

THE UPSIDE THE FLIPSIDE

VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 1

\$3.00



PINBALL CIRCUIT BOARD REPAIR

- * New Low Price on MPU Boards
- * Game Manuals also Available

GAME ROMS (\$20.00 EACH) FOR ALL BALLY & WILLIAMS PINBALLS

- We Can Repair / Replace Most Bally & Williams Boards
- Fast Turnaround / Low Prices
- Free Estimates Upon Request

BALLY PINBALL GAMES

<u>Description</u>	<u>Repair</u>	<u>Purchase</u>
MPU Board	\$50	\$125
Solenoid Driver Board	30	50
Lamp Board	30	35
Aux Lamp Board	30	50
Power Supply w/Board AS-2877	30	75
Power Supply AS-2518	30	75

WILLIAMS PINBALL GAMES (SYSTEM 3, 4, 6, 7)

<u>Description</u>	<u>Repair</u>	<u>Purchase</u>
MPU Board	\$50	\$125
Solenoid Driver Board	30	75
Power Supply Board	30	75

PINBALL DISPLAYS

<u>Mfr.</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty. Disc.</u>
Bally	6 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$20	6/100
Bally	7 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$40	3/100
Williams	6 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$20	6/100
Williams	7 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$40	3/100
Stern	6 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$20	6/100
Stern	7 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$40	3/100
Gottlieb	6 Digit	Complete & Tested	\$20	6/100
Gottlieb	7 Digit	Tube Only	\$10	12/100
Gottlieb	4 Digit	Tube Only	\$5	15/50

ALL EXCHANGE PRICES ARE BASED UPON YOUR BOARDS ABILITY TO BE REPAIRABLE,
MPU BOARDS SHOULD HAVE WORKING ROMS.

REPAIR PRICES REFLECT LABOR ONLY, PARTS ADDITIONAL.

THE FLIPSIDE

Publisher and Editor
Steve Epstein

Managing Editor
Anna Joseph

Associate Editor
Michael Brent

Canadian Editor
Aaron Benditt

Contributing Editors
Steve Baumgarten
Michael Getlan
Dallas Overturf
Robert Rosenhouse
Jim Schelberg
Lyman Sheats, Jr.
Doug Young

Editorial Assistant
Joe Schick

Art Director
Nathaniel Lucas

Advertising Director
Sondra Epstein

Circulation Director
Walt Levine

THE FLIPSIDE is published by Sonderid Publishing, 81 Carrar Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060. Reproduction of editorial or pictorial content in any manner is prohibited. No responsibility will be accepted for unsolicited material. All such material must be accompanied by sufficient first class postage. Single copy price \$3.00. Subscription rate \$18.00 for one year (6 issues), Canada and Foreign are \$28.00.

SPECIAL WHEN LIT

Welcome to the second issue of THE FLIPSIDE and thanks to all of you for your support, encouragement and feedback. I especially want to extend sincerest appreciation for those of you who took the time to contribute to the premiere issue and to the one you're holding now. Without your help there wouldn't be THE FLIPSIDE, and as I stated the first time around, the purpose of this pinball magazine is to be for players, about players and by players.

Our long term hope is that this can be a vehicle to gain valuable playing tips and reviews of the latest pinball machines; read about special places to go to play pinball, meet some of your fellow pinball players and, most importantly, be an open forum to exchange ideas, observations and any issues that impact what I'd like to believe is a love affair between us and the games.

Pinball is an amazing bond that brings each of us closer together, whether we're regular players, competitors in leagues and tournaments, or individuals who share the passion to keep the games alive. And that, ultimately, is the goal of THE FLIPSIDE.

But we can only be as good as you'll help us to be. This is really your magazine and we want to hear from you to know what we've doing right, what you like and don't like, what you'd like to see. We'll make the effort to best serve your needs and desires when it comes to reporting on the world of pinball.

This time around we've tried to bring you a full slate of interesting features, highlighting the accomplishments of Steve and Laura Engel and their Mayfair Amusements. From Jim Schelberg comes a close up look at one of the world's leading female players, Wendi Jankowitz, and Michael Getlan takes you behind the scenes of a fantastic gameroom in Yonkers that's a must visit if you're ever in the area. Also, THE FLIPSIDE is pleased to present the first of what we plan on having as a regular feature, our profile, that recounts the design career of Mark Ritchie. Last, but not least, some of the best players around give their views of CUE BALL WIZARD, DOCTOR WHO AND STAR WARS.

So sit back, enjoy, and let us hear from you as THE FLIPSIDE embarks on its second installment.

Steven Epstein

EVOLUTION

One man's saga about a casual player who now heads up flipper pinball promotions on a daily basis

By Doug Young



No, this isn't an article explaining how pinball machines like LITTLE WHIRLWIND or BALLY-HOO have transformed over the years to become machines like CUE BALL WIZARD, STAR WARS, DOCTOR WHO, or FISH TALES, but it does generally describe a bit of a personal transition. It's about a guy (me), who went from being a casual player to being somebody who participates in flipper pinball promotions on a daily basis.

Like most of you, my earliest memories of pinball are very fond...playing those fantastic 1962, '63 and '64 machines at "Bishop's Cafe", (really more of a bus depot) when I'd stop in for a Green River Soda or some candy, or heading downtown to the penny arcade and the "Riveria", where all kinds of coin-op games were there for my enjoyment. I didn't realize it then, but growing up in a semi-famous resort city like Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, gave me plenty of opportunities to do, year 'round, what others traveled hundreds of miles to enjoy for just a couple of days each summer.

Those were great times. Running through the arcades to see if those crazy Illinois people had left money in the coin returns, or credits on the machines. For some of us maybe things haven't changed all that much! And "roto targets", weren't they some of the best features ever? I remember them vividly. They were great, but that's a whole 'nother story, maybe some other time.

The boyhood days are long gone, but I

didn't stop playing. On through high school and college, although my time was limited, I'd play when I could. As the late seventies and early eighties reared their pinball mashing heads, there wasn't as much opportunity to play, finding pinball machines was difficult in my area. So what could I do? I made sure I always had one in my place of business (being that I owned and managed a club made that task a bit easier). That way, whenever I had

"...sometimes I'd wake up with my hands on the machine I was playing in my dreams..."

a few minutes, I could shirk my management duties and play for a while. Like you, a healthy dose of pinball helped me make it through the day.

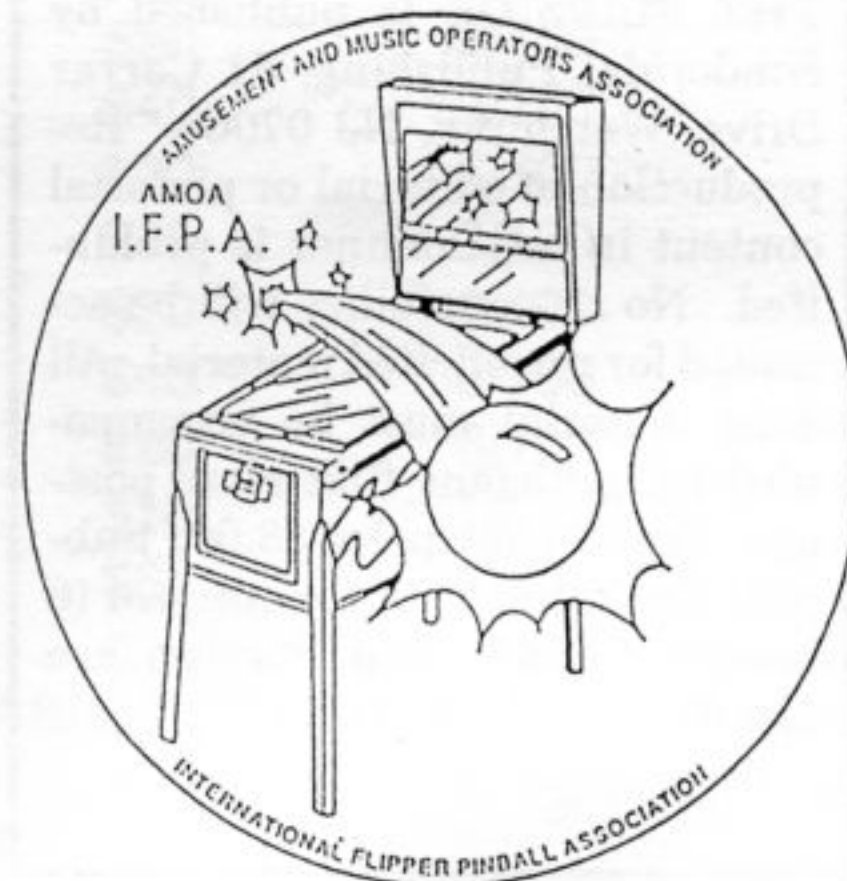
Big games happened all the time. When friends dropped by we'd have some. When their friends stopped by, we'd have some. And so on and so on. Playing, and encouraging others to play, was taking up much of the spare time I might otherwise have had. But what a way to go!

And so it went for quite some time. Run the business, play pinball. Play pinball, take care of business. Sometimes I'd wake up with my hands on the machine I was playing in my

dreams. Then it was back to work, etc., etc., etc. Then the big change, a new career. It was time to get serious about promoting play for pinball...for the AMOA-IFPA. Fortunately for me it's an association that focuses exactly on an activity that I have always enjoyed, it's just that now it's more serious, much more serious.

Being in a position to help spread the good word about pinball leagues and tournaments has been exciting and rewarding. From getting to know some of the great people in the manufacturing segment of the industry, to learning about the machines themselves, to admiring the skill of the players, it's been great. The different personalities add so much to the industry. There's never a dull moment.

For me, the excitement and work lies in the middle area of the industry, between the manufacturers and the players. That's where the IFPA is making an impact, and where the work



that helps keep me so busy, lies. As a vehicle of the AMOA, it's IFPA's task to bring all the industry segments together, for the benefit of all of them, both individually and collectively. What a juggling act! Given enough time and support, however, we're sure the program will provide the industry with a rock solid base of leagues and league players, and that will be good for the entire industry.

"...we're sure the program will provide the industry with a rock solid base of leagues and league players..."

So, here's my pep talk. As a player, you have the right to be more excited about pinball today than at any other time in the game's modern history. The games are more appealing, the features and capabilities more astounding, and the prospects of participating in pinball leagues and tournaments more promising, than ever before.

All you have to do is take advantage of it! You do that by participating in leagues and tournaments whenever they're offered, sharing the good news about pinball to anyone who'll listen - especially those people who are hanging on to their old pinball memories...instead of making new ones, and most importantly, to keep on playing and practicing pinball. There is nothing that can take the place of really enjoying the game...and don't the machines just keep getting better and better!?

If you have questions, comments or suggestions regarding the IFPA, you are invited to contact the offices at 141 W. Vine Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212, or call 414-263-0233 if it's more convenient. The Third Annual IFPA World Pinball Championships take place this coming May in Milwaukee. You are cordially invited to attend and you can get specific details at the address and phone listed above. Good Flipping!!

IFPA 3rd annual WORLD PINBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Friday • Saturday • Sunday
May 21, 22 & 23, 1993

The Grand Milwaukee Hotel
Milwaukee, WI

- Team and Singles Events for:
Open, Mixed, Women and Pinmasters
- Special Events, Youth Divisions & International Players
- \$15,000 in awards and prizes*
100% payback of entries & added money
- Over 80 new model pinball games
- Player reception and opening ceremonies Friday evening
- Special \$69 room rate 1 to 4 persons
Call 1.800.558.3862 for reservations



For additional information,
call the IFPA at
414.263.0233

* estimated based on entries

SPONSORS

Premier
Technology

Williams

**DATA
EAST**

Bally/MIDWAY

AMOA
Amusement And Music Operators Association

A MAN AND HIS DREAM

STEVE ENGEL - MAYFAIR AMUSEMENTS



***LEADERS IN THE INDUSTRY** - Steve and Laura Engel of Mayfair Amusements who have one of the largest parts warehouses and nearly 7,000 backglasses in stock. Their variety of parts and knowledge are here for you to use. Just give them a call at 718-417-5050.*

Although pinball was illegal in New York City until 1976, the thrill of playing the silverball was enchanting during his childhood. Waiting to vacation in the Catskills each summer at a known summer resort he would swim, meet new friends and, the best of all, play pinball!

The best memories of leaving the city strife was having a pocket full of quarters and wondering what new pinball machines would be at the local candy shop located in South Fallsberg. To his amazement there was a pingame that caught his eye at the age of seven years old called SLICK CHICK. He remembers putting in his shiny first quarter for the summer, sipping on an egg cream, cocking the ball, pulling the plunger and the fun began...the ball bouncing, the bells ringing, and his eyes wide in amazement at how much fun this summer would be for him. Winning 165 free games and lasting for two full days, this young man knew that pinball was something that he wanted to grow up with into adulthood.

Today, he is the most widely known business entrepreneur in the pinball industry for the collector, enthusiast, player, and operator. Steve Engel of Mayfair Amusements has

locked together the total involvement of pinball with man and his machine. His company is known for the largest selection of pinball backglasses and parts for electromechanical and solid state machines in the world.

Each year he has strived to further and satisfy the hobby by developing the most extensive selection of pinball parts you could think of for your machine. But one of the most interesting features of his company is the ever expanding inventory of pinball backglasses which now approaches 7,000 pieces. Referred to today as "PINBALL ART", these illustrated backglasses are now recognized as classic works of graphic art. Many glasses provide a social or political commentary on the popular icons of the day. Cowboys and indians, comic book heroes, poker, war games, fantasy, pop idols and outer space are some of the themes. This form of art has become immortalized on the pinball backglass.

Although the trend has become to collect the work of the artists or certain theme for wall hangings, Steve remembers when there was little interest except for a handful of collectors spread about the continent. Instead of seeing these backglasses destroyed by the manufacturers, Steve decided to

make an offer to them, having the foresight and hope that one day pinball would be a hobby that offered endless fun to the collector and families in the world

"I originally purchased these glasses because I loved the artwork and knew if someone broke their backglass to their machine that it would be virtually worthless. I try to provide a service to the collector, hobbyist, and operator so that they can restore their machines or pingames that they may find in their travels. Instead of these beautiful machines being thrown into land fill dumps throughout the United States, these are now wonderful working games in people's homes," he added.

Mayfair's reputation and longevity is proof that he has satisfied pinball collectors and operators around the world, celebrating his 10th year in business and growing steadily on a weekly basis. "I remember people laughing when I purchased those backglasses, or bought up old outdated pinball parts when there was practically no market, but thanks to Rob Berk, Chairman of the Pinball Expo, who created this extraordinary international show, and Steve Epstein of the Broadway Arcade in New York City and creator of PAPA, they have

both broadened the minds of collectors and players throughout the world. Pinball is fun and exciting for everyone of any age," he said with a smile.

Engel, who was the first to make a career full time in the pinball industry, made a decision that he wanted to dedicate his life to it. Attending college at the State University of New Paltz, he majored in business and economics and graduated with honors; he created his thesis around a business career in pinball. While taking a break from the books he would wander to the Student Union Building for a hamburger, soda and, of course, a game of pinball. Putting up his quarter for his two games, he would sometimes have to play against a female contender on the machine. Together they would win the high scores to date and compete, sometimes tying, for the grand prize of tickets to the concerts of Harry Chapin and Bonny Raitt. Their love affair with pinball and each other grew into a relationship that has developed over the past 15 years and a strong working partnership and marriage of eight years together. Laura, who works closely with Steve on a daily basis, received her degree in photojournalism and graduated on the Dean's List.

Together they have created history in pinball and collected over 63 machines currently in their personal collection. In 1986, Steve was crowned the International Pinball Wizard at

the first Flip-Out Pinball Tournament in Chicago at the second Pinball Expo. Laura worked for six years as Director of Communications for the largest not-for-profit organization for the blind and visually impaired in the country.

But, as Steve's business grew not only in pinball backglasses, parts and service, he also studied electronics from a retired engineer and student of Cooper Union and now offers full service board repair for solid state games.

Laura made a career choice and helped to pursue their goal in the pinball industry...together they are creating a chapter in pinball history. "We receive orders from China, Japan, New Zealand, Mexico, and other places where I would never believe they collected pinball," she said, "but it is heartwarming to know that we all have one true love and that is pinball," she added. "There never seems to be a language barrier when it comes to the silverball."

Another exciting project over the past year is their re-screened backglasses for the older pingames that have flaked or peeled with age. Recognized in the industry as the leaders in this field, these top quality glasses help the older electromechanical machines come alive again, giving new life and satisfying the hobby one step further. Although very costly to produce, they have come out with KINGS & QUEENS, EGG HEAD, SLICK CHICK, SWEETHEARTS, BANK-A-

BALL and several others are on the way. "It is a very time consuming endeavor since we strive to create the most accurate and highest quality backglasses available," Steve commented.

"One thing I strive to create with my company is that if you don't like the product just return it for a refund, because I always hated getting stuck with a part I thought I needed and then I didn't, or it was the wrong one!"

Steve has a full library of original schematics and manuals for virtually every machine and also odd ball types as well. "We have strived over the years to create a full service pinball warehouse for every machine and if we can't help you, we will try to direct you to the proper person or source. That today is a dying aspect in business," he said. "I look at ourselves as one of the last of the mom and pop businesses in the country!" he commented, with a glimmer in his eye. They have been featured on the television shows MTV, Entertainment Tonight, Good Day New York and numerous newspaper and magazine articles.

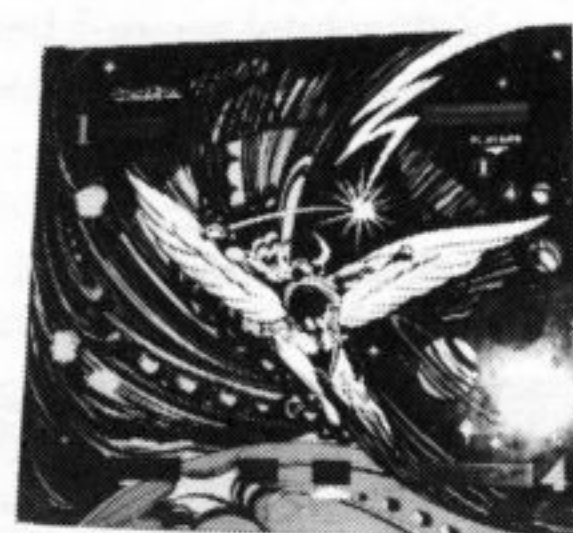
Mayfair Amusements is looked upon as the Ambassadors of Pinball and rightfully so. They took the plunge, invested their savings and endless 80 hour work weeks so that all of us can enjoy a game with a silverball...PINBALL!



ROLLER DISCO - 1979



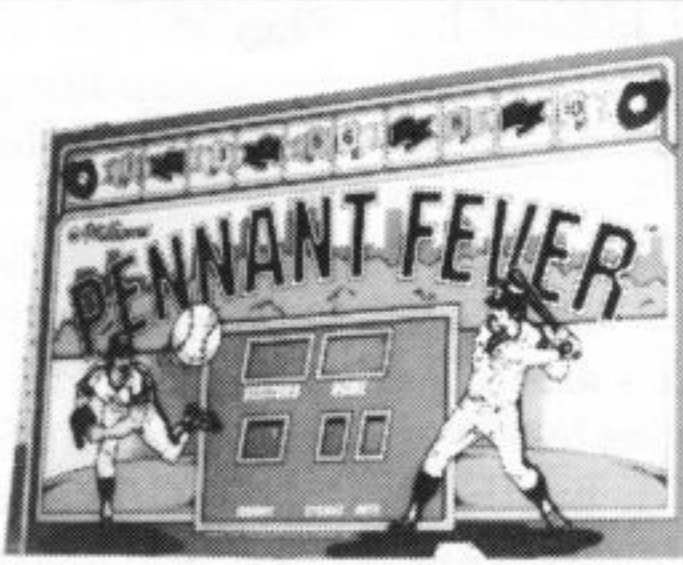
LASER CUE - 1984



SUPER NOVA - 1984



PINBALL POOL - 1979



PENNANT FEVER - 1984



FIREPOWER II - 1983

THE FLIPSIDE

PROFILE: MARK RITCHIE

He has established himself as one of the leading pinball designers of the past decade with a unique style and creative sensibility. Here, Mark Ritchie shares his experiences, how he started and what it has taken to persevere and succeed.

FS: When did you first discover pinball?

MR: It's difficult to pinpoint exactly when I played my first pinball machine but I think it was an old Bally MOON-SHOT. I must have been about six or seven. My mom would bowl twice a week and I would go with her after school and play pinball. I would stand on a chair to play because I was a short kid and couldn't see over the arch.

About six or seven years later my attention was again focused on pinball. The year was 1972 and the game was FIREBALL. They had just gotten it - still had the paper stuff on the side armor. I had never seen a multiball game before this and was able to play this game really well. We (my buddies and I) were gamblers at heart. I would purposely play badly to suck in my friends, letting them think I was terrible at the game. I was pretty darn good at the skill shot in the back - the elevated section with the rollover slots - this was truly a skill oriented feature which I mastered. And, if I took their money, I was god for the week. That's what was important at the time.

During my high school years I became more interested in cars and girls so I really didn't have much time for pinball.

When I graduated from high school in 1976, I had absolutely no idea of what to do with myself. I worked as a cook at a restaurant for awhile and got totally bored with that in no time.

FS: If pinball had faded into the background, how did you ever get involved in the business?

MR: Well, big brother, Steve, had landed himself his first real job at a place that made video games - Atari, located in Sunnyvale, California. This seemed like utopia to me.

I began pestering my brother every time I saw him, "Are they hiring? Can I get a job there even if it's assembly work?" I had a strong desire to get my foot in this business plus I had an "In." He would respond, "I can't do anything for you because of their policy of not hiring family members."



After months of this, it happened. I got a call from Steve. He told me that if I wanted a job at Atari, I had to show up at a certain time. I couldn't contain my excitement. I was hired. (Apparently, if I worked in a different department from Steve, it was OK. This policy would be changed later.)

They started me working on the line in the Santa Clara facility building control panels for a game licensed to Atari by Namco called F-1 - a mechanical driving game.

Shortly after being hired, I was at my parents' house for Thanksgiving dinner. You know, turkey, 2 kinds of potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce and pinball. WHAT? Yes, it's true, pinball! Steve had brought home a CAPTAIN FANTASTIC for us to play. Immediately we set it up and started playing. I loved this game - great shots, great target action, cool artwork - what more did I need?

After dinner, we all went back out to the garage to play. As we dropped targets and opened the gate at the bottom, Steve informed my Dad and me that he was working on a pinball design for Atari. Atari doesn't make pinballs, I noted. Steve said, "They do now."

About six months after that conversation, the first Atari pinball rolled off the line. I had the honor of being the first of six people to be picked to start a second pinball assembly line. Within two weeks, I was promoted to lead assembly man. I was training non-English speaking Vietnamese people to drive little screws into the playfield. Little did I know the second line was for rework. Massive amounts of rework! Virtually every game built came back to the factory because all the playfields we had purchased from the Chicago area were rotted out under the top layers of veneer. What a nightmare! The game was called THE ATARIANS - a fun game when it worked, which was about an hour.

After Atari had gotten their fingers burned with that, they went into TIME 2000, then MIDDLE EARTH, then Steve's debut game AIRBORNE AVENGER, then SPACE RIDERS. Next came SUPERMAN, another Steve Ritchie game and my personal favorite at that time.

After SUPERMAN was in production, Steve had gotten an offer from Williams' President, Michael Stroll. He took it and I was stuck in total Atari turmoil. They had finally gotten their act together on SUPERMAN, but it was too late. They decided to disband their pinball operation.

FS: *So there you were with Atari going through incredible changes and Steve having moved away, what were your options?*

MR: By this time I was working in the pinball prototype and engineering department as a tech. It wasn't long before the Atari bailout was underway and I was out of a job. Atari did offer me a job as a burn-in oven maintenance man for less money than I was making as a pinball tech. Nothing like being the low man on the totem pole!

Having loved every minute of this business - a total thrill - I again started bugging my big brother. My call was answered. I met Mike Stroll in California and he made me

an offer I couldn't refuse.

I was 21 and packing my bags for Chicago. Mike Stroll had said to me, "Let's see how you work out as a tech and who knows, maybe in a couple of years you can be designing games too." I thought, not only is this guy doubling my salary, but he wants me to design games too!

At first I worked on what was my brother's current game - FIREPOWER. I learned cabling, basic electro-mechanical theory and some design. Steve had me make all his metal ball guides for FIREPOWER, which I would use to my advantage later. By this time the first prototype game was finished and we played it for the first time. It was the most fun I ever had on any pinball machine. It was a great game.

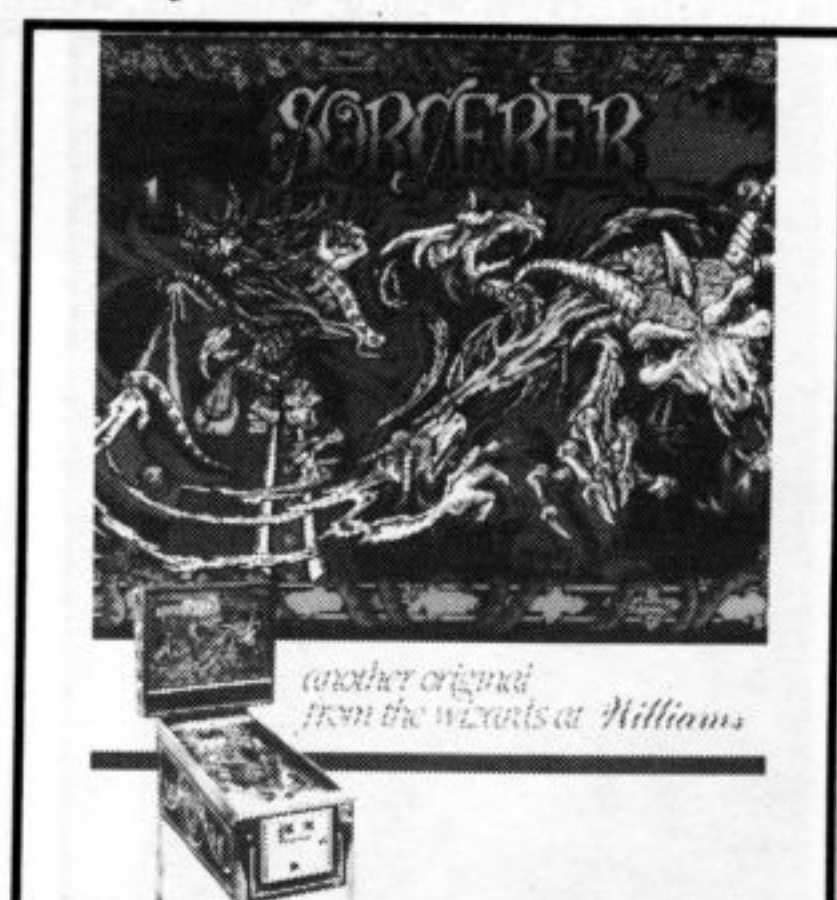
This game, I think, inspired me the most. It had some great "firsts" on it - first talking multiball game and the first game to have lane change. I played it like crazy. It became my all-time-favorite game.

FS: *You were doing technical support, how did you move into design?*

MR: After learning everything I could about game design and teching games for every Williams designer, I started my first layout for a pin game. I wanted to motivate and innovate. I wanted to build a game that would offer a player total control. I built a two-year catastrophe called THUNDERBALL. It featured an automatic ball launch system that would fire balls directly over the flippers to get the balls to the flippers sooner. It took the better part of six months to make the thing work. It would be the worst experience of my entire design career.

FS: *I don't know if many people are familiar with the game, what were the rules?*

MR: We originally set out to make a pin game with video game-like rules, such as wave progression. The player was expected to complete various target sequences to get to Superwave. Superwave was all six balls on the playfield for 15 seconds (adjustable). The automatic kickouts would be auto-firing balls on the player's flippers for this time period. Absolutely terrible! But you live and learn.



After THUNDERBALL I came back down to earth. I started really paying a lot of attention to why pinball designers did what they did and what made people want to play pinball machines over video games. It was control of a little steel ball and shots that were both satisfying and rewarding.

In the wake of Steve Ritchie's BLACK KNIGHT, it seemed like there was just nothing anybody could do to top it. Countless attempts at two level games were produced by the big guys in the business. None were quite as cool in my opinion.

FS: It was a great game, but it also impacted the direction pinball would take and the fact that it became more and more difficult to compete against video.

MR: In 1982-83 things got worse for pinball. It seemed nothing would break the deadlock in the industry. But finally it happened. It was one of my games, FIREPOWER II, a sequel to the game I loved so much. It came out in the summer of 1983. I was heavily influenced by the success of FIREPOWER. I knew there was more magic left in that theme. I kept the playfield very similar to the original because I wanted the same game flow as the original. Although its older brother, FIREPOWER, was a tough act to follow, we managed to make a cool game that I feel was the best sequel ever done (for pinball). We enjoyed success at last. I think we sold 3500 units, which at that time was considered an accomplishment.

It proved that there was once again always room for a good product no matter how bad the marketplace was.

By the following year I decided I wanted to do something a little different. Having enjoyed Chicago Coin and Williams baseball games as a child, I thought it might be fun to do one. It was called PENNANT FEVER and featured a progressive pennant award for any grand slam. The game would keep track of 10 pennants arranged around the border of the backglass. The first player to get the 10th pennant won a replay. It also featured a consecutive home run award which would increase the home run value 2X, 3X, 4X, 5X. There was also a 2X home run award. On the playfield there was a moving arrow which, when lit, would double the home

run if it was in the right section of the upper deck. It wasn't a killer but it was fun to do.

FS: It sounds like you took many of the play principles from pinball and adapted them into a novelty game, but then you went back to pinball.

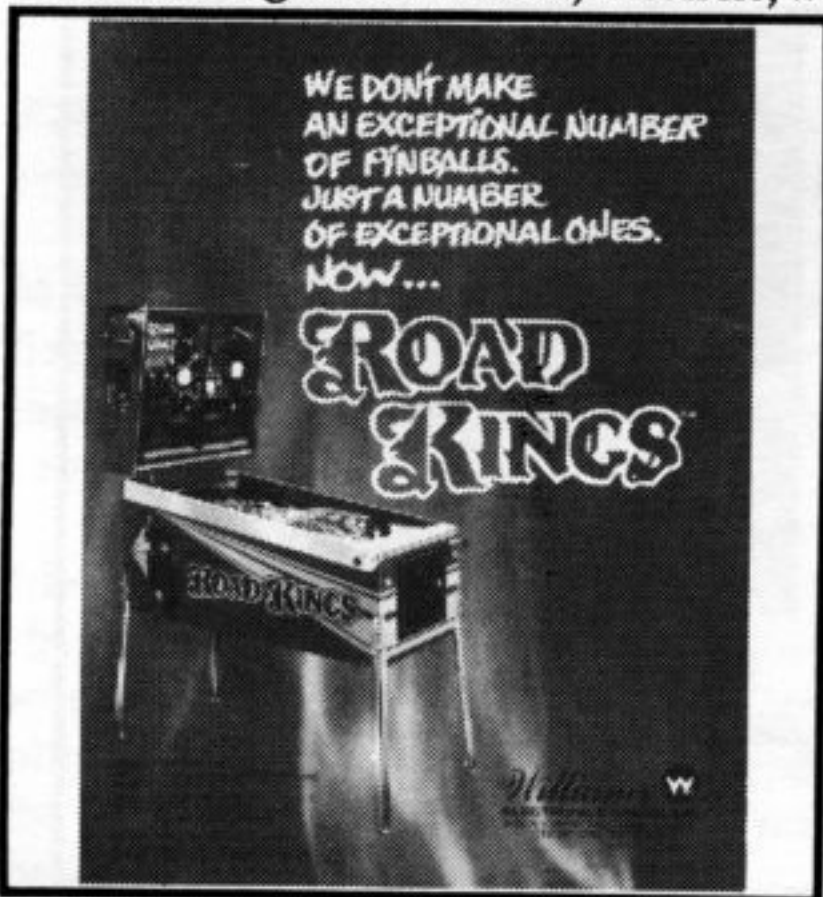
MR: In 1985, I knew I wanted to try something new for pinball and the first ideas began to take shape for what would eventually become SORCERER. I was nearing my second wedding anniversary and I wanted to give my very wonderful wife, Trudy, a special gift. Knowing her love of wizard and dragon figurines inspired by her reading of The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings trilogy, I concocted SORCERER as a theme for a pinball.

The game featured an elevated ramp and wireform shot to lock balls for multiball play. Each ball locked during multiball doubled playfield values by 2X, then 3X, then 5X. The game took on very much a cult following. We also had tremendous problems selling the game in the southern part of the country. Apparently, it was seen as demonic and evil. The artwork was spectacularly designed and executed by debut artist, Pam Erikson, and was, I think, one of the best looking packages I've ever seen or had the pleasure of working on. I obviously can't say enough about this.

In 1986 came ROAD KINGS, a Road Warrior crash and burn motorcycle vigilante theme. This game featured a never before seen multiball feature called Time Lock. Once in multiball, the player would lock both balls again into two of three possible shots. If successful, this would raise the right ramp for a Mega Score worth 150,000 points per shot. This was also the first Williams game to feature the Yamaha sound/music chip. Along with the chip came a new sound engineer, Chris Granner. This was Chris' first dedicated pinball project and since then his name has appeared on more than a few of my games. He's a great musician and a great engineer.

Another interesting bit of trivia is that the software and several game concept ideas came from George Petro of T-2 video fame.

Next came the catapults - BIG GUNS. By now I wanted to



take a different approach. I thought because of market conditions at the time I would make a more novice-friendly game in order to appeal to a broader marketplace. There wasn't the dedicated player base that we now enjoy.

Also in the wake of over 16,000 F-14 TOMCATS in the field, there wasn't much buying power out there. I figured I'd better do something different.

Programmed by pinball software ace, Bill Pfitzenreuter, BIG GUNS featured two never-before-seen catapults which shot the balls across the playfield through midair into two caged wireform receptacles and back down to the lower flippers. It also had a means of saving the ball at all three drain locations. There was a pop-up post between the flippers, a kick-back on the left and a gate on the right that made it almost impossible to lose the balls.

Also, in the backglass there was a feature called the King's Chamber. As the player hit the lower guard targets, he could accumulate shots to the King's Chamber. A small pachinko-type of play feature would kick a small plastic ball up to the chamber in the backglass for a possible extra ball.

I should mention, the object of the game was to lock up all three balls, get multiball and become invincible to rescue the queen for the Jackpot.

This would be the first time I would work with the Romanian wild man, Python Anghelo. Python took the art one step further (or beyond) with his artistic abilities. I remember the two of us spending countless hours together talking over ideas and conceptual stuff.

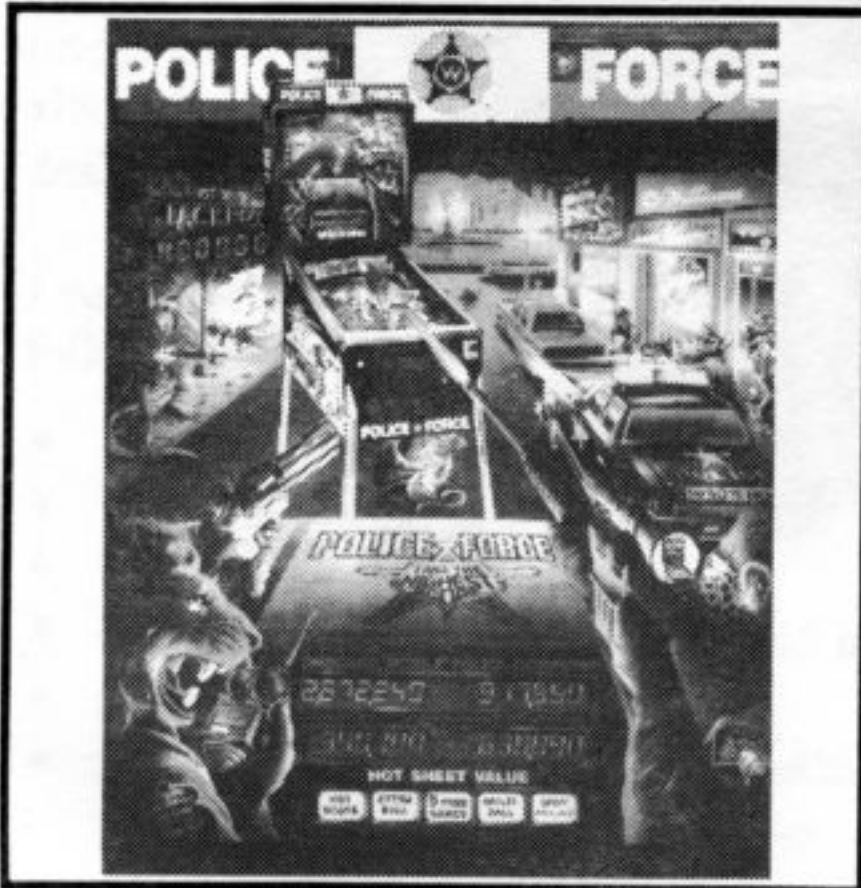
The night the backglass was conceived, he and I had been out for dinner and had a bit too much to drink so I let him stay at my place. I went to bed and the next day when I awoke he was down in my basement just putting the final touches on the elaborate pencil sketch for the backglass.

BIG GUNS turned out to be a player's game for sure so I really hadn't achieved my goal, though I thought it was quite good. I think my favorite part of the game was the constant challenge of rescuing the queen. I also liked a great deal the 3-bank drop target arrangement at the top of



Mark Ritchie and the legendary Python Anghelo

the game. Making the three banks set up a timer for the small loop shots revealed when the targets were down for a possible 2-9X bonus multiplier. The catapults were cool, but because they were covered by the gun plastics they were difficult to see.



Now, in 1988, I was about to embark on a very special trip, a TAXI ride. TAXI was conceived by myself and Python Anghelo. We were having dinner with our better halves. After dinner we sat around thinking about what we were going to do with this really cool playfield with the crisscrossing wireforms.

You would be driving this taxi around town picking up the weirdest cast of characters in the pinball world. From there, we connected picking up these passengers to a jackpot award. There was also a million shot which was activated by making left and right combination ramp shots. With the ball shooter skill shot spinout, players could pick up a passenger or score up to 400,000 points. Picking up Gorbie, Marilyn, Santa, Pin•Bot and Dracula lit the Jackpot. It was simple and not too deep but I think it had a great playfield and great rules. It also had outstanding artwork and was a beautiful package.

A true player's game, TAXI was tough and very challenging. Next to FISH TALES, I think TAXI was my best game ever. It also influenced me heavily on the next two games I would design.

After the success of TAXI, I again hooked up with Python to do POLICE FORCE. Together with Barry Oursler, we developed a game originally to be themed "Batman" two years before Data East did it. Negotiations for the license didn't work out so Batman became POLICE FORCE. What originally was to be a Batmobile was now a police car and the Batcave became the City Jail. The game was a pure novice player's game. I thought we could hook some new players out there with its friendly play features.

The Unlimited Million shot for the good players was the only shot on the game. Once I watched a guy make that shot 67 times in a row. I think if we had connected that to some kind of target sequence or something, it would have been cooler.

FS: *There has been an evolution, of sorts, when looking at your creative design approach. How would you describe it?*

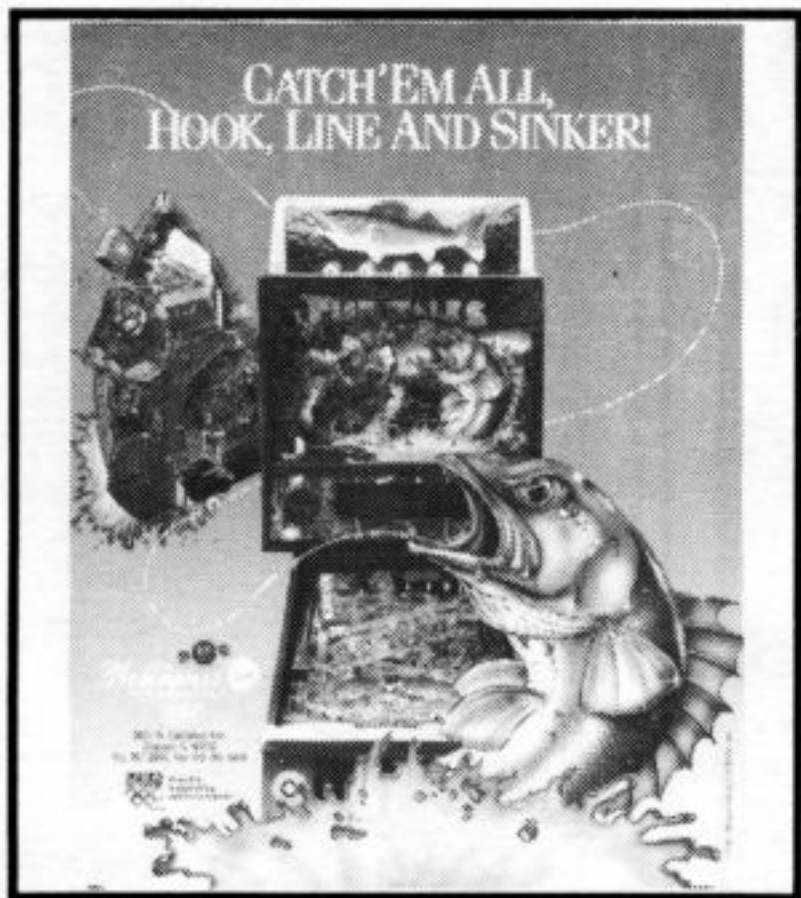
MR: Different times in my career produced different

thoughts about my games. When I did POLICE FORCE, I thought we needed something more contemporary for casual players, but I think I underestimated the dedicated players in the world. I have since learned to avoid this. You cannot please everyone all the time.

Next in 1990 came DINER. Because of my fondness for nostalgia, American style, I wanted to theme a game around a diner. I borrowed the public service thing from TAXI and originally intended to use characters different from those on the playfield. They were George Bush (Buck), Manuel Noriega (Pepe), Gorbachev (Boris), Margaret Thatcher (Babs) and Ghandi (Haji). I thought this would have created some great controversy but I was persuaded to remove them from the game. I then set the rules to the theme. Players would serve crabby customers an array of goodies. Next came the cash register and jukebox. Situated on top of the left ramp was a miniature cash register which would score tons of points. The jukebox awarded skill shot values from the ball shooter.

Next came the cup shot which I thought was a lot of fun. I like long shots in a game and DINER had some good ones. I think it catered pretty well to both novice and experienced players. I was happy with it.

Departure time again. Enter SLUGFEST. Baseball's back but this time with a different twist. I was going to give away baseball cards to every kid that played it and got a home run, grand slam, or the highest score. They loved it. I loved it too.



Some new features went into this game - a dot matrix display depicting a scoreboard and other cool display effects, a baseball card dispenser and the ability to vend tickets as well.

I don't know how to explain my departure from pinball other than that I enjoy designing games, not just pinballs.

I've now reached the point in this chronology to talk about my current and favorite game - FISH TALES.

It's been said to me, "What made you take such a departure from your previous pinball designs?" In a design sense, however, FISH TALES to me is really not that much of a departure. However, I think the rules in the game are. Together with Mark Penacho, Pat McMahon, Python Anghelo, Chris Granner and dot matrix artist, Scott Slomiany, we conspired to make the best game yet.

This time around I had the very best people in the business around me. I think that's what made FISH TALES the game it is.

I really can't say that I was influenced by anyone. In fact, people would say, "C'mon you're going to do a fishing game? What are you, nuts?" I would boldly respond, "Yes," to both.

I liked the crisscross wire form action in TAXI so much, I did it again on FISH TALES. There's a lot more attention to depth in this game as not everything is attainable within three or four plays.

FS: *There is a lot of depth and a challenging layout.*

MR: FISH TALES turned out to be a player's friend in more ways than one. There are several ways to win. You can either max out on the boat shots to light Monster Fish Hurry Up (inspired by T-2 pinball), or go for jackpots or catch fish and lie like mad for big points, or nail the captive ball for multiple values.

I think the reason this game is hot is that there are so many things to go for. I also believe I have a much better understanding now of what players want in a game. I have also learned to connect my thoughts as a player to the game designer a little better.

I consider myself to be a pretty decent player. I like the following things in a pinball machine:

- Nice, long shots at reachable angles
- Good combinations shots
- Escalating the rules
- Good accompanying sounds and music
- Several ways to win
- Nice artwork, preferably something light in color to provide better vision of features
- Good payback for time and money invested

pinGame journal

Covering The World of Pinball

Since the first issue in May, 1991 the journal has covered a wide variety of pinball subjects and eras. From Genco's 1940 METRO an 18-page series on the making of Data East's STAR TREK to the current issue's description of a renovation of KING OF DIAMONDS. The future looks even bigger and better!

Contributors include Richard Bueschel, Russ Jensen, Gary Flower and a host of others. There are new game descriptions, older machine reviews, opinions, memories and more. Letters, classified ads, flyers, plastics, and the ever-popular score cards are also included.

Hundreds of players and collectors have received every issue. Subscribe now and see what YOU are missing!

Twelve Issues—\$26.00

(Canada—\$32.00, Europe—\$45.00)

Sample Issue—\$3.00, Information—FREE

31937 OLDE FRANKLIN DRIVE
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN 48334
Message or FAX (313) 626-5203

My all-time favorite games:

1. FISH TALES
2. TAXI
3. T-2
4. OPERATION THUNDER
5. HIGH SPEED
6. THE GETAWAY
7. BONZAI RUN
8. MATA HARI
9. CAPTAIN FANTASTIC
10. SURF CHAMP

My playing technique may not be quite as stylish as Roger Sharpe's famed "Run and Gun" technique but I manage to do alright. I try to remain calm but alert. Fast playfields have gotten the best of me at times so I do my best to keep my agility in top form. I like to rest my left foot on the base of the left leg to gain a little more stability and to prevent excess cabinet shake resulting in snap tilts.

Some of the people who have influenced me at different times:

Steve Ritchie - smooth playfield design
Python Anghelo - conceptual creativity
Roger Sharpe - player features
Steve Epstein - player appeal
Steve Kordek - practicality of design

PLAYING THE FIELD

CUE BALL WIZARD

By Robert Rosenhouse

Pool and pinball have been together for a long time. There probably aren't too many pool halls that don't have a pinball or two. Pinball has had quite a few themed games too. Games with such titles as BANK A BALL, PINBALL POOL, RACK 'EM UP, and countless others. This is a natural theme, as a lot of the same skills that exist in pool can be utilized in pinball.

That brings us to my review for this month. As of the last year or so, Premier has been running hot and cold as far as game releases are concerned. In my opinion, their SURF 'N' SAFARI was a turning point in game manufacture. It is a fun game, with many skill shots, special modes, and good special effects. It only suffered with the lack of overlapping modes. But more on that later. SUPER MARIO BROS. was not so exciting in my eyes. A good kiddie game, with lots of repetitive shots, easy-to-hit ramps, and a familiar theme. Problem is, it just got too tired too soon. Now we are introduced to their newest piece: CUE BALL WIZARD (CBW).

CBW has a fairly symmetrical playfield. Like the old PINBALL POOL, there are 2 seven drop target banks, one on the left and one on the right. These represent the solids and stripes. The top of the playfield consists of two pop bumpers, two knockout holes (bank shots), and a set of targets representing the 'sweet spot'. In the center of the playfield is a horseshoe loop, much like the one found on SILVERBALL MANIA. Just below this loop is a regulation size cue ball. What is a cue ball doing on a pinball playfield? I'll explain later.

There is a ramp that surrounds the playfield that begins on the right side, and drops the ball in the left flipper return lane. The bottom of the playfield is pretty standard, with two outlanes, and two return lanes. CBW features no kickback. Finishing off the playfield is an elevated mini playfield, complete with a mini cue stick and eight ball, which is poised to hit three sets of colored targets.

The game begins with a standard plunger shot that enters the ramp, and is let go on the left flipper. The timing is important on this shot, as the cue stick, which swivels back and forth, will strike the eight ball as the silver ball enters the ramp. The idea here is to hit the center blue area with the eight ball for a quick 5 million points. And, as if one skill shot wasn't enough, you then have the opportunity to score 20 million by back-handing the ball into the left side of the horseshoe. A risky shot, but worth the effort. With that out of the way, we can now begin to play.

There are a few different objectives on CBW. I will begin with the pool balls. As in real pool, you need to sink all the solid balls (1-7) before you pocket the eight ball. This is done by knocking down the drop targets on the left side. The playfield is laid out such that many shots will rebound off the targets and land in the bank shot hole at the top of the game. This scores a 'Clean Bank Shot' and awards a random feature. Once all the solid balls have been made, the eight ball feature becomes active. Here you must hit the cue ball in a manner that it strikes one of the green targets suspended above the playfield.

Accomplishing this will sink the eight ball and enable multiball. All you need to do to start multiball is make a shot up the ramp. This will begin two ball play. Now your main objective here is to make the eight ball hit each of the colored targets on the upper playfield. Each color scores the jackpot value as indicated in the dot matrix display. Striking the drop targets increases the jackpot value. The skill here involves hitting the cue ball when the cue stick is aimed at the needed color, while keeping both balls in play. If you manage to get all three colors, the ramp will light to offer a Super Jackpot worth 100 million points.

That is the first half of the game. Glaring up at you in the center of the playfield is a wagon wheel with six large lights representing different scoring modes. Each mode is started by hitting the ramp when the wagon wheel at the entrance of the ramp is lit. Depending on how the software is set up, you need to qualify the ramp shot by either putting the ball in the left side knockout hole, or making the ramp itself, will light the ramp to score the wagon wheel value. The game does a good job of explaining each round to you, so I won't go into detail here.

Once you light up each light on the wagon wheel, you get the opportunity to enter Pool Ball Mania. This is a special three ball multiball round where all targets score 'X' million points. This depends on the software setting. The idea is to keep the balls banging around for as long as possible, potentially scoring many hundreds of millions. Once you lose two of the three balls, you can shoot the ball up the ramp to begin the Nine Ball

round.

The nine ball round requires that you sink all nine balls in succession. Doing this scores the second highest award in modern pinball history: One Half Billion. (Second to the BRIDE OF PINBOT'S One Billion shot). This mode is timed to some degree, depending on the local settings.

The last thing of interest on CBW are the video modes. You light the ramp for a video mode by spelling P-O-O-L. There are 2 video modes. The first involves moving the pocket of the pool table to catch the pool balls descending from the top of the dot matrix display. The second is a random chance to find the 'King' behind one of the three drawn curtains. Here you will find anything from 'Cactus Jack', a cow pie, or Elvis, the 'King'. These modes are rather quick and low scoring.

CBW is a decent game that remains very true to the game of pool. There are lots of shots on the board and quite a few different strategies that you can use to play the game. However, it suffers from some uneven scoring and even a bug. Nothing on a pinball game should score a half billion. This is just too much. One can play the game for quite a long time and score around 600 million, but this is overshadowed by this one shot. The programming also has a bug (feature?) that goes like this. In normal play, work the game up to lighting the eight ball, but **DON'T HIT IT**. Now complete the wagon wheel and get into Pool Ball Mania, but avoid the eight ball like the plague. Once you're down to one ball, start nine ball mode, and all you need to do is hit the eight and then the nine to score the half billion.

One thing that Premier insists on doing is locking the game into a mode and having everything else ignored on the playfield until the mode ends or times out. For example, once you start the extra ball round, nothing else builds up until that round is over. I've seen many good players just cradle the ball, and wait for the more bogus rounds to end before

continuing play. I'm not sure if this is designed into the game to keep things simple, or the program is not sophisticated enough to keep track of many events at the same time.

On the positive side, Premier has given us a game with lots of skillful shots that require good aiming and timing. The whole cue ball concept is quite challenging. The game is designed very smoothly, and the voice and dot matrix prompts will help the novice choose where to aim the ball.



PLAYING THE FIELD

DOCTOR WHO

By Lyman Sheats, Jr.

DOCTOR WHO is a pinball game based on the popular BBC science fiction series of the same name. One thing I would like to introduce right off is the fact that I know very little about the Doctor Who series itself. I recall watching an entry or two of the series on a PBS station a long time ago, perhaps when I was 10 or 11 years old, and I didn't find the show very interesting. I'm sure all of the Doctor Who fans who are reading this right now would like to slap me across the face and tell me to wake up; Doctor Who fans may not think I'm qualified to write this review.

I'm not prepared to cover how much I like or dislike the artwork, or how well I think the Doctor Who theme was recreated in this new release from Bally, primarily because I'm not a Doctor Who fan and I'm not familiar with the show. Of course, artwork and theme are important aspects to one's overall enjoyment of a pinball game, but if a game isn't very playable, then my feeling is that the best theme (if there is such a thing) and the most beautiful artwork (if there is such a thing) aren't going to be enough to make a game more playable.

Artwork and theme may make a game more enjoyable to play, but they aren't going to make up for deficiencies in the design of a game. So I hope what everyone is about to read is going to be a fair review of a pinball game that concentrates mainly on major scoring features, without a lot of the fluff about how great the artwork may or may not be, or how great the theme ties into the play of the game.

The game is started by selecting one of the seven doctors. Each doctor is pictured below the dot matrix display, much like the "THING" lamps under the dot matrix display on THE ADDAMS FAMILY. Players can select a doctor with a lower number by hitting the left flipper button, or select a doctor with a higher number by hitting the right flipper button. Once the desired doctor is selected, pushing the "launch ball" button directly beneath the solenoid plunger awards the doctor.



At this point, I'd go ahead and describe the plunger/skill shot, but DOCTOR WHO doesn't seem to have one. The solenoid plunger simply launches the ball into a rubber stopper, and the ball eventually gets returned to the right flipper via the right return lane. Putting the ball

into play isn't very interesting.

Depending on which doctor was selected at the start of the ball, players may want to concentrate on specific areas of the playfield to better their chances at a high score. Each area of scoring is indicated on the playfield by the doctor numbers (1-7) in white.

THE DOCTORS

Doctor 1 is the SPECIAL/VIDEO MODE doctor. Doctor 1, when awarded, spots an extra ESCAPE target. There are two ways to spot an ESCAPE target - one is to hit the bank of targets marked ESCAPE below the START WHO ramp and above the right return lane, the other is to shoot the ball into the hole below the pop bumpers that leads to the police box.

Completing ESCAPE awards the lit ESCAPE value (500K, 1 MIL, 2 MIL, 3 MIL, SPECIAL) and advances the ESCAPE award. Completing ESCAPE also lights the Video Mode, which can be collected by shooting the Build Transmat shot around to the pop bumpers, over the switch below the pop bumpers and into the hole that leads to the police box.

Doctor 2 is the HANG ON doctor. Doctor 2, when awarded, doubles the value of the Hang On score and allows more time to complete the shot.

The Hang On shot is activated by the right return lane switch. The shot itself is directly above the upper left flipper, it is the H shot in the W-H-O sequence. The Hang On value ranges from 250K to 2 MIL points.

Doctor 3 is the W-H-O doctor. Doctor 3, when awarded, allows more time to complete each individual letter in the W-H-O sequence. The W-H-O sequence is completed by shooting the START WHO ramp (the right ramp) from the lower left flipper for the W, the left side lane past the upper left flipper from the lower right flipper for the H, and the CLIFF HANGER ramp (the side ramp) from the upper left flipper for the O. Completing a fixed number of W-H-O sequences lights the extra ball.

Doctor 4 is the REPAIR doctor. Doctor 4, when awarded, spots an additional REPAIR target when a REPAIR target is hit. Completing all REPAIR targets makes each REPAIR target worth 1 MIL points. The REPAIR targets are located on the left side of the playfield, above the upper left flipper and directly opposite the CLIFF HANGER ramp.

Doctor 5 is the TRANSMAT doctor. Doctor 5, when awarded, increases the jet bumps score such that the jet bumpers require fewer hits to light the transmat target directly below the CLIFF HANGER ramp and directly above the START WHO ramp. Hitting the TRANSMAT target when lit awards a doctor.

Doctor 6 is the MULTIPLIER doctor. Doctor 6, when awarded, steps the playfield multiplier, awarded at the CLIFF HANGER ramp, in increments of 2 instead of 1. Doctor 6 also increases the amount of time it takes for the playfield multiplier to count back down to 1X scoring values.

Doctor 7 is the MULTIBALL doctor. Doctor 7, when awarded, spots an additional "expansion factor" target when the mini-playfield is on level 2, and adds more time to the re-lock timer after a multiball in which no jackpot was collected.

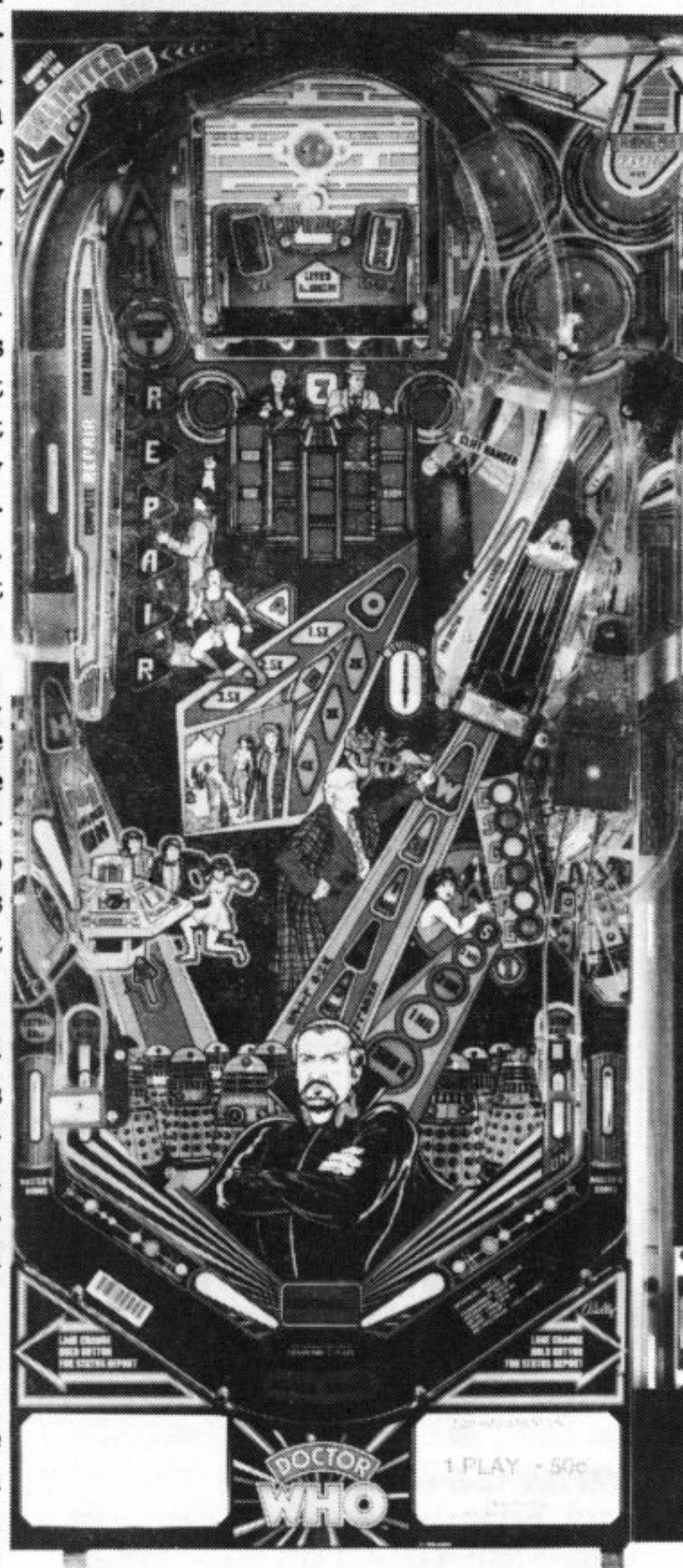
MAJOR SCORING FEATURES

The CLIFF HANGER ramp is the large side ramp that can be hit from the upper left flipper. The ramp can be hit repeatedly, and players can really get into a rhythm hitting this

ramp over and over and over. The entrance to the ramp is huge, and the shot becomes extremely easy once the correct spot is located on the upper left flipper to make the shot.

The CLIFF HANGER ramp shot is the shot that increases the playfield multiplier. The values start at 1X and increase by 0.5X with each ramp shot up to a maximum of 4X. If Doctor 6 has been awarded, then the values increase by 1X with each ramp shot, again to a maximum of 4X.

When the playfield multiplier has maxed out at 4X, then each CLIFF HANGER ramp shot is worth 1 MIL points.



Sonic Booms are awarded at 10, 20, 30,...loop shots on the CLIFF HANGER ramp. When the sonic boom sequence starts, the ball is returned from the CLIFF HANGER ramp to the lower left flipper. The sonic boom sequence is a timed mode in which all of the W-H-O letters are worth 10 MIL points.

VIDEO MODE

DOCTOR WHO's video mode is, in my opinion, one of the better video modes to come out on a pinball game in recent months. The video mode on DOCTOR WHO requires the player to make the doctor "jump" over obstacles as the doctor is being pursued by a Dalek firing at his feet. There are two different types of jumps in this video mode - a shot jump, accomplished by hitting one flipper button, and a long jump, accomplished by hitting both flipper buttons. Correspondingly, there are two different types of obstacles in this video mode - those requiring a short jump to clear, and those requiring a long jump to clear.

It is possible to memorize the video jump patterns, allowing players to complete the video mode waves much easier, but the memorization method is extremely dependent on how the machine is set up by the operator. The jump patterns depend on whether the particular game in question is set up on Easy, Medium, or Hard difficulty settings.

The reason I like DOCTOR WHO's video mode so much is that it is fairly easy to finish - if you happen to be paying attention the entire time. It isn't impossible to perfect each wave, like it is with the video modes on CUE BALL WIZARD and FISH TALES, nor is it easy enough to complete in your sleep, like it is with the fight mode on LETHAL WEAPON 3 or the "pole position" mode on THE GETAWAY.

Another reason I like video mode on DOCTOR WHO is that there always seems to be an extra ball available at the end of one of the waves. On some games, I've seen an

extra ball appear as early as at the end of wave 2; on others, the extra ball has appeared as late as at the end of wave 4. But the extra ball always seems to be there; its existence doesn't seem to be dependent on any factory or operator percentages.

One major scoring feature in the video mode to watch for is the Video Mode Last Wave. At the start of each wave of video mode, there will be a display of the number of waves that need to be completed until the Last Wave total is awarded. The Last Wave total is the sum of video mode wave scores awarded thus far. So, for example, if wave 1 yields 5 MIL points, wave 2 yields 7 MIL points, wave 3 yields 9 MIL points, wave 4 yields 11 MIL points, and the Video Mode Last Wave is awarded at the end of the wave 4, the Last Wave total will be worth 5 MIL + 7 MIL + 9 MIL + 11 MIL = 32 MIL. With a 4X playfield multiplier, I have seen the first Last Wave total as high as 100 MIL, the second Last Wave total as high as 200 MIL, and the third Last Wave total as high as 500 MIL.

MULTIBALL

Multiball is achieved by locking two balls on level 1 of the mini-playfield. For those familiar with the game PIN•BOT, locking the balls for multiball on DOCTOR WHO is very much like locking balls for multiball on PIN•BOT. However, the multiball mode on DOCTOR WHO is a bit more difficult to start than the multiball mode on PIN•BOT. Once two balls have been locked in the Time Expander (mini-playfield level 1), the playfield will rise, revealing level 2 of the Time Expander. Completing all 15 targets on level 2 will cause the playfield to rise again, revealing level 3 of the Time Expander. Shooting the ball into one of the three doors on level 3 will start multiball.

At the start of multiball, the mini-playfield will lower to level 1 and eject the two balls that were locked earlier. Then the mini-playfield will rise again to level 3, enabling collec-

tion of the jackpot. The jackpot value will be worth 40M x the playfield multiplier if multiball was started by shooting the ball into the left or right doors, or it will be worth 50 M x the playfield multiplier if multiball was started by shooting the ball into the center door.

To collect the jackpot, balls must be shot into each of the three doors. If the player loses all but one ball without collecting a jackpot, the player will have a limited number of time to restart multiball by locking balls on level 1 of the Time Expander - as soon as the second ball is locked, multiball is restarted.

After collecting the first jackpot, if multiball was started by shooting the ball into the left or right doors, then the jackpot sequence will restart. If, however, multiball was started by shooting the ball into the center door, then the Davros Waves start. The Davros waves start with level 2 of the Time Expander - 5 targets need to be completed to make the playfield rise to level 3 for collection of the Davros Super Jackpot. The Super Jackpot starts at a minimum of 100 MIL, and is affected by the playfield multiplier for a maximum value of 400 MIL (100 MIL x 4X).

Once the first Davros Wave is over and the Super Jackpot has been collected, the wave starts over again, except now 10 targets on level 2 of the time expander need to be completed to make the mini-playfield rise to level 3 to collect the second Super Jackpot, which has a value of 200M at 1X playfield values. Similarly, the third and subsequent Davros Waves require 15 hits on the targets on level 2 of the Time Expander, and are worth 300M at 1X playfield values.

So any player that makes it to the third Davros Wave can potentially collect a Super Jackpot worth 1.2 BIL. That's the largest single point award I've seen on recent games.

OVERALL GAME PLAY

I have found DOCTOR WHO to be a relatively playable game. The game

possesses quite a variety of shots and quite a few different ways to collect some major points. The three I have already mentioned, the CLIFF HANGER ramp (including Sonic Booms), VIDEO MODE AND MULTIBALL are the areas of the game that will yield the largest point awards. The major scoring features are spread equitably around the playfield, and although a player can get into the repetitive mode of always shooting for one feature, a player isn't forced to because of the diversity of the high scoring features.

PROBLEMS

There are a couple of problems with the game that I would like to present, as I have seen the problems occur on more than one particular machine.

Very often, the gate that keeps the ball from coming back up the BUILD TRANSMAT and ADVANCE BONUS X orbit shot doesn't do its job very well. Quite often, the upper right pop bumper will slam the ball into the gate a few times, fairly quickly, such that there is the possibility that the gate is up and the ball can be shot around the wrong way on the orbit shot by the pop bumper. The unfortunate result of this is that the ball usually comes right back down the center drain. Players shouldn't be penalized for making a good shot when the problem is clearly a result of a flaw in the design of the game.

Almost as often, when the ball is returned to the flipper via the police box, the ball will hit the blue rubber stopper just above the right lane switch, fall to the return lane with some backspin, crawl up the return lane, and drain down the right outlane. If the blue rubber stopper were placed further down above the return lane, perhaps an inch or so, this problem might not occur. Again, players should not suffer the loss of a ball due to a faulty design.

Despite these problems, I still find DOCTOR WHO to be one of the better releases of the year.

PLAYING THE FIELD

STAR WARS

By Aaron Benditt

A long time ago, in a city far, far away (depending on where you live, of course) Data East Pinball acquired the license for one of the most renowned Science Fiction series, Star Wars. A short time ago, in an amusement center close, close by, Data East's latest creation was moved in.

STAR WARS continues the great tradition of DE games laid down by LETHAL WEAPON 3. It is a game with solid rules, good playfield layout, and a great package of art and sound. Although the game looks similar in many features to LETHAL WEAPON (almost a conversion kit), STAR WARS is a very different game, with merits all its own.

Actually, the playfield is somewhat reminiscent of THE ADDAMS FAMILY, what with its lower jet bumpers, center ramp shot, opening door with a hit quota to activate, and more. However, the game is not an ADDAMS FAMILY copy. The playfield is what could be called "Lawlorish", without the upper flippers.

The game opens up with a skill shot on the dot matrix display. After a brief video introduction (which, like most of the other video displays, can be skipped by holding the right flipper button, including bonus count) the display becomes the window of a battle ship, and the player must destroy the enemy, which flies in different directions, always passing through the center to provide a direct hit. The player uses the 'gear



shift' handle button to make the shot. This shot is difficult since the button must be pressed before the enemy is directly in line for a perfect hit. Some degree of anticipation is required. On each ball, the enemy becomes more and more evasive, until finally the player must use the sound of the enemy ship to know when to fire, since "your eyes can deceive you...don't trust them," a quote from the first movie.

The main objective in the game is the same as any other DE game: go for triball (DE's new term for multiball) and get jackpots. In order to achieve multiball, the Death Star

(just right of center ramp) must be hit seven times. At this point, the Death Star opens, similar to the Flugelheim Museum on Batman, but this is a much narrower shot, and the ball must be sent inside. It is possible to backflip the ball from the right flipper to hit the Death Star, and drop the ball inside. There is an easier way to open the Death Star than to hit it seven times, though.

There are seven 'moon' lights in a semicircle in front of the Death Star. One lights up for every hit. After the fourth hit, the third yellow moon is lit, and the light above the plunger kicker illuminates. This signifies that if the shifter (where the plunger should be) is placed in the down position, and the fire button is pressed, the Death Star will open and award five million points. There is a catch, however, to using this trick method. As soon as the door opens, the moon lights begin to flash and disappear fairly quickly. When the last one is no longer lit, the Star closes, putting the player back at square one. The easy way out is to only open the Death Star when the ball is trapped on either flipper, providing a direct shot inside. By the way, if the Death Star isn't opened by the third ball, it will automatically open. Therefore, when the ball is about to drain on second ball, and the trick feature is lit, just hit the button to score the five million points.

The dot matrix will show a superb display of accurate footage from the movie, a perfect transition into Tri-Ball. In this mode, shooting the again closed Death Star lights Jack-

pot, and raises the Jackpot award one million points per hit. Jackpot is collected on the ramp (of course, what did you expect from DE?). Then, shooting the open Death Star awards double jackpot. It closes again, and now it must be hit twice to light jackpot. There is no penalty for losing one ball in tri-ball, and it can even be re-started if both balls were lost, provided no jackpots were awarded.

Unlike many previous DE games, there is a wealth of points in other areas of the game.

First of all, the random features.

The one that provides the most points in the game is "The Force." Located just above the left slingshot and below the jet bumpers, The Force shows four 'pieces of puzzle' on the dot matrix, each piece awarding random sequences, such as "Catina" where all targets are worth 250,000 points for a limited amount of time. When all four pieces are uncovered, the major award is given, such as The Empire, or outright point values. If The Force isn't all lit and the ball is sent there, The Dark Side of the Force is activated.

It takes three shots to activate it though, providing ten million points as the reward. While the Force gives point values between five and ten million, on the average, Jabba the Hut, on the right side of the playfield above the slingshot (similar to ADDAMS' swamp kickout), awards the usual random features such as low million awards, extra balls, or will even add a letter to spell Star Wars (explained later), or spot a Death Star hit. Finally, the Yoda feature is similar to the Super Leo feature from LW 3. Two sequences or values are offered, and the player must choose one via the flipper buttons.

Spelling Star Wars is a simple task so the reward is light. Ten million points are awarded if the ball can be sent around the perimeter loop shot eight times, once for each letter. This

shot is easier done with the left flipper since the right flipper shot can send the ball into the jet bumpers first. The task can be made difficult if the operator chooses to have the Star Wars letters reset at the beginning of each ball, instead of allowing carry over, or spotting letters at the beginning of the game.

One of the great features of the game reminds one of the Hurry Up award in the Joker face from Batman. Here, shooting the ball between the Death Star Shot and the right loop entrance spots one of C3PO's eyes, and sends the ball to the VUK near the bouncing, spinning-headed R2D2. The VUK sends the ball along the wireform tubing (I guess we can call it a habitrail) to the left flipper lane. Repeating the same shot lights the R2D2 Runaway, providing 15,000,000 points down to 3,000,000 points, depending on how quickly the loop shot around the right side is accomplished.

Another fine feature is the X-Wing Target sequence, where all of the standup targets become worth Million Plus. The targets each have an X-Wing fighter in front of it for easy identification.

Hyperspace is a breakthrough for Data East. It finally places the drop target bank as a subordinate playfield part (similar to Batman), and uses it as an extra way to pad your score. Knocking down the three targets just to the left of the ramp three times lights hyperspace, and then its ten million award can be collected on the ramp.

The ramp is also used for the same features as LW 3: looping and awards after a quota of shots, ie., three shots lights extra ball, seven for seven million, 14 for 14 million, etc. Finally, however, DE has found a new shot for the Victory shot, the 25 million point award after scoring a replay initiated on Checkpoint, hence its name. Victory is now scored on the loop shot around the right side, not the ramp.

The jet bumpers increase the Sarlacc

value, which can be obtained in the Sarlacc pit across the way (similar to the graveyard or swamp value).

That does it for game play. The sound and art are typical DE work. The music, more masterpiece arrangement of original soundtrack music from Brian Schmidt. The voices, however, are constantly hard to understand. Only a few phrases can be heard and understood in a regular noisy arcade. (What is Yoda saying, anyway?!?) The art is, as usual, a collage of scenes of each movie in the series, but perfectly done as usual. The entire package makes for one great game, especially the fact that DE finally produced a game without top rollover lanes and jet bumpers just below them!

There are some faults, however. The ball saver is on a very short timer. Once the ball has touched two switches, the saver is deactivated. Therefore, if the ball hits the jets and drains right away, that's just too darn bad.

Also, as with any DE game, the entire storyline revolves around multiball. While they have greatly improved in further rule development, multiball (sorry...Tri-Ball) must not retain its sacred importance.

Other than those complaints, STAR WARS maintains itself as another great pinball, continuing the DE success from LETHAL WEAPON 3. Way to go, DE, and keep the great stuff coming.

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.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A CULTURAL & CULINARY INSTITUTION IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY

By Michael Getlan

At its site on Central Park Avenue in Yonkers, New York, *The Gameroom at Nathans* has been a gathering point for arcade players for over thirty years. Originally opened as part of the Adventurers Inn Restaurant in 1955, it has grown to its present 2800 square feet of top pinball and video games. My family has been operating the facility since its inception. I am the third generation to manage the gameroom.

I started out sweeping the floor under the watchful eyes of my grandparents before I was ten years old. I continued working part time over the years and through college. And although my responsibilities have grown along with the business, a special place is reserved in my heart for this gameroom. It is where I go to play. It is where it all started.

The Yonkers store has always been the place to go for a hot dog, fries and a soda. Then it's off to the gameroom! We have always allowed food to be brought into the gameroom as we have employees cleaning the equipment during all hours of operation. Full time technicians are on-site performing periodic preventative maintenance on all equipment. They spend most of their time on the pinballs; cleaning, leveling, parts replacement, etc...making sure everything is working perfectly. Our belief has always been that every bumper, every flipper, every drop target should work perfectly and give a score. If something is not working or not scoring, the customer is entitled to a free game. By maintaining this policy we have developed a relationship with our customers so that all problems that have escaped our notice are brought to our attention quickly and repaired immediately.

New games are also essential to provide an exciting gameroom.

This arcade receives on average one new game a week. Along with The Broadway Arcade, *The Gameroom at Nathans* is one of the major test sites for equipment manufacturers. These two facilities receive equipment that many other arcades may not see for months.

Our company has grown since the days when I was sweeping the floors at the Yonkers Store. But the quality of service and family at-

mosphere at our Flagship Arcade has not really changed. I invite all players to come and enjoy it with me.

(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.)



GETTING PERSONAL

INTERVIEW WITH WENDI JANKOWITZ

By Jim Schelberg

Jim is the editor of the pinGame journal, a monthly, all pinball publication for players as well as collectors covering all aspects of pinball. For information write him at 31937 Olde Franklin Drive, Farmington Hills, MI 48334 (313-626-5203).

Wendi Jankowitz turned thirty-one years old two weeks after she won the women's division championship at Pinball Expo's Flip Out '92 last November in Chicago. I spoke to her while in the Expo exhibit hall about her pinball life.



Pictured above, Wendi (left) and 2nd place winner, Julia Slayton (right), proudly display their trophies from Pinball Expo '92.

That life began for Wendi 20 years ago. A bit later she remembers playing a Williams '74 LUCKY ACE in a gameroom while her mother attended graduate level college classes. Although she began on electromechanical machines she is partial to the newer solid state games...with one big exception: "I don't like the video modes they are coming out with," she told me. "I don't like having to take my eyes off the playfield to see what I have to shoot. I don't like having to take my hands off the flippers to shoot something. I'm getting better at it but I still don't like it."

"My favorite newer game is THE ADDAMS FAMILY and my favorite older game, and probably the first game I will own is SILVERBALL MANIA. It was in the bowling alley a friend and I used to go to and we would put 50 cents each in and play all night. We would leave with many free games unplayed. I played it here a little while ago and turned it over twice. Looking at it now it seems like a pretty lame game but it will always have a special place in my heart."

Wendi told me she has one good friend who could match her game for game a few years ago, but since then Wendi has become more serious, putting in more practice and entering tournaments. Meanwhile, her friend got a life (Wendi's words, not mine) and is married and won't play with her any more.

I asked Wendi for her views on why women seem not to be able to compete with men in pinball. Wendi said she didn't agree with the premise. "The reason I'm here is not to win the women's division," she told me. "I know this will sound cocky, but I want to prove to all the male chauvinists out there that the women can play with the 'big boys' and compete. Pinball has nothing to do with sex. Many women don't take it seriously enough."

As a newcomer to competition, one problem Wendi says she is having is getting into a tournament frame of mind. She knows it takes more concentration and even a different type of practice. She is the first major competitor I've met who does not own a game. She says all that will change and adjustments in her lifestyle are under way with better pinball as her goal. "I know in my heart I belong on the qualifying list of major tournaments," she explained, "and I will be there in a year or two." If her positive, confident attitude translates into pinball scoring, she may be there sooner than she thinks. Next stop--PAPA in February, 1993.

THE PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR PINBALL ASSOCIATION
(CANADA) EXCALIBUR GARDEN CITY LEAGUE - 12/29/92
STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 10 MATCHES

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
1	MIKE KOSTIUK	228.0	131,959,938	18.0	9.0	3.0	7.60
6	JAMES KROPODRA	202.0	75,406,239	16.0	7.0	7.0	6.73
4	SHAWN KIDD	177.0	78,678,485	11.0	12.0	7.0	5.90
9	ROB DUBECKY	163.0	69,555,533	9.0	13.0	8.0	5.43
8	CHRISTOPHER STARANCHUK	163.0	58,388,741	9.0	13.0	8.0	5.43
2	ADAM BLACKBURN	153.0	56,013,463	11.0	6.0	13.0	5.10
3	LANG WONG	138.0	50,124,435	8.0	9.0	13.0	4.60
7	CHRIS PLAMONDON	110.0	30,663,869	4.0	11.0	15.0	3.67
5	DARREN LEYBOURNE	106.0	31,155,610	4.0	10.0	16.0	3.53

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH							
	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
4	SHAWN KIDD	25.0	168,127,780	2.0	1.0	0.0	8.33
1	MIKE KOSTIUK	25.0	159,615,823	2.0	1.0	0.0	8.33
2	ADAM BLACKBURN	25.0	40,682,079	2.0	1.0	0.0	8.33
8	CHRISTOPHER STARANCHUK	20.0	90,909,780	1.0	2.0	0.0	6.67
7	CHRIS PLAMONDON	20.0	38,728,598	1.0	2.0	0.0	6.67
6	JAMES KROPODRA	16.0	35,431,470	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.33
9	ROB DUBECKY	7.0	41,028,177	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.33
3	LANG WONG	3.0	44,858,473	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.00
5	DARREN LEYBOURNE	3.0	9,961,838	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.00

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

BECOME A SUBSCRIBER

Enter my subscription to
THE FLIPSIDE.

MAIL TO: **THE FLIPSIDE**
81 Carrar Drive
Watchung, NJ 07060

☐ Send me one year (6 issues) for
\$18. Canada and foreign \$28.

Make check or money order payable to **THE FLIPSIDE.**
(Full payment must accompany order. No C.O.D.'s please.)

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

STEVE ENGEL

60-41 WOODBINE STREET RIDGEWOOD NY 11385

TELEPHONE 1-718-417-5050

Save this ad as a source for Pinball Backglasses. **\$75 to \$150** each plus shipping. Most are brand new. Over **6000** in stock and growing!! This is only a partial listing. We are acquiring new backglasses. So if you don't see the one you need here, just call or write me. Chances are I have it!

ABRA CA DABRA
ACES AND KINGS
ALGAR
ALI
AIRBORNE AVENGER
AMIGO
APOLLO
ATLANTIS
AZTEC
BALI HI
BALLY HI
BANK SHOT
BARACORA
BASEBALL
BASE HIT
BATTER UP
BIG BEN
BIG BEN
BIG BRAVE
BIG FLIPPER
BIG GAME
BIG INDIAN
BIG HIT
BIG STAR
BLACK GOLD
BLACK HOLE
BLACK KNIGHT
BLUE CHIP
BLUE NOTE
BRONCO
BUCCANEER
BUCK ROGERS
BUMPER POOL
CANADA DRY
CAPTAIN CARD
CARD TRIX
CARD WHIZ
CENTIGRADE 37
CHARLIES ANGELS
CHEETAH
CINEMA
CITY SLICKER
CLEOPATRA
CLEOPATRA
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS(E)
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS(S)
CONEY ISLAND
CONTRACT
COSMIC PRINCESS
COSMOS

COUNT DOWN
COUNTER FORCE
COWBOY
CUE-T
CYBERNAUT
DANCING LADY
DARLING
DEALERS CHOICE
DEFENDER
DELTA CHOICE
DEVILS DARE
DISCO
DISCO FEVER
DOLLY PARTON
DOLPHIN
DOUBLE UP
DOUTRON
DRACULA
DRAGON(E)
DRAGON(S)
DROP A CARD
EIGHT BALL CHAMP
EL DORADO
ELITE GUARD
ELECTRA
EVIL KNEVEL
EYE OF THE TIGER
EXPRESS WAY
EXTRA INNING
FAST DRAW
FIREBALL CLASSIC
FIRE QUEEN
FIRE CRACKER
FIRE POWER
FIRE POWER II
FLIGHT 2000
FLASH GORDON
FREE FALL
FRONTIER
FUN FEST
FUTURE SPA
GALAXY
GAY 90'S
GEMINI
GENIE
GOLDEN ARROW
GOLD BALL
GOLD STRIKE
GORGAR
GRAND SLAM

GRID IRON
GULF STREAM
HAUNTED HOUSE
HIGH ACE
HIGH HAND
HIGH SEAS
HIT THE DECK
HOME RUN
HOT TIP
JACK IN THE BOX
JACKS OPEN
JAMES BOND
JET SPIN
JOKER
JOKER POKER
JUBILEE
JUKE BOX
JUNGLE KING
JUNGLE PRINCESS
JUNGLE QUEEN
KICKER
KING POOL
KLONDIKE
LASER CUE
LAWMAN
LIBERTY BELL
LIGHTNING
LITTLE CHIEF
LUCKY ACE
LUCKY HAND
LUCKY SEVEN
LUCKY STRIKE
MARS
MEGATRON
METEOR
MIDDLE EARTH
MINI CYCLE
MYSTIC
MOON SHOT
MR & MS PACMAN
MUSTANG
NEPTUNE
NIGHT RIDER
NOW
NUGENT
OLYMPICS
ORBIT
OUT OF SIGHT
OUTER SPACE
OXO

PANTHERA
PARAGON
PENNANT FEVER
PHARAOH
PHOENIX
PINBALL
PINBALL POOL
PLAYBOY
POSEIDON
POP A CARD
POST TIME
PRO POOL
PYRAMID
QUICK DRAW
RAWHIDE
RED BARON
ROAD KING
ROCK STAR
RO GO
ROLLER DISCO
ROLLING STONES
ROYAL GUARD
ROYAL PAIR
SCORPION
SEA RAY
SEVEN UP
SHERIFF
SHIP AHOY
SHOWTIME
SIX MILLION \$ MAN
SKILL POOL
SKIPPER
SKY DIVE
SKY JUMP
SKY LAP
SKY RIDER
SKY ROCKET
SMARTY
SNOW DERBY
SOCCER
SOLAR CITY
SOLAR RIDE
SPACE INVADERS
SPACE MISSION
SPACE ODYSSEY
SPACE ORBIT
SPACE WALK
SPANISH EYES
SPIDER MAN
SPIN OUT

SPLIT SECOND
SPOT POOL
STAMPEDE
STARLIGHT
STAR ACTION
STAR GAZER
STAR POOL
STAR RACE
STAR TREK
STARS
STINGRAY
STRAIGHT FLUSH
STRIKER
STRANGE WORLD
SUPER-FLIGHT
STRATO-FLIGHT
SUPER NOVA
SUPER SOCCER
SUPER SONIC
SUPER SPIN
SUPER STAR
SURE SHOT
SURFER
SURF CHAMP
SWINGER
SHARP SHOOTER
SHARP SHOOTER II
TARGET ALPHA
TEAM ONE
TIGER
TIME FANTASY
TIME LINE
TKO
TOPAZ
TOP CARD
TOLEDO
TOP SCORE
TOTEM
TRAVEL TIME
TRIDENT
TRIPLE ACTION
TRIPLE STRIKE
TRIZONE
300
VOLLEY
VULCAN
WARLOCK
WILDFIRE
WILD WILD WEST
X'S & O'S
ZIP A DOO