designer of "Sharpshooter" and "Barracora," and noted historian of the entire pinball industry. We met while playing together in 1975. What happened to two strangers while flipping a silver ball can only be described as somewhat magical. A strong bond developed rather quickly on the basis of our play. An understanding and appreciation of each other arose that usually takes years to occur. After I became aware of this phenomenon, other such relationships started. About the same time I became acquainted with Roger, an older gentleman started to become a fairly regular customer. He also was an avid pinball player - playing about two hours a day. As is my custom after seeing someone on a regular basis, I struck up conversations about the games we would be playing. I found out the gentleman's name was John Hammond. Not being familiar with the music industry, the name did not ring a bell. It turned out that John was instrumental in helping launch some notable musicians' careers. The list is long, but a sampling would include jazz greats Lionel Hampton, Teddy Wilson, Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Freddie Green, to modern music giants. These include Aretha Franklin, George Bensen, Bob Dylan, Stevie Ray Vaughn and Bruce Springsteen. We would spend many afternoons playing and talking - mostly about pinball. Occasionally, John would share a story about the many great people he had known. The friendship he had developed with Bruce Springsteen was very close. The magical part of it has to do, of course,

with pinball. When Bruce first sought John out at Columbia Records, he was a totally unknown musician from the New Jersey shore. John gave him an audition and fell in love with his music and the poetry of his lyrics. But the true cement to their relationship came when they discovered a mutual love for pinball. John related how shy and awkward Bruce was and that the discussions about pinball helped create a mutual trust and understanding between them.

Though John passed away some years ago, his presence is still with me. He gave me his friendship and a feeling of importance that I will treasure my whole life.

Being in the middle of Manhattan Island surrounded by Broadway theaters, television studios and recording studios, I get to see many people who are associated with these entertainment media. The faces look familiar when they walk into the arcade, but I have always maintained a policy of not intruding on a celebrity's privacy. Sometimes, however, I find myself developing a casual relationship with certain celebrities who have become more regular visitors to the arcade. This was the case with Lou Reed. When he was filming *One Trick Pony* with Paul Simon, he came in and played a great deal of pinball between takes. As I usually do when given the opportunity, Lou and I began to play pinball together and a special friendship resulted that has lasted to this day. When Lou got married a few years back, we closed the arcade for his wedding party. A few years ago on his album, *New Sensations*, Lou wrote and sang a song called "Down at the Arcade." The song is about the Broadway Arcade and me.

Maybe these things could have happened without the magic of pinball, but I honestly don't think so. There's a common ground that pinball can often provide which is truly unique when it comes to this leisure-time entertainment art form. Whether it's an arcade or the local tavern, pinball machines remain an outstanding attraction with an appeal that transcends simple fun and games.

Flipper Tales originally appeared in Tavern Sports, a former trade magazine that is no longer published.

HAIL THE CONQUERING HERO AT THE PINBALL SHOW '92

By Jim Schelberg
Editor of the pinGame journal

Last June pinball collectors and players gathered from around the country and world at the third annual Pinball Show in Scottsdale, AZ. Many collectors of older pingames are also players of new ones. The tournament held at the show was a chance for many of them to show what they could do.

The preliminaries were held on designer Steve Ritchie's latest game, THE GETAWAY. The finalists played on a slightly older game, a 1986 PIN•BOT. Of course, some show attendees are primarily collectors and won't go near a game with a computer chip and others are primarily players who came for the competition only. One such player was Jym Killy.

Jym finished the event in first place. I was joined by Rob Berk, chairman of Pinball Expo and the Flip Out '92 tournament, and spoke to Jym shortly after his victory.

Jym, from Fountain Valley, California has been playing since he was ten. He is now only 24 years old. His first game was JUNGLE QUEEN and it is still one of his favorites. He told us he had played the tournament game, PIN•BOT, before but not for over two years.

He holds a number of world records as compiled by Electronic Gaming Monthly, a consumer game player magazine published by Steve Harris. He explained that players submit scores to the publication; they are placed in order and current high score records are kept. He holds records on TORPEDO ALLEY and GOLD WINGS, the latter with a score of 162 million points.

After placing seventh in the preliminaries at the Pinball Show, he had a 10 million plus game on PIN•BOT which eventually was enough to win first place. He knew many of the other players were regulars and after seeing how they played THE GETAWAY he wasn't at all sure his PIN•BOT score would hold up.

Jym has been relatively unknown in the competitive circles and seemed to "come out of nowhere" to win this tourney. He said he has a friend who works in Chicago for Atari that keeps him advised on what events are upcoming. He arranged time from work to attend this, his first tournament.

He likes to play one game at a time and concentrate on that game for a while instead of playing a large variety of games at once. He has had less experience on older, electromechanical games but says he does not play them and enjoys all the games he plays.

He feels his success in playing is a combination of eye-hand coordination and dedication to playing. He explained, "Until recently, when work became busy, I played constantly. I don't usually like to listen to music or use ear phones when I play...I

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like to concentrate on the game. I can listen to music anytime."

He said he gives a slight edge for his favorite games to Williams' machines but mentions Premier and Data East as also producing games he likes. He added, "I like certain games, not a specific company."

He is not sure if he will be able to get the time off from his work in ceramic tile installation to travel to many other tournaments, especially those in the east. But he will try to attend Pinball Expo in Chicago and compete in Expo's Flip Out '92. The tournament game will be played on Premier's latest effort, CUE BALL WIZARD which was very well received at a recent industry trade show.



Pinball Show '92 Tournament Champ, Jym Killy (left) is congratulated by show co-ordinator, Bruce Carlton.

PLAYING THE FIELD

LETHAL WEAPON 3

By Steve Baumgarten

Before I go any further, I should state out front my biases. I like anything with the name "Ritchie" on it, and I've been a Williams fan for a good 15 years now. When Data East first came on the pinball scene, I noticed the flash, the sound, the licenses. I also noticed the infamous solid-state flippers, and some very uninspired playfield design. Data East games have always been rules-light and bells-and-whistles heavy; thus, we tend to get games like *THE SIMPSONS*, which look and sound terrific, but play worse than nearly every contemporary Williams and Bally release.

While Data East has been steadily improving with each new offering, it has always seemed to me that more emphasis was put on getting hot new licenses and throwing in the latest in high-tech pinball features (DE was the first with dot-matrix displays; they were first to include solenoid plungers as gimmicky replacements for the standard plunger; their pinball sound system has always been second to none) than was put in designing playable games.

That one-sided focus has changed in recent years, and with *HOOK* it looked like Data East was on the right track. Without moving away from their desire to base games around popular licenses, and without reducing their emphasis on great game sound and music, the company was able to place more emphasis on game design, and the result was actually pretty decent. Not something that might take you away from *THE ADDAMS FAMILY* perhaps, but *HOOK* was nonetheless a very playable game.

And now things have changed in a big way with Data East's latest game, *LETHAL WEAPON 3*. No longer does DE lag behind in playfield design. No longer is their game software bug-ridden and flaky. And no longer can serious pinball enthusiasts afford to overlook Data East's new offerings on the theory that they'll just be another *BATMAN* or *STAR TREK* clone, each designed with some new gimmick to draw in pinball novices, but none with enough attention to game design to interest veteran players.



Now, through dedication to the goal of designing games that appeal to novices and wizards alike; through months of hard work; and through finicky attention to every detail, Data East has produced what is easily the best game they've ever made. It is also, in my opinion, one of the best games of the year. Start with the shot selection, which is as rich as it is in Williams' best games. The playfield itself is single-level, with two "habitrail" tubes to guide the ball from the game's only ramp shot back to the right flipper and from a vertical kick saucer back to the left flipper. Somewhat reminiscent of Williams' wide-open *T2* playfield, it also sports two game-topping loop shots (*T2* has but one, with the left-to-right shot blocked by an upper saucer) which are integral to the game. These shots both relight the left drain kicker and set up a video mode shootout that starts up while you have the ball in play.

At the end of the video mode you're awarded either bonus points, the chance to earn special awards, or mega-points during a scoring "frenzy" mode.

In fact, the "subway" shots (so named because they show display animation of a subway train moving left to right or right to left) each load bullets into your Uzi, prominently displayed on the lower playfield just above the flippers. Once the Uzi is loaded, you're given an opportunity to shoot a bad guy in video mode and collect anywhere from 3 million to 6 million points (depending on how long you wait before shooting). You operate your gun by squeezing the trigger on the game's solenoid plunger, a la *T2*. Yet this video

mode plays *while your ball is still in play!* As with THE GETAWAY, you're told about when to shoot, yet unlike THE GETAWAY, you forfeit your bonus points for waiting too long. In addition, a single squeeze on the trigger won't get you maximum points; for that, you have to empty the gun at just the right time.

Needless to say, a game that requires you to take your hands off the flippers and engage in a shootout while your ball is still in play is going to make as many enemies as it does friends. While I happen to like this feature a lot, I'm aware that many people don't care for it at all. Perhaps as a compromise, the game designers have not given the shootout excessive importance - you could play the game and get a very high score without ever engaging in a single shootout. Yet no one can pretend that it's not fun; and most people give it a try once or twice, even at the cost of losing their ball as they try to do with two hands something that really calls for three.

While the Uzi is the predominant artwork on the playfield, the game overall is quite handsome and features very attractive and distinctive artwork. The backglass is a montage of scenes from LETHAL WEAPON 3, and the playfield is covered with film-inspired art.

This attention to detail is--typically for a Data East game--present in the game's music, digitized voices, and choice of three background soundtracks. The most popular is a version of C + C Music Factory's "Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)", which is a ZZ Top Selection. There's also something called "Lethal Weapon 3 Soundtrack" which is a Brian Schmidt original score based on music from the film. (No matter what background music you've chosen, when you're about to shoot for multiball, special "multiball ready" music plays; this music is distinctively Brian Schmidt's - and Data East's at this point, since Schmidt has done so much work for DE in recent years - and one of the reasons why Data East is so noted for excellent pinball sound and music.

Distinctive, too, is the game's full-size dot-matrix display, which features perhaps the best and most impressive display animation of any current game. In addition to displays that are well-integrated into the game, the display also shows brief scenes from the LETHAL WEAPON series as you complete a "1-2-3" trio of saucers. With each



completion, you're treated to another LETHAL WEAPON scene. Stay alert during each scene for a chance to win 1 million points. The "1-2-3" series are worth 5 million more points each time, and can be set to carry over to the next ball. In addition, the series itself can be set to require you to make the shots in order (first "1", then "2", etc.) or in any order, depending on the game's overall difficulty setting.

High scores and extra balls are available by hitting the ramp shot. This shot awards points progressively after a certain number have been made: 3 million after 3 shots; 7 million after 7 shots; 14 million after 14

shots, etc. This feature, too, can be set to carry over between balls - if it does, you can rack up quite a lot of points just by going for the ramp.

The #3 saucer doubles as the "Leo Getz" shot (you may get tired of hearing "what Leo wants, Leo gets" over and over again); normally this is worth a small bonus, but make the four upper-left-side targets (one of which is hit for the skill shot) and Leo suddenly becomes Super Leo, awarding you anything from mega-points to an extra ball or a replay.

But the most points in the game are available during multiball, and to some extent the rest of the game is

simply a warm-up for it. Multiball is enabled by hitting the two banks of drop targets such that you get the left, right, and middle targets in both banks in order. Some experimentation is needed here, since the game is not very clear on exactly what is needed to start multiball. However, you'll know it when you get it because the display shows a huge arrow pointing to saucer #3 with the legend "Multiball Ready". With **LETHAL WEAPON 3**, Data East is following Williams' lead in making their games more "self documenting", and players are given much more information in this game than they ever were in previous Data East efforts. Each ramp shot triggers a display summary of your total ramp shots, plus the number of shots needed to get to the next award level; activating the "Karate Kick" (left-side drain kicker) let you know how to relight it; clipping one of the drop-target wires tells you which other wire to clip in order to start Million Plus mode. Unfortunately, these instructions range from very good (the ramp summary) to less than helpful (the Karate Kick can be relit only by making the Subway shot twice in quick succession-something that the game does not tell you, nor even hint at).

Multiball features single, double and quadruple jackpots, all based on making the ramp shot at the same time. Single jackpots are relatively simple; double jackpots require you to first hit the lit "1", "2", or "3" saucer and then make the ramp shot before time expires; quadruple jackpots require you to do all of this, and in addition get two balls on the ramp *at the same time*. Although I've gotten double jackpots on this game, I've yet to get a quadruple jackpot-though that doesn't stop me from trying.

Rumor has it that Data East has completely overhauled their game software for this new release; even if they didn't, whatever they did really shows. **LETHAL WEAPON 3** is the first Data East game in a long time to go out the door almost entirely bug-free--quite an accomplishment, considering how much deeper the rules for this game are when compared to

the rules for games like **BATMAN** and **HOOK**.

Better still, the game "feels" just right - at least to this born-and-bred Williams fan. DE's solid-state flippers finally get a chance to use their power in sending the ball looping through left- and right-side Subway shots, and the game itself isn't designed to drain the ball out the sides in a cynical attempt to reduce playing time. Compared to **THE GETAWAY** and even **THE ADDAMS FAMILY**, the wide-open playfield feels quite refreshing; it's something I liked a lot about T2 and missed on **THE GETAWAY**, which seems overly cluttered for a game that features so few actual shots. From the flippers you can make:

- the "1", "2" and "3" saucers
- the ramp
- the left Subway loop
- the right Subway loop
- either bank of drop targets

All in all, a fairly wide variety of shots with very little on the playfield to prevent you from making them.

Finally, the video mode--after all, what would a modern pinball machine be without video modes? **LETHAL WEAPON 3** sports three different video modes, of which only one seems poorly designed. The first I have already mentioned: it's the shootout that's triggered when you load the last bullet into your Uzi. The second is "Fight Mode", in which you throw punches by rapidly pressing the flipper buttons: land more punches than the computer for 5 million points. The third is a shooting range target shoot, featuring paper targets of bad guys, civilians, and even cows. Shoot the bad guys - but not the civilians - for 10 million points.

Of the three video modes, only Fight Mode seems poorly thought out. The problem is that it doesn't get any harder, and that everyone figures out quickly enough that fluttering your fingers against the flipper buttons - rather than slapping the sides of the cabinet - will ensure that you

win every time. The other two video modes, though, remain both fun and challenging. (Tip for the Shooting Gallery: take out the cows if you want to score the 10 million point bonus; remember, this is a Data East machine and cows have recently come to be associated with Williams games. That makes them Bad Guys - not civilians.)

Overall, **LETHAL WEAPON 3** is a lot of fun and a consistent challenge. It is a game that allows you to play your way, not the way the designers want you to play (this is one of the things that makes **THE ADDAMS FAMILY** such a great game, but which effectively sinks **BLACK ROSE**). Tired of going for the "1-2-3" stunts? Try making the Subway loops to help relight the Karate Kick and score the Uzi specials. How about going for Super Leo? Of course, don't forget about the millions available by making the ramp shot, both before and during multiball.

Of course, even in a game this good there are bound to be problems; fortunately, with **LETHAL WEAPON 3** the problems are minor. If I had to pick nits, I'd include the following:

- the skill shot is mostly luck - Data East's flaky solenoid plunger doesn't allow you to make the skill shot with any degree of reliability, as you can with the almost identical skill shot in T2

- the Karate Kick is perhaps too difficult to relight, given the likelihood of a left-side drain

- the ramp value is perhaps worth too much, given the ease with which you can make the shot (this is not a problem if the ramp value isn't set to carry over between balls)

There really is not a lot to complain about with this game, and if truth be told, there's quite a lot to be happy about. A liberal "Don't move" timer that should shame the designers of **THE GETAWAY**, very high (and well implemented) integration of the license into the game play; great overall game "feel" and those wonderful Ritchie-inspired Subway loops. Data East has come a long way in a very short time. If their next game is anything like this, Williams and Premier better start looking over their shoulders.

PLAYING THE FIELD

FISH TALES

By Robert Rosenhouse

The latest release from Williams, the "Wizards of Pinball", is **FISH TALES**, a Boat-Rocking, Fast-Casting, Torpedo-Shooting game that takes place on a lake that's anything but calm.

The adventure begins with the sound of your answering machine telling the world that you've 'Gone Fishin'. The trend of plungers being replaced by other gimmicks continues here. **FISH TALES** has a casting rod with a button on top to shoot the ball. The playfield begins at the top with three lanes (L-I-E) along with an eject hole hidden in the right corner, a la **TERMINATOR 2**. Completing this sequence awards a bonus multiplier. Below the lanes are three bumpers in a triangular fashion.

The center of the playfield consists of a large, angled, rowboat. The ball can be shot up either side of the boat, with ramps returning the ball to the opposite flipper, so that you continue to repeat the sequence. Just like **TAXI** (another Mark Ritchie design), you get big points for hitting the lanes when lit. Each successful shot adds a small fish to a string of six. When the sixth fish is made, a Monster Fish countdown shot is started. The Monster Fish is caught by shooting the ball up the left side, through the spinner. Twenty Million points are awarded if made immediately, with the amount decreasing the longer it goes without being hit. The score bottoms out at 5 million, and allows you about five seconds to nail it, before it disappears completely.

In the center of the boat is a captive ball which awards 'Bonus Hold' as well as Light Video Mode, Rock the

Boat, Light Extra Ball and Instant Multiball. This captive ball value is stepped up and activated by making the 'Long Cast' shot up the right side of the playfield when lit. Once lit, Video Mode is started by shooting the left lane into the eject hole at the top of the playfield. Using the casting rod, you're challenged to fire torpedoes at water craft and jet skiers that crisscross the dot matrix display. This event is timed, and you have a limited amount of ammo to hit as many moving objects as possible. There is also an 'EB' that occasionally floats by, so keep on your toes! Rock The Boat is another timed feature, which awards 10 Million points each time the ball enters the boat or hits the captive ball. You have approximately 20 seconds to *rock the boat*, so the potential for many points exists.

On the left and right sides of the game you'll find green fish targets. Completing these fish lights a large

fish, and gives you a short time to 'Stretch The Truth', by shooting the ball through the spinner. You can exaggerate the size of the fish you just caught by 2 to 5 times (and light a fish tale), or you could be caught in your lie, and score nothing. Catching four large fish begins a 'Feeding Frenzy'. Four purple fish light up, two on the boat, and one on each long shot to the top. The first three purple fish scores 5 Million and the fourth fish scores 20 Million. You have 20 seconds to hook all four purple fish.

Just next to the right side long shot is the Multiball Lock. Shooting the ball here locks the ball in a fishing reel on the opposite side of the playfield. Locking three balls begins multiball play. Here, you want to put a ball back into the lock, and shoot another ball through the spinner, into the eject hole at the top of the playfield, to collect the Jackpot. This also awards the first of three lures (Tropical, Fresh Water and Deep Sea). Once



you have mastered Tropical Fishing, you can lock the ball again, hit another Jackpot, and master Fresh Water Fishing. The same continues for Deep Sea Fishing. These lures are remembered throughout the game. Once you've mastered Deep Sea Fishing, Super Jackpot mode begins. For the duration of your Multiball, the captive ball can be hit multiple times for Super Jackpots of 100 Million each. This continues until only 1 ball remains on the playfield. Subsequent attempts at Multiball require that you knock down the drop target that guards the lock.

The bottom of the playfield is pretty standard. The return lanes light the entrance ways to the boat, as well as long cast on the right. When lit, the right return lane lights the Fish Finder at the eject hole at the top. Hitting this awards anything from points to lighting extra ball and other values.

One thing that sets FISH TALES apart from many of the other games out there, is the fact that it is not based on a movie. Instead of spend-

ing time and money securing a licensed theme, the designers created a game with LOTS of rules, and many challenges. One thing that in my mind, makes a pinball great, is the ability to play it with different strategies. This is what made games like TAXI, HIGH SPEED and PIN•BOT playable today, while other games have come and gone.

There are three major ways to play FISH TALES. You can shoot for multiball, and nail jackpots and super jackpots. Incidentally, the super jackpot mode is probably the most difficult super jackpot of any game to conquer. It was a couple of weeks into playing FISH TALES before I got my first one. For a change of pace, you can go for the Monster Fish. Keep shooting lit ramps until you complete the string of six fish and send the ball through the spinner to collect 20 Million. Next time, it's 30 Million and so on. Or, you can also go for the four large fish by hitting the side targets and then the spinner to earn a 'tale'. Doing this with all four tales begins an extra long 'Rock the Boat' mode, which is not documented on the instruction card, as well as a Feeding Frenzy.

I enjoy the fact that there are hidden features in this game. This will keep my interest more than games that don't have this type of depth. I think that games with a Billion Shot, or some other nonsense, makes the machine very unfair, especially in competitive pinball. I feel the same about random features that can skew one score far ahead of another. FISH TALES is a very fair game, and randomness, other than the ball bouncing around, really doesn't apply here.

One thing that does bother me with a lot of recent games, is what I call: The Airball. I'm sure this has happened to you. Quite often, when shooting toward the lock with the left flipper, I have found that the ball will hit a piece of rubber, become airborne, and land on the ramp that returns the ball to the right flipper. The other annoyance is that the ball will hop over the wall back to the shooter lane. The problem seems that the ramps are too low, or the playfield is not deep

enough in the cabinet. I hope that this can be fixed in future games.

Another trend in newer games is the cluttering of things at the top of the game. On FISH TALES it is difficult to see the top lanes, and the entire bumper area. Now, the designers thoughtfully put L-I-E lights above the playfield, but it is still very difficult to look at those, and follow the ball.

"I enjoy the fact that there are hidden features in this game. This will keep my interest more than games that don't have this type of depth..."

While on the subject of distractions, let me touch upon the subject of lighting. I appreciate that an extra ball or replay deserves special music, displays and lighting effects, but sometimes I am convinced that the games are designed to make it as hard as possible to follow the ball, with all the flashing lights and strobes blinking. (The 'Transmat' on Doctor Who comes to mind.) I doubt this issue will be addressed, as I think it's designed to make one lose concentration on the ball.

The other thing I have noticed about FISH TALES is that quite often during multiball, the game will not award credit for hitting the Monster Fish. Probably just a programming problem, but a problem, nonetheless.

Fortunately, there are a number of features of FISH TALES which show that the programmers are in tune with the player. The game happily keeps track of all locked balls for each player, so that another player



cannot 'steal' your locked balls. Another thing is that FISH TALES not only keeps track of the high scores, but also the initials of those who caught the most fish and those who Rocked the Boat the most times. In addition, all times modes can overlap without causing problems, which is a feat in itself.

After playing many games, and shooting for different objectives, I have found that going for all the multiball awards is the best way to maximize my score. Jackpots can be doubled or tripled by locking 2 or 3 balls in the reel first. The lock shot and extra ball shot can easily be back-handed with the right flipper. Rocking The Boat is usually good for 50 to 70 million points. (My friend managed to Rock the Boat an amazing 11 times.) I think the Feeding Frenzy is fun but not worth shooting for. The targets tend to hit themselves as the ball rebounds off the slingshot kickers. Also, shooting for these targets often results in the ball draining down the sides.

Overall, I find FISH TALES a refreshing departure from all the 'licensed' games that have been flooding the market. After a while, one gets tired of the shooting, killing, and exploding of many recent games. There are many clean shots, quite a few backhands, and lots of features to keep my interest. I hope Williams continues this trend of fun-to-play games. I'm going out to play a few games of FISH TALES now!

"...FISH TALES not only keeps track of the high scores, but also the initials of those who caught the most fish and those who rocked the boat the most times..."



PLAYING THE FIELD

SUPER MARIO BROTHERS

By Dallas Overturf

Premier's SUPER MARIO BROTHERS pinball, following on the heels of SURF'N SAFARI and OPERATION THUNDER, to me was a welcome sign that 1992 was going to mark the re-emergence of the former D. Gottlieb pinball company as a solid pin maker. Myself and one of my pals recently treked over 50 miles to an arcade called Funworld in Nashua, NH, which I had never heard of before, to play it.

The fact that the games at this arcade seemed to be in pretty decent shape and the arcade well run, made for a very pleasant trip indeed.

At first glance, SUPER MARIO looked like a cute pin, mostly intended for the kiddies and novice players. In the final analysis this seemed to me to be a reasonably accurate assessment of the game, especially when the game is set to the default factory settings. I also will note here that I later played one on harder settings and just plain did not enjoy it at all, partially due to the left drain which I'll comment on later. The game was very enjoyable at first, and the sound and video seem a good match for the game.

The video display looked very good; no complaints there (I never could seem to manage to get through all the way, though my pal did.) I'm just not into video games I guess.

The general objective of the game is to be SUPER and collect red keys in one of three holes (not the castle

hole) and you get to select one of two scoring choices via the flipper buttons. Selections such as Castle Extra Ball are preferably selected when you are SUPER since this will double most features during the timed sequence, including the Extra Ball. SUPER was a feature we liked, though the two extra balls from the castle seemed a bit of overkill when playing with multiple players.

Red keys are lit every time green turtles are collected.



MAJOR SELECTIONS

Castle Extra Ball, Bomb Round, Exclamation Round and Yoshi's Countdown

FEATURES OF INTEREST

BOMB ROUND: Selecting this feature will light the spot target by the left ramp. If you can hit this before the bomb goes off, then the upper hold will be worth 20 million points per hit for the duration of that ball in play. Also, immediately putting the ball in any hole will score 10-30 million points (adjustable).

THE EXCLAMATION ROUND: Each Exclamation Mark hit is worth up to 10 million points. The best thing to do with this round is just keep going around the ramps as each ramp is an Exclamation Mark.

YOSHI COUNTDOWN: The Yoshi spot target on the upper playfield will count down. Continually hitting this will momentarily pause the countdown. If you are fast enough, this feature can be hit several times for mega-points.

MULTIBALL: If you don't like collecting keys, you can just go for multiball play and try collecting multiple jackpots. This is not the best or most efficient strategy, but it will work. The left hole will light for possible multiball when the numbers "one" through "four" have all been made. In multiball, the object is to keep putting a ball into the Castle hole up above the Pop Bumpers to collect Jackpots. Jackpots incrementally increase each time collected up to a max of 40 million points.

GAME PLAY

The game is fun for a while and I still think it a very good game, but it has its flaws.

The Lower Kickout holes on the game we played at Funworld worked well; however, in 3 different games I was to play later they all seemed to kick

the ball out "somewhere" towards the flipper. This might be onto the flipper, above the flipper, onto the other flipper or right down between the flippers. All of the above machines appeared to be well maintained and the level of the playfield, both in pitch and side-to-side, seemed reasonable. This made playing these later three Mario games very un-enjoyable.

Another killer feature of this pin is the dreaded left drain. This drain has a kickout feature that on the game at Funworld appeared to be on at the start of a ball--until it was used. Once used, however, it could be turned on by putting the ball in the kickout hole on the top playfield but would only stay on for a brief duration of time.

On the three subsequent games I was to play, this feature was set quite conservatively. Not "on" at the start of a ball and once lit only staying on for a rather short period of time.

"...The general objective of the game is to be SUPER and collect red keys in one of three holes..."

GOOD POINTS

A very good first dot-matrix game with software that was relatively bug free.

BAD POINTS

On most of the games I played, the protective mylar extends partially

up the flipper return lanes and can be used purposely to hold a ball there in multiball by putting two balls on the same flipper and kicking one back up the lane a tiny bit. The mylar cutouts should be done such that the mylar ends slightly above the flippers or extends further up into the return lanes.

The left drain is typical of the original FIREPOWER (that is where I first saw it) and I still dislike it, since there's little skill (or chance for that matter) to save the ball once it gets near it. This is especially true if the playfield wood has warped slightly and the outer edges are low, which has been common (though minor) on many games from all of the pin-ball manufacturers I have seen the last few years.

The game does not have a reliable mechanism to launch the ball onto the playfield. Auto pluggers are fine when they work well. Most of the SUPER MARIO games I played did not, for whatever the reason.

The game should display a game rom revision on power up so players can more effectively report bugs in the software.

WRAP UP

After three nightly and two weekend (all day) excursions to play the game, I did start to tire of it. Strangely, my pal claims he preferred SUPER MARIO to ADDAMS FAMILY.

Expect this game to do well in locations with younger and novice players. However, it will probably not be able to hold the interest of really good players.

BE A GAME REVIEWER

We're looking for players to give their in-depth reviews and evaluation of the latest games. You don't have to be the greatest player in the world to contribute. Let us hear from you. Just call Steve Epstein at 212-247-3725.

PLAYING THE FIELD

BLACK ROSE

By Steve Baumgarten

BLACK ROSE is a Bally pinball that has a lot going for it; a very unique and distinctive playfield piece, interesting playfield layout, good dot-matrix display animation, good sound effects and an original theme, which is something that shouldn't be overlooked or taken for granted at a time when you're more likely to be putting 50 cents into last summer's hit movie than you are into a pinball machine with an original, non-commercial theme.

But it is also a game that suffers from too little attention to its rules and some of the least balanced scoring in recent memory. It's especially unfortunate that a game that was so long in coming--the Bally production run for *THE ADDAMS FAMILY* was the longest in the industry's post-war history--seemingly had so little time lavished on its rules, since deep rules can be the difference between a great game and one that is merely mediocre.

One thing that makes a game like *THE ADDAMS FAMILY* so much more fun than many recent releases is the almost endless number of ways that you can play it and still get a high score. Some people like touring the mansion as quickly as possible. Others concentrate on playing multi-ball. Still others enjoy playing each mansion room for maximum points; and even novices find that they can get reasonably high scores just by keeping the ball in play and making a mansion shot every so often.

But *BLACK ROSE*--for all its interesting playfield shots--centers around two shots in particular, and therein lies the game's Catch 22. If you can't



make those shots reliably, you'll quickly become very frustrated with the game as a whole, since you'll never be able to get very high scores. However, if you *can* make the shots reliably, you may find yourself becoming increasingly bored with the game.

The game's theme is, as I've said, an original, non-licensed one. You set sail with Black Rose--"queen of the high seas" as the game puts it--and help her plunder and sink ships while you amass treasure and engage in typical pirate activities: walking the plank, swimming frantically from sharks, throwing knives, and swinging from the riggings. All of these activities are presented to you in about a half-dozen video modes, each of which is moderately amusing and challenging, though they reminded me to some extent of the old *TRACK & FIELD* video game that was so popular several years ago.

But the most important and unique part of the game is loading the cannon, which is represented by a rotating translucent disk just above the flippers. You load the cannon by making a left-side ramp shot with the upper-right flipper (much like the ramp shot in *HIGH SPEED*) or by making a lower-left ramp shot which leads to the upper-right flipper. After a few shots the upper-left ramp raises and the cannon is ready to load. One more shot into the space beneath the ramp loads the cannon. This shot causes the ball to fall beneath the playfield and into the rotating disk; because the disk is translucent you can actually watch this and see when the "cannon" mechanism is loaded and ready to fire. At that point you can either press the "Fire" button located on the top-front edge of the game (where the buttons for *RIVERBOAT GAMBLER* were) or press either flipper button. At no point do you ever actually have to press the special "Fire" button, and you'll find that in some of the video

modes (particularly the one where you have to swim away from a shark) you'll definitely lose if you do use it. I personally think that the special button adds little to the game, but it does make the cabinet look distinctive from a distance. (One could argue that putting a huge, rubber, loopy-looking fish on top of the backboard makes FISH TALES look even more distinctive, but that's a subject for another review.)

Firing the cannon causes the ball to be launched from beneath the playfield back into play, and because the disk rotates through about a 90 degree arc, you have a lot of control over where the ball winds up. The most important shot, though, is straight back to the top of the game—the enemy ship's "broadside". This is the single most important shot in the game, and if you can't make it reliably, you'll find yourself getting more than a little frustrated with BLACK ROSE.

But it's a satisfying shot to make if you can, and one that is potentially very rewarding. You see, each time you load the cannon you also light either one or two letters in the phrase "SINK SHIP"; when you complete the phrase the cannon shot becomes worth a minimum of 20 million points—but only if you can hit the enemy ship broadside and sink it. If you do sink the ship, the next ship is worth 30 million; the one after that 40 million, and so on, seemingly without limit.

If you haven't completed "SINK SHIP", you instead shoot for one of a half-dozen different specials (randomly selected before you make your shot). The specials can be made by hitting any lit jewel on the playfield, including the broadside shot at the top of the game. Though not always the easiest or surest shot to make, it's without a doubt the most fun, since the game "fires" the ball straight back to you by way of a metal rail that leads directly from the top of the game to bottom—in fact, to the space right between your flippers! This is a little disconcerting the first few times it happens, but you'll quickly

learn that the ball always lands on your right flipper and is never in any real danger of draining. (The metal "habitrail" is fun, though it does obscure your vision of the area directly above the flippers, much as the plastic ramp in HURRICANE did.)

Although you need to complete "SINK SHIP" once for every ship you attempt to sink, you'll quickly find that the payoff for sinking a ship far outweighs any other payoff on the game, and that the game itself devolves into a somewhat boring series of ramp shots followed by cannon shots, ad infinitum. Scores of well over a billion are easily achievable; although the high score on the machine I play is only 1.1 billion, I think it could easily have been higher had not the wizard simply gotten bored with the game.

If the only way to light letters in "SINK SHIP" were to make several ramp shots, load the cannon, fire (scoring one or two letters), make several more ramp shots, etc., the game's scoring might still be balanced enough to keep it interesting. After all, there's multiball to go for, not to mention a nifty ramp shot at the upper-right of the game that can be worth lots of points and an extra ball. But any good player quickly discovers the fatal flaw in BLACK ROSE'S rules; that during multiball, each ramp shot scores one letter in "SINK SHIP", and that these letters are carried over after you sink a ship. Thus, if you hit the ramp 16 times, you'll be able to load the cannon to sink one ship. After that, you'll be able to reload it immediately to sink another, since the game saves the extra letters you scored during multiball. Since by the time you've sunk your





third ship there's nothing else on the game that's even close in value (remember that the game is awarding you 50 million points to sink your fourth ship), you have little alternative but to load the cannon and sink that ship. And since the very next ship is worth 60 million points, why, what else can you do? The only sensible course of action is to load the cannon and sink the next ship-repeat until you finally lose your third ball or until boredom sets in.

If you decide to play **BLACK ROSE** just to play, and you don't particularly care about getting a high score, you're certainly free to actually *play* multiball. But it's in your best interest to do nothing of the kind-instead, just get multiball started, quickly catch and hold one ball on the left flipper, and then make ramp

shots all day with the upper- and lower-right flippers. Each shot scores a letter in "SINK SHIP"; score a couple dozen of those and start sinking ships left and right: the result is a score well into the hundreds of millions.

The game offers combo shots, multiball, a jackpot shot. But none of these features or shots are worth really going for or playing, because that cannon shot beckons so. Why fool around with a 6 million point jackpot when you can load the cannon and score 10 times that? (I should also add that the game has a number of other awards and special features which never seemed very obvious or self-explanatory to me. I think **BLACK ROSE** is the least comprehensible game to be released this summer, with the possible exception of **SUPER MARIO BROS.**,

which at least is *supposed* to contain a lot of surprises and undocumented awards. On the other hand, it may be that I never bothered to learn the rest of the game once I figured out all I needed to know to get a high score.)

I think it's too bad that the design team didn't spend a little more time working on the game's rules, since **BLACK ROSE** is generally a pretty fun game to play. But it is truly a one-shot game (the broadside shot from the cannon), and more a game for people who like single-minded approaches to pinball than for folks who enjoy exploring a game's many different-but equally valuable-scoring possibilities. Though I think you'll find **BLACK ROSE** challenging for a little while, I also think that you'll soon find yourself returning to more balanced games like **LETHAL WEAPON 3** and **FISH TALES**.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

NEW YORK CITY'S FAMOUS BROADWAY ARCADE

By Steve Epstein

I first saw a pinball machine at an arcade in Newark, New Jersey in 1955 at the ripe old age of 7. My father managed the arcade and brought me there on Sunday mornings. A love affair had begun which has lasted to this day. After graduation from college in 1970, I went to work full time at the Broadway Arcade in New York City. My father had bought the business in 1963 and I had worked there part time and decided this would be my profession. Fast forward to 1975, when pinball was again becoming legal in New York City. There had been a ban on the games since 1942. I met one Roger C. Sharpe at this time. He became my dearest friend and mentor while we both played pinball at the arcade.

The three factors of my father's belief in product mix, my love for playing pinball, and Roger's insights into the dynamics of pinball machines, have led to the Broadway Arcade becoming one of the premier pinball locations in the world. The most important ingredient is the pinball machines themselves. During the early 1980s when it seemed that the video game boom was taking over all the arcades and other locations, the Broadway Arcade stayed true to the philosophy of product mix. We still presented all the new pins of the era on a consistent basis. This allowed us to create a strong base of players from which league and tournament promotions were developed. All of these things would not have happened, though, if we hadnot adhered to some basic tenants of pinball operation.

All the pinballs at the arcade are cleaned and polished on a weekly basis. The games are leveled as the need arises. All lights are replaced on a playfield when they burn out. The legs are tightened to the cabinet on a regular basis. The lighting in the arcade tries to eliminate any glare to the playfields. A part that breaks down is promptly fixed or replaced. Flipper strengths are checked periodically as well as the condition of all rubbers. Rules of conduct are also important to the enjoyment of the players and are rigorously enforced. The management is open to all suggestions on

how to improve the arcade and its games. I have often been described as a player, not an operator. This is the best compliment for me to receive. I believe that when players become more unified amongst themselves, they will present a reason for locations to upgrade their care and operation of more pinballs.

(We encourage you to write to us about your favorite place to play pinball and why it is special. Send pictures, if you can, and we'll tell the world about your discovery so that they know where to visit when they're in your neighborhood.)



THE PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR PINBALL ASSOCIATION

10/22/92

HOT SHOT LEAGUE

STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 1 MATCH

TEAM STATISTICS

Team		Points	Average	Games		Series		2-of-3
				Won	Lost	Won	Lost	Bonus
3	3	25.0	60,354,407	6.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	2.0
1	1	20.0	36,553,590	4.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
6	6	18.0	37,805,993	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0	1.0
5	5	15.0	25,412,588	5.0	4.0	0.0	3.0	2.0
2	2	13.0	40,085,408	5.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	1.0
4	4	8.0	33,321,531	3.0	6.0	0.0	3.0	1.0

PLAYER STATISTICS

Team and Player		Points	Average	- - Record - -				PEPGA
				1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
6a	KAI BATEMAN	55.0	49,487,660	3.0	5.0	0.0	1.0	6.11
5a	STEVE EPSTEIN	48.0	33,184,033	4.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	5.33
3b	ROB ROSENHOUSE	43.0	70,494,940	3.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	4.78
2a	JOHN WONG	41.0	39,551,183	3.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	4.56
1b	WILL HOO	38.0	40,566,723	3.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	4.22
3a	STEVE BAUMGARTEN	36.0	50,213,874	3.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	4.00
2b	JOSEPH CARTAGENA	34.0	40,619,814	2.0	2.0	4.0	1.0	3.78
4b	GENNADY LEVITAN	33.0	36,920,816	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	3.67
4a	TIM POST	32.0	29,722,246	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.56
1a	PAULO HOO	31.0	32,540,457	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.44
5b	JEFF OLIVER	23.0	17,641,143	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.56
6b	JAYSON HAHN	18.0	26,124,326	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	2.00

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH

TEAM STATISTICS

Team		Points	Average	Games		Series		2-of-3
				Won	Lost	Won	Lost	Bonus
3	3	25.0	60,354,407	6.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	2.0
1	1	20.0	36,553,590	4.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
6	6	18.0	37,805,993	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0	1.0
5	5	15.0	25,412,588	5.0	4.0	0.0	3.0	2.0
2	2	13.0	40,085,408	5.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	1.0
4	4	8.0	33,321,531	3.0	6.0	0.0	3.0	1.0

PLAYER STATISTICS

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				1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
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5a	STEVE EPSTEIN	48.0	33,184,033	4.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	5.33
3b	ROB ROSENHOUSE	43.0	70,494,940	3.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	4.78
2a	JOHN WONG	41.0	39,551,183	3.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	4.56
1b	WILL HOO	38.0	40,566,723	3.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	4.22
3a	STEVE BAUMGARTEN	36.0	50,213,874	3.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	4.00
2b	JOSEPH CARTAGENA	34.0	40,619,814	2.0	2.0	4.0	1.0	3.78
4b	GENNADY LEVITAN	33.0	36,920,816	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	3.67
4a	TIM POST	32.0	29,722,246	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.56
1a	PAULO HOO	31.0	32,540,457	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.44
5b	JEFF OLIVER	23.0	17,641,143	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.56
6b	JAYSON HAHN	18.0	26,124,326	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	2.00

PEPGA (Point Efficiency Per Game Average), trademark (TM) PAPA, utilized for handicapping in pinball tournaments and leagues.

THE PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR PINBALL ASSOCIATION
ALL PRO LEAGUE - 10/21/92
STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 1 MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
8	AVI ISKOWITZ	60.0	42,130,875	4.0	4.0	0.0	7.50
9	PAUL SCOTTI	60.0	25,156,122	4.0	4.0	0.0	7.50
5	SEAN BOND	56.0	38,769,502	4.0	3.0	1.0	7.00
2	STEVE FISCHER	52.0	63,082,217	4.0	2.0	2.0	6.50
3	HOO NINT	42.0	23,905,872	2.0	4.0	2.0	5.25
6	VICTOR MERCADE	38.0	24,866,915	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.75
4	GENNADY LEVITAN	34.0	38,848,600	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
1	SHIMON ISKOWITZ	34.0	25,232,431	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
7	SAM FIELD	8.0	0	0.0	0.0	8.0	1.00

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
8	AVI ISKOWITZ	60.0	42,130,875	4.0	4.0	0.0	7.50
9	PAUL SCOTTI	60.0	25,156,122	4.0	4.0	0.0	7.50
5	SEAN BOND	56.0	38,769,502	4.0	3.0	1.0	7.00
2	STEVE FISCHER	52.0	63,082,217	4.0	2.0	2.0	6.50
3	HOO NINT	42.0	23,905,872	2.0	4.0	2.0	5.25
6	VICTOR MERCADE	38.0	24,866,915	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.75
4	GENNADY LEVITAN	34.0	38,848,600	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
1	SHIMON ISKOWITZ	34.0	25,232,431	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
7	SAM FIELD	8.0	0	0.0	0.0	8.0	1.00

BIG APPLE LEAGUE -10/19/92
STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 1 MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
1	RAYMOND COSTANZA	53.0	20,516,155	5.0	0.0	3.0	6.62
5	JONATHAN MARTEL	51.0	23,813,920	3.0	4.0	1.0	6.38
8	PAUL CHEN	51.0	8,262,521	3.0	4.0	1.0	6.38
4	RICK DE MASI	43.0	22,740,617	3.0	2.0	3.0	5.38
2	MICHAEL KONIK	41.0	19,228,137	1.0	6.0	1.0	5.12
9	LIONEL MARTINEZ	39.0	35,015,178	3.0	1.0	4.0	4.88
7	PETER CERRATO	38.0	13,823,731	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.75
3	DAVE PELLER	34.0	15,930,511	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
6	DAVID TAYLOR	34.0	10,630,253	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
1	RAYMOND COSTANZA	53.0	20,516,155	5.0	0.0	3.0	6.62
5	JONATHAN MARTEL	51.0	23,813,920	3.0	4.0	1.0	6.38
8	PAUL CHEN	51.0	8,262,521	3.0	4.0	1.0	6.38
4	RICK DE MASI	43.0	22,740,617	3.0	2.0	3.0	5.38
2	MICHAEL KONIK	41.0	19,228,137	1.0	6.0	1.0	5.12
9	LIONEL MARTINEZ	39.0	35,015,178	3.0	1.0	4.0	4.88
7	PETER CERRATO	38.0	13,823,731	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.75
3	DAVE PELLER	34.0	15,930,511	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25
6	DAVID TAYLOR	34.0	10,630,253	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.25

PEPGA (Point Efficiency Per Game Average), trademark (TM) PAPA, utilized for handicapping in pinball tournaments and leagues.

THE GREAT WHITE NORTH

By Aaron Benditt

No matter where a teenager goes in any North American city, he is never lost once inside a shopping mall. The same goes for pinball players entering amusement centers. Playing pinball in Canada is not much different than playing in the United States, but there are some variations worth mentioning.

First of all, unless a distributor is in town, new games can often take a little extra time to show up. Here in Winnipeg at press time, only two FISH TALES games are on location, and both are distributors' sample games. However, about 400 miles south, in Duluth, Minnesota, a bowling alley has

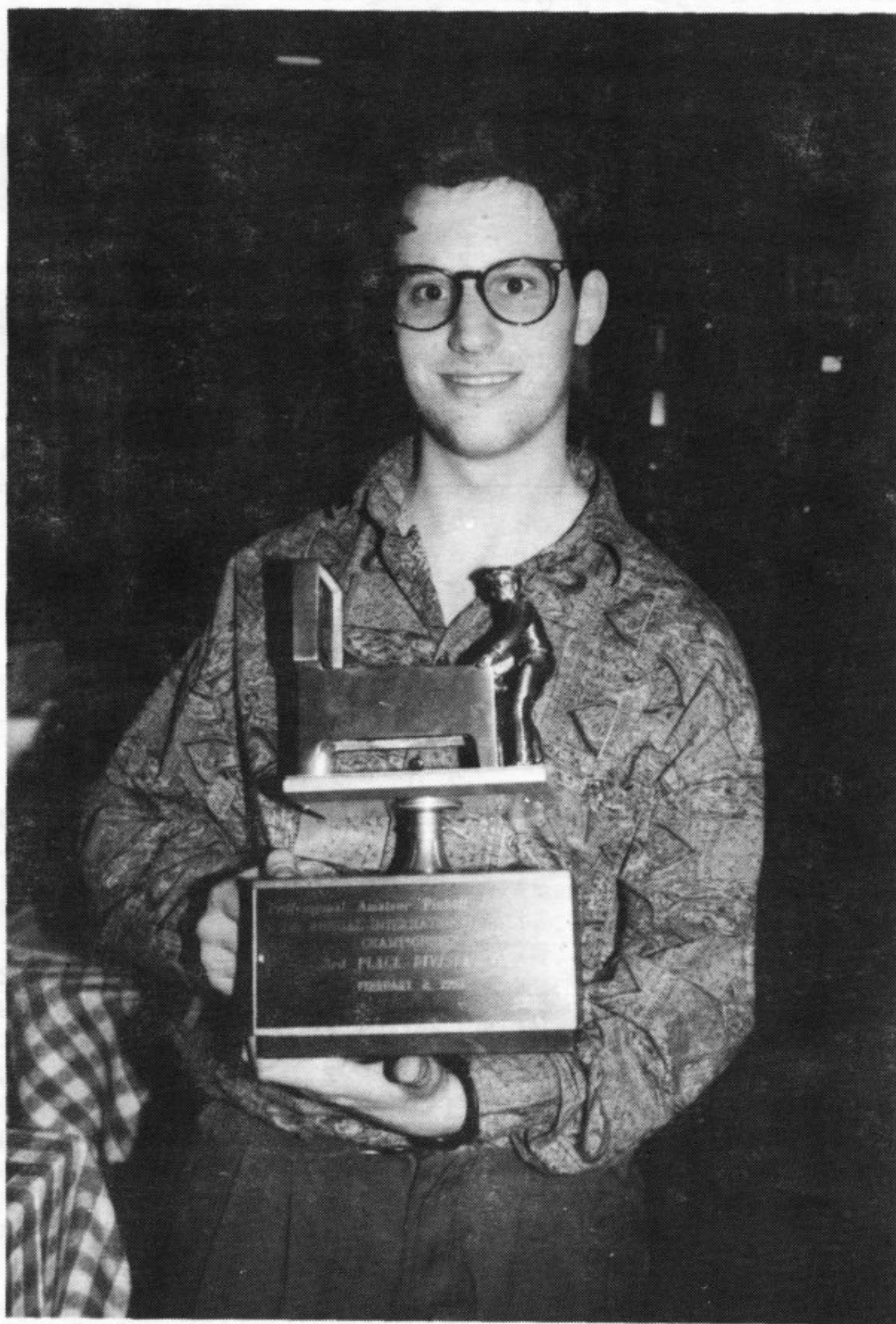
had a FISH TALES game for about two weeks. The rest of the FISH TALES destined for Winnipeg's arcades are still on order.

Second, popularity of pinball is somewhat less than that seen in America. It's still taking a lot of time for people to recognize that pinball is still around, and its current incarnation, as compared to its style back in the 1950s and 1960s.

Still, there are the die hard pinball players here, like me, that frequently attend pinball locations to get my quarter's worth (actually 50 cents worth) of fun. Players don't tend to crowd around the new pinball after its just been set up, but the pinballs do tend to make a large share of money, as many-a-time I've waited to play while the operator took lengthy amounts of time to empty the machine's coin box.

After traveling around for the summer in the Midwest part of the U. S., I noticed the high scores and high replay values on the newest games. For instance, the lowest replay I saw in my travels on Bally's ADDAMS FAMILY pin was 80 million points, whereas here in Winnipeg, the lowest value is about 40 million points. This isn't to say that there are no good players in Canada; however, the popularity of pinball just hasn't reached the highs that it has elsewhere.

It will take some time and some more PAPA promoting, but eventually Canadians will all feel the excitement of the new age of pinball.



HIGH SCORES

STAKE YOUR CLAIM TO FAME AND PINBALL WIZARDRY

Let us know your best scores on the most recent games and tell us where you play and what you like. We want to from you.

ADDAMS FAMILY

4,714,302,410

2,727,800,000

2,242,000,000

2 billion +

1.9 billion

1,569,225,040

605 million

510 million

BATMAN

120,000,000

BLACK ROSE

2 billion +

DR. DUDE

91,662,660

DOCTOR WHO

1.5 billion

FISH TALES

708 million +

650 million

453 million

368,669,870

GILLIGAN'S ISLAND

494 million

HOOK

1,496,560,550

690 million

HURRICANE

219,826,030

OPERATION THUNDER

283 million

STAR TREK

354 million

SURF 'N SUFARI

130 million

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY

1,495,950,440

1,262,000,000

THE GETAWAY

1,410,800,890

1 billion +

800 million

574 million

420 million

THE MACHINE: BRIDE OF PINBOT

10,837,625,450

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale Golfland, Sunnyvale, CA

Kevin Martin, New River Valley Mall, Christianburg, VA

Kevin Martin, Jolly Time Arcade, VA

Robert Chesnavich

Dean Grover, Hughes Aircraft, Torrance, CA

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Christopher Hartman, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Robert DeLoura, Seattle, WA

Donald "Ace" Howard, San Antonio, TX

Robert Chesnavich

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Robert Chesnavich

Christopher Hartman, Urbana-Champaign, IL

Robert Chesnavich

Robert DeLoura, Seattle

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Carin Anderson, Woodbridge, NJ

SKA (courtesy of Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA)

Travis Reynolds, Fayetteville, NC

G (courtesy of Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA)

Ryan Sanders, Orlando, FL

Mark Schultz, Des Moines, IA

Alison Chen, San Francisco, CA

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Robert Chesnavich

GGG (courtesy of Mark Conant, Sunnyvale)

Phaedrus (courtesy of Robert DeLoura, Seattle)

Josh Hayes, Seattle, WA

Christopher Hartman, Urbana-Champaign, IL

Robert DeLoura, Seattle, WA

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Many thanks to Steve Baumgarten and the growing computer network of pinball enthusiasts (and wizards) for contributing your scores and other information. One favor we'd like to ask, and we know that it's difficult since the games are reaching such stratospheric scoring, and that is to give us as many numbers in your score as possible so we can get rankings in accurate order.

Once again, thanks and keep those totals coming.

WE WANT YOU!

To rest your flipper fingers long enough to fill out this questionnaire. Tell us what you like and don't like about pinball. Then rip (or photocopy it) and send it to us pronto at this address: THE FLIPSIDE, 88 Carrar Way, Watchung, NJ 07090.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Family Income: Under \$14,000 _____ \$14-21,000 _____ \$21-39,999 _____ Over \$40,000 _____

Education: Elementary School _____ High School _____ College _____ Master's _____ PhD _____

Occupation (if none, list parents'): _____

What I'd like to see less of: _____

What I'd like to read more of: _____

What can we do better? _____

What magazines do you read? _____

Hobbies: _____

GAME AND COMPUTER SECTION

How much money do you spend on pinball Per week? _____

Favorite new game: _____

Biggest disappointment: _____

All time favorite pinball machine: _____

Do you play video games? Yes _____ No _____

What is your current favorite arcade video game(s)? _____

What is your all-time favorite video game(s) _____

What home game system do you own? _____

How long have you owned it? _____

How many hours per week do you play? _____

If you should get another system, which would it be? _____

What home computer system do you own? _____

How long have you owned it? _____

What peripherals do you own? _____

What is your favorite software/game or otherwise? _____

If you should get another system, which would it be? _____

How much computer sotware and/or video games do you buy each month? _____

GETTING PERSONAL

Meet Martin Dulberg...

I'm 32 years old and have been playing pinball for about 18 years, starting back when I was in high school. In general I play about four or five times a week, although when my outside life encroaches on my routine and I get too busy, I might not play for two or three weeks.

I usually develop a "love affair" with one machine at a time--working to perfect my technique and score. This can last anywhere from two to three weeks on up to three or four months before I lose interest in the game and start looking for something new.

My favorite game at the moment is THE ADDAMS FAMILY. But I also like SURF 'N SAFARI, BLACK ROSE AND LETHAL WEAPON. In addition, I hold a special place in my heart for Bally's BLACK PYRAMID, SPACE MISSION from Williams and the original FIREBALL, which is the game that got me started playing pinball.

Admittedly, over the years, I've seen pinball get much more complicated and intricate. And this advancement is great, but there are also some shortcomings as far as I'm concerned. I enjoy the added "technical tricks" such as magnets in playfields, extra ramps and special multiball shots, but sometimes the flashing lights and complicated sequences are too difficult to figure out. And that's a drag. But it's pinball and I love it all.

By the way, The Broadway Arcade is the BEST place to play pinball. It has the latest machines, great conditions and reasonable levels of difficulty on all the settings.

We want to hear from you and we're sure others would like to "meet" you in the pages of **The Flipside**. Tell us your story and how you got started playing pinball and, if you can, send us a picture and be featured in GETTING PERSONAL.