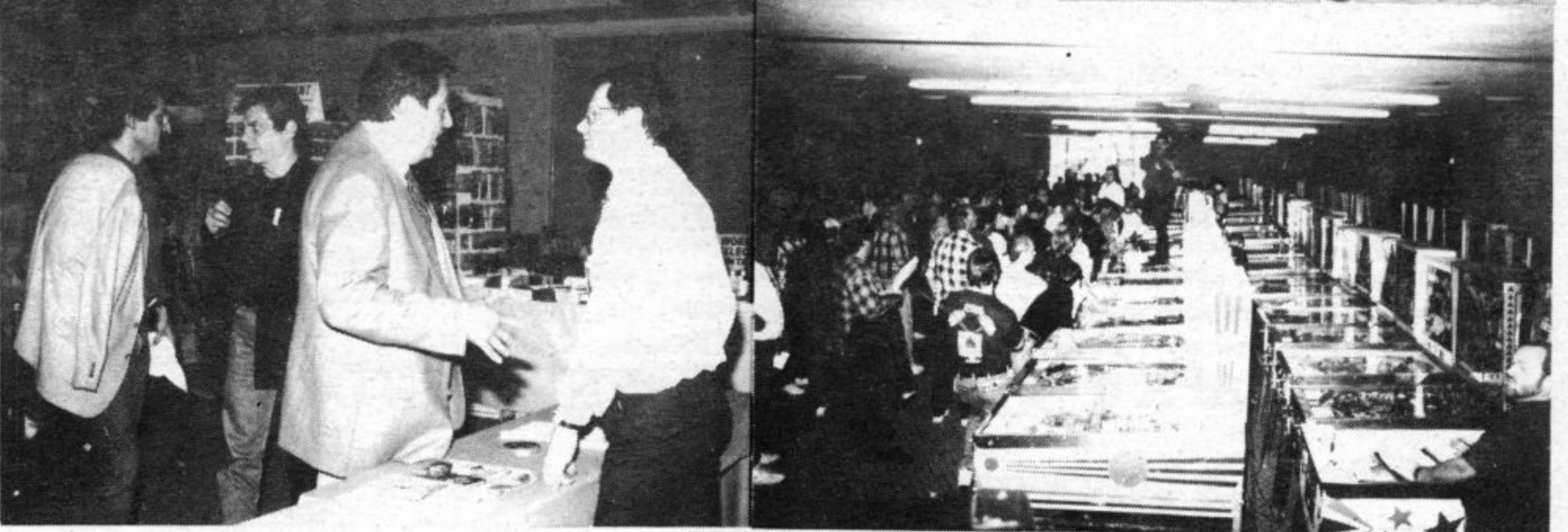


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VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 4

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SPECIAL WHEN LIT

As we approach our first year publishing THE FLIPSIDE (in time if not in issues) I believe some thanks are in order to those of you who have contributed so much in time and effort. To all THE FLIPSIDE staff, thank you - it has been a learning process for all of us and a lot of hard work. To our contributing editors to date, Chris Arnold, Steve Baumgarten, Aaron Benditt, Paul Drabik, Jr., Laura Engels, Michael Getlan, Kevin Martin, Bob McGugan, Leonard Moscaritolo, Dallas Overturf, Rob Rosenhouse, John Ross, Jim Schelberg, Frank Seninsky, Lyman Sheats, Jr., Michael Teixcira and Doug Young, thank you one and all. I sincerely believe that each game review and article written by you has been exceptional.

Now I would like to reflect back and review where we have been and where we are going. The idea to create a magazine purely for the pinball playing public seemed like a good one. To furnish the player with information concerning the current pinball games available and allow them to write about these games seemed a good starting point. Being able to reach out to the designing world for insights and philosophy from a designer's point of view and then have the players respond appeared not only interesting but useful for all of us. Being able to bring information concerning pinball tournaments, leagues, or other related events seemed needed. But, most of all, we hoped to create a forum for the exchange of ideas on all matters concerning the pinball playing public.

We had aimed for six issues in our first year, but have yet to reach that goal. I ask your indulgence as we still try to get the bugs out of our publishing schedule. We had hoped to have several contributors for our reviews and that base has expanded very nicely. Being my first venture into publishing I have no point of reference as to where we should be in subscriptions but they are growing at a good rate, slow but sure. Thanks to all of you!!

My biggest disappointment remains lack of response from our readership, but until the time I had actually started to write this editorial, response just had not happened. Mark Ritchie's article, which I felt was well written and thought provoking, gave you, the player, the perfect chance to reach a pinball designer and ask questions or offer comments to a person whose games we have all played and enjoyed. If the opposite is true, then what a great opportunity to let him know what you consider to be the problems. This is the process of learning THE FLIPSIDE set out to achieve. Then I received a letter from one of our subscribers, Stephen Zamonsky. His letter is so outstanding that we decided it deserved being treated as a feature article because it covers so many areas we know is of interest to everyone involved in pinball.

This magazine is necessarily dependent upon you for its existence. Whether it's contributing an article or review, or just giving us feedback, we must have your *ACTIVE* participation to keep THE FLIPSIDE going. And there's certainly enough that needs to be discussed openly to easily fill every issue: the industry in general, game designs, cost per play (do you like the new buy-in system) etc. But standing around talking about them to each other at a show or arcade is sort like a person who doesn't vote but is the first to complain about how the country is run. Certainly if there is no response to the many ideas expressed in Stephen's letter, then serious consideration must be given to THE FLIPSIDE's future. So that's where we've been - where we're going is ultimately up to you, the reader.

Steven Epstein

THE WRITE STUFF

Dear The Flipside:

In response to your request for letters, I take keyboard in hand to let you know what's happening in my world and how I feel about pinball, PAPA and your magazine.

ABOUT ME...

I have enjoyed pinball very much for many, many years. I am now 26, and, while I cannot recall the first time I encountered a pinball, I know that it was probably 20 years ago. My love affair with the silver ball has never diminished since then, and I am probably more interested in pinball now than I have ever been. In fact, I currently own one pin -- Jon Norris' 1989 Gottlieb LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!. I also own 2 videos (curses! -- the "V" word) -- ELEVATOR ACTION AND WWF WRESTLING SUPERSTARS.

I currently work part-time at an arcade in Langhorne, Pennsylvania some 15 minutes from my home. My responsibility is to clean and help maintain our 20 pinball machines, a job which I enjoy very much. While I am not a technician, I am able to perform light maintenance (e.g. switch and coil replacement) -- difficult problems involving boards, etc., I refer to my boss. All of our machines are relatively recent releases -- our oldest game is the 1987 Premier/Gottlieb ARENA, but most of our games are post-1988. My full-time job is as a Master Control Operator for a small cable television station in Trenton.

ABOUT THE FLIPSIDE...

NOTE: The most recent issue was described as "the fourth". I have copies of issues 2 - 4, but I must have missed the first one. I would very much like to purchase a copy of it - please let me know about its availability and cost.

Let me start by saying that I enjoy the magazine very much. My favorite sec-

tions are the game reviews and the designer profiles. The other material, for the most part, is interesting as well (though "The Physics and Metaphysics of Pinball" did nothing for me).

The interview with Mark Ritchie was very entertaining. I enjoyed the step-by-step, game-by-game approach. For the most part, I find I have enjoyed his games very much -- his DINER is among my all-time favorites. I am not thrilled with INDIANA JONES, but it's not bad. FISH TALES may be my girlfriend's favorite game ever. As for Jon Norris, I eagerly await the second half of his article, for obvious reasons -- as I mentioned, I own one of his games and look forward to any comments he might have about it.

I enjoy the "Playing the Field" game reviews section very much, although I think that in the future it should be expanded to include at least one "older" game per issue. I have been playing pinball for a long time, but I am not familiar with all games and there are certain "classics" that I'd love to see reviewed, if for no other reason than to introduce newer players to games from a few years ago (indeed, "older classics" need not be ancient games -- I'd love to see a review of Williams' 1990 FUNHOUSE or DINER or other such games, and I'd be willing to write one if you wish).

In addition, in certain cases my opinion of a particular machine differs from that of your reviewer. The most notable example of this involves Steve Baumgarten's recent review of Data East's latest project -- JURASSIC PARK. He seemed very, very pleased with the game, whereas I am not. He called it "Data East's best game", while I think STAR WARS is light years beyond JP in terms of playability and enjoyment. This type of difference of opinion is what leads to discussion and general conversation among players -- the stuff that maga-

zines are (or can be, at any rate) made of. I would very much like to meet Mr. Baumgarten -- in person or by mail -- and discuss the pros and cons of JP and other machines. I believe that he was present at PAPA 3 in February, as were my girlfriend and I. It is my regret that I did not meet him then. I'll look for him at PAPA 4, but I would also appreciate any help your magazine could provide regarding my meeting some of the legendary players in this area.

In other cases, as you might expect, my opinion is very close to that of the reviewer -- Kevin Martin's review of DRACULA is probably the best example of this to date. I thought that he hit the high and low points of the game very well. Interestingly enough, Steve Baumgarten's opinion of WHITE WATER shows that he likes it a lot -- as I do. It's amazing how two peoples' opinions can be so close on one machine and yet so different on another. Moreover, Baumgarten's comment that CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, "while (being) spectacular to play (and even more spectacular to watch and listen to), ...seems less successful than WHITE WATER as a game that lets you play your way" is, in my opinion, right on the money. If I owned an arcade, I'd certainly want CREATURE for its attractive backglass and cabinet, awesome soundtrack, and money-drawing ability, but it is not one of my favorite games to play (although, because my girlfriend loves it, I end up playing it a lot!).

Overall, then, I enjoy the reviews and hope that you will be able to continue -- and perhaps expand -- them. I would enjoy very much the opportunity to review a game for you, either a recent game or an older "classic". If you wish to contact me about this, please do so. You should have my address (since I'm a subscriber), but I'll list all my information at the end of this letter anyway.

Other suggestions that I would make to improve the magazine in the future would include: a section for "letters from our readers" where you could print small (1-2 paragraph) letters and comments from subscribers -- many, many magazines do this and I always enjoy these "mailbag" sections; a section called "ask Mr. Epstein" where you could answer questions from subscribers about the pinball industry in general, arcades, machines, and so on; a "pen-pal" type section where people could send in their addresses so that other subscribers could write to them or meet them in person (this would help me a lot); and, if feasible, a schedule of PAPA tournaments or leagues or representatives so that players who do not live near the Broadway Arcade could keep up with and get involved in this organization.

Keep us the good work with the magazine -- I hope it is around for years to come.

ABOUT PAPA 3...

PAPA 3 was the first pinball tournament I ever heard of, entered, etc. I enjoyed it immensely (except for the weather -- let's try improving that next year). I enjoyed seeing the new machines and meeting new people (although I didn't make enough of an effort to meet enough people -- I'll correct that in the future). The Park Central Hotel is nice, and seemed well suited for the event. Since I had never entered a tournament before, I knew I'd be overmatched and probably not do well. I entered Class C and did OK -- qualifying 11th and moving on to the next round where I was bounced out. The person who won my group -- I know his first name was Kevin -- was an excellent player and I was very surprised to find him in Class C. One of our group members told me that he had won PAPA-sponsored tournaments in the past and therefore, in his words, had "no business whatsoever being in this Class" and that he was even going to file a protest about it. I do not know if what he said was true or if he ever followed it up, but, whatever the case, I was not so upset about it. I was just happy to be involved in the whole event, and I know that if I had played better, I would have done better. In addition, for six years I supervised a softball league, and I know how hard it is when

you operate on an "honor" system to keep good teams from entering weaker divisions, either deliberately -- because they like finishing first -- or accidentally -- because they don't realize how much better they are than their competition. Let me stress that this situation did not diminish my enjoyment of PAPA 3 at all, and I fully intend to be there when the doors open on PAPA 4 this coming February. I thank you for organizing these wonderful events, and I hope to attend many in the future.

Speaking of tournaments: as I mentioned before, I'd really like to find out about other contests and leagues in the New York-New Jersey area, and any help you could provide would be appreciated.

ABOUT PINBALL...

Pinball is my favorite activity - I would even say that it is "my greatest love" but my girlfriend would kill me -- and I hope it survives the coming Virtual Reality binge. I think it will -- its fans are not going to go away overnight, although I know that the coin-op industry is suffering right now. Pinball has survived the crisis of the early 80s and come storming back, and I think it will survive (for a while, anyway). I have enjoyed the recent resurgence and, generally speaking, I enjoy almost every new machine that comes out today. I have particular favorites, of course, but I enjoy seeing the industry survive in general, and the number of "dogs" has dropped, percentage-wise, in my opinion, in recent years.

Generally speaking, I tend to prefer Williams/Bally games to those of Data East and Gottlieb, with some exceptions. Among my all-time favorites are: Williams' 1990 trio of FUNHOUSE, WHIRLWIND and DINER, Bally's 1985 EIGHT BALL CHAMP and WILLIAMS' 1988 TAXI. Older machines that keep a special place in my heart include X'S AND O'S, FRONTIER, BLACK JACK and XENON (possibly my favorite game ever). Honorable mention goes to DR. DUDE, PINBOT, EIGHT BALL DELUXE, SILVERBALL MANIA, SUPERMAN and PANTHERA.

Examining the machines reviewed in

Issues two through four of the magazine, I would say that I enjoy WHITE WATER, DR. WHO and STAR WARS very much, and that TWILIGHT ZONE is excellent -- certainly the best of the entire group. ROCKY & BULLWINKLE is decent, and I enjoy STREET FIGHTER II, while DRACULA and CUE-BALL WIZARD are only fair and I do not like JURASSIC PARK. CREATURE I covered before, TEE'D OFF I have only seen and played once, so I offer no opinion.

Surveying the other popular games of today, ADDAMS FAMILY is great - a true classic, as I believe TWILIGHT ZONE will be. LAST ACTION HERO, which I've played only three times, seems decent but not great, while INDIANA JONES is good, but the ramps are too steep and strong flippers force the ball in-and-out of the "mode start" eject hole too often. SURF N' SAFARI I like, and is one of the best Gottlieb machines ever. SUPER MARIO got too dull, too fast (although it's great for kids, which helps promote pinball's next generation of fans). THE GET-AWAY is good, but too much like its predecessor, HIGH SPEED, to stand out on its own.

As far as features go, I have mixed feelings on "video modes" -- among the best ones are DR. WHO's and FISH TALES', while LETHAL WEAPON's and BLACK ROSE's are somewhat pointless and hard on the hands (although I think ROSE's video modes are cute). Machines like WHITE WATER have demonstrated that you do not need video modes to make a quality pinball game today.

THE WRAP-UP...

Let me thank you again for the excellent publication, PAPA 3 and your time in reading my letter. Please let me know if I can review a game (new or old) for you (I'd enjoy it) and please provide me with information on the first issue of the magazine (you could just send it to me along with a bill and I'll send you a check, if you like. My complete address and phone number are listed below. Thanks again.

STEPHEN ZAMONSKI
Trenton, NJ 08628

Dear Stephen:

First of all, your letter is excellent -- you've covered just about every subject we can think of and have raised lots of issues that we have been trying to get our readers to write to us about since we began *THE FLIPSIDE*. Just as you have disagreed with some of the reviews so others will probably disagree with you and probably for entirely different reasons (we hope to be able to offer some of those views in our next issues - what about it readers - you're not going to pass up this opportunity, are you?

Since your letter was so diverse we have decided to make it a full feature because we felt all the opinions and suggestions warranted an extended reply by us and we will, therefore, reply to your letter in step-by-step order.

ABOUT YOU...

Thanks for the background info on yourself; your profile probably fits the majority of our subscribers and players in general. Most of them either hold jobs or go to school, many of them do both. Most of them either probably own a machine or two or plan to do so in the future. And, of course, for most of them pinball is their favorite activity.

ABOUT THE FLIPSIDE:

This issue of *THE FLIPSIDE* will be the fifth; however, because our first issue was not numbered but simply labeled *PREMIERE ISSUE*, the subsequent numbering system commenced as Volume 2, Issue 1, 2, 3, and this issue, #4. Thus, the confusion -- actually, you're only missing the *PREMIERE* issue. In our next February/March issue in 1994, the numbering system will change to Volume 3, Issue 1, etc.

All back issues are available at a cost of \$3.00 each but we want to point out now that our supply of the *PREMIERE ISSUE* is very low.

We appreciate and welcome your opinions and comments expressed regarding the game reviews, designer profiles

and various other articles. While every article will not appeal to every single player, we do try to have a mix that will appeal to most of you. Of course, the game reviews are the backbone of *THE FLIPSIDE* and whether you agree or disagree with a reviewer's opinion of the game overall, you must admit they are very detailed and helpful as far as game play. Hopefully, we'll now be flooded with letters from readers either agreeing or disagreeing with you and/or the reviewer.

Your suggestion about including at least one "older" game review in future issues is potentially a good one if held within certain guidelines. We have refrained from writing about older games because the focus of *THE FLIPSIDE* has been and we feel should remain on the current games. Perhaps if we defined "older" as being games no older than __?__ years, with one review per issue, it might be helpful to our readers. We know that there are a lot of games in this bracket around in the smaller locations so a review following the above guidelines might work. We urge our readers to write us and let us know what they think. We have taken you up on your offer to write a review of *FUNHOUSE* for our next issue and will look forward to the feedback.

Your wish to meet and talk with the reviewers and other players is understandable, either in person or through *THE FLIPSIDE*. Other than at a tournament, meeting them in person is not very feasible, but certainly we would welcome such dialogue in a "Letters from our readers" section in future issues. The problem is we must have response from our players and, so far, we have not had this. I do not mean we have not received letters complimenting us on our magazine and placing a subscription (and we certainly want and appreciate them) but we want such a section to feature "meat and potatoes" dialogue with opportunity for plenty of feedback from our other readers. We decided at the beginning that neither we (nor our subscribers) wanted "fluff" as fillers and so far we feel we've managed to maintain this standard. We do not encourage the "pen pal" type of direct correspondence for the simple reason that we

would like to see such opinions expressed where all our readers can benefit.

When available, we would be happy to print any information about other leagues, tournaments or shows taking place across the country. But most of them are on a local basis and if someone doesn't notify us about them, we cannot tell you about them. (Refer last issue re Collectors' Expo in October). Also, because of our publication schedule, we must know about them well in advance in order to get the word out before the event is over.

ABOUT PAPA 3:

Glad you enjoyed the PAPA 3 Tournament and will look forward to seeing you in February at PAPA 4.

As you pointed out, sometimes players are unfairly entered in a Class in which they do not belong, but for the most part we think they are properly classified and we make every effort to keep it as fair as possible.

By the way, we have already put in the word for better weather and have been assured it's in the bag!

ABOUT PINBALL...

Your views pretty accurately reflect the situation in general and we, too, believe that pinball will persevere as it has in the past. If anything, competition from other areas seems to spur the pinball industry to fight back in the best (and really the only) way possible - producing better and more innovative games than ever before.

THE WRAPUP...

Well, Steve, our reply to your letter has been a long one but we think it's been extremely informative and we hope will inspire others to "take keyboard (or pen) in hand". Thanks very much for the time and effort that obviously went into your letter and we'll look forward to your review of *FUNHOUSE*. We'll also be contacting you soon re doing a current review for us - it should be interesting.

STEVE EPSTEIN

PLAYING THE FIELD

MYSTERY CASTLE

By Leonard Moscaritolo

I did not have a chance to see MYSTERY CASTLE until I got to the ballroom at EXPO in September. In fact I knew nothing about the game except for the name and Alvin G. and Co. I'm not used to going to an EXPO without being completely prepared for the qualifying game. But for some reason I thought it would be different stepping up to a game I've never seen or played before and trying to qualify on it. It turned out to be an excellent change of pace for me as I promptly compiled a 1.4 billion score and won the top qualifying spot.

After the tournament was over and I was on my flight home, I sat back in my seat and began to try and understand why I did so well on a game I knew nothing about. It turned out to be a simple answer. I really like the game! It's an excellent game to play. Smooth ramp shots that keep the ball moving, good feel on the flippers, workable return lanes and, most important, no clutter in the lower half of the playfield. In these days of powerful flippers and flying pinballs, no clutter in the playfield is very important to draw the interest of the average player.

The programming on the game is very typical of recent games. You have 15 rounds you can enter. Entering a round is done by shooting one of the lit five main shots on the playfield. The number of main shots lit are: three choices for the first five rounds, two choices for the next six rounds and only one choice thereafter. Basically what I did to get my 1.4 billion was to let the unimportant rounds expire and played the ones I felt were important. The Jesters Hat, The Painting, Doom and The Crown are the four rounds I felt a need to play. Out of those four, I found most of my points coming from the Doom round. In Doom, all five main shots light up, giving out 50 million points each for the first four. The fifth shots will give you 200 million. This is all done while in two ball megamode. After completion the shots relight and the sequence restarts.

The Crown round is awarded after all the other rounds have been completed. All I did in this round was to shoot the 100 million moving jackpot. A few hits was all I managed. It could have been

much more. Both Doom and the Crown round is done in two ball megamode.

This all seems quite easy and systematic but there is a catch to this game. Two of the five main shots must be made from the upper flipper. I was surprised to find no way to feed the upper flipper. In fact, there is no way. So you have a couple of choices: A) Find a bounce that puts the ball in the upper flipper area or B) hit the yellow target located to the left of the right ramp which changes the lit shot to a makeable one. I chose Plan "B" from the right flipper.

I got curious about this upper flipper so I first spoke with Mike Gottlieb about the problem. He explained that the game originally had a second level which allowed the ball to drop to the upper flipper. Later I spoke with the 1993 Grand Wizard and game designer, Jim Shird, who explained how the upper field would feed the pop bumpers or the upper flipper. Once the upper level was removed he began looking for solutions to feed the upper flipper. The most effort seemed to go into the secret door. But Jim felt that if they used the secret door, it would not be secret anymore so the idea was scrapped. I said to Jim, "How about a magnet"? Jim replied, "Good idea but we don't have a magnet designed yet." (A little growing pains maybe.) So they tweaked the extreme right lane shot to loop to the upper flipper. I don't think it worked well but it really didn't matter. I had fun playing the game.

MYSTERY CASTLE is a very good game. I wish it

showed up in my area because I would certainly be playing it. The crew at Alvin G. & Co. deserve a pat on the back. It is obvious they are trying very hard to become a bigger factor in this industry. Most important, the industry needs Alvin G. & Co.



PLAYING THE FIELD

JUDGE DREDD

By Steve Baumgarten

The design team that brought us CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON has now brought us more. Much more. Too much, even. For on the theory that bigger is better, Williams/Bally has continued to release games in the "wide body" format that debuted with TWILIGHT ZONE. At that time the wide-body format was something of a novelty, since only those of us old enough to have played pinball during the seventies--the heyday of the wide-body, back when some games were so wide as to make the current crop seem like bowling alleys by comparison--were familiar with games of non-standard widths. And TWILIGHT ZONE made good use of the extra playfield space, something that those games in the seventies weren't always able to do.

But now it seems that we are once again going to be faced with wide-body games that don't need to be wide -- or perhaps should have been standard-width instead. JUDGE DREDD is one of those games, and although it's not really a bad game, neither is it a worthy sequel to CREATURE, or even a game that shows off the wide-body format. In fact, the wide-body format is one of the things that hurts JUDGE DREDD, pointing out clearly why "more is not the same as better".

The game itself is based on a licensed theme, though one that wasn't too familiar to me. I've since found out who JUDGE DREDD is, and I have to admit that the game now makes somewhat more sense to me than it did when I first played it; though I've never read a JUDGE DREDD comic book, I just think of ROBOCOP and that seems to do just as well. As licensed themes go, Bally did a good job designing a

game around the character and his dysfunctional world -- from artwork, to the music and voice samples, to the huge playfield toy that dominates the game -- and the game is enjoyable even if you haven't been following the Judge's exploits all these years.

That playfield toy is eye-catching: it's a giant plastic model of "Dead World", complete with ball lock mechanism and crane (to release the locked balls and start multi-ball). As it happens, the ball lock mechanism was something

less than reliable in prototype games, and in production models the software has been modified to lock only one ball in the planet. Since that ball is almost immediately lifted and released by the crane, the whole effect is rather unspectacular; still, the spinning planet is something to look at, and the ramp it straddles is a central game feature. (Ramps in JUDGE DREDD are much more important than the ramps in CREATURE; here they start modes and participate in them; the planet ramp is also used to qualify the



jackpot shot in multiball play.)

One interesting consequence of the change in design: the game uses the same kind of "virtual" ball locks that were featured in Coffin Multiball in DRACULA. That is, you send one ball around the ramp to "lock" it; then again to "lock" the second ball; the third time around the ball really does lock in the spinning planet, and 3-ball multiball starts immediately as another ball is kicked into play. When the crane returns the locked ball to the playfield, you play a 4-ball multiball as you attempt to score jackpots and work your way up to the Ultimate Challenge (more or less "10 million per ramp shot" mode).

As I mentioned, the game is a wide-body, but the design team seemed somewhat hard-pressed to fill up all that space, and so seemingly dumped a large assortment of flippers, ramps, habitrails, kickbacks and captive balls on the playfield, stirred once or twice - and then got down to the real business in this game: the sound and graphics. These are some of the best yet; JUDGE DREDD is the second game from Williams/Bally to feature their new DCS digital sound system, a hardware and software combination that's finally giving Data East a run for its money. The sound is crisp and clear, and although the rock music soundtrack is a tad repetitive, it works well as background music without obscuring the very well done foreground sound effects and voice samples. More than any other modern digital games, I think JUDGE DREDD would be incredibly boring to play were it not for the light and sound show.

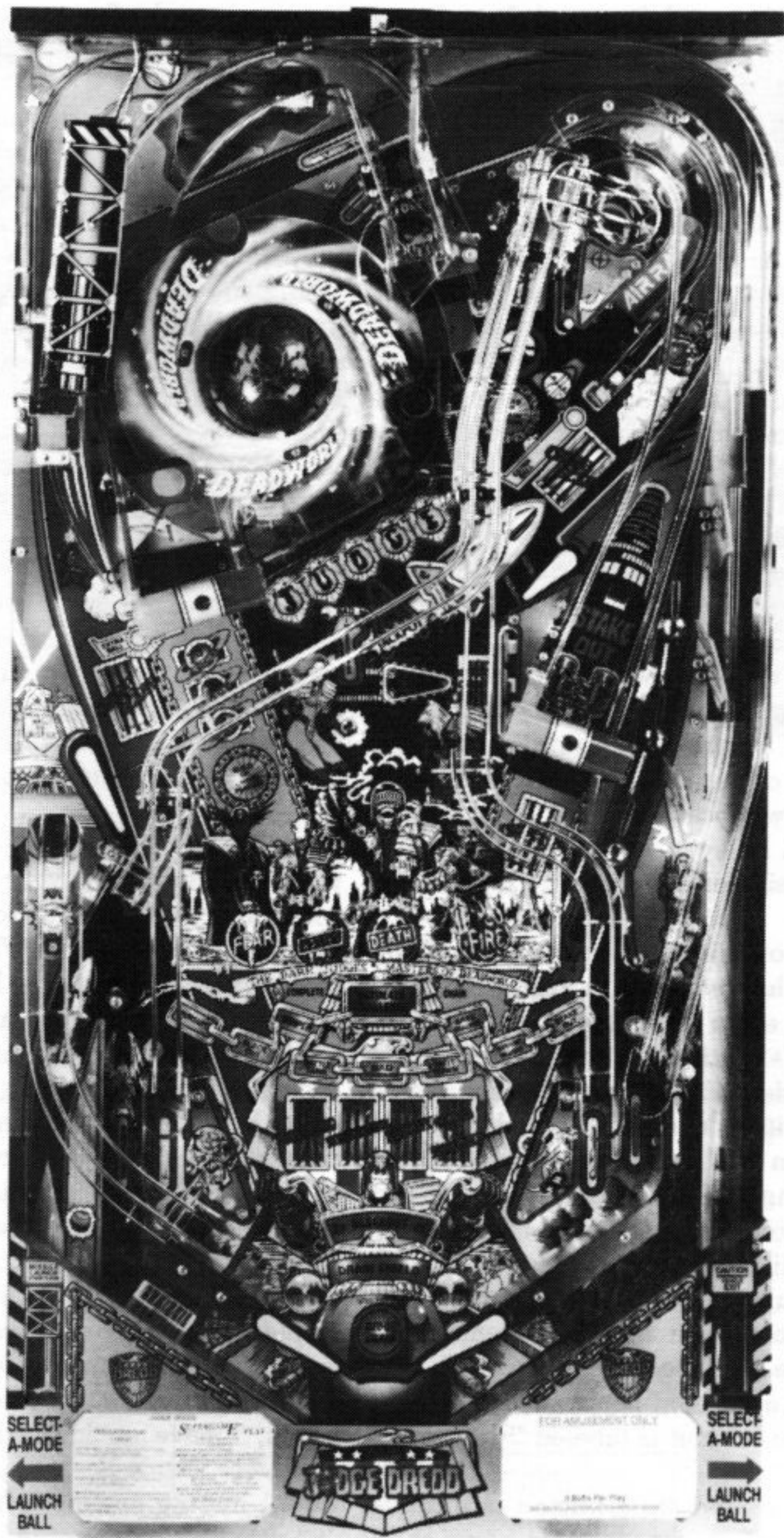
Speaking of which, the game's display animation is, I think, unmatched in its detail; in the way it fits into the game play, and especially in the way the animation for each mode is lengthy, distinct, and frequently very funny. In this area, as with the game's sound and music, JUDGE DREDD is very much a worthy successor to CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, itself one of the best sound and graphics packages in years.

But, oh, how I wish the rest of the game even came close to living up to the light

and sound show! Mode-laden and restrictive, JUDGE DREDD's rules frequently give you little in the way of shot selection; though there are lots of ramps to shoot for, there's almost never any reason to do so, and there's frequently very little reward for making the attempt. Instead, the game plays just like INDIANA JONES: you can either start a mode or lock a ball for multiball play. If a shot doesn't qualify one or the other, it doesn't do anything else, and essentially serves no purpose at that

point in the game. The problem with this is that there are only two "mode start" shots on the game (and often only one is lit); in addition, once you start a mode, you're locked into it and can't start another until the one you're playing ends. Contrast this with TWILIGHT ZONE, in which you're always free to start a new mode, play the current one, or ignore the modes altogether and play the Powerfield or Gumball machine.

And although it doesn't affect game play, I think it's worth pointing out just how



poorly designed the game's "user interface" is. It used to be fairly simple to start a game on a pinball machine you'd never played before: you'd put some money in, press the flashing start button, pull back the plunger and you're off. Then came plungers disguised as guns, large buttons mounted flush to the front of the cabinet, large buttons angled out somewhat, stick shifts, and stick shift/button combos that confuse nearly everyone but the game's designers.

But JUDGE DREDD raises the ante: it removes the "plunger" altogether and instead moves it to the *side* of the game where no one can see it, and where in any case no one would think to look for it. I eagerly await Williams/Bally's next game, in which the plunger will likely be mounted underneath the game, or perhaps inside the game -- the only two locations I can think of that would be even less obvious than the right side of the game.

Compounding a novice's confusion: the game has two start buttons in addition to an extra ball buy-in button. And there's a "mode switch" button on the left side of the cabinet (it's easy to spot, since it looks exactly like the plunger button on the right side). For a novice, playing JUDGE DREDD must be a lot like going on a treasure hunt, or perhaps like playing charades -- the game helpfully announces "Use 'Fire' button to launch ball" if it senses that you're confused; this, of course, just adds to the confusion, since no button on the cabinet is labeled "Fire".

That second start button is interesting: with it you can start a two-credit "Super Game". Such a game starts a limited multiball at the start of each ball; if you complete a relatively simple task (knocking down all the drop targets), your multiball is upgraded to 6-ball play, and you can start shooting for various super jackpots. Because of the plethora of super jackpots, Super Game scores tend to be very high; however, a separate high score table is maintained for each style of game. (Though, of course, the high score tables don't differentiate between score achieved with and without use of a purchased extra ball -- that might dis-

courage people from wasting their money on this dubious feature.)

The Super Game modes are not available in "regulation" play; since I've never spent money on a Super Game (and thus only played Super Games at Pinball Expo, where they were all free), I can't say whether they're a lot more fun than regular play. My sense is that they are, if only because the modes tend to require that you do more than just one thing over and over again. On the other hand, near-constant multiball doesn't seem all that much fun to me; your mileage will vary. The Super Game certainly doesn't seem worth twice the price to me; I'd just as soon play two regular games instead, giving me twice the chance the win replays or extra balls, and making each super jackpot I earn seem somewhat more special for the effort it took to light it.

Back to the game play; other than modes and multiball, your goal is to do something with "Crime Scenes": basically, lit ramp ramps. When a ramp shot (or other shot) is lit, you get awarded a Crime Scene and score its value. Why you would want to do this (beyond lighting the extra ball targets when you reach a certain number of Crime Scenes) is beyond me. I've never been able to figure out this part of the game, and to tell you the truth, I've long since given up trying. The Crime Scenes change color (and are nicely implemented: the plastics are transparent and are illuminated by colored lights mounted below the playfield); again, I have no idea why. As you complete Crime Scenes, you hear the Judge meting out his form of justice: "85 years for kidnapping" and "2 years for speeding" are common. But the whole implementation carries over into multiball play, where you're supposed to jail the four judges. However, as you jail each judge, his light goes out and another one lights, thus obscuring any indication of progress toward your ultimate goal, the Ultimate Challenge.)

Terminology on the playfield only adds to the confusion: you start a mode by shooting something labeled "Build Up Chain Feature", the scoop behind the drop targets (the jackpot shot in multiball) is labeled "Pick A Prize",

even though you never pick a prize when shooting it, other ramps are unlabeled and shooting them gives you little indication of what they do, if anything. Contrast this user interface disaster with CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, which was exceptionally clear and easy to understand, with award lights cross referencing the shots needed to light them and the game itself telling you exactly what you needed to do at each point. But start multiball on JUDGE DREDD and you're on on your own -- it's not until you've been flailing around for a while that the game bothers to tell you what you're supposed to be doing. So what is fundamentally a very simple game has been made into something that confuses novices and experts alike -- perhaps the price we paid for having the designers take the time they would have normally spent on making their game clear and easy to understand and using it instead to design Super Game modes that, frankly, I think few people are ever going to play.

There are fewer modes in this game than there could be, and for that I am profoundly grateful. Still, even as it is some of the modes are repetitive, others are borderline pointless, some score points way out of balance with their difficulty. (One requires you to hit up to three captive balls, but since this is the only time you're ever supposed to aim for them, it's kind of absurd. Hard to believe that the designers put in those captive balls just to support one mode, but that's apparently what happened.) The game allows you to switch the lit mode at any time by using a button near the left flipper; I didn't see much point in doing this during game play, since one mode is about as good as any other, and all must be completed to play the Ultimate Challenge.

While JUDGE DREDD is reasonably fun to play for a while, I found it started to get boring once I'd figured out that I only needed to concentrate on a few basic shots. All of the interesting shots on this game -- all the loops and mini-ramps near the top of the game -- are effectively worthless, and you can more or less avoid shooting them the entire game without affecting your score in the least. The tiny

flipper mounted near the top-right corner of the game is annoying, though crucial: if you don't use it, the ball will almost surely drain down the left outlane. Once you get the two main ramp shots down (and the shot into the Sniper Tower in the upper-right corner), you're set; the only question is how long the light and sound show will sustain your interest, and whether you're curious enough about the Super Game to waste an extra credit experimenting.

The game is a letdown for me, since I enjoyed playing CREATURE and expected another game just as tight and interesting; instead, JUDGE DREDD seems thrown together and ill thought out in every way save the window dressing, and for me, window dressing only goes so far. The game itself just isn't good enough to keep me coming back for more.



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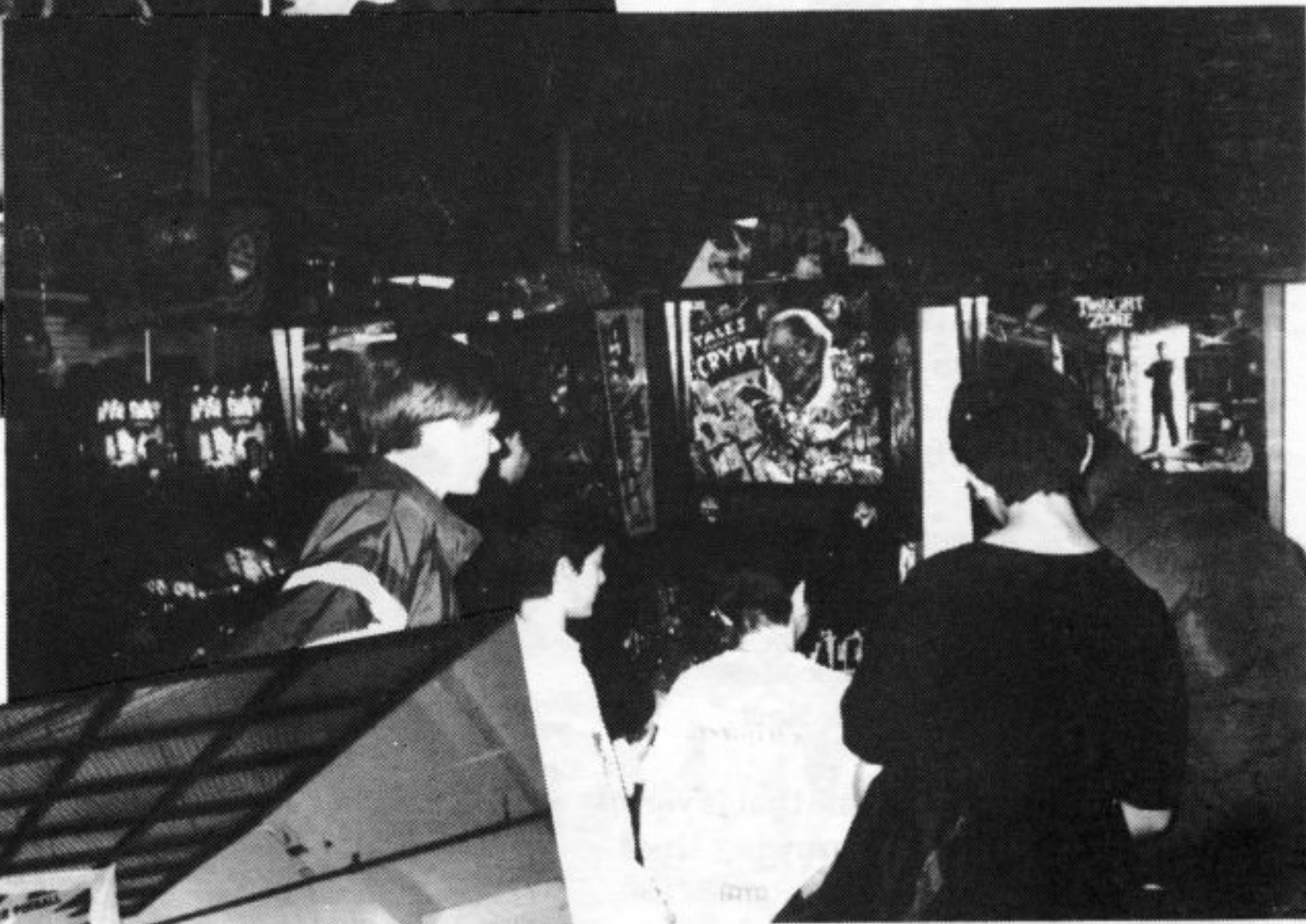
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PLAYING THE FIELD

LAST ACTION HERO

By Rob Rosenhouse

The license wars continue. Here we have a greatly anticipated movie, only to have it bottom out in the United States. Let's hope the pinball version of the LAST ACTION HERO (LAH) does better than its celluloid cousin.

The most striking feature of the game is the backglass. When Arnold said he'd be back, he wasn't kidding. His face covers one third of the backglass, with the remaining part featuring the usual montage of movie scenes we've come to expect from Data East.

Once again we have a game that is very mode-dependent. I am growing tired of mode games. At least with the release of LAH, the software is more robust. Now we can choose to hit the flashing cat target, or we can choose to begin a new mode. The game seems to handle multiple modes much better than JURASSIC PARK, their prior release.

Unfortunately, LAH is basically a two shot game. Fire the ball around the ramp, and then fling it into the ubiquitous scoop to fire up the mode. Now note that there are many, many nice shots around the entire playfield, but none are worth anywhere near what the individual rounds score. Right up the center of the machine is an old favorite scoring objective that has been absent from pinball for a while: a spinner. This leads into three fairly active bumpers. LAH features a shaker motor that vibrates the game whenever the ball is in the bumper area, and at other times, too.

Above the bumpers are three lanes

that will 'Double Your Bonus.' I guess this is a fancier way of adding a bonus multiplier, but I like the way Arnold splits into two. I wish the bonus was a bit more significant.

There is also a long curved shot on the

left side of the game that leads the ball into LAH's playfield toy, a giant crane. This was done very well, although after seeing the ball travel from one side to the other, consuming 8 seconds in the process, multiple times per game, can lose its novelty real fast. This



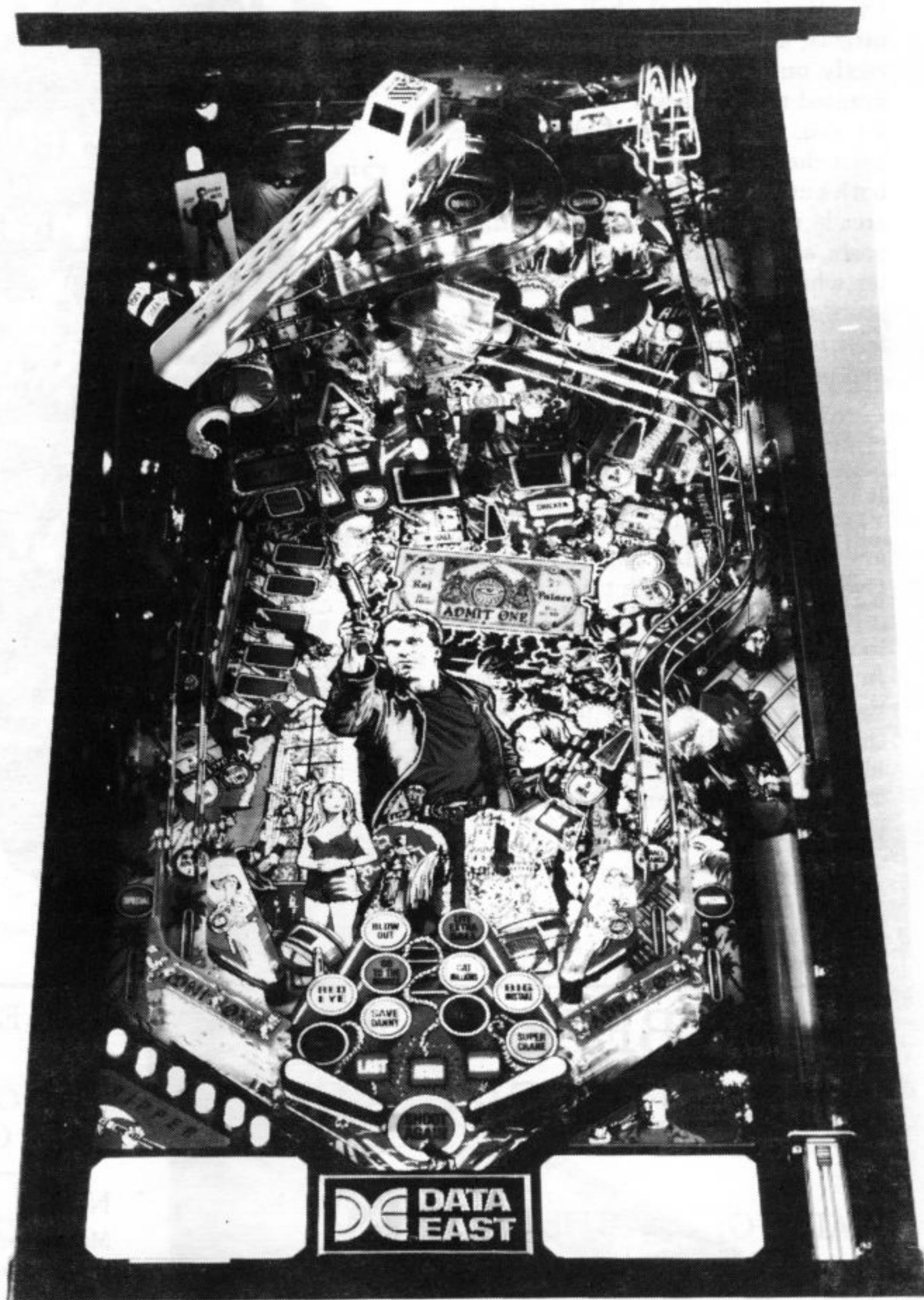
brings up another 'time waster.' Each time you begin a mode in LAH, you first see a dynamite fuse burning down, then a description of the rules of the mode, and then another delay before the ball is released. This whole production takes about 10 seconds EACH TIME you start a mode. It would have been much nicer if either these animations were abortable, or just didn't appear after the second or third mode is started. This really breaks up the flow of the game.

Back to the crane. When enabled, the crane will take a ball from the right side of the playfield, and load it into a lock high above on the left side. Locking balls will increase your jackpots in M-ball (Data East's term for playing more than one ball at a time). The lock will hold two balls. I was hoping that locking a third ball would begin a different M-ball round, but unfortunately, I was not allowed to lock a third ball.

Another blast from the past is the use of two captive balls. Hitting either of these subtracts from the M-ball countdown. When the countdown reaches zero, M-Ball is enabled in the left scoop. The game also enables M-Ball on the last ball, to allow novices to experience the thrill of multiple pinballs. Sad to say, though, that once M-Ball is lit, nothing else really matters on the field. There is one shot, and one shot only.

However, I enjoy M-Ball on LAH. Goals are presented in order of ascending difficulty. First, hit the jackpot on the friendly ramp (easy). Next, shoot the crane for a Double Jackpot (harder). This will begin six-ball play. Your next goal is quite a bit more difficult. You have to hit each of four shields disbursed about the game. Follow this with a shot to the crane. Then you will have an opportunity for the Super Jackpot on the ramp, immediately followed by a Double Super Jackpot for another shot to the crane. I find it very helpful to use the Smart Missile to qualify the shields for me. This makes Super Jackpots much easier.

There are a few things worth mentioning about the modes in LAH. First off, in most, (perhaps all?) modes, you can



smack the lower captive ball to reset the mode timer to 20 seconds. Obviously this is good to hit LATE in the round. The other neat feature is the Wild Card. Any ball through the return lanes will light the right scoop for a Wild Card. Nailing the scoop will enable additional scoring possibilities, and double awards for the remainder of the round. This is truly a cool feature, although I think it is a tad too hard to hit.

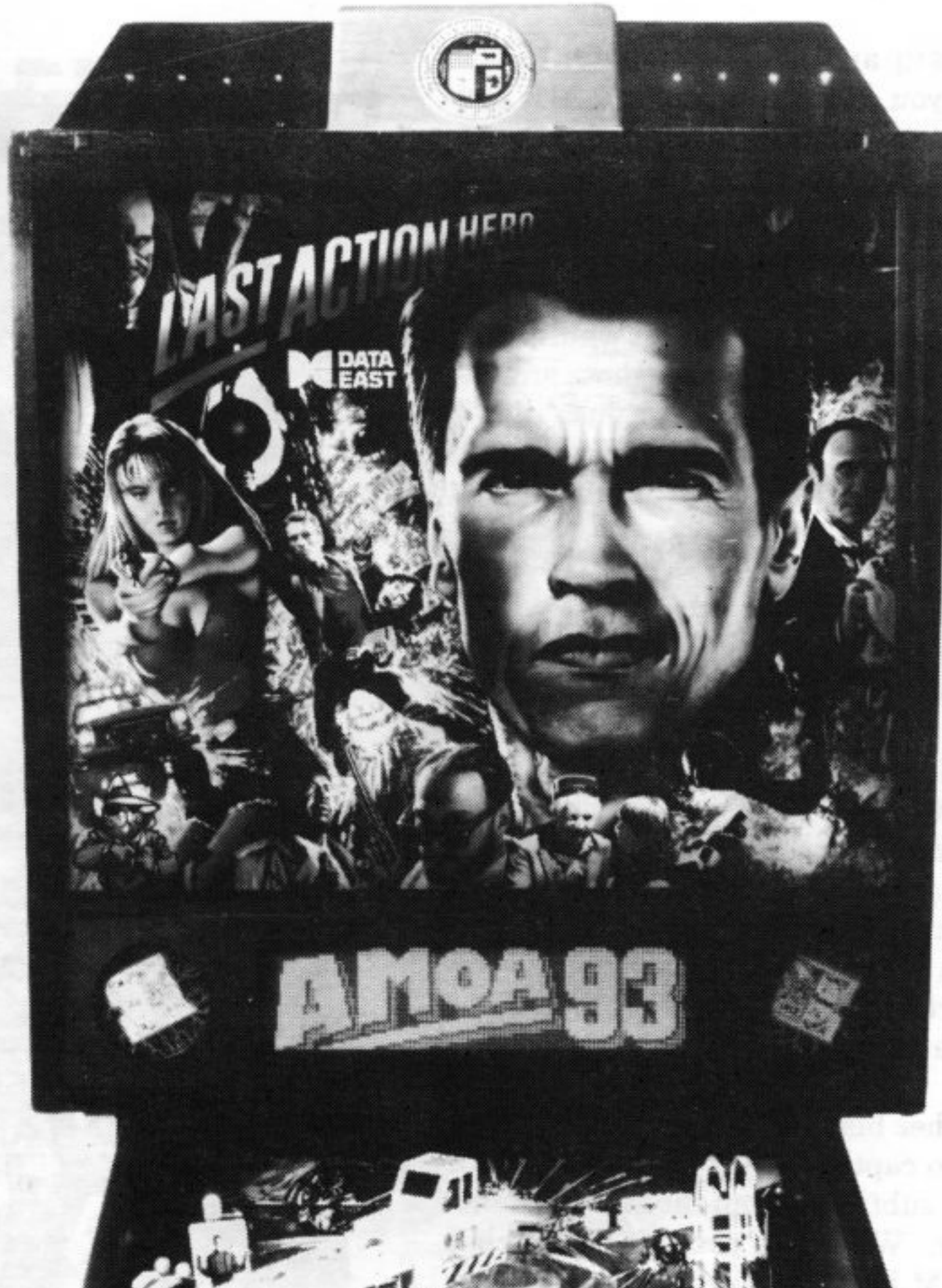
Once again, the sounds are great. Fan-

tastic sounds, and to a lesser degree, well-animated dot matrix graphics are DE trademarks, although JUDGE DREDD's displays give LAH a run for the money (see Steve Baumgarten's review, this issue).

This is a very playable game. There is good flow in most of the shots. In my opinion, this game, and LETHAL WEAPON 3 were the most playable of the recent games from the Chicago manufacturer. This is not to say that the layout of LAH is without fault.

The auto plunger on a lot of the models I've played will fire the ball at the drop targets, and the ball will rebound directly out the right outlane. Now, granted the game will tell you not to for you, but this design should have been changed. I have also found that both outlanes are ball eaters. In one arcade, rubber was added to the outlane posts, and the game played much better, while adding only 10 seconds to the average ball time (a method that manufacturers use to gauge game difficulty and profitability).

Outside the opening shot problem, I enjoy playing LAST ACTION HERO. It is fun, and for the most part, fair. There are lots of clean shots to aim at, and the flow of the game is smooth. Overall, I would chalk this up as another winner from Data East. I'm looking forward to their next release. In the words of Joe Kaminow, Data East's license go-getter, what would be the ultimate pinball license? If you haven't heard, they'll be releasing a Tommy pinball in early 1994. It should be great



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PLAYING THE FIELD

INDIANA JONES

By John M. Ross

I was very fortunate to be able to talk with Steve Epstein at Pinball Expo 93. It was he who asked me if I would be willing to do an article on Williams' latest pin, "INDIANAJONESTHEPINBALLADVENTURE". Knowing the depth of the game, I accepted the challenge.

THEME

First of all, I would like to congratulate the people at Williams Electronics. The design team, along with Roger Sharpe, have come up with another winner! INDIANA JONES captures scenes from all three of Indy's movies and puts them all into one terrific machine. The playfield art and display animations are incredible. The most alluring aspect of this game is definitely the music and sound effects. Indy features a totally new sound system called Digital Compression System (DCS) which has more capabilities than anything previously used. You almost get the feeling of being in the movie theater when you play this game.

Another first for this game is the Tilt-A-Matic playfield. Indy actually features a mini playfield that tilts to control ball flow via the flipper buttons. It's called "The Path of Adventure".

GAME PLAY

Game play begins from the gun ball shooter which launches the ball to the top of the playfield where 4 I-N-D-Y lamps are lit (by the way, no skill shot on this game). Completing the INDY rollovers will advance bonus multiplier and will also flash one of the five characters that are in between the flippers (I will explain more about this feature later). As the ball travels towards the pop bumpers, a fist fight

between Indy and one of the movie characters breaks out on the display. Players must score a certain number of jet bumper hits to obtain Super Jets. At this time, jet bumpers are worth 1 million points for the remainder of the ball. I've actually seen players score in excess of 150 million points off of the jet bumpers alone!

INDY actually features 12 games/modes in which players are able to act out scenes from the trilogy. Four scenes from each of the movies are repre-

sented in the center of the playfield. At the beginning of a game, one of the twelve lamps will be flashing. It is then up to the player to activate that scene by shooting the ball into "mode start". The mode start eject hole, which is between the outer left loop and left ramp, is probably the most important shot in the game. Mode start also gives the player a random award called the "Hand of Fate" when this is lit from the return lane.. Players are given a certain amount of time to complete each scene before going on to the next one.



I will now describe what each of these mode scenes are:

GET THE IDOL:

You must acquire the idol by continuing to knock down the center drop targets, 5 million points are awarded for each target hit. If you're successful then you must lock the ball in the center hole behind the right drop target for an additional 20 million.

STREETS OF CAIRO:

You must find Marion. She is hiding under one of the four baskets which are portrayed on the display. For a time period, outer loops and ramps will be flashing. Shooting them will score 10 million points each. If you cradle the ball after this mode begins you will observe the monkey on the display making a fuss over one of the boxes. This is where Marion is hiding! I personally find it better to shoot the ramps and loops she's not in to score 10 million each. Then save the sure thing for last which will yield 20 million. Upon completion of this, Mode Start will flash for 20 seconds or so. You have a choice of either shooting for Mode Start to kill the bad guy and collect 20 million or just hit the gun trigger and collect 2 million.

WELL OF SOULS:

This mode immediately begins 6 ball play. All shots to the center hole behind the drop targets score 2 million each multiplied by the total balls in play. For example, for 4 balls on the playfield, the center shot would score 8 million. I usually try to cradle two or more balls on the left flipper while shooting the center hole with the right. This is one mode where players can really rack up the points!

RAVEN BAR:

This is one of three video modes. The quest here is to kill the Nazi characters and recover the medallion. The flipper buttons move the gun from one end of the bar to the other simultaneously firing bullets. It will kill 20 or more Nazis on the screen and a medallion will appear and award an extra 15

million points. On occasion, an (EB) symbol will appear in this mode. If captured, an extra ball will be awarded to the player.

MONKEY BRAINS:

I feel that this is the most humorous part of the whole game. You get a mouthful of monkey brains (also depicted in video) when ramp and loop shots are made. The sound effects are great -- BELCH! These shots will score 8 million points each for a time period. I try to save this feature just before going into multiball to score more points.

STEAL THE STONES:

In this mode, the path of adventure lights and players must shoot for the tilting playfield via the right ramp. Once on the path of adventure, one must manipulate the playfield using the flipper buttons. All flashing spots on the mini playfield will score 5 million each. Completing all yellow lamps will award an extra 20 million -- for a total of 60 million points.

EXCAPE IN THE MINE CART:

In this video depiction, you must steer the mine cart through the corridors (and not hit the barricades) using the flipper buttons. You will be awarded 1 million points for each barrier avoided. Passing all 25 tunnels will award an extra 30 million.

ROPE BRIDGE:

This is a combination video and pin mode. Both ramps will be flashing at this time. Each ramp shot will cause Indy (depicted on the screen poised on a rope bridge) to get closer to the other side of the bridge. Each shot scores 10 million. If 5 shots are made before the time expires, Indy will cut the bridge and award 20 million. Successfully completing this mode will also light an extra ball at the mode start eject hole.

CASTLE GRUNEWALD:

Dr. Jones must be rescued. This is done by hitting the captive ball in the upper right corner of the playfield

before the time expires. The ball must be hit 3 times to free Dr. Jones. Completion will award 35 million points. The display graphics in this mode are amazing.

TANK CHASE:

The tank must be destroyed. Outer loops are lit for a timed period starting at 15 million points and counting down from there. This is similar to "hurry up" features on previous Williams games. Each loop shot advances Indy closer to the tank and awards the current display value. Upon completion of the 4th loop, Dr. Jones is rescued from the tank. The fifth loop will destroy the tank and award 30 million.

THE THREE CHALLENGES:

The object is to complete the lit lanes on the Path of Adventure by controlling the mini playfield using the flipper buttons. If you are successful and complete all three challenges you will receive 65 million bonus points.

CHOOSE WISELY:

This is the third and final video mode. Five chalices are shown in the display. At the beginning of the mode, the chalice of choice is shown in bold briefly. Hint: One must keep one's eye on the chalice of choice as they are mixed rapidly on the screen. Using the flippers, position the arrow over the chalice that will provide eternal life (ie., the chalice of choice). Pull the gun trigger. If successful, 20 million will be awarded. If not, you will melt and turn to dust!

Those are the twelve different game play modes that are available to the player. They do not necessarily go in this order since at the beginning of each game, a random mode is flashing. You can also advance the flashing panels which indicate the current mode which will be activated by shooting either ramp.

For the expert player who is successful enough to complete all modes, there awaits a big surprise. All rollover switches and targets will be worth 10 million points each. Six ball multi-ball will begin and 30 seconds of eternal life

will be granted. This time, you want to score all of the lit targets and switches on the playfield while keeping at least 2 balls in play. I usually try to get the hard part over first which is the Path of Adventure switches. Keep in mind that eternal life in this game means that all six balls will be returned to the player and the lamp is lit for 30 seconds. I feel it's best to concentrate on the HARD shots at this time! If all targets are made, 1 billion points will be awarded -- YES, 1 BILLION! In addition, if you're good enough and still have 2 or more balls in play, you can repeat this a second time! I wonder if anyone has been able to pull that off?

(Multi-ball Play)

Multi-ball play can be achieved in several ways. Well of Souls and completing all modes will award 6 ball play. However, 3 ball play can be achieved by locking 3 balls in the idol. After the balls are released, the left ramp will light the ARK jackpots which start at 20 million. Eternal life will be lit for a few seconds and return any lost balls back to the player. This can be increased by either the captive ball or mode start. The idol lock will also double or triple the jackpot (if 3 balls are in play). The jackpot can be collected by shooting the right ramp. After this, the whole process can be repeated in which you are required to get the stones and grail jackpots. After this, super jackpot lights at the captive ball with each shot scoring in excess of 80 million. One nice thing: if you collect only one jackpot, you still have the rest of the game to get the others. This is similar to FISH TALES' jackpot sequence. Two ball multi-ball can be achieved by hitting the single drop target three times to expose the captured ball for a timed period. Hitting the captive ball will start two ball play in which the object is to hit the captive ball and recover various treasures.

(LOOP JACKPOT)

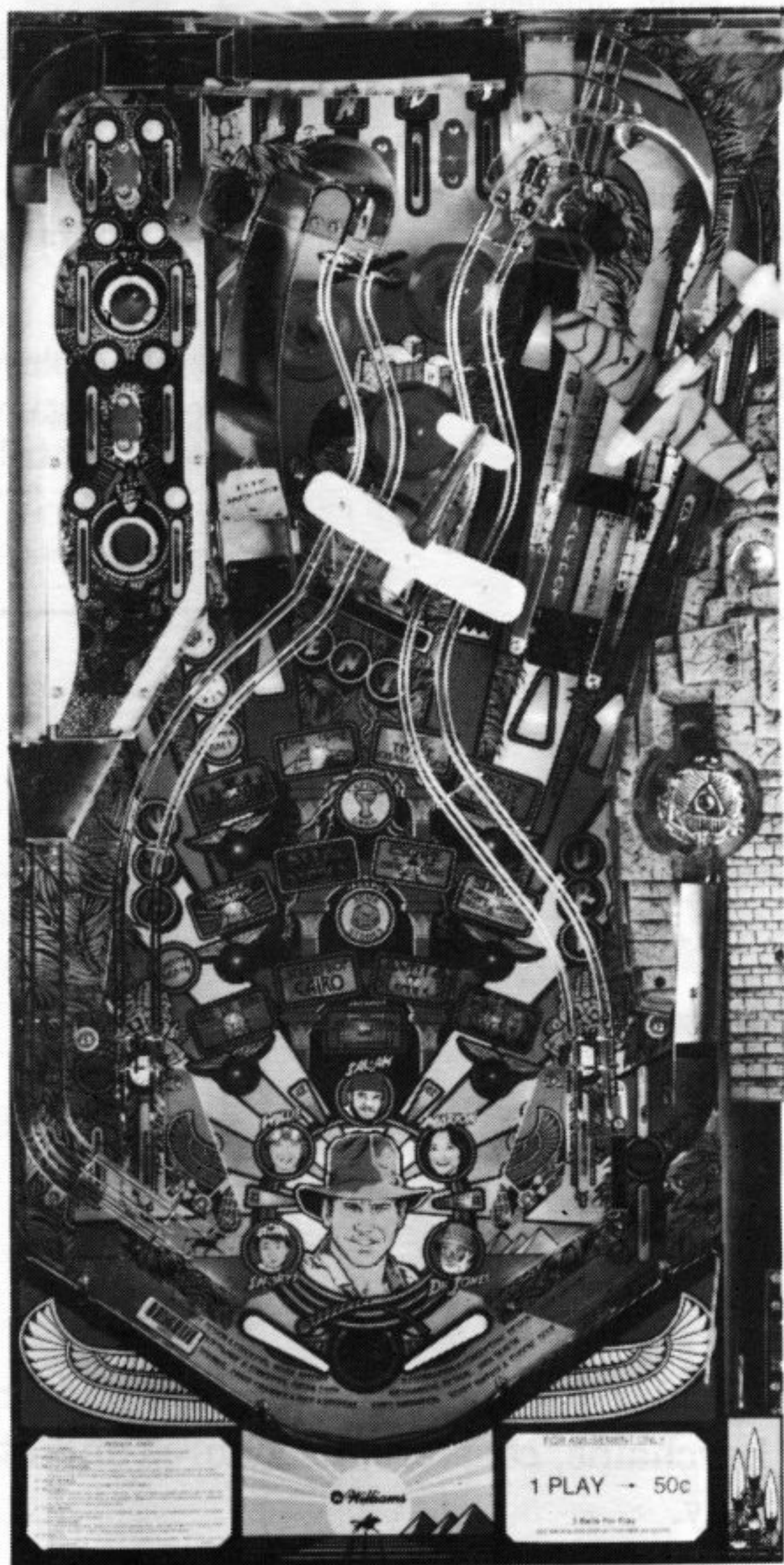
Each time the INDY rollovers are completed a character (from one of the three movies) will flash near the bottom of the playfield. There are five characters, with the object to get all of them flashing. When a return lane is

made, try shooting for the flashing loop. This will "freeze" one of the character lamps. If this can be done 5 times during the game, loop jackpot will light at the right lamp until it's collected. It starts at 40 million and can be built up higher by shooting lit loops. You have the rest of ball to collect loop jackpot; also, shooting lit loops consecutively will award big points.

One other way to score some quick points on this game is to light the yellow hurry-up lamp which is at the center lock. To do this, you must shoot for the lighted ramps which will ad-

vance the green lamps on the playfield. When all green lamps are completed, a special hurry-up bonus will be lit at the center hole. It starts at 40 million and counts down until collected.

Helpful Hint: The hurry-up bonus will stay at 40 million until the right drop target is knocked down. If you are able to leave the right drop target standing and then complete the green winged lamps, hurry-up will light for 40 million and not count down. You can then hit the red stand up target behind the "E" prop target and collect the full 40 million.



SUMMARY

I really can only think of two things I dislike about INDY. Shots taken from either flipper tend to go awry very often after they hit the center drops. I've had many jump over the ramps and drain after hitting the targets. I'm not really sure what causes this. One nice thing is that if a ball hits one of the three drop targets and makes contact with an outlane switch immediately after, it will return to the player. The other feature which I don't like is the Superball. I've heard other players complain about this also. It's only one ball, but if you have only one more mode to complete for Eternal life, it can be a billion points difference -- which will allow some people to buy their way into the high score table.

I feel INDY carries a lot of characteristics that the ADDAMS FAMILY pin did. It's really never the same game twice. It's not very difficult to understand and average players can get a really good score and win a game. I collect pinball machines and rarely buy new machines. The last new (in the crate) game I bought was TERMINATOR II. Boy, is that about to change!



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PLAYING THE FIELD

GLADIATORS

By Aaron Benditt

Following in the line of great releases from Premier Technology comes another game that convinces me that Gottlieb games are ones to be reckoned with. Too often, operators and players overlook Premier as a source for good pinball games with good playfields and minimal service problems. Fortunately, however, since CUE BALL WIZARD, more and more games with the Gottlieb name have been showing up in my area. TEE'D OFF has become rather popular (there's even one in a local convenience store), and now, the latest release, GLADIATORS, is continuing the success of fun and challenging games.

A Jon Norris design, GLADIATORS moves away from the light and tongue in cheek themes toward a serious and very challenging game. It is not approachable like TEE'D OFF and does not attract the non-pinball players. However, any pinball player who accepts the challenge of the macho style game is in for just that: a challenge. Plus, the non-pinball players will find a fun game in GLADIATORS if they do try it.

The game begins with a plunger skill shot. While solenoid shooters do provide a change from the traditional, it is nice to sometimes return to the past and put the ball into play the old-fashioned way. Three lamps in the shooter lane light and change intermittently, and after the ball is shot from the plunger, it lands in the top hole and stops the lights from changing. The one at which it stops is the reward; advance MULTI, advance WEAPON, or start a round.

Advancing MULTI adds a letter to spell the word in order to light the lock for multiball. Each letter can be scored

by shooting the corresponding shot in the proper spelling order. The left ramp scores M, the left horseshoe U, the right horseshoe L, the right ramp T, and the right (and only) spinner to the top hole, I. Once MULTI is completed, the player is in multiball, always played with two balls, where the object is to shoot and hold balls up the left ramp and collect jackpots. After the first ball is shot up the left ramp it is held for a generously timed period. This allows the player to shoot the other ball up the same ramp. Once this is done, super jackpot is lit on the right ramp. The balls are released from the left ramp hold and sent directly to the upper left flipper, the tool

needed to shoot the right ramp and score super jackpot. Within about five seconds, if the second ball is shot up the right ramp, Ultimate Jackpot is scored. At this point, the left ramp must be shot again and the process continues until one or both balls are lost.

Advancing a letter in WEAPON is an aid in spelling this word to light, of course, the weapon feature. The remaining letters can be collected by shooting into the top hole for mystery, or the right or left horseshoes. When completed, the center upkicker is the shot to make for the weapon award, selectable with the flippers.



The center upkicker is a difficult shot to make, though. Especially since the hole is covered by the upper right flipper. TIP: The easiest way to shoot into this hole is to shoot the right horseshoe with the lower left flipper, and then hold BOTH flippers up. The ball will slide off of the upper left flipper and into the hole, since the upper right flipper is now out of the way. If the ball is sent through the right horseshoe via the upper right flipper, this trick may not work because the speed of the ball will be reduced than if sent from the lower left flipper.

Starting a round sets the player off on the journey to fulfill the game objective of killing the final beast, a three headed dragon. There are seven rounds in total, six of which are 'pyramid rounds', all of which can be played in multiball or timed play. Shooting the MB target to the left of the left ramp three times will light multiball for the round. As long as multiball is kept in play, the round will continue. Starting a round without shooting the MB target will place a timer on the round. The lamps next to the right upkicker, located just to the right of the spinner lane, will inform players in which mode the play will take place. Other lamps near the right upkicker will inform the player the multiplier of the points for the upcoming round. Each round, before it is entered, can be multiplied by up to 3X by shooting the center upkicker, the abyss hole. Every two or three adjustable counts increases the multiplier. The right upkicker starts each round.

The first round is "Rain of Terror", where the jet bumpers and the spinner each score a million, and the abyss hole scores five million.

The second round, "The Catapult Round", gives five million points for each ramp shot, and 50 million for a shot to the catapult hole, located at the bottom of the horseshoe.

Thirdly, the "Fire and Ice Round" scores three million for each of four strobing shots, and after the fourth is completed, an extra 30 million is awarded.

The "Cataclysm Round" is similar to

STREET FIGHTER II: CHAMPION EDITION's 'Roaming Ninja's Round'. Two major shots are strobing, and change at certain time intervals. Five million is added to the cataclysm bonus for each shot, and the bonus is collected at the end of the ball.

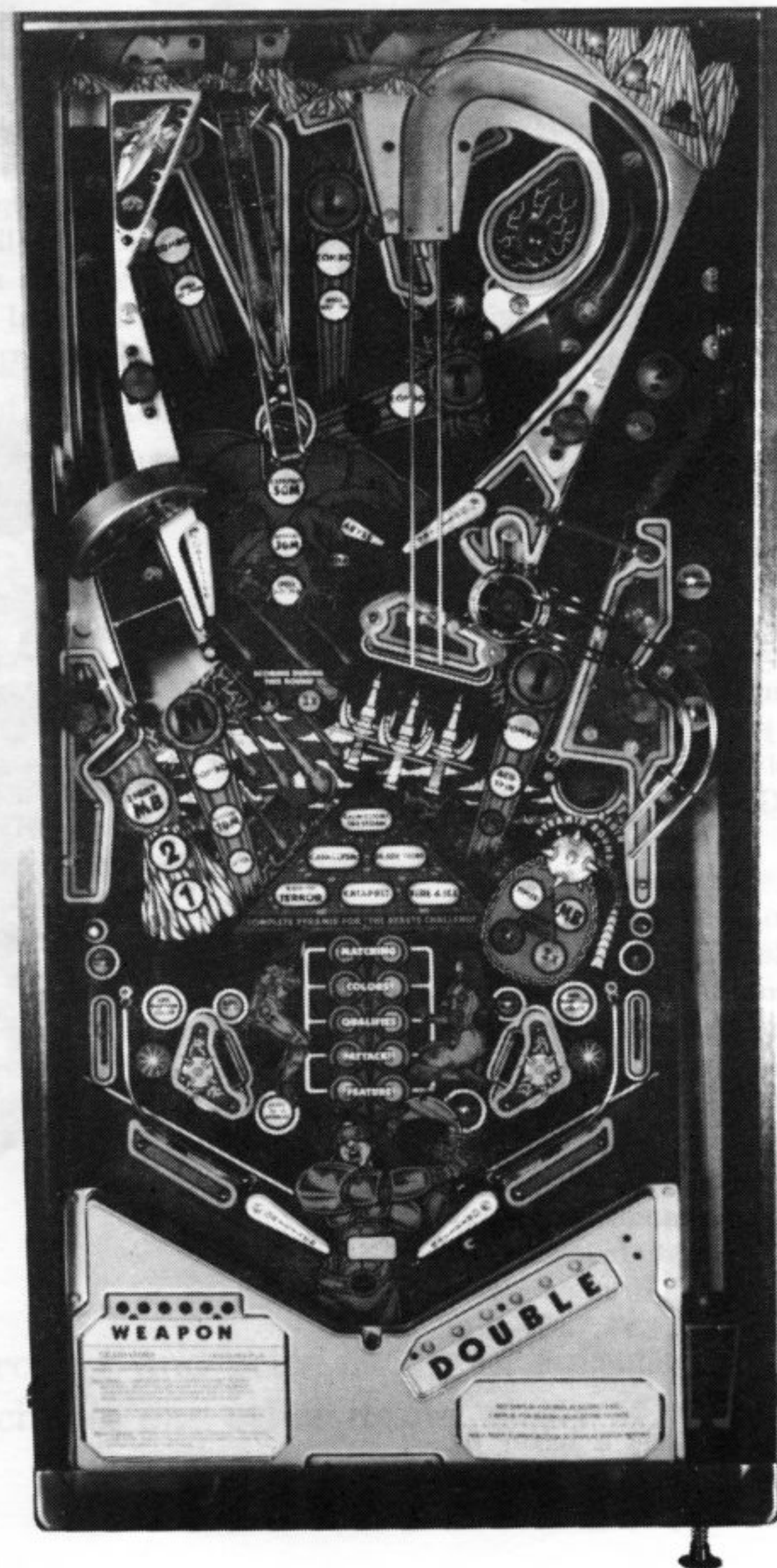
Shooting the lit drop targets in the "Bladefight Round" scores five million points when the bank is completed, ten million for the second time, and 20 million for the third.

The "Calm Before the Storm Round" is a special three ball multiball where two, three or five million points (adjustable) are added to the 'beast bo-

nus' for each strobing shot. The beast bonus is collected at the end of game and during the next and final round.

The "Beast's Challenge Round" is an untimed, one ball challenge to defeat the three headed dragon. The player must shoot the strobing shot three times to sever the three heads. As each head is severed, the beast bonus is awarded, and successful slaying awards a special and the opportunity to enter initials.

TIP: The jet bumpers can be disabled by holding the flipper buttons. This is a great aid if a round is being timed, and the ball is caught in the bumpers.



Disabling them will bring the ball down to the flippers where shots can be made before the timer runs out.

There are numerous other features to the game which can substantially add to the score.

The left hole, where catapult 50 million is collected, also serves a fantastic purpose. Shooting the hole advances letters to spell the word DOUBLE. When completed, everything, including rounds, is doubled for the remainder of the ball. This means that if the round multiplier is at 3X, and everything is doubled, the multiplier will actually be at 6X. The Mystery hole can also add a letter to spell DOUBLE, by the way.

The Acu-Spin Feature is enabled by completing the center drop target bank. Shooting the spinner and matching the displayed target spin amount at the time the ball reaches the top hole scores extra ball the first time, 20 million the second, and finally 50 million points.

The Attack! Feature commences when the blue and yellow matching lamps below the pyramid lamps are completed. The left and right drop targets advances the lamps when lit, and the sling shots always advance them. Noticeably at this point, the sling shots are smaller, possibly to make more room for the ball to be sent from the right upkicker to the right shooter lane.

When Attack! is lit, the left ramp scores three million points, and the ball is held in the innovative catapult until a flipper button is pressed. The player must press a flipper button to release the ball from the left-right swinging catapult, and have the ball land in the Attack! hole (also the catapult 50 Million hole). This gives the player a 30 million point award.

An extra ball can be obtained by making ramp shots and advancing their respective billboard values. When the billboard values are maxed out, extra ball is lit, and can be collected in the center upkicker.

The final feature is the combo shots. There are combo lamps at the spinner, left and right ramps, and left and right horseshoes. When lit and shot, the combo counter increases and consecutive shots

award the displayed values, from one to 1 to 18??? million points. There are award levels for combo shots, all adjustable. 20 Million or an extra ball (adjustable) are collected for the first level, and 50 Million for the second level. Initials can be entered for the highest combo shots to date.

GLADIATORS is without doubt a very challenging game with a variety of options. Ideally, the best player would want to have the round multiplier at 3X for each round, with everything doubled for every ball. More realistically, a player would want to have everything doubled with the multiplier at maximum just prior to entering the "Calm Before the Storm Round". Also, it is the option of each player to decide whether or not he or she is better under pressure of a timer, or can better excel at managing two balls at once. Even the novice player can score big points by spelling MULTI and shooting directly for multiball.

The playfield is designed so well that there is an impeccable smoothness of play. Shooting the right horseshoe or the left ramp feeds the upper left flipper for the shot to the right ramp, which drops the ball in the middle of the playfield toward the lower right flipper. The option here is to dead flip the ball to the left

flipper, or quickly shoot the ball up the left ramp again.

The center upkicker shot is an especially challenging and neat idea, where a flipper must be held up to score the shot, a rather refreshing change.

The swinging catapult is also a neat idea which sets the ball up for a shot from the upper right flipper to the right horseshoe, the upper left flipper for the shot up the right ramp, or the left hole.

Finally, kudos must go to the entire design team for a job well done. In a world of licensed themes, this original game, as difficult to approach as it is, when approached, proves to be a very fun and challenging game.

Congratulations go to Jon Norris for his design, concept and rules; Dave Zabriski and Craig Beierwaltes for the sound and music, including the fantastic orchestra hit sound; Constantino Mitchell for the masterpiece backglass art; Dave Moore for the playfield artwork; programmer Bob Wilson; display arts Alycen Hareas and Darryl Moore; and finally, Randy Paulin for the display programming.

Now all that is left to do is to play this game while we wait for the next fantastic Premier game.



THE FLIPSIDE

PROFILE: JON S. NORRIS

In this installment of FLIPSIDE PROFILE, we continue our visit with pinball designer Jon Norris, who has lived pinball as a player and collector and was fortunate to realize a dream to become one of the industry's leading creative forces.

FS: When we last left you it was 1985 and you were going to travel to Chicago.

JN: I sold most of my pinball collection and squeezed the rest into a 24 foot Ryder truck (which now contains all of my possessions). Now I head cross country, pulling my small pickup truck on a tow hitch. My only pinball that I played on this trip was a very tired FIREPOWER. Needless to say, I left ball two at the plunger and walked away from this poorly maintained game (in a truck stop).

I arrived in Illinois with about two weeks until my first day at Premier, so I looked for an apartment and played pinball. The first arcade that I found had about five games, including EIGHT BALL DELUXE, HIGH SPEED, COMET, MOTORDOME and, I think, FIREPOWER II. I quickly won multiple games on EIGHT BALL DELUXE, and after awhile, the owner came over to the game and turned it off, saying "This game is out-of-order." He would not even refund the quarter. He said "We do not give refunds," pointing to a sign which said "Play at your own risk." As I left the arcade, I looked back and saw him turning the game back on.

Later I found out that this location was illegally operating these games and were forced to remove all of the pinball machines from their location. YEA!

I had not seen any location with more than five games until several weeks later. From the outside, Gala Lanes in Carol Stream looks like your standard bowling alley, but when you enter the arcade, you realize that they have dedicated about 30% of their floor space to the arcade (50% now). There were 23 pinball machines, including HIGH SPEED, EIGHT BALL CHAMP, BLACK HOLE, HAUNTED HOUSE, XENON and many others. "Wow, it was like going back to the 70's before video games became King." They probably had over 100 video games at the time.

This location was (and still is) one of the best locations in the Chicago area to play pinball.

FS: Which games influenced you as a game designer and in which ways?

JN: Gobblied games of the 50's, the 60's and the 70's. These games were little more than rollovers, Pop Bumpers, Flippers, and Rules. They had no light shows, no music, no video, and no computer. But they were still fun to play because of the rules. Designers of that era had so little to work with, but they turned out some great games, such as QUEEN OF HEARTS or SLICK CHICK.



FS: *It was a great accomplishment to become a designer, especially coming from the outside world. How did you accomplish this feat?*

JN: I was at the right place at the right time. I came to PINBALL EXPO '85 with resumes and gave copies to representatives from each of the current pinball companies. During one of the seminars, everyone on the front row (myself included) grilled the panel (the panel had representatives from all of the pinball companies) on how to become a designer. Their answer was to join a company in a junior type position and work up to being a designer. Well, I still persisted in my endeavor. I believed that my two college degrees and years of experience with pinball were qualification enough for any entry-level design position. Shortly thereafter, I was hired on at Premier Technology as a game designer. A year and a half later, my first game DIAMOND LADY was released.

FS: *What do you consider when you design a game, the player or your personal preferences?*

JN: The Player. If I were to design games for myself, they would be far too difficult for 95% of all players out there.



Jon Norris (left) and Ray Tanzer (right) take time off work to play some "TEE'D OFF"

FS: *What type of player do you design for?*

JN: Do you mean skill level, age, sex, or education? I will only say that we will always have a combination/mixture of all of those items. A game with a street theme, such as CUEBALL WIZARD will mostly be placed in tavern type locations, but will also be placed in any other type location, such as a bowling alley, arcade or 7-11. So, to answer your question, I will emphasize to a player group depending on the theme, but must keep all players in mind.

FS: *What type of layout do you favor and is there any type of shots that define a Jon Norris playfield?*

JN: I have always like to use Drop Targets in my designs. Maybe it is because I learned to play pinball on 70's Drop Target games such as SKYJUMP, EL DORADO, HIGH HAND, JACKS OPEN, and KING PIN. I also like combination / bank shots in games. Look at CAR HOP or CUEBALL WIZARD, you will see those two aspects combined, where the player has to make combo/bank shots using Drop Targets.

FS: *What is the future for your games based on the technology and the market of today?*

JN: I think that we will see better video graphic routines as well as better quality music/sounds/speech in games of the future. I hope that someday, a better quality display becomes economical (the type we are starting to see in notebook computers). At this present time, a display of this type is very cost prohibitive. In the near future, I think that the pinball industry will have C.D. quality music in its games.

In the market today, licensed themes and mechanical playfield gimmicks are "Hot". This can and will change in the future, as the market changes. I plan on being there when it does change.

FS: *What do you like in game rules and features?*

JN: I enjoy being at the cutting-edge of this aspect of game design. My best accomplishments have been in this area, but to answer your question, I like a rule-set such that no two games will ever play the same. It takes a fairly deep rule-set to pull this off. Remember that deep does not mean complex. Another aspect that I like is the timed round (Feature Mode). I have used this feature on most of my designs. Look at LIGHTS CAMERA ACTION! which came out in 1989. This was the first pinball game to be based on the feature mode. I mean that the game had multiple feature modes, and the object was to complete all of them (Movie Scenes) for a big reward. Please note that this game also had Auto Skill, Reveal Match Number, Select-A-Feature and Player interactive animation (a forerunner to today's video modes).

Finally, I like features which require the player to gamble. The best example of this is the Double or Nothing feature

used on both TEE'D OFF (Ray Tanzer layout, my rules) or VEGAS. Another example of this is try to time one feature with another to get maximum points, with the game being that the player has to save collecting one feature until later. Look at SUPER MARIO BROS. pinball. The player could become SUPER which qualifies double scoring, but if the player were to save this until entering a round, then they would get double scoring during that round. Furthermore, if a player were to save both until multiball was ready, then they would have double scoring during a round, with three balls on the playfield.

FS: If any, which games would you like to be able to change of the ones you have designed?

JN: My early games such as DIAMOND LADY, BAD GIRLS, AND HOT SHOTS were far too difficult for the average player. The rounds in HOT SHOTS were very confusing because we were just learning how to do rounds. Finally, VEGAS should have been a full featured game, I mean ramps, etc. I also never liked the bright pink cabinet on this game. It should have been painted black.

FS: List your top ten games and the people that have influenced you.

JN:	QUEEN OF HEARTS	Gottlieb	1952
	GYPSY QUEEN	Gottlieb	1955
	HARBOR LITES	Gottlieb	1956
	SLICK CHICK	Gottlieb	1963
	EL DORADO	Gottlieb	1975
	MATA HARI	Bally	1977
	EIGHTBALL DELUXE	Bally	1981
	XENON	Bally	1980
	HIGH SPEED	Williams	1986
	BLACK KNIGHT 2000	Williams	1989

I also like: PINBOT, FUNHOUSE, VEGAS, TAXI AND CHECKPOINT. I am refraining from adding any games made in the past two years. I admire the following people: Wayne Neyens because he designed so many great-to-play games. He designed most of the Gottlieb games of the fifties to early sixties. He has four on my top ten, and so many

others that just missed my top ten, such as LIGHTNING BALL.

Ed Krenski designed most of the "Drop Target" games of the 70's. Steve Ritchie just about invented the "Flow" game, with great layouts such as the two I have mentioned above, GETAWAY, T2, and F14. Barry Oursler has given us some great games such as: PINBOT, CYCLONE and SPACE SHUTTLE. Pat Lawlor has given us everything but the kitchen sink (maybe on his next playfield) on his games. In addition to FUNHOUSE, his contributions include BANZAI RUN, EARTHSHAKER, and ADDAMS FAMILY. John Trudeau has also influenced me not only because of games such as VICTORY, GENESIS, and CREATURE FROM THE BLACKLAGOON, but because he was responsible for most of my training. Other creative minds around me have included Ray Tanzer, Dave Zabriski, John Borg, and many others in and out of the pinball industry.

FS: Describe your playing style.

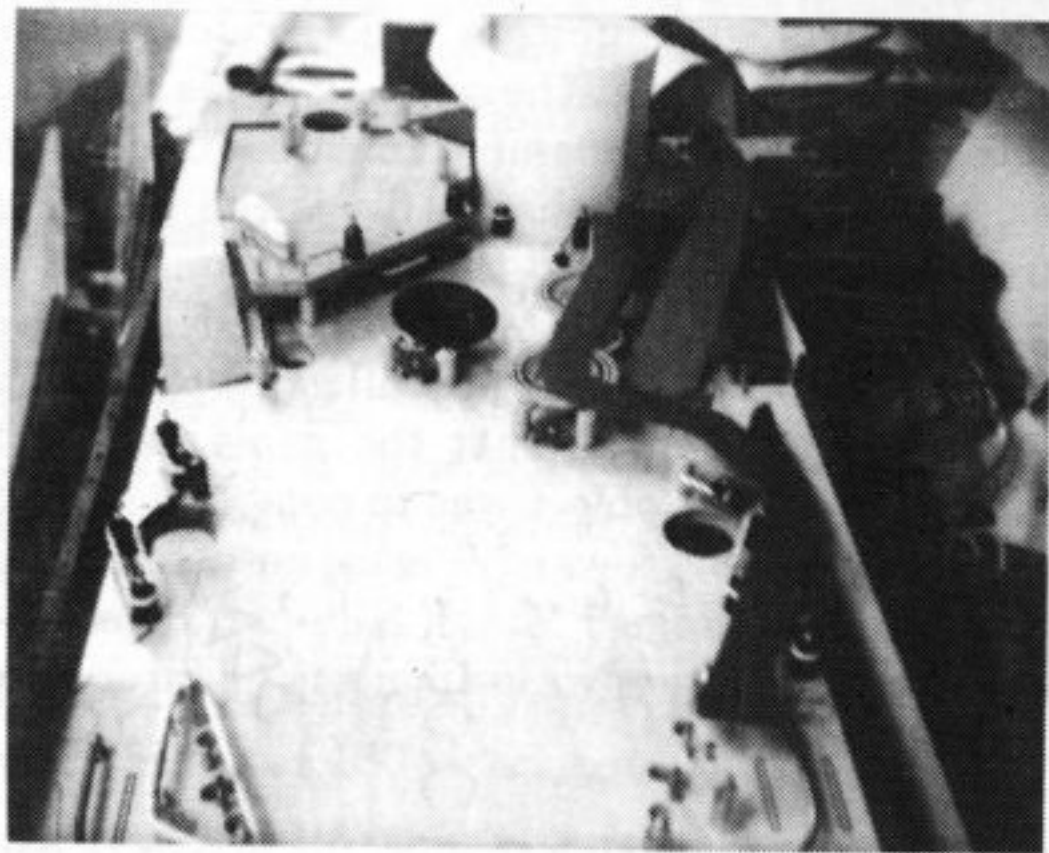
JN: I am a finesse type player who uses ball control as a strong point. I am more of a "Catch and shoot" type of player than most and I do shake the machine. My moves include the "Bang-Back", "Slide-Save", "Drop-Catch", and others. I will play a game at its maximum as far as tilting is concerned, and have been known to use up tilt warnings.

FS: What do you like in pinball ?

JN: I like rules and shots that "keep me at the edge of my seat" so-to-speak. Having the ball on the left flipper with the half billion flashing on CUEBALL WIZARD or getting the last letter of double with "Next Round 3X" lit for going into "Calm Before The Storm" on GLADIATORS, or the anticipation of going into "Pitch & Putt" on TEE'D OFF with 180 million in bonus. These examples are all on our games, but carry-over to most pinball machines made today.

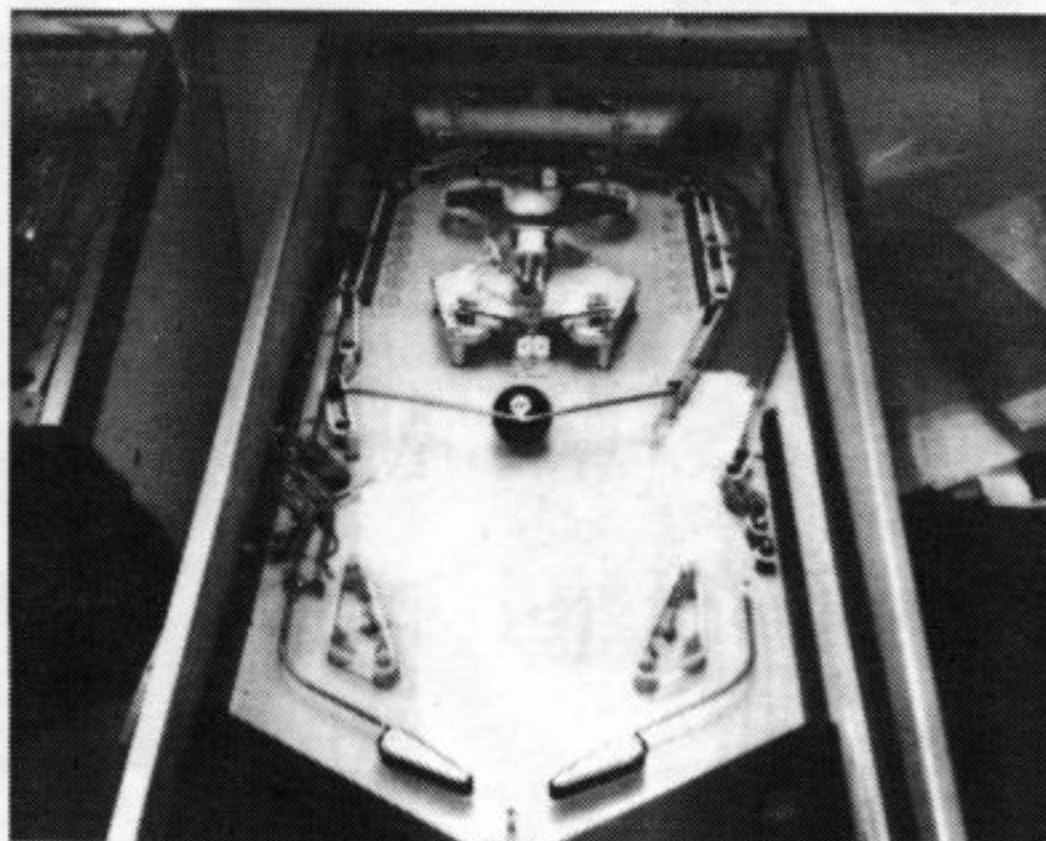
FS: What do you hope to accomplish in the future?

JN: I would really like to have a number one game. That is designing a game which makes it to the number one position in either REPLAY or PLAYMETER magazines.



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11-20-91



Q BALL WIZARD

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DOCTOR WHO

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DR. DUDE

91,662,660

EARTHSHAKER

10,385,170

ELVIRA

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FISH TALES

3.1 billion

2,004,387,170

708 million +

650 million

565,328,800

453 million

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 SAFARI

661 million

130 million

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY

1,899,842,120

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

8,471,842,490

Dino Rodriguez, Fun & Games, Willowbrook Mall

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

Donald "Ace" Howard, San Antonio, TX

Robert Chesnavich

Christopher George Aiello, Mid Valley Video Arcade, Olyphant, PA

Robert Chesnavich

Mark Conant, Sunnyvale, CA

Nathaniel Sallee, Souviner City Arcade, Gulf Shore, AL

Rick Stetta, Beefy's Cabin, Sunnyvale, CA

Rick Stetta, Keystone-Almaden, San Jose, CA

Rod Bair, Family Amusement, Salem OR

Christopher Hartman, Urbana-Champaign, IL

Robert Chesnavich

Paul Drabik, Bowcraft, Scotch Plain, NJ

Robert DeLoura, Seattle

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

Rick Stetta, The Landing, San Jose, CA

Alison Chen, San Francisco, CA

Rod Bair, Family Amusement, Salem, OR

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

Mike Mahaffey, Wunderland, Salem, OR

THE PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR PINBALL ASSOCIATION
SPACE PORT #1 - 11/1/93

STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 6 MATCHES

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
4	STEPHEN KLUTSARITS	128.0	39,508,850	10.0	5.0	3.0	7.11
9	SCOTT WILLIAMS	120.0	32,528,943	10.0	3.0	5.0	6.67
2	JOHN ROSSNER	118.0	33,661,799	8.0	7.0	3.0	6.56
8	TONY TAKACH	109.0	23,297,523	7.0	7.0	4.0	6.06
6	STEVEN TIRPAK	104.0	22,061,874	6.0	8.0	4.5	5.78
5	JAMES KUTZ	88.0	19,130,462	6.0	4.0	8.0	4.89
7	TONY SASLO	84.0	70,561,782	4.0	7.5	6.5	4.67
3	TOTAL ALL PLAYERS	63.0	8,920,066	1.0	9.0	8.0	3.60
	SHAWN MIETZLER	7.0	0	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.33
	SHAWN MILLER	56.0	10,704,080	1.0	8.0	6.0	3.73
1	CLIFF WOLFE	50.0	9,684,928	2.0	3.5	12.5	2.78

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
2	JOHN ROSSNER	30.0	8,205,410	3.0	0.0	0.0	10.00
4	STEVEN KLUTSARITS	25.0	16,110,526	2.0	1.0	0.0	8.33
9	SCOTT WILLIAMS	21.0	27,709,526	2.0	0.0	1.0	7.00
6	STEVEN TIRPAK	20.0	23,088,250	1.0	2.0	0.0	6.67
8	TONY TAKACH	16.0	7,785,893	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.33
7	TONY SASLO	11.0	4,657,789	0.0	2.0	1.0	3.67
1	CLIFF WOLFE	11.0	2,361,454	0.0	2.0	1.0	3.67
3	SHAWN MIETZLER	7.0	0	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.33
5	JAMES KUTZ	3.0	9,554,000	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.00

SPACE PORT #2 - 11/1/93

STANDINGS AND LEAGUE STATISTICS AFTER 6 MATCHES

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
1	CHRIS MILLER	147.0	31,272,532	13.0	3.0	2.0	8.17
7	NATE HARTMAN	132.0	48,282,082	10.0	6.0	2.0	7.33
8	RANDY JONES	122.0	31,896,502	8.0	8.0	2.0	6.78
6	SHARRON HARTMAN	95.0	15,302,375	5.0	8.0	5.0	5.28
5	GENE MAYERS	92.0	37,224,665	6.0	5.0	7.0	5.11
2	JAMES KUTZ	89.0	17,260,988	3.0	11.0	4.0	4.94
3	LOIS SMITH	87.0	9,481,400	5.0	6.0	7.0	4.83
4	TOM MOLLER	82.0	6,799,450	4.0	7.0	7.0	4.56
9	BLIND 1	18.0	0	0.0	0.0	18.0	1.00

STATISTICS FROM LAST MATCH

	Player	Points	Average	Record			PEPGA
1	CHRIS MILLER	30.0	31,440,476	3.0	0.0	0.0	10.00
6	SHARRON HARTMAN	30.0	25,065,416	3.0	0.0	0.0	10.00
7	NATE HARTMAN	30.0	7,341,523	3.0	0.0	0.0	10.00
8	RANDY JONES	15.0	18,432,725	0.0	3.0	0.0	5.00
2	JAMES KUTZ	11.0	29,355,993	0.0	2.0	1.0	3.67
4	THOMAS MOLLER	11.0	5,695,750	0.0	2.0	1.0	3.67
3	LOIS SMITH	7.0	8,194,110	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.33
5	GENE MAYERS	7.0	4,278,793	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.33
9	BLIND 1	3.0	0	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.00

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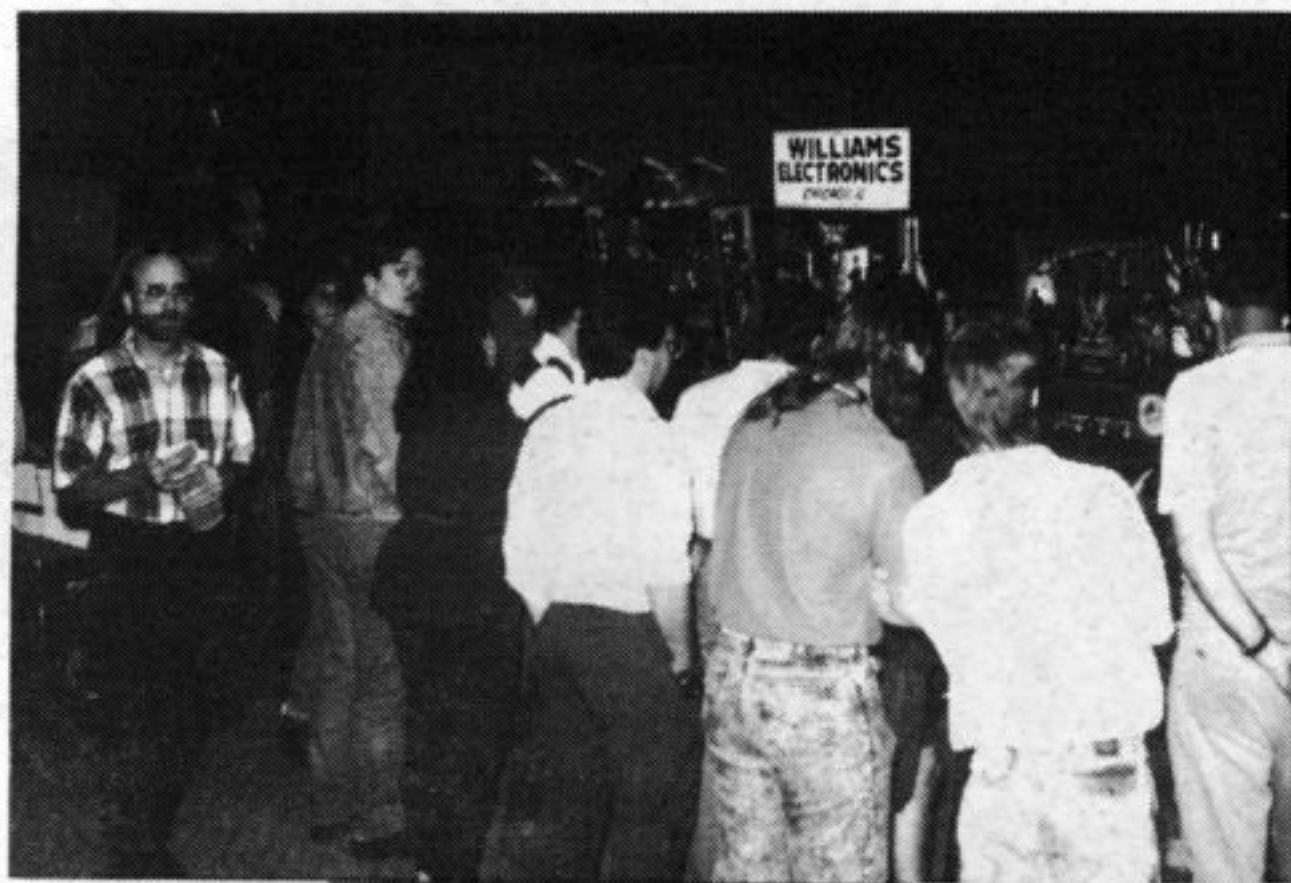
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