The Usenet Lynx Guide

January 27, 1993

As of this writing, the Atari Lynx handheld video game system has more than fifty games. Certainly, the Nintendo Gameboy has more games than this, but how many can be considered of the caliber offered by even the weakest of Lynx games. Buying all of the games currently released will easily cost over $1,000. That's why Robert Jung's reviews are so useful. His well-written critiques document the ideas behind a game and inform the reader of the game's strengths and weaknesses.

The first section of The Usenet Lynx Guide contains the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list. The FAQ is a good place to turn for general information about the Lynx.

The second section of this document contains the complete text of Mr. Jung's reviews, with an index that I have created added to the end. The reviews are organized alphabetically, and the page on which they are located is in boldface in the index.

Mr. Jung's scoring system works as follows:

Rating values	10 - 8	Great! A value at the regular price.
	7 - 5	Good. Buy if you're interested or if it's discounted.
	4 - 2	Poor. For die-hards only.
	1	Ick. Shoot it, please.

The third section is the Lynx Cheats guide which offers tips and tricks for a number of the Lynx titles. This list is maintained by myself, so if you have anything to add and have e-mail access, let me know!

Once again, I offer my thanks to Robert Jung for penning these reviews in a timely manner (often within hours of a game hitting the shelves!).

Kevin Dangoor
Internet e-mail: tazzzzz@eecs.umich.edu

Frequently Asked Questions

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 |||  ATARI Lynx "Frequently Asked Questions" File!  Updated: 1/2/93
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Created by Darius Vaskelis, who saw the need and filled it.

Maintained by Robert Jung (rjung@usc.edu)

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This file is not maintained by, overseen by, endorsed, or otherwise associated with Atari Corp. or any of its subsidiaries. It's just a collection of questions and answers, with a few news tidbits thrown in.

This file is posted on a monthly basis, usually around the first of the month. It is maintained by Robert Jung at rjung@usc.edu on USENET. Send corrections, news, updates, comments, questions, or other stuff to that address. All mail is welcome!

Updates since the last publically posted FAQ on rec.games.video have a vertical bar in the first column.

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Q. What is the Atari Lynx?

A. The world's first hand-held color video game system. Sold by Atari, the Lynx offers true multi-player competition, built-in 3D and distortion graphic effects, reversible controls, and fast arcade action for under $100.

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Q. What's the relationship between the Atari Lynx and Epyx?

A. The Lynx was originally conceived by Epyx in 1987. It was called the "Handy" at that time. Two creators of the system, Dave Needle and R.J. Mical, were also members of the Amiga design team. Atari bought the rights, and the rest is history. Epyx is still required by its contract with Atari to provide technical support, which it still does.

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Q. Are Lynx game cards encoded with any encryption scheme?

A. Yes and no. Most of the game card is not encrypted, just a few hundred bytes. The game-card verification system was introduced to enforce game quality, which Epyx perceived as a major threat after looking at what happened to the Atari 2600 (VCS) towards the end. Epyx still performs the encryption of the game cards, using a proprietary encoding system. Epyx makes no judgement on what is encoded, but does everything Atari requests.

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Q. What are the differences between the original Lynx ("Lynx Classic") and the new Lynx ("Lynx II")?

A. The new Lynx is a bit smaller and lighter than the original Lynx. It has a slightly longer battery life, and can also just turn the screen off during a game pause to save batteries. (The original Lynx had a five minute auto-power shut-off that would have prevented this from being useful. It is gone in the new Lynx). A power LED has been added (which also blinks when battery power is low), and cartridges are easier to insert.

The only differences in a technical sense is that the new Lynx has a more efficient internal design, and the headphone jack supports stereo sound. The speaker in new Lynx is also not as loud as the original Lynx, although it's more than adequate for all but the noisiest situations.

Also, the new Lynx can experience what is called "blinking pixel syndrome".

With certain game cards, one pixel on the screen (usually stationary) cycles through all the colors very quickly. It does not affect game play, and isn't always noticed unless it's looked for. It seems to be fixed in later Lynxes, making it even less of a factor.

The power consumption in the new Lynx is only slightly less than in the original Lynx, and is not enough to account for an extra hour of play time. The extra hour is claimed by assuming that the user will turn off the backlight for some of the running time, which could be counted as dead time, not game time.

========== Q. What are the specifications of the Lynx?

A. Physical dimensions:

Size: 9.25" x 4.25" x 2" (10.75" x 4.25" x 1.5" for original Lynx)
Screen: 3.5" diagonal (3.25" x 1.88" approx.)
Speaker: 2" diameter
Buttons: Two sets of fire buttons (A and B)
Two option buttons (OPTION 1 and OPTION 2)
Pause button
(OPTION 1 + Pause = Restarts the game
OPTION 2 + Pause = Flips the screen, which allows the Lynx controls to be reversed)
Power on light (Not on original Lynx; indicates unit is on)
Power on button
Power off button
Backlight button (Not on original Lynx; turns off the screen, but does not turn off the game. This saves electricity use when a game is paused)
Joypad: Eight directional
Controls: Volume
Brightness
Ports: Headphones (mini-DIN 3.5mm stereo, mono on original Lynx)
ComLynx (multi-player)
Power (9V DC, 1 A)
Game card slot
Battery holder (six AA)

For the technically minded, the Lynx has two basic chips that form a cooperative set of co-processing subsystems that maximize the Lynx's performance by sharing the work of executing a game program. These chips are called Mikey and Suzy.

Mikey (16-bit custom CMOS chip running at 16MHz)

- MOS 65C02 processor running at up to 4MHz (~3.6MHz average)

8-bit CPU, 16-bit address space

- Sound engine

4 channel sound

8-bit DAC for each channel

(4 channels x 8-bits/channel = 32 bits commonly quoted) Range of 100Hz to well above the range of human hearing Stereo with panning (mono for original Lynx)

- Video DMA driver for LCD display

- System timers

- Interrupt controller

- UART (for ComLynx)

- 512 bytes of bootstrap and game-card loading ROM

Suzy (16-bit custom CMOS chip running at 16MHz)

- Blitter (bit-map block transfer) unit

- Graphics engine

Hardware drawing support

Unlimited number of high-speed sprites with collision detection Hardware high-speed sprite scaling, distortion, and tilting effects Hardware decoding of compressed sprite data

Hardware clipping and multi-directional scrolling Variable frame rate (up to 75 frames/second) 4096 color (12-bit) palette

16 simultaneous colors (4 bits) from palette at one time

160 x 102 "triad" standard resolution (16,320 addressable pixels) (A triad is three LCD elements: red, green, and blue) Capability of 480 x 102 artificially high resolution

- Math co-processor

Hardware 16-bit multiply and divide (32-bit answer)

Parallel processing of single multiply or divide instruction

The Lynx contains 64K (half a megabit) of 120ns DRAM. Game-cards currently hold 128K (1 megabit) or 256K (2 megabits) of ROM, but there seems to be a capability of up to 2M (16 megabits) on one game-card.

With alkaline batteries, the reasonable average battery life is 5 hours.

(4 hours with the original Lynx) The Lynx can run off rechargeable Ni-Cad batteries, but average battery life drops drastically to 1.5 hours per recharge (1 hour for the original Lynx). Your mileage may vary.

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Q. Why does the Lynx use a 6502 and not a 68000?

A. From R.J. Mical, one of the Lynx's creators:

"Some people believe it's less of a processor than the 68000, for example. That series of chip was used in the Amiga, but it wouldn't make our machine do things any better. In fact, it would only make the unit larger and more expensive. It's also harder to write 68000 code, so we definitely made the right decision.

From Stephen Landrum, an author of portions of the Lynx operating system and of several Lynx games:

"The real answer for the choice for the 6502 vs. 68000 was price. Secondary considerations (that did not really enter into the decision making process): 68000 code is very fat compared to 6502 code. An application that takes 1K of 6502 code averages 2.5 to 3K of 68000 code. The 6502 is very bus-efficient, the 68000 has lots of dead time on the bus. As for it being harder to write 68000 code, that is probably not true, and in any case was not part of the reason the decision was made."

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Q. Is the Lynx an 8-bit or 16-bit system?

A. If 16-bit refers to the main CPU, (such as the Sega Genesis/MegaDrive) then the Lynx is an 8-bit system. If 16-bit refers to the graphics engine, (such as the NEC TurboGraphix-16/PC-Engine) then the Lynx is a 16-bit system.

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Q. What can I use to carry my Lynx game cards?

A. A cheap and easy solution is the plastic cases used to hold trading cards. They're transparent, sturdy, and lock shut when closed. Most hobby and comic book stores will sell them; a large case costs $0.50 to $1.00, and can hold up to 14 Lynx cards.

Another solution are Lynx card wallets. Sold by Realm, a wallet costs $5.95, holds up to 18 cards, padded for protection, and folds flat. Write to Joey Sherman at Realm, 10504 Easum Rd., Louisville KY 40299. On GEnie, send e-mail to REALM.

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Q. What other accessories exist for the Lynx?

A. The following products are known to be available:

- ComLynx cable. Connects multiple Lynxes together for multiplayer games.
- AC adaptor. Powers the Lynx from any AC wall socket.
- Cigarette lighter adaptor. Powers the Lynx from any automobile cigarette lighter. Will support one or two Lynxes simultaneously.
- Atari Lynx Sun Shield. Folds down to protect the Lynx screen, and pops open to shade the Lynx screen from sunlight for outdoor play. (NOTE: There are two models; you need the one appropriate for your Lynx)
- D-cell battery pack. Holds six D-cell batteries, and can be attached with a belt clip. Alkaline batteries provides power for up to 20 hours of playing.
- Atari Lynx carrying pouch. Holds a Lynx, several game cards, and a ComLynx cable. Attaches with a wrist strap/belt loop.
- Atari Lynx Kit Case. Holds a Lynx, up to 24 game cards, and assorted accessories. Padded interior with Velcro dividers, can be customized. Carried with a handle or a shoulder strap.

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Q. What do I get when I buy a Lynx?

A. The Lynx is available in two packages:

The Lynx "Deluxe Package" costs $129.95. It includes the Lynx unit, a copy of the CALIFORNIA GAMES game card, a carrying case, a ComLynx cable, and six AA Alkaline batteries.

The Lynx "Base Package" costs $89.95. It comes with only the Lynx, and includes no accessories.

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Q. Is there a TV tuner option for the Lynx?

A. No. Atari's official position is that market research shows that a TV tuner, while a neat idea, would not be bought by most players. The unofficial word from Stephen Landrum is that the Lynx screen display is not capable of handling a broadcast television picture.

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Q. Do all players "Lynxed"-up via ComLynx need a copy of the game being played?

A. Yes. All players need a copy of the game card.

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Q. What's the ComLynx port like?

A. There is limit of 18 players via ComLynx. In practice it may be possible to connect more units together, but to operate within specifications, the drivers in the Lynx cannot drive over more than 17 units with pull-ups on the serial ports.

ComLynx runs from 300.5 to 62.5K baud. It works on a "listen and send" structure. Data transmission between Lynxes is done in the background, freeing up the CPU to run the game instead of communicating. It's called "RedEye" in-house at Atari, named after an early idea of having Lynxes communicate with infra-red transmissions.

It uses a three-wire cable (+5V/Ground/Data) and allows for bi-directional serial communications. The system frames messages in terms of 11-bit words, each consisting of a start bit, eight data bits, a parity bit, and a stop bit. The ComLynx port is used solely for communications; it can't be used to control other aspects of the Lynx, though in theory it can be used to send signals to external devices.

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Q. Sometimes a multiplayer ComLynx game will freeze up. Why?

A. A ComLynxed game will freeze if communication between the Lynxes is interrupted. If communications can be restored, the game will continue. The most common cause of this problem is a fray in one of the ComLynx cables, or a loose seating in one of the ComLynx jacks. Communication is broken, and the game "freezes". Jiggling the cable or reseating the jacks may fix the solution temporarily, but the best cure is a new cable.

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Q. What are all of the current Lynx games available in the United States?

A. Current Lynx Games List (The notation "(x)" means to refer to footnote number x):

Title	Stereo	Players	Description
A.P.B.	no	1	Patrol the city and look for felons
Awesome Golf	no	1-4	Go for par on three 18-hole courses
Baseball Heroes	no	1-2	The all-American sport for one or two
Basketbrawl	no	1-2	Shoot hoops and slash opponents
Batman Returns	no	1	The Dark Knight Returns again
Block Out	no	1	Three-dimensional Tetris
Blue Lightning	no	1	High-speed jet combat
Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure	no	1-2	A non-heinous adventure through time
California Games	no	1-4(1)	Harmless fun in the sun and sand
Checkered Flag	yes	1-6	High-performance Indy auto racing
Chip's Challenge	no	1	144 block-pushing puzzles
Crystal Mines II	no	1	180 dirt-digging mining puzzles
Dirty Larry: Renegade Cop	yes	1	Blow away the punks and scum
Dracula the Undead	no	1	Escape from the Count's castle
Electrocop	no	1	3-D rescue adventure
Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge	no	1-2(2)	Kings, queens, and pawns on the go
Gates of Zendocon	no	1	Side scrolling space shooter
Gauntlet: The Third Encounter	no	1-4	Fight through dungeons for a gem
Hard Drivin'	no	1	Stunt and speed driving simulator
Hockey	no	1-2	Hot action on the cold ice
Hydra	no	1	Pilot a flying boat over the seas
Ishido: The Way of the Stones	no	1-n(4)	Place colored tiles in matching sets
Joust	no	1-2	Air warfare on the back of an ostrich
Klax	yes	1	Catch and position color tiles
Kung Food	no	1	Bouts and routs in the refrigerator
Lynx Casino	no	1-2	Try to beat the odds the safe way
Ms. Pac-Man	no	1	Run the mazes and eat the dots
NFL Football	no	1-2	Pigskin action with real teams
Ninja Gaiden	no	1	Martial arts in the big city
Pac-Land	no	1-2(2)	Run and jump through Pac-Land
Paperboy	no	1	Deliver newspapers to keep your job
Pinball Jam	no	2	Two real-life pinballs on one card
Qix	no	1-2(2)	Draw lines and trap the helix
Rampage	no	1-4	Ravage cities as a giant monster
Rampart	no	1-2	Build a castle and defend it
Road Blasters	yes	1	Auto racing with guns and rockets
Robo-Squash	yes(3)	1-2	3D racquetball
Robotron:2084	yes	1	Save the humans from robots
Rygar	no	1	Run and battle beasts of the land

Scrapyard Dog	no	1	Run and jump to rescue your pet
Shadow of the Beast	no	1	Explore and fight the Beast Lord
Shanghai	no	1-2	Remove all of the tiles
Steel Talons	no	1	Helicopter combat flight simulator
S.T.U.N. Runner	no	1	3-D tunnel warfare at 700mph
Super Skweek	no	1-2	Paint tiles to save the day
Switchblade II	no	1	Slash through Havok's forces of evil
Todd's Adventures in Slime World	no	1-8	Explore slimy caves for treasure
Toki	no	1	A spitting monkey saves the day?
Tournament Cyberball: 2072	no	1-4	Futuristic robot football
Turbo Sub	no	1-2(4)	3-D shooter in the sea and air
Viking Child	no	1	Jump and fight to save your family
Warbirds	no	1-4	WWI biplane flight/combat simulator
World Class Soccer	no	1-2	Soccer with 100 international teams
Xenophobe	yes	1-4	Destroy aliens in the space stations
Xybots	no	1-2	Destroy robots in a 3-D maze
Zarlor Mercenary	no	1-4	Shoot enemies for big bucks

Footnotes:

(1) Manual says 1-2 players, 1-4 is possible
(2) Multiple players on one Lynx, alternating turns.
(3) Stereo sound does not match game action.
(4) Players can compare scores, but not interact directly

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Q. What are some of the upcoming Lynx games?

A. Upcoming Lynx Games List:

Note: This list is hardly definitive. It's based on many sources, and in some cases, it just might be dead wrong. Games also often change from pre-release to production.

Title	Players	Description
Aliens v. Predator	1?	Two mean monsters, head-to-head!
Battlezone 2000	1-2	Update of the classic tank battle
Blood & Guts Hockey	1-2	Hockey with the violence knob turned up
Cabal	1-2	Shoot for your country and your freedom
Cards	1?	Cribbage, Gin, and Solitaire
Daemonsgate I	1?	Fantasy role-playing
Defender/Stargate/Defender II	1?	The arcade classics from Williams
Dinolympics	1	Use your brain and lead your cave clan
Double Dragon	1-2	Street fighting game
Eye of the Beholder	1	First-person dungeon-exploring adventure
European Tournament Soccer	1-2?	Realistic soccer action through Europe
Full Court Press Basketball	1-2	Fast action basketball
Gordo 106	?	???
The Guardians: Storm Over Doria	1-4	Large scale role playing-type game
Heavyweight Contender	1-2	First-person boxing action
Jimmy Connors Bad Boy Tennis	1-2	Hit a ball over a net, while Connors comments
Krazy Ace Minature Golf	1-4	Putt for par against zany obstacles. Comes with course construction kit
Lemmings	1-2	Save the green haired dudes
Malibu Beach Volleyball	1-2	Ball-bouncing fun on the beach
Ninja Gaiden III: Ancient Ship of Doom	1-2?	Sequel to the martial arts game
Ninja Nerd	1	Time-travelling, nerds, and ninjas
Operation Desert Storm	1	The UN vs. Saddam!
Outpost Mars	?	???

Pit Fighter	1-2	Fight in the underworld arenas
Power Force	?	???
R.C. Destruction Derby	1-4	Radio-controlled car-blasting
Rabbit Quest	?	???
Relief Pitcher	1-2	Realistic baseball action from the arcade
Rai-Den	1-2	You vs. the aliens in a scrolling shooter
Road Riot 4WD	1-2	Off-roading mania with a stun gun!
Rolling Thunder	1	One agent against the evil empire
720 degrees	1	Skateboarding for fame and profit
Spacewar	1-2?	Warfare in the final frontier
Spot: The Video Game	?	7Up's mascot goes on an adventure
Starship	?	???
Strider II	1	Run, jump, swordfight the techo-enemies
Super Asteroids & Missile Command	1?	Two updated classics on one game-card
Super Off-Road	1-4	Off-road racing on the Lynx
Ultra Star Raiders	1?	Enhanced version of the computer classic
Vindicators	1-2	Use your tank to destroy space stations

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Q. My Lynx screen is badly scratched! How can I fix it, what can I do?

A. Get some "plastic scratch remover" or "plexiglass scratch remover". You can find it in hardware stores, or look in your Yellow Pages under "Plastics."

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Q. Agh! My Lynx is broken! How can I fix it?

A. For $50, plus $5 shipping and handling, and your old/broken Lynx, Atari will repair it or replace it with a new Lynx II unit.

Send your Lynx to: Lynx repair service, Atari Computer Corporation, 390 Caribbean Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94088

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Q. Where can I get a review and/or comments about <insert game name here>?

A. Robert Jung has written detailed reviews for every Lynx game ever released. They are available on-line at the Cleveland Free-net's Lynx Support Section (see below). If you cannot reach the Free-net, you can contact Robert at rjung@usc.edu on USENET.

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Q. Where can I find secrets, tips, and hints for <insert game name here>?

A. Kevin Dangoor maintains a comprehensive list of Lynx cheats, secrets, and tricks. He will accept new tricks and tips, and the file is periodically posted to rec.games.video. Contact Kevin at Tazzzzz@eecs.umich.edu on the Internet.

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Q. How can I reach Atari Corp.?

A. Customer Service:(408) 745-2000

Mailing Address: Atari Corp.

1196 Borregas Avenue

Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1302

The Lynx hot-line in Chicago ((708) CRY-LYNX, a.k.a. (708) 279-5969), appears to have been disconnected. This is probably due to Atari moving their offices from Chicago to Sunnyvale. No new number is known at this time.

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Q. What are other sources for Lynx information?

A. Publications:

A.P.E. Newsletter 2104 N. Kostner Chicago, IL 60639 GEnie: C.SMITH89	Dedicated Lynx newsletter ("A.P.E." stands for "Atari Portable Entertainment"). Write to Clinton Smith. Published five times p cost is $6.00/year.
Atari Explorer P.O. Box 6488 Duluth, MN 55806	Atari's official magazine. Lynx information is periodic, but ofter and biased.
AtariUser 249 N. Brand Boulevard, Suite 332 Glendale, CA 91203	Atari-oriented magazine. Lynx news and reviews on a regular ba Subscription is $15 a year (12 issues), free at newsstands.
Die Hard Game Fan 18612 Ventura Blvd. Tarzana, CA 91356	General video-gaming magazine with some Lynx coverage.
Electronic Gaming Monthly 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222 Lombard, IL 60148	General video-gaming magazine with some Lynx coverage. Will screen shots and reports of new games before other publications.
Gamemaster Gamemaster Computer Publications Ltd. P.O. Box 2224 Arvada, CO 80001-2224	Dedicated specifically to the Lynx, including reviews, tips, and buy/sell/trade activity. 10 issues/year for $10, free sample issue a on request. (303) 423-6805
Gamepro P.O. Box 3329 Redwood City, CA 94064	General video-gaming magazine with some Lynx coverage.
On Target 18C Boyle Avenue Cumberland, RI 02864-2306	Dedicated specifically to the Lynx, including reviews, tips, and buy/sell/trade activity. Bi-monthly, $4/year, checks to "Matthew Szewczyk", (401) 658-3917 and talk to Matt.
Portable Atari Gaming System P.O. Box 37692 Raleigh, NC 27627-7692 GEnie: E.SCHOFIELD	PAGS is a quarterly newsletter with reviews, editorials, news & i gaming tips. One year costs $12.00.
Video Games & Computer Entertainment 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300 Beverly Hills, CA 90210	General video-gaming and computer-gaming magazine. Lynx ne in news articles and in the dedicated portable-gaming column.
Usenet newsgroup: rec.games.video alt.games.lynx	often contains Lynx reviews and discussions Lynx-related discussions, often crossposted to rec.games.video
Internet FTP sites: atari.archive.umich.edu or terminator.cc.umich.edu (141.211.164.8)	/pub/atari/portadd has back-issues of Portable Addiction, a news about the Atari Lynx, Sega Game Gear, and Atari Portfolio. Sub sending a note to tjerk@nikhef.nl. /pub/atari/misc contains lynx.txt.Z, a compressed file with som roundtable discussions on the Lynx.
Internet TELNET site: Cleveland Free-net AtariSIG freenet-in-a.cwru.edu or cwns16.ins.cwru.edu (129.22.8.82) freenet-in-b.cwru.edu or cwns9.ins.cwru.edu (129.22.8.75) freenet-in-c.cwru.edu or cwns10.ins.cwru.edu (129.22.8.76)	You can log on as a visitor to explore the system. At the opening ("Please enter 1 or 2:"), enter "2" to log in as a visitor. At the nex enter "2" again to explore the system. You will then read an oper disclaimer and a login bulletin, then be sent to the main Freenet Once inside, type "go lynx". Follow the menus to read Lynx-relat discussions and reviews.

BBS:

Star-Linx BBS
(602) 464-4817, 300/1200/2400 bps
Video Game Information Service.

It's located in Mesa, Arizona (USA) and has a Lynx Club. Be sur your California Games game-card handy when you call to gain h access.

(201) 509-7324, 300/1200/2400/9600/14400 bps. Multiple lines

Located in West Orange, New Jersy (USA). The BBS is complete dedicated to video gaming, and maintains files of cheats and revi all game systems. Carries video-game-related conferences from c computer networks, including Fidonet, Worldnet, and Globalnet.

Online services:

- GEnie Atari ST Roundtable BBS, Category 36
- CompuServe, Lynx Data Library and Message Group, in the ATARI8 forum. Reviews, discussions, tips, and a monthly contest.(Type "GO ATARI8", and join the forum)

International clubs:

Germany: Internationaler Lynx Club
Hans-Jorg Sebastian
Siegfriedstr. 3
3684 Schmitten 3
Germany

Netherlands: International Lynx Club
Leon Stolk
Vanenburg 2
7339 DN Ugchelen
The Netherlands

Austria: Internationaler Lynx Club
Christian Lenikus
Obertraun 27
4831 Obertraun
Austria

Switzerland: Swiss-Lynx-Info-Club
Eugene Rodel
Sangeliweg 45
4900 Langenthal
Switzerland

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Q. How do I disassemble my Lynx II (assuming I want to)?

A. The original Lynxes were easy to take apart, for whatever reason you needed. The new Lynx IIs are more puzzling, but not impossible. The following set of (edited) instructions are provided by Ken Small (kens@umich.edu):

"It's not hard, but there are a lot of fragile pieces and the electronics are sensitive to all the things that electronics are usually sensitive to, like static. PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK.

"First, remove the rubber pads from the bottom of the Lynx. They're glued on, but they peel off pretty easily. Beneath them are screw holes -- remove them. Note that it's *very* easy to tell if your lynx has been opened, since you leave holes in the glue stuff. Take off the back of the case.

"Remove the screw located inside the battery area. Be careful when replacing this; it can strip easily. Mine is stripped, but the rest of the case holds the battery bay in place. Remove the battery bay piece.

"You will see a circuit board with a couple of wires and circuit ribbons attached to it. Carefully unplug all of these. The ribbon in particular seems flimsy. Do not puncture or otherwise damage it. Remove the circuit board.

"Beneath the circuit board is an assembly screwed to the inside of the case, which contains the screen, button contacts and buttons. A warning when unscrewing this-- the are LOTS of small pieces in here, and they're particular about how they go back in. In particular, be careful about the A/B buttons, which are slightly different sizes, and the rubber mat around the LCD screen, which has nothing to hold it in place.

"The last thing is the joypad contact itself. This is a small rubber mat held in place by a snap-on piece of plastic. You can carefully remove the plastic to get under the apron, where the contacts can be cleaned. Clean in-between the contacts, being careful not to abrase the contacts themselves. They look like half-circles with a small (half-millimeter or less) space between. Grunge between them can register an intermittent false contact, which looks to the player like the joypad is being quickly, repeatedly pressed in one direction."

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Q. What's the Lynx developer's kit like?

A. Hardware:

- Commodore Amiga computer: 3M RAM and hard disk.
- "Howard" board: A parallel-interface module that has the electronics of the Lynx, also with debugging tools. A large PC board inside of a metal case with power supply, and connections on the back for cable to connect to the Amiga, and to the "Howdy" unit.
- "Howdy" unit: A small PC board in a plastic case with buttons and a Lynx display, and a cable that connects to the "Howard" board.

Software:

- Handy-Bug: A powerful symbolic debugger, also contains a disassembler.
- Handicraft: Graphics translator that takes IFF files and turns them into coded Lynx sprite definitions.
- HSFX: Sound editor
- Macro libraries
- Example programs
- Notebook of system documentation ("about 3 1/2 inches thick... we've stopped counting pages") plus updates

A full Lynx Developer's Kit currently costs around $5,000.

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Reviews

A.P.B.

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Meet Officer Bob. He just graduated the other day from the Police Academy, and is now ready to serve and protect. It's not an easy assignment; his sergeant is a real hothead, and the slightest mistakes will get Bob into trouble. Still, if Bob works hard and plays it straight, he may someday make chief. But that's in the future; Bob has to go to work now -- after he gets a donut. Preferably chocolate.

A.P.B. for the Atari Lynx is an adaptation of the cartoony arcade game of the same name. You play Officer Bob, who patrols the big city in his squad car. Every day, you must catch criminals big and small, while avoiding demerits for actions unbecoming an officer. If you get too many demerits, you are fired (rather painfully, too), though you can erase demerits by hard work. Along your career, you will have chances to earn extra rewards, upgrade your patrol gear, and maybe someday make the big catch.

GAMEPLAY

Fans of the arcade A.P.B. will be pleased with the Lynx adaptation, as all of the whimsy and almost all of the original features are translated intact. At the start of each day, you are given a quota of traffic violators, from litterbugs to speeders, to arrest. On certain days, an A.P.B. (all-point bulletin) of an especially dangerous criminal is issued; capturing this suspect is worth more points. Failure to either arrest the A.P.B. or meet your quota will bring the sergeant's wrath, and earn more demerits.

The actual patrol takes place on a vast overhead city map that scrolls in 360 degrees. Violators submit easily and can be ticketed by pointing your crosshairs and sounding the siren, but the criminals will put up a fight, and require a chase to take down. Between arrests, you must keep your car filled with gas, grab donuts for more time, and look for various bonuses. Hints and tips will periodically scroll across the screen, giving warnings, game advice, or what mistake you just performed. In all, there is a total of about 30+ levels to play, which keeps this game fresh for a long time.

There are a few flaws with the game, however. First, button "B" is used as the accelerator; this means there is no fine speed control, and makes using the siren (button "A") while driving tricky. Second, the arcade bonus sequence, where you take a captured A.P.B. criminal and try to extract a confession, has been removed. Finally, the Lynx version is more sensitive to collisions than the arcade. If you are moving and touch another car when the siren is off, that counts as a demerit against you, regardless of which driver is at fault. While these problems are mostly minor, they do detract from the game somewhat.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sights and sound of A.P.B. are very well done and entertaining. The graphics, while not always identical to the arcade versions, are distinctive, detailed, and appropriately silly. The 360-degree scrolling is very smooth, and even the cartoon sequences remain intact. Sounds are equally impressive; the music is identical to the arcade, while car honks and other sounds are realistically rendered. Then there are all the digitized voices, slightly scratchy, but very well done: cries for help, complaints from arrested violators, and the sergeant's incomprehensible mumbling when he congratulates you on a day well done.

SUMMARY

A.P.B. on the Lynx is a decent adaptation of the original game, and offers a refreshing variety to video gaming. The gameplay is fair, and is enhanced by some very appropriate and entertaining sound and graphics. For people hooked on the arcade title, and players interested in a slightly silly change of pace, Officer Bob is waiting with a box of donuts.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**9.0**

OVERALL	**8.5**

AWESOME GOLF

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Forget those 5:00am tee-offs, with AWESOME GOLF you can now play the links on the Lynx. This is a fully loaded golf game, offering three courses filled with obstacles, and enough challenge to keep you busy. Chipper the chipmunk will be your caddy and scorekeeper, so pick your club, and please replace your divots.

You can play on one of three imaginary courses, for a 9-hole or an 18-hole game. Up to four players can ComLynx together, practice on individual holes, or work on a driving range. Each hole beings with an overhead map, where you can aim your shot as well as scroll and zoom as desired. Fourteen clubs are available: three woods, eight irons, two wedges, and a putter. Finally, you take swing, hopefully staying on the fairway and avoiding the hazards.

GAMEPLAY

AWESOME GOLF is a straight, no-nonsense implementation of the game, with many features and game options. A game can feature three different wind levels, while the properties of terrain and the slope of the green must be kept in mind. Distances to the hole are always available, and each club's range, usage, and effect on the ball are accurately duplicated. Strokes are done with a power bar using three button presses: The first press starts the swing, the second press sets the strength, and the third press determines hook and slice. Finally, you can select the clothing, race and sex of your video duffer, though the only major effect is that women golfers tee off closer to the hole.

There's not much else to be said -- AWESOME GOLF plays golf, and plays it well. As in real golf, the key to winning is a good strategy and a good technique. The game is helpful without being pandering; players can set individual handicaps, hints on clubs and aim are available to beginners, and the driving range reports statistics on your swing. The only gripe is with the multiplayer option. You must ComLynx to play against other people, though the game could have been designed to support multiple players on one Lynx. It's a trivial point, but one worth mentioning.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Graphics on AWESOME GOLF are a combination of detailed realism and light humor. Shots are seen from behind your player, and the ball's flight is viewed from overhead, all done with quality animation, detailed backgrounds, and smooth scrolling and scaling. Finally, cartoon stills highlight events such as bogeys, penalties, and birdies. On the sound side, AWESOME GOLF is fairly quiet, using short chimes to indicate selections and decisions. To spice things up, Chipper's high-pitched voice is peppered throughout, congratulating good strokes, laughing at blunders, and making remarks everywhere.

SUMMARY

Between CHECKERED FLAG and AWESOME GOLF, the Lynx is shaping up to be a serious video sports system. This game captures the intricacies of the sport, while offering enough extras to enhance its appeal, though playing with friends can be a hassle. If golf is your game, AWESOME GOLF should not be missed.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**9.0**

BASEBALL HEROES

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

With Atari finally increasing the number of sports titles for their Lynx game system, the only real question was how long it'd take for them to release a baseball title. Now there's BASEBALL HEROES, a portable video version of the American pastime. One or two coaches pick from four fictitious teams, each with 20 players (two in each position and four pitchers) rated in various attributes. Before a game, you select a team, assemble a squad of nine men, and arrange a batting order. They then take to the field, trying to score the most runs possible in nine innings. A single exhibition game is possible, or you can play a multiple-game "Final League" challenge. Between games, practice in batting and fielding is available with the "Home Run Derby" and "Three Flies Out" games.

GAMEPLAY

This is one of the more ambitious Lynx sports games out now; BASEBALL HEROES tries some new ideas and to push the boundaries of portable gaming, and partially succeeds. The ability to select your players and adjust the lineup is welcome, but you must decide carefully, since there's no way to change either once the game starts. A wide variety of views are used, according to the situation: behind the batter, behind the pitcher, three-quarters overhead, directly overhead, and from the outfield fence, giving this game a real "you are there" feeling.

The actual gameplay is respectable: infield players cover each other, and dives and jumps for the ball are fully supported. Batters can swing high and low, inside and out, while pitchers can steer the four stock pitches for variety. Common baseball rules and events are supported, including beaning the batter and wild pitches. The computer opponent is challenging but not completely perfect, leaving some opportunities for crafty players to exploit.

BASEBALL HEROES is not without problems, however. The worst offender is the fielding, which starts with an overhead view, then switches to a "behind the outfielder" angle on the ball's descent. This makes judging the ball's location difficult, and requires lots of practice to master. Also, some of the controls are a little quirky, such as using the same button to throw and jump, and the slow swing times of the batters. There's nothing that makes the game unplayable, but they do detract a bit.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on BASEBALL HEROES are simply delightful. There's great use of animation, including little details like the umpire hunching down for each pitch. The batter and pitcher views feature gigantic characters that fill the screen, while the fielding scenes use small but manageable players running about. Even the player selection and lineup sequences are entertaining, with "trading cards" used to select and rearrange your team members, and fanciful logos for each team.

The only music in the game comes from the title theme and a few simple tunes. The remaining sounds consist largely of digitized effects of caught balls, the crack of the bat, and the umpire's calls. Though the umpire's "strike!" is unrecognizable, and the crowd falls silent too quickly, the sound effects are fine overall.

SUMMARY

BASEBALL HEROES is a very good translation of the sport, though not a perfect game. It has a few rough spots that will try some people, but for the most part this is a quality title and a showcase game for the Lynx.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**8.0**
OVERALL	**8.0**

BASKETBRAWL

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

For some reason, combining basketball with violence is a popular video game trend -- look at ARCH RIVALS, BILL LAIMBEER'S COMBAT BASKETBALL, or PUNKSHOT. Now there's BASKETBRAWL, a Lynx version of the Atari 7800 title, with a very similar theme. You pick your character from a fixed pool of players, each rated according to skills and health. You then play against the other team, trying to score more points before the six-minute clock runs out.

Aside from this, anything goes. Players must fight, stab, and mutilate their opponents for the ball, while spectators attack anyone who get too close. Weapons and power-up icons appear on the field, giving temporary benefits such as speed or renewed health. Your ultimate goal is to beat five other local gangs and win the championship. A password allows you to continue from a later point, while two players can ComLynx together for a team-up against the town.

GAMEPLAY

Sadly, when BASKETBRAWL took away the rules, it also took away the fun. The problem is that neither the brawling nor the basketball aspects of this game are done well. Shooting consists of jabbing Button A and praying the ball goes in. Fight moves are limited, aiming attacks is difficult, and weapon effects have little variety. Defense is nonexistent; you can't block shots or passes, steal the ball, or resist enemy attacks. The basketball action is constantly disrupted by fights, and fight fans have to stop and score points to keep the game going.

The overall pace is frantic and confusing. You play three times against each team, first with one opponent and working up to three. Two spectators enter the field and attack players for no reason, and a third throws knives at everyone. The control buttons are used to attack, kick, shoot, and throw, depending on who has possession. But it's difficult to tell when you have the ball, and you may throw it away when you were planning to attack. In the end, there's a lot of frenzied button-pressing but very little satisfaction.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Sights and sounds in BASKETBRAWL do little to enhance its appeal. While backgrounds are sufficiently detailed, the main game graphics are simple, crude, and poorly animated. Throw in a very choppy side-to-side scrolling, and game looks like a relic from the Atari 2600. The title theme music is very catchy, but the other game sounds are primitive and dull.

SUMMARY

BASKETBRAWL takes an idea loaded with potential, then removes most of the excitement by combining weak sports action and weak combat action. The only thing to do is to wait a while longer for an authentic basketball game; Lynx owners may be eager for sports titles, but they're not desperate.

GAMEPLAY	**4.0**
GRAPHICS	**4.0**
SOUND	**5.0**
OVERALL	**4.0**

BATMAN RETURNS

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Yes, Bruce Wayne's back, in this Lynx license of the 1992 hot summer movie with Keaton, Pfeiffer, and DeVito. Catwoman and the Penguin have formed an alliance, and their plan is to defame Batman and place themselves in political power. Now Batman must save both the town and his reputation, while bringing in his opponents for their punishment.

Closely mirroring the movie's plot, BATMAN RETURNS makes you the defender of Gotham City, as you run, jump, and fight through four scrolling levels. Your enemies are a motley crew of thugs, police, and penguins, while you fight back with Batarangs, acid vials, and your fists. Even with battle armor, Batman is a frail creature with limited health; if he takes too much damage, the game ends.

GAMEPLAY

As the description implies, BATMAN RETURNS is an action-arcade game in the traditional run/jump style. You have a limited amount of Batarangs and acid vials, though icons throughout the game give more equipment and health. While the general location of enemies is fixed, their actions and appearances are not, making patterns impossible.

This is a hard game, as the deck is clearly stacked against the player. You have one life, no continues, and no passwords to defeat a seemingly endless number of opponents and their various attacks. Though four levels might not sound like much, each level is dozens of screens large, and the high difficulty of this game will make finishing the first stage a major accomplishment.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on BATMAN RETURNS can do no wrong. Gotham City on the Lynx perfectly captures the unique architecture and moody atmosphere of the movie. The enemies are distinctive and easily identified, and Batman's acrobatic flips and cape-flapping jumps are among the best effects ever on a Lynx. A pulsating theme music plays in the background, while the majority of game sounds are recognizable but not noteworthy.

SUMMARY

BATMAN RETURNS is a respectable action game, and the Lynx version would be equally enjoyable on any other platform. It offers solid action and a serious challenge wrapped up in a hot license, making a package that's guaranteed to sell more Lynxes.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**6.5**
OVERALL	**8.0**

BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Who says Death doesn't bear grudges? In retaliation for getting "Melvined" in the second movie, the Grim Reaper has kidnapped Bill and Ted's girlfriends/wives/better halves, the Princess Babes. The ladies were smart, though; during their abduction, they scattered sheet music from the band's latest song along the path. Now the two guitarists from San Dimas must follow this musical trail through time and space, and carry out a rescue before the next Wyld Stallyns concert.

BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE on the Atari Lynx is really a combination action/adventure game. As either Bill or Ted, you must follow the time trail in your interdimensional phone booth. Each area is a maze-like scrolling landscape, viewed from an overhead perspective, and protected by roaming creatures. Your basic goal is to collect enough musical notes, which reveals more pages of the phone book, which enables you to travel to other eras. Along the way, you will find objects and meet assorted historic figures, who ask for favors. Help them, and they return your generosity with further aid. For more fun, two players can ComLynx together and go traveling together.

GAMEPLAY

It is the adventure portions of BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE where the game shines. Many of the puzzles must be solved by taking an item from one time period and using it in another. Furthermore, time paradoxes are possible and must be avoided. For example, if you find a note to yourself that a later version of you has written, you must be sure to go and leave that note, in an earlier time

period, later in the game, for you to find in the future (get it?). The puzzles are robust and challenging, and solutions rely on finding the right object for the right situation.

Like the movies themselves, this Lynx adventure emphasizes silly fun and non-violence. The guys do not carry weapons, but can subdue certain enemies by playing the right musical instruments. Similarly, Bill and Ted can never die. If you are caught by a creature, you are sent back to an earlier position, no worse for wear. The only problem is that the game can occasionally become tedious. In tight spots, you may need several tries to get pass the random monsters. Since the game can take a long time to finish, a detailed password system is offered. Unlike other Lynx games, this is a true game save feature, encoding your current score, location, and inventory.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sights and sounds are serviceable, but not much more. Game graphics are done in a recognizable, cartoony style, with a moderate number of animation. There is also good use of color and detail, especially the subtle changes in the same lands across different eras. Sounds are not really needed, but the ones present are basic. Background rock music plays according to your current time period, but if they become irritating, you can shut them off with the Option 2 button.

SUMMARY

How you feel about the Bill and Ted movies should not be a factor, as this game is an enjoyable package. It has a fair amount of action with lots of rock-solid puzzle solving, and the addition of time travel offers even more gaming potential. Though the sound and graphics are not extraordinary, in the end BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE earns its name.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**8.0**

BLOCKOUT

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Based on the original computer game by California Dreams, BLOCKOUT for the Atari Lynx is clearly inspired by TETRIS. As in TETRIS, the object is to rotate and position oddly-shaped blocks into a pit, dropping them so that the pieces interlock. When a level is filled, the blocks in it are removed, giving more space for more pieces. The longer the game lasts, the faster pieces fall, until there's no room left to maneuver.

BLOCKOUT differs from TETRIS, though, by using all three dimensions. Pieces can be rotated around all three axes, the pit can be of variable size and depth, and the pieces can come in very strange shapes. Naturally, all these features add to the complexity and challenge.

GAMEPLAY

As in the original BLOCKOUT, emphasis is placed on gameplay over frills. The game screen is non-nonsense, showing the pit, its contents, and the current piece to be placed. A level indicator color-matches the layers in the pit, and shows the depth of the current piece. Your score, the high score for the current setup, the game settings and difficulty are also shown. Points are scored based on the shape of the pieces and the height they're dropped from.

BLOCKOUT is very friendly and playable, one of those games that takes 30 seconds to learn and a long time to put down. The only hitch is in the controls; X and Y rotations can be done in any direction, but Z rotations can only be counterclockwise. Still, this is a minor nuisance, and the game is still fun regardless.

Several options let you customize the game. The pit size and rotation speed of the pieces are selectable, and sounds can be toggled. Blocks can be either flat, simple 3D, or a manic extended collection. Finally, you can start playing from any of 10 speeds, though the longer you play, the faster it gets. A practice mode, game demo and controls screen makes learning painless.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Graphics in BLOCKOUT are appealing, though minimal. The colors and graphics are distinctive enough to let you know what's happening at a glance, and watching the wire-frame pieces rotate is nice. Except for a little music between games, the sound may as well be turned off.

SUMMARY

This is a nice, addictive, no-nonsense strategy game. Without any patterns to memorize and several options to choose from, BLOCKOUT will keep its freshness for quite some time. If you thought TETRIS was too simple, give this title a try.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**
GRAPHICS	**7.5**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**8.0**

BLUE LIGHTNING

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

You just can't help yourself. Even in the midst of war, with the enemy's overwhelming air power, with the Air Force's best pilots gunned down like ducks, you just can't resist the urge to goof off whenever you take to the air. But now Central Command gets its revenge: the Blue Lightning, an advanced fighter jet, has been developed to the experimental design stage. The top brass needs it, but doesn't want to risk the lives of their remaining competent pilots. Guess who's deemed expendable enough to field-test a flying prototype in the heat of battle?

Witty storyline aside, BLUE LIGHTNING for the Atari Lynx is a first-person air combat game in the AFTERBURNER tradition. The action is seen from directly behind your plane as it dives and banks through nine missions. Barrel rolls can be used to dodge enemy attacks, and a ten-second afterburner burst provides extra speed. The Lightning is equipped with forty missiles and an unlimited supply of cannon fire, which are used to attack enemy jets and targets. A password for each stage allows you to start at later levels, and the game ends when you finish the ninth mission or use up all six lives. The only danger comes from collisions -- crash into a tree, a canyon wall, or an incoming missile, and kiss another life goodbye.

GAMEPLAY

BLUE LIGHTNING strikes a perfect balance between respectable difficulty and reasonable gameplay. The action does not go at supersonic speeds, but proceeds at a brisk pace, and the result is that you never feel "cheated" from being destroyed by something too fast to be seen or overwhelmed with inhuman odds. The terrain and the placement of the enemy are somewhat random, which prevents the game from being solved by pattern development. The game starts off easy enough, but adds more threats at a gradual rate, and you're drawn completely into the action before long.

If there is a flaw, it's that the missions are not varied enough, as many of the levels involve destroying various ground targets. To compensate, most stages add extra rules to complicate matters -- For example, level 4 requires you to destroy tanks while travelling through a twisty canyon, and you cannot o high enough to fly over the rock walls. There are also a few minor nits: the aim of the guns feels a little off, and enemy missiles can go through the terrain, but these are easily adapted to and do not hamper the gameplay.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

One major contribution to the appeal of BLUE LIGHTNING is the game's graphics: There's a lot of incredibly diverse stuff moving on-screen at once. From the flight crew that preps the plane to the sheer number of terrain and targets to see, the game graphics never feel dull. Especially impressive are the dancing paths of the enemy's manta-like fighters and the graceful arcs left by the vapor trails of the missiles. The Lynx's sprite engine is heavily used, with specks on the horizon growing into hills and mesas, and flat lands rendered with realistic disappearing perspectives.

There aren't a lot of different game sounds, but each one is properly suited to its situation. The most persistent noise is the roar of the jet engines, which is punctuated by cannon fire, flying missiles, the warning beep of incoming attacks, and lots of explosions.

SUMMARY

It's very refreshing to see a game that's a challenge without resorting to tricks or gimmicks. Success or failure in BLUE LIGHTNING is completely based on the player's skill, and the game is recommended for all action players. Though the levels could use a little more variety, the user-friendly gameplay and the sensational graphics make this title a blue-ribbon winner.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**9.0**

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

So you want fun in the sun without the hassles of zinc oxide, crowded beaches, and the risk of skin cancer? Well, the Surgeon General has certified CALIFORNIA GAMES for the Atari Lynx as a completely safe way to get your sand-coated jollies. This is an adaptation of the Epyx home computer game, and allows one to four players to compete in a number of "sport" contests for points and bragging rights.

(Sidebar: The instruction manual says that CALIFORNIA GAMES only allows for 1 or 2 players. ComLynxing three or four players is possible, but tricky -- don't give up if it doesn't work initially)

There are four events in CALIFORNIA GAMES. The BMX bike race is a run through a hilly, obstacle-infested course as fast as possible. Surfing lets you hit the waves, doing stunts like riding the tube or 360-degree spins before running out of time. Similarly, halfpipe skateboarding gives you a time limit to try and perform as many handplants and aerial turns as possible. Finally, you can play with the footbag, which consists of keeping a small beanbag airborne using only your feet -- style counts.

GAMEPLAY

CALIFORNIA GAMES is a card for beginning video players. The individual games are fun at first, but all of them are fairly easy, and most dedicated gamers will master them in a short period of time. This is especially noticeable when playing by yourself, and the game soon becomes an exercise in "can I beat my previous score?". More contests would have helped, as well as options to adjust the difficulty or a "tournament" consisting of all events.

There's nothing wrong with CALIFORNIA GAMES; there's just not much to recommend, either. Playing with other people makes it more enjoyable -- the competition is head-to-head, and you must adjust your strategies for opponents who are trying to trip you, run you over, or crash into your latest stunt. This is good for some cheap laughs, but the lack of real depth in the gameplay keeps it from retaining any permanent appeal.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sound and graphics in CALIFORNIA GAMES are a good indication of what the Lynx is capable of. Color, hue, and animation are used well throughout, providing realistic-looking backgrounds and characters. The scrolling is smooth, and there are a few graphic treats, like the semi-transparent tube in Surfing, and the camera zoom in/zoom out on the Halfpipe.

Sounds are also commendable, with quality music and noises everywhere. Each game has its own, distinctive soundtrack, and the title theme music is suitably bouncy. Similarly, sound effects are appropriately used, each one properly coordinated for the current on-screen action.

SUMMARY

It's understandable why Atari includes CALIFORNIA GAMES in the deluxe Lynx packages: It's easy, varied, non-violent (have to placate worried parents, you know), looks and sounds well, and ComLynxable. However, with only four basic games available, most players will want a tougher challenge soon enough. If you don't already own CALIFORNIA GAMES, you may want to consider a different title.

GAMEPLAY	**4.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**8.0**
OVERALL	**6.0**

CHECKERED FLAG

Atari, 1-6 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

It's time to strap on the helmets and head for the tracks; as the name implies, CHECKERED FLAG presents auto racing on the Atari Lynx. The class is Indy racing, with the ground-hugging racers that symbolize breakneck speed. The usual elements are all here: cars to pass, curves to negotiate, and roadside obstacles to avoid, all while trying to be the first across the finish line. Option settings allow you to configure the game as desired, and up to six Lynxes can be connected for a real challenge.

GAMEPLAY

CHECKERED FLAG is an absolute joy to play! While the game offers nothing that hasn't been done before, it implements and integrates all of its elements effectively. There are no bonus items, pit stops, weapons, or auto design to complicate matters; rather, the emphasis is on pure driving skills at high speeds. Even though the promised track editor has been left out, the end result is an extremely fun card that captures the thrills of the sport.

The action is viewed from directly behind your car. A course map, race information, speedometer, tachometer, and rear-view mirrors are always visible. Controls include acceleration, brakes, gearshift, and steering, all of which feel properly responsive. The computer opponents are fairly straightforward, though they manage to stay on the road better, and will try to pass you whenever possible. Hitting another car or an obstacle may result in a crash or a spinout, which costs speed and time. Take too many hits and you might even lose your mirrors.

To make things even more interesting, the game offers numerous options. There are 18 tracks to race on, from the slightly curvy to the very difficult. You can drive for practice, run a single race, or go for an eight-race tournament, and your car can be equipped with one of three different transmissions. Up to ten human and computer racers can compete, and starting positions can be set randomly or by a qualifying lap. For an extra touch, you can also choose the color of your car and the gender of your driver.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

CHECKERED FLAG's images are among the best on the Lynx. From cars to obstacles, all of the graphics are elegant and highly detailed. The sense of speed is very convincing, with the Lynx's hardware scaling used to make everything fly by smoothly. Race information is clearly visible without being obstructive, and other game screens are equally attractive.

There are not a lot of different sounds in the game, but they are used well. Engine whines alert you to change gears, tires squeal on tight turns, and the stereo roar of other cars remind you of pass attempts. Then there are the little extras, like the flagman's digitized voice announcing the start of the race and the musical scores between races.

SUMMARY

This is a high-performance title that does nothing but pure video racing, and does it extremely well. Crammed with exciting gameplay, fast action, options galore, hot sound and graphics, and true multiplayer challenge, CHECKERED FLAG is absolutely terrific!

GAMEPLAY	**10**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**10**

CHIP'S CHALLENGE

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Meet Chip. Chip is a nerd. Chip has a problem with women (natch). Meet Melinda. Melinda is a nerdette. A good-looking nerdette, though.

Melinda has a problem. Melinda needs a date. Chip wants to take Melinda. Melinda is not impressed. Can Chip prove himself?

Chip can try "The Challenge". Mazes. Blocks. Computer chips. Buttons. Switches. Time limits. Thieves. Keys. Doors. Traps. Force fields. Fireballs. Water hazards. Fire hazards. Ice hazards. Chip-eating creatures. LOTS of creatures.

Will Chip do it?

"Sure, Melinda!"

See why Chip has a problem with women?

Welcome to CHIP'S CHALLENGE, the brain-straining strategy game for the Atari Lynx. From a scrolling overhead view, you control Chip as he tries to survive 144 levels filled with all sorts of dangers. The object is to find the exit of each level and escape before time expires. Complications include deadly monsters and hazards, as well as a number of computer chips that must be found before you can reach the exit. Naturally, each level is a puzzle; only by properly moving blocks, pushing buttons, building bridges, and avoiding dangers can Chip get his date.

GAMEPLAY

CHIP'S CHALLENGE is one of the most innovative strategy games ever released for any system. Unlike some puzzle games, this title offers a wide range of tasks to perform and goals to reach, and all of the puzzles are carefully crafted to be uniquely challenging. The main objective is escape, but the subtasks needed to accomplish this varies widely, and it's impossible to find a universal strategy. Some levels require doing things in a certain sequence, or repeating one motion many times over. Others have lots of possibilites but only one answer, and still others require precise timing and fast movement. Most levels emphasize sharp thinking over arcade action, so players not blessed with lightning-fast reflexes will not be too intimidated.

Another thing worth mentioning is the high degree of friendliness in this game. Chip has an unlimited number of lives, so you can redo a level as often as needed until you solve it. If you fail too often, the game will let you skip the current level if desired, and a password for each level allows you to start there in future games. Best of all, the first eight challenges are tutorials, summarizing what must be done to solve it, and introducing new creatures and objects at a controlled pace.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Puzzle games generally don't need flashy sound and graphics, but CHIP'S CHALLENGE doesn't skimp on special effects. Game visuals are small but distinctive, allowing you to see a wide area while identifying everything at a glance. Animation is used fairly well, and the multidirectional scrolling is flawless. Sounds are equally well-done, with distinct effects used for everything that can happen. Even if something happens off-screen, the sound cues help you to keep track of everything happening on the current stage. Finally, several "electronic" soundtracks play during the game, though they can be turned off if needed.

SUMMARY

The Lynx was originally designed for fast arcade-action games, but there's no reason why it can't expand its range. With a lot of variety, a lot of difficulty, a lot of originality, and a lot of ol'-fashioned craftsmanship, CHIP'S CHALLENGE is a quality title and recommended for players of all kinds.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**8.0**
OVERALL	**8.5**

CRYSTAL MINES II

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

What do you get when you cross DIG DUG with CHIP'S CHALLENGE? The answer is CRYSTAL MINES II, the latest puzzle/strategy game for the Atari Lynx, and a sequel to Color Dream's original puzzle game for the Nintendo Entertainment System. You control a mining robot whose objective is to gather precious gems from a series of underground caverns. You must do this while avoiding falling rocks, wandering monsters, radioactivity, lava, and the dwindling time limit.

The robot is equipped with a digging laser and dynamite, which can be used to fight creatures and create caverns. Meet the gem quota for a level, and you must next find the exit to travel to another, more complex cavern. Some caverns offer more advanced challenges, such as gravity-altering switches and item-changing pipes. The game offers 150 regular levels and 31 hidden levels, ensuring lots of challenge.

GAMEPLAY

One of the best aspect of CRYSTAL MINES II is the diversity of game elements, which all interact in consistently complex ways. Rocks, dirt, and creatures can be explosive, indestructible, or easily disposed. Temporary enhancements are available for use, such as a long-range laser, a map of the current level, or protective shielding. Gathering more valuable gems can help you meet the level's quota faster; other game elements can help or hinder your progress, depending on how you use them.

The game elements all interact in a consistent manner, and a lot of the time is spent learning how they interact with you and with each other. A big reason for this is the instruction booklet (yes, the booklets are back) -- It is deliberately general, teaching only the most basic elements of gameplay and leaving the rest for the player to explore and discover. To make this easier, you have an unlimited number of robots, and each level has a four-letter password to let you play there in future games. Even better, if you take too many tries to finish a level, the game will offer to skip it.

Though CRYSTAL MINES II is clearly a strategy title, it places a bit more emphasis on good reflexes than other games of this genre. This is neither good nor bad; how much you will enjoy this title depends mainly on what combination of strategy and action you prefer. Completing a cavern relies on figuring out how to use the features of that level to uncover gems and equipment, stop pursuing enemies, and avoid robot-destroying dangers. Aside from the first few introductory stages, the levels are very challenging and not easily solved.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sights and sound of CRYSTAL MINES II are simply functional, and no more. The main game graphics are drawn with grid-oriented components, with little or no animation. On the other hand, game features with similar properties are drawn similarly, making it easier to predict how they will react. Similarly, music and sounds are all very basic. Most of the noise comes from the title theme, which plays throughout the game, though it can be toggled off with Option 2. Other game sounds are generic, though distinctive from each other.

SUMMARY

CRYSTAL MINES II borrows a lot from earlier puzzle games, especially BOULDER DASH and CHIP'S CHALLENGE, and produces a decent challenge to both the mind and the reflexes. Though it won't win any awards for special effects, the large number of demanding levels and the wide array of game elements make this a respectable title for any strategy game player.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**6.0**
SOUND	**5.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

DIRTY LARRY: RENEGADE COP

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

The story sounds familiar, almost like it came from a movie: Detective Larry has just gotten chewed out by the chief, then sent off to bring in Mr. Snuff, first lieutenant to the city's kingpin of crime. The big man doesn't like this, though, and sends his legions of psychopaths and gang members to stop the cop. Larry's got a simple answer to crime scum -- he wields his .45 and blows it away. But can even "Dirty" Larry survive long enough to deal with Mr. Big once and for all?

That's Larry, not Harry, but you get the idea. DIRTY LARRY: RENEGADE COP puts you in the shoes of a hard-boiled gumshoe who walks, jumps, and ducks through seven side-scrolling stages, fighting everyone in sight. Larry's fists are always available, but he's equally proficient with handguns, rifles, and grenades. You have one life to live, and once you lose it, the game ends. For your sake, Larry can take a number of hits, and icons found along the way will restore some of his health.

GAMEPLAY

There's a difference between game pace and game speed. Someone at Atari got the two confused, and decided to make DIRTY LARRY a high-speed title, a move that effectively ruins the game balance. The computerized criminals attack far too quickly, and Larry has no effective way to protect himself or dodge attacks. His only recourse, therefore, is to shoot the criminals before they come close, meaning that Larry's fine as long as he has ammunition. Once he's out, he gets trounced.

Larry himself is also too fast; a typical player can fly through a scene in three minutes or less. The game has only seven levels, and the criminals, extra ammo, and health icons all appear in a fixed order. Combine all of these factors, and this card soon becomes a test in how well the player can memorize appearances and conserve bullets. A savvy player can finish this title without too much effort, but that same player would not care for the game's too-short duration.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Weak as the game is, the graphics in DIRTY LARRY are no slouch, and put some other titles to shame. The sprite animation is only average, but the graphics feature incredible use of color and detail: shadows in the alleys, lights rushing by in the subway, torn wallpaper, and lots more. A few animated intermissions advance the plot as well. Sound effects, though, are not half as impressive. The title theme is above average, but actual game sounds consist mostly of gunfire, assorted thuds, and a few miscellaneous effects.

SUMMARY

onceptually, DIRTY LARRY had the ingredients to be a easy, no-nonsense ction title. Unfortunately, the game balance got thrown out of sync, and the inal result lies in video limbo: young players will be turned off by the difficulty of the game, and experienced gamers will finish it too quickly.

GAMEPLAY	**5.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**5.5**
OVERALL	**5.5**

DRACULA THE UNDEAD

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

If Bram Stoker were alive today, would he have written "Dracula" as an interactive novel? Atari thinks so, and their reinterpretation of the horror classic is DRACULA THE UNDEAD, a gothic adventure for the Lynx. You play the part of Jonathan Harker, who is visiting Count Dracula to conduct real estate business. As the story begins, Jonathan has awakened from an overnight sleep at Dracula's castle, ready to work. However, the Count has affairs to attend to, and will be gone until the evening. With a day of waiting and no Lynx to spend the time, Jonathan decides to explore Dracula's quaint home. In your travels, you will discover many unusual secrets; your goal is to escape with evidence proving that Dracula is a danger to mortal men and possibly destroy/ the Count himself. Of course, Castle Dracula is filled with danger, not the least of which is its tall, imposing owner...

GAMEPLAY

As the plot summary attests, DRACULA THE UNDEAD is not your ordinary video game. If nothing else, its gets credit for diverting from the usual sword-and- sorcery fantasy scenario. Game control is similar to the method in computer adventures such as KING'S QUEST and THE ADVENTURES OF MONKEY ISLAND: each room is a graphic image, and you use the joypad to move Jonathan around and explore it. Complex actions are done by choosing verbs and nouns from a scrolling window to form commands like "examine drawers", "open door", or "use lamp with tinderbox". Room features that you can interact with are indicated by having its name appear on-screen when you pass by it. You can also talk to people by selecting your dialogue from a number of sentences.

The actual adventure is a fairly challenging affair, though a little bit linear. Many times, there are several possible goals, but usually only one will lead to progress which advances the plot. Puzzles are not easily solved, and often nothing can be done without a certain item that you haven't found yet. Hints are few, coming from Jonathan's musings and an occasional narrative from Bram Stoker, and red herrings abound. It is also possible to finish the game without winning it, since Jonathan must make enough notes to build a convincing case against Dracula. The game assumes a little knowledge of vampire lore, but nothing too complex, while dialogue and descriptions are brief but appropriate.

There are only two weak points with DRACULA THE UNDEAD, the first being the control scheme. Each room is shown from a single viewpoint, with the LCD screen being one of the walls, so some features are unseen, either because they're off-camera or part of the screen "wall". Since their names appear when Jonathan approaches them, it's only a minor nit, and enforces the need to explore rooms thoroughly. The greater flaw is the lack of a save-game feature. You must finish this game in one sitting; the game disables the automatic shut-off feature of the Lynx, but if you haven't finished this title already, it's best to play with an AC adaptor.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

DRACULA THE UNDEAD is drawn in shades of brown and tan, using impressive "brownscaled" images that look almost like digitized aged photographs. Most of the animation comes from Jonathan walking around, with a little gratuitous scaling as he moves towards and away from the player. The game is sprinkled with animated scenes, such as the conversations with other characters, and Bram Stoker flipping pages while reading the latest plot twist.

Sound effects are a respectable mix of machine-generated and digitized effects, such as creaking doors and the howl of wolves, but they are few and far between. Instead, the game's most consistent sound is a moody background tune that plays continuously. It can be disabled with the Option 2 button if it proves wearisome, however.

SUMMARY

DRACULA THE UNDEAD offers traditional adventuring fare with an unusual premise, with enough challenge and appeal to satisfy most adventurers. The inability to save a game in progress hurts, but dedicated players who are willing to live with this flaw are encouraged to give the Count a visit.

GAMEPLAY	**7.5**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

ELECTROCOP

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Inspired by various science-fiction movies popular with the masses, in the near future the worldwide conglomerate known as Megacorp developed you, the Electrocop. As the only one of your kind, you have tirelessly served the public interest, and today you have been summoned with a crisis: The President's daughter has mysteriously disappeared, and is believed to be kidnapped.

Megacorp's intelligence net says that she is being held in an abandoned warehouse by a new robotic creation called the Criminal Brain. Worse, the place has been rendered impregnable with an array of traps, weapons, and computer-sealed doors. Megacorp deems that only you, with your superior design, security countermeasures, and total loyalty can breach this fortress. You have one hour to search the building, survive the dangers within, and confront this mysterious being to find the truth behind these happenings.

GAMEPLAY

When everything is said and done, ELECTROCOP is a real-time action-adventure game presented in a three-dimensional view. Each level of the warehouse is a maze, with drones and weapons to be destroyed and exits to be found. You are initially equipped with a laser gun, but can find more powerful weapons throughout the game. Many of the passages contain computer-locked armored doors, which are opened when the proper security code is given. Computer terminals also allow you to repair wounds, fix damaged weapons, search for security codes, or play simple video games to pass the time.

That's the entire game, and that's the problem. ELECTROCOP is fairly limited in its gameplay; the only real adventuring aspects are in opening doors and exploring the levels. There are weapons to find and enemies to fight, but most of them can be defeated by simply firing like mad. Worse, there is little randomness to the game -- the layouts of the levels and the combinations to the doors never change, making this title very prone to memorization. Most of the time with this title will be spent constantly mapping levels and cracking codes, and as with many adventure games, once ELECTROCOP is solved, there is little incentive to play it again.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

ELECTROCOP is played with a 3D perspective view, shown as a camera that tracks you everywhere. This result in some of the most eye-popping effects ever seen in a video game; you run not only left and right, but also into and out of the action, an effect unduplicated by any other video game. Quality graphics are everywhere, from the detailed, smooth-scaling graphics to the cinematic sequences at the start and the end of the game. The only problem is that your character is too large; you don't see enough to your left and right, producing a "tunnel vision" effect.

Sounds are a little more mixed, but still impressive. Actual game sounds consist of explosions, weapons fire, and assorted bells and warning klaxons, all done nicely. What steals the show, though, is the music: there are a number of high-quality soundtracks, from classical

to rock, all capturing the intense tempo of the game itself. The futuristic title theme is especially catchy, and runs throughout much of the game.

SUMMARY

This card was a brilliant concept that didn't completely clicked; the race against the clock and the real-time exploration/combat elements are hampered with uninspired gameplay and little variety. ELECTROCOP's stunning visuals and sounds make it fun to watch, but whether you'd buy a game for its razzle-dazzle is a personal decision.

GAMEPLAY	**6.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

GATES OF ZENDOCON

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Let's skip the story already -- there's only so many ways to set up a horizontal-scrolling, shoot-everything-in-sight video game, which is what GATES OF ZENDOCON is. Your mission is to fly your spaceship through various scrolling lands, firing lasers and dropping bombs to destroy everything in your way. There are power-up weapons, but they are few and far between, and a password feature lets you start the game at any selected level. The ultimate goal is to stay alive long enough for the final confrontation with Zendocon, a giant alien who looks like a disembodied brain.

There are a few interesting wrinkles to this title. The game features 51 levels, but you do not go through them linearly. Instead, each level has one or more "gates", and the next stage you go to depends on which gate you exit through. Any path you choose will eventually take you to the end, but some routes are longer and/or harder than others. Your ship has a temporary shield to repel most attacks, and you can suffer up to three hits before dying. The first two hits take away your shield and your laser, respectively, and those can be repaired at the end of a level. Finally, the game can be played in either "Easy" or "Hard" mode, where the action is twice as fast and the score is 100 times greater in "Hard" mode.

GAMEPLAY

As the first side-scrolling shoot-'em-up game for the Atari Lynx, GATES OF ZENDOCON is not bad. True, there's nothing that's really innovative about the game, but it does offer a lot of action. One big reason for this is the vast number of different enemies and levels in the game: You're attacking and attacked by everything from UFOs, columns of flame, and giant insects to robotic walkers, space lizards, and rolling missile launchers. Each enemy behaves differently, attacks differently, and have different vulnerabilities. Similarly, the 51 levels are set in some very diverse locations -- beneath the ocean, over futuristic cities, in caverns, and more.

Many of the enemies appear and attack in predictable times, but there is a fair amount of randomness to the action. The game difficulty is fairly consistent, and the game as a whole is an above-average challenge. Some levels are easier than others, but not by too much. It's worth noting that many people will find that the "Easy" mode is too easy; the pace of the game is half as slow as the typical arcade game, and today's dedicated players will breeze through it without too much effort. The "Hard" mode, however, will suit these pros just fine.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics in GATES OF ZENDOCON are adequate, with a fair use of detail and color, but they don't completely feel right for the title. Many of the game elements look simple and cartoony, instead of the sleek and rugged futuristic appearance traditionally associated with these games. Sounds are also a mixed bag. The good news is that the game features several musical scores, each one uniquely appealing in its own way. On the other hand, actual game sounds are mostly uninspiring, consisting mostly of explosions and the firing of your ship's laser. Worse, the sounds of combat drown out some of the music, which detracts. There is also a short digitized laugh at the start of the game, but nothing truly noteworthy.

SUMMARY

This game makes a strong argument for not judging a book by its cover. Underneath the average graphics and average sound is a well-rounded, pretty diverse action game just waiting to be discovered. There is very little that hasn't been seen before, but for players who are looking for a stereotypical "shoot it if it moves" title (and there are enough of those out there for any platform), GATES OF ZENDOCON is a good buy.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**6.5**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

GAUNTLET: THE THIRD ENCOUNTER

Atari, 1-4 players, vertical game

OVERVIEW

No, you're not mistaken. GAUNTLET: THE THIRD ENCOUNTER is _not_ a Lynx adaptation of any of the GAUNTLET arcade games. Instead, this was originally a similar game developed by Epyx called TIME QUESTS AND TREASURE CHESTS. When Atari bought the rights to the Lynx, they gave it a quick name change in hopes that the GAUNTLET title would enhance its market appeal.

In any event, the game pits you and up to three companions against the demonic hordes of an abandoned castle. Players can choose to be one of eight characters, each of whom is rated differently in speed, strength, fighting skill, and health. Your objective is to fight through a dungeon of 40 maze-like levels, and retrieve a mysterious Star Gem of immense power. Along the way, you will find food, treasure, keys, magic potions and scrolls, and computer terminals(!) which offer information and sell supplies. You lose health from time and attacks, and die when it disappears. The action is seen from a scrolling overhead map, along with a second window that provides a first-person view of the action.

GAMEPLAY

One new twist to the gameplay in GAUNTLET: THE THIRD ENCOUNTER is inventory management. Everything your character finds is carried along until used, though there is a limit to how much you can tote. It's possible, for instance, to drop pots of gold and "build" a protective wall to shield your adventurers from nearby threats. The game itself is fairly difficult, as survival depends on both minimizing your damage and on managing your food supplies. There is also quite a bit of creativity and variety throughout -- opponents include multiplying slime creatures, falling stalactites, and robots, and your character choices range from cowboys to pirates to nerds.

Unfortunately, these points are counterbalanced by a number of criticisms. Since levels are presented in a fixed order, and the location of their contents never change, the game becomes static and predictable. The arcade frenzy has slowed down a bit, due to monsters who will not attack until you either strike first or approach close enough. Worse, if a creature touches your character, the monster disappears, reducing the overall difficulty. Progress can often be made by standing still and holding down the attack button, which reduces the strategy needed and increases the repetitive atmosphere.

The orientation of the game is worth a few extra words. Used properly, vertically-oriented games can add to the fun, giving a taller viewing window into the action. Here, it feels more like a gratuitous demo of the Lynx than an aid to gameplay, as the display could be rearranged for a horizontal setup with no loss of data. Worse, the bright backgrounds used in some levels have been known to cause eyestrain and headaches in some players when played for long periods.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sights and sound of GAUNTLET: THE THIRD ENCOUNTER are pretty average, neither highly appealing nor truly repulsive. Game graphics are small but varied and clearly recognizable, though animation is at a minimum. Scaling is used in several places, but not to great effect, and the first-person-perspective "action window" does little to enhance the game. Sounds are also short and varied, consisting mainly of clips indicating the attacks used by the monsters and your players. A low-key background tune plays throughout the game as well.

SUMMARY

This cartridge offers some good points and some bad points, coming to rest as an average game. Several more refinements would have been welcome, but as it is now, whether or not you should get GAUNTLET: THE THIRD ENCOUNTER depends on whether you can tolerate its weaknesses.

GAMEPLAY	**5.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**5.5**

HARD DRIVIN'

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

HARD DRIVIN' for the Lynx is an adaptation of the Atari Games arcade racing title. The objective is to drive your performance sports car around a track, while dodging traffic and trying to finish each lap as fast as possible. Also, the track is divided into a speed course and a stunt course, which allow you to go at top speeds or try to survive death-defying jump ramps and banked curves. Race well enough and you can challenge the last champion in a head-to-head duel.

What makes this different, though, is that HARD DRIVIN' is a true driving simulator. You can drive anywhere on the field, and your car has weight, momentum, and inertia, just as in the real world. Turn too hard and the car will skid, which becomes a spinout if you don't countersteer in time. Taking a jump at the wrong speed will result in a fiery collision, and approaching a loop too slowly is certain suicide.

GAMEPLAY

HARD DRIVIN' is a straightforward game. Your sportster has four speeds with reverse, with either an automatic or manual transmission. The action takes place from within your car, complete with working instruments, while the track is drawn with filled 3D polygons. The speed track is mostly flat, with long stretches of curves, while the stunt track offers a drawbridge jump, banked curve, and other dangers.

Surprisingly, game speed is not a problem with this game. One would expect that the complex mathematics of the physics and polygon graphics involved would slow HARD DRIVIN' to a crawl, but it doesn't. While it is not as fast as the home computer and Genesis versions, the speed of the action is not enough of a problem to affect gameplay.

What does anchor HARD DRIVIN' from greatness on the Lynx are two problems, both unexpected. The first problem is in the "feel" of your car; it's hard to tell exactly where your edges are in the game's universe. Extra room is needed when tailing or passing another car, or else a crash occurs. Similarly, a healthy dose of paranoia towards road obstacles will improve survivability.

The other, more critical problem is in the game's controls. Steering, accelerating, and braking are incredibly sensitive, to the point where playability is severely hampered. Anything more than a tap on the joypad will send you on a sharp turn, and the car's speed rises and falls faster than you would expect. With the manual transmission, it's even more confusing, with Option 1 and Option 2 used to shift gears. Players will need a lot of time and patience to become comfortable with the controls.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The visuals of HARD DRIVIN', though not perfect, are simple and effective. The filled polygon effects are done well, while retaining enough detail, and help to enforce the sense of realism in the game. The instant replay scenes are the best part of the game, using reverse angles to accurately duplicate the conditions of your latest crash. Aside from a title song, the main game sounds are the roar of the engine and a few digitized clips.

SUMMARY

Converting the complexities of the arcade HARD DRIVIN' is a difficult task; what makes the Lynx version especially disappointing is that its shortfalls could have been prevented. The sensations of the arcade are duplicated well, but unweildly controls reduce this title to only a moderate game. While the Lynx version is still playable, only the most dedicated HARD DRIVIN' enthusiasts will derive the most pleasure from it.

GAMEPLAY	**6.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**6.0**

HOCKEY

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal & vertical game

OVERVIEW

It's a cold fact that the current Lynx library is short in sports titles. This trend is fading, however, first with AWESOME GOLF and CHECKERED FLAG, and now with HOCKEY for the Lynx. As the title indicates, this is a portable version of the winter sport, and an unofficial translation of MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY on the Sega Genesis. The action is seen from a mid-court arena seat, as one or two players lead a team of five skaters and a goalie, trying to score as many points as possible over three periods. All of the familliar elements of hockey are here: face-offs, tiebreaker shootouts, two-minute penalties, and the obligatory fistfights.

GAMEPLAY

Lynx HOCKEY contains enough statistics and options to satisfy most players. Periods can be 5 or 10 minutes long, the computer opponent can be set to easy or normal play, and rules, penalties, and fights can be toggled on or off. There's a league of 22 teams, with each team rated in abilities like skating speed, defense, and goalie skills. The default settings are modelled after the 1991 NHL, but you can rearrange or randomize the league, and an eight-letter password keeps track of the new ratings. If you're not in the mood for a long game, you can practice the fighting and shoot-out sequences.

The actual hockey contest is a one-game bout, with no provisions for season play or a tournament. While you control one player, the computer handles the rest of the team reasonably well. Player selection (with OPTION 1) and puck-passing (with button B) are managable, but shooting for the goal is quirky. To shoot, button A is tapped once or twice and aimed with the control pad, a system that's more complicated than it sounds. Scoring is possible, but you'll need some time to get the hang of the system.

Gameplay is brisk, though you might briefly lose track of the puck in a crowd. The computer opposition plays very well even on the easy setting, and tends to rush your goalie for a quick score. When enabled, fights can occur fairly often, but you can choose not to enter them. Common hockey penalties are supported, such as offsides and the two-line pass, but the loser of a fight is punished, which is inaccurate. Several screens of game stats are available any time, covering trivia like "number of successful checks" and "% of time on offense". The shoot-out sequence at the end of a tied game is worth mentioning: the Lynx is held vertically as each team takes four shots at the opponent's goal.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics of HOCKEY are reasonable. The best scenes are before the game starts, with player poses and digitized scenes shown while selecting teams and options. The rink holds small but recognizable players, a referee, and an even smaller but workable puck, along with game scores and clocks. The scrolling is a little jumpy and could have been better, and the near-digitized fights are detracted with cartoon-like special effects.

In contrast, sounds offer little worth mentioning. Aside from a stirring title theme, music consists of short, simplish renditions of the American and Canadian National Anthems, and assorted rally tunes. The game is often quiet, with bland effects, simple sirens and whistles, and an unnatural silence from the crowd.

SUMMARY

HOCKEY on the Lynx is a good, but not great, video version of the sport. A few minor flaws, like the quirky shooting controls and the lackluster sound effects, keep it from doing better. Still, for Lynx sports fans who can bear its weak points, this card is a good buy.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**5.5**
OVERALL	**7.0**

HYDRA

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

You are known as Hydra, though no government will admit you exist. You are a mercenary whose specialty is the transport of "sensitive" packages, using your Hydrafoil, a one-man armed speedboat. Even so, there is competition from other agents, and danger from those who don't want your cargo delivered. Only the best survive, but that's okay -- you are the best. Maybe.

This is HYDRA for the Lynx, an adaptation of the Atari Games arcade title. The action is seen from behind your boat which you pilot through nine levels of rivers and oceans. Along the way, you can get money bags for bonuses and crystals for extra fuel. There are also gun embankments, enemy crafts, and other nusances, though your Hydrafoil can fly temporarily to escape dangers. Finish a stage and you can try to win more money in a bonus stage, then buy better weapons for the next job.

GAMEPLAY

HYDRA on the Lynx loses very little on the way to the Lynx. A single hit will destroy your Hydrafoil, but that's not a problem, as your survival is measured in fuel; the only way the game ends is if your gas tanks are empty. This version is slightly easier when compared to the arcade, but remains of average difficulty. Unlimited continues are available, but resets your score. There is no randomness to the location of objects, on each level, but the later levels use a large number of enemies and obstacles, coupled with a rarity of fuel, to keep the game from being finished quickly.

All of the buttons are used to fire weapons, change weapons and activate your craft's air-lifting boost. There's a minor quibble with the controls -- you press down to accelerate and up to decelerate, but it has no effect on playability. Unlike ROADBLASTERS, the steering is more gradual, makes driving and aiming with the joypad reasonable.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The digitized game elements of the arcade HYDRA are respectable on the small screen, though the colors make some items look a little muddled. Also, judging collisions requires a little experience; your first few forays will feature lots of collisions with obstacles you thought you avoided. Sounds fit the action accordingly, consisting mostly of the roar of your engines, chimes when items have been picked up, a wide variety of weapons fire, and the obligatory explosions.

SUMMARY

It must be said that HYDRA borrows heavily from the game ROADBLASTERS, and offers little that's different or unusual. That doesn't make it any less fun or exciting, however, and this Lynx version is a decent adaptation that will be enjoyed by action players and fans of the arcade.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.5**
SOUND	**7.5**

OVERALL	**8.0**

ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES

Atari, 1-? players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Once again, the Lynx travels to the Orient to get inspiration for a strategy game. This time it is ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES, a conversion of a home computer title. You are given a set of 72 tiles, each marked with a specific color and figure. The stones are presented one at a time, and you place them on a board with 90 slots, next to other matching pieces. The more matches made, the better your score. If you play good enough, the Oracle may appear and impar some of its wisdom.

GAMEPLAY

ISHIDO's rules are simple, yet not immediately obvious. The basic idea of matching tiles is enhanced with restrictions on the types of matches possible. But in return for learning the rules, ISHIDO offers a deeply complex and challenging experience. Tiles are matched by color and figure, with the elusive four-match being the best play (match two by color and another two by figure). The game is "won" by making the highest score possible, but you will quickly find other goals to achieve, such as using all the tiles or scoring four-matches around the starting board.

ISHIDO also offers several variants and options. Scoring can be either the "ancient" method, where only four-matches have value, or the "modern" way, where all matches score. Games can be played solitare, alternating with a computer or human opponent, or as a tournament against any number of players. During the game, you may take back moves, ask for legal moves, and view the stones remaining. Other options allow you to select the tile set to use, and set a time limit for moves.

An interesting extra is the Oracle of the Stones. Make a four-match, and the Oracle will offer a piece of "ancient wisdom". These are excerpts of insightful thinking, similar to the writings of the I Ching, and the player is asked to apply them to his innermost questions. In the end, it is harmless fun, though you can turn the Oracle off if it proves distracting.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics and sound in ISHIDO are total contrasts. Visually, the game is stunning, with beautiful imagery everywhere from the opening fireworks to the glimmer of a four-match. Sounds are also appealing, but are at a minimum; the primary game sound is the click made as each tile is placed.

SUMMARY

ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES is proof that a game does not need many rules to be sophisticated. The concept is simple, yet each new move offers a wealth of possibilities to be explored, making this a perfect entry for the deep-thinking strategist.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**8.0**

JOUST

Shadowsoft, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

It's arguable who made the best video games in the early days of arcade gaming, but one firm commanded awe from all players: Williams. Their early games had simple rules, lots of strategy, and a take-no-prisoners challenge that only the best could master. JOUST for the Lynx is a version of the Williams classic title. The player rides a flying ostrich, engaging in combat against enemy riders. Two riders joust by colliding, and the winner is the one whose lance is higher. The arena is a cavern of platforms, which can be walked on or flown around.

A few extra wrinkles make the game more interesting. Defeated enemies turn into eggs, which hatch into more aggressive fliers if they're not retrieved in time. Later levels introduce the lava troll who snatches riders overhead, a nearly-indestructible pterodactyl, and vanishing platforms. Two players can play together with the ComLynx cable, working cooperatively or competitively. Some stages have special bonuses, such as extra points for not losing a life, or for unseating your partner first. You start with three riders, with extras at regular intervals, and once they're gone, the game ends.

GAMEPLAY

This title is from Shadowsoft, the same folks who gave us their incredible Lynx version of ROBOTRON: 2084 a year ago. I don't need to say much -- if you liked JOUST in the arcade, you'll love the Lynx version! It's a perfect, flawless translation that loses absolutely none of the original's depth and excitement. What starts off as a simple exercise in dismounting opponents soon becomes organized chaos. Your character is soon assaulted by riders on all sides, with more aggressive enemies hatched and on the way, and a pterodactyl ready to assault you for taking too long.

This conversion also has a few extra features. There are ten difficulty levels, where more aggressive enemies appear sooner and hatch quicker at the harder settings. With two players, you can also play in "gladiator mode", where you configure the arena, then try to destroy your opponent completely. Throw in a high score table to track the top five players, and you've got a "must buy" Lynx game for action/arcade fans.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The sights and sounds of JOUST are just as faithful to the source. The Lynx screen resolution causes a slight loss of detail, but nothing to get upset over. The sprites are small but easily recognizable, with animation, color, and visuals copied exactly in every detail. Similarly, almost all of the sounds have been digitized or duplicated exactly. I only noticed one sound effect from the original that has not been copied, but other than that, it's all here.

SUMMARY

JOUST is another unbelievably excellent product from Shadowsoft. Players who never played the arcade title will be captivated by its simple rules, deep strategy, and fast action, while the legions of arcade JOUST fans will be in video-gaming heaven!

GAMEPLAY	**10**
GRAPHICS	**9.5**
SOUND	**9.5**
OVERALL	**10**

KLAX

Atari, 1 player, vertical game

OVERVIEW

It's good every once in a while to see video games that don't have a ludicrous plot tacked on to the concept -- Really, who can believe that the paddle in ARKANOID is a trapped spaceship trying to reach home? KLAX for the Atari Lynx is a translation of the Atari Games arcade strategy title, and thankfully nobody gave it a background along the way.

The base idea is simple: You operate a moving paddle at one end of an advancing conveyor belt. Your objective is to catch colored tiles coming down the belt, then either deposit them into a bin below or toss them back on the conveyor for a little extra planning time. Points are awarded for making rows, columns, and diagonals using three or more tiles. To complicate matters, each level ends only when its goal is met: make six diagonals, or score 10,000 points, for example. Both the bin and the paddle can hold a limited number of tiles, and tiles are dropped into oblivion if you don't catch it in time. Drop too many tiles, and the game ends.

GAMEPLAY

KLAX in the arcade had a uniquely addictive quality about it, and the Lynx version loses none of this appeal. Like TETRIS, the game fools you with its simplicity: newcomers often adopt a "How hard can this be?" attitude, but are soon enraptured by the depth and strategies possible. However, KLAX offers more variety and a quicker pace, making it appealing to people who found TETRIS too slow and limited. The game features 100 levels, which helps keep the challenge high.

With such simple rules, it's not surprising that KLAX on the Lynx misses none of the original's features. As in the arcade, you can start the game at levels 1, 6, or 11, and skip levels after every fifth stage. However, this version also allows you to go to the highest stage ever reached, and offers three levels of overall game difficulty. An unlimited number of continues is available, and the score is cleared each time. The vertical orientation of the Lynx is welcome here, making optimal use of screen space and allowing all of the action to be clearly seen. The game as a whole is quick and responsive, though the action slows down a bit when there are too many tiles on the conveyor belt at once.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

KLAX makes full use of the Lynx's sound and graphics capabilities, and successfully captures the bouncy atmosphere of the game. The graphics are large and colorful, and the animations and effects of the arcade are duplicated exactly. Even the various abstract backgrounds are present, though some of the original scenes have been replaced with new ones specifically for the Lynx.

As good as the graphics are, however, what really steals the show are the sounds and music. Crisp digitized sound effects, all from the arcade game, are used everywhere -- the applauding crowds, the lady announcer at the start of each wave, even the wail of a falling tile as it drops into the void. Stereo, heard for the first time on the Lynx, is put to great use, both during the game to indicate the location of tiles, and in the rollicking, high-tempo, electric guitar-loaded theme music masterpiece.

SUMMARY

This is an incredibly simple and totally addictive game, appealing to both the mind and the reflexes alike, that has made a perfect transition from the arcade. Between the friendly gameplay, elegant graphics, and stunning sound and music, KLAX on the Lynx is highly recommended!

GAMEPLAY	**9.5**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**10**
OVERALL	**9.5**

KUNG FOOD

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Okay, how's this: For some crazy reason, your boss at the video-game company wants to put the unstable mutagen Rynoleum into the next batch of games. Acting on your conscience, you steal the toxic waste, haul it home, and put it for safekeeping in the freezer. Unfortunately, you've been contaminated into a six-inch-tall, naked, green version of yourself. Worse, your groceries have gained sentience, and are now planning to take over the world! Can you fight through your leftovers, cure yourself, and stop this plan cold?

That's KUNG FOOD for the Lynx, the video game with a plot that's an instant finalist in the "Goofiest Idea of 1992" award. You play the samaritan in the refrigerator who kicks, jumps, and punches through five levels of killer groceries and other hazards to save the day.

You start with three lives, and can take a limited number of hits, but the vegetables still outnumber you. There are no continues, but power-up icons along the way will help even the odds. Sure, it's silly, but it's no weirder than ninja-trained terrapins, right?

GAMEPLAY

There's no surprise here -- KUNG FOOD is your generic "beat everything in sight" video game. You walk left to right, up and down, and after a few steps encounter a pack of hopping peas, potato men, or ice demons that have to be destroyed before you can go any farther. You take hits pretty easily, and there's not much warning that you've been hit, so watching the health gauge is very important.

There are a number of small quirks that may bother some players, however. Controls are a little awkward; button A and the control pad activate punches and kicks, which is tolerable, but it's impossible to turn quickly in the heat of battle. Actually hitting an opponent requires a fair amount of precision, and, depending on where you're standing, it's possible to be hit by an enemy who you can't hurt. Working around these limits isn't difficult, but veterans of video street battles will be caught flat-footed at first.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on KUNG FOOD are among the most elaborate ever on a Lynx title. There's great use of color, detail, and animation, and some fairly elaborate opening and closing sequences, which mesh together with a consistent level of high quality. Game sounds are pretty good and match the action appropriately, but the background music and title theme are repetitive and grating. Fortunately, pressing OPTION 2 lets you turn the music off while keeping the sound effects.

SUMMARY

Take away the story, and KUNG FOOD comes across as a very average fighting game that breaks no new ground. The game's controls and minor quirks may irritate some players, but fight fans with Lynxes should look past the silliness and give the title a try.

GAMEPLAY	**6.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**5.5**
OVERALL	**6.5**

LYNX CASINO

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Video gambling games are hard to promote. On the one hand, an accurate simulation lets players experience high-rolling thrills without using real money. On the other hand, if there are no real winnings, why bother? Other questions about how much strategy can be developed or transferred for games like Roulette or Craps are left to professional gamblers.

LYNX CASINO doesn't resolve this paradox, but it does offer a risk-free alternative to Atlantic City or Reno. This title is a collection of five familliar casino games: Blackjack, Craps, Roulette, Slot Machines, and Video Draw Poker. You start off with $1000, though the cashier can give you two loans of $500 each; when your money's all gone, the game ends. You can also ComLynx with a friend for a mini-electronic junket.

GAMEPLAY

The best thing about LYNX CASINO is that it faithfully captures the experience of casino gambling. Not only are authentic rules, odds, and payoffs used, but each game allows of the same options that its real-life counterpart offers. For instance, Craps supports everything from the usual Pass/No Pass to Hard Way and Horn Bets, while Roulette uses a Double Zero wheel and allows numerous number combinations, and Blackjack is played with six decks. The only major discrepency is that you're always the dice shooter on Craps.

The user interface changes with each game, but is generally consistent. Statistics are kept for each game session, allowing pros to analyze their playing skills. As a result, LYNX CASINO can be played on two levels: casual players can have fun just placing bets, while self-proclaimed experts can exercise existing gambling strategies or trying to develop new ones. While this card may not make you rich, it can be treated almost as a simulation, and the only regret I have is that more games weren't included.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Graphics in LYNX CASINO are decent overall, with a touch of cartoon whimsy. You guide your on-screen personna among the games and roaming bystanders, while still images show scenes of other gamblers and the staff. Most of your time is spent at the tables and machines, which are well drawn with good use of color and detail. Sound effects are not so interesting; a variety of background tunes play during the game, though they can be turned off if desired. Other than that, game sounds are few, brief, and fairly simple.

SUMMARY

There's not much that needs to be said: LYNX CASINO is a well-done, no-nonsense video version of the Vegas experience. If you want to refine your Craps strategem or just want to blow some imaginary money, this game will easily fit the bill.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**9.0**

MS. PAC-MAN

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Unless you've been living in a cave for the last 20 years, chances are good you know of Pac-Man. The original yellow-balled maze muncher became _the_ symbol for video gaming, and spawned a flock of sequels and me-too titles. The official sequel by Bally/Midway/Namco was MS. PAC-MAN, and now you too can plug this game into your Atari Lynx.

The game is simple: You control Ms. Pac-Man, a feminine yellow ball with a mouth, through a maze. Your objective is to eat all the dots in the maze and go to other mazes. Four ghosts chase you through the maze -- one touch and you die. Run out of lives, and the game ends. Certain dots are "energizers", which temporarily turn the ghosts blue and vulnerable for you to eat them. At times, bonus foods hop through the maze, and eating them gives even more points.

The Lynx version features two sets of mazes. You can play with either the original arcade four mazes, or with an alternate set of 21(!) wider mazes. On the alternate mazes, a lightning bolt will occassionally hop through the maze. Get the bolt, and you can push a button (A or B) for 15 seconds of high speed. The bolt goes away if you die, finish the level, or use it.

GAMEPLAY

To be honest, MS. PAC-MAN is a simple game, and it's not surprising to see it arrive on the Lynx intact. Scoring is the same, controls are the same, and (as far as I can tell) the ghosts even behave the same. The alternate set of 21 mazes helps keep this game interesting, especially to jaded maze runners who mastered the original. I myself don't mind a _little_ Pac-mania (though I think it went too far, in the end), and am happy for a maze game on the Lynx.

(I'm personally bummed that the two-player-simultaneous gameplay rumored a few months ago is not present. Oh well)

GRAPHICS/SOUND

MS. PAC-MAN is set up as a horizontal game on the Lynx, with the maze scrunched to keep the entire maze on the screen at once. As a result, the graphics suffer a bit. The game graphics, from Ms. P to the ghosts to the fruits, are very small. Details (such as the ghosts'

eyes) are missing, though the game is not affected any. The only place to see big ghosts and Pac-people are in the intermission cartoons, which are kept intact from the arcade.

Sounds on this game are decent, though not outstanding. Music bits (the opening tune and intermission bridges) remain identical, cheery and light. The game sounds are average, neither irritating nor exceptional.

SUMMARY

A decent adaptation overall, and a good game in its own right. I suspect whether or not you'll buy this depends on how willing you are to have a Pac-Maze-game on the Lynx. If you are interested, the Lynx version will not do you wrong.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

NFL FOOTBALL

Atari, 1-2 players, vertical game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

There's no surprises here; NFL FOOTBALL for the Atari Lynx is a portable version of the American pigskin sport. This is the sport where two teams of eleven guys each try to carry an oddly-shaped brown ball down a hundred-yard field into the opposing team's end zone. As a licensed game, all of the real football teams and logos of the NFL are used, letting players fulfill their fantasies of managing their hometown favorites. For even more realism, the card features offensive plays designed by a real NFL coordinator, and game strategies can be altered in real time as needed. The action takes place from an overhead perspective, which zooms in and out of the action.

GAMEPLAY

Ugh.

NFL FOOTBALL had such promise, but falls far short. This game has so many defects in its implementation that you wonder if anyone bothered to play it before its release. The good news is that, on offense, almost two dozen plays are available, and each play can be improvised as needed (pass the ball on a running play, for instance). A game lasts for four 15-minute quarters, and two players can compete head-to-head with the ComLynx cable.

Everything else goes downhill from there. On offense, passes are done by holding down the "B" button, moving a crosshair to an open receiver, then releasing the button to throw -- all performed while the opposition rush for the tackle. Running plays are easy to perform, but they yield little yardage and become essentially useless. When you have the ball, any touch from an opponent brings you down, with no chances to spin or break free. The selection of defensive plays is pitiful, with only six general defenses available, and there is no easy way to change the defensive player you are controlling.

Two-player games are inherently more challenging because the computer opponent is pathethic. The Lynx has no head for strategy, and you can use the same play repeatedly with no effect. The computer makes up for its stupidity by making its players run faster than your team; if all your defenders are behind the ball carrier, it's a guaranteed touchdown. Each session is a one-game bout, with no provisions for league play, and there is no difference between teams other than their logos and uniform colors. There are no fouls, no way to block punts, and many more shortfalls, too numerous to list.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on NFL FOOTBALL are clean and identifiable, yet fail to excite or inspire. The Lynx's hardware scaling is wasted; the screen zooms in at the end of a play and zooms out to a high overhead shot for kickoffs, but most of the game is viewed from a static halfway

height. It's possible to be in control of an off-screen player, though it shouldn't have to be. Screen clips highlight cheering crowds and the referee's calls, but they are simply animated there's not many of them.

Sounds are a little better, but not by much. Aside from a title theme, the game is quiet most of the time, with most of the sounds consisting of a whistle and the shlup-shlup-shlup of running feet. The digitized voices of the referee calls are a bit muddled, while the crowd that cheers after each score is a simple "white noise" effect.

SUMMARY

It doesn't help if football games on other portable game systems are no more sophisticated than NFL FOOTBALL. The bottom line is that this game is a futile exercise in boredom, and is certainly not fun to play nor worth the price asked for it.

GAMEPLAY	**4.5**
GRAPHICS	**5.0**
SOUND	**5.5**
OVERALL	**4.5**

NINJA GAIDEN

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Adapted from the arcade game (and not the Nintendo adventure series), NINJA GAIDEN represents the second Tecmo arcade conversion for the Atari Lynx. The storyline is irrelevant; you play a lone ninja, who must defeat all of the assorted criminals and villians in a scrolling city landscape. Your only weapons are your fists, feet, and the occassional sword, while the villians have more weapons and much more numbers.

As the landscape scrolls by, you can walk and jump all over the terrain. Enemies will come from offscreen, and you must fight them to the death. Several attacks are possible, such as swinging from overhanging poles, backwards jumps over walls, and flipping the opposition. Some obstacles along the way can be broken, by throwing someone into it, and will often reveal benefits such as extra health, lives, or a sword. For extra pressure, you must finish each level before an on-screen clock runs down.

GAMEPLAY

The biggest gripe against Tecmo's earlier Lynx title, RYGAR, was that it was a scaled-down version of the arcade original. Sadly, NINJA GAIDEN offers no improvement at all, and some would call its curtailing even worse. Only about half of the different types of villians are present, though there is some variety to their attacks. The game makes up for this deficency by bringing out even more enemies than the arcade version did. The challenge thus comes in simply surviving a swarming attack, rather than reacting to a wide variety of opponents.

NINJA GAIDEN is challenging, though not exceedingly so. You start the game with four lives, and each life can take up to five blows before dying. When you finally die, you may continue the game up to two times with a score of zero. The biggest problem, though, is that the game is too short; only four levels from the arcade original are present, which will not be enough for many action fans.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The highest point of NINJA GAIDEN comes in the game graphics. Though they are only about average for a Lynx game (reminescent of RAMPAGE to a degree), the visuals are almost a direct lift from the arcade version. The smooth animation and distinctive appearances are translated intact. Game sounds are limited to the thuds and crashes of combat, though that is a fault of the original game instead. A background soundtrack adds a little spice to the action.

SUMMARY

NINJA GAIDEN is not a bad game; it's just not a good game, either. More sophisticated games have been done before on the Lynx, which makes this all the more depressing. However, it is not a total pushover, which saves it to a degree. For the arcade purist, NINJA GAIDEN is a dissappointment, but for the Lynx player looking for an action game, it's worth a try.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

PAC-LAND

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Anyone remember Hanna-Barberra's PAC-MAN cartoon from the early '80s? Yes, folks, before Nintendo's CAPTAIN N hit the airwaves, the world's most famous video game star had his own television show. The adventures of Mr., Mrs., and Junior Pac-Man failed with the Neilsons, but not before they inspired Namco's arcade PAC-LAND video game, now available for the Atari Lynx.

Despite the presence of "pac-" in the name, PAC-LAND has nothing to do with mazes and dots. Rather, Pac-Man is on a mission of charity, who must take a lost fairy back to her home. So he puts her under his hat, then proceeds to run and jump across the towns, forests, hills and deserts of Pac-Land. The way is dangerous, with rickety bridges, quicksand, and deep chasms to cross, not to mention the ever-present ghosts. However, if Pac-Man looks hard enough, he can find tools, powers and secret warps to help him complete the job.

GAMEPLAY

Despite the silly storyline and cute graphics, PAC-LAND is not an easy game. There are five "trips" to be completed, spread over 20 levels; you can choose which trip to start at, which lets pros skip the easy parts. Each trip consists of several levels to return the fairy, then a level of guiding Pac-Man home. Along the way, Pac-Man must dodge the ghosts, who chase him in cars, busses, airplanes, and pogo sticks. There are also swimming pools to be jumped, floating ledges to ride, and darkened houses to explore, each with their own tricks and dangers. For extra pressure, each level must be completed within a given time limit.

Pac-Man is not completely helpless, naturally. If Pac-Man walks across certain areas, hidden fruit will appear, which he can eat for points. There are also energizer pellets, which enable our hero to temporarily chase the ghosts. In addition, there are goodies such as helmets, invulnerability, and warps to higher levels hidden in the game, and assorted known and unknown point bonuses to try for (can you get the 7,000-plus-point bonus at the end of each level?).

While PAC-LAND is an engrossing "run and jump" game, it's not as complex as other titles in this genre. The different levels offer a bit of variety, but each level does not take long to complete. The ghosts are fairly easy to avoid with a little careful dodging; to compensate, their appearances are randomized, which prevents patterns from being developed.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on PAC-LAND are cute and cartoony, appropriately enough. Pac-Man looks friendly and animated, while the ghosts are silly and amusing. Other items are drawn with bright colors and simple designs. Finally, there is some multi-plane scrolling both behind and in front of the action; however, the positions of Pac-Man and the ghosts are always clearly shown. Game sounds are similarly simple but amusing. The background music is taken from the original cartoon show, though some people may find it irritating. Other sounds come from the ghosts on the prowl and various game actions, but are simply average.

SUMMARY

PAC-LAND is a simple but challenging action game. The cute atmosphere masks lots of surprises to uncover, and the game requires attention to beat. There are a few shortcomings, but they are there because the card is accurate to the arcade original. Veteran video jumpers may breeze through this title, but for other players, a trip to PAC-LAND is worth considering.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

PAPERBOY

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

In Norman Rockwell's America, purehearted young men got their start in the financial world by delivering newspapers or selling fruit. In PAPERBOY for the Atari Lynx (an adaptation of the Atari Games/Tengen arcade title), you play such a young man, out to deliver a week's worth of papers on either Easy Street, Middle Road, or Hard Way.

You start off with a bike, ten papers, and two blocks of customers. As you ride up the street, your objective is to deliver papers to your customers with a well-placed toss. Aim carefully -- breaking windows is a fast way to lose a customer. Between customers, throw papers haphazardly to destroy other people's property(!) or hit people(!!) for bonus points(!!!). At the end of the run, you can run an obstacle course and show off your bike-riding and paper-throwing prowlness.

It's not all peaches and cream, though. Crashing your bike into an obstacle (incoming traffic, pedestrians, animals, etc.) will lose you a paperboy. Lose all your customers, or all your boys, and the game ends. Survive an entire week and you may actually keep your job.

GAMEPLAY

A decent adaptation of the arcade game. Minute game details from the arcade original are preserved intact, such as the "hidden targets" (the catburglar, the birdbath --> periscope, etc.). Scoring and gameplay are identical enough that veterans of the original will feel right at home.

There are a few nitpicky points that detract, though. For one thing, while you can slow down/speed up the bike, you cannot STOP. For another, the Lynx version seems a little bit easier than the original. Making mailbox "bullseyes", dodging obstacles, and generally staying alive are easier to do. You do get to pick three different streets of varying difficulty, though there's no way to refine the game further.

One minor "cute touch" -- the Lynx version maintains a seperate high score table for each street. Get a score in the top five for the street, and you get to enter your name. No score-saving mechanism, however.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

A mixed bag. Graphics are clearly distinguishable (breakdancers from drunks, trash cans from tombstones), but left me with a sense of "could have been done better". Every extra graphic nicety was counterbalanced by a weak point, leaving an overall OK graphics impression.

Similary, the sounds are indifferential. The background music is a pale shadow of the original, but the other game sounds are appropriate and helpful (especially the musical riffs when you deliver a paper). The volume of the sounds vary widely, though -- you strain to hear a delivery riff and have your concentration broken by a (relatively) loud "car horn", for instance -- again leaving an overall balanced impression.

SUMMARY

Not a bad game, though not one of the Lynx's best. It's not a fast-paced breakneck-speed game, so people looking for relaxation should be interested. If you can overlook average-quality graphics and sound, and did not dominate the arcade version, this is worth trying out.

GAMEPLAY	**7.5**
GRAPHICS	**6.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

PINBALL JAM

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

As much as I like video games and pinball, I never cared much for video pinball games. The problem is that either the playfield is an unrealistic collection of screen-sized subfields slapped together (ALIEN CRUSH, DINOLAND, DRAGON'S FURY), or the programmers put in "video features", like bosses and marble eaters (HIGH SPEED and PINBOT for the Nintendo Entertainment System). In either case, the fundamentals of pinball end up being compromised.

Now Atari Corp. has released PINBALL JAM for their Lynx portable video game system. This game card contains two real Williams/Bally pinball titles, "Elvira and the Party Monsters" and "Police Force". Elvira has you shooting targets and ramps for pizzas, punch, and water rides with the campy Mistress of the Dark. "Police Force" requires you to defend the Law of the Jungle against the Drug Rat, the Loan Shark, and other animal villains. The action is viewed from directly overhead, with the screen scrolling up and down to track the ball.

GAMEPLAY

PINBALL JAM consists of a lot of plusses mixed with a few minuses. The best thing is its high level of realism and adherence to the originals' rules and scoring. Game physics are convincing for the most part, down to the frustrating ramp shots that don't quite succeed, but the marble is a little more elastic than it should be. On the other hand, this is still not a total replacement for real pinball. Pressing the OPTION 1 button shakes the board, and tilts are possible, but slap saves and other complex moves are not. Still, for the time being, this is the closest that pinball purists can get in a video game system.

A few other changes have been made to accomodate the transition to a video screen. The scrolling screen follows the ball, so aiming for targets at the top of the playfield becomes harder. During multiball, the lower ball is shown and an arrow points to the location of the other. Free game specials are now extra balls, and end-of-game matches are gone. Each pinball can be played in easy or hard mode; "easy" gives five balls per game, while "hard" offers three balls and clears all lit targets after a drain. Only one player can play at a time, but a high score table tracks the top three scores for each machine.

Of the two titles, Elvira is a tougher challenge and requires good playing to get high scores. Police Force is suited for beginners, and offers many easy chances to get high scores. One minor risk is that players who are unfamilliar with the originals will start off handicapped. The manual documents shots and target combinations, but nowhere are they labelled or illustrated. As a result, new players have to discover where the Pizza Passage, the Hot Sheet, and other targets are before they can play effectively.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Graphically, PINBALL JAM literally tries to duplicate the look of the arcade. The screen closely resembles the real games, containing everything from playfield art and flashing arrows to transparent slides and wire ramps. The effect isn't perfect, however, and the limits of the Lynx screen display are clear. Some areas are colored too brightly, and some other spots are too cluttered. The screen scrolls well most of the time, but when the balls get extremely fast, the scrolling becomes somewhat jumpy in order to keep pace.

The primary game sounds come from computerized approximations of bumpers, flippers, and other obstacles at work, which are okay by themselves. Each pin also has a selection of digitized voices from the arcade, though they are slightly scratchy and rearranged a little

with the original game actions. The best sounds, though, are the number of background tunes play throughout, setting the pace and keeping things lively.

SUMMARY

PINBALL JAM is a fun game, though it cannot satisfy the die-hards who want the complete pinball experience. But for those of us who can accept some minor compromises for realistic pinball action on the go, this card is a perfect way to spend many spare hours.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**8.0**

QIX

Telegames, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

Telegames, the first developer of third-party Lynx games, strikes the market again with QIX. This is an adaptation of the Taito arcade game from the early 80s, named after the Qix, a swirling helix of colored lines. The player's goal is to draw boxes on the playing field, restricting the movement of the Qix, while avoiding contact with the Sparx, Fuse, and the Qix itself. Each level has a percentage threshold, and the level ends when you have claimed the limit, with bonuses rewarded to extra territory. Higher levels offer more Qixes, Fuses, and Super Sparx to outsmart.

GAMEPLAY

The original QIX was a simple game by today's standards, so it is not surprising to find that the Lynx version plays exactly the same. The Qix dances around the field, and you lose a life if it touches your drawing lines. Points are awarded for drawing boxes, with more points given for daring to draw slowly. There are 256 levels, each with its own combination of game elements, and a password to avoid the earlier levels. Two players can compete by alternating turns, while built-in instructions and a Practice Mode help beginners learn the game.

There are a few problems, however. The arcade game used separate buttons for slow and fast drawing, but this version uses only one, which is awkward. More annoying are the sensitive controls; a wayward diagonal can cause the marker to jam, leaving you vulnerable. Finally, the Qix is proportionally larger on the Lynx, making the game slightly harder. None of these flaws are crippling, but they do diminish the game.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The simple graphics of the Taito QIX have been renovated slightly for the Lynx. Each level uses a different pattern to fill in claimed space, and the other visuals have been duplicated here. Sound effects are fairly simple, consisting mainly of the buzzing of the Qix and two short tunes, though the title page uses a nice, short digitized rock riff.

SUMMARY

QIX on the Lynx is a steady translation, offering no more and no less than the original. Whether it will appeal to today's players is questionable, but longtime devotees and people who like unusual games will probably enjoy this title.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**6.5**
OVERALL	**7.0**

RAMPAGE

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

"Better living through chemistry"? Not for four employees at MegaVitamin Pharmaceuticals, who -- through a mixup in the company cafeteria -- ingested a contaminated sample of Megavitamins. Within 24 hours, Larry, George, Ralph, and Lizzie had transmorgrified into giant animals, wrecking havoc and major property damage throughout the United States. Worse, a rumor is now around that an unnamed lab technician can develop an antidote for the disease, but is hiding this information to extract extortion from the government...

RAMPAGE for the Atari Lynx is a conversion of the Bally/Midway game from a few years back. You play one of four monsters (one more than the original), who travel from city to city, smashing skyscrapers, pounding cars, breaking bridges, and eating fruits/humans/vegetables/humans/meat/HUMANS. You and your friends can collectively wreck havoc, or clobber each other, depending on your inclination. As you jump and climb your way through the city, the screen scrolls to show you the action immediately around your monster.

Along the way, you encounter the evil forces of the United States Army, who throw soldiers, tanks, helicopters, and bombs at your 60-foot-tall self. You can smash them, too, but they are many and you are few, so you've got to keep yourself alive while tearing the town apart. Destroy all the buildings in a city and you move to the next, thus effectively roaming the country. If you survive long enough, you may be able to find the mysterious lab technician who can restore you to your former self.

GAMEPLAY

This game is fun. Aside from the sheer silliness of the concept, RAMPAGE is very easy to play, with uncomplicated controls, simple rules, and a sense of difficulty that feels right. There is a lot of stuff to eat and destroy, such as passing trolleys, damsels in distress, neon signs, bridges, and cars. The Army will be able to wear you down through sheer numbers, but if you play it safe and snatch all the food you can get, you'll be able to hold out for a while. If you're lucky, you can find and drink potions, which will render you invulnerable (and invisible to other players) for one level.

Players familliar with the arcade game will be glad to know that the Lynx version is very close to the original, and offers more. After your monster loses all its health, it turns back to human and slinks out of the picture -- until you activate another life. Run out of lives, and you're out of the game. If you're playing with friends, you can continue the game with a new life indefinetely -- until you get past level 40. After that, all deaths are final. Your monstrous abilities to destroy are all translated intact, and the levels, though presented on a scrolling screen, are about the same size as the arcade. Unlike the original, though, there seems to be no difference in the abilities of the different monsters. Watch out for crumbling buildings, and don't jump too hard on the bridges.

If you survive long enough, you will ultimately find a lab scientist who can cook up an antidote to revert you to normal. Though I can't confirm it, I think this will take _quite_ a while to accomplish. The scientist is rumored to be in Sunnyvale, and level 40 doesn't even take you halfway around the country; you start in the state of Washington, and it seems like you travel counterclockwise throughout the United States. Level 40 only gets you to Tennesee. I hear that this game offers around 100+ levels (the manual doesn't say), and it seems quite possible.

As mentioned before, the action takes place on a scrolling screen, so it's possible to be attacked by someone you can't see. This doesn't matter, though, as the game, overall, is slightly easier than the original. It's not a breeze, though, as you will eventually get worn down by a lack of food and an abundance of military might (the lack of continues past level 40 doesn't help, either).

A side note: Normally, I don't discuss manuals in these reviews, but this time I'm making an exception. There's a lot of things that you can do in this game, but are breezed over or completely ignored by the manual. For instance, you can grab a dynamite pack and hurl it away before it explodes. Or grab and HOLD ON to a civilian for points. I don't know whether the omissions were intentional or not, but it's a good idea to TRY EVERYTHING -- you may turn up a surprise or two.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The game graphics in RAMPAGE are similar, but not identical to, the arcade original. There's nothing wrong with that; game elements are clearly recognizable, and rendered in the same cartoony, tongue-in-cheek mentality that arcade fans will recognize. Especially

delightful are the little "cute touches". Punch an electrical applicance and get shocked, eat an undigestible object and cough up, swallow some dynamite and breathe fire -- there's a lot of visual humor in this game. Between cities, the newspaper headlines present the city, the level, and offers bad jokes (there's monster humor, cow puns, and subliminal ads for Atari, to name a few).

The sounds in this game are appropriate, but not special. Sound effects match the game action, as it should. During the game, bouncy/cheery background music plays, sounding similar to the tunes found in CHIP'S CHALLENGE. Fortunately, if it bothers you (I think it's for the wrong game, myself), you can turn the tunes off and keep the sound F/X.

SUMMARY

RAMPAGE for the Lynx reminds me of XENOPHOBE for the Lynx: A lighthearted, silly game that's lots of fun for lots of players (the more the merrier). Though it's not hard to play, I feel that there's going to be lots of hours invested in this card before someone finishes it. If you like the arcade original, like multiplayer cooperative/competitive games, or are looking for a casually-paced challenge, RAMPAGE is the way to go.

GAMEPLAY	**9.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**9.0**

RAMPART

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Longtime players fondly remember the Golden Age of video games, where flashy graphics and sound didn't matter as much as a solid idea backed with good gameplay. Even though most of today's games fall into recycled formulas, every now and then there's a title that gets attention simply for daring to be different.

Such is the case with RAMPART, an adaptation of the Atari Games' arcade machine. The player is the warlord of an enclosed castle; cannons are placed behind the walls and used to repel enemy attacks. After each battle, holes in the wall must be patched with Tetris-like pieces before the next attack, else the game ends. One player can compete against a computer-controlled navy through eight levels, or two players can fight each other, with or without the computer.

GAMEPLAY

Lynx RAMPART is a near-complete copy of the original. The Lynx controls are a respectable substitute for the arcade's trackball. In a one-player game, a level ends after enduring a number of attacks, and survival is the final goal. Against the computer, the difficulty starts off moderate and builds gradually, with higher stages having more ships and stranger-shaped wall pieces. A two-player game ends when one player loses, and all games have a limited number of continues. There is one difference that devoted fans will notice: On the Lynx, all ships can drop off ground forces, which makes defending your shoreline very important. This change makes the game more difficult, but not unplayable.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

RAMPART in the arcade used simple but uninspired graphics, which the Lynx duplicates exactly. To compensate, this version also shows a number of elegant animated and still images between breaks in the action. There are not too many sounds, but the ones present are well done, with explosions, musical themes and dirges, and digitized voices.

SUMMARY

RAMPART on the Lynx is a good adaptation, and is a welcome change from today's recycled arcade themes. For those who've never tried this unusual game, its original blend of action and strategy can be quite addictive, and is well recommended.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**
GRAPHICS	**9.5**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**8.5**

ROADBLASTERS

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

We don't really need a storyline for this game, and the one that comes with the manual is a bit on the cheesy side, so let's skip it. ROADBLASTERS is an adaptation of the arcade hit by Atari Games/Tengen, which also had the dubious distinction of being one of the earliest video game/toy tie-ins (Play the game, buy the Matchbox cars). People who are familliar with the arcade game can skip the next two paragraphs; this Lynx adaptation has it *ALL*.

The game, in a nutshell, is SPY HUNTER crossed with POLE POSITION, thrown into the 21st century. This is a concept that long-time Los Angeles residents (like myself) will appreciate: You drive a high-performance sports car through 50 crowded, twisting races. Other cars in your path are out to stop your commute, so either pass 'em or shoot 'em. Complicating the matter are third-party obstacles: roadside obstacles and cannons, immobile mines in the road, and roving spikers. Contact with any obstacle destroys your car.

To be fair, you have a few tricks on your side. Your only major concern in this game is fuel -- run out of gas, and the game ends. There is no time limit, and collisions are only annoying because they slow you down. Furthermore, at various points in the race, a jet will fly by and air-drop "power-ups" for your car. These range from the high-speed Nitro injector to the all-destructive Cruise Missile (my favorite).

GAMEPLAY

As I wrote above, people familliar with the arcade game will be right at home with this one. Just like the Lynx version of KLAX, this adaptation features *ALL* of the gameplay from the arcade, intact. Indestructable blue limos, high-turbine motorcyclists, level warps, power-up weapons, the bonus multiplier...The only things missing from the arcade to this card are the coin slots, the high score table, and the free T-shirt contest. If you lose a run, you can continue (up to four times) if you want.

The game is really fast and challenging, and it's hard to find anything wrong with the game. The game promises to be a no-holds-barred, high-speed, action-packed thriller, and it delivers. My only gripe comes with the controls; as with most home video driving games, steering with a joypad/joystick is not as accurate as using a steering wheel/control yolk. This is doubly annoying in ROADBLASTERS, because you need precision steering to both dodge obstacles and shoot well. With a little bit of practice, though, you will get used to the controls, and *REALLY* enjoy the game.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

One reason this Lynx adaptation is so close to the arcade comes from the audios and visuals. Visually, everything looks either identical or VERY close to their arcade counterparts. The graphics are well-detailed, distinctive, and very colorful. The Lynx's graphics hardware are put to great use -- the smooth scaling and fast scrolling work together to make this one of the slickest, fastest, and most exciting driving games for ANY home video game system currently available. This game shows off the Lynx at its best.

Sounds are, similarly, a little short of perfection when compared to the arcade. The opening title tune, digitized voices, and game sounds are all from the arcade (I love the whine of the motorcycles when you pass them). However, the digitized voices have a bit of static to them (especially dissappointing when you realize how clean the voices on KLAX are), and the music is louder than the rest of the sounds, causing an annoying imbalance as you play. All in all, though, the game sounds fit the game accurately.

SUMMARY

This is a mind-blowing *AWESOME* adaptation. I'd recommend it to most video-game players -- fans of driving games, fans of shooting games, fans of action games, and fans of the arcade original. It's a challenging, well-balanced arcade/action game, faithful to the original, worthy of the Lynx and offering lots of hours of fun.

This goes right up there with BLUE LIGHTNING as one of the best Lynx games around. Grab yourself a copy, but don't be surprised if they dissappear FAST.

GAMEPLAY	**9.5**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**9.0**

ROBO-SQUASH

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

It's the 31st century, and after 200 years of peace, there is a conflict. The two political parties of the universe are arguing over a successor to the recently-deceased President of the World. Instead of settling the dispute through barbaric warfare or elections, both parties have sent a representative to play the zero-gravity game of Robo-Squash. The winning player will win the Presidency for his party. Guess what? You're one of the players.

The Robo-Squash game consists of 16 rounds. For each round, you sit at one end of a zero-gravity corridor. At the other end is your opponent, and in the middle are spinning bricks and some icons. A ball is batted back and forth between the players, picking up speed and knocking out obstacles as it goes. A round ends when one player fails to return the ball three times, or one player hits the roving mecha-spider that appears when all obstacles are knocked out.

The game is complicated by a few twists: First, missing a ball leaves a big red splotch on your end of the arena. This is more than a nuisance, it blocks your view of the ball and makes it harder to see incoming shots. Second, hitting the icons in the middle of the arena gives you (if you can catch it) power-ups: a ball grabber, a larger paddle, a fireball launcher, or a ball spotter are available.

Before each of the 16 rounds, a player picks a ball in a 4-by-4 grid to play for. Winning a round wins the ball for the player, and at the end of all the rounds, bonuses are awarded for getting grid entries in 2, 3, or 4-in-a-rows.

GAMEPLAY

ROBO-SQUASH is a nice, well-balanced "sports game" (okay, sport-like). The general concept reminds me of PONG, BREAKOUT, SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE, and ARKANOID. The game and controls are easy enough to learn, and the addition of power-ups, vision-blocking, and fighting for grid positions make it more interesting. The game has four difficulty levels, which affect the top speed the ball can get and the intellect of the coputer opponent.

ROBO-SQUASH can be played either against the computer or another player. The computer opponent is good, but not unbeatable -- like video tennis games, alternating volleys to extreme ends of the arena can trip it up. Human opponents, though, are another matter; use strategic shots (to set up vision-blocking splotches) or fireballs (exploding bricks obscure the view temporarily) to distract your opponent.

One minor annoyance: You can angle the return of the ball by hitting it on the edge of the padde OPPOSITE from where you want to go (make it go down by hitting it with the top edge, for instance). Once you understand it, ball control is easy -- but until then, it's a mystery. The manual is of little help here.

GRAPHICS/GAMEPLAY

From an original name of "3D Barrage", ROBO-SQUASH makes good use of the Lynx's scaing capabilites. The 3D effects of the game are very well done; the ball's size changes and the use of two ball shadows make it clear where the ball is, and the obscuring blotches

are a neat idea. The rest of the graphics are functional, though the power-up icons are a bit cute (a dragon's head for the fireball launcher, for instance).

Sounds are passable but not notworthy, repeating the trend in PAPERBOY and XENOPHOBE. The actual gameplay is mostly silent, with only the sound of the bouncing ball and smashed bricks punctuating. The only real music comes in the opening title tune, and while it's nice, it's not enough.

SUMMARY

A good, slightly above-average game. Playing it by yourself is fine, since the difficulty levels let you tune the computer to your skills. I suspect, though, that playing it with another person would be more fun. Best for players who are looking for a sports-type game for the Lynx (at least until TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL comes out).

GAMEPLAY	**7 to 8**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

ROBOTRON: 2084

Shadowsoft, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Shadowsoft, a newcomer to the Lynx development scene, takes video gamers back in time with their first release. The destination is 1984, where Williams Electronics' ROBOTRON: 2084 is taking arcades by storm. In a plot reminescent of the movie Terminator, you play a laser-firing mutant who must save the last humans of Earth from extermination by the mechanical Robotrons. Destroy all the Robotrons, and you travel to the next stage, with even more dangers.

GAMEPLAY

Williams' video games were respected as true challenges, with no mercy for the weak, and Shadowsoft's version is no exception. ROBOTRON on the Lynx is just as fast and tough, with absolutely nothing missing nor abridged. The action is viewed from overhead, and you must navagate around each level, saving humans while keeping yourself alive. The difficulty can be set to one of five levels, though even the easiest is a challenge.

Anyone familliar with the original ROBOTRON will know that the controls will present a problem. In the arcade, two joysticks were used, allowing you to move and fire independently. In response, Shadowsoft has provided three different control schemes, using different methods of aiming and firing. This is an acceptable substitute, and each player will find a setting that works for himself.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

ROBOTRON's faithfulness goes down to the smallest detail, as the sights and sounds of the arcade machine are duplicated exactly. Game elements are distinctive enough, though their may be some confusion in the heat of the battle. All other visuals are copied as well, right down to the storytelling attract mode. Similarly, the sounds of the original have been rendered exactly, down to the last zap and explosion. Most of the game is played in mono, though the moody title tune and the effect when you die are done in a subtle stereo.

SUMMARY

ROBOTRON on the Lynx loses none of the intensity of the classic title. Though the controls are a minor sticking point, they can be worked with, leaving this a game of intense non-stop shooting action. If Shadowsoft's future works are as good as this, Lynx owners are in for a lot of fun.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**

GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**8.5**

RYGAR

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

It has been over 10,000 years since the demonic hordes of the underworld drove our people away from the fertle farmlands and forced us into hiding on the desolate slopes. Now, however, the predictions of the ancient sages has come true. You are Rygar the Reclaimer, born of the mystic birthmark, who has the power and the skill to weild the warrior's shield, destroy the demons, and bring our people home.

Okay, so the storyline is nothing original. RYGAR for the Lynx is an adaptation of the Tecmo arcade game, where you play the barbarian hero out to battle monsters and beasts across the land. You run from left to right across a scrolling screen, fighting monsters and grabbing artifacts along the way. Your weapon is your armored shield, which, when thrown at the monsters, returns to your hand. If there are too many creatures to be destroyed, you can stun them for a few seconds by jumping on them.

The artifacts you find along the way will either give you additional points or extra fighting powers. You must be careful in your travels, however. Touching a non-stunned creature, or falling off the path, spells instant death for Rygar. Run out of lives, and the game ends. You face opponents such as headless zombies, flying griffons, and giant rolling worms across 23 levels. Clear all the levels, and you will return peace to the land.

GAMEPLAY

Okay, how's it play? As an arcade adaptation, RYGAR is almost -- but not completely -- identical to the arcade version. Veterans of the original will notice a few differences in the gameplay. For instance, you can't throw your shield in a protective arc, and throwing the shield upwards is possible only if you have a "star" artifact. There are other minor differences as well, but this is an adequate adaptation for the most part.

On the plus side, the controls are easy to use, and the game difficulty is not set too high. The game is mostly patternized, with a few random elements in terms of what artifacts appear. You start off with three lives, and get extra Rygars at certain point intervals (the first three are at 50,000, 100,000, and 175,000 points). When you die, there is no "continue" feature, and no "skip levels" feature, so this is largely an endurance contest.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on RYGAR are identical to the arcade version. Both Rygar and the demons are clearly distinctive, detailed, and animated identically to the arcade. The landscape is done in two-level multilayered scrolling, with nice details and some background animation. While it's not MICKEY MOUSE AND THE CASTLE OF ILLUSION, it is sufficently well done.

Sounds are a bit weaker, however. The game effects are appropriate and adequate, though the bells that signal the presence/taking of artifacts can get irritating. The background music is reminescent of the arcade tunes -- a low rythmic drum beat during gameplay and a musical interlude between levels -- but suffers from either being too low-volumed or too high-pitched. Fortunately, you can turn off the music by pressing Option 2 before starting the game.

SUMMARY

RYGAR for the Lynx is a "typical" game, neither extremely outstanding nor truly dissappointing. While fans of the arcade game will find slight differences, it's close enough to be familliar (especially since the only other adaptation was a vastly different game for the Nintendo). Though there are only 23 levels, the lack of a level skip and game continues means this is an average-difficulty endurance contest which will take some time to finish.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**6.5**
OVERALL	**7.5**

S.T.U.N. RUNNER

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Take the New York subway system, throw in a hovercraft cruising at 900 MPH, and you have S.T.U.N. RUNNER, the latest Atari Games' arcade sensation adapted for the Lynx. The game starts off simple enough: just drive your S.T.U.N. sled up, down, and around a twisting course of tunnels and walkways, trying to finish it in the brief amount of time given. Complicating the matter are the other cars in the passages, trying to ram and slow you down, as well as passing jets trying to bomb your craft. While firing back, you must keep an eye on the track, for reckless driving will slow you down, which can cost you the race. There are over 20 levels, each with its own variety of twists, branches, jumps, and obstacles.

GAMEPLAY

S.T.U.N. RUNNER on the Lynx is both a thrilling action game and another shining translation. In terms of action, the gameplay is fast and furious, requiring you to negotiate the twisting track, deal with opponents, and go for bonuses all at the same time. Enemies may be dodged or destroyed, though you can unleash a road-clearing Shockwave if things get too thick. The only time you really get to relax is while examining the map between races.

As a conversion, S.T.U.N. RUNNER offers all of the game features found in the original. Each of the arcade courses have been faithfully duplicated, with the same combination of narrow tunnels, jump ramps, and other track features. Similarly, the opposing vehicles are as varied and tenacious as ever, blocking your path in the most annoying ways. Finally, challenge stages are scatted throughout the game for extra points.

There are a few imperfections, but they are very minor. The steering controls are a little sensitive, and beginning players will tend to oversteer. The problem is not critical, however, and players will adapt to them in a short time. The Lynx version is also harder than the arcade game: turning improperly into a curve will slow down your craft significantly. Coupled with the tight time limits on each track, this can cost you the race.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

S.T.U.N. RUNNER on the Lynx exploits the graphics engine completely. While the original game drew everything with filled polygons, this version duplicates it with scaled sprites. The end result is not as refined, but the action is incredibly fast -- you really get the sensation of flying at supersonic speeds. Distinctive-looking enemies, sharp backgrounds, and intermissions round out the sensational effects.

Sounds are also very good, with a constant barrage of blasts, screeches, and explosions pulling you into the action. Even better, sound effects and voices are digitized from the original game, giving strategies, tips, and encouragement throughout.

SUMMARY

This game is a high-quality production from beginning to end, retaining all of the action, thrills, and speed of the original game. The Lynx's abilities are exploited to the fullest, making this version of S.T.U.N. RUNNER a fully-loaded action extravaganza and the best adaptation now available for any machine.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.5**
SOUND	**9.0**

OVERALL	**9.0**

SCRAPYARD DOG

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Louie is back for the first time. No, that's not a contradiction; the big-nosed junkman from the Atari 7800 game SCRAPYARD DOG returns in this new adaptation for the Atari Lynx. As before, Louie's pet dog Scraps has been kidnapped by Mr. Big, and it's up to him to rescue his pet pal by running, ducking, and jumping through 24 stages.

Along the way, Louie will face Mr. Big's animal gangsters, such as rat mobsters and rock-dropping birds. He can fight back by lobbing tin cans, or try to sidestep the problem all together. He can also find money, play in hidden bonus sequences, and go shopping. However, a timer counts down each level, so Louie can't dawndle too long.

GAMEPLAY

SCRAPYARD DOG offers solid game action in an easy-to-learn package. The controls are simple and logical, and Louie himself responds sharply to your moves. The action takes place on a side view, horizontally scrolling playfield, though some scenes scroll vertically as well. Game dangers are clearly visible, which prevents you from getting killed by a blindsided attack. Players comfortable with Bonk or Mario will be right at home with Louie.

Though the mechanics are very familiar, SCRAPYARD DOG keeps things intersting by good use of variety throughout the game. The trip starts off at the scrapyard, but winds through, above, and below the rest of the town. With vehicles to drive, places to explore, and villians to foil, the player is kept pretty busy. Things never get too hectic, though, and overall the game runs at a leisurely clip. As with other games in this genre, there are very few random elements, so patterns can be developed over time.

The most interesting parts of the game are the numerous secret bonuses and diversions. There are stores along the path where Louie can buy useful items, such as weapons or protection. Also, hidden throughout the landscape are various bonus scenes. For instance, by hopping on the right keys of a giant organ, or winning a shell game, Louie can pick up more money and benefits. There are also other bonuses, both hidden and overt, sprinkled throughout the game for the player to find.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics in SCRAPYARD DOG are simple and entertaining. Game elements are easily identifiable and drawn in primary colors with a minimum of detail. There are also extra touches that add to the fun, such as an animated opening cartoon, and Mr. Big's taunting notes throughout the game. Sounds are pretty basic, offering appropriate but generic noises with a musical tune thrown in.

SUMMARY

Despite the cute graphics and the simple plot, this title offers good clean fun for players of all ages. The numerous hidden surprises and the variety throughout only add to the game's appeal, making SCRAPYARD DOG a well-recommended title.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**8.5**

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

The Beast is back! SHADOW OF THE BEAST for the Lynx is -- no surprise -- a conversion of the popular Psygnosis computer game. You play an inhuman demon, stripped of your human identity by the dreaded Beast Lord, and who has just now learned of your lost heritage. Now driven by rage and revenge, you must run, jump, and fight through a number of multidirectional scrolling stages to destroy the fiend and rest your soul. Along the way, you will unravel puzzles and hunt for tools and weapons, but an army of minions and many traps stand in your way.

GAMEPLAY

The original version of BEAST was notorious for being incredibly difficult, and this version is just as hard; it is one of the toughest Lynx games you can buy today. You have only one life, and your lifeblood is quickly whittled away by relentless attacks and sheer drops. The game offers three continues, but there is no way to save a game or to skip earlier stages. The game is immensely large, with dozens and dozens of places to explore, and players are advised to allocate lots of free time for this title. Simple controls allow you to jump, attack, and select weapons, though you cannot instantly change directions.

What elevates SHADOW OF THE BEAST from being another rehash of DONKEY KONG is its adventuring aspects. While there are platforms to jump and enemies to destroy, blindly going forward will get you nowhere. Instead, the only way to make progress is to thoroughly explore each area. The adventuring aspects of this game are simple and very linear. Each problem has one path to the proper solution, and deviations from that are harder or simply impossible. Also, some areas require prior knowledge, which you can get only by experience from earlier games. To be fair, this game pulls no sudden surprises; when you die, for instance, you know exactly what mistakes led to your demise.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on BEAST are some of the best ever seen on a Lynx. Fantastic use of color and detail makes for realistic characters and backgrounds, topped off with fine, multilayered parallex scrolling. Your on-screen personna runs, turns, and jumps with fluid, lifelike animation, and many of the game's antagonists are equally well done. The game sounds are slightly above average, though they do not come too often. Much better, though, are the many background tunes running throughout the game, all of which are terrific, atmospheric, and haunting. You can press Option 2 to turn them off, but you won't want to...

SUMMARY

SHADOW OF THE BEAST hits the Lynx without losing any of the relentless challenge from the original. It is an audio-video feast, but the game's high difficulty level and gameplay may turn off some players. Still, if you relish a serious, take-no-prisoners video game, this title is just the ticket.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**7.5**

SHANGHAI

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

In 1986, before TETRIS, a company called Activision (now known also as Mediagenic) took the ageless Chinese game of Mah Jongg and twisted it into a computer puzzle challenge for the 20th century. This game became an instant hit, largely due to its simplicity: Players remove matching pairs of tiles from an organized heap, trying to remove as many tiles as possible.

Now the game returns, in color, portable, and expanded, on the Atari Lynx. As in the original SHANGHAI, you are presented with 144 Mah Jongg tiles arranged in an organized, three-dimensional heap. By selecting matching pairs of "free" tiles (tiles not blocked by other tiles to the left or right), you whittle down the pile, and ultimately -- if your strategy is wise -- clear the heap. The Lynx version is expanded from the original with alternate board sets and two-player options, while retaining all the features of the original.

GAMEPLAY

SHANGHAI is like TETRIS, KLAX, or a Rubik's Cube: it looks so easy to solve, but actually beating the challenge is another matter. Players who are familliar with SHANGHAI elsewhere will have no problem with the Lynx version, as the original gameplay has been kept completely intact. You move an arrow around the screen with the joypad, pressing the "A" button to select tiles, and the "B" button to deselect them. During the game, pressing Option 1 will provide you with extra features -- previous best scores for this board, changing the way tiles are displayed, restarting the game, or a starting-tile hint. Scoring is done by both the number of tiles you have removed, as well as the amount of time you take to finish the game (an on-screen clock is provided).

As mentioned before, the Lynx version has been expanded from the original. Before the game starts, you can choose to play on one of seven tile configurations: Dragon (the original), Hawk, Butterfly, Fish, Bear, Spider, and Turtle. With two Lynxes ComLynxed, you can play either Alternating Competitive, Simultaneous Competitive, or Cooperative. The game even offers built-in instructions, for on-the-spot teaching.

A special word goes out to the instruction manual. In this age of short and sparse game instructions, the SHANGHAI manual goes beyond the call of duty, presenting not only the fundamentals of gameplay, but some historical background into the Chinese Mah Jongg game, the origin of the tile symbols, and some very helpful strategies. There's even a slightly-silly storyline, for people who must have a tale for everything.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

One major reason why SHANGHAI on the Lynx is so playable are the graphics. All of the tiles are clearly recognizable at all times, both in their symbols and their height on the board. Tiles can be displayed either as a number and a symbol (e.g., a "3" and a bamboo), or as the actual Mah Jongg tile image (e.g., three bamboo sticks). To further help identify the tiles, a magnified picture of the tile under your pointer is displayed (if the tile is "free" for removal), thus eliminating all ambiguity. Other game graphics are equally functional without being intrusive.

Sounds are not really needed for this game, but the Lynx version provides them anyway. Tiles are selected with a resounding click, and a buzzer alerts you when you have made an illegal move. Option 2 selects from one of four background tunes, as well as total silence.

SUMMARY

This is an excellent version of SHANGHAI, preserving all of the charm of the original game while throwing in enough twists to make it stand on its own. For fans of the original who want to play on the go, and for players interested in an engrossing, always-challenging puzzle for the Lynx, SHANGHAI is recommended without any reservations.

GAMEPLAY	**10**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**10**

STEEL TALONS

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Once again, the Lynx dares to go where other portable game systems fear to tread, with an adaptation of STEEL TALONS, the arcade helicopter flight simulator. Your objective is to fly a military chopper through twelve filled- polygon missions, blowing away enemy

armaments and camps while staying alive. Each of your four helicopters can take a small number of hits, and the battle computer and instruments provide lots of information, but in the end it takes skill and strategy to win. Are you up to the challenge?

GAMEPLAY

Confession time -- when I heard that STEEL TALONS was being adapted for the Lynx, I shuddered in fear. After all, the last attempt at a polygon simulator was the very disappointing HARD DRIVIN'. If the Lynx couldn't handle a car, how much worse would a helicopter simulation be? Surprise! STEEL TALONS is a LOT of fun to play, and represents the cutting edge of Lynx software technology. John Sanderson and NuFX have learned a lot from their earlier effort, and this title is to be commended.

Three features from the arcade game have been removed from the Lynx: The ability to play two players simultaneously, the use of fuel limits, and the option to completely simulate an Apache helicopter's control set (the arcade default used simplified controls to make flying easier). Otherwise, everything else is preserved. You have control of your speed, altitude, and heading, and instruments show everything from structural integrity to ammo remaining to the location of you and your targets. The game can be seen either from behind your chopper, or from the cockpit for double points. The instruction manual is a little sparse on details, leaving players more about the game to discover.

The steering yolk, pedals, and stick of the original STEEL TALONS have been streamlined; all of the Lynx's buttons are used, alone and combined, to give you total control. Learning the scheme takes about ten minutes, but it's a worthy investment. Unlike HARD DRIVIN', everything is properly responsive and the controls are reasonable. One quirk that may confuse some players is that "flight" controls are not used; pressing up takes you higher, not lower. This shouldn't bother most players, however.

Overall, the game is fairly hard and challenging, and careless players will be quickly decimated. Missions are progressively difficult, ranging from a training run to night hunting to weaving through tall canyons. Each mission is timed, and finishing a mission fast enough earns bonuses. You have a set number of machine gun rounds, rockets, and guided missiles, with the battle computer finding targets and helping your aim. You'll soon completely lose yourself in the action, strafing targets and destroying tanks effortlessly.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics and sound on STEEL TALONS will please most players. The game action is rendered with filled-polygon graphics, drawing enemies and hills along with trees, clouds, and rivers. The screen is updated at about four frames a second; while it's not as fast as a dedicated machine, it's more than sufficient and doesn't hurt the game at all. Instruments are visible without obscuring the view; other graphics, like the terrain maps and the high score table, are drawn very nicely.

There are not a wide variety of sounds, but the ones that are present are used appropriately. The drumming of your chopper's blades fill the skies, mixed with the rattle of the machine guns and the hiss of missiles. Klaxons and chimes warn of radar lock and enemy hits, all punctuated with assorted explosions. Finally, there's a somewhat garbled voice giving you tips before each mission, and some nicely-done musical tunes sprinkled throughout.

SUMMARY

Purists who wanted nothing short of a total, unabridged translation will be disappointed. For everyone else, though, STEEL TALONS on the Lynx is a joy to play, a very pleasant surprise, and a Herculean effort to be saluted. If the idea of realistic air combat action stirs your blood, buy this game and take off!

GAMEPLAY	**9.5**
GRAPHICS	**9.5**
SOUND	**8.5**
OVERALL	**9.5**

SUPER SKWEEK

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's...an orange furball? No, it's SUPER SKWEEK on the Lynx, an adaptation of the French computer game, and an unofficial sequel to SLIDER on the Game Gear. You control Skweek, the orange furball alluded to above, whose mission is to save 250 tile-filled levels on five islands with a motley crew of creatures and critters. The game is viewed from above, as Skweek walks along the tiles and shoots any creatures that get in his way.

Skweek's most common goal is to walk on the blue tiles to make them pink, though some levels require rescuing female Skweezettes or destroying monsters instead, and all levels feature a time limit. Making the effort harder are the many types of tiles in the game -- slippery tiles, crumbling tiles, explosive tiles, and even tiles that float above the ground. Skweek can also find or buy icons to change his shots or give other powers. The game can start from stage 1, 50, or 100, or be played in a random order, and a password saves your current score and game. Finally, two people can ComLynx together for cooperative or competitive play.

GAMEPLAY

Though it looks like a puzzle game, SUPER SKWEEK shouldn't be treated as one. Some of the levels require strategic thinking, but most of the game is played with instinct and arcade-quality caution. This title's biggest asset is its wealth of features. There are literally dozens of enemies, enhancements, tiles and wall pieces to work with, and discovering how everything works will take a while. There's also a lot of randomness to the game, which makes pattern developing impossible and helps its appeal. Other options allow you to restart the current level and to adjust the diagonal movements of the joypad.

While the idea is fine, the implementation is not, as there are problems in SUPER SKWEEK that make it harder than necessary. Shooting is tricky, as only a direct hit on a monster counts, and near-misses often prove deadly. Because Skweek's movement is not confined to the "grid" of each level, you can walk into a dangerous area unintentionally. There's also an annoying bug if Skweek dies on a disappearing tile: your next life appears in the same spot, and if the tile is still gone, you die again. These problems are frustrating, though not enough to totally discredit the game.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on SUPER SKWEEK are very nice, though there's little here that any other video game can't duplicate. Colors are used incredibly well, with bright pastels and primaries used to compliment the whimsy and give the impression of lots of shades. Game text and elements are small, yet remain easily identified with lots of detail and animation. Sounds consistly of machine-generated effects, but nothing truly unusual or noteworthy. The various themes and music, however, are a notch above the standard Lynx fare.

SUMMARY

This is an unusual game with a distinctive atmosphere that may not attract all players. While the concept is fairly novel, there are a few flaws in the implementation that hinder it somewhat. Still, if you're willing to put forth a little patience for its weaknesses, SUPER SKWEEK can produce many hours of engaging fun.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**7.5**
OVERALL	**7.5**

SWITCHBLADE II

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

In the far future, the evil ninja lord Havok reined over the land, until Hiro the immortal defeated his robot army and banished the fiend. Now Havok and his forces have returned, stronger than ever, and Hiro has returned to fight once again. Armed with lethal metal-

slicing blades and an array of weapons, you must guide Hiro across the scrolling landscape, destroying all enemies in your path and bring down Havok once again.

If you haven't fallen asleep from that threadbare plot, then here are more details for this Lynx adaptation of the Gremlin game. Hiro starts with three lives, though each life can take several hits before dying. Money, health, and points can be found along the way, while extra lives and advanced weaponry can be bought in the shops located in the game. There are six levels in all, each divided into several substages and capped with the obligatory boss villain.

GAMEPLAY

The video game market is filled from floor to ceiling with hundreds of these scrolling, kill-everything titles, some very good and some very mediocre. SWITCHBLADE II leans towards the latter, with fairly bland gameplay that feels flavorless and leaves you hollow. On the surface, there is nothing at fault with this game, as it follows all of the formulas: Controls are simple and responsive, the story and gameplay are tried and true, and there's a wealth of enemies, weapons, and scenery. Just go in and clobber anything that moves, right?

On the other hand, this game lacks a soul, a sense of adventure and excitement. There's very little challenge, with enemies patrolling mindlessly or attacking in ones and twos, and no time limit or other form of pressure. Young players may find this game tricky, but experienced players will easily stomp over the forces of evil. Many other games offer the same basic action, only better, or faster, or more difficult, but SWITCHBLADE II quickly becomes an exercise in boredom. There's no solid reason to dislike this title, but it offers little incentive to like it, either.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics and sound of SWITCHBLADE II do not do anything to enhance its appeal. The graphics are small and passable, with a good variety to reflect the different types of terrains and enemies. Unfortunately, they fail to get the player excited, and the animation is extremely simple. Similarly, aside from a stirring title theme, the game is mostly quiet, except for the tapping of Hiro's feet and assorted explosions. Remaining sound effects are uninspired and quickly forgotten.

SUMMARY

SWITCHBLADE II is yet another side-scrolling kill-everything action game that will quickly get lost in the crowd, as it commits the cardinal sin of boring the player. People who dislike this game genre will not be swayed by SWITCHBLADE II, and action gamers can easily find other, similar titles that are more enticing.

GAMEPLAY	**5.0**
GRAPHICS	**5.5**
SOUND	**5.0**
OVERALL	**5.0**

THE FIDELITY ULTIMATE CHESS CHALLENGE

Telegames, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

We all knew it would happen, sooner or later. After all, even portable video gamers cannot live on action-arcade titles alone. Now filling a void, Telegames Inc. has released THE FIDELITY ULTIMATE CHESS CHALLENGE for the Atari Lynx. There's not much that needs to be said, really; this is a one- or two-player version of (Western) chess, following all of the standard rules for the game. If you don't know how to play chess, get a different game.

(Quick note: Though this game seems to be packaged and distributed by Atari, there are enough signs that this is an independent developer's effort. Everything on this game is credited to Telegames Inc., so all praises and criticisms must fall squarely on their shoulders...)

GAMEPLAY

What does this version of chess offer? FIDELITY CHESS (for short) lets one or two players play chess with a _single_ Lynx. The computer offers 17 levels of difficulty -- 8 levels based on search depth, 8 levels based on analysis time, and an "ultimate" level using unlimited time and searching. You can ask the computer for hints, force it to make a move immediately, and take back moves (up to 100 full moves can be taken back). The board offers gold and silver pieces on a 2-D or 3-D board, and game sounds, messages, and other features can be toggled and selected during a game. Finally, the entire current chess game is logged in standard chess notation, and can be reviewed, along with a running count of the players' scores (based on pieces remaining).

The most important question, naturally, is how well FIDELITY CHESS plays the game. Though I enjoy the game, I don't claim to be a chess expert; however, the Lynx appears to play a very respectable game. For a test, I pitted FIDELITY CHESS (on the Lynx's 65C02) versus the computer game BATTLE CHESS (on a 68000). Although the Lynx took longer to make decisions deeper into the game, it ultimately checked and mated in 23 moves. With "ultimate" mode, FIDELITY CHESS may just be almost impossible to defeat. On higher levels, it can take quite some time for the computer to make a move. To counteract this, the Lynx's automatic shutoff feature is disabled.

A few minor quibbles with the game. Control response is the most sluggish I've ever seen in a Lynx game. Specifically, response to button presses are not always instantaneous, for some reason. Also, while there is an icon-driven Setup screen to help you set options, not all features are available. Without reading the manual, you'd need an accident to find out about features such as taking back a move (press A and B simultaneously).

There is one large flaw in FIDELITY CHESS, however: The game has no "board set up" feature. The manual suggests that you can set up a game by playing a two-player contest to the desired point, then switching to a one-player game; however, I find this suggestion cumbersome and unfriendly. Essentally, then, you must either finish a game at one sitting, or log all the moves to recreate (and continue) a game at a later time. Very dissappointing.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics and sound on FIDELITY CHESS are functional, but nothing more. That's fine, though; flashy graphics and noises can be a distracting irritant if done improperly. The chess pieces in both 2-D and 3-D mode are clear and distinctive (though a little large in 3-D mode, in my opinion). Sounds are similarly sparse; aside from a musical ditty played at the title page, the only noises available are the chimes that are played when a piece is moved, or a message is displayed.

SUMMARY

Telegames has made a respectable entry into the Lynx game market with this title. As a chess game, THE FIDELITY ULTIMATE CHESS CHALLENGE fits the bill. It plays a strong, challenging game, though it presumes some knowledge of chess on your part. The lack of a board set-up option, however, is inexcusable; it could have been added with very little effort. However, if you can live with this omission, and want to play chess on the go, then FIDELITY CHESS is a good solution.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**6.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

TODD'S ADVENTURES IN SLIME WORLD

Atari, 1-8 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Okay, let's get the novelty out of the way: TODD'S ADVENTURES IN SLIME WORLD is the first eight-player video game ever created. That aside, you play the role of Todd the explorer, who's trapped inside a planet made of disgusting green slime. There are six scenarios, and most of them requires you to climb, jump, slide, and fly to the exit, while grabbing as much treasure as possible on the way (when playing with friends, one scenario has you hunting the other players to be the last one alive).

Todd starts off with a water pistol and a computer-generated map. As Todd explores Slime World, he will find valuable slime gems and assorted tools such as shields, jet packs, or megabombs. Todd will also get coated in the gunk, whether it's from dripping ceilings or attacks from numerous creatures. The creatures can be dispatched with the water gun, but too much slime is fatal, so you must keep Todd clean. Even then, the trip is very dangerous; an unlimited number of lives are available, and pausing the game gives a six-character password to let you continue at a later date. A built-in tutorial makes learning easier.

GAMEPLAY

This game is HUGE. Most of the caverns used in the scenarios are hundreds of screens large, and require literally hours to reach the exit. You'll often look at the computer map, think you're near the end, explore a bit further, then find a larger expanse of uncharted territory ahead. There's quite a lot to look at, also: waterfalls of slime, rubbery slime to bounce on, slippery slime, giant pools of slimy water. SLIME WORLD's creatures will fly, hop, and jump all over, hoping to either coat you in the ooze, eat you alive, or simply stick to your face. The six different levels are somewhat distinctive; some emphasize arcade-type action, while others require careful exploring and thinking.

As large and varied as it is, SLIME WORLD's weakest point is the lack of repeatability. It's biggest attraction is the appeal of exploring the unknown. Once you eventually finish a scenario, there is little motivation to try it again, as the layout and contents never change; a randomly-generated level would have helped immensely. While the "hunt the other players" mission is very enjoyable, the other levels feature little direct interaction, and do not benefit greatly when ComLynxed. Exploring Slime World is fun, but it's after the exploration ends that the fun wanes.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

SLIME WORLD's slime effect is convincing and impressive, with glistening, unidentifiable clumps throughout, all oozing and pulsating in real time. Todd himself is highly animated, and can be clearly seen throwing bombs, using equipment, and performing whatever else you want. Creatures and other objects are also done well, though not nearly as animated as Todd. In a multiplayer game, your character has blonde hair while other players are brunettes.

Sounds are interesting, though ultimately not as exciting. Aside from the title theme, game music consists of repeating clips, ranging from short tunes to near-random beeps, that change periodically. Sound effects are a bit better, though a crowd of slime creatures in tight quarters can quickly produce a jarring kalidescope of noise.

SUMMARY

TODD'S ADVENTURES IN SLIME WORLD will appeal mostly to players who enjoy the idea of exploring every nook and cranny of its vast, gooey terrain. For others, however, the appeal is not as distinct; depending on personal preferences and the availability of friends, the value of this card will vary significantly.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.5**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

TOKI

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

So there's Toki the caveman, out spending time with his girlfriend, talking about whatever it is cavepeople chat about. Who comes to spoil the party but the local Evil High Priest Vookimedlo, who kidnaps his gal and uses magic to devolve Toki into a chimp. Strangely enough, Toki the chimpanzee can shoot fireballs from his mouth, and decides to use his primitive machismo to rescue his date. Hey, if an Italian plumber can rescue damsels in distress, why can't an ape give it a try?

That's TOKI for the Atari Lynx, an adaptation of the little-seen arcade video game from Fabtek. You must guide Toki through eight multidirectional scrolling stages of caverns, moats, and whatnot, battling Vookimedlo's traps and flunkies. Toki can defeat enemies by hitting them with his fireballs, or by repeatedly jumping on them. Along the way, you will find items that temporarily enhance Toki's abilities, like higher jumping or more powerful fireballs. A life is lost if Toki is hit by an enemy, caught by a trap, or runs out of time; an extra life is awarded if enough coins are collected.

GAMEPLAY

The most supportive statement that can be made for TOKI on the Lynx is that it's a very faithful adaptation. Almost none of the gameplay has been abridged or altered; people who have played this in the arcade will be in familliar territory. The problem is that the original was not that spectacular to begin with. Aside from the slightly novel plot, there is very little here that hasn't been done before.

This is not to say that TOKI is a bad game; as yet-another-run-and-jump, its redeeming points elevate it a bit above its competition. There is a good amount of variety; the enemies you have to face are very diverse, and the different stages are much more than a change in window dressing. Also, the game sets a very irreverant tone; for instance, two of the tools helping Toki's quest are football helmets and teeter-totters loaded with weights. Finally, the game itself is of fair difficulty; you start with four lives, and can continue up to two times, but the typical player will need all the help he can find.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics and sound of TOKI capture the game's lighthearted attitude very well. There is good use of color and a lot of detail and animation in the graphics. However, some of the game elements are fairly small, requiring a bit of effort to spot them. This can be fatal with some of the more detailed backgrounds, as a small incoming projectile could slip past your sight.

Sounds are better, making good use of music, computer-generated effects, and digitized clips. Each level is accompanied by an unobtrusive background soundtrack, and the individual sound effects are distinctive. The digitized bits are often the most enjoyable, such as Toki's death yelp and the cartoon-inspired "boing!" noises.

SUMMARY

TOKI is, in the final analysis, a great adaptation of an average game, duplicating the original's sights, sounds, and action faithfully. If you aren't interested in run-and-jump contests, there is little here to change your opinion. However, if you're in the market for a new arcade-action game, TOKI is a worthy candidate.

GAMEPLAY	**6.5**
GRAPHICS	**7.5**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game, $39.95

OVERVIEW

As mankind moved into the 21st century, the task of keeping people entertained started to become a problem. The sports and games of yesteryear seemed boring and tame as the new generation wanted more action and danger. Since murder remains illegal, the solution fell to robots, who could offer the violence that the audience demanded while preserving human lives.

Welcome to the era of TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL, the explosive sequel to the CYBERBALL arcade game from Atari Games. This is a futuristic sports game with very close ties to American football. Two teams of robots play on a 100-yard field, trying to move a ball into the opponents' end zone. The ball heats up over time, so the offensive team must carry the ball far enough to cool it down, else face an explosion that destroys nearby players. Cheap mass-produced replacements are available, but smart coaches save their winnings to buy the better model players.

GAMEPLAY

On the surface, TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL appears to be a decent adaptation. Up to four players can play, either against each other or versus one of four computer coaches. The defense has a fixed selection of moves, while the offensive choices are picked by the game from a larger pool, according to the situation. On the field, each player controls a robot, and are responsible for making the passes and blitzes needed. During the game, you earn money for specific scoring actions, such as interceptions and scoring. The game lasts for six periods, with opportunities to buy enhanced players throughout the game.

Scratch the surface, however, and the problems appear. There is no apparent difference in abilities between the teams, and the team-unique plays from the original are gone. Robots cannot be damaged, though an explosion will destroy the ball carrier. Handoffs are unpredictable, reducing the value of running plays, and while passes are effective, it's difficult to intercept the computer's throws. Opportunities for enhanced players appear throughout the game, but reduce the number of plays available until you accept. The pace of the game is a little too fast; more time to decide and choose plays would be welcome, and plays start as soon as all players are in position. These and other flaws reduce a great idea into a frustrating experience.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics in TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL are passable, though little more. The robots are distinctive, but are otherwise nondiscrept, and appear a bit too small. The three-quarters perspective scrolling and the play selection screens are done well, but are nothing to shout about. Sound effects are of a similar nature, either using similar versions of the arcade sounds and music, or omitting them all together. On the plus side, some of the digitized voices have been preserved, though hearing "Three... six... hike!" on every play becomes irritating after a while.

SUMMARY

TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL on the Lynx could have been a quality conversion; other Lynx titles have shown the potential of the system. This game seems to have been written by someone with little familliarity with the original, and the shortcomings show through. In the final analysis, the many fans of TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL should skip this conversion and stick to the arcade machine instead.

GAMEPLAY	**5.5**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**7.0**
OVERALL	**6.0**

TURBO SUB

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Let's get this straight: Earth is under attack (again) by alien invaders (again). All attempts to repel the invaders have failed (again), but a single brave hero may (again) restore peace to the planet (again). Guess who gets this honor (again)? Yes, you (again).

TURBO SUB for the Atari Lynx is a first-person nonstop firefight. The enemy has taken over the skies and seas of the Earth, and it's up to you to destroy the invaders and save the day. You pilot the Turbo Sub, a high-speed flying and diving aquatic arsenal. Your foes use everything from amphibious warships to robotic creatures and flying stone heads. Each level (there are reportedly seventeen) starts off with an aerial attack, though you can dive to escape if the situation gets too thick. After the air attack, you head underwater, with more enemies to fight, obstacles to dodge, and gems to gather. Survive the round, and the sub enters a supply cavern, where you use gathered gems to buy additional supplies and weapons.

GAMEPLAY

TURBO SUB is what I call a "ten second" game; it takes ten seconds to learn it, and another ten seconds to get into the thick of things. Your primary objective consists of blasting everything. Staying alive means dodging enemy fire, collisions, debris, and underwater

obstacles. The sub's main weapon is an unlimited supply of electro-plasma bursts; there is also a limited supply of megabombs, which can destroy all visible enemies at once. Between rounds, you can buy extra ships, extra fuel, and better weapon systems for use on the next level. Two players can ComLynx together, but the only purpose is to see who can out-shoot the other.

There is little else that needs to be said. The game idea demands fast, frantic action, and TURBO SUB delivers it in spades. The initial levels consist of small groups of one and two aliens, but quickly progress into more opponents wielding more firepower. The game starts with eleven subs, and they will go quickly if you're not careful. In the end, though, TURBO SUB strikes a balance between being difficult without being hopelessly overwhelming. The downside of this game is that there is little variety; as with other games of this type, victory will come to players with the fastest reflexes and the strongest thumbs.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

As expected, the Lynx's sprite hardware makes TURBO SUB's 3D effects smooth and effortless. The graphics themselves are a mix, from realistically detailed to bright and simple, and end up attractive and engaging. There is very little for sound, however. The only music comes from a bouncy little tune at the title page, and actual game sounds are mostly explosions and weapons fire.

SUMMARY

What TURBO SUB lacks in originality and variety, it makes up with blistering excitement. If you've got an appetite for uncomplicated massive destruction at Mach 3, TURBO SUB is the way to go!

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.5**

VIKING CHILD

Atari, 1 player, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Can't a guy fulfill his destiny in peace? Brian the Viking child was just sitting at home when the Norse god Loki appeared (between stints in GHOULS AND GHOSTS, natch). Worried about the prophesy that Brian will grow up into a mighty Viking leader, Loki has kidnapped Brian's family, spirited them across the land, and dared the young boy to rescue them. If Brian can survive the rescue of his family, he may get to fulfill this destiny someday.

This is the premise of VIKING CHID, an action-adventure game for the Atari Lynx, adapted from the European computer title. You play the part of Brian, who must explore many stages of the side-view scrolling landscape in search of your family. A family member has been hidden throughout the land, guarded by both Loki's forces and a bit of deception. Only by agility and intelligence can you complete this quest.

GAMEPLAY

When you boil the game down, VIKING CHILD is essentially a run-and-jump quest game with a few adventure-gaming touches. Brian loses health over time and in fights with monsters, while each victory earns money and points. Though the trip is very linear, there is a lot of terrain to explore, and houses, castles, and caves contain shops selling weapons and magic. Finally, you can't exit a level without first uncovering and defeating the level's chieftain monster, who is hidden from immediate view.

In the end, the combination of action and adventure is only partially successful, which hampers the appeal. As an action game, VIKING CHILD is a bit slow; Brian walks and jumps at a modest rate, while monsters run and jump all over the place. There are numerous fights, but they consist mainly of poking creatures with a dagger or throwing weapons against them. And while there is much to see, this game offers none of the sophistication of real role-playing games. In its favor, VIKING CHILD is a tough game, with time limits and Loki's forces combining to whittle down your health.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on VIKING CHILD are done fairly well. The adventure itself makes good use of earth-tone colors and detail. Brian and the creatures are drawn small enough to give a good view of the surrounding area, without losing much detail. There are also some elegant static screens and lots of cute touches throughout. Sounds, in contrast, are an absolute minimum. There are some nice scores, but the few primary game sounds are simply basic.

SUMMARY

While VIKING CHILD is a pleasant diversion, it is missing the refinements needed for greatness. The biggest appeal is in exploring the land and just trying to survive, but it should not be mistaken for an adventure game. Still, if you're looking for something that's a little more than the typical run-and-jump title, VIKING CHILD is worth a try.

GAMEPLAY	**7.0**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**6.0**
OVERALL	**7.0**

WARBIRDS

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Modern air combat is hardly as glamorous as it appears in the movie theatres (or video games, for that matter). Modern radar and weapons systems seek and destroy a target well before the pilot even sees his enemy, and today's "dogfights" end in the blink of an eye. Not since the days of the early 20th century have air combat involved pilots flying close enough to salute each other before the kill.

This is the world of WARBIRDS, the new aerial combat game for the Atari Lynx, and the first true flight simulator for any home video game system currently available. Other flying games currently available only give the illusion of flight -- While you can move around the screen, you have no real control over where you go. WARBIRDS, on the other hand, puts you in complete control of a World War I biplane. You can fly over a barn, loop around, then strafe it from another direction. You determine all of the plane's maneuvers, and can turn, roll, dive, and climb any way you want.

GAMEPLAY

So what are you doing here? Up to four pilots (including yourself) can occupy the airspace over the lush green countryside. No matter how many are present, your objective is the same -- destroy them all. Your only weapon is a front-mounted machine gun, and your only defense are your skills and the occassional cloudbank. "Scoring" consists of how many planes you can shoot down before you yourself are killed, over a series of missions. If you run out of ammunition, you must find, land, and reload your guns, during which you are vulnerable to enemy attacks.

Several game options are available. These include how much damage a plane can take, whether collisions are fatal, how much ammunition is present, and where your airplane starts. In a multiplayer game, everyone can choose their own settings, providing a handicapping feature between players of different skills. In a single-player game, six "missions" are available; however, the only difference is the number of enemy planes, and whether they're amateur or professional pilots.

As a simulator, WARBIRDS is filled with features not found on any other video game. Your plane has instruments for airspeed, altitude, direction, oil pressure, and ammo rounds remaining; all are important in their own way. The physical effects of stalling, high-speed dives, and even the inertia from the rotating engine are duplicated convincingly. Because WARBIRDS is a simulator with no fancy weapons, success or failure is fully dependent on your own flying and hunting skills. This realism cuts both ways, however -- biplanes were not known for their speed, and players accustomed to the high speeds of today's arcade games may find WARBIRDS boring. There is an "arcade" option, which gives your plane a faster "jet" engine, which may satisfy your need for speed.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on WARBIRDS are a mixed bag from good to great. The opening title page is attractive, with biplanes and credits flying by the player. The actual combat scenes are done with a combination of filled polygons (for hills and barns) and scaled sprites (clouds, planes, flying bullets, smoking engines). Digitized pictures are shown at the end of a fight, indicating your success or failure. Overall, it's slightly above average for the Lynx's abilities.

Sounds are essentally basic and effective. The game uses several music scores before and after flights. Actual combat is filled with the noises of your engine (unless you turn it off), the rattle of gunfire, and several sound effects indicating when you're hit, when your shots hit, and when a plane has been downed.

SUMMARY

WARBIRDS is designed and written by Robert Zdybel, a newcomer to Lynx game design; He dedicates the game to his father, and it's a worthy piece of gaming to be proud of. It's a game that's simple in concept and fun to play. Throw in true simulator realism, a variety of options, and the ability for four-player competition, and the sum is greater than its parts. For the video gamer looking for realistic aerial action, WARBIRDS leaves eveything else behind.

GAMEPLAY	**9.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**8.0**
OVERALL	**9.0**

WORLD CLASS SOCCER

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game, $29.95

OVERVIEW

In Atari's moves to fill the Lynx game library with sports titles, the latest entry is WORLD CLASS SOCCER. As the title indicates, this is a portable version of the worldwide ball-kicking sport for one or two players. Two teams from around the world face off for a one-game bout, trying to score the most goals in the time given. Basic soccer rules and penalties apply, including throw-ins, corner kicks, and fouls. Game options allow setting the length of the game, from 10 to 90 minutes, the field conditions, and the computer difficulty level.

GAMEPLAY

WORLD CLASS SOCCER has the makings of a quality title; unfortunately, its good points are outweighed by numerous quirks in the gameplay. On the plus side, ball control is fairly effortless, with automatic dribbling and easy passing and kicking controls. On defense, you can steal the ball either by kicking or a sliding "tackle", and you have full control of the goalie as well and all squad members. The field scrolls from side to side, while the screen zooms in and out of the action as needed.

While the game ideas are sound, the actual result is lacking and hurts the playability. Control automatically goes to the man closest to the ball, which causes quick control changes it enters a crowd. There is an option to manually change the active player, but it doesn't work at all. The zooming screen tends to focus closely on the ball, creating tunnel vision; long passes are impossible to coordinate, and you may be controlling a player or goalie who's off-screen, impairing your defense further. Players can choose teams from a hundred countries, but the only difference is the flag used. These and other problems make following the game very difficult and frustrating. Playing well is possible, but requires a lot of practice.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

Like the game itself, the graphics on WORLD CLASS SOCCER are a mix of good and bad points. Images and sprites are respectably drawn and animated, and look well even when the screen is scaled to its smallest point. On the down side, the scaling is too slow to effectively show where the active player is, and the scrolling is often very jumpy to keep pace with the ball. Sounds are even less inspiring, composed mostly of a bouncing soccer ball mixed with periodic whistle blows and a simplistic crowd cheer.

SUMMARY

This game has the ingredients for a quality soccer game, but assembles them into a disappointing ensemble that could have been better. While the hard-to-follow game action can be overcome with perseverance, only devoted soccer fans will care to invest the time that WORLD CLASS SOCCER requires for mastery.

GAMEPLAY	**5.0**
GRAPHICS	**7.0**
SOUND	**4.0**
OVERALL	**5.0**

XENOPHOBE

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

What is it about video games and aliens that always end up with the former focused on destroying the latter? It's either because a first-contact game about diplomacy would be too boring, or game designers like to see things go bang. XENOPHOBE is no exception; in this adaptation of the Bally arcade game, you (and up to three other players) are assigned the duty of eliminating alien Xenos who have infested 23 space stations and bases. The similarities to a series of science-fiction thriller movies are not coincidental.

You start off with a pool of nine characters; a single-player game has four lives, but a multiplayer game lasts as long as characters remain. Each player starts with a simple pistol, though more powerful guns and bombs are available. You must explore each station, eliminating all of the Xenos you find, while grabbing equipment and objects for extra health and bonuses. A character loses health from assorted attacks and from accidents, and you lose a life when it's all gone. A level ends when the base is completely overrun with Xenos, when you activate the self-destruct, or when all aliens have been destroyed.

GAMEPLAY

XENOPHOBE has the right mix of static and unpredictable elements that are needed to make a good action game. While the layout and contents of each level are predictable, the specific locations are not, requiring you to hunt for the items you need. The game is difficult without being overwhelming; though the Xeno's numbers increase from level to level, a fair amount of caution will help players stay alive. Both the Xenos and the station layouts add to the freshness of the game; each type of Xeno has different attacks and weaknesses, while the stations use shafts, labs, multiple stories, and fires to add an extra element of challenge. Other diversions include equipment to repair and security systems to disarm. Since the main objective of each level is to destroy Xenos, the game can become repetitive, but there is enough variety to offset this for most players.

There are a few additions in the Lynx version of XENOPHOBE that were not in the arcade, all of which add to the fun. New types of equipment expand the strategy, such as the jetpacks which allow you to fly around, safe from many attacks. The Lynx's controls are put to good use, making controlling your player much easier than with the original's three-button joystick. Multiplayer games are especially enjoyable: aside from just the cooperative nature of the game, a player can also choose to play a Xeno and hunt his friends in disguise. However, multiplayer games do tend to slow down a bit in the higher stages.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

As with the arcade game, XENOPHOBE on the Lynx takes the terror out of an alien hunt through its graphics. The dark nature of the title is sharply defused with bright colors everywhere, whether it's in the layout of the station rooms or the non-threatening greens and reds of the Xenos themselves. Your cast of beings, with punny names like U2 R B52 and Dr. Zorderz, are very distinctive, and animation is used heavily through the game.

Sounds are also done well with a wide variety of blasts, klaxons, and other effects. There is almost no music per se, though a low rythmic backbeat plays through much of the game. The noises are also highly functional, often acting as a hint of what awaits you in adjacent rooms; this is especially noticeable when using stereo headphones on the newer Lynx II units.

SUMMARY

With its expanded gameplay and easy-to-use controls, Lynx XENOPHOBE is arguably more fun than its arcade inspiration. Sound and graphics are more than acceptable, and the multiplayer cooperative possibilities are welcome. While some people may find the game a little repetitious, as a whole this title is challenging, intriguing, and worth the money.

GAMEPLAY	**8.5**
GRAPHICS	**8.0**
SOUND	**9.0**
OVERALL	**8.5**

XYBOTS

Atari, 1-2 players, horizontal game

OVERVIEW

Daleks, Replicants, Terminators, Robotrons, Xybots -- the robots are at it again. EarthBase 26-B9, a remote station in the Federation's intelligence network, has been completely overrun by the alien Xybots in a surprise attack. Recovery of this base is of the highest priority; since you are the closest agent available, you must infiltrate the station, battle the Xybot forces, and stop the Master Xybots from taking over. NOW!

Storyline aside, XYBOTS is a Lynx adaptation of the Atari Games' arcade title. One or two players must travel through the station's levels, as seen from a first-person 3D view. As you wander through the maze, you can grab coins, keys, and weapon enhancements, all while fighting the various Xybot forces. Your battlesuit will protect you, but it loses energy through time and from attacks; if it runs out, you are captured and the game ends. Reach the exit, and you have an opportunity to buy more equipment before going even deeper, featuring trick walls, transporters, and even more dangers.

GAMEPLAY

Though a few recent Lynx games have been disappointing, XYBOTS is happily not continuing the trend. This is a respectable version of the game, with all the features of the original. The enemy comes in many different forms, using various defenses while firing on your position. Your gun fires unlimited shots, and an energy-draining zap can temporarily freeze the Xybots. The main action is seen from directly behind your fighter, and a second screen showing the level layout and status information is available. Every tenth level or so is a fight with a Master Xybot, but the main game remains maze-running and robot-blasting. Temporary enhancements such as robot locators and extra firepower are available, but financial frugality will help you survive later.

The game is not perfect, however, since the Lynx version is a little easier than the coin-op. The Xybots are not too bright, and often spend time waiting until you are in range before attacking. They are still dangerous, but you will rarely have to worry about being overwhelmed. You also start with 35 coins, enough to stay well-armed for three or four levels. As a result, the game may seem to start off slow for more experienced players, but Warp Exits allow travel to the higher stages quicker. Overall, XYBOTS on the Lynx remains formidable, but don't be too surprised at the initial progress you make.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

With XYBOTS, the Lynx once again pulls off game graphics that look almost completely identical to the arcade. The station mazes are spartan, drawn with identical wall panels, but enemy Xybots and other game items are well-animated and detailed. Other visual extras such as the teleporter and the transition between stages have been duplicated exactly. The only shortcoming is that rotating your view is done with a 90-degree "snap", which can be a little disorienting.

Sounds are also very faithful, with the few blasts and explosions of the original copied closely. The mechanical Xybot voices have been removed, but in their place are several quality techno-rock background tunes. Though enjoyable, they can be turned off from the title page if desired.

SUMMARY

XYBOTS on the Lynx is a solid translation, presenting an acceptable version of the game on the go. While the difficulty has been scaled back slightly, there is still more than enough of a challenge to keep the typical player back for more.

GAMEPLAY	**8.0**
GRAPHICS	**9.0**
SOUND	**8.0**
OVERALL	**8.0**

ZARLOR MERCENARY

Atari, 1-4 players, horizontal game, $34.95

OVERVIEW

Ah, life in the space lane. You are one of the most hated and most revered people in the galaxy -- a mercenary. If someone's got the bucks, you've got the guns, for whatever the cause.

Your current case is for the Zarlors, who are at war with the Mendicants over some financial dealings or other. The Zarlors have decided to cripple, but not kill, the Mendicants with a set of six tactical strikes. They jingled their Zarbits, so you signed up for the deal. The Zarlors don't think you can survive all six attacks. You'll show them...

That's the game in a nutshell. ZARLOR MERCENARY is a horizontally-based, vertical-scrolling space shoot-em-up, an original title from Epyx for Atari, by the creator of CHIP'S CHALLENGE (talk about diverse). The screen scrolls from top to bottom at a fixed rate, and you (and up to three other friends) move around the screen, shooting everything that dots the landscape. The screen moves horizontally with you, giving you even more targets to blast.

Everything you destroy is worth Zarbits, that funny plastic money from the Zarlors. The more you shoot, the bigger your profits, and the more money you have means the more hardware you can buy from the Mercenary Merchant. You start off with three ships, and can get more through the game -- either that, or buy them.

GAMEPLAY

Shooter fans will rejoice, because ZARLOR MERCENARY has all the staples of these games -- power-ups, bosses, targets, targets, and more targets. Everything that can be shot is worth something, and there is a *LOT* to shoot at. There are only six levels, but each level is fairly large (about five minutes to get through), and the enemies are numerous enough and fire enough to punch through any defenses you have. There are a lot of enemies/targets too, in a wide variety, such as patternized fighter squadrons, unconcerned walkers, mercenary-seeking drones, and unarmored civilians (grin). If anything, the game may be too difficult for fewer players, though your mileage may vary.

You start off as one of several "characters", each of whom has a different power-up weapon to start with. What you don't have you can get, either by shopping between rounds or picking up floating globes on the level. If things get tight, you can also sell your weapons back (at a loss, natch), or trade Zarbits with your co-mercenaries between levels. There are a lot of power-ups in a wide range of uses, enough to satisfy most video warriors. The gameplay and controls are straightforward enough for any gamer; true video warriors will pick up the game in 10 seconds, if not sooner.

GRAPHICS/SOUND

The graphics on this game are _INCREDIBLE_! The game itself is shown in a three-quarters psuedo-3D view, with accompanying shadows everywhere to reenforce the effect. Targets and background graphics are crammed with nice features and detailed touches, from blinking lights and transparent windows to ditches dug by mechano-bots that stop when you destroy them (the bots, I mean). Someone went through a lot of loving care to make the graphics stand out, and it shows.

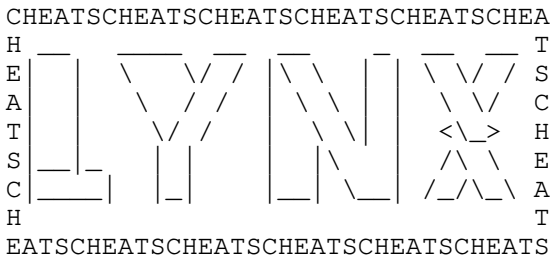
Sounds are slightly above average, though not up to the standards set by the graphics. A slightly-repetitive tune plays throughout the game, but you can turn it off with the Option 2 button if it bothers you. Most of the other game sounds are from weapons fire, explosions, and the occassional off-screen special effect. All are done well, though not outstandingly so.

SUMMARY

A great no-nonsense action game, perfect for people who love the "shoot it if it exists" philosophy. The game itselt is not easy, and the addition of four-player teamups and cash payments/transfers/power-ups ensure quite a bit of variety to the game. Though there are only six levels, they are quite varied, and should offer many challenging hours to the average player.

GAMEPLAY	**9.0**
GRAPHICS	**10**
SOUND	**7.5**
OVERALL	**9.0**

Cheats



Here are all the cheats I have for the Lynx. Please e-mail any corrections, suggestions, more cheats, and whatever to: tazzzzz@eecs.umich.edu.

Last updated: January 27, 1993

-- New list maintainer information
-- Crystal Mines II level and bonus codes. Level skipper
-- Dracula the Undead solve
-- Shadow of the Beast solve
-- A.P.B. Cheat
-- Batman Invincibility
-- Toki Secret Screens
-- QIX level codes (mostly there, at least)

These are from the Lynx FAQ from rec.games.video on Usenet, Portable Addiction, Howard Chu, Jaime Villacorte, Dan Hollis, Jonathan Haas, Ken Small, Bobby Tribble, Peter Kaminski, Johanne Kaminski, Jocelito Carpio, Dionicio Lazo, Jason Bennett and probably a bunch of others. THANKS! Lotsa thanks to Robert Jung. Finally, thanks to Damian Gick who would probably still be keeping this list up to date if he hadn't lost his net access.

Kevin (Tazzzzz) Dangoor

A.P.B.

When your quota is met, hold down OPT 1 and OPT 2 when you touch the Officer Bob parking space. This will warp you to level 99. (The game will not end, just repeat level 99 with random quotas.) Hold down Option 1 and Option 2 while getting a donut to skip the level.

AWESOME GOLF

Entering LANDLORD as your name will make the OPT 2 button swing at the ball and when the ball is in the air OPT 2 will sink the ball!

BASKETBRAWL

Put in MJ?? to play with a partner, supposedly Jordan. Replace the ?? with any two numbers. Pause, hold down Option 1 and press Option 2. You can change the pause message to anything you want! (from Star*Lynx BBS)

Level codes

```
Level 1-1 AAAA    Level 3-3 IIII
Level 1-2 BBBB    Level 4-1 JJJJ
Level 1-3 CCCC    Level 4-2 KKKK
Level 2-1 DDDD    Level 4-3 LLLL
Level 2-2 EEEE    Level 5-1 MMMM
Level 2-3 FFFF    Level 5-2 NNNN
Level 3-1 GGGG    Level 5-3 OOOO
Level 3-2 HHHH
```

Taken from January 1993 EGM (Edward Mann). Someone at Atari is very imaginitive.

BATMAN RETURNS

From Video Games and Computer Entertainment, you can make Batman invincible with the following steps at the title screen (the one with the Batlogo): press up 8 times, down 12 times, left 15 times, right 19 times and option 1 27 times, press A or B to start the game. Once the action starts, press pause. The use option 1 to skip to the next level, option 2 to make Batman invincible! Falling can still kill you, however.

BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

(Solve) : From Portable Addiction Electronic Magazine

First of all, collect all the notes you can get and find the gold nugget. Now go to the guarded building and give the nugget to the guard. Enter and find the man that tells you about the staff. Return to the telephone booth and travel to 15OO BC. Use the scare stone. Find all the notes you can get (remember to count by sixteens!). Enter the valley and find the paper note about the fake staff. Travel back in time and put the note at the pillar. Go to the South-East of Egypt and find the royal ankh (You must wade through shallow water). Travel to 15OO again and find the boat at the South-West part of Egypt. Use the royal ankh. Find your way thru the water (it's like an invisible maze). First go to the place where you found the ankh in 17OO BC. Enter the temple and find the secret passage which leads to the harp. Return to your boat and go to the pyramid. Go into the pyramid and open the door by walking over the red spots on the ground. Then, when past the wall/door, walk over the four other red spots and take the staff. Find the two keys and open the corresponding doors. To get rid of the two creatures guarding the room, just lure them out of there and then run away. When you return to the room they will be gone. To take the staff, use the harp. Return the staff to the man to get the flute. Use this flute in 17OO BC at the North-East to scare the animals over there. Then find all the notes that are hidden under the trees to find a phonebook-page. Travel to Rome.

First, enter the dungeon. Find all the notes and the two keys: Blue and black. Remember to visit Caesar at the north of the arena when you have enough notes. Outside the arena you must once again find notes. When you think you have all of them, go to the statue. Push the four pieces around the statue in place and the push the statue. Now do this again and then go stand in the middle yourself. After you get launched, find all the notes around the house, but don't enter it. When you got all the notes, walk into a roman to get kicked out of the garden. You are now outside. Go West, to where a roman is guarding the entrance of the city. Now go down and find your way through the forest. Somewhere in the forest there is the next page of the phonebook. You must collect all the notes in the forest and you must also find the little building. Enter it and find the way through the maze until you find an apple. Leave the building and go to the guard. Give him the apple and enter the city. If everything is right you now have 8O notes. Travel to Europe.

In Europe, enter the mansion. To avoid the furniture, stay on the green dots on the floor. This may take some practise! Find the white key and then find your way to the backyard. Use the black key to open the gate. Go to the North-West of the screen to find a red key. Use it to enter the small house nearby. Avoid dracula and take the magic wand next to his coffin. Return to the mansion and find the organ. Use the wand to shrink it down so you can carry it. Return to the phonebooth (The wand causes the furniture to stop). Travel back to Rome. Do the trick with the statue and this time enter the house while using the organ pipes. You can now safely walk thru the house to the backyard to take the lyre. Return the lyre to Ceasar and you will get another lyre. Enter the dungeon and use the lyre to scare away the lion that guards the white lock. Use the white key to open the lock and take the page of the phonebook.

Travel to Rome 7O BC and enter the dungeon. Use the black key and put it back where you found it (Bottom-right). Now travel to Texas. Collect all the notes you can get. Somewhere, hidden under a skull, there's a golden coin. Go to the station and buy a ticket. Walk to the train and use the ticket. Now use the train to find the remaining notes. You must also find the golden nugget, hidden under yet another skull. Travel back to Egypt and replace the golden nugget at the place where you first found it. Now travel to San Dimas 2691 AD! Yeah, most radical, dude!

Be careful on the step-stones as you can only jump from one to another if they are in the middle-position. Again find as many notes as you can and find the dynamite. Return to Texas. Use the dynamite to release Billy the Kid. Return to San Dimas. Go to the place where you usually get overwhelmed by enemies and use the harmonica. You can now safely enter the next part of San Dimas. Every time you pick up a note in this part, a block will disappear somewhere else, thus letting you reach other notes after which you will be rewarded with a golden key. Return to Europe.

Collect 16 notes. Use the golden key to enter the previously unaccessable house at the swamp. Here you will find a mandolin. You can use this to enter the previously locked part of San Dimas. The Grim Reaper welcomes you, and you're now ready to play his game. As the exact route isn't easy to explain in a solution like this, I'll just tell you what to do. The objective of this part is to collect yet another 16 notes. Sometimes it is necessary to shove blocks over the lava in such a way that you can go to other parts of the playing field. The princesses have got the last note. If you succeed in rescuing them you should have 144 notes by that time. To get back to the entrance of the playing field, go east from the place where your rescued the babes. The go south and walk clockwise (ie: south, west, north). When you are standing against the north wall, walk west to the corner and go counter-clockwise. Once in the northeast corner you must go west, south, west and north to the exit. You'll have to find the correct tiles to jump on all the way yourself. Now you must return to the phone booth. The Grim Reaper is guarding it, but when you play your guitar he suddenly realizes that he has LOST! Enter the booth and travel through time to finish the game!

BLUE LIGHTNING

The codes are:

1-AAAA 2-PLAN 3-ALFA 4-BELL 5-NINE 6-LOCK 7-HAND 8-FLEA 9-LIFE

You can land upside down on the Courier Run mission (LOCK).

For bonus points, hit your afterburniners as you enter the canyons on level BELL. The Gutsy Bonus will give you 30,000 points ("You've got guts!"). When you're in the canyons fire your afterburners for 65,000 poins (Lunatic Bonus) "You're crazy!!" The points are added when you land -- but if you do both, it will only display the Lunatic Bonus, but you get points for both. (A good place for the second bonus is right before you enter the second set of canyons)

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Although the manual says it's two player, up to 4 can be Comlynxed. It may take a few tries, but keep at it. (It's also a bit slow, but hey, it wasn't meant for 4 players.. :)

BMX: If you stay just a little (about one pixel) above the place where the grass meets the dirt there won't be anything in your way (Like those pesky bales of hay). You can crash the game by hitting the bale of hay on the bottom of the track just before the finish line. The game will freeze and the only thing you can do it turn it off. Tiny tid-bit: If you're going _really_ fast when you cross the finish line and jump just a little after crossing it, you will end up crashing into something you can't see way to the right.

SURFING: In the surfing game, you can ride the pelican. Run your last man into the bottom of the screen a few seconds before the timer runs out. The bird will fly across the screen until the timer runs out and you'll land on it! It's possible to do an UNREAL 360 (5 360's) for 1200 points (As opposed to 600 for a Quadruple 360)

FOOTBAG: If you spin right after jumping, you spin faster than normal. Thus, jump and hit the bag with your head, then spin away...

Also-- in the manual under Foot Bag it says: "Score an extra 50 points for hitting the seagull in the beak with the foot bag (but only in this game -- be kind to the birdies in the other events)."

[Thought that was pretty cute. :) d.g.]

HALF-PIPE: Hitting Option 2 while skating will show off the Lynx's awesome scaling capabilities.

CHECKERED FLAG

Course information:

RIDGEWAY	Odo	Side
SHANGHAI	0.3	Right
PORTFOLIO (w/picture)	0.7	Right
CYBERBALL	1.0	Left
ATARI CORP.	1.2	Right
[atari logo]	2.1	Left
ST (w/picture)	2.7	Left

Total lap distance: 2.9 miles

GRIZZLY FLATS	Odo	Side
ATARI CORP.	0.8	Right
SLIME WORLD	1.3	Left
SHANGHAI	3.2	Left
[atari logo]	3.7	Left

Total lap distance: 3.7 miles

SKULL VALLEY	Odo	Side
WARBIRDS	0.2	Right
RAMPAGE	0.9	Left
AWESOME GOLF	1.5	Left
PORTFOLIO (w/picture)	2.3	Right

Total lap distance: 2.7 miles

GREAT BEND	Odo	Side
SHANGHAI	0.5	Right
AWESOME GOLF	1.4	Left
SLIME WORLD	2.3	Right
ATARI CORP.	3.0	Left
RAMPAGE	3.5	Right

Total lap distance: 3.8 miles

PALM SPRINGS	Odo	Side
ATARI CORP.	1.0	Right
PORTFOLIO (w/picture)	1.2	Right
ST (w/picture)	2.0	Right
TT (w/picture)	2.4	Right
[atari logo]	3.3	Right

Total lap distance: 3.7 miles

DEATH VALLEY	Odo	Side
KLAX	0.2	Left
STUN RUNNER	0.6	Left
ST (w/picture)	0.8	Left
RAMPAGE	1.1	Left
CYBERBALL	1.4	Right
MS. PAC MAN	1.9	Right
[atari symbol]	2.7	Left
ATARI CORP.	2.8	Left
SHANGHAI	3.3	Right
PORTFOLIO (w/picture)	4.1	Left

Total lap distance: 4.2 miles

REED POINT	Odo	Side
LYNX (w/picture)	1.0	Right
CYBERBALL	2.2	Left

Total lap distance: 3.1 miles

LOGAN SPEED	Odo	Side
GEO DUEL	1.0	Right
MS PAC MAN	2.3	Left
STUN RUNNER	3.5	Left

Total lap distance: 4.7 miles

WOODLAND	Odo	Side
KLAX	0.2	Left
BASEBALL HEROES	0.6	Right
STUN RUNNER	1.0	Left
PORTFOLIO (w/picture)	1.2	Left
MS PAC MAN	1.4	Left

Total lap distance: 1.7 miles

EAGLE BEND	Odo	Side
KLAX	1.1	Right
CYBERBALL	1.8	Left
AWESOME GOLF	2.3	Right
TT (w/picture)	2.9	Right
[atari logo]	3.8	Right

Total lap distance: 4.0 miles

VICTORVILLE	Odo	Side
CYBERBALL	0.5	Right
SHANGHAI	1.3	Left
BASEBALL HEROES	1.8	Right
MS PACMAN	2.4	Left
KLAX	2.8	Left
GEO DUEL	3.7	Right
ATARI CORP.	3.9	Left

Total lap distance: 4.0 miles

PHOENIX	Odo	Side
STUN RUNNER	0.9	Left
RAMPAGE	1.1	Left
ST (w/picture)	1.6	Right
LYNX (w/picture)	2.2	Right
[atari logo]	2.5	Right
ST (w/picture)	2.7	Right

ATARI CORP.	3.0	Left
TT (w/picture)	3.1	Left
AWESOME GOLF	3.6	Right
SLIME WORLD	4.2	Right

Total lap distance: 4.4 miles

FARMINGTON	Odo	Side
WARBIRDS	0.9	Right
RAMPAGE	1.8	Right
LYNX (w/picture)	2.8	Left

Total lap distance: 2.8 miles

MIAMI	Odo	Side
TT (w/picture)	0.3	Left
LYNX (w/picture)	0.6	Left
BASEBALL HEROES	1.0	Right
GEO DUEL	2.0	Right
AWESOME GOLF	2.5	Right
WARBIRDS	2.9	Left

Total lap distance: 3.1 miles

BLACK CANYON	Odo	Side
RAMPAGE	0.3	Right
ATARI CORP.	0.7	Right
BASEBALL HEROES	1.3	Right
CYBERBALL	2.2	Right

Total lap distance: 3.0 miles

MOUNTAIN VIEW	Odo	Side
LYNX (w/picture)	0.1	Right
TT (w/picture)	0.4	Right
GEO DUEL	0.8	Left
(atari logo)	1.6	Left
CYBERBALL	2.4	Left
ST (w/picture)	2.7	Right

Total lap distance: 3.2 miles

COLDWATER PASS	Odo	Side
WARBIRDS	0.4	Left
LYNX (w/picture)	1.0	Left
PORTFOLIO	1.4	Left
AWESOME GOLF	2.1	Right
SLIME WORLD	2.8	Right
TT (w/picture)	3.0	Right

Total lap distance: 3.2 miles

DARLINGTON	Odo	Side
BASEBALL HEROES	0.9	Left
MS PACMAN	1.9	Right
STUN RUNNER	3.1	Right
ST (w/picture)	3.6	Right

Total lap distance: 3.7 miles

Transmission information:

Gear (7-speed)	Top Speed
1	29
2	55
3	83
4	107
5	148
6	179
7	219

Gear (4-speed)	Top Speed
1	49
2	106
3	172
4	219

CHIP'S CHALLENGE

#	Name	Code
1	LESSON 1	BDHP
2	LESSON 2	JXMJ
3	LESSON 3	ECBQ
4	LESSON 4	YMCJ
5	LESSON 5	TQKB
6	LESSON 6	WNLP
7	LESSON 7	FXQO
8	LESSON 8	NHAG
9	NUTS AND BOLTS	KCRE
10	BRUSHFIRE	VUUS
11	TRINITY	CNPE
12	HUNT	WVHI
13	SOUTH POLE	OCKS
14	TELEBLOCK	BTDY
15	ELEMENTARY	COZQ

16	CELLBLOCKED	SKKK
17	NICE DAY	AJMG
18	CASTLE MOAT	HMJL
19	DIGGER	MRHR
20	TOSSED SALAD	KGFP
21	ICEBERG	UGRW
22	FORCED ENTRY	WZIN
23	BLOBNET	HUVE
24	OORTO GELD	UNIZ
25	BLINK	PQGV
26	CHCHCHIPS	YVYJ
27	GO WITH THE FLOW	IGGZ
28	PING PONG	UJDD
29	ARCTIC FLOW	QGOL
30	MISH MESH	BQZP
31	KNOT	RYMS
32	SCAVENGER HUNT	PEFS
33	ON THE ROCKS	BQSN
34	CYPHER	NQFI
35	LEMMINGS	VDTM
36	LADDER	NXIS
37	SEEING STARS	VQNK
38	SAMPLER	BIFA
39	GLUT	ICXY
40	FLOORGASBORG	YWFH
41	I.C. YOU	GKWD
42	BEWARE OF BUG	LMFU
43	LOCK BLOCK	UJDP
44	REFRACTION	TXHL
45	MONSTER LAB	OVPZ
46	THREE DOORS	HDQJ
47	PIER SEVEN	LXPP
48	MUGGER SQUARE	JYSF
49	PROBLEMS	PPXJ
50	DIG DIRT	QBDH
51	I SLIDE	IGGJ
52	THE LAST LAUGH	PPHT
53	TRAFFIC COP	CGNX
54	GRAIL	ZMGC
55	POTPOURRI	SJES
56	DEEPFREEZE	FCJE
57	STRANGE MAZE	UBXU
58	LOOP AROUND	YBLT
59	HIDDEN DANGER	BLDM
60	SCOUNDREL	ZYVI
61	RINK	RMOW
62	SLO MO	TIGW
63	BLOCK FACTORY	GOHX
64	SPOOKS	IJPQ
65	AMSTERDAM	UPUN
66	VICTIM	ZIKZ
67	CHIPMINE	GGJA
68	EENY MINY MOE	RTDI
69	BOUNCE CITY	NLLY
70	NIGHTMARE	GCCG
71	CORRIDOR	LAJM
72	REVERSE ALLEY	EKFT
73	MORTON	QCCR
74	PLAYTIME	MKNH
75	STEAM	MJDV
76	FOUR PLEX	NMRH
77	INVINCIBLE CHAMPION	FHIC
78	FORCED SQUARE	GRMO
79	DRAWN + QUARTERED	JINU
80	VANISHING ACT	EVUG
81	WRITERS BLOCK	SCWF
82	SOCIALIST ACTION	LLIO
83	UP THE BLOCK	OVPJ
84	WARS	UVEO
85	TELENET	LEBX
86	SUICIDE	FLHH
87	CITY BLOCK	YJYS
88	SPIRALS	WZYV
89	BLOCK BUSTER	VCZO
90	PLAYHOUSE	OLLM
91	JUMPING SWARM	JPQJ
92	VORTEX	DTMI
93	ROAD SIGN	REKF
94	NOW YOU SEE IT	EWCS
95	FOUR SQUARE	BIFQ
96	PARANOIA	WVHY
97	METASTABLE TO CHAOS	IOCS
98	SHRINKING	TKWD
99	CATACOMBS	XUVU
100	COLONY	QJXR
101	APARTMENT	RPIR
102	ICEHOUSE	VDDU
103	MEMORY	PTAC
104	JAILER	KWNL
105	SHORT CIRCUIT	YNEG
106	KABLAM	NXYB
107	BALLS O FIRE	ECRE
108	BLOCK OUT	LIOC
109	TORTURECHAMBER	KZQR
110	CHILLER	XBAO
111	TIME LAPSE	KRQJ
112	FORTUNE FAVORS THE	NJLA
113	OPEN QUESTION	PTAS
114	DECEPTION	JWNL
115	OVERSEA DELIVERY	EGRW
116	BLOCK BUSTER II	HXMF
117	THE MARSH	FPZT
118	MISS DIRECTION	OSCW
119	SLIDE STEP	PHTY
120	ALPHABET SOUP	FLXP
121	PERFECT MATCH	BPYS
122	TOTALLY FAIR	SJUM
123	THE PRISONER	YKZE
124	FIRETRAP	TASX
125	MIXED NUTS	MYRT
126	BLOCK N ROLL	QRLD
127	SKELZIE	JMWZ
128	ALL FULL	FTLA
129	LOBSTER TRAP	HEAN
130	ICE CUBE	XHIZ
131	TOTALLY UNFAIR	FIRD
132	MIX UP	ZYFA

133	BLOBDANCE	TIGG
134	PAIN	XPPH
135	TRUST ME	LYWO
136	DOUBLEMAZE	LUZL
137	GOLDKEY	HPPX
138	PARTIAL POST	LUJT
139	YORKHOUSE	VLHH
140	ICEDEATH	SJUK
141	UNDERGROUND	MCJE
142	PENTAGRAM	UCRY
143	STRIPES?	OKOR
144	FIREFLIES	GVXQ
145	(Ending Sequence)	....
146	CAKE WALK	JHEN
147	FORCE FIELD	COZA
148	MIND BLOCK	RGSK
149	SPECIAL	DIGW
150	(Ending sequence)	....
***	Mandelbrot Generator	MAND

The code for level 146 was found on level 34 (Cypher). That level spells out: JHEN which is the password for level 146.

[On atari.archive.umich.edu in /atari/lynx is a PostScript file that has notes and a few maps for the levels. (ChipsChalngNotes.ps.Z)]

Mandelbrot Generator Instructions:

Thumb Joypad: Move the zoom in/out window
A: Zoom in
B: Zoom out

OPTION 1: Stop/start fractal generation

|| (PAUSE): Parameter menu, OPTION 2 picks which fractal set, OPTION 1 restarts the generation

OPTION 2: Toggles between three modes:
- stops generation
- animation through color cycling
- reverse color cycling

There is a limit on how far you can zoom. The "zoom-in" effect is a good example of the Lynx's ability to automatically scale bitmaps.

The Lynx Mandelbrot code does 48-bit fixed-point math using 8 bits of integer and 40 bits of fraction, via the hardware multiplier (16x16) and a lot of help from the 65C02. The comment line on it (the source) says it was written by Steve Landrum of Blue Lightning fame.

CRYSTAL MINES II

Atari Lynx Crystal Mines II Level Codes
(still missing 25 bonus levels)
Compiled by Johanne Kaminski <casper@tsoft.net>, January 1993

1-TSLA	2-UEPT	3-MTFQ	4-IRTR	5-ZCXP	6-DPRX	7-OIGT
8-YHYR	9-VYHK	10-ITCU	11-QCFK	12-BXNG	13-MOXA	14-IDWJ
15-RFVC	16-GHSI	17-SKHU	18-TRFN	19-LQRE	20-AURV	21-TYGU
22-FUIX	23-QFXV	24-XVXU	25-KYPO	26-HBTR	27-SFEB	28-HXRE
29-TRVJ	30-FQCS	31-ZOIH	32-LHJV	33-GVYU	34-EMTV	35-OHXY
36-GSTB	37-UXRC	38-PWYH	39-XQCE	40-PNGU	41-DZDI	42-PIPH
43-PKAV	44-TBUM	45-CXRI	46-QIPZ	47-HBJP	48-NXKU	49-IGPY
50-INUK	51-LPHD	52-NEBX	53-JVNL	54-CAQS	55-KEHL	56-EMSE
57-ZLAE	58-MSXV	59-JXTD	60-SOVS	61-GHGV	62-QVOZ	63-ZCEL
64-COYH	65-HJHT	66-DONQ	67-VBHF	68-JSMJ	69-HTRA	70-WBHD
71-MVJX	72-ANZI	73-EDLA	74-PCMN	75-YJKJ	76-RAIQ	77-ZRWH
78-ECMO	79-AOTP	80-SVWK	81-VRBD	82-SVYA	83-KRFH	84-CNQR
85-YNXR	86-CWQU	87-YXFJ	88-SRDW	89-PDSQ	90-QKOA	91-CKLQ
92-KHBA	93-MZKM	94-DYDO	95-IDIC	96-WVOM	97-NJCU	98-WUQR
99-BSZB	100-RERF	101-WNON	102-IVLC	103-PJOL	104-RGEI	105-WCEF
106-DSGY	107-PHUF	108-NCDS	109-KOMZ	110-LFXQ	111-WAET	112-YJNV

```
113-TAUJ  114-IMOZ  115-NBFD  116-ZAPR  117-BXFT  118-GEFA  119-QIKD
120-GMWJ  121-MKIH  122-ULEL  123-KBDW  124-QEFP  125-SFJX  126-LQXW
127-INMQ  128-NMAD  129-RHEM  130-YHVR  131-FSHF  132-EIKJ  133-CQCR
134-AIYA  135-SXOE  136-EKDR  137-DRVY  138-RGUM  139-FEDC  140-PRKL
141-ONKO  142-QXPL  143-JRXP  144-PADJ  145-KGLI  146-FDXR  147-BLKS
148-TJGB  149-QKBT  150-AUEC
```

Of the 31 bonus levels, I thus far have only these 6:

0-ZERO (precedes level 1)
3-DBFQ (get to through level 27)
9-BIOH (get to through level 55)
10-BNRY (get to through level 59)
21-TMCB (get to through level ??)
23-PNZS (get to through level 119)

Thanks to Arun Welch <welch@cis.ohio-state.edu> for bonus level 0.

If you have codes for any of the other bonus levels (even just one!),
please send them to <kaminski@netcom.com> or <casper@tsoft.net>.
Thanks, and have fun!

Enter the password KIMI but don't press the A button to start the game. Instead hold down Option 1 and Option 2 buttons and press B. You will hear a sound like a machine gun and you'll see the first level (Down in the Dirt) appear on the screen. Press A to skip ahead to the next level or press B to move back through the list. When you see the level you want to play, press any direction on the control pad to start the game.

DRACULA THE UNDEAD

From: dab1@ukc.ac.uk

First, get the notebook from the chest of drawers. Go into the bedroom and get the tinder box from the table and the crucifix from the bed. Use the crucifix. Go to the dining room, get the oil from the table. Talk to Dracula, and immediately afterwards, use the notebook. Go to the antechamber, open the window and look out of it. Use the notebook. Climb out of the window and go to the next window on the right. This room should be the bedroom. Open the window and climb out of it. Make your way to the top right window (it should be a big window like the one you climbed out of initially). Examine the table, then use the notebook. Get the lantern, fill it with oil and light it with the tinderbox. Go through the door on the right into Dracula's money room. Get some money, get the box, then open the box. Use the iron key you find in it on the door. Go into the crypt. Turn the lantern so that it says "The lantern has been turned down". Go down, right. Get the twine. Go right, down, down. Get the crowbar, examine the coffin, use the notebook. Find your way back to Dracula's study. Climb out of the window, and go back to the top left hand window. Go to the south wing landing and use the crowbar on the door. Enter the sewing room. Wait to be returned to the bedroom and then use the notebook. Climb out of the window and go to the top left hand one. Go to the dining room, get the sugar from the table. Go back to Dracula's study and get the lantern. Light the lantern with the tinderbox and enter the catacombs again. Go down, right, right, down, down. Get the small brass key from the coffin. Return to the south hallway and use the small brass key to open the clock. Get the small key. Return to Dracula's study, examine the desk and then use the notebook. Get the hook from the drawer. Go to the money room and turn the lever on the bottom wall. Enter the library through the door which opens and examine the books. Examine the book you get, then tie the twine to the hook. Enter the catacombs and go down, right, up, up. Climb the ladder and then use the sugar on the horse. Get the spade and use it on the well. The fishing line on the well, then climb down the well. THE END.

ELECTROCOP

Here are the codes to all the doors and what they contain.

Level 1 D1 = 2473 -> Level 2 Level 7 D1 = 6021 -> Level 4

D2 = 9874 -> Level 2 D2 = 5824 -> Level 9

D3 = 8743 -> Weapons

Level 8 D1 = 7698 -> Level 6

Level 2 D1 = 3287 -> Lvl 7 (Right)

Lvl 3 (Left) Level 9 D1 = 0170 -> Pla.Cannon

D2 = 5409 -> Empty D2 = 1092 -> Empty

D3 = 7102 -> TriLaser

Level 3 D1 = 9284 -> Level 4 D4 = 4726 -> Empty

D2 = 7210 -> Level 4 D5 = 1375 -> Level 11

D3 = 3936 -> Smart Bomb D6 = 2857 -> Bi-Laser

D4 = 7395 -> Plasma Cannon D7 = 6998 -> Tri-Laser

D5 = 8294 D8 = 1798 -> Tri-Laser

D9 = 4321 -> Level 1

Level 4 D1 = 0394 -> Weapons

Level 10 Left Exit -> Level 11

Level 5 D1 = 8658 -> Weapons Middle Exit -> Level 9

D2 = 5462 -> Door 7 Right Exit -> Level 2

D3 = 9973 -> End of Game

D4 = 7642 -> Door 1 Level 11 D1 = 0293 -> Bi-Laser

D5 = 0912 -> Door 2 Left Exit -> Level 3

D6 = 0974 -> Door 3 Right Exit -> Level 12

D7 = 7865 -> Door 4

D8 = 4285 -> Door 5 Level 12 D1 = 2987 -> Pl.Cannon

Stingrays -> Level 10 D2 = 6473 -> Pl.Cannon

Open/Closing Doors -> Level 1

Level 6 D1 = 9722 -> Level 5

D2 = 8765 -> Level 12

To crash the game go to either level 5 or 9 and get as many programs hacking the door codes as possible. It may be best to set the code to the one over the actual code (See above) so the program won't find the code too soon.

Turn off your sound at title screen, now hold up and left on the joypad and keep tapping both A & B buttons until it says "LEVEL 1" instead of "NOW TELEPORING TO LEVEL 1".. Use joypad to choose level. (from Star*Lynx)

GATES OF ZENDOCON

There is a secret bonus level that contains pictures of the Lynx designers and programmers and all the bonus weapons. At the beginning of level TRYX turn on your shields and fly through the bottom of the floor. On the deviding portion where the tanks are on are sections that flicker red. Between the first square one and the next oval one is the spot. Then fly about one ship's height above the bottom through the posts and under the stalagtites. Enter the portal and there you go!

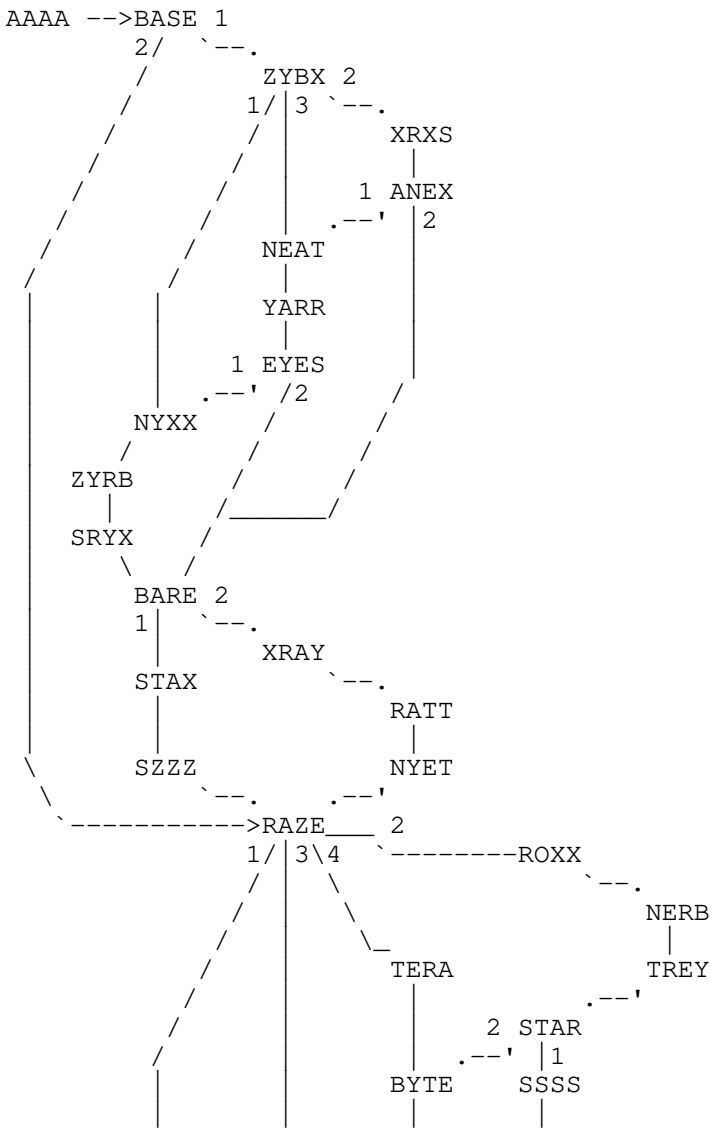
Also, one level worth mentioning is the level BROT. This has background pictures of the Mandelbrot set and the monsters behave in a way that is a lot like Conway's Game of Life (Making a geometrical pattern).

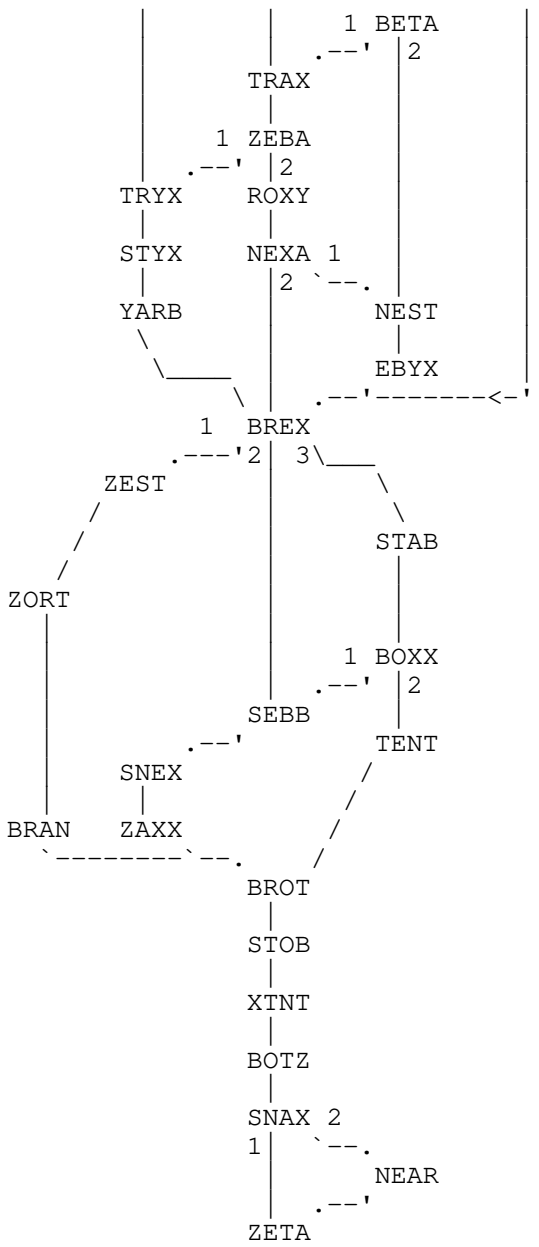
This map is a bit more informative than a sequential list of levels... Note that it's possible to go in a circle by way of the secret level. (TRYX -> Secret -> NERB -> ...) I keep on expecting to find similar paths thru TRAX and SNEX. Anyone find anything like that?

Gates of Zendocon -- Map by Howard Chu

Each level's gates are numbered left to right, top to bottom, as the terrain scrolls from left to right.

Start





-- Howard Chu @ University of Michigan

GAUNTLET

There are three endings to this game. (Not a cheat, but cool info...) Choose a character and start the game, but do not move your player. Each time you press OPT 1, you will jump ahead five levels.

KLAX

You can warp to level 56 by getting a "Big X" on level 11. You can also warp to level 51 by getting a "Big X" on level 6. Both of these give you bonuses of ~60,000 points.

MS. PAC-MAN

To get extra speed press press Pause, Option 1, A, and Option 1. A lighting bolt will appear, and unpause the game. Press 'B' to use it. To get five lives in reserve press Pause, Option 1, B, B, A, A, Option 1 (only once per game). Start game, pause and press option 1, B, B, B, Option 1, unpause. Now use option 1 to skip levels. Start game, at anytime pause, hold down option 1 hit A, B, A. Then release option 1 and hit option 1 the 2nd time. The Light Bolt will appear. Hit B to activate. (from Star*Lynx)

PAC-LAND

First get a high score. Put 330NE as the high score name. As long as that's the highest score, you'll get ten extra lives when you play.

QIX

QIX Codes

Codes found by: Patrick and John Hardie
Flushing, NY

Text File by: John Hardie 03/18/92

After level 255 you go back to level 0. There is no known code for level 1. [I don't think this file is right, but I don't have QIX to test it myself. If you think you can get this file to me in mail, please give it a shot! -- kd]

```
2- GFGHEF          3- GFGGEN          4- HAHEHF          5- HAHFNJ          6- HAHG
7- HFHCPI          8- HFHNGF          9- HFHMIJ          10- IAIKCJ  11- IAIL
12- IAIMAN  13- IFIIJE  14- IFILHJ  15- IFIKBJ  16- IFJF
17- IFJEHI  18- IFJHCM  19- IFJGIE  20- IFJBAI  21- IFJA
22- IFJDHJ  23- IFJCBJ  24- IFJNBE  25- IFJMHI  26- IFJP
27- IFJOBH  28- IFJJHJ  29- BFAIFP  30- IFJLDF  31- IFJK
32 - IFKFBJ 33- IFKEBF  34- IFKHHI  35- IFKGCM  36- IFKB
37- IFKAAI  38- IFKDCE  39- IFKCLG  40- FKNBJ          41- IFKM
42- IFKPIC  43-FKOBJ           44- IFKJKL  45- DFBID          46- IFKL
47- IFKKPF  48- IFLFLF  49- IFLEBJ  50- IFLHPE  51- IFLG
```

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52- IFLBBJ  53- IFLAPH  54- IFLDLF  55- IFLCBJ  56- IFLN
57- IFLMLF  58- IFLPBJ  59- IFLOPB  60- IFLJLF  61- BFCI
62- IFLLPA  63- IFLKLF  64- IFMFCM  65- IFMEIK  66- IFMH
67- IFMGKJ  68- IFMBIC  69- IFMACM  70- IFMDAF  71- IFMC
72- IFMNJA  73- IFMMJK  74-IFMPKJ         75- IFMOJA  76- IFMJ
77- DFHIMF  78- IFMLHO  79- IFMKEL  80- IFNFKJ  81- IFNE
82- IFNHJF  83- IFNGIM  84- IFNBCM  85- IFNAIK  86- IFND
87- IFNCKJ  88- IFNNIC  89- IFNMCM  90- IFNPHF  91- IFNO
92- IFNJJP  93- BFEIDF  94- IFNLFN  95- IFNKJP  96- IFOF
97- IFOEJJ  98- IFOHHF  99- IFOGPK  100- IFOBAM 101- IFOA
102- IFODHF 103- IFOCIG 104- IFONMJ 105- IFOMDI 106- IFOP
107- IFOOAM 108- IFOJJF 109- DFFIM  110- IFOLJD 111- IFOK
112- IFPFIK 113- IFPEAI 114- IFPHKJ 115- IFPGIC 116- IFPB
117- IFPAKL 118- IFPDIC 119- IFPCJF 120- IFPNIA 121- IFPM
122- IFPPKL 123- IFPOIC 124- IFPJAF 125- BFGIHA 126- IFPL
127- IFPKII 128- IFAFKF 129- IFAEOB 130- IFAHJJ 131- IFAG
132- IFABNL 133- IFAAAM 134- IFADKF 135- IFACHF 136- IFAN
137- IFAMCM 138- IFAPIK 139- IFAOAI 140- IKJ          141- DFLI
142- IFALGL 143- IFAKKL 144- IFBFIC 145- IFBECI 146- IFBH
147- IFBGIC 148- IFBBEM 149- IFBAID 150- IFBDFF 151- IFBC
152- IFBNCM 153- IFBMIA 154- IFBPAI 155- IFBOKL 156- IFBJ
157- BFIIJFB      159- IFBKCH 160- IFCFII 161- IFCE
162- IFCHOB 163- IFCGJJ 164- IFCBAF 165- IFCALI 166- IFCD
167- IFCCMF 168- IFCNHF 169- IFCMJJ 170- CPCH         171- IFCO
172- IFCJKF 173- DFJIFB 174- IFCLJJ 175- IFCKCM 176- F
177- IFDEAI 178- IFDHKJ 179- IFDGIC 180- IFDBCL 181- IFDA
182- IFDDIC 183- IFDCHL 184- IFDNPF 185- IFDMLF 186- IFDP
187- IFDOPF 188- IFDJL  189- BFKINM 190- IFDLJF 191- IFDK
192- IFEFKH 193- IFEEBL 194- IFEHPF 195- IFEGLF 196- IFEB
197- IFEAJI 198- IF           199- IFECAF 200- IFENHF 201- IFEM
202- IPCH         203- IFEOIJ 204- IFEJKF 205- BFNIHB 206- IFEL
207- IFEKCM 208- IFFFIK 209- IFFEAI 210- IFFHKJ 211- IFFG
212- IFFBCL 213- IFFAKL 214- IFFDIC 215- IFFCFL 216- IFFN
217- IFFMLF 218- IFFPJF 219- IFFOIC 220- IFFJCM 221- FFII
222- IFFLBI 223- IFFKPF 224- IFGFLF 225- IFGEAF 226- IFGH
227- IFGGCL 228- IFGBKI 229- IFGAIC 230- IFGDCM 231- IFGC
232- IFGNAI 233- IFGMCO 234- IFGPLG 235- IFGOAI 236- IFGJ
237- BFPICG 238- IFGLCH 239- IFGKIA 240- IFHFGJ 241- IFHE
242- IFHHIC 243- IFHGHF 244- IFHBIC 245- IFHACM 246- IFHD
247- IFHCAI 248- IFHNDA 249- IFHMLG 250- IFHPAF 251- IFHO
252- IFHJCM 253- BFOIBK 254- IFHLAI 255- IFHKDA O- BFBF
```

RAMPAGE

To play any of the 61 levels, pause and unpause the game on the selection screen before you choose your monster. At the newspaper screen, you can choose a level with the joypad while holding down Option 1. Here's a bonus: Activate the level select trick (Pause and unpause when choosing your monster). At the newspaper, hold down Option 1 and select Day 6. Press Pause twice. Hold down Option 1 and select Day 15. Press Pause twice. Hold down Option 1, Option 2, and the 'B' button simultaneously. The game will end, but there will be a "smiling programmer" instead of the winning monster.

===== Levels and City Names =====

1. BOISE
2. PORTLAND
3. SEATTLE
4. SACRAMENTO
5. OAKLAND
6. SAN FRANCISCO
7. LOS ANGELES
8. SAN BERNADINO
9. SAN DIEGO
10. LAS VEGAS
11. SALT LAKE CITY
12. PHOENIX
13. TUSCON
14. EL PASO
15. ALBUQUERQUE
16. DENVER

17. CHEYENNE
18. BUTTE
19. BISMARCK
20. SIOUX FALLS
21. OMAHA
22. LINCOLN
23. KANSAS CITY
24. WICHITA
25. OKLAHOMA CITY
26. DALLAS
27. HOUSTON
28. NEW ORLEANS
29. LITTLE ROCK
30. ST LOUIS
31. DES MOINES
32. MINNEAPOLIS
33. MILWAUKEE
34. CHICAGO
35. DETROIT
36. CELVELAND
37. DAYTON
38. CINCINNATI
39. INDIANAPOLIS
40. LOUSVILLE
41. MEMPHIS
42. NASHVILLE
43. JACKSON
44. BIRMINGHAM
45. ATLANTA
46. TAMPA
47. MIAMI
48. CHARLESTON
49. CHARLOTTE
50. RICHMOND
51. BALTIMORE
52. WASHINGTO D.C.
53. PHILADELPHIA
54. PITTSBURGH
55. BUFFALO
56. SYRACUSE
57. BOSTON
58. PROVIDENCE
59. NEWARK
60. NEW YORK CITY
61. SUNNYVALE

===== Headlines (XXXX... ON NTH DAY) =====

- GIANT MONSTER GOES ON RAMPAGE (level 1)
- ALL-OUT BATTLE...
- CITY-STOMPING...
- DEADLY DISASTER...
- FEROCIOUS RAMPAGE...
- INTENSE FIGHTING...
- MASS DEVASTATION...
- MONSTROUS MELEE...
- NATIONWIDE MAYHEM...
- PERILOUS POUNDING....
- TRAGIC ONSLAUGHT...

===== Captions =====

- AQUATIC STARLET WADES INTO DEEP TROUBLE...
- AVOID LIGHTNING IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF
- CABBIES CRY "NO FARE!!"
- CITY HOWLING MAD, SAUSAGE SCAM EXPOSED
- DAIRY EXPLODES - UDDER CHAOS EVERYWHERE...
- DRINK THE FINAL POTION TO INDUCE YOUR BACKWARD MOTION
- EAT FOOD ITEMS TO INCREASE HEALTH...
- EVER-GROWING CONCERN OVER MEGA-VITAMIN...
- EX-MUTANT IS ARRESTED FOR STREAKING
- GET A BANG OUT OF LIFE -- PICK UP DYNAMITE
- GIANT APE THROWS MONKEY WRENCH INTO CITY WORKS
- GIANT WEREEOLF GOES SHOPPING...SACKS 5TH AVENUE...
- GUILTY LAB TECHNICIAN DISCOVERS CURE
- GYM SOCK THIEF THWARTED...SUSPECT BEING HELD (AT ARM'S LENGTH...)
- HAVE A FRIEND FOR DINNER...BURP
- HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE "MONKEY-IN-THE-MIDDLE"???...OUCH!...
- HINT: FOOD BEHIND OPEN WINDOWS...

- HINT: WANT TO EAT WELL? PUNCH SLOWER...
- HOVERING HELICOPTERS HERALD HUMONGOUS HURT...
- IS THERE NO END TO THIS RAMPAGE?
- JOB OPENINGS IN NATIONAL GUARD
- KEEP THE SPRY LAB TECHNICIAN IN SUNNYVALE...OR ELSE!!
- LAB SCREW-UP WEARS OFFF...FILM AT 11...
- LAB TECHNICIAN SIGHTED IN SUNNYVALE...
- MEGA VITAMINS -- JUST SAY NO...!
- PLAY "TROLLEY HANDBALL" WITH YOUR FRIENDS
- POTIONS GIVE SPECIAL POWERS...
- PROPERTY VALUES AT ALL-TIME LOW...
- RADIOACTIVE LAKE CHANGES WOMAN'S SCALE
- REAL ESTATE PRICES PLUMMET...BUYERS BEWARE
- REAL LIFE JEKYLL AND HYDE STORY!!
- SHORTAGE OF PRIME OFFICE SPACE...MARKET COLLAPSES
- SOMETHING'S BREWING ON THE ROOF AT THE ARGLEBARF CHEMICAL COMPANY
- SPOUSE OF MUTANT FILES LEGAL ACTION
- TANK BUT NO TANKS...
- THERE ARE NO (BUY A LYNX) SUBLIMINAL (OR TWO) IN THIS GAME (BUY A LYNX)
- VIDEO PIRACY IN CITY HALL? MAYOR IN REEL TROUBLE...!
- YOU CAN LEAD YOU BUDDIES TO WATER, BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE THEM SWIM
- WARNING!: ELECTRICITY IS SHOCKING...
- WITNESS SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON FLUORESCENT BULB SCAM...

RAMPART

[I'm not sure exactly how to do this one, if someone knows, please mail me... --kd]

Clear two veteran levels and ??? and push the joypad left as if you were trying to select a different battlefield. The highlight will disappear and then you press A or B you will play on one of the two player levels.

During the cannon stage, if you click five times on a place where the cannon can't be built, you'll go on ahead to the firing stage. One strategy is to place the cannon over a boat you plan to target and click five times, so that when you start the firing stage the crosshairs will already be over he boat.

ROAD BLASTERS

Hit the first tree on either side of the road, hold down the B button on the first level. Or, drive slowly on the right side of the road. Inch forward to the first tree, and wait until it disappears, and press the B button. You can now use OPTION 1 and OPTION 2 to select your *next* level. You'll also get the pictures of the programmers. (You can also drive down the left or right side of the road holding the B button...) Deaccelerate from 204 down to around 188 or so and acelerate again until you get up to 205 MPH! (from Star*Lynx)

RYGAR

Floating shield trick: Throw the shield in front of you, then restart the game with Option 1 and Pause. When you restart the game, your shield will be floating in front of you. As soon as you fire, your shield returns to normal. (programming glitch?)

SCRAPYARD DOG

When you start the game, wait until your man appears and press PAUSE Now press right on the joypad and press the "B" button at the same time. You should see a message at the bottom othe screen that says "SHIELD AWARDED." Note: This works only once at the beginning of each level. Found by: Sky (John Hardie From Flushing, NY) Feb. 1992.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Keep in mind when you read this that Beast is an arcade game, thus just knowing how to do this may not be enough. Quick reflexes may be necessary. Also, my strategy is not perfect in places... if you know how to improve my technique (ie, you don't get hit as much) let me know (tazzzzz@eecs.umich.edu).

Outside. Start by running to the left. Watch for the bats that will fly down (I've only made it through here unscathed a couple times, normally I just run back to the right a little bit and duck when I hear the bats shriek). There are two different sets of bats, and each set of bats will attack in two different smaller groups. As soon as you get past the second set of bats, there are three metal traps in the ground. All you need to do is jump and land between the sets of "jaws". Enter the tree (there is nothing of value further to the left).

In the tree, part one. The small head at the bottom of the staircase will shoot at you when you get a certain distance from it (something you're bound to discover on your own!). Climb down the ladder and head to the left. The game progresses pretty linearly here. You've got a few platforms to jump and a few monsters to dispose of, but there's really only one way to go. When you get past the green guys with the swords (watch out for those spikes overhead!), climb up the ladder and head to the right (passing the next ladder which is heading up) until you come to the ladder that goes down. A bit more jumping on platforms and you'll come to a blue total health restoring potion. Things progress a bit more and you will encounter these golden flying things. When you are at this point, you will climb down a ladder and find a silvery (but with red center) circular device stuffed in a corner to the right (somewhat near a big skeleton lodged in the wall). This is a teleporter that will take you back a ways. Don't use it yet. Instead, head to the left, ignoring the ladder heading down.

Next, you will come to the weird eagle thing that is holding a blue crystal globe. Time his fire-breathing activities and get up close to him when he's not scorching the air in your vicinity. Ducking will avoid the fire. Then, when he's not breathing fire, punch the globe (it will flash each time you hit it). I counted eleven hits for it to be finished. You will then have the blue globe in your inventory (you'll get to use it soon enough). Head back to the right the way you came, and then take the ladder down.

You will climb down a jog in the ladders, and then head left instead of down. To the left, you will find an area with a key. I've found it easiest to jump off of the moving platform into that section and then getting onto the up-down moving platform without the resident blue guy seeing me. (Basically don't walk to the left at all after jumping off of that moving platform. Just hop straight onto the up-down platform). Now, head back to the right. If you need health, climb down that ladder that I told you not to climb down before and head to the left. All the way left is a blue complete health restoration potion.

I have a hint for this whole section. I found it much quicker to avoid catching all the ropes and jumping on all the platforms by simply falling off the ledges. The health potions were conveniently spaced so that I could easily survive these falls (watch out for spikes though!) and leave this area with full health. Climb back up the ladders and hop in the teleporter.

After teleporting, hit option 1 and select the blue globe. The blue globe gives you a nifty missile weapon. Head left and climb up the ladder. When you move to the right, a wall will rise sealing you from escape! There is a lone spike "bush" in the middle of this little battlefield. Stand with the Beast's right foot just about touching the left edge of the bush. When the monster rises up, duck. You should be below his shots. Note that before he rises up, he will fire one shot. Try to jump over them, but they don't do too much damage so don't worry too much. I comfortably get four shots in before I have to duck. It takes fifteen shots total (don't waste these shots, I've found them useful later). Hit option 1 and select "exit" in order to go back to regular punches. Off to the right, you enter the second half of the tree and a new save point!

In the tree, part two. As you run to the right, you will run past a machine with a lever, gears and a chain coming out of the top. Ignore that for the moment, and jump over the spikes. After you climb down the ladder, there will be some snakes coming out of the floor and spitting at you. Just run up to them and punch them after they spit. After the second and third snakes a bird thing will fly down and you will need to duck. Don't take the downward ladder after the snakes. Instead, pick up the gear and head back to the machine. Once there, hit option 1 and select the gear. Assuming you're standing close to the machine, the gear will go in place. Punch the lever and a platform will lower. Climb onto the platform and punch the lever again to go up. Go to the right and get the torch hanging from a support pole. Head left, beat up some green guys and flip the switch on the wall. Climb up the ladder you past when you went to flip the switch, and head left past the bouncing eyeballs (!?). When the dragon stops breathing fire, run, pick up the key and stand next to him and wait out his next attack. After that, run back to the right and past the eyeballs. If you need health, head to the right and pick up the blue potion. Otherwise, head back down the ladder and the "elevator". Go past the snakes again, and then head downward. Head right and punch the lever. Then turn back and cross

the platform that had been extended across what used to be a gap. Punch the lever you find off to the left and then go back to the right and downard (gadzooks! They've got you running back and forth!). Run left after getting to the bottom of the ladder and use the moving platforms to take you further left. You will find a blue "glove" suspended in midair. If it's surrounded by electricity, you forgot to flip the switch in the hallway underneath those bouncing eyeballs. As you head back right past the ladder, a couple of those red batlike things will fly down. Try to hit them, because now is a good time to conserve health. You've got a ways to go before a refill. Continue on downward and avoid the obstacles (I have really got much to comment on here. Just practice your timing around the spikes and try not to get hit.) When you get to the ghosts, if you head right instead of down the ladder to the left you can avoid having to deal with these rocket engines that are mysteriously igniting. However, only avoid those engines if you have the health to take a fall into spikes (and you must also be confident of your ability to get rid of the dragon). Hit option 1 and select the yellow glove. You can't kill the dragon without it. If you watch the timing, you will notice that the spike will drop to the floor and the dragon will stop breathing fire. That is when you need to jump across. You can comfortably punch the dragon five times before you need to jump back across when the spike is down. It takes a total of thirty hits to blast this guy. Use the yellow key you picked up to leave the tree area through the well.

Topside once again. All right! So we're out of that hellhole of a tree. Well, there's still a bunch of ickyness to deal with up top. First, stand in front of the cannon. After the nifty little green dude lights the fuse (wait for it to be burning), punch the cannon. The little guy gets blast and leaves a handy gun behind. Now, head back to the right eliminating the baddies that you encounter. The columns that look like piles of rock contain potentially useful items (there is only one evil column in the game, and that comes near the end). The first two you come across have health bonuses. The last one contains a large ball. Push the ball along with you as you avoid the spikes and use it to plug up a hole from which some green and red balls are popping. When you get to the funky pterodactyl statue, don't be alarmed. This is actually a pretty easy monster. He does a bit of damage if he hits you, so don't let him. Punch the statue five times to let the monster out, and then punch him three times to take back the freedom you just gave him. I personally hate the spider forest that comes next, but at least there is health afterwards. The eyeballs aren't too bad once you see the holes that you can rest in. Duck as the green guy flies overhead, and then punch him as he comes back around but lower. When the flying dragon drops the winged bomb, punch the bomb before it explodes and it will eradicate the annoying swarm of insects. I think you can handle the rest of the obstacles until you get to the castle.

In the castle. Go left, past the ladder, and get rid of the green, hoppy guys. Flip the switch. Go back and climb the ladder. You can only punch wooden barrels; the silver balls and indestructible. There are two wooden barrels followed by a metal ball, and this repeats itself indefinitely. Hit the first wooden barrel, and use the ladder up to the next level as a means to dodge the second barrel and the metal ball. When you get to the floor where the barrels are dropping down, run to the left and flip the switch. Climb the ladder to the top floor, and punch the chests to the right for health, except be forewarned that the very last chest contains a green guy who shoots arrows, and the second to last chest can be stood on to avoid the arrows. Kill the green guy by punching the chest before getting the last bit of health. Run to the right, avoid axes and flying dragons. Pick up the wrench. Climb down the first ladder you come to. As you run to the right, watch for green dudes in the floor which throw knives at you. To avoid getting hit by the axes that come down, stand right underneath whence they come, and they'll fly over you from each side. After defeating the three big green mouths, run and jump across the gap. You need to jump at the last second to make it. Punch the little head in the wall three times, and jump onto the chandelier as it lowers. Wait for the spider to go up to run underneath it. More axes. Some spiders need to be punched once or twice before they'll go up. After climbing down the ladders, you'll be back near the entrance. Go right. You might want to consider using some of your remaining shots from the blue ball to kill the red bouncy blobs and the bats after them. The gates here will only be open if you've flipped both switches prior to getting here. Climb down the ladder; don't go all the way to the left. Some health is on the right then. Go left, wait for the metal ball to pass, go left, climb the ladder, climb into the pit, and duck. Wait for the ball, go left, and climb down the ladder. Pick up the spare bullets, and climb down the next ladder. Run to the right until you see the gargoyles; then run back to the left, and punch the button on the wall. There's another green guy in the floor after the axes. Use the wrench to get past the electric field. Climb up the ladder, go to the left, and flip the switch. Arm yourself with the gun, climb down the other ladder, and go to the right. Get in close, and just shoot. And keep shooting. You shouldn't need to refill the gun. Use the blue key to unlock the door. You are now outside.

Outside the castle. Go right. Punch the tombstones for health. In the second set of tombstones, the second tombstone contains a ghost instead of health. Kill everything. To kill the final guy, watch his shot pattern. Get in close and jump and kick the face in the middle of his body. Congratulations, you won.

SHANGHAI

To view the victory screen, go to the high score table and press Pause. Hold down Option 1, Option 2, A, B, and press the joypad diagonally up and to the left.

SLIME WORLD

At the title page, hold down OPT 2, then hold down OPT 1. Next press the joypad up and right. Let go of everything at once. You will be invincible! In multiplayer games, all invincible players are kept in an "alternate universe". Basically, invincible players will show up on the maps of other invincibles, but not on the maps of the regular players.

One (There may be others) secret level is on level 6. As soon as you enter shoot the floor immediately to the right of Todd. The floor will open up to another level.

A 'Zit Popping' game can be played by going to the summary screen and then going to the screen where Todd is green. Press Option 1 and you'll see a zit. Blow it up by hitting the buttons as fast as you can.

4EB435 and 6134A4 will crash Slime World so completely that the only way to recover is to turn the lynx off and on again!

The codes found in this text file were compiled by Mr. Kale Swindell of La Canada, CA. He indicates that these codes will place your character (TODD) at one of the restart stations located in the game. The further along the code is in the list, the further into the level your character will be restarted.

Adventure 1: EASY

```
24CAA1  E8CA6C  EC8AA9  118AEA  6FCBE9  919073  E70926  A809E3  6B4B6C
66CBE0  25CBA7  114928  12C9AA  550894  D7C956  19CB93  198AD2  9D0AD9
45C9C5  5DC9DD  070946  CA090D  CCC94F  30C988  4F8B09  0B8BCD  098BC3
078BC1  C28A87  870AC3  8A0ACE  8F0BC8
```

Adventure 2: EXPLORATION

```
269AF3  ED9ABE  ECDA78  ED9BBF  E4DB71  259BF7  EA193D  EF58F9  D199B9
E79EB4  EDDE7D  EE9EBF  D29EBB  E79FB5  2F9CF2  6CDCE3  AC5CB2  139CFE
159DF9  D01A24  559925  5A9E23  43DFE9  1E1969  1DDCA0  1899E0  1CD8AF
0399EB  865591  465F57  4EDFDD  75DFD8  245947  085F11  4C5C52  070997
4FDFDD  089ADD  70DCDF  75DCD8  F1181B  B51FDA  711B9B  8EDA1A  F1DA45
745947  749807  F659C1  B85D87  BD1DC0  B79B40  3DDC80  B79B40  7E5D4D
205F09  7F9E0C  60DEC9  20D988  205F09
```

Adventure 3: ACTION

```
9157B6  AB9277  2F1176  919073  198AD2  5DC9DD  15563D  569039  98D638
1796FC  111671  5417B2  1DD7BB  1993FB  D052FC  1492F9  D91225  5CD1E4
5CD6E5  011766  DC93A6  1E1262  43536C  42506C  47972D  0D97EB  77D1DF
B816D8  7A575B  B610D8  72139C  0C1654  8916E9  4D9115  F150D3  CA9095
0892D5  8F9350  B69358  391245  FF9086  BC12C0  BD11C4  3C5604  215601
211746  67970D  EAD74B  6B910B  62920F  A610C8
```

Adventure 4: SUSPENSE

```
DD0114  DDC154  9D8154  5DC0D4  5C8114  5C4157  1C4117  DC0117  DCC157
DF8197  9C01D7  9C4197  5D8014  9CC117  5C0097  5CC0D7  DCC0D7  C641D9
C941D8  494158  C9C659  464159  474059  46C0D9  464058  884284  0B82C4
0DC286  8C4280  8E4282  B0824C  34004E  C7071C  1A472B  1A076B  1DC7AB
5DC7EB  5D872B  5D476A  5C07AA  9702EB  10C3A2  110362  114322  918362
2E81E6  9146A1  9106E1  EEC666  114621  110661  11C6A6  2E0666  2E4626
2E86E7  2EC6A7  2B413A  2B81FB  2BC1BB  28413B  2881F8  28C1B8  294138
2981F9  29C1B9  24413F  2387F1  200771  E00731  A007F1  6006B1  210671
E10631  A106F1  6101B1  3E0272  FEC171  BEC131  7EC0F1  3EC0B1  FFC071
BF00F1  7F03B1  3C0371  FC0331  BC03F1  7C02B1  3D0271  7C4371  3A0276
FA42F6  BA42B6  FAC276  BA8176  BD42B1  BD02F1  BDC231  A48278
```

Adventure 5: LOGIC

```
D9E275  9C26F4  9B62B7  02A2FF  9F63B0  C02032  C4E17F  C2A1B2  032770
DF67F4  022470  05E7B3  47667F  4621BE  8522F9  06E3B8  8921F8  C966F9
8C65BB  CDE665  71E1E1  4C21A4  0EE3A0  CAA3A5  8D62A1  8F22E3  7527A3
336720  CEE565  F52520  39652C  3CA4EB  B7E42D  B2A662  BA64A8  F162ED
77E3E9  796168  BBA66B  3BE0AA  FF61D6  60A417  236516  E02711  A12601
652692  E8E55F  A6E61E  6A2798  AD25D8  27A1DF  A7A358  7CE2D1
```

Adventure 6: ARCADE

```
012D7C  016E39  016938  00EAA5  002A64
```

S.T.U.N. RUNNER

Start out at level 11 (Labyrinth) and complete it. On level 12 (Coathanger) go right and catch the boost and continue going right. You will fly up and then continue and cross the finish line. You will be warped to level 18!

SUPER SKWEEK

Choose Normal Game from the options. At the map screen position Skweek (or Skruch) over the "O" in the word GARGOUIL LAND and scale until you can't fly any lower. You will see a snorkeling furball. It may take some positioning, but maneuver yourself over the furball and then press OPT 1 so you can go to the forbidden islands. If you want two extra men, scale onto the small island directly to the right of the WELCOME ISLAND in the upper right corner of the dark blue spot. You will see a Skweek next to a palm tree. Hover over it

and push OPT 1 for two extra lives. To gain 3000 extra coins, scale over to the large body of water in the PAGALAGOS ISLAND. You will see a Skweek. Hover over it, push OPT 1 and the cash is yours. (from July 1992 EGM)

TOKI

Press and hold down OPT1 and UP before the title screen appears get into "freak out" mode. Pressing A or B starts the game normally (from Star*Lynx BBS).

For those of you trying to get the digitized picture of the TOKI designers to appear in TOKI but are having trouble, I've found that holding the pad UP and holding OPTION 1 simultaneously JUST as the screen fades to black to show the "Continue" screen usually produces the white dot after the timer expires (of course hold UP and OPTION 1 through the whole duration of the continue screen.)

While trying to get the digitized picture, I discovered an "additional" trick (at least I think no one has posted about this before.) Kill all

your men in TOKI. Once at the "Continue?" screen, after the first "beep" of the countdown, and while the timer still shows a 9, press UP and OPTION 1 at the same time, and hold them, just like for the digitized trick. You'll see the GAME OVER screen, but keep holding them. The TOKI demo will appear... keep holding UP and on OPTION 1. After the names of the designers fall down, the demo should go psychedelic!! The demo will cycle through colours, a catchy tune will begin, and the pad will allow you to sample digitized TOKI sounds...furthermore, pressing DOWN and LEFT repeatedly will cause the samples to descend in pitch. Conversely, pressing UP and RIGHT repeatedly will cause the samples to ascend in pitch.

Note: Once the new demo begins, release UP & OPTION 1. Then use pad to sample sounds.

Have fun!
Jason

--
Jason Patrick Bennett "The little girl had the making of a poet in her
Simon Fraser University who, being told to be sure of her meaning before
Burnaby, B.C., Canada she spoke, said: 'How can I know what I think
bennetta@sfu.ca till I see what I say?'" --Graham Wallas

TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL

In Tournament Cyberball there is an apparent bug in the game that can be a real cheat. This works well against another human player. I haven't tried it against the computer. I'm guessing the computer is "too smart" to fall for this cheat. Anyways, if you're fairly far up the field, you can run your quarterback all the way to the opposite end of the field, before throwing your pass. "Unrealistic" passes can be completed from the opposite end of the field. Watch out though, some computerized cyberbots will follow you all the way.

The advantage of this cheat is simple: It takes out a few of the computerized defenders, and it throws the defense player off by not allowing the defense player to see where your receivers are going. In other words, all you see on both player's lynx's is a pretty much blank screen with nothing but a quarterback and a few rushers....With enough practice, one can have little trouble blindly throwing passes like this.

Lastly, don't try this cheat on the "Real" arcade version of this game. It doesn't work. Actually it's quite amusing what happens. When you think the quarterback is going to throw a 70 + yard pass, he/she/it ends up throwing a pass that lands like 1 yard right in front of the QB. Try it if you're ahead sometime on the arcade version. Is kinda amusing....;-)

VIKING CHILD

Viking Child -Codes-

Village Castle: OMEGAMAN

Forest Mountain: PATRICIA
Land Bridge Lake: REDDWRARF
Labyrinth Mund Flat Volcano: DEWSBURY
Desert Pramid: ISLAND
Codes from Wizz Kidd (Mike Reed from Tempe, Az)

WARBIRDS

When playing alone, pause the game and you can still look around with the 'B' button. This may help new pilots so they can pause the action, look around and plan their route.

For single-player Grave Sight, as soon as you die (when the roses and skulls border appears) quickly pause the game. 'A' button will change the viewpoint from plane to plane (And to the point where you died). Look around with the joypad.

XENOPHOBE

Hints:

First the basics. I love the yellow electro gun, so all my strategy revolves around this gun. The puffer gun does more damage.

I usually crawl along the ground and fire alot. I stand to kill festers and ceiling vines. Jump to move quickly.

Festers (the fellows who appear on the sides of the screen) Take these guys out by being just over half a screen away from them. Fire like crazy. You better make sure you are at least half a screen away because these really hurt! You can advance on them once they retreat and expose their hand, makes killing them easier if you do. When they throw stuff, you better be facing them and firing... Getting hit by this stuff stuns you, likely costing your life on later levels. You can kill them with the puffer gun by laying low near the edge of the screen, and standing up and firing as soon as they start to retreat. You can always ignore these guys buy crawling along the floor... but it's good to take them out as soon as you can. They produce other aliens, and create another hazard. You can often kill festers on the adjacent screen by firing very close to the edge. I used this to my advantage alot on level 22, which is almost nothing but festers.

Ceiling vines: As I mentioned earlier, make sure you don't move into them while firing. Stop, then aim up and fire.

Rollerbies (the armadillo like things that curl into a ball) Getting hit by these balled up creatures can stun you for some time, like the festers can, which means losing your life in later levels. Fire alot at them to make them roll the other way of course. Don't fire too much if there is a closed door in the way, as they'll bounce back at you at high speed. They unravel once they stop moving. I often fire once or twice at them to make them stop. They then unravel and I kill them. Or, I throw a grenade, and fire just enough to make them be near the grenade. These guys are what really threatens your life at the beginning of later levels... Don't underestimate what a mob of these can do to your game. :) One stuns you, then every alien and their brother beat up on you while you can't do anything. Then you lose your gun, and losing your gun on later levels usually means the end of your life, if not your whole game! (you usually get a laser with your new guy, which often is inadaquate). Point blank shots often don't work on these guys for some reason, very important to remember.

Laser firing security drones: Of course you can make these stop firing at you by getting the disk and putting it in the security machine. But did you know that you can kill them? You have to fire alot, unless you have a puffer gun. Stand and fire diagonally up, fire like crazy, and don't change directions! They'll move right into your fire. The laser gun does so little damage, it is questionable if you should do this with that gun. I kill these drones on every floor I encounter them until I find the disk.

Little crawling aliens: crawl and fire alot, jump if you they stick to you. On later levels, it often isn't wise to jump immediately... you might jump into a festers xray beam, and get stunned, lose your gun, your life, your game...

Snotterpillars (big hopping spitting aliens): While heading towards a new screen, if you hear that you are hitting something just before you enter the new screen, stop and keep firing until the sound stops. Then fire a lot as you enter the new screen. Firing at them usually stops the nasty spittle they throw. You should have no problems taking out mobs of these fellows by firing alot. Stop moving as soon you are hitting one, you want to hit them as far away as you can. I am pretty brave with these guys, I'll take on a big mob of them at once. Just fire very very fast. If too many get close, or are about to, move directly away and hit jump twice (or more) in a row. This one tactic is the main reason why I survive so long! Not only does it make you run away quickly, it also has the effect of dodging their spittle. Practice turning around and

hopping away repeatly when there aren't aliens around. Make sure you are moving away before jumping, otherwise you'll jump up instead of away, and then you're really If you have the puffer gun, have no fear-- if you fire fast enough, you can kill a solid wall of these guys with it.

machine that spits out bombs: Each bomb does 200 damage I think, so be careful. Jump away or over bombs that get thrown near you. hit option two to fix the machine, then hit option one until you have a full load of grenades.

self destructing: often a good idea, unless you are about to finish the level. You won't get 200 bonus health, but on later levels you'll probably lose more than that. I usually self destruct 2 or maybe 3 levels.

Fire levels: I am continually switching from the fire extinguisher to the electro gun on this level. Put out the fire, run and grab your gun and clear the rooms until you hit the next fire, etc. You can push along both guns, but it's risky. Fires count as part of the alien remaining count... so don't leave the fires for last! Otherwise you'll get stuck with a fire extinguisher on your next level. If I'm cautious, I often gain more health than I lose on these levels.

level 21: This level is utter hell. Makes every other level look silly. Be paranoid with every room you enter. I can't stress enough how hard this level is. Fire as fast as you can. Good luck keeping your gun... that's the main thing actually on the later levels, keeping your gun. The beginning of 21 and other later levels is hellish, this is one place where I wouldn't feel guilty using alot of grenades. Those hordes of rollerbies are a real problem at the beginning of levels.

level 22: This level is as easy as 21 is hard. Almost nothing but festers. This level might not be so easy if you don't have an electro-gun. I always have one here.

level 23, final level: Use my technique for killing snotterpillars, especially hopping away repeatedly when mobs get close. Grenades here can take a wall of snotterpillers, what a rush. :) Keep up a wall of fire to stop their spittle. Be wary of hidden ceiling vines on the edges of the screen. Fire as fast as you can when you see the mother alien, crawl behind her while firing when you've cleared the other aliens in the room. Fire at her head once you're behind her. (diagonally up from ground)

It's important to learn to survive with a laser gun until you can get something better. Be very convervative, do most of your killing from the adjacent screen. Hit things as far away as possible. Run from snotterpillars when they get inside your max range (yup, hop twice again..) use grenades if you have to. God I hate losing your gun on the later levels. Free free to mail me any questions and comments. Is the arcade game exactly the same?

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Map:

Guide to abbreviations

BM - Bomb Machine
E - Elevator
F - Fire
FP - Fireball Pit
FS - Fire in space station
IS - Infestation Screen
GD - Green ooze Dripping from ceiling
O - Outdoors
FO - Floor opening
MSU - Moving stars Unit
PR - Pestering Robot
RN - Research Notes
SC - Security Central (needs ID card)
SD - Self Destruct unit
SXU - Sealed Xeno Unit (needs Key)

Notation in header

(NN Xenos) - Number of Xenos to kill on this level
(F) - Space station is on fire

(PR) - Space station has a Pestering Robot that shoots

Space Station 1 (63 Xenos)

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1					MSU	RN		

Space Station 2 (56 Xenos)

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1			E			O		O
2			E	IS	BM			

Space Station 3

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	GD	GD	E	SD		IS		O
2			E					
3			E	FB				

Space Station 4

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	IS		E	FO			FO	
2			E	FO			FO	
3			E					
4		IS	E		SD			

Space Station 5 (PR) (127 Xenos)

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	O		E	IS	O	SC		
2	SXU		E	IS		GD	GD	
3			E	IS		FP		

Space Station 6 (F)

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1		F	E	IS,F				
2	F		E	IS,F	SD,F	F		

Space Station 7

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1			E	IS				
2			E		BM			

Space Station 8

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1				FO				FO
2				FO				FO
3				FO				FO
4								
5	SD			IS		IS		

Space Station 9 (55 Xenos)

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

1			E	IS				
2			E		BM			

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 10					(99 Xenos)		
1	GD	GD	E	SD		IS		O
2			E					
3			E	FP				

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 11					(122 Xenos)		
1	IS		E	FO			FO	
2			E	FO			FO	
3			E					
4		IS	E		SD			

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	(PR)		Space Station 12					
1	O		E	IS		SC		
2	SXU		E	IS	GD	GD		
3			E			FB		

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	(F)		Space Station 13					
1		F	E		F		F	
2	F		E	F,IS	F,SD	F		
3								

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 14					(100 Xenos)		
1			E	IS		O		
2			E		BM			

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 15							
1		FO		FO				FO
2		FO		FO				FO
3		FO		FO				FO
4		FO	IS					
5	SD			IS		IS	IS	

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 16					(57 Xenos)		
1			E	IS				O
2			E		BM			

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Space Station 17							
1	GD	GD	E	SD				

2								
3								
4								
5								

Space Station 18							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	IS	E						
2		E						
3		E						
4		E						
5					SD			

Space Station 19							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	O		E			SC		
2			E	IS				
3			E	IS				

Space Station 20 (F)							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1			E	IS				
2			E		BM			

Space Station 21							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1			E	IS		O		O
2			E					
3								
4								
5								

Space Station 22							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

Space Station 23							
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

ZARLOR MERCENARY

ZARLOR MERCENARY / The Game of Life

ACCESSING LIFE: The game of LIFE is accessed through the character selection screen of Zarlor Mercenary. Turn on your Lynx with the Zarlor Mercenary game card inserted. Press the fire button twice to get to the character selection screen. At this point you must hold down OPTION 1 while moving the joypad as follows: Up, Down, Left, Right, Up.

At this point your screen should say LIFE and there will be a LIFEform known as a 'glider' moving across the screen diagonally. It will go off the edge of the screen and return on the bottom, eventually running into the cells forming the word LIFE and causing the chain reaction that destroys the title screen.

Before the title screen is destroyed you may try the following controls:

1. Moving the joypad or pressing either OPTION button or PAUSE will stop the current evolution of LIFE.

2. Pressing OPTION 1 to continue the evolution puts LIFE into a mode where cells that reach the edge of the screen wrap around to the other side.

3. Pressing OPTION 2 to continue the evolution puts LIFE into a mode where cells that reach the edge of the screen behave as though they have reached a solid wall. This may be useful if 'gliders' that are launched are disrupting your LIFEforms.

4. Pressing either BUTTON A or BUTTON B puts LIFE into DRAWING MODE.

DRAWING MODE: Access DRAWING MODE by pressing BUTTON A or BUTTON B while LIFE is evolving or after the current LIFEform has reached a stable state. You can tell you are in DRAWING MODE because the joypad will be in control of your cursor, a set of green crosshairs. While in DRAWING MODE, your controls behave as follows:

1. Moving the joypad with BUTTON A depressed will allow you to draw.

2. Moving the joypad with BUTTON B depressed will allow you to erase.

3. Pressing OPTION 1 or OPTION 2 will allow your LIFEform to evolve, as described in 2 and 3 in the above ACCESSING LIFE section.

4. Note that the screen cannot be flipped, but attempting to RESTART the game will cause the screen to be cleared, and you will remain in the DRAWING MODE.

5. Pressing PAUSE and BUTTON A will put you in COPY MODE.

6. Pressing PAUSE and BUTTON B will put you in PASTE/ERASE MODE.

7. Pressing OPTION 2 and PAUSE will copy your current screen to a temporary buffer (see below).

COPY MODE: Access COPY MODE by holding down PAUSE and pressing BUTTON A while in DRAWING MODE. You can tell you are in COPY MODE because the green crosshairs will be onscreen with the word COPY in green below and slightly to the right of the crosshairs. While in COPY MODE, your controls behave as follows:

1. Pressing either OPTION 1 or 2 will return you to drawing mode.

2. Holding down PAUSE and pressing either OPTION 1 or OPTION 2 will evolve your LIFEform frame-by-frame. Note that the OPTION button used determines whether screen wrap is on or off.

3. Pressing BUTTON A sets one corner coordinate of a box that you can draw. Pressing BUTTON A again sets the other corner coordinate of the box. Anything within the box is now in your COPY BUFFER. You are now in PASTE/ERASE MODE.

4. Holding down PAUSE and pressing BUTTON A takes you to the LIFEform library, a screen full of goodies for you to put into your COPY BUFFER. After selecting a LIFEform or group of LIFEforms, you will be in PASTE/ERASE MODE.

5. In the LIFEform library, pressing PAUSE and BUTTON A again takes you to your temporary buffer (see above). You can cut items from this buffer to the main screen.

6. Holding down PAUSE and pressing BUTTON B takes you directly to PASTE/ERASE MODE, using whatever was last put in your COPY BUFFER. If you haven't yet selected anything, you may get garbage.

PASTE/ERASE MODE: Access PASTE/ERASE MODE either by holding PAUSE and pressing BUTTON B while in DRAWING MODE, or by going to COPY MODE and selecting LIFEforms from your screen or the library screen. You can tell you are in PASTE/ERASE MODE because your joypad now controls whatever you have in your COPY BUFFER. While in PASTE/ERASE MODE, your controls behave as follows:

1. Pressing either OPTION 1 or OPTION 2 will return you to DRAWING MODE.

2. Pressing BUTTON A will allow you to paste your COPY BUFFER.

3. Pressing BUTTON B will allow you to erase using your COPY BUFFER.

4. Holding PAUSE and pressing BUTTON B will flip your COPY BUFFER any one of eight possible ways.

5. Note that the screen cannot be flipped, but attempting to RESTART the game will cause the screen to be cleared, and you will remain in the PASTE/ERASE MODE.

6. Pressing PAUSE and BUTTON A will put you in COPY MODE.

Index

Boldface indicates a page containing a review. *Italics* indicate a page containing a cheat.

A.P.B., **13**, *67*
A.P.E. Newsletter, 10
Activision, 51
Adventures of Monkey Island, The, 25
Alien Crush, 41
Amiga, 12
Arch Rivals, 16
Arkanoid, 33, 46
Atari Explorer, 10
AtariUser, 10
Austria, 11
Awesome Golf, **14**, 30, *67*
Bally, 36, 43
Baseball Heroes, **15**
Basketbrawl, **15**, *67*
Batman Returns, **16**, *68*
Battle Chess, 56
Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure, **17**, *68*
Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball, 16
Blackjack, 35
blinking pixel syndrome, 4
Blockout, 18
Blue Lightning, **19**, *69*
Boulder Dash, 24
Breakout, 46
California Dreams, 18
California Games, **20**, *69*
Captain N, 39
Checkered Flag, **21**, 30, *70*
Chess, see Ultimate Chess C
Chip's Challenge, **22**, 23, 24, 44, 65, *71*
Cleveland Free-Net, 10
Color Dreams, 23
Combat Basketball, 16
Compuserve, 11
Craps, 35
Crystal Mines II, **23**
Die Hard Game Fan, 10
Dig Dug, 23
Dinoland, 41
Dirty Larry
    Renegade Cop, **24**

Donkey Kong, 51
Dracula the Undead, **25**, *74*
Dragon's Fury, 41
Electrocop, **26**, *74*
Electronic Gaming Monthly, 10
Elvira and the Party Monsters, 41
encryption, 3
Epyx, 3, 28, 65
Fabtek, 58
Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge, see Ultimate Chess C
Gamemaster, 10
Gamepro, 10
Gates of Zendocon, **27**, *76*
Gauntlet, **28**, *77*
GEnie, 11
Germany, 11
Handicraft, 12
Handy, 3
Handy-Bug, 12
Hanna-Barberra, 39
Hard Drivin', **29**, 53
High Speed, 41
Hockey, **30**
Howard, 12
Howdy, 12
Hydra, **31**
International Lynx Club (The Netherlands), 11
Internationaler Lynx Club (Austria), 11
Internationaler Lynx Club (Germany), 11
Ishido, **32**
Joust, **32**
King's Quest, 25
Klax, **33**, 45, 52, *77*
Kung Food, **34**
Landrum, Stephen, 5, 6
Lynx Base Package, 6
Lynx Casino, **35**
Lynx Classic, 3
Lynx Deluxe Package, 6
Lynx II, 3
Mah Jongg, 51
Mario Lemieux Hockey, 30
Mediagenic, 51
Mical, R.J., 3, 5
Mickey Mouse and the Castle of Illusion, 48
Midway, 36, 43
Mikey, 4
Monkey Island, 25
Ms. Pac-Man, **36**, *77*
Namco, 36, 39
Needle, Dave, 3
Netherlands, 11
NFL Football, **37**
Ninja Gaiden, **38**
NuFX, 53
On Target, 10
Pac-Land, **39**, *78*
Pac-Man, 36, 39
Paperboy, **40**, 47
Pinball Jam, **41**
Pinbot, 41
Poker, 35
Pole Position, 45

Police Force, 41
Pong, 46
Portable Atari Gaming System (newsletter), 10
Psygnosis, 51
Punkshot, 16
Qix, **42**, *78*
Rampage, 38, **43**, *79*
Rampart, **44**, *81*
Road Blasters, 31, **45**, *81*
Robo-Squash, **46**
Robotron 2084, 33, **47**
Roulette, 35
Rubik's Cube, 52
Rygar, 38, **48**, *81*
S.T.U.N. Runner, **49**, *85*
Sanderson, John, 53
Scrapyard Dog, **50**, *81*
Shadow of the Beast, **51**, *82*
Shanghai, **51**, *83*
Shufflepuck Cafe, 46
Slider, 54
Slime World, **56**, *83*
Slot Machines, 35
Spy Hunter, 45
Star-Linx BBS, 11
Steel Talons, **52**
Stoker, Bram, 25
Super Skweek, **53**, *85*
Suzy, 5
Swiss-Lynx-Info-Club (Switzerland), 11
Switchblade II, **54**
Switzerland, 11
Taito, 42
Tecmo, 38
Tengen, 40
Terminator, 47
Tetris, 18, 34, 51
Time Quests and Treasure Chests, 28
Todd's Adventures in Slime World, see Slime World
Toki, **57**, *86*
Tournament Cyberball, 47, **58**, *86*
Turbo Sub, **59**
TV tuner, 6
Ultimate Chess Challenge, **55**
Video Draw Poker, 35
Video Game Information Service, 11
Video Games & Computer Entertainment, 10
Viking Child, **60**, *86*
Warbirds, **61**, *87*
Williams, 33, 47
Williams/Bally, 41
World Class Soccer, **62**
Xenophobe, 47, **63**, *87*
Xybots, **64**
Zarlor Mercenary, **65**, *92*
Zdybel, Robert, 62