

RESET64

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALL THINGS C64!



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RESET64

Reset64 #11 – Pew Pew!

We are proud to present the 11th issue of Reset64, and boy it's a big one! Our theme for the issue is a genre that is certainly well represented (and well loved) on our beloved breadbin – the shoot 'em up (or shmup). Whether it's vertically or horizontally scrolling, flip or single screen, arcade conversion or C64 exclusive, there is a plentiful supply of fine examples of the genre to choose from and surely something for everyone. Personally, the shooter is my favourite genre. Playing and looking at some of these classic titles certainly again has been fun (and a test of my aging reflexes).

Several devs immediately come to mind when thinking about C64 shooters, including Minter, Braybrook, Trenz and Cyberdyne Systems (and many more too). We have articles about, and even including the participation of, some of these legendary coders and their games. What's even more exciting to see is that the genre is far from dead, with Jason Aldred achieving the Reset64 2017 GOTY award with his smash hit, Gaplus/Galaga inspired Galencia early in January.

Speaking of which, it has been interesting reading the comments from people who agree and disagree with our assessments for GOTY. No doubt Sam's Journey was a bit unlucky being released so late in the year, however, Galencia was a more than worthy winner. One thing we all can agree on is that the standard of C64 software is better than ever and the bar keeps on getting higher. It's amazing, really!

2017 was such an amazing year for C64 development and reviewed in this very issue are some of the best games released last year. It's a sure bet that 2017 isn't going to be a one off and already we've been spoilt with some fine releases in the first part of 2018. It's so great to see the modern C64 publishers lift their game even further by producing even more outstanding physical products that are both a joy to collect and play. Fantastic work!

2018 has also seen the release of the C64 Mini (which we will explore in Reset 12), bringing a mass produced C64 product back to the market for the first time since the C64DTV. There is no reason why it can't be successful and tug at the nostalgic heart strings of many a casual C64 fan from the classic era. I have one, and so does the majority of the Reset team!

Also recently announced is the 2nd Reset 4kb 'Craptastic' game coding competition. The first was so much fun and we had many requests from coders and gamers alike to bring the compo back. Well, now it is and the deadline is set for the end of June. You can read more about it over at Ausretrogamer (<http://www.ausretrogamer.com/2018-reset64-4kb-craptastic-game-competition/>).

The wait for Reset 12 shouldn't be quite as long this time, with the issue to be review focused and a catch up of the 2018 game releases so far, but for now, we hope you enjoy what we think is a great collection of themed articles, old favourites, a stunning Mix-i-Disk (if I do say so myself) and a chance to read about some of the most exceptional games that have made their way into our collection. It's a great time to be a C64 owner, that's for sure!

Sincerely,

Kevin Tilley

Reset64 #11 - May 2018

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Special thanks to all Mix-i-Disk contributors. Credits for individual programs can be found on the Mix-i-Disk page.

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The Reset team were deeply saddened recently with the devastating loss of legendary Ocean cover artist Bob Wakelin. His bold art grabbed everyone's attention in the '80s and '90s and helped shape what memories of C64 gaming of that era looked like. This issue we're paying tribute to the man and his lasting legacy, by picking some of our favourite pieces and explaining what made them so special.

bob wakelin

ILLUSTRATION DEL SEYMOUR





VINDICATOR

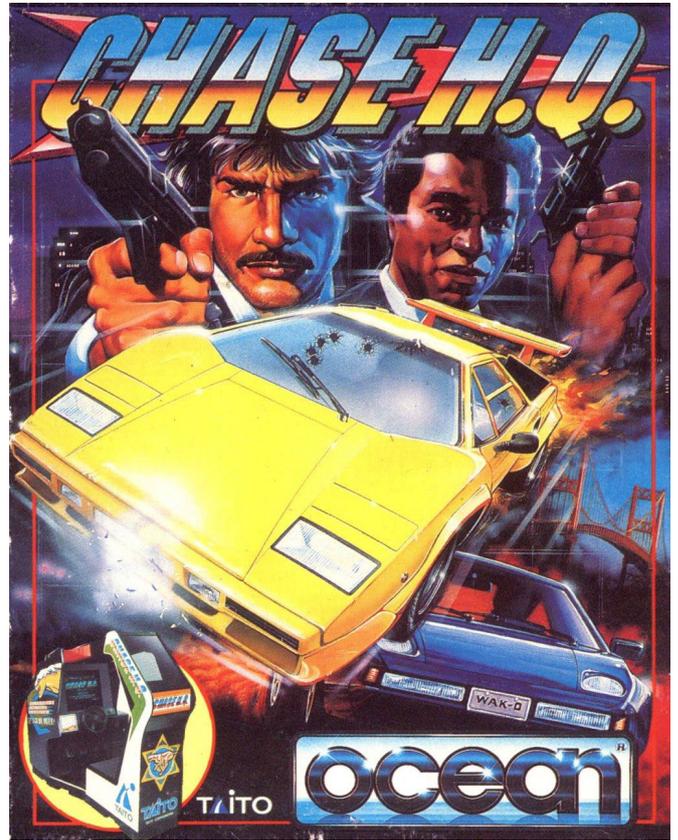
Did I tell you about the time I was painting a dragon from the D&D box set cover for art class at school, was in a car accident and, when I recovered and returned to high school, I was told that dragons were depressing and hence my art was nixed?

High school, hey?

This didn't stop me trying to replicate cool things in my art class during those formative years. I fondly recall meticulously copying in pencil Bob Wakelin's Vindicator art for an assignment. I love everything about that piece. The Terminator-esque visuals, the feeling of weight as our sunglasses-wearing hero hefts a massive autocannon, the twisted remnants of the metallic lobster-beast in the background. The entire composition is perfect and instantly portrays a message of casual, cool, destruction.

I learnt that the Vindicator art was by Bob Wakelin when he passed on and the retroscene posted images of his works up on social media. This drove home how much we've lost but also what a wonderful legacy Mr Wakelin gifted us on his journey.

Anthony Stiller



CHASE H.Q.

Bob made a comment in an interview that he'd always be told when a particular game needed a special cover, as those were the ones which were most likely to be horrible.

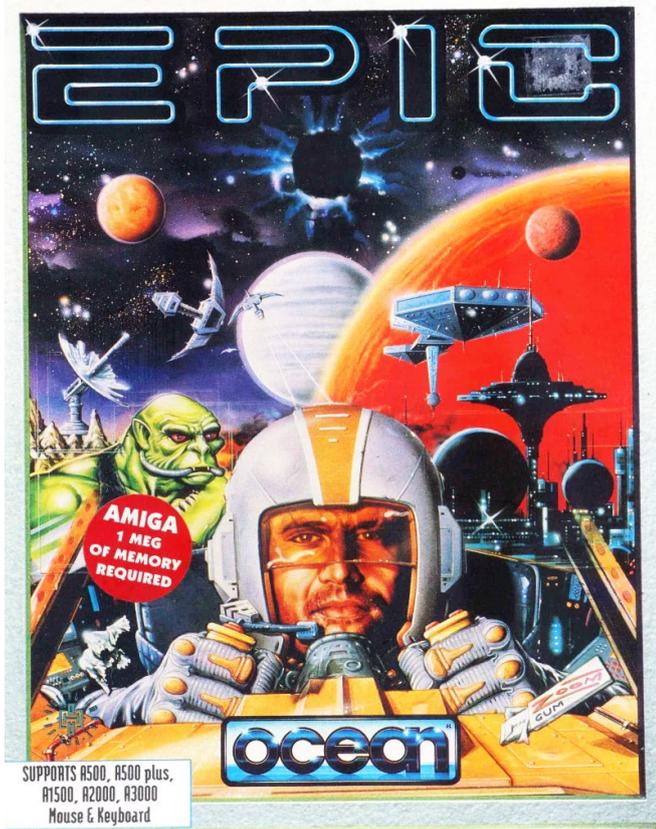
Chase HQ wasn't one of those games, providing you ignore the C64 version of course. Regardless, it is one stylish piece of box art.

Most of it is dominated by the visage of that yellow Lamborghini thrown up into the air, flames spurting out the exhaust, bullet holes on the front windscreen. You can sense the desperation by the driver, trying to avoid the law.

Seeing our heroes in their sleek Porsche, its deep-black paint-job nicely contrasting against the cityscape at the deepest level. It all forms this unique level of grittiness - all in the pursuit of putting an end to those who think they can operate above the law and let crime run rampant.

Chase HQ's cover perfectly evokes 80s police-action movies with epic car chases, a classy cover for an excellent racer (just not the C64 version!)

Rob Caporetto



EPIC

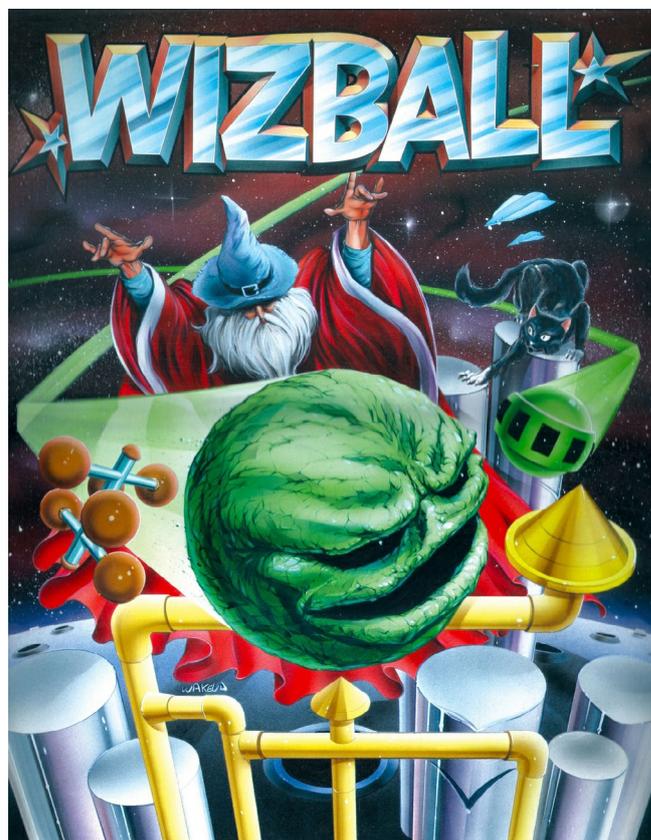
I love having physical versions of video games for similar reasons as to why I also collect vinyl.

Being a very tactile person, I love picking them up, reading the blurbs, looking at the feelies and being able to display them on my shelf.

The biggest reason, though, is the wonderful cover art that, sometimes, was better than the game itself (lots of rubbish games came in very pretty boxes). I am a massive fan of art, and it was only recently that I realised the thing I like most about my collection is also the same thing I have always taken for granted. I have never really stopped to think about who created the art, researched the artist and established links in my collection through the art.

After researching Bob Wakelin since his passing, I am sure I don't actually have many games with his box art, however, I am certainly familiar with many of the images through advertising, reviews and looking through archives on the net. One game that I have and have always loved the art for is actually an Amiga title, Epic, with the wonderful sci-fi theme always capturing my imagination, and that's one thing good art should certainly do!

Kevin Tilley

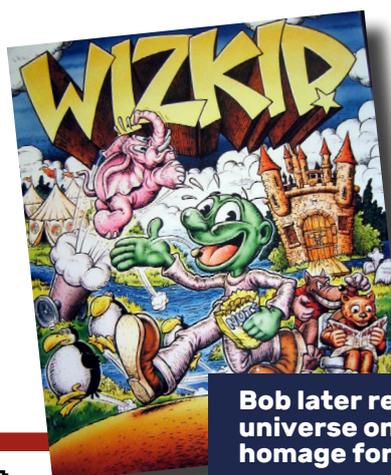


WIZBALL

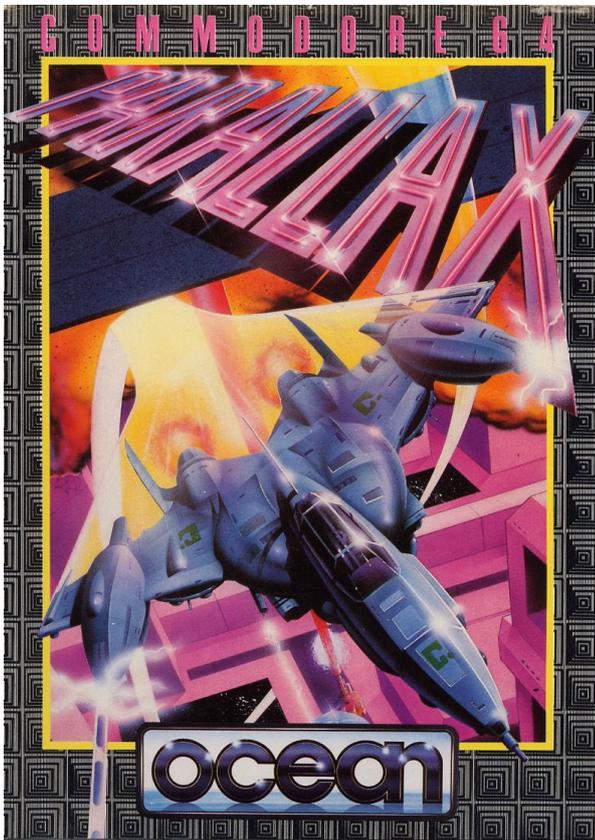
Wakelin's cover art for Wizball is just as wild and inviting as the greatest Commodore 64 game ever made. It immediately grabbed my attention. There was a stonking great big wizard commanding control over...what on earth IS that big green thing in the middle? And there's a cat. And it's in space. I think that big green thing is a cabbage, maybe?

There's dozens of the game's elements that are left out of the piece and would have been well suited to put on the cover. In particular the colour collecting, or the psychedelic bonus rounds, or the way you can fill the screen with mega bullets could have all found their place here, but to me the cover works perfectly because it captures the game's sense of wonder. Wizball is a game that wants you to hang out with it for a while and be simultaneously chilled and thrilled, and Wakelin nailed that vibe completely.

Cameron Davis



Bob later returned to the Wizball universe on his Robert Crumb homage for Wizkid.



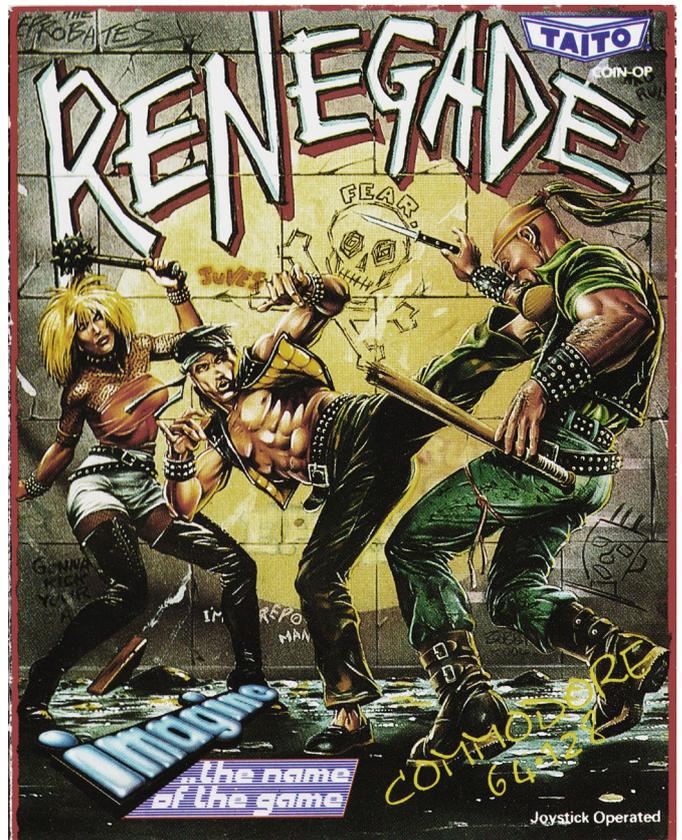
PARALLAX

Cover art was a huge part of our game-buying experience. Software publishers cottoned onto that pretty quickly, and employed top-notch artists to help sell their games. Ocean Software was one of the biggest, and they hired one of the best in Bob Wakelin.

His artwork for Ocean and Imagine's games was always striking, but as a lover of sci-fi and shoot 'em ups it was his Parallax image that most grabbed my attention. I loved Bob's rendition of the game's plane/ship almost blasting off the page; so much so, that the magazine advert version of it ended up on my bedroom wall.

It's a picture I'd love to own on everything: mug, t-shirt, giant poster print... you name it, I'd probably buy it. As it is, I have the game. For now, it's enough.

Paul Morrison



RENEGADE

When I think of Bob Wakelin, I think of awesome art, pure and simple! Whenever I would browse games at department stores, it was Bob's covers that would stand out like beacons of light! His artwork definitely stood head and shoulders above everyone else's. Picking my fave is truly unfair, but Cam Davis promised me chocolate, so I thought I'd pick one - Renegade.

The ghetto setting and gritty art with the 6-pack protagonist karate kicking the bad dude to the neck while the thigh-high boot wearing woman with the mace watches just sticks in my mind like chewing gum on the bottom of your shoe. I would cut out Renegade ads from my favourite C64 gaming magazines and stick them on the front of my school folders! I carried Bob Wakelin art around at school for years! I was so damn cool, thanks Bob.

Alex Boz

bob wakelin

MIX-I-DISK

The Mix-i-Disk is Reset's very own cover disk, which is available as a free download or as an optional physical disk for subscribers of the Reset Special Edition.

http://cloud.cbm8bit.com/resetc64/Reset_11_Mixidisk.d64

Just type LOAD"*",8,1 and then type run. After this, you need to choose which loader to use; either fastload enabled or kernal (choose kernal loader if you are using an SD2IEC device)

Use your joystick in Port 2 to navigate the menu.

Reset Disk Menu

Code, Character Set & Sprites: Richard Bayliss

Logo: Shine

Music: Richard Bayliss

IRQ Turbo Loader: Martin Piper

The Reset disk menu has been coded especially for Reset by Richard Bayliss, with a logo by Shine and featuring new music titled Shoot'em Up by Richard. Thanks to Richard & Shine.

Reset #11 Intro

2018 Reset64 Magazine

Design & Programming: Dr J

Music: Rock

Reset Logo: Sounx

Dr. J returns to coding duties for Reset with our greets intro, to help celebrate the scene release of Reset #11. Joining him is Sounx, who pixelated a brand new Reset logo, and Rock, who has composed an absolutely pumping new SID tune (appropriately called Riffn'). Thanks guys!

Split Second Redux

2017 Alf Yngve

<http://tnd64.unikat.sk/>

Design, Graphics & Concept: Alf Yngve

Additional Programming & Enhancements: Martin Piper & Richard Bayliss

Music & Sound Effects: Richard Bayliss

Alf Yngve strikes back with this fantastic version of Split Second, given the full Redux treatment courtesy of Richard Bayliss and utilising Martin Piper's amazing Redux engine to full effect.

After the Timewarp Wars were won, our hero Joe Rubicon has sustained injuries that cause him to divide into two versions of himself. Not even this is enough to stop him from defending the planet from hordes of body snatching aliens from an invading force!

Exploding Fish

2018 Megastyle

<https://megastyle.itch.io/>

Programming, Graphics & Linking: Chris Stanley

Additional Graphics & Petscii: Roy Widding

Title & In-Game Music: Andrew Fisher

Megastyle Intro: Kåre Johannesen

Loading Picture: Rune Spaans

Loading Music: Anders Rodahl

Docs & Docs Viewer: Eric Hilaire

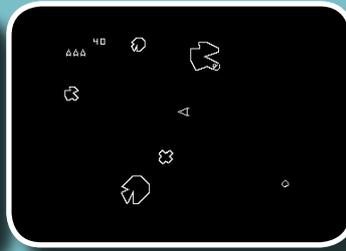
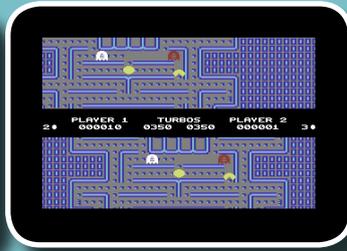
Helpful Suggestions: Chris Ledger

Exploding Fish Advertisement: Del Seymour

Reset Magazine is very proud to present Megastyle's Exploding Fish. It has been lovingly crafted in the style of an early C64 game that looks and feels like it could have been published by Interceptor Micros or Mastertronic. Exploding Fish is a nostalgic nod to the days when games were simple in concept but fiendishly difficult to play! Guide the brave diver Dougal in the depths of the sea to collect the encryption keys to access and diffuse the bomb. More information and a full set of docs can be found within the game.

If you enjoy Exploding Fish (and we know you will), please let Megastyle know by sending a message to the Reset email address or leaving some feedback on Twitter via @ScubaChris72 and @Rotteroy. Special thanks to Megastyle for allowing Reset to release this fantastic game on the disk.





Operation Metalstorm

2017 Alf Yngve/TND

<http://tnd64.unikat.sk/>

Design, Graphics & Sound Effects: Alf Yngve

Additional Programming & Music: Richard Bayliss

Original SEUCK code: Jon Hare & Chris Yates

Sideways SUECK: Jon Wells

Alf Yngve and TND team up once again to bring us this cool Sideways SEUCK shooter and the sequel to Operation Firestorm. Featuring stunning graphics and a moody soundtrack by Richard; plug your joystick in port two and get ready to fight the advancement of the machine army. Find the master computer and destroy it before the machines completely wipe out the human race. Remember, our fate will be decided by you!

Special thanks to Alf and Richard for providing Split Second Redux and Operation Metalstorm for publication on the Mix-i-Disk.

Labyrinth

2017 Alessandro Sanasi

http://public.bplaced.net/c64/labyrinth_en.html

Programming & Design: Alessandro Sanasi

Labyrinth is a two player, split screen Pacman clone which was produced by Alessandro Sanasi way back in 1989, but not released until now on this very Mix-i-Disk. The game also includes a wonderful built-in level editor. Gameplay is similar to Pacman with a few enhancements. This time, the ghosts become more aggressive as you take time to finish a level and you are also equipped with a turbo, which will move your Pacman faster by pressing the fire button until the counter reaches zero. There are also several items which give you various amounts of points and have different effects on your Pacman and gameplay.

Alessandro has created a website which includes full game instructions and some background information about the game.

Have fun, and just in case, here is a poke that makes the ghosts completely harmless:

POKE 4038,240

POKE 4039,237

Thanks to Alessandro for sending in the game to Reset.

CBM Asteroids - Reset Edition

2018 Wegi

Code: Wegi

Sound Effects: Owen

Graphics: Bimber

Music: Rabbi

CBM Asteroids is quite possibly the finest Asteroids clone to be released on the C64. Guide your ship with 360 degree movement through the asteroid field, pressing up for thrust and down for warp. Destroy all of the asteroids to progress to the next level while avoiding contact. Shoot down any UFOs that appear before they get you!

Thanks to Wegi for providing us with this fantastic score chaser. We hope you enjoy it!

Kobo64 (r222)

2013 Soci/Singular

<https://sourceforge.net/projects/kobo64/>

Programming: Kajtár Zsolt (Soci)

Music: Glenn Rune Gallefoss (GRG)

Graphics: Balázs Oszvald (Poison) & Kajtár Zsolt (Soci)

Charset: Kajtár Zsolt (Soci)

Kobo64 is a stunning port of Kobo Deluxe and was originally entered in the 2013 RGCD 16kb Cartridge Game Competition, placing an impressive 4th overall. Since the original compo release, the game has been enhanced and updated several times and this version (r222) is the latest, which was released in February 2018.

Kobo is a multi-directionally scrolling arcade blaster in which you must clear each level of the alien labyrinth space stations. This is done by shooting the blue spheres on the edge of the labyrinth walls, making your way to the centre of the stations and destroying them. Sounds simple enough but be warned, it may start off slow and steady but things get extremely hectic very quickly!

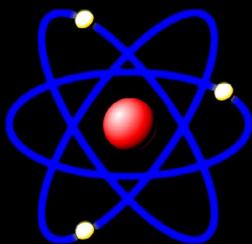
We hope you enjoy this brilliant game. Special thanks to Soci for permission to publish Kobo64 on the Mix-i-Disk.





NEWS

ILLUSTRATION DEL SEYMOUR



PROTOVISION

Creating the Future.



Protovision successfully released the long awaited C64 platformer *Sam's Journey* on Christmas Eve 2017. It has since gone on to sell over 1250 copies and is still available from the Protovision webshop (physical edition) and [itch.io](https://www.itch.io) page (digital download). *Knights of Bytes'* masterpiece is reviewed in this very issue

Retream's action/puzzler/mindbender, *MAH (v2.0)*, has been released by Protovision (disk only) and RGCD (cartridge). The Protovision release comes in a deluxe physical box along with 7 quick reference cards, which are vital when playing the game.

Protovision are also preparing for the re-release of scrolling platformer, *It's Magic 2*. Originally released in 2001, the game will be released on Protovision's new standard cartridge, complete with hi-score saver and deluxe box.

<https://www.protovision.games>





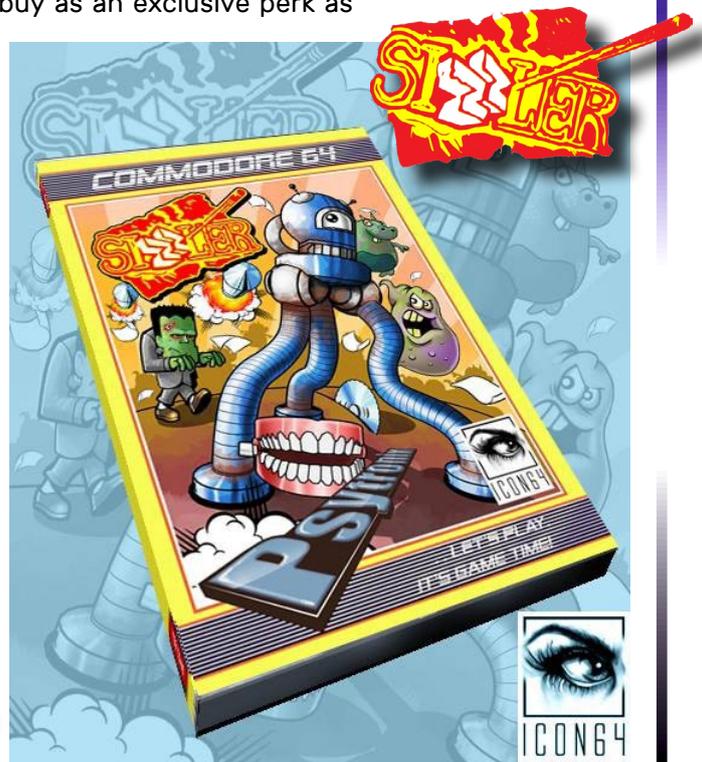
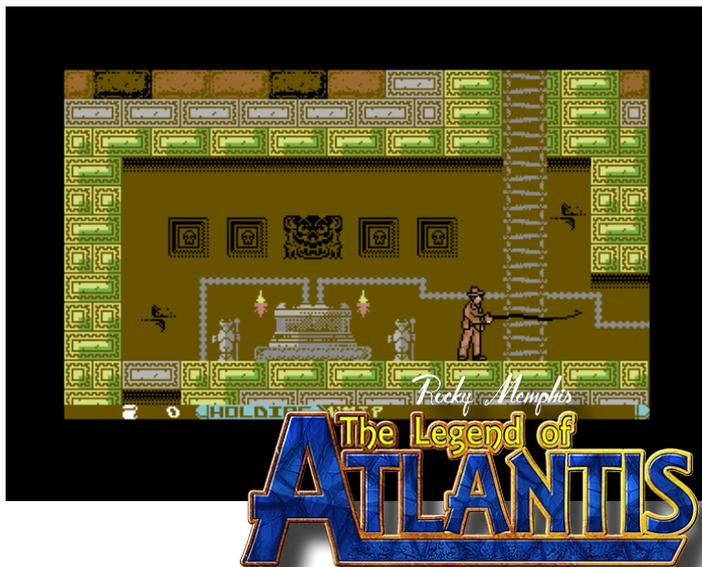
PSYTRONIK

S O F T W A R E

Psytronik have had a super busy start to 2018, releasing Pains 'n' Aches - A Knight 'n' Grail Adventure by Mikael Tillander and Steel Ranger by Lasse Öörni. Both are huge arcade adventures and are available on disk only in physical form, or as a digital download. Psytronik have also released both games in the new Collector's Edition range, which come with additional extras and a premium glossy box. Both games will be reviewed in the upcoming Reset #12.

Coming soon are two games from super prolific graphician and designer Trevor Storey, including the Stuart Collier coded The Legend of Atlantis. The game stars Rocky Memphis in his first (finished) C64 outing, exploring "the ancient temple ruins on a quest to find the secret of the lost city of Atlantis". Expect traps, objects, hidden switches, boobytraps and a multitude of deadly inhabitants!

Also coded by Stuart and developed under the Icon64 label, Sizzler will be Psytronik's first cartridge release (in addition to a tape edition) and was only available to buy as an exclusive perk as part of the mega-successful Zzap!64 Annual Kickstarter. In the game, you control the Mik3 tribot on his quest to find the necessary elements to create a new game that is to be awarded a Sizzler by the Zzap!64 team. Both The Legend of Atlantis and Sizzler also feature music by Saul Cross. <http://www.psytronik.net/>



Rocky Memphis The Legend of ATLANTIS

RGCD

RGCD have been very busy, releasing the cartridge editions of Planet Golf (Psytronik released the disk edition), Paul Koller's stunning LuftrauserZ conversion and the cartridge edition of Retream's MAH.

Coming soon is the cartridge edition of Yoomp!64, which is a conversion of a successful Atari XE/XL homebrew title from 2007. Imagine "Trailblazer in a tube", which we must add is a description the developer completely dislikes, but according to RGCD is probably a great way to describe the game! Yoomp!64 has been coded by Zbigniew Ross and contains 23 levels, rhythm-synchronised gameplay and new music by MCH.

<http://www.rgcd.co.uk/>



Sydney Hunter and the Sacred Tribe

Canadian publisher CollectorVision have shipped their first Commodore 64 game, Sydney Hunter and the Sacred Tribe. Available on cartridge, disk and a digital download, the game was coded by Andrea Schincaglia, with music and graphics by Saul Cross. Sydney Hunter can be purchased at the CollectorVision webshop.

<http://collectorvision.com/product-category/commodore-64/>



2018 4kb Craptastic Game Competition

After the success of the 2016 competition, the 4kb Craptastic Competition is back on again, with the deadline set at 30th June, 2018 (23:59 GMT). Thank-you to competition prize sponsors: RGCD, Pond Software, Protovision and Bitmap Books. So far, the competition is attracting a lot of interest with some fantastic looking games under development. More information, as well as future compo updates, can be found at Ausretrogamer.

<http://www.ausretrogamer.com/2018-reset64-4kb-craptastic-game-competition/>

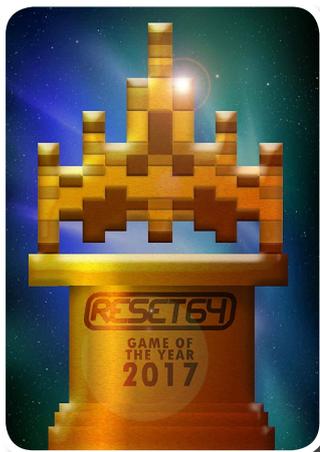


Reset 2017 GOTY

The staff of Reset Magazine would like to congratulate Jason Aldred/Team Galencia on winning the Reset 2017 GOTY award. The judges were a combination of Reset staff and contributors. The top 5 placings are as follows:

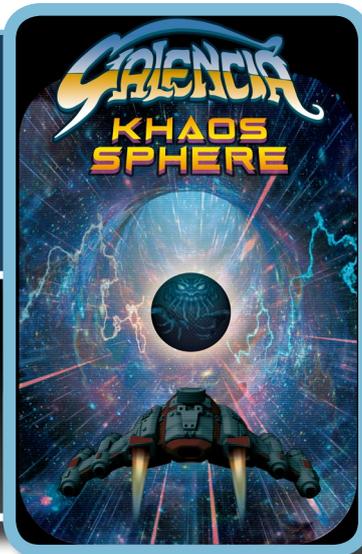
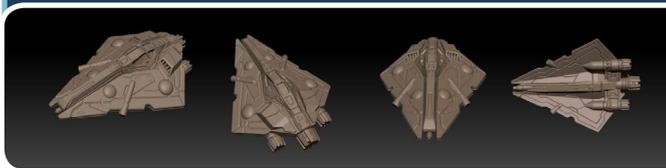
- #1 – Galencia (Team Galencia/Protovision)
- #2 – Planet Golf (Psytronik/RGCD)
- #3 – Sam's Journey (Protovision)
- #4 – LuftrauserZ (RGCD), The Bear Essentials (Pond Software)
- #5 – Rescuing Orc (Poly.Play)

<http://www.ausretrogamer.com/reset64-magazine-2017-commodore-64-game-of-the-year-award/>



Galencia Khaos Sphere

Jason Aldred and Team Galencia are working hard to complete the follow up to the 2017 Reset GOTY, Galencia. Titled Galencia Khaos Sphere, the game is a new shooter that features a "dynamic story between Amy and Ace, which will change depending on how you play the game". Gameplay will include three distinct shmup types rolled into one game. Galencia Khaos Sphere will be cartridge only, with the team confidently aiming for a November release date. Jason has kindly sent in some 3D rendered ship models.



Game Art Beyond

Game Art Beyond is a graphics slideshow containing classic C64 title/loader pics which have been re-worked by scener and graphician, ThunderBlade. Released by scene group Bliss, the collection covers two disk sides and also contains classic game SID remixes by c0zmo. The release also placed #1 in the mixed compo at the 2018 BCC party in Germany. The collection is available for free download at CSDb.

<http://csdb.dk/release/?id=162501>



Counterweight Kate

New C64 game label Cogitare Computing has released Counterweight Kate, described by author Alexander Martinelle as "a bouncy colourful, full screen, scrolling, platform game with some simple puzzle elements."

The aim of the game is to bounce your way through 12 levels, in order to save six of her cuddliest toys. Counterweight Kate is available at itch.io.

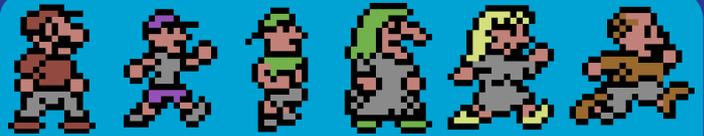
<https://cogitarecomputing.itch.io/counterweight-kate>



Shovel Knight

First thought by many to be an April's Fool gag, Yacht Club Games are actually working on a C64 conversion of their indie hit, Shovel Knight. Programmed by Carl-Henrik Skårstedt, the game is early in production. Carl-Henrik is also working hard to finish his Commodore 64 strategy game, Space Mogul. We asked Carl-Henrik about his two C64 projects:

"Shovel Knight 64 is a Commodore 64 version of the original game. It is very early in development and at this point there are a lot of things to do. It was part of an April Fools giggle but the joke was that we usually talk about Shovel Knight 64-bits, not that we were not serious about Commodore 64! Space Moguls is a tribute to M.U.L.E., a game created by Ozark Softscape for Electronic Arts 35 years ago. This game is getting fairly close to completion with a small set of features remaining. The name Space Moguls is a reference to Electronic Arts trying to strong-arm Ozark into renaming M.U.L.E. to Mars Moguls late in development!"



Mancave

Megastyle continue to be very active on the C64 gamedev scene. After completing Exploding Fish for the Reset #11 Mix-i-disk, Megastyle member and coder Chris Stanley is working on a new game called Mancave, with game design, graphics and music by Roy Widding. Roy sent in the following information about the project:

"The Man Cave - A place where you keep all your favourite things, where you can do whatever you want and nobody bothers you. You wanted this room to be your own space away from your wife and kids, but peace is threatened... One day coming home from work, you discover that your kids are inside your mancave, turning the place inside out. Your biggest fear is grabbing you hard in the stomach, they are about to find the your collection of adult magazines from your days as a teenager. Afraid of facing the shame you rush into the mancave to find and secure the adult magazines before it is too late... Only to find that one of your mischievous kids has found them, and spread them all around the house for your wife to find..."

Spelunky

Paul Koller is continuing work on his C64 conversion of indie smash hit, Spelunky (Mossmouth). The game is a roguelike cave explorer, with traps, monsters, items and secrets. What sets it apart is that the game generates new levels each time you play. Paul has given us this update about the games' progress:

"My C64 port of Spelunky is actually already in a quite playable state at this moment. The random level generation, scrolling routines, most of the player control scheme, enemies including collision detection, as well as some initial tunes & (simultaneous!) sfx are already included. Also almost all of the background and sprite graphics have already been converted! The next thing on my todo list is the implementation of moveable char-based objects, like the arrows, bombs, etc. I still have to see whether a sprite multiplexor is required for this game, or whether I can get away with only 8 sprites on screen at the same time."



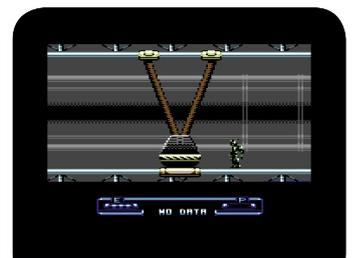
Hibernated Part 1: This Place is Death

Pond Software have released the digital version of Stefan Vogt's long awaited sci-fi text adventure, Hibernated 1: This Place is Death. Pond also plan to release a physical version of the game later in the year.

The protagonist, Olivia Lund, has awoken from a long hypersleep of more than 200 years, aboard a ship which has been sent on an interplanetary exploration mission. She has awoken unexpectedly to find her ship has been captured by the tractor beam of an ancient alien vessel. And so the adventure begins!

Coded using The Quill text adventure engine, the game takes advantage of the classic verb/noun parser system. Hibernated has been extensively playtested and crafted to give all players, regardless of skill level, a good chance of solving the adventure.

<http://pondsoft.uk/hibernated.html>



Geo 6

Mikael Tillander is continuing work on his latest Commodore 64 game, Geo 6. According to Mikael, Geo 6 is a "platform game that focuses on you changing the host that you control, to solve puzzles and generally wreak havoc." He had this to say about his progress:

"I'm hoping to have it done sometime in Q2 2019. Made a new years promise to finish it this year, but I can see now that it's not going to happen. There are three sections left to map out (and draw graphics for) and there are a few hosts that I haven't even started to implement yet. The hosts take the most amount of time to create, it's like making a new main character for a completely new game, each time."

KEVIN TILLEY

Job at Reset:

Forgetting to reply to emails in a timely manner.

Last C64 related purchase:

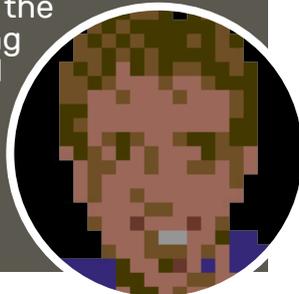
Steel Ranger, Pains 'n' Aches, MAH2.0

Currently playing:

Sam's Journey (C64), LuftrauserZ (C64), Steel Ranger (C64), Pan-Dimensional Conga Combat (Windows)

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

That's a hard one! In the official vote count, I gave Galencia the nod, just over Sam's Journey. But on any given day it could be either. At the moment, I'm playing through Sam's and quite enjoying its incredibleness!



ALEX BOZ

Job at Reset:

Stringing a few words together and herding cats.

Last C64 related purchase:

LED Storm on floppy! Tim Follin's "Smoke on the Water" SID rendition is simply sublime! Pump up the volume!

Currently playing:

Lots of pinball, especially the Attack From Mars Remake. On the video games front it's surprisingly the Nintendo Switch - lots of brill indie games on the new Ninty platform.

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

Have you seen the Ausretrogamer avatar? Then that should give it away - pew, pew, pew, Galencia all the way, baby!



CAMERON DAVIS

Job at Reset:

I draw some pretty pictures and encourage my friends to add yet more features to their games and magazines

Last C64 related purchase:

Luftrauserz and pre-ordering a C64 Mini. After giving away all my physical C64 gear (SHOCK!) it will be nice to have a C64 next to the TV again!

Currently playing:

Galencia (C64), LuftrauserZ (C64), SF Alpha 2 (SNES), Clip Studio Paint (PC)

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

Galencia all the way! It's the peanut butter and jam of video games - two of my favourite things together at last - Galaga and the C64!



ANTHONY STILLER

Job at Reset:

Drawing camels. Killing monsters and taking their stuff. Definitely not making the tea.

Last C64 related purchase:

The very wonderful Sam's Journey. Modern C64 games arriving in the mail is still amazing to me.

Currently playing:

LuftrauserZ, 4th & Inches (I blame Rob), Argus, some playtesting for the new C64 adventure game Hibernated, Cheese and Onion on ye olde VIC 20.

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

It was very close! LuftrauserZ still blows me away but I am giving my personal GOTY to (surprise, surprise!) Galencia.



PAUL MORRISON

Job at Reset:

Whatever they ask me to do, really.

Last C64 related purchase:

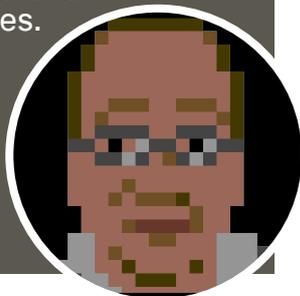
I recently bought about a dozen classic games on cassette, most of which I had in the 80s but a few of which I've never actually owned. It's always fun to make the collection look more impressive.

Currently playing:

An absolute ton of shoot 'em ups. I'm alright with that. Also, Shadow of the Colossus on the PS4. What can I say? I'm a heartless monster.

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

Sam's Journey is a stunning piece of work, but it arrived too late in the day to swing my vote. For me, Galencia was the best C64 game of 2017, and I enjoyed it a lot more than many modern releases. It's amazing.



ROB CAPORETTO

Job at Reset:

Reviewing mainly. Also organise and edit the Reset Rewind, where I try to get the crew to check out something a little less known... and put some coherent thoughts on it.

Last C64 related purchase:

On the modern side of releases, copies of both Steel Ranger and Pains 'n' Aches. For the retro side of things, a boxed copy of Maze Master.

Currently playing:

Ultima II: Revenge of the Enchantress (Apple II/C64), Intensity (C64/Specy), Retro Game Challenge (NDS) and finally How Long Will It Take To Render This Latest Video Now (macOS).

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

Galencia won out for me with its polish, challenge and so much more on top. But I'll admit, had my runners up made it out earlier, it may not have been so clear cut...



PAUL KITCHING

Job at Reset:

Eh? there's jobs here? Oh yeah, I remember. I help (I think) with the cover layout and some other design stuff. I did the new logo don't ya know?

Last C64 related purchase:

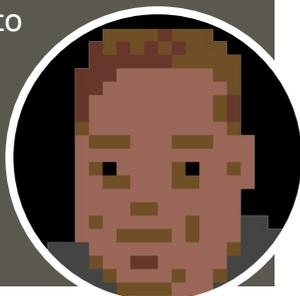
A games bundle from evilbay.

Currently playing:

I'm too scared to say...

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

I really liked Paper Plane when i played it at Amiga Ireland (even though I was soooo bad it it!). I'm looking forward to getting my hands on Sam's Journey, which i haven't yet, sadly :(



DEL SEYMOUR

Job at Reset:

Dotting the Ts and crossing the Is - no wonder this issue took so long!

Last C64 related purchase:

A lovely bundle I picked up online - loads of lovely Interceptor and Anirog clam shells and a couple of gems I'd been after for a while.

Currently playing:

LuftrauserZ (C64), Rime (PS4) and God of War (PS4)

Your 2017 C64 GOTY:

I haven't really had a chance to sink my teeth into Sam's Journey at the time of writing, and as much as I love Galencia - its LuftrauserZ all the way for me.





BRISBANE C64 NIGHT

They say that in life, the only certainties are death and taxes, and there was no better reminder of the former than being at the Brisbane C64 Night. Surrounded by devices older than most television celebrities and a crowd of middle aged men with more spare time than hair, I quickly realised that death will soon come for us all, that nothing we do really matters, and the futility of seeking pleasure is just delaying the inevitable.

They also had Wizball there, so that was nice.

In all seriousness, the Brisbane C64 Night was a tremendous success and an incredible amount of fun for all. An apparently record turnout filled the room, with 50-or-so enthusiastic C64 players gathered

together to celebrate their favourite machine, ages ranging from "teenagers" to "can't remember". It was great seeing so many members of the next generation of gamers enthusiastically pick up a joystick and see the games their parents loved back in the day.

Even the media turned up, with local radio presenters on-hand to capture the sounds of the night and interview various attendees about why they keep the C64 so close to their hearts.

The room was packed with Commodore 64s of all shapes and sizes - including a rarely seen Educator 64 that drew many "what IS that?!" comments. Along the walls were a C64 with extra hardware that allowed it

to play full motion video (the classic Australian C64 TV ad, of course), a SX-64 along with what would have to be pretty much every single cartridge game ever made up until this point, and the trusty D64 was even ready for people to check out. Someone even brought in a really solid and surprisingly comfortable home-made joystick that withstood the ultimate test - round after round after round of International Karate +.

Other machines shared the room, though - it was nice to see a couple of Amigas doing their 16-bit thing, and I personally got a thrill seeing a PC Engine up close.

Of course, C64 gaming was what the night was all about. There were a good dozen or so machines littered around the room, with classics and new hits on display for all to play.





1988 was a hugely significant year in computing; and more specifically, in the history of the Internet. Not only was it the year of the first well-known computer virus, the Internet worm, it was also when the first permanent intercontinental Internet link was made between the US and Europe. And if that wasn't enough; the concept of the World Wide Web was also first discussed at CERN in 1988.

Yet, for most C64 computer enthusiasts the fledgling World Wide Web wasn't at the top of our list of interests in 1988. Okay, a few may have dabbled on Compunet now and again but what really drove the vast majority of C64 owners was the desire for great new games. Thankfully, the Spring of 1988 didn't disappoint.

The first big hit of the Spring was Elite's conversion of the SNK coin-op Ikari Warriors. When it came to arcade conversions, you were never sure what to expect from Elite, but thankfully Ikari Warriors (alongside Ghosts n Goblins and Buggy Boy) was a cracker. Programmed by C64 coding royalty John Twiddy, the two-player vertically scrolling shoot-em-down was very demanding but extremely addictive and narrowly missed out on a Zzap!64 Sizzler, earning a very respectable 89%. It was superb fun in two player mode - especially when you took out your fellow player with a deadly blast of friendly fire.

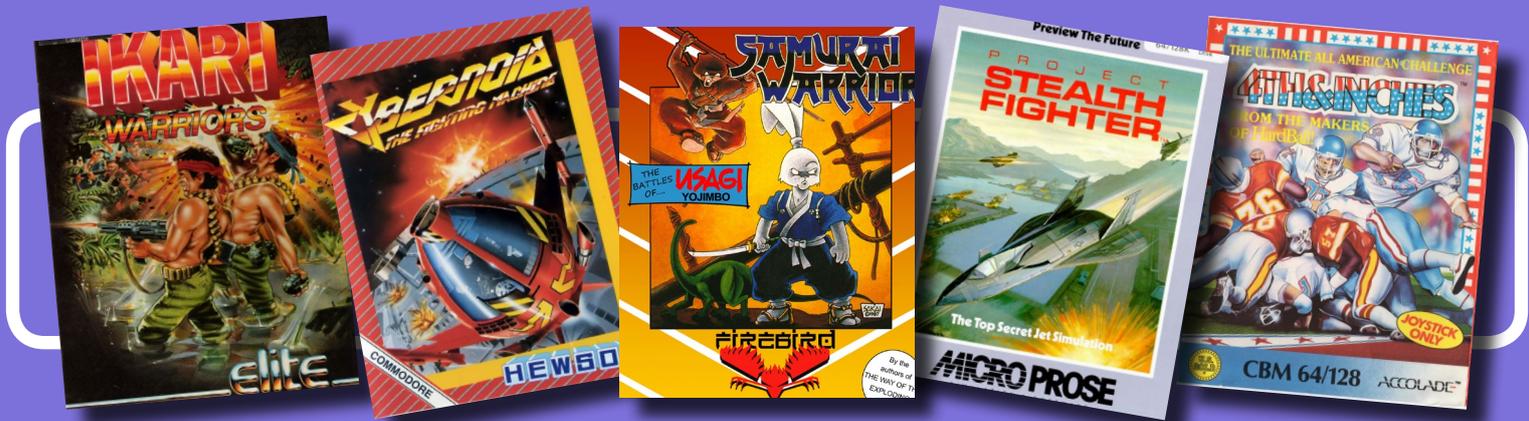
'Superb fun' isn't a phrase which could be used to describe the first attempt to port Ikari Warriors to the C64. Back in 1986, Data East released a horrible conversion for the North American market which thankfully quietly sunk without trace. With ugly graphics, no sound effects and dreadful collision

detection, US Ikari Warriors was a complete dog of a game. It should be avoided at all costs and never confused with the excellent Elite effort.

Released around the same time as Ikari Warriors in March 1988 was Project Stealth Fighter, a state of the art jet combat simulator from Microprose. As a disk only game, I have to confess that I didn't play this myself back in the day but there was definitely a lot of love for it at the time. Not only did it achieve the coveted Zzap!64 Gold Medal award (although it 'only' scored 96%), it also got a 9/10 in Commodore User and 863 from new-mag-on-the-block ACE. It's still highly regarded today and currently stands at number 21 in the Lemon 64 list of the best C64 games of all time. I really need to look it up.

One game that I was very familiar with back in the first few months of 1988 was the American Football simulation 4th and Inches. Since the early 80s when Gridiron was first shown on British TV (thanks to Channel 4), I'd become obsessed with the sport. There were quite a few Gridiron games around in the mid to late 80s. Some good, some bad and some downright minging. Argus Press' 'American Football' and Electronic Arts' 'Touchdown Football' fall into the mingers category, while GFL Championship Football from Activision and Ocean's Super Bowl are contrasting but decent efforts at replicating the sport on the C64. The pick of the bunch by a mile by early 88 was 1987's Super Sunday from Nexus (those of the silly game box). Super Sunday was easy to get into but also had lots of depth and detail. It was my go to American Football sim until Accolade's 4th and Inches stole its crown a year later. With neat graphics, instant playability and a brilliantly fun two player option, 4th and Inches bagged a deserved Zzap!64 Sizzler in issue 36 earning a score of 90% and the comment 'The most accomplished, entertaining and realistic American Football simulation to date'.

A million miles from the football field, somewhere in deep space, those pesky space pirates were up to their old tricks. This time they'd ransacked the Federation's storage deposits, stealing valuable minerals, jewels and weapons. It was your job to jump into the good ship Cybernoid, retrieve the goodies and destroy the pirate hordes in the process. By the spring of '88 Hewson were on a roll, producing a string of brilliant blasters. Following in the footsteps of the excellent Exolon and totally zarjaz (why does nobody use that anymore) Zynaps, Cybernoid was



a stunning and slickly presented multi-coloured, multi-weapon blast 'em up with gorgeous graphics, superb sound and stacks of playability. Like Ikari Warriors it was tough but also rewarding and garnered some excellent reviews upon its release including a 93% Zzap!64 Sizzler.

If rampaging Rambos, American Football, jet simulators or space set shoot 'em ups weren't your thing then how about sword wielding ninja rabbits? One of the many things I love about the 8-bit days was the innovation and originality of the games scene. If you had the skill set and know how it was relatively easy to dream up a game concept, code it and get it to market. There were very few steps between the programmer's imagination and the end consumer and as a result we got to play all kinds of weird and wonderful games that would be laughed out of the focus group these days. Although not an original idea in that it was a licensed game, Samurai Warrior: The Battles of Usagi Yojimbo was certainly original and highly innovative, with an absorbing backstory and an extremely well realised atmosphere. Usagi Yojimbo, the epic comic book saga of Miyamoto Usagi, a samurai rabbit living in early-seventeenth-century Japan, was first published in 1984 and is still going strong today. In 1987 Firebird obtained the rights to produce a Usagi Yojimbo computer game and commissioned Beam Software for the job. Beam were famous for two types of games: Beat em ups (Way of the Exploding

Fist, Street Hassle, Rock 'n' Wrestle) and adventures (The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings and Fellowship of the Ring) so maybe it was no surprise that they combined the two genres in Samurai Warrior to great effect. A cartoon-like combination of exploring and fighting, with a strong narrative element, Samurai Warrior was terrific fun. A kind of cute cartoon Karateka with rabbits. It had a great narrative and required strategy and brain power as well as fast reflexes and quick fighting skills. Its clever use of etiquette meant that sometimes it was a case of 'think first and draw your sword later' which added depth to the gameplay – it wasn't just a case of hacking down everything in sight. Usagi was a huge hit with the critics. Zzap!64 gave it a 91% Sizzler while C&VG awarded it 9/10. Even 30 years later it still holds a place in the heart of C64 gamers with a very respectable 50th position in the Lemon64 Top 100 games of all time.

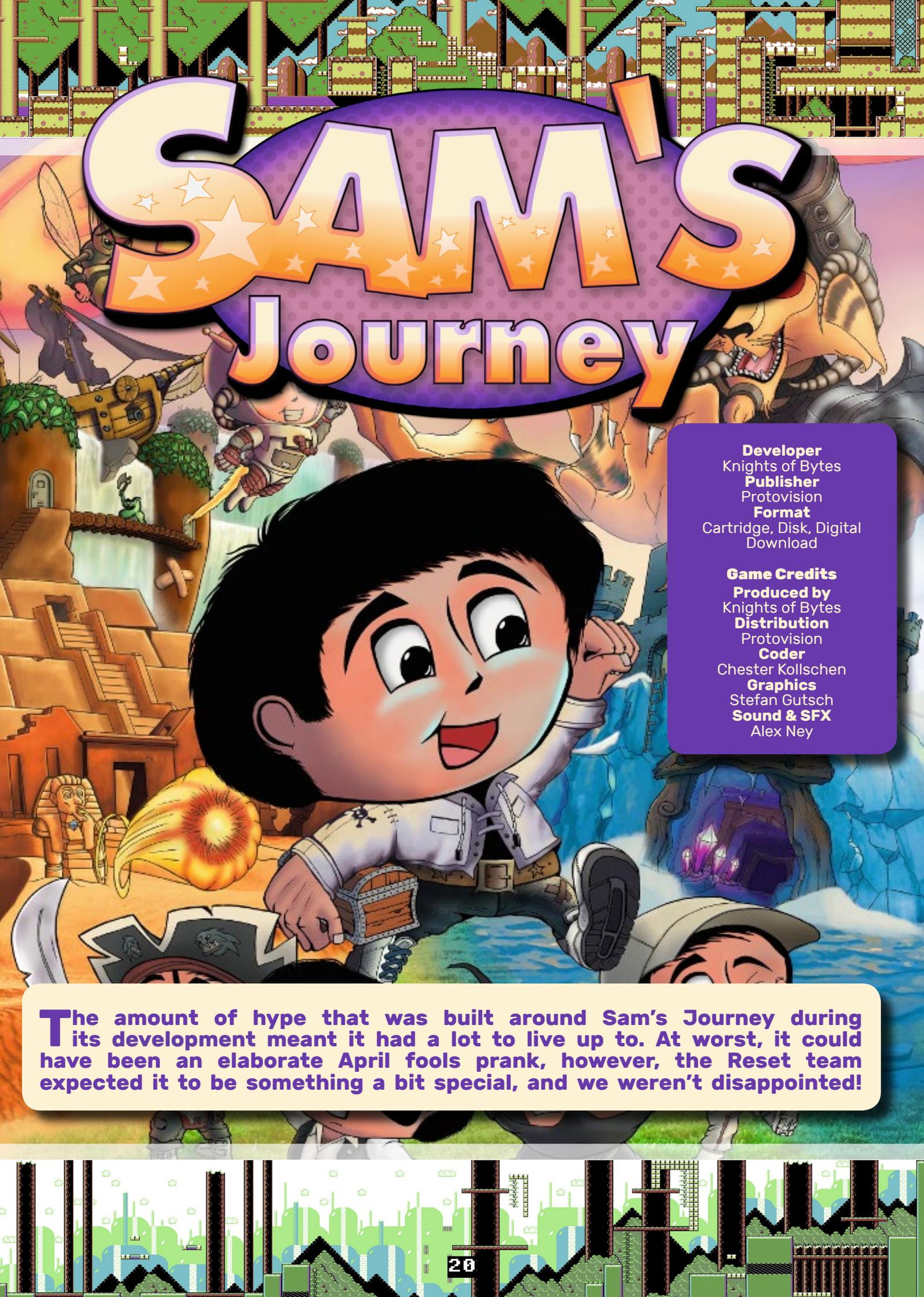
Away from the world of computers, back in late 20th Century Britain, kids were preparing to sit GCSE exams for the first time in 1988 following the abolition of O levels and CSEs. The housing boom was in full flow with house prices in Norwich rising by a staggering 50% in just 12 months, while 'I Think We're Alone Now' by Tiffany and 'I Should Be So Lucky' by Kylie Minogue were the biggest selling singles of the spring. At the cinema, Frantic, Beetlejuice and Colors were the movies of the moment while on television the long running soap Crossroads sadly came to an end.

Well that's it from me for another issue. I'm off for another game of Samurai Warrior – my personal pick of the games of Spring 1988. Stay safe everyone.

See you next time.

Martin C. Grundy

@C64Reloaded



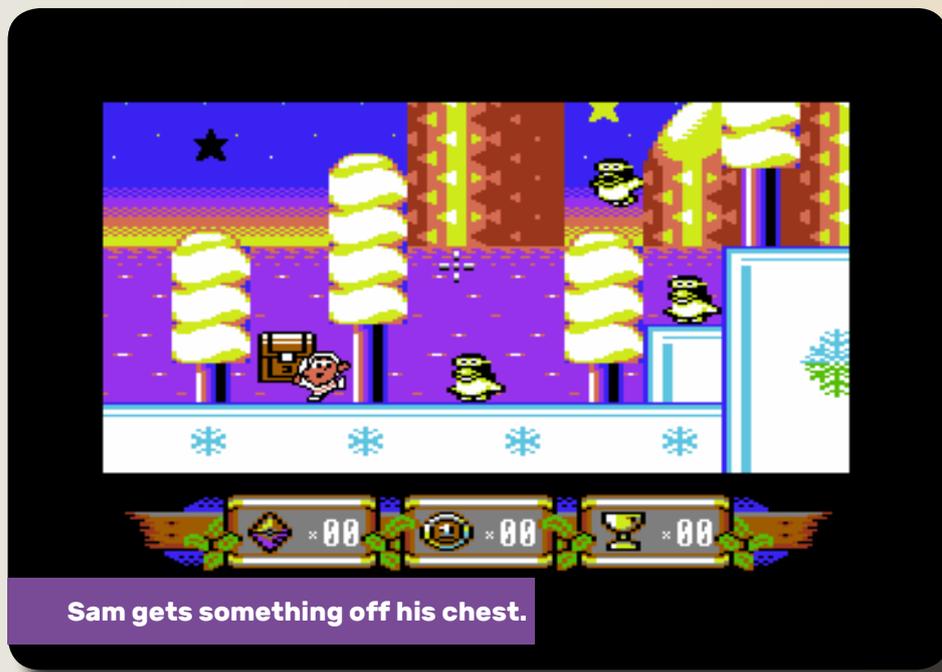
SAM'S Journey

Developer
Knights of Bytes
Publisher
Protovision
Format
Cartridge, Disk, Digital
Download

Game Credits

Produced by
Knights of Bytes
Distribution
Protovision
Coder
Chester Kollschen
Graphics
Stefan Gutsch
Sound & SFX
Alex Ney

The amount of hype that was built around Sam's Journey during its development meant it had a lot to live up to. At worst, it could have been an elaborate April fools prank, however, the Reset team expected it to be something a bit special, and we weren't disappointed!

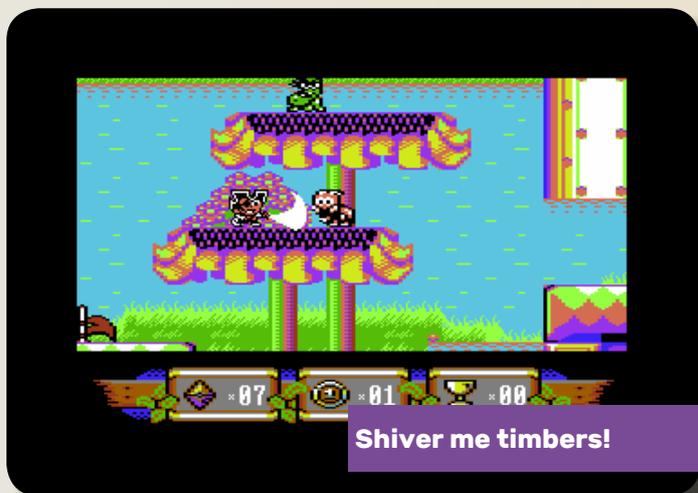


Sam gets something off his chest.

With a feature list that includes 30 free-directional fast scrolling levels, colourful graphics, 19 tunes, 2000 screens, hidden items, secret passages, and 3 overworld maps, in many respects Sam's Journey is more akin to a console game than a traditional C64 style platformer.

Featuring lush, consolesque presentation right from the get go, the game begins with a series of animated introductory cut-scenes, telling the story of how Sam is pulled into the strange and mythical world that he finds himself in.

What sets Sam's Journey apart from other C64 platformers and into the realm of the 16 bits is the fact that the game isn't your standard from A to B affair, instead combining both old school and contemporary gameplay and design. To



Shiver me timbers!

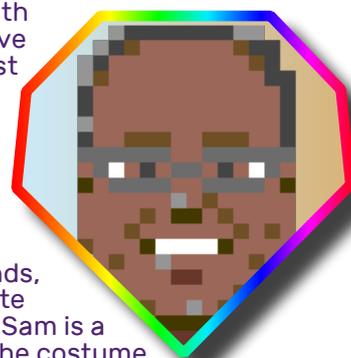
begin with, 3 load/save slots are available from the get go, negating the need to memorise level passwords or finish the game on a single play through. There are no lives or game over screens either. Checkpoints are placed throughout the levels, with the player either restarting from the latest checkpoint upon death, or going back to the world map. Even though Sam's Journey is actually quite linear, you can choose to re-enter and further explore worlds in the hope of obtaining missed bonuses and secrets to achieve 100% completion, as well as bumping your score.

Also outside the norm for a C64 platformer, Sam can do much more than just run and jump. In certain situations, he can swim, climb, peek, carry and also find a variety of costumes that will

give him special abilities, all of which are vital to his progress throughout the game.

There are rocks for Sam to throw, keys to collect, switches that need switching as well as the familiar diamonds, coins and trophies to find. Furthermore,

The wait has been worth it. Knights of Bytes have crafted one of the most polished and playable C64 games ever, pushing the machine to its limits.



The superb world is filled with colourful and vibrant backgrounds, with a huge host of cute critters on the attack. Sam is a wonderful hero, with the costume changing mechanic bolstering the enjoyment. The soundtrack is amazing, with distinctive level tunes adding to the atmosphere.

There is just so much to do and explore, from hidden passageways to bonus coins seemingly out of reach - until you find a handy switch or springboard. Just finishing the game will take hours, so being able to save progress is a welcome move. Then comes the bigger task of achieving 100% completion, checking out every level for the sneakily hidden diamonds. You will keep coming back for more, and the game will continue to surprise and entertain you. Any frustration will disappear when the way to solve a level clicks. Outstanding in every way. **MERMAN**



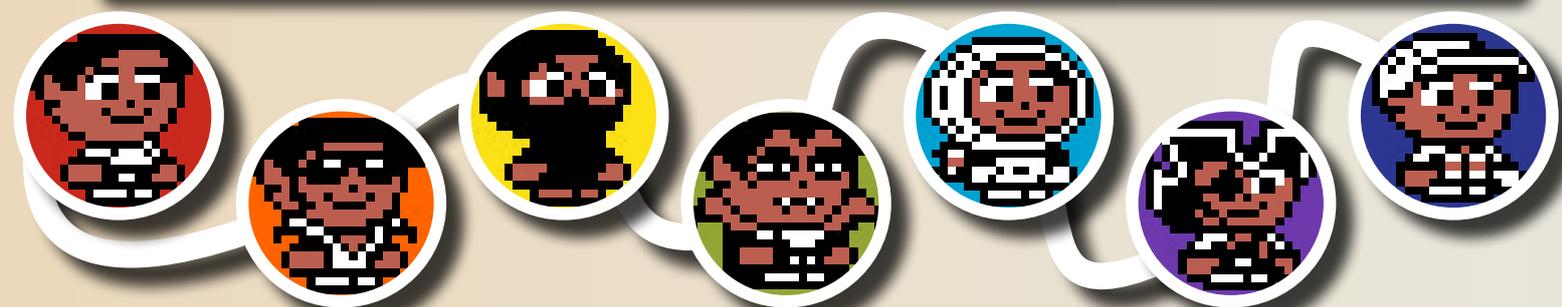
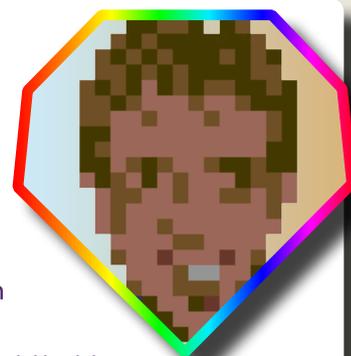


Everything on offer here is done to perfection. Playing the game off cartridge is a breeze and the disk version loading is obviously slower, but certainly unobtrusive.

For me, Sam's Journey plays more like an Amiga platformer and there is nothing really like it on the C64. The level layouts, power-ups, secrets, items and the game worlds would feel right at home on the more powerful 16 bits and the look, feel and physics are spot on as well. The colourful front-end and story board cut-scenes really set the tone for what is a wonderful experience when playing.

The physical boxed edition rounds out a game that, as an overall package, is miles better than what was available in the C64's heyday. Everything here has been meticulously produced.

Sam's Journey is both a wonderful game and groundbreaking technical achievement that has been made with skill, care, and by people who obviously know what the player wants. **KEVIN**



there are a variety of nasties littered around the levels, impeding Sam's progress and making life that much more difficult. If that wasn't enough, we have trampolines, moving platforms, cannons that catapult Sam over long distances and owls that fly Sam to what would otherwise be inaccessible areas.

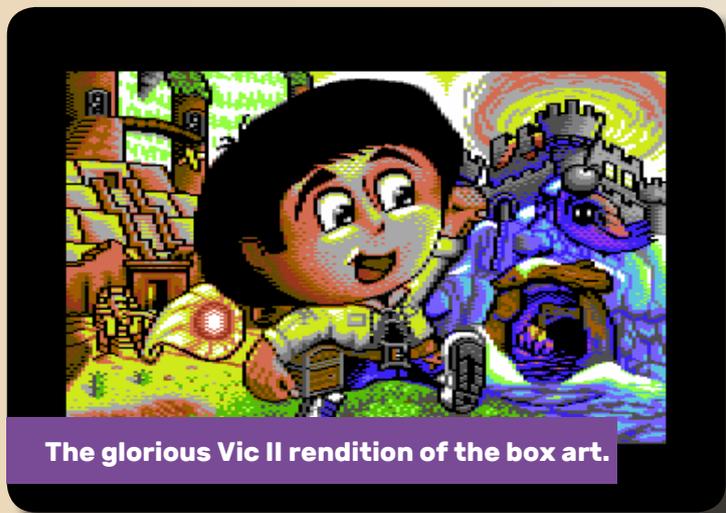
Not content on providing us with a groundbreaking Commodore 64 game, Knights of Bytes have teamed up with publisher Protovision to present Sam's Journey as a premium collector's edition. It features a stunningly presented box that is packed to the brim with feelies, as well as a beautiful, full

Sam's Journey is a masterpiece. From the wonderful opening cutscene you know that this is something very, very special indeed. Delicately constructed sprites, perfect inertia, modern game conveniences, challenging gameplay, fantastic music and delightful power-ups - all this and more make Sam's Journey a game that surpasses most of the C64's entire catalogue. No mean feat indeed!

I do have some nitpicks with the control scheme - it's slightly unintuitive and I sometimes had to restart from a checkpoint due to fumbling between up and fire. But I can overlook this due to all of the amazing polish and bountiful gameplay that Sam's Journey promises and delivers.

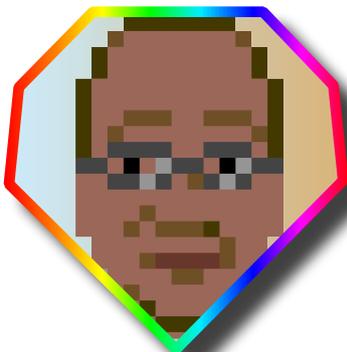
Couple this with a jaw-dropping physical version and you have in your hands the culmination of decades of evolution of gameplay design and coding wizardry. All for us to help Sam throw on a pirate's costume and wave a cutlass around for the sheer joy of it. It's incredibly exciting that we all have the opportunity to experience this joy.

Make Sam's Journey yours as well. **ANT**





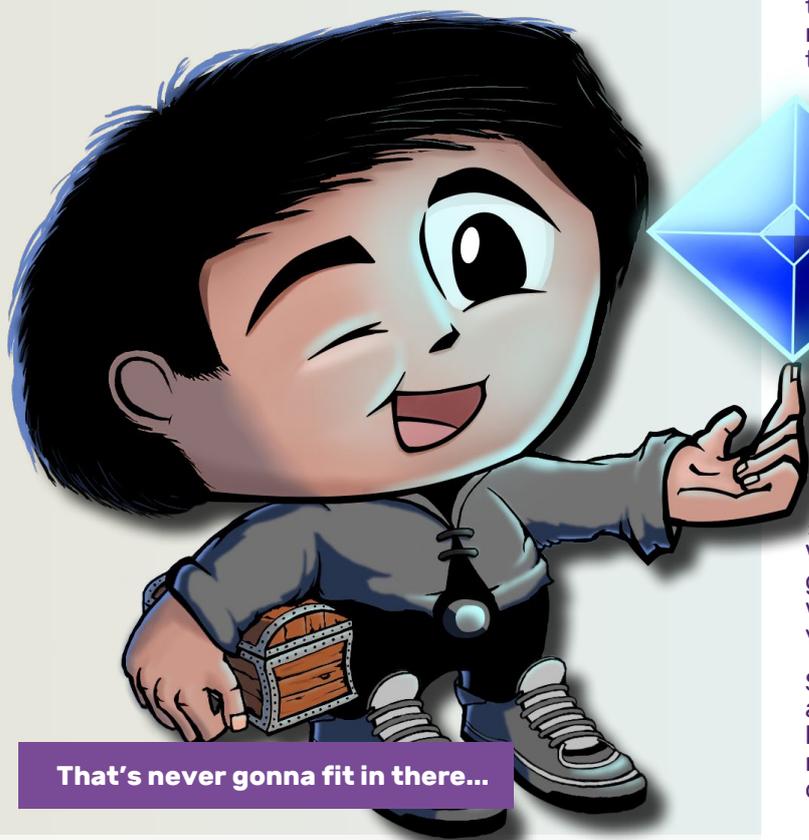
It's difficult to put into words just what has been achieved here. The team has taken inspiration from all manner of games and consoles and produced something the like of which has never been seen, or possibly even imagined before on the Commodore 64.



Sam's Journey looks and sounds like a dream, but more importantly, it plays like one. The costume feature is a really clever way of giving the player power-ups and lends a real sense of fun, playfulness and adventure to proceedings.

Everything about the design is perfectly judged, meaning that you're constantly wanting more. Even if you should complete the game, you'll come back to try and 100% all the levels, and that's going to take you some time. Sam's Journey is expensive, but you're going to get your money's worth. I could say more but I just have to try and get past this next level... excuse me. **PAUL**

colour instruction manual. This edition is available in either cartridge or disk formats (although slower to load, the disk has the advantage of catering to NTSC users who have access to a REU). A cheaper digital download is also available if you have no need for the extras and just want the game for use on you 1541 Ultimate (or similar device) and/or emulator.



Wow. Let's just get it out of the way. What truly blows my mind when it comes to Sam's Journey is how we've finally seen a release which feels like an evolution of what we had in the twilight years...



By eschewing lives for a simple retry system, and offering checkpoints around the levels, Sam screams fairness in a way rarely seen in new releases. Then there's the tricks in-game - abilities Sam earns by finding them in the levels, offering new tactics for getting those 100% ratings on each level.

Visually, it's made up of some of the most strikingly vibrant pixel art to come out of the VIC-II, filled with colour, detail, and so much going on. The same can be said for the music, with some charming music contributing to the vibe incredibly well.

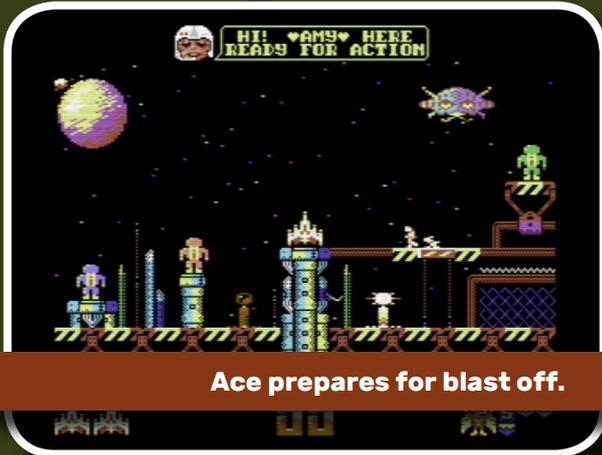
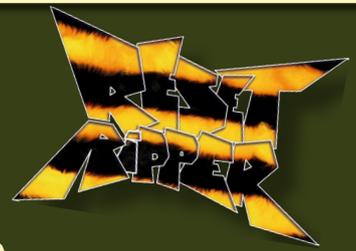
Sam's Journey is a truly excellent gem offering a tight, polished experience, plenty of challenge, lots of longevity, excellent presentation, and is more than worth finding a prime spot for in any discerning C64 fan's library. **ROB**

That's never gonna fit in there...



GALENCIA

the review



you have any ships remaining, you can recapture the hostage ship by simply blasting the offending enemy when it has the nerve to attack you again.

Doing this successfully results in the rescued ship bolting itself onto your active ship, giving you twice the firepower. Now you can really take the fight to the invading swarms and dish out a double dose of death. It's best to use this tactic as taking on the masses of enemies with one ship is like trying to shoot

You'd think we'd have learned our lesson from Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home – don't mess with Mother Nature. Unfortunately the human race is not good at learning lessons, and this time, the planet's bee population has declined to the point where it is in peril. This aberration has not gone unnoticed... nor will it go unpunished. Out in the Cosmos, the bee guardians have seen what is happening on Earth and have come to wreak their terrible revenge. It falls to you, with your state-of-the-art 1981 Galencia fighter, to take to the skies and ward off this insect invasion... before it's too late (sounds un-bee-lievable – Ed)!

If you're an arcade gamer of long-standing, you might think that scenario sounds a little familiar... and you'd be right. Galencia has much in common with the classic Galaga, but with a few additions thrown into the mix. Much of the standard gameplay is the same... waves swoop onto the screen then attack, with some ships using a tractor beam in an attempt to capture your fighter. Should that happen, and

I can't have been the only one to say that waiting for Galencia was long and arduous. But on playing the final result? It was more than worth it.

The opening is fantastic, and from there it packs a great assortment of options - from alternate colour palettes, to the single-life tournament mode. Conveniently, all of this is squeezed into a single load, ever so appreciated in this day and age!

From there it's onto the action itself, and Galencia certainly delivers on that during its 50 hectic levels, ranging from battles against formations, to challenges awarding bonuses for accurate blasting, and others navigating asteroid fields. They're also joined by the occasional boss battle, offering an even tougher challenge.

Controls are razor sharp, with all the responsiveness and precision you need; the sprites are large, well coloured and fluidly animated. The music offers some great grooves, and the sound effects are loud, offering that arcade vibe.

Galencia is an essential arcade experience offering plenty of challenge and replay value in an excellent package!

ROB

Developer

Team Galencia

Publisher

Jason Aldred (Digital download),
Protovision (Physical)

Format

Cartridge, Disk, Tape,
Digital Download

ROB PLAYS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9AaseSTkVE>





I always preferred Galaxian to Galaga in the arcades, but that doesn't mean I'm not up for a bit of good quality Galaga-esque blasting. The Commodore 64 was never that well-served in that regard, but fortunately Jason Aldred has put that right with Galencia. It has all the classic gameplay features you'd expect, then adds a few more just to spice things up a bit.

Of course, you can have all the gameplay features you like but if the game doesn't play well, then they're useless. Galencia, unlike most other Galaga clones on the 64, plays like an absolute dream. Key to this is the movement of the sprites. They swoop around the screen in a most arcade-like fashion, fully selling the idea that this is an arcade game on your computer.

The game's presentation is spot-on too, with a great intro, superb graphics and fantastic sound. If you're looking for a state-of-the-art shmup on your 64, then look no further... Galencia is out of this world!

PAUL

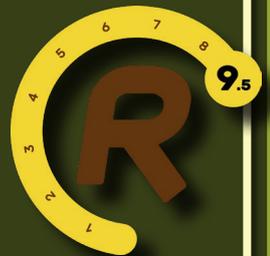
down flies with a peashooter.

Realising that simply throwing a weight of numbers at you will not be enough to win, the enemy mixes up its attacks by sending other warriors into the battle at various times. These warriors take on different forms to the standard bee-type attackers, and move in varying patterns. This means that you must be on your toes at all times, ready to counter these threats.

It's not all relentless onslaught, though. Well, it is, but there are moments of relative respite to be found. Some of the enemy waves encountered on your path to the final boss do not shoot at you, and completely wiping them out will see you

rewarded with a bonus ship. There are also asteroid fields to be traversed, and bonuses can be picked up here, too. In fact, if you want to challenge anybody to a high score competition, you'll need to learn how to take full advantage of the asteroid fields.

Should you prove to be a skilful pilot, you'll defeat the enemy and save the Earth. Hurray! But as we all know, enemies such as these are not prone to giving up and there's every chance you'll have to go through it all again...



Galencia pays homage to Namco's classic 1982 arcade game, Galaga, itself a sequel to the groundbreaking Galaxian. It's one of the most well-known arcade games of all-time, probably thanks to its incredible popularity in the USA. Indeed, such is its standing there that it's often shoehorned into popular culture when a video game reference is needed. Recent examples can be seen in the movie Pixels, where an attack on Earth begins when aliens send waves of attack ships based on Galaga to destroy a military base; or our favourite, in the movie Avengers Assemble, where a minion of SHIELD is busted playing Galaga when he should be doing his job. If only we could get away with that...



GALENCIA

the interview

Martin Grundy met up with Galencia coder Jay Aldred for a cheeky Newcastle Brown and a chat about Jay's awesome new C64 shoot 'em up.

Hi Jay, thanks for joining me to chat about your awesome C64 game Galencia. For those who haven't come across it yet, can you tell them a little bit about it?

Galencia is my love letter to the great 'stars and space' shmups from the early 80s. I hope it's well balanced and players don't feel cheated if they die - I spent a very long time tweaking the difficulty curve which ebbs and flows. I get asked about that quite a bit and what I mean is that the difficulty follows a pattern - like two steps forward and one step back - so the level difficulty progresses like this: harder, harder, easier (oo-er Mrs!)

Where did the idea for Galencia come from?

Galencia was originally going to be called Alpha Runner. Alpha Runner was the title of my very first video game which was due to be published in 1986 for the C64 by The Power House. Unfortunately The Power House went bust and the game was never released. Recently, I had the idea that I would recreate Alpha Runner, with some significant updates, appropriate for a 2017 game. After doing a little research I discovered that a recent PC game had been launched with the Alpha Runner title.

This sent me back to the drawing board. I tried to find a game I loved that hadn't really been done well on the C64 and I ended up with a very short list. Top of the list was the Namco classic Galaga. A direct port of Galaga would be impossible in my opinion due to lots of factors: screen orientation, sprites per line, resolution limitations etc... So the idea of Galencia

started to take on a life of its own, starting from the Galaga seed idea.

This was fleshed out with various influences from many other games. The asteroid field section of Galencia was inspired by Astro-Blaster. I liked the risk/reward system in Astro-Blaster and adapted this with the temptation of stars which are worth a ridiculous 10,000 points each, quite the temptation!

Amy Starbanger, Ace Harper and his dog Roxy are my idea of giving the game a little character and some nice presentation which isn't part of the core gameplay. The dog, as you eagle eyed gamers have already spotted, was influenced from the 1985 Andromeda Software classic Scarabaeus (Invaders of the Lost Tomb in the USA), I always loved that touch, and this is my tribute to that amazing game.

I was always a fan of the bees in Galaga and spent many hours trying to get them looking reasonable rotating, changing direction to follow their trajectory - just as they do in the arcade game. Unfortunately, they only looked good with a Hi-Res overlay, this would limit the enemy to two per line (as you have to consider when a Siren captures a ship and other swooping bees) so that was a no go. So, I ended up with the bees always facing down when attacking. Although this sounds limiting, I think they look pretty good when combined with their movement patterns and they are always clear and unmuddled.

Amy has a few cheeky lines, some might say innuendo, this is my tribute to the very British humour found in many UK C64 titles from the 1980s, those fun days before everything became so corporate and dry!

How long did it take to make Galencia?

Approximately six months. There was a lot of intense development during the first four months as I did not have a full time job. Following this I took a full time job so there was less time for development. At the moment I'm working on a physical release which should be available soon.

What's your C64 setup?

I wish I had the space for a couple of real C64 setups (PAL/NTSC), but I didn't at the time of coding Galencia. Everything was developed on my trusty PC via the excellent VICE emulator - it really is stunningly advanced, a technical marvel. All in game graphics were created on CharPad and SpritePad. Saul Cross and PulseBot both use GoatTracker for music



Galencia's intro screen - ready for blast off!

Ace Harper and Amy Starbanger.



and sound effects. The assembler I use is CBM Prg Studio. I don't use any kind of dedicated debugger, that's cheating! I debug by dumping variables to the screen and frame by frame advancing the game as its running. I then solve the problem by 'running' the program virtually in my head!

Any particular high or low points in the game's development?

The lowest point of development came soon after I released the first public Beta versions. It was quickly trained by a cracking group and distributed faster than the official version. This meant that all the Youtube videos were linked to the cracked version which stopped me from getting any Beta feedback - making the entire Beta process pretty pointless. There was also a certain, well known retro gaming website, that posted an article about Galencia and credited the cracking group three times in its article - no mention of the devs! It then proceeded to link to the cracked version, again, bypassing the entire point of a Beta version. I would have expected such a website to support developers more than cracking groups and had to argue with them to get the article updated. Very disappointing considering that Indie and Retro games are their bread and butter. All this palaver almost resulted in the game being canned, but thankfully it pulled through - largely due to the support I got from C64 fans on Lemon64 - you guys saved Galencia!

High points are definitely the release through itch.io. It was fantastic to see the game officially out there and being reviewed by such great C64 legends such as Julian Rignall (Zzap!64), Mamemeister (Alan Stewart), Hellfire64 (Rob Caporetto), Sprite Castle (Rob O'Hara), Lukozet, GRay Defender and many others. Only yesterday I received a German twitter notification that brightened up my Saturday afternoon:

'Nach mehr als 30 Jahren wieder ein Spiel für den C64 gekauft #Galencia'

(After more than 30 years I bought a game for the C64!)

Who else was involved in the creation process?

Jason Aldred [UK]

- All code and initial graphics, design, project management and community interaction.

PulseBot [USA] the artist formerly known as 'The Highway Guy' (real name William Fay - Shhh don't tell anyone!)

- All music, including loader music, which is not public at the moment
- Half of the sound effects



Jason kindly shared these images with Reset which show Lobo's step by step process creating the amazing hand painted artwork that finally graced Galencia's physical packaging.

Saul Cross [UK]

- Enhancing my original graphics
- Creating new graphics, including the loading bitmap which is not public at this time
- The other half of the sound effects

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Saul for helping me out with graphics and sound effects at very short notice when he was extremely busy in his personal life. Thanks Saul!

Lobo [USA]

- All non-game artwork, physical box, label art for media, manual etc..

Jakob chen-voos [GERMANY]

- Protovision producer the physical versions

What reception has the game had from the C64 scene?

In a word, Amazing! It has been very encouraging all round. Most comments and reviews being overwhelmingly positive, for example: Itch.io scores it 5/5 over 15 reviews and it is rated at 9.35 over 9 reviews at csdb.dk. (at the time of interview). It

amazes me that the C64 scene is not only alive and kicking but is actually growing year by year.

Is there going to be a physical release? If so, how much work is involved in getting a physical copy of a game to market in 2017?

Hopefully by the time this article is published, the



Galencia's comprehensive options screen.

game will be available on tape, disk and cartridge, with both PAL and NTSC supported on all formats.

Because of the way I have chosen to release Galencia, it is a little different to most games. I have independently released the game on itch.io with later physical versions to be released by Protovision. There is an initial consultation process of gauging interest between various publishers and I have spoken to three publishers in all (strangely they all begin with the letter P!). Two were very interested and were very positive about publishing and the third did not get back to me. It was a very tough call choosing a publisher, I would have been more than happy with either one. What swayed it for me was the way I got along with Jakob from Protovision. He shared my enthusiasm of classic shoot em ups and we have had many involved conversations, covering everything from programming, friends in the industry to marketing and production details. We have a very transparent working relationship which is brilliantly refreshing. Being on the same label as the incredible looking 'Sam's Journey' is something I'm really proud of - Protovision is a very prestigious label for Galencia.

Regarding the physical release, we have to carefully look at the unit costings and try to give the end user the best value package we can. This includes high quality big box packaging, custom inlays and choosing the right 'feelies' (I love this word, it means the extra physical goodies you get in the game box!). When that's sorted, we have to get the artwork perfect for all printed materials - boxes, inlays, manuals, labels etc. This can be time consuming as we are working with huge files and we are all working on this as a second job, trying to balance other work and family commitments.

Mastering is also a pretty big task. Once the game is duplicated, no further patches are possible, so a rigorous testing phase must be completed. This is a positive from having the game out on digital format already, a worldwide test has already been made on the core gameplay and compatibility. There are some more surprises which will be announced at launch along with details of the feelies!

How big is the C64 games market today? In other words - if you don't mind me asking - how many copies might a good C64 game expect to sell?

I don't know of any C64 game that has sold more than 1,000 units in the last few years. A great game might break 500, a decent game 250 and an average game might sell 100 copies.

These figures have been given to me in confidence by other developers and they seem like reasonable numbers to me. One thing to consider is the C64 market is actually growing, so who knows what the future holds?!

What are your Commodore credentials?

This list isn't exhaustive and as the old biological computer has a little bit of rot, but here goes! I've worked on the following games:

- The Real Ghostbusters
- Treble Champions
- Menace
- Heroes of the Lance

- Dalek Attack
- Suburban Commando
- Sporting Triangles

Probably a few more that escape me right now!

What was it like working as a games coder in the golden age of the 1980s and early 90s?

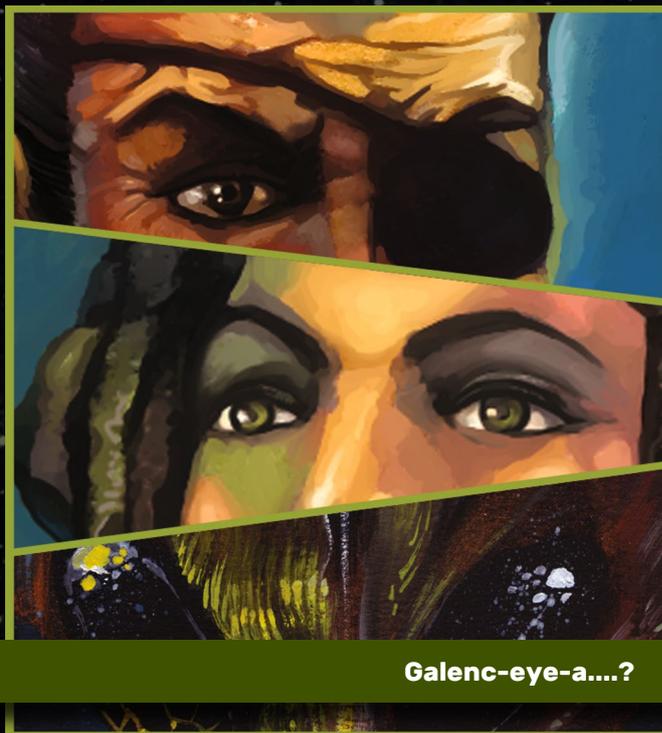
I would compare it to the wild west! Lots of testosterone filled, spotty teenagers being exploited by older, more business savvy people. Many programmers didn't really care about financial rewards and had little idea of the kind of money being earned by their labours, they did it for the love of the machine, driven by passion and challenge. I know of some programmers who created the biggest titles of the 80s who didn't earn as much as their partners who worked as sales assistants in retail stores.

Why did you eventually leave the games industry?

In a nutshell, too many companies going bust and leaving developers high and dry. Once you have been burned several times you know it's time to look elsewhere for your income.

What made you return to coding the C64?

I had some time on my hands due to my work situation and I always wanted to revisit my first digital love, the C64. It is a great machine that I learned in my teenage years and I still remember lots of the hardware registers - they are deeply planted in the old grey matter. I will always love this computer more than any other - it was really special to me and offered me a way out of the predictable working life that a lot of my peers fell into. Although a life filled with exotic holidays and incredible sports cars didn't quite happen. But who knows? Maybe it's still waiting for me, somewhere!



Galenc-eye-a....?



What would you say to someone thinking of returning to coding the C64?

The market is tiny but is increasing, I hope that Sam's Journey will bring back a lot of gamers to the mighty C64. It is highly anticipated, and I hope it will be the strongest title to grow the market. Coding on the C64 is an amazing experience these days. There's a fast community feedback, easy to use digital distribution channels and the ability to roll out a new version instantly. The amount of talent who are keen to contribute to projects and the mature, freely available development tools are exceptional – much more advanced than those available in the 80s. If you have the inclination, I would say go for it. The community is great, and it is very satisfying to earn a warm reception from your project. If you write a game for mobile phones for example, you might not even get on the radar, let alone stay on the radar, with a smaller market such as the C64 a reasonable game will get some coverage – and it is not all about marketing, unlike mobile platforms.

Galencia is extremely polished but is there anything you'd change about it?

Thank you! It's nice to know all that effort is appreciated. If I was starting Galencia again from the beginning, I would have had a more complete design document – it was pretty much designed on the fly. Although I had designed the game to be modular and easy to change things, I did not anticipate the direction it eventually took. That said, a rigid design can be a double edged sword – it can work great in some situations but might limit your imagination in others.

Galencia's actual gameplay is pretty solid and I still enjoy playing it. I honestly can't say this for all my previous projects – I am usually thankful to have the project finished and archived – so in all honesty I wouldn't really change an awful lot.

Maybe have the NTSC version as the lead version to avoid any issues like the sprites in the border and reduced cycles per frame.

Any plans to make more C64 games in future?

I have three options on the table right now for a new C64 game, I will probably regret this, but here they are:

The obvious Galencia 2 – more of everything, the predictable sequel.

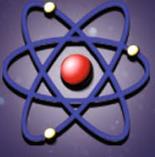
T.O.G. (not disclosing this just yet) A ground assault 8 way scroller, clearing the scorched earth after the Galencia fighter has cleared the skies.

Galencia Tactics – A turn based, combat orientated strategy game in the Galencia universe – I have started to mock this up and it's the most fleshed out of the three ideas. I think it would bring something new to the C64. Would you like to see some screens? Well I'm not showing them hahahaha!

For those Reset readers who haven't got hold of the game yet, how can they buy a copy of Galencia?

For all things Galencia, check out Galencia HQ at <http://www.galencia.games> where you can order digital and physical versions of the game. Galencia HQ also contains a range of cool Galencia merchandise (baseball caps, hoodies and t shirts) as well as info about the official distributors, the latest high-scores, a YouTube review and the opportunity to catch up on Twitter Galencia moments that you might have missed.

Sounds great. Thanks for joining me today Jay and chatting about Galencia. It really is a superb C64 game. I'm off for another attempt to beat my high-score. See you next issue.



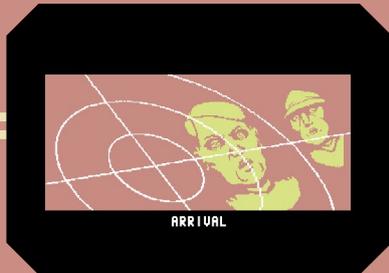
Galencia

**TIME TO PUT A STOMP
ON THOSE BUGS!**

Lobo 2017

(c) 2017 Jason Aldred www.protovision.games

LUFTRAUSERZ



It's WAR! And as unsurprising as it is, it's not down to precise planning and deployment of lots of individuals into battle to save the day, but rather just one and a super-fighter! Rob and Ant dive into the fray and try to win the war in LuftrauserZ!

It's as it always goes: war has erupted, and the allies are being beaten back... at least until a dastardly scheme is hatched to turn the tide. Of course, you're chosen and you've been given an experimental sub-launched Rauser to take to the skies... and save the day!

Each run starts off in the hangar. Here you'll be able to customise your Rauser, swapping out its weapons, body and

engine to change how it behaves in battle. Your part selection also sets out the missions you need to accomplish - and these are important, as completing them unlocks new parts!

These drastically change your Rauser - adding weapons like lasers and heat-seeking missiles. Next there are bodies which drop bombs, take more damage, or even avoid it from mid-air collisions. Then there's engines, allowing you to fly underwater, or even fire from behind! To top it all off, each combination flies into battle with its own unique soundtrack!

The missions start from those involving obtaining a target score, but rapidly shift towards challenges involves taking out a



Developer
Paul Koller
Publisher
RGCD
Format
Cartridge, Digital Download

Original Game Design
Vlambeer
Code, Design & Graphics
Paul Koller
Music & Sound Effects
Stein Pedersen



Upon discovering Luftrausers was Paul Koller's next demake, I was tense. I'd greatly enjoyed the original version, meaning my anticipation was high. Thankfully, it has more than been worth the wait.

From a technical front, it's amazing seeing what Koller has squeezed out of the humble C64, with fluid action, tight controls, and that solid frame rate (which actually beats out the original!).

But what seals the deal are the extra details, like your progress being saved onto the cart itself, rather than saving to disk (though the download edition still relies on this).

It's mind blowing that almost everything from the original PC version has made it over here - all of the enemies (barring the giant submarines), all of the parts (with some tweaks), but most importantly, all the white-knuckle, high-flying action is as intense as it ever was.

LuftrauserZ has more than delivered on its mission to demake an indie hit for the C64, and can rightfully stand very high as one of the finest titles of 2017 for the C64. **ROB**



ROB PLAYS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRyEdTrMTNQ>

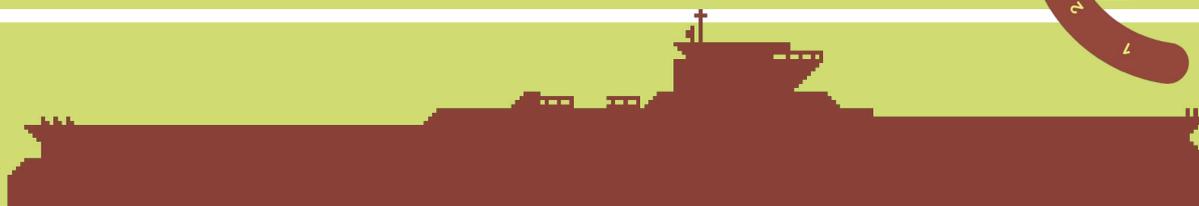
number of tougher targets, some even in the same mission!

The enemy forces start out with cannon fodder such as fighters and boats. As your mission continues, tougher enemies will provide reinforcements. Starting with jets, and ace pilots in the air... to battleships on the ocean. But even then... more powerful threats in the skies await the skilled pilot.

The Rauser is hardy, and can take a number of hits before exploding - with the current status represented by the border colour, and damage is repaired when you cease firing.

LuftrauserZ is a PAL only C64 release, and is available as a physical cartridge (from RGCD), and as a digital download (from the RGCD itch.io page). The physical cartridge allows you to save your progress directly to it, whereas the download requires you to have a disk drive connected to do the same.

The download provides a CRT cartridge image which works with emulators such as VICE and Micro64, along with devices for real C64 hardware like the Ultimate II/II+ and Turbo Chameleon.



It's not often that I am truly amazed by a game these days (on account of me being all old and cynical) so when something like LuftrauserZ streaks down from the sky and rattles my windows I pay attention.

This game is a marvel. Paul Koller, through what I can only assume was the use of dark arts, has crafted a demake so astounding that it boggles my mind when I play it.

So wondrous is this demake that the minor, perfectly understandable, niggles are easily ignored (there's a touch of slow down here and there, and not everything made it from PC to C64). The entire game is so polished with a heap of options (including a neat save feature) and the game... the game!

Luftrausers is wonderful on the PC and the C64 version is stuffed to the jet intakes with the features, gameplay and variety of the original. From music to art to progression system, Luftrauserz proves that just when you think the C64 can't give anymore, oh baby, it does. **ANT**



BLAST FROM THE PAST

SHMUPS

Pew, pew, pew, dodge, shoot and repeat. The shoot'em up formula may sound simple, but the devil is always in the (gameplay) detail.

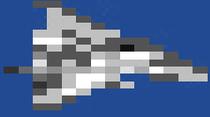
The roots of shoot'em ups go all the way back to the early 1960s with Steve Russell's Spacewar!, but it was Space Invaders that brought the genre to the masses!

There is something visceral about shmups - you survive by dodging kamikaze fighters, weaving past bullets and the best part, blowing up stuff! This all may sound morbid, but it is pure gaming fun.

With such a grand old genre, the list of shmups could fill every page of this magazine and then some. As you may have noticed, I am stalling on picking my favourite C64 shmup. The reason for my hesitation is the sheer volume of great shoot'em ups on the trusty 64KB machine. Do I go for a horizontal or vertical game? Do I pick a classic like IO, Salamander, Delta, River Raid, Armalyte, or do I go for the latest shmup, Galencia? It's really a tough choice!

Ok, ok, if I had to pick, I couldn't split it between Salamander and Armalyte. These two are bloody tough as nails but oh so lovely and rewarding to play. Oh yeah, try playing them without a trainer!

As I grab the TAC-2 and fly out in my R-9 Fighter, I radio back to Reset HQ to ask the crew what their fave C64 shmup(s) are. After a bit of radio static, their responses come flooding in... Roger that! **Alex Boz**

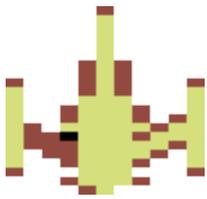


This one's tough, but my best shmup pick has to be Manfred Trenz's C64 swansong - Enforcer: Fullmetal Megablaster. You'd expect Manfred's reputation would mean this one would be popular, but sadly not... which is no doubt limited to being published via Golden Disk 64. Enforcer takes the basics of his prior games, and amplifies things up to 11. Fast action, lots of enemies on screen, barely any slowdown... and yes, gigantic terrifying bosses at the end of each stage.

The power up system is familiar, yet easy to grasp... and if you die? You may lose them, but you won't be put in an unwinnable position.

Enforcer really is one of those late era gems which shows what the C64 can do in the hands of a true master. It's slick, challenging, yet fair, and whilst I didn't learn about it until the internet age... it never fails to impress when I sit down to give it a spin!

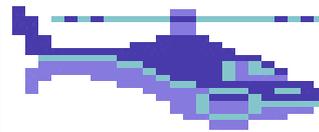
Rob Caporetto



Normally I'd just say "Paradroid" here and leave it at that, but as that's a given, I want to highlight a much-overlooked shmup... Firetrack. Also released on the BBC, it's a Star Force-

inspired blaster which grabbed my attention from the get-go, as Star Force is one of my favourite arcade shooters. Firetrack has a very individual look, with unusual but effective colour schemes coupled with classic arcade-style alien ship designs. Where it really excels, though, is its gameplay. Everything moves smoothly and the ship handles beautifully, so it always feels like your own fault when it goes wrong but you feel great when it goes right. The challenge increases as you push on, with the game asking more of your skills and throwing faster and larger attack patterns at you. The biggest compliment I can pay Firetrack is to say that it feels more like an arcade game than a computer game, and is the best vertical-scroller on the C64.

Paul Morrison

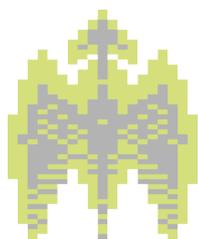


When I was a wee child, after school this amazing theme song would be on the TV and as soon as that tune played

I would be hooked watching the adventures of Hawke and his amazing machinery.. That being Airwolf.. Loading up the game and that theme song has got me hook, line and sinker, the work by Mark Cooksey absolutely gets it perfect and the visuals definitely complement... and those memories come flooding. The game itself follows the premise of rescuing 5 scientists, whilst that would seem easy, the game itself is quite challenging. Ammo is unlimited so you can shoot as much as you want, however you have to keep your helicopter upright, avoiding EVERYTHING, as everything will damage you. You only have a limited amount of

shielding and with this the game gets quite frustrating. That been said I always saw this as a challenge and a damn hard shooter. Completing your mission definitely earns you a pat on your back.

Rajesh Singh



For me, Terra Cresta is one of the most memorable shoot-em-ups on the C64. During the game, five numbered targets flash away at different stages, the destruction of which releases bolt-ons for your ship including a mode

which allows you to shoot an arc of laser fire. Deployed by pressing the space bar, it is an effective but temporary feature with your ship reverting back to normal after ten seconds. A dim-witted mate of mine, 'Conky' Dave, was transfixed by Terra Cresta and in particular this mode. However, he was even more amazed by my new 'voice activated' joystick which in truth was a classic yellow and black Zipstik. After activating the mode, I pretended to Dave that I had programmed the joystick to recognise my voice so that when I said 'change', the ship would revert back to its original form. It was simply the mode coming to an end but Dave didn't know that and he quickly rushed home to put a voice-activated joystick at the very top of his Christmas list! Sorry Dave!

Gavin Greenhalgh



This was a tough choice for me, because I LOVE shooters and could have chosen one of many, many quality examples of the genre to have graced the C64. But in the end

(well, right at this very moment), I decided to go with Commando (a choice which even surprised me). The epic 3 level (haha!) Chris Butler conversion didn't disappoint the 8 year old me, I just loved it and played it over and over. Even though the game wrapped after only 3 levels and the challenge was easy; the amazing Hubbard soundtrack, attractive (though glitchy) graphics and frantic gameplay was so much damned fun! When Nostalgia released Commando Arcade a few years ago, it was like Christmas 1985 all over again, with the lads correcting all of the original misgivings of the original but retaining the charm of the conversion. Rose tinted nostalgia had me choosing Commando, however, Commando Arcade is actually a damned near perfect C64 game!

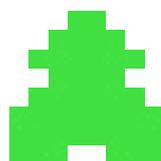
Kevin Tilley



There are many shooters that I love on the C64 (including Iridis Alpha, see Retro Rewind!), but here it's all about Uridium. The game has received an interesting

roller-coaster of opinion over time, first being lauded by all the press initially, and then Jaz and Steve noted how quickly they tired of it in a subsequent Zap!Back feature. Today, Uridium is still looked upon favourably even if it can be a bit of a memory test at times, countered by the fact while it may be about remembering the layout of the ships, it's completely another having the skills to negotiate them! Plus a sturdy joystick. Besides, if you find the original too easy, then there was always Uridium+ to try and beat. The background graphics still hold up today like nothing else, the epitome of 50Hz scrolling and with speed to spare. It's as if the phrase "silky smooth" was coined specifically for this game, as your spinning and tumbling Manta narrowly avoids certain death at every turn. An example of why the C64 rocked.

Mat Allen

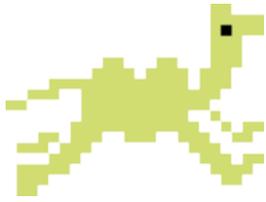


Nothing yet has surpassed the scintillating, shmup-y pureness of Matrix aka Attack of the Mutant Camels aka Gridrunner II. Look, it's got camels in it.

Spitting white-hot death across the grid, you are launched into twenty screens of Centipede-like carnage. Matrix demands both intense focus, and the ability to let go and enter "the zone", both key components of a good Minter blaster. With features such as the treacherous Snitch, deflectors and the infuriating X and Y Zappers there's enough variety to keep wanting to try and get to that next screen. It's all so wonderfully presented in gorgeous, glowing pixels and laser blasts. Gameplay is perfectly minimalistic. I still play Matrix regularly (in fact I just had a go with a new joystick). Despite the frenetic action it is my chill game. I still swear a bit when I run into a bomb, though.

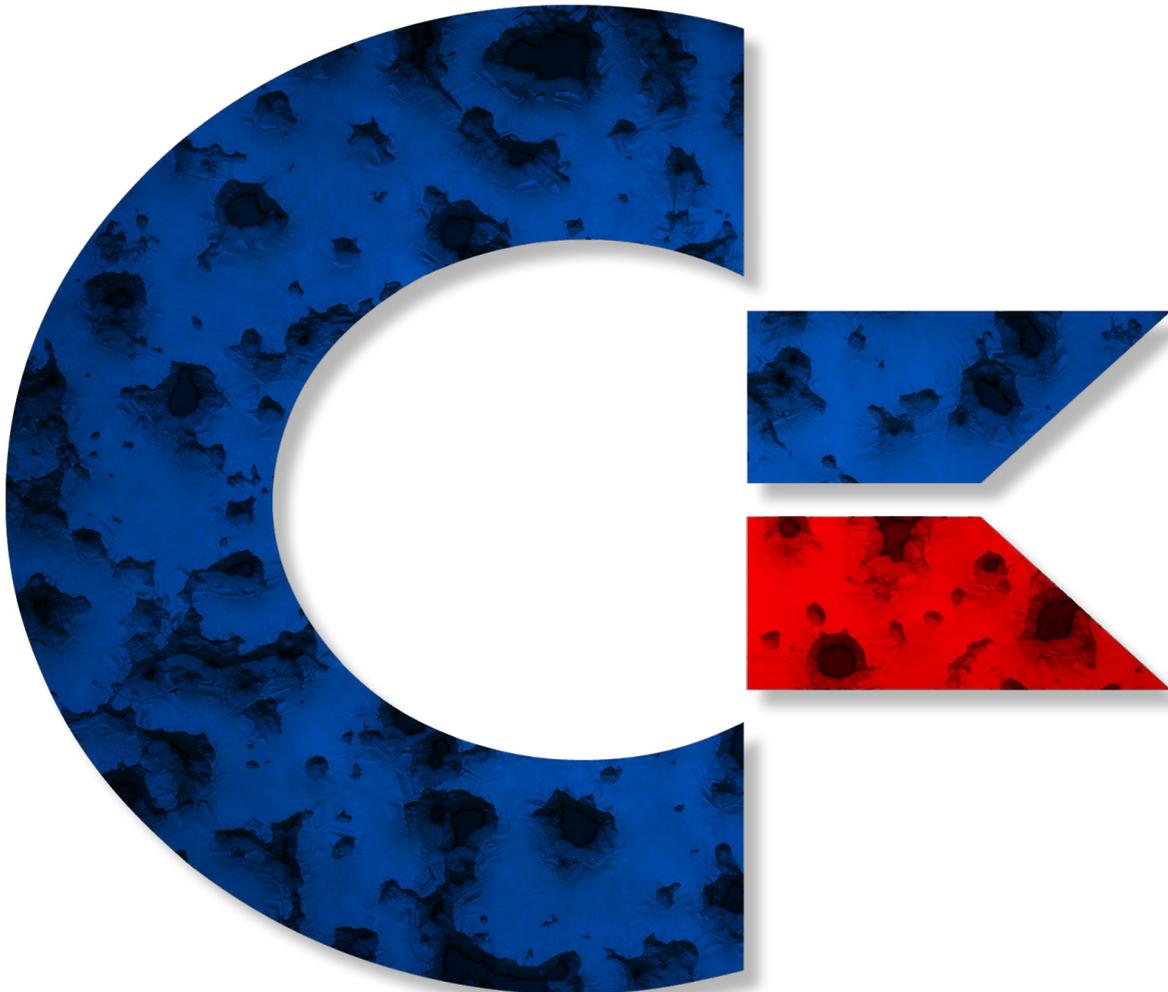
Every shmup should be Matrix.

Anthony Stiller



My choice is Minter's woolly spin on the Defender formula, Sheep In Space! You're a flying sheep who fires glowing thingies out of its mouth to destroy weird flying enemies. Above and below are two planet surfaces, and you're floating in the weird gravitational pull that exists between them. Shoot all enemies and you're whisked away to the next level. Delay and the planets blow up, throwing you into the harsh void of space. Or you can just chill out on a nice patch of grass for a shield-replenishing snack. Using gravity and inertia to deftly manoeuvre between the two planets is ace. I liked how your bullets take opposing gravitational forces into account so you can fire in long arcs. And! You can head-butt enemies out of the way! It's also the game that taught me the word "bloated": if you eat too much grass you explode! It's a game you can feel yourself get better at with each go, and to this day I'm still discovering new ways to improve my score..

Cameron Davis



My favourite shoot 'em up of all time has to be Armalyte, which I bought back in the early 2000's, from either eBay or an online retro games shop. Armalyte is a neat horizontal scrolling blaster where you have to control your player ship and drone (unless you are playing in 2 player mode, it is a different matter). While playing this game for the first time, my jaw dropped when I saw the amount of aliens on the screen at once! The C64 always had a limitation of 8 sprites, but use those inside multiple rasters and you get multiplexed sprites. That means that you can fit more than 8 sprites on the screen and the Armalyte coders did this stunningly! The difficulty curve is high, which means you will need to keep on trying to battle your way through each level. I just love it, and find it a highly addictive shoot 'em up and one of the best to ever grace the C64.

Richard Bayliss



Gyruss. It's like Galaga, in a circle, with weird controls, flickery graphics, music by Bach, and difficulty set to 5 billion. Apparently

I believe this to be the formula for the best SHMUP on the C64. I'm crazy like that. I discovered Gyruss on a TurboTape back in the day (I'm not a pirate...ignore the eye patch and peg leg). Despite it being ridiculously difficult, I was hooked. I fondly remember the time a cousin that was obsessed with the arcade version schooling me by almost making it to Earth. He's basically a God, or a programmer. I dunno. Same thing.

sigh Now I'm nostalgic. Time for a quick game.

<a minute later>

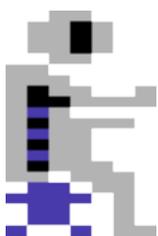
SCREW THIS STUPID GAME! What kind of dummy would think this is fun?!

<plays again... a minute later>

F THIS CRAP!

<throws C64 out window>

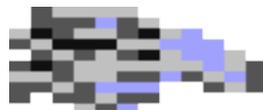
Freakin Frankie



My all-time favourite C64 shoot-em-up is Archer Maclean's Dropzone. Originally written for the Atari 800 in 1984, Maclean ported Dropzone to the C64 himself and US Gold (as UK Gold) published it in the UK in June 1985. Such was the quality,

speed and polish of the game, playing Dropzone felt like you had an arcade machine in your home. It was the perfect marriage of technical brilliance and simple but superb gameplay. Its frenetic, tense and highly addictive blasting made Dropzone an immediate classic and its super-fast scrolling, attractive graphics, cool SFX and humorous touches introduced the world to the awesome skills of its C64-legend-to-be creator. As one of my first ever C64 games in Autumn 1985, Dropzone was a big reason why I fell in love with the C64 - a love affair that's still going strong 32 years later.

Martin Grundy



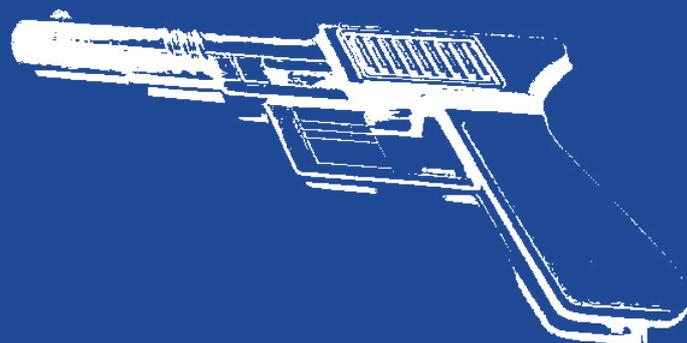
R-Type - where have my skills gone? R-Type on the C64 is hard. I hate to say this but I had to use a trainer to

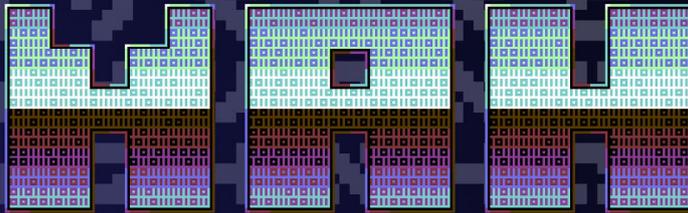
initially get past the first level! Of course, it's probably just my ancient, arthritic reaction times. Difficulty aside, it's an excellent conversion. The graphics are gorgeous. Backgrounds are beautifully designed and sprites are detailed and well animated. Throw in the full-screen bosses, and it really is a game to show what the old VIC can do. SID isn't neglected either. Chris Hulsbeck did an epic job with the soundtrack. The SFX are few and far between but with better-than-arcade music, who cares?

Due to rampant C64 piracy in the '80s I admit I didn't play this as much as I should have. Had I actually spent hard earned cash on the game I would have been able to appreciate it for what it is - a damned good shooter. Just be warned, the tape loading times are longer than Crystal Gayle's hair (really showing my age now).

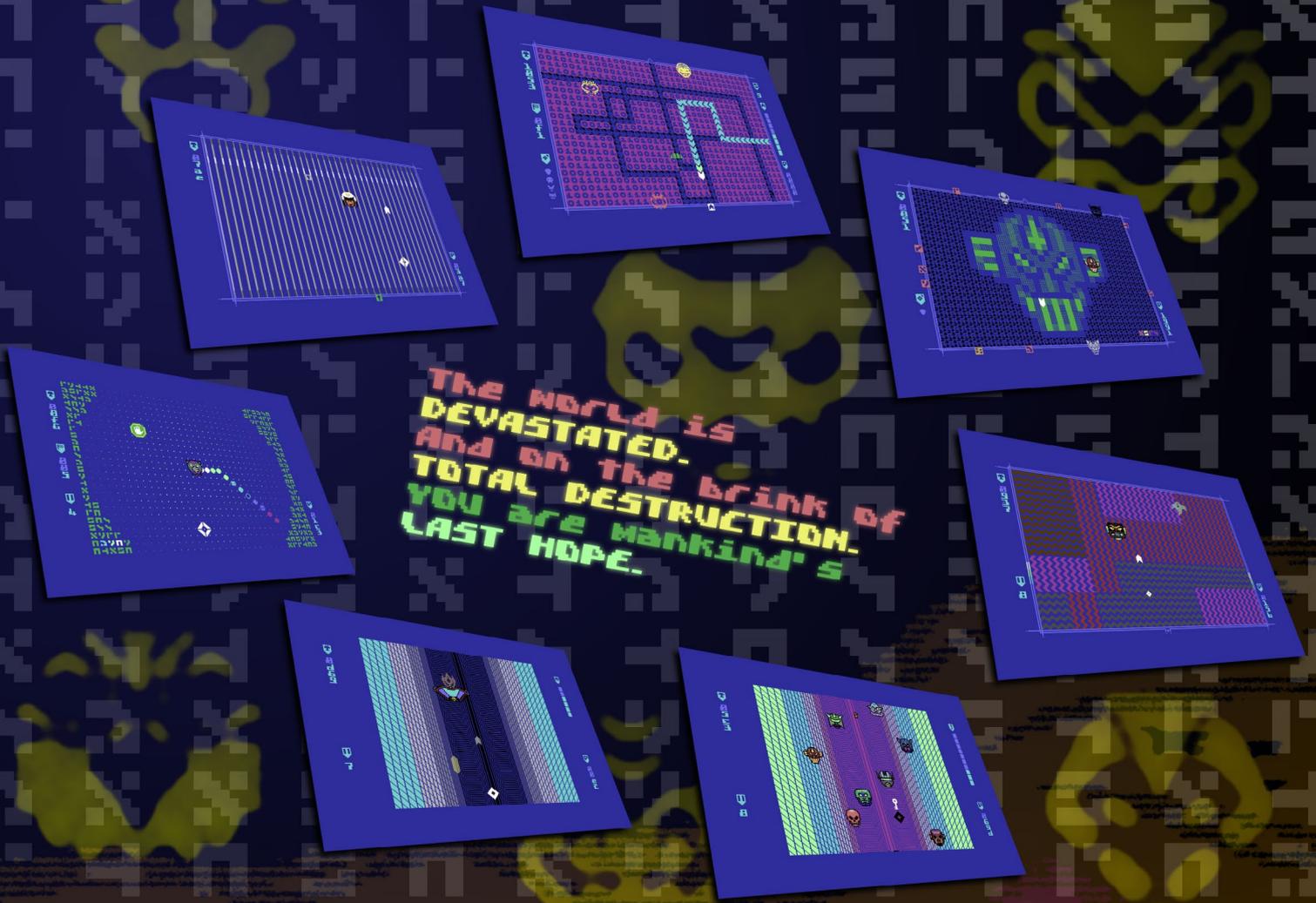
Karl Burnett

Whoa, the Reset HQ crew sure does have some great taste when it comes to shmups on the C64. I'll even allow our Ed's entry, even though I reckon it's a run and gun game, but I'll save that discussion for another day. So, do you agree with the collection of shmups that are being heralded in these hallow pages, or have we left out some majorly awesome shmups on the C64? Let us know your fave C64 shmup by hitting Reset C64 on Twitter or Facebook!





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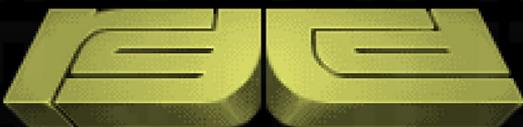


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PLANET GOLF

Besides making the best Commodore 64 magazine on Earth, the Reset 64 crew are also keen astrophysicists. Knowing how important the next stage of space exploration is, we are now testing our reviewers to see how they handle the only entertainment available to people in the future across the solar system - Planet Golf.



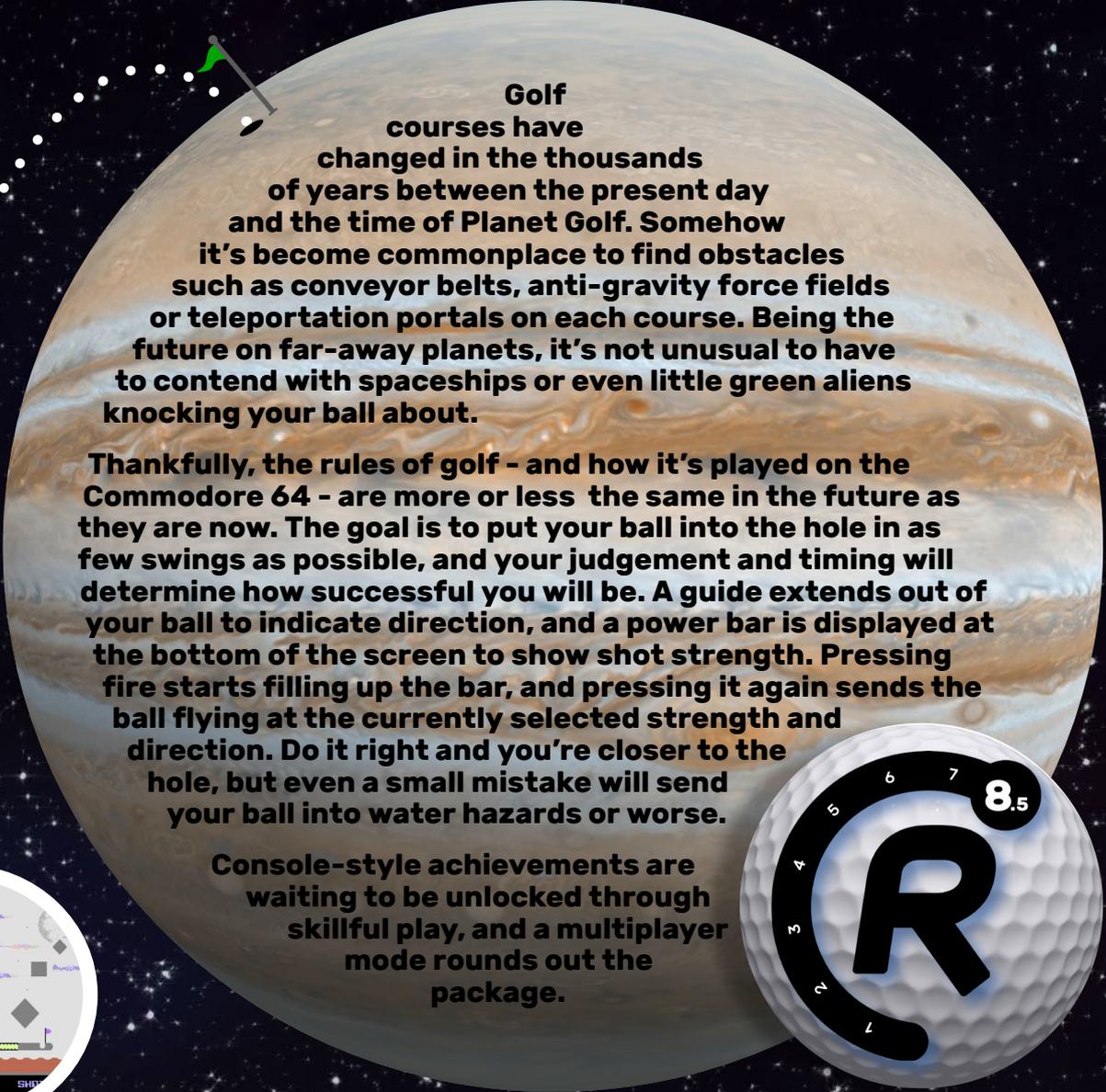
Planet Golf made me cry. Devilishly crafted and with presentation far beyond almost any other C64 game, Planet Golf oozes gameplay and inflicts exquisite pain. Playing this with Cam really showed me my a) hatred of the game of golf; and b) ironic love of hitting eagles out of the sky with golf balls. So I owe creator Antonio Savona a word of thanks for that.

With a difficulty curve balanced on a knife's edge, Planet Golf can feel punishing at times (a lot of the time) but as with any good game, it compelled me to return and ask for more. Shot, after shot, after shot I'd take until Cam would feign a heart attack or "accidentally" turn the monitor off (this does show that the 2-player mode might not be the best for players of uneven skill).

And while my cries of anguish did reverberate around the RESET 64 regional office, they were usually (eventually) punctuated by a shout of victory when I finally got that tiny ball in the little hole. **ANT**

In the future, mankind not only has ventured onto other planets but has done so often enough that going to Jupiter or Mars is as commonplace as you or I would go to the local supermarket. With exploration off civilisation's "to-do list", only one thing remains: the quest for entertainment. For some reason not adequately explained in Planet Golf's documentation, humanity has chosen golf as the go-to source of thrills in the year 38911.

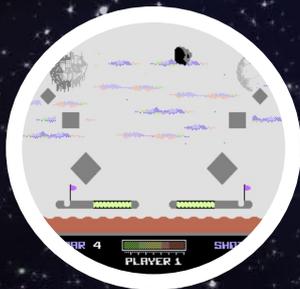
Each stage in Planet Golf is, as you would suspect, based on a different planet in our solar system. Starting on Earth, players will find that gravity and water work in the future just as they do today. Progress to Mars and even the tamest of shots will send your ball soaring through the atmosphere, while Jupiter demands forceful swings to make even the modest of approaches towards the hole. Beyond that, and we'll be spoiling things...



Golf courses have changed in the thousands of years between the present day and the time of Planet Golf. Somehow it's become commonplace to find obstacles such as conveyor belts, anti-gravity force fields or teleportation portals on each course. Being the future on far-away planets, it's not unusual to have to contend with spaceships or even little green aliens knocking your ball about.

Thankfully, the rules of golf - and how it's played on the Commodore 64 - are more or less the same in the future as they are now. The goal is to put your ball into the hole in as few swings as possible, and your judgement and timing will determine how successful you will be. A guide extends out of your ball to indicate direction, and a power bar is displayed at the bottom of the screen to show shot strength. Pressing fire starts filling up the bar, and pressing it again sends the ball flying at the currently selected strength and direction. Do it right and you're closer to the hole, but even a small mistake will send your ball into water hazards or worse.

Console-style achievements are waiting to be unlocked through skillful play, and a multiplayer mode rounds out the package.



At times I'm not sure if Planet Golf is maddeningly addictive or just plain maddening. This game is brutally hard! Once you escape Earth's orbit the later levels turn into some of the most complex and often frustrating puzzles seen on the C64 platform. We're talking real "slam the joystick down on the table and regret all the life decisions you've made to get up to this point" levels of teeth-gnashing difficulty here.

However, I can't refuse the urge to come back for one more go, because Planet Golf is also a lot of fun. The feeling of relief and success when I nail the right shot is second to none, and each screen offers a unique spin on the formula to keep the action fresh through the many long hours ahead. It also boasts some of the best presentation I've seen on the C64 - that intro has to be seen to be believed and the voice samples take the sting out of missing a shot (again). **CAM**



Developer

Antonio Savona

Publisher

Psytronik & RGCD

Format

Disk, Digital Download & Cartridge

Coding

Antonio Savona

Music

Aldo Chiummo & Gaetano Chiummo

Graphics

Ilkka Sjöstedt & Massimiliano 'WiZkiD' De Ruvo

RESCUING ORC



In most fantasy literature, orcs are horrid, disgusting creatures and you certainly wouldn't be rescuing them. But then, this is 2018 and we certainly don't discriminate, so rescue it is. And besides, when you're a goblin yourself, who are you to judge? Kevin and Merman arm themselves with their trusty swords and bravely enter the World of Magica so they can find their lost friend, and hopefully avoid being slain in the process!

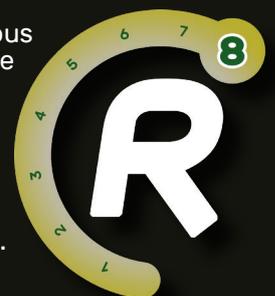
That feeling when you've cooked a meal worthy of Master Chef, and your guest doesn't even show. Not even a bloody phone call, zip! This is exactly what happened to one particular goblin in the beautiful, yet dangerous World of Magica. Being a good friend, the goblin couldn't let it go and knew something must be amiss. Grabbing the nearest (and shortest, mind you) sword, the goblin set off on a daring adventure to find Orc.

Set across 5 separate locations in 3 distinct areas, Magica is a sprawling world full of nasties and surprises, all intent on stopping the goblin from finding Orc.

Playing the role of the goblin, the player begins near Orc's home in Black Forest and then must continue to explore the flip screen world, including the dangerous path across Rocky Mountains and the fallen stronghold of Bluestone Keep. Along the way, you can collect various bonuses, extra lives and interact with the environment through switches and hints that have been placed throughout the game. There is a definite linear path that the player must follow, although the game itself is free roaming to an extent and exploration is required to find the correct path. There are secrets to be found and even characters you will meet along the way that don't want to actually kill you and may, in fact, offer assistance and clues!

Rescuing Orc is Juan J. Martinez' first C64 game, hot off the heels of Magica, his previous game which was released on the Amstrad CPC. As with Magica, Juan has enlisted the help of Vanja Utne of Pond Software to create the game's loading screen.

Rescuing Orc is available as a boxed Collector's Edition which has been published by Poly.Play. The box comes with an assortment of goodies including poster, manual and MicroSD card (containing a digital image of the game, MP3 soundtrack and various other goodies). Rescuing Orc is available on either cartridge, disk or cassette from Poly.Play, or as a free digital download in D64 format from the Usebox. Net homepage.



Developer

Usebox.Net

Publisher

Poly.Play

Format

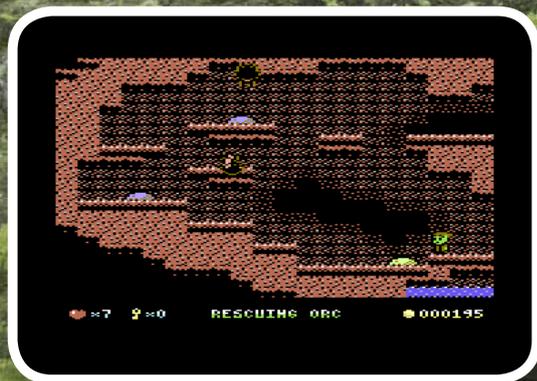
Tape, disk, digital
download & cartridge

Code, Graphics & Sound

Juan J. Martinez

Loading Screen

Vanja Utne



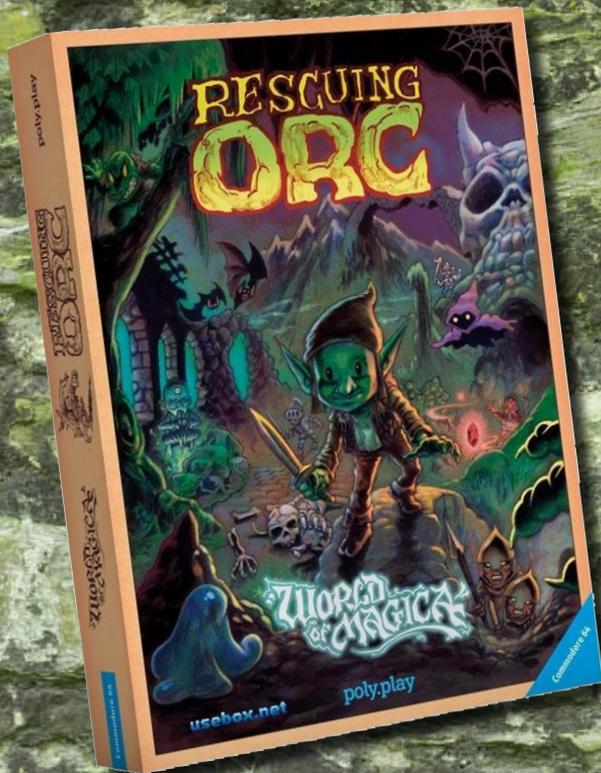
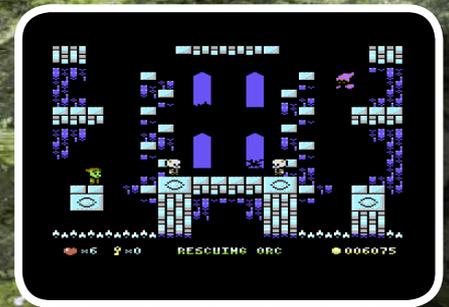
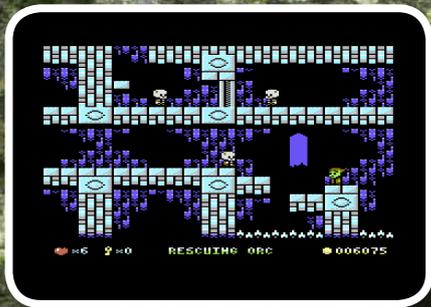


Wow! The first thing that hits you upon loading Rescuing Orc is the impeccable presentation. From the beautiful loading screen by Vanja Utne to the attractive title, all of the aesthetics impress. Juan has done a wonderful job making sure the game looks and sounds amazing!

Rescuing Orc is initially tough, but the game is actually very fair. The pixel perfect jumping can be executed perfectly with patience and the enemy attack patterns can be countered once learnt. You can't expect to just barge through each screen and survive – they require concentration. Additionally, there are easily enough bonus lives scattered around the game to get you through if you play carefully.

Rescuing Orc is old school fun. Those of you who require level passwords, fast paced action and energy bars to get you through, look elsewhere.

However, if you're a tried and tested Commodore 64 gamer, the initial difficulty and learning curve will not be off putting and you will find Rescuing Orc to be a lovingly crafted and wonderfully playable arcade adventure. Now, go play it! **KEV**



Special mention must also go to artist Ralph Niese for the stunning box art!

The packaging of the physical edition from Poly. Play is superb, including the MicroSD card with MP3s, concept art and emulators. It all fits into a big box with great artwork, echoed by Mermaid's brilliant loading screen.

Juan has made the game file available to download for free, updating it to fix some very minor bugs. The game itself is very cute, with some nicely drawn graphics and great music throughout. The message box is cleverly used to give hints and pass on the plot. The challenge really lies in mastering the tricky jumps (by getting to the platform edge) and defeating the enemies with your sword. Platform layouts are designed to stretch the player, while the enemies show some interesting if infuriating behaviour (particularly the bats swooping about). I certainly look forward to returning to the World of Magica for future games, following the high standard set by this release. **MERMAN**



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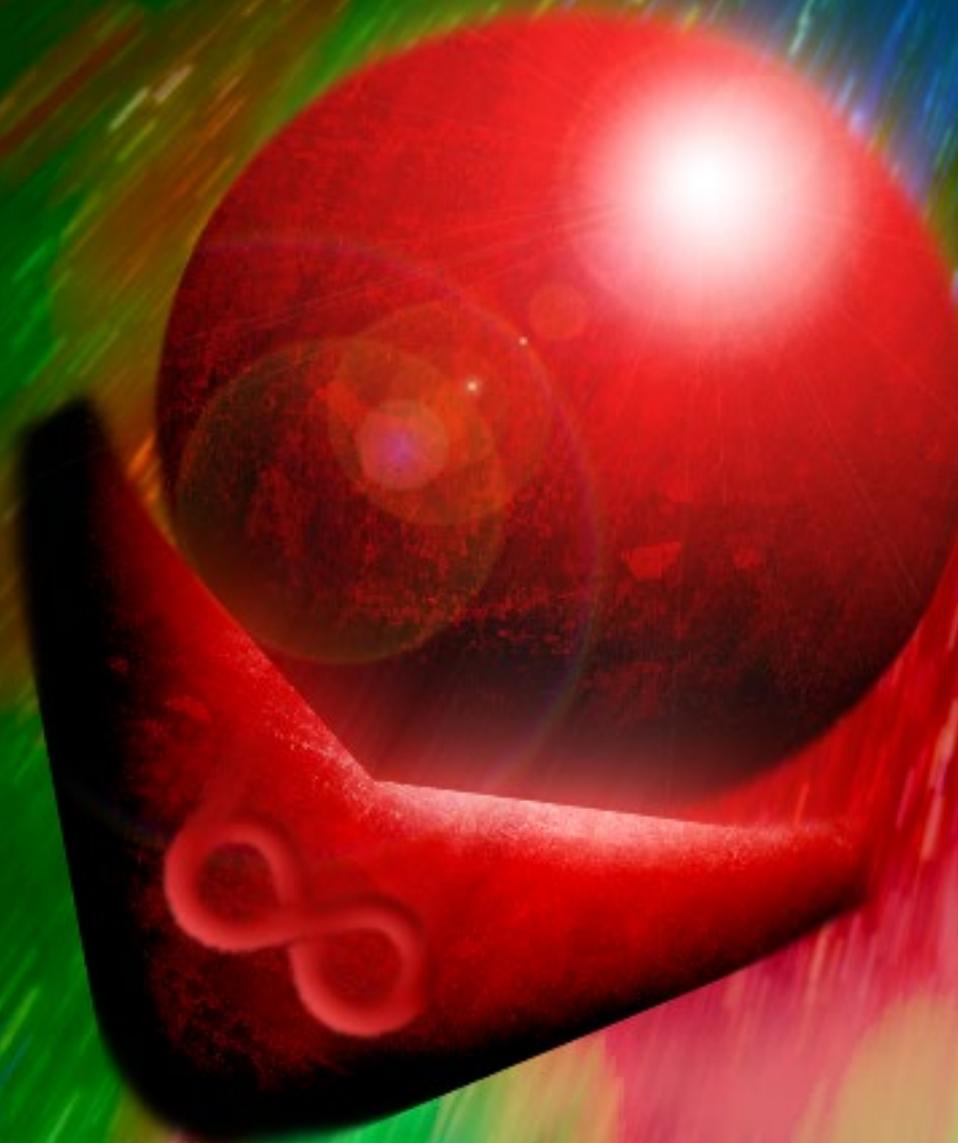


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RESET REWIND IRIDIS ALPHA ZAP

Each issue, the Reset team journeys back into the mists of time to revisit a title from C64 history, and see how it fares today. Does it still stack up, or is it one best left in our collective memories?

With our crew looking at C64 shmups this time, it's only fitting that one from the master himself Jeff Minter would be worth checking out and of course, it's time to take charge of Gilby in Iridis Alpha! When covered all the way back in Zzap issue 18, the crew there gave it a whopping 95%, so time to see what the Reset team think...



Kevin Tilley

There are two camps when it comes to Llamasoft games – you're either into Yak's psychedelic and intense shooters, or you just don't get them!

I've been a fan since the beginning; Yak's games have been on my gaming menu throughout my entire life!

There have been a couple that have passed me by and Iridis Alpha is one. Playing a Minter game for the first time on an 8 bit, as if it was coded yesterday, is one surreal experience, as it's as seizure inducing as Space Giraffe or Polybius. It's fast, frantic, headache inducing and there are rules. Pick up and play it is not, but gee whiz, it's fun!

If my time as a gamer has taught me anything, it's that sometimes less accessible games are more rewarding. Iridis Alpha could very well prove this to be true – it has a lot more depth than your average 8-bit shooter.

Just one more go... Damn, blasted Licker Ships!

Rob Caporetto

I'll admit, Iridis Alpha is one of the few Minter games that I've never really given enough time to. It should be though, as it's highlighted as one of his better games on the '64. Having dived in, it deserves this kudos, despite its brutality.

Iridis Alpha is an evolution of Sheep in Space. Battle enemies, and balance your energy levels. The dual playfields complicate things, requiring you to switch between them to keep things balanced between the two Gilbys. Gilby itself makes for an interesting character, if only for its ability to transform between air and land modes, providing differing weapons (and tactics) in each.

Like any Minter game, there are its fair share of odd enemies, strobing colours, and fast, challenging zapping action, and surreal music on the title screen. It's certainly tricky to get your head around at first, but when you do... you're in for one heck of a ride!

Finally: Screw those Licker Ships.



Alex Boz

Damn it, why do shmups have to be so damn tough! Don't get me wrong, I love playing them, but some have brutal difficulty which can sometimes stop me from going back to them unless some clever peep whacks in a trainer, then it's a different story. I am digressing.

Rightio, I am back on track. Mr Minter's Iridis Alpha falls in the category of "Oh my god, this is brill and oh my god, this is bloody hard!". The game sucks you in immediately with its gorgeously slick graphics and equally fantastic aural pleasures. This horizontal shmup is darn quick, a bit too quick for my dull reflexes, but you do get the hang of it, which makes it rewarding and heaps of bloody fun (even if you lose all of your lives and start again)!

The C64 is blessed with a heap of great shmups and the Yak's Iridis Alpha is lodged at the pinnacle of this list!

Paul Morrison

Man, this is a hard game. Kind of like an updated Sheep In Space, it's way faster and way harder than that early Minter classic. The speed of the thing is incredible... I don't think there's another shmup on the 8-bits that propels you into danger at such velocity. That can make it extremely daunting to even the most experienced blaster, but a bit of practice will soon open things up...

It's those aforementioned Licker Ships that put you off more than anything. They're unbelievably savage enemies to encounter so early in the game. Once you work them out, though, you start to get into the meat of the game, and that's when you realise there's a lot of depth to this blaster.

A special word for the amazing sound effects... the laser screams and explosive thumps add an enormous amount to an exhilarating blasting experience. Iridis Alpha is trademark Minter, with bells on.



Anthony Stiller

I promise I won't mention the Licker Ships.

Iridis Alpha is the pinnacle of Minter. Not that it is my favourite Yak game (it's close), but that it is a psychedelic Chimera, a true Minter beast. And no mere blaster, this. There are several resource management components to always be aware of. Coupling these with the split-screen means that your mind is going in at least twenty-seven different directions at once until you hit the sanctum sanctorum of "the zone" where everything flows and you can see how flowers taste.

There's a chaotic, almost hypnotic, underlying pulse to Iridis Alpha that always draws me back to it. Maybe it's the deep thumps as enemies are killed or the stunning scrolling or the moments where you scream, "It's so beautiful and what am I doing!?"

A truly iconic, wonderful, and highly playable game that most will not enjoy. And maybe that's ok.

Mat Allen

While being a Minter fan in general, I originally picked this out of a bargain bucket at a computer show in 1987 for the princely sum of one pound, along with Monty on the Run and Paradroid... what a trio of purchases they were.

There are plenty of words that can be used to describe Iridis Alpha. Fast, noisy, manic, psychedelic, joystick-breaking. Okay, so that's two technically. Not as many words that will be uttered when you discover the crazy bastard licker ships as early as wave three in the game!

Jeff has often affectionately been referred to by the C word, and no more so was it appropriate than here for one of the craziest difficulty spikes in videogame history.

Once you get past that, well... survive, it's an incredible blaster, full of strategy, variety and longevity, one of the best for the C64. Thankfully I also purchased v1.1 which means I never saw the crash bug either...



Cameron Davis

As a kid my friends always talked about Doctor Who. They'd rabbit on about the Time Lord's adventures and it sounded great. (Aliens! Time travel! Space battles! Killer robots!) but when I checked it out...I felt cold.

Iridis Alpha is the Doctor Who of Commodore 64 games.

Like Who, Alpha has ingredients that I should be crazy about. Minter! Flashy colours! Shooting things! Weirdness! But it's just too out there to figure out. The split screen is distracting, and makes the play area cramped. Call me the most simple-minded person since the lead singer of Simple Minds, but shmups requiring an instruction manual aren't my kind of shmup.

I appreciate Minter wanting to push the boundaries of a shmup and I reckon you should try it but, like being in a conversation about Doctor Who, to this day I just nod and smile politely whenever someone mentions it.

Maybe if Iridis Alpha had Karen Gillen in it, though?

Conclusions:

Iridis Alpha is certainly a divisive game - and whilst that's certainly not unique amongst Jeff's work - the extent to how polarising it is amongst the team. But it's worth trying it out, for whilst it may bend you brain, it also provides a unique experience amongst blasters on the C64!

The Yak Speaks:

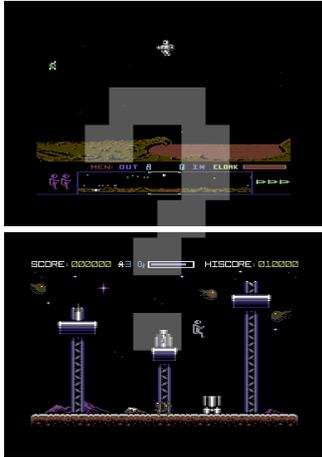
As it so happened, a rather enthused discussion between some individuals on Twitter ended up with Jeff himself offering a brief reflection about one particular aspect of the game - "To be fair I was a smeghead putting licker ships on level 3. I had much to learn about how properly to profile a difficulty curve."

SHARP SHOOTERS QUIZ

SHOT TO PIECES

Anagrams of 10 great shooters, old and new, how many can you find?

- » Metal Ray
- » Nicer Body
- » Lean Madras
- » Porn Doze
- » Nice Gala
- » Mrs Hotcakes
- » Car Retreats
- » Daft Sniper
- » I Rip Dahlias
- » Golfer Itch



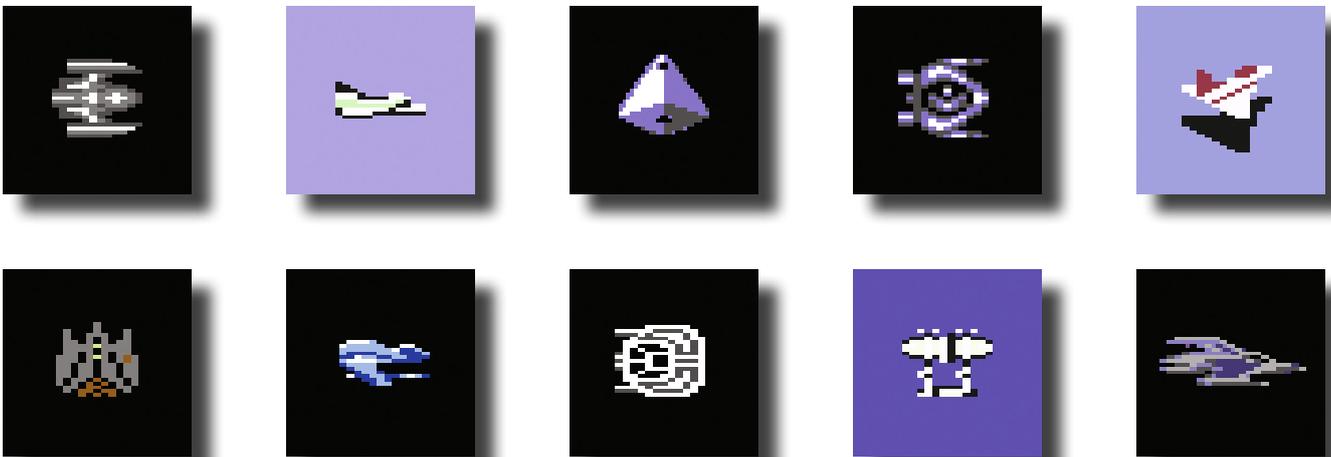
ONE SHOT

Take the first letter of each answer below to unlock the name of this mystery shoot-em-up.

- » Sensible Software's colourful horizontal shooter.
- » Shooting / racing game from Uridium creator.
- » Original name of Sanxion.
- » The player was 'Far From Home - Far From...' in this Thalamus release by Martin Walker.
- » Underground shooting / flying game featuring 'Elite' pilot Stringfellow Hawke.
- » Publishers of Crazy Comets later released this average shooter with outstanding Rob Hubbard soundtrack.
- » Galencia sequel, currently in production.

SHIP SHAPE

Name the classic shoot-em-up from the ships below. Happy blasting!



- » Delta
- » Sanxion
- » Mega Apocalypse
- » IO
- » Zaxxon
- » Galax-I-Birds
- » Zynaps
- » Uridium
- » 1942
- » Katakis

SHIP SHAPE

» Sensible Software's colourful horizontal shooter **WIZBALL**

» Shooting / racing game from Uridium creator **ALLEYKAT**

» Original name of Sanxion **RAINBOW WARRIOR**

» The player was 'Far From Home - Far From...' in this Thalamus release by Martin Walker **HUNTER'S MOON**

» Underground shooting / flying game featuring 'Elite' pilot Stringfellow Hawke **AIRWOLF**

» Publishers of Crazy Comets later released this average shooter with outstanding Rob Hubbard soundtrack **W.A.R.**

» Galencia sequel, currently in production **KAOS SPHERE**

MYSTERY SHOOTER = **WARHAWK**

ONE SHOT

- » Metal Ray (Armalyte)
- » Nicer Body (Cyberoid)
- » Lean Madras (Salamander)
- » Porn Doze (Dropzone)
- » Nice Gala (Galencia)
- » Mrs Hotcakes (Rocket Smash)
- » Car Retreats (Terra Cresta)
- » Daft Sniper (Pastfinder)
- » I Rip Dahlias (Iridis Alpha)
- » Golfer Itch (Lightforce)

SHOT TO PIECES



The horizontally scrolling space shooter is a well-loved and generously represented genre on the C64, but for me, I was never more impressed than when I saw the shmup levels of Turrigan 2. The layered parallax scrolling, variable scrolling speeds, incredible colourful graphics, as well as the detailed enemies and bosses were as good as it ever got on the world's best selling 8-bit. I always imagined and wondered why a full game was never made in the style of those levels. One game came close; Enforcer, written by Trenz himself. It was fantastic, however, it never really captured the look and feel of those Turrigan II levels perfectly.

Cue Metal Dust, which was released in 2005, but its (it would be fair to say, difficult) development actually began a decade earlier. During the long development cycle, the game was occasionally previewed in magazines and on the net, teasing and tantalising C64 gamers with the ever growing feature list of a game most would never be able to play. The SuperCPU was a niche product, on a niche machine, and was already extremely hard to come by at a price even close to reasonable. The only hope that most would ever have to actually play the game was emulation, and for a long time even that appeared unlikely to ever happen.

Without warning, in 2016, a breakthrough! Somehow, the team at VICE decided to release a SuperCPU compatible build of the emulator. Suddenly, Metal Dust could be bought and enjoyed by anyone with a PC capable of running VICE, and within minutes, I had purchased the digital download of the game and was off blasting away at a glorious 20Mhz.

Never mind the silly plot, just look at some of these features:

- One or two player options as well as three difficulty levels.
- Four MASSIVE levels with a combination of mid-level and end-level bosses.
- A multitude of graphical effects, including multi-speed parallax scrolling and thousands of animated enemies.
- Full digitised soundtrack by the band Welle:Erdball (with simultaneous digitised sound effects).
- Upgradable primary and secondary weapon systems.

If that feature list looks impressive (and it's far from complete), wait until you play the game!

Metal Dust was previously available in a physical Collector's Edition from Protovision, but is now only available as a digital download from the Protovision itch.io page, perfect for emulator use.

metal dust

System Requirements (Physical version)

- Commodore 64 with Heavy Duty Power Supply (or a Commodore 128)
- 3.5" floppy drive (FD-2000, FD-4000 or 1581)
- CMD SuperCPU 20 MHz Accelerator with SuperRAM Card (at least 4 MB)

Even though Metal Dust requires the SuperCPU accelerator, all of the individual elements are unmistakably C64. The SuperCPU allows enough grunt for the programmers to have seamlessly stitched everything together in an actual game and have all of the elements working together. The parallax backdrops, massive levels, extended animations, and the pumping digi-soundtrack all combine together to create a game that, to the untrained eye, appears like it belongs on the C64, but wouldn't ever be possible on stock hardware. Knights of Bytes are obviously huge Manfred Trenz fans (and why wouldn't they be), with the game feeling like a natural progression of Turrigan 2 and Enforcer.

As a game, Metal Dust is amazingly playable and compulsive. The levels are extremely tough, and the standard shmup power-up system on offer works well. That meteor fly through in the first level and hearing the digitised soundtrack are both amazing wow moments when first played, and set the tone for the entire game. It actually feels and plays like you're playing a modern Euro shooter.

Metal Dust is absolutely superb, with the quality of programming, graphics and sound being equalled by the wonderful gameplay and design. It's the C64's best horizontal shooter on an unfair playing field, and an amazing achievement by the development team!

KEVIN



Developer

Knights of Bytes

Publisher

Protovision

Format

Disk (discontinued) & Digital Download

Game credits

Coder

Chester Kollschen

Graphics

Stefan Gutsch

Music & SFX

Welle:Erdball (digital soundtrack) & Lars Hutzelmann (title and end-sequence SIDs)

Running Metal Dust on Windows VICE: SCPU64 (other formats may vary slightly).

Running Metal Dust on the VICE SCPU emulator is simple enough and is also a fantastic way to experience the game.

We're going to assume you have at least a basic knowledge of how to use the VICE emulator and Commodore 64 loading commands. We also highly recommend you install the JiffyDOS ROMs, and of course, you will need to purchase the Metal Dust digital download.

Download required files:

JiffyDOS (optional but highly recommended): <http://www.go4retro.com/products/jiffydos/>

Metal Dust digital download: <https://protovision.itch.io/>

VICE emulator: <http://vice-emu.sourceforge.net/>

Open up VICE: SCPU64 emulator.

Ensure Drive Settings are set to true drive emulation and drive type is set to 1581 (the provided disks are 1581 images).

Install JiffyDOS ROMs (optional).

If you have purchased the JiffyDOS ROMs, copy them into your VICE folder for safe keeping (wherever that may be). In the ROM Settings/Drive menu, select the 1581.bin JiffyDOS ROM for the 1581 drive.

Load the game.

Mount Metal Dust disk 1 and load the first file (LOAD"***",8,1). When you get to the disk loader menu, press '8' for 1581, and then select the appropriate loader type. Obviously, JiffyDOS only works if you have the ROM installed and is the recommended loader. Kernal will be the slowest.

Shoot alien scum! Choose appropriate options and skill level, then start, die, repeat!



SuperCPU

The SuperCPU is an accelerator for the Commodore 64 (and a separate model for the Commodore 128) that was developed and sold by American based hardware manufacturer, CMD. It features a 65816 processor (an enhanced version of the 6510) and can use up to 16mb RAM via an optional RAM Card. More information and other useful links can be found at the SuperCPU C64 Wiki (<https://www.c64-wiki.com/wiki/SuperCPU>).



I've always felt Metal Dust to be an untouchable milestone - being the first (if not the only) C64 release to require the SuperCPU has always meant it was something just that bit more special than your regular release.

The presentation is outstanding, offering detailed loading screens and throwing plenty of digitised audio about. That also extends in-game, with sampled sound effects being added and giving the feel of newer hardware.

There are some great touches - like the water which pushes you down or up from what you're moving through. More importantly is the power up system, which involves you collecting weapons direct from the pods, over repeatedly blasting them to find the right one.

I found myself on a few occasions running into obstacles which on first impression looked like they were part of the background. Though, like any shmup, this will be something you learn to navigate through with repeated play.

Metal Dust is absolutely worth checking out, even if just to see how far a C64 can be pushed.
ROB



Publisher

Psytronik

Format

Disk, Tape, Digital Download

- Game credits -

Coding

Achim Volkers

Graphics, design & packaging

Trevor 'Smila' Storey

Music

Saul Cross

When he's not donning his Game Master's robes and rolling dice, Ant loves diving into CRPGs, killing monsters and taking their stuff. This time, he takes Merman with him for the ride of his life. It's time to once again save the realm with nothing but your sword, map, and repeated pressing of the Fire Button!



Argus is gorgeous. Movement is fast and the interface, for the most part, is solid. The enemies, though sparsely animated, are imposing and look great.

I love maps but Argus is just so twisty-turny and same-looking that I needed two maps: the (very helpful) automapper, and an image of the map (provided with the game).

Dungeon crawl RPGs are all about wonderful, stabby combat. Argus has an array of similar weapons and unfortunately combat quickly devolves to a battle of attrition, quaffing potions and stabbing fire buttons. This repetitiveness echoes throughout. The single, pleasant tune wears thin. The expansive play area only highlights the lack of variety in monsters. There are minimal puzzle elements to help break up the pacing.

Argus is a competent game, a good experiment, and a wonderful tease at what could be. I have complete admiration for the Argus team and, while Argus wasn't the Eye of the Beholder I was hoping for, it has given me hope that someday we could truly be embarking on some amazing adventures.

Thorán's Journal: Rescue the Starchild, they said. It'll be a right laugh, they said. Now I'm stuck here in this twisted forest, naught but a broken sword and a fried chicken leg in hand. Wait, I hear something ...

There really is nothing quite like a good RPG on the ol' C64. Getting lost in another world, the crunchiness of statistics, fate hinged on the rolling of virtual dice, ... stabbing things.

Argus is a bold attempt to bring classics like Eye of the Beholder or Dungeon Hack to our favourite computer. Even as the opening sequence begins to roll you know that you're in for something special.

Thorán's Journal: Oh, that's right! That nutty sage gave me a map. Bigger this walking around in circles for a lark. Now, let's just unroll it and ... bloody 'ell! IT'S HUGE!

You travel through the world of Grayfell in the first-person, moving in discrete steps as you explore your surrounds and battle foul beasts. A deft push back on the joystick opens your inventory and here you can equip a weapon, consume a potion or food (even in mid-combat!), or select an appropriate key if you're facing an object (pro-tip: skulls and coins are also keys!).

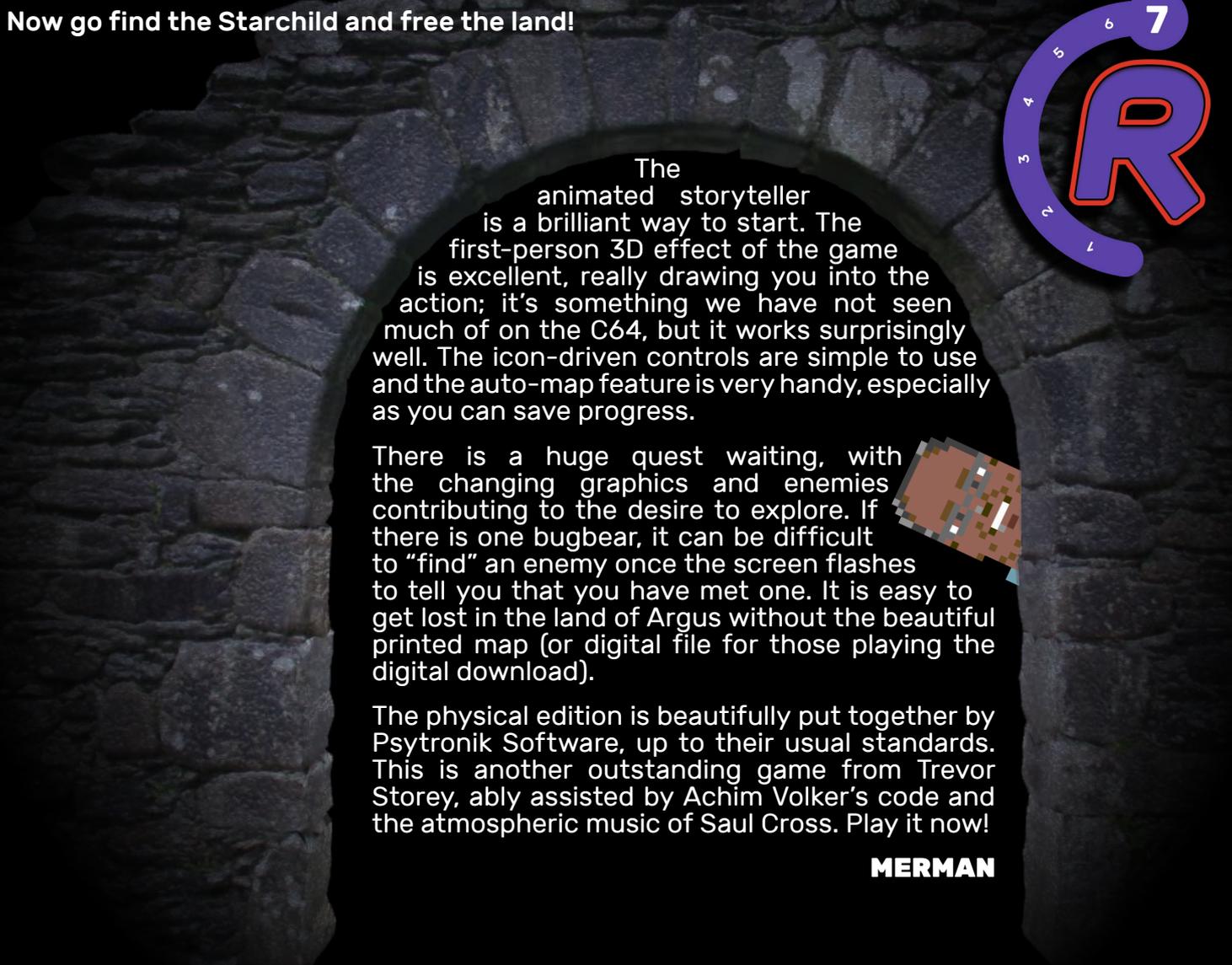
As you explore you will find keys, doors, and chests (the chests can be unlocked to reveal new weapons and more keys!)

Thorán's Journal: Arrgh! That last blighter sure packed a wallop! Lucky I found this amazing ... errr ... wand-thing in that chest earlier.

Enemies appear frequently and once you're facing one of the beautifully drawn monsters the fire button unleashes your equipped weapon. Monsters attack at different speeds and, if things are going awry, you can flee or rummage through your backpack for healing. Monsters sometimes drop food and potions and any adventurer worth their salt knows to snarf anything and everything dropped by any monster ever.

Thorán's Journal: Deep in a dark temple. Danger around every corner. Must stay alert. Oh, look! A majestic, lion-creature! I wonder if it will be friends with me?

Now go find the Starchild and free the land!



The animated storyteller is a brilliant way to start. The first-person 3D effect of the game is excellent, really drawing you into the action; it's something we have not seen much of on the C64, but it works surprisingly well. The icon-driven controls are simple to use and the auto-map feature is very handy, especially as you can save progress.

There is a huge quest waiting, with the changing graphics and enemies contributing to the desire to explore. If there is one bugbear, it can be difficult to "find" an enemy once the screen flashes to tell you that you have met one. It is easy to get lost in the land of Argus without the beautiful printed map (or digital file for those playing the digital download).

The physical edition is beautifully put together by Psytronik Software, up to their usual standards. This is another outstanding game from Trevor Storey, ably assisted by Achim Volker's code and the atmospheric music of Saul Cross. Play it now!

MERMAN



JON HARE

Galax-i-Birds
Parallax
Wizball
Shoot 'em Up Construction Kit
Oh No!
Insects in Space

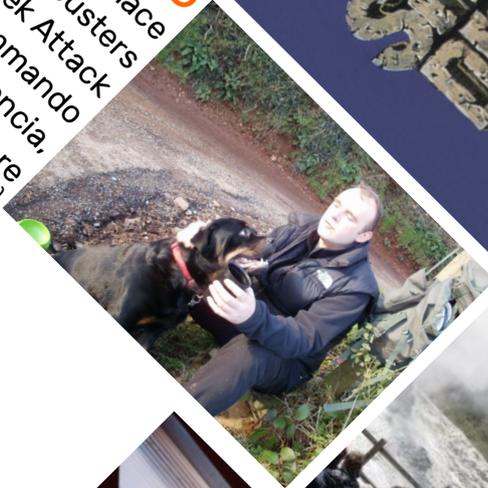


PART 1

by **PAUL MORRISON**

JAY ALDRED

The Real Ghostbusters
Suburban Commando
Galencia : Khaos Sphere
(in development)



SIMON PICK

Nemesis
Slimey's Mine
NARC
Revolution



PETE BARON

Salamander
Myth: History in the Making
(if you can make it to that bit!)



ANDREW BRAYBROOK

3D Lunattack
Paradroid
Uridium
Alleykat
Morpheus

Shoot 'em ups are loved by almost everyone who plays games. Certainly, most of us who were playing games in the 1980s couldn't get enough of them and, fortunately, our appetites were kept in check by an almost-constant stream of releases, be they in the arcades on our consoles or computer systems of choice.

Many of the mechanics of the shoot 'em up have evolved over the years, as greater technology and better hardware has given programmers the power to incorporate ideas from their wildest dreams. You could argue that Commodore 64 programmers did that with the tools they had available, but were they able to fully realise their visions? What could they have produced if they had the same power at their fingertips as today's programmers? Or were they perfectly happy with their lot at the time? How did they even get started with shmups in the first place?

I sat down (virtually) to discuss such matters with some of the biggest guns in the Commodore 64 shoot 'em up scene, and they shared their thoughts on the genre. Who exactly turned up for this chinwag, though, and what makes them qualified to comment on such matters? Here's who climbed into the chat cockpit, and the shoot 'em ups, or games with shoot 'em up elements, that they've written or worked on for the Commodore 64:

Paul Morrison: Reset writer, question master, genial host

Jay Aldred: Menace, The Real Ghostbusters, Dalek Attack, Suburban Commando, Galencia, Galencia: Khaos Sphere (in development)

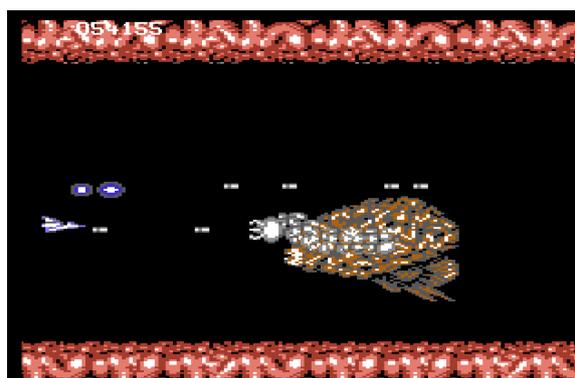
Pete Baron: Salamander, Myth: History in the Making (if you can make it to that bit!)

Andrew Braybrook: 3D Lunattack, Paradroid, Uridium, Alleykat, Morpheus

Jon Hare: Galax-i-Birds, Parallax, Wizball, Shoot 'em Up Construction Kit, Oh No!, Insects in Space

Simon Pick: Nemesis, Slimey's Mine, Revolution, NARC

PAUL: Welcome, everyone, to Reset 64's Shoot 'em Up Discussion Kit! Thanks for taking part. Over the course of this chat I'll be asking you some questions that I hope are interesting, fun and occasionally that you've never been asked before! Before we get there, though, I'll start you all off with an easy one: what was the first shoot 'em up or shooting game you can remember playing? Mine was an old mechanical Sega arcade game called Dive



Bomber, where you controlled a plane on a wire, strafing tanks. It really grabbed my attention, far more than the likes of slot machines, and I think from then it was inevitable that I would be hooked on video games.

PETE: For me the first one was also a mechanical game with a periscope – after a quick search the one that looks most like my memory is “Sea Devil”^{*1}. I had very limited pocket-money at the time so I think I only got one or two goes on it – but I loved that someone was building these elaborate machines for entertainment.

JAY: My earliest memories are of a Sea Wolf cabinet (Midway, 1976). This was a very immersive experience with the double handled periscope, compressed sound style and lovely artwork depicting the mysterious depths of the ocean on the kick panel. I was very young, and short, when I encountered this cabinet and had to use the arcade provided step to reach the periscope!

PAUL: They weren’t daft, those arcade owners.



I remember thinking I was pretty good because I was near the top of the high score list. I hadn’t figured out yet that they must have reset it every morning.

-JON

They’d do anything if it would help them to rake in some extra cash! It’s funny how those early games were all rooted firmly on planet Earth though, isn’t it? It was all planes and tanks and submarines and cowboys until the aliens came along.

ANDREW: We used to play a two-player vector game called Space Wars^{*2}. The cabinet used to rattle and rumble with sound and it seemed like it might have been old as it was a monochrome game. One of the space ships looks rather like the Enterprise, the other from Asteroids. In fact it was a 1977 game, so pre-dates and inspired Asteroids. The game even pre-dates Space Invaders, though from a programming point of view it is more sophisticated as it is modelling some gravity physics.

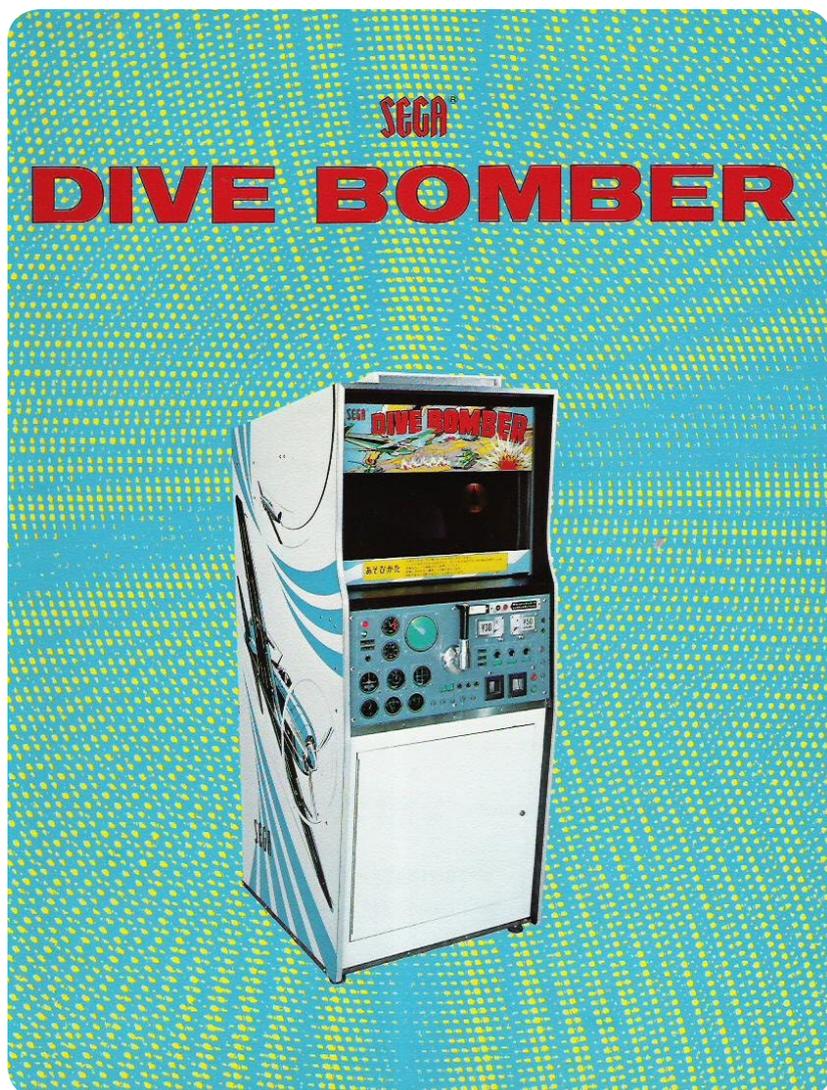
PAUL: I never saw that one, but Asteroids was one of my first arcade games. We had a very enterprising chip shop nearby that stocked its back room with a number of arcade games: Galaxian, Astro Fighter, Asteroids, Space Invaders, Moon Cresta and a couple of other early games now lost to me... I think Galaxian made the most impact, though.

JAY: I love how there is a specific demographic that has this link between arcade games and fish & chips. It never fails to raise a smile when I hear it!

JON: I remember playing Asteroids in an arcade in Southend on a day out with my mother sometime in the late

^{*1} <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpRUKVBIpOE>

^{*2} https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=space+wars+arcade



70s. I remember thinking I was pretty good because I was near the top of the high score list. I hadn't figured out yet that they must have reset it every morning.

PAUL: Haha yeah, that was always a disappointment. Thank heavens for games that saved high scores... or arcade owners who left all the games on overnight!

SIMON: I played Space Invaders a lot, but it was Defender that really excited me. It was the first scrolling I'd ever seen. Was it the first scrolling arcade game?

PAUL: It was definitely one of the first. I'm not sure if anyone knows definitively but there can't have been many before Defender. I always loved the look of it but it was far too difficult and overwhelming for my under-developed shmup skills! Still, Eugene Jarvis is a genius.

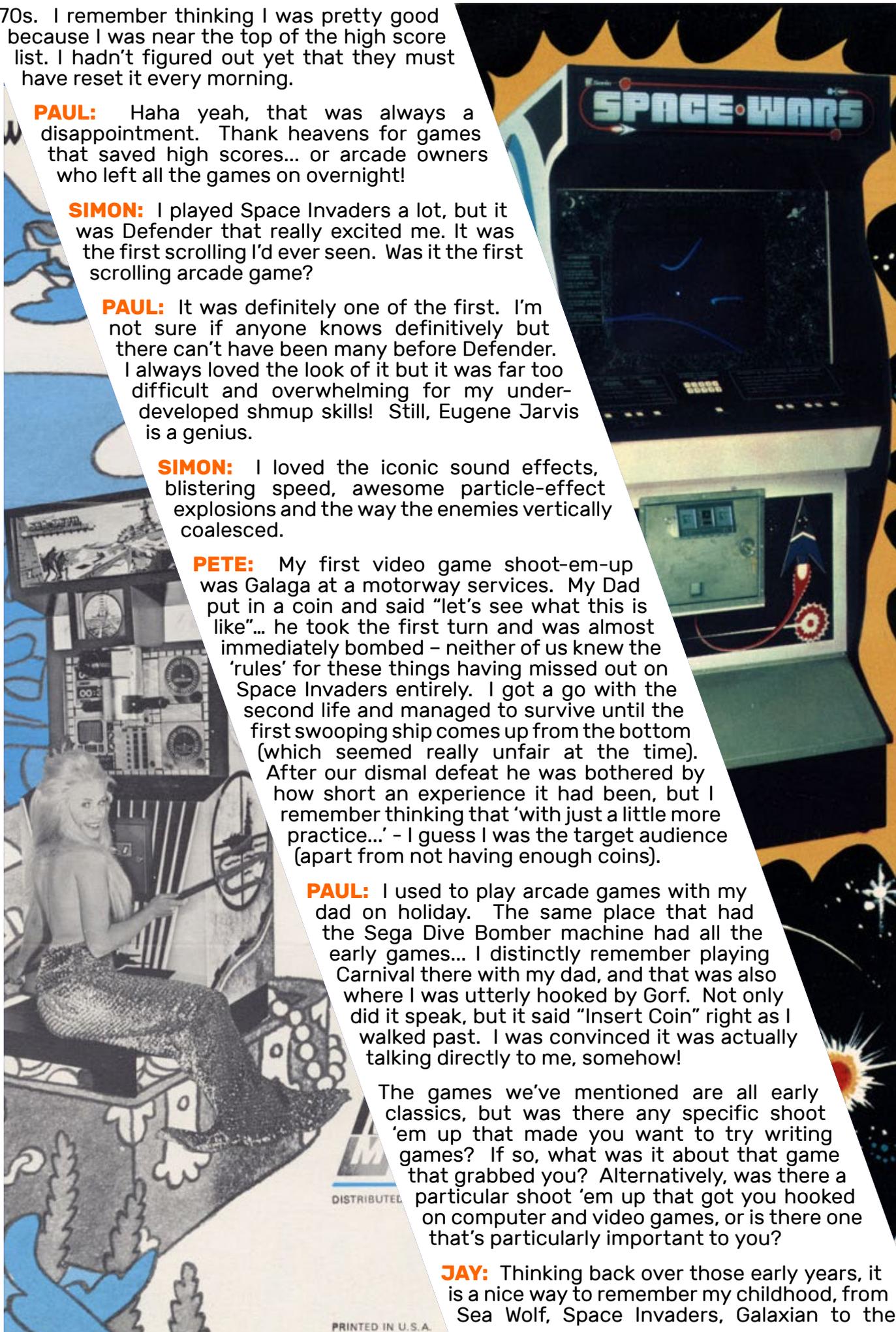
SIMON: I loved the iconic sound effects, blistering speed, awesome particle-effect explosions and the way the enemies vertically coalesced.

PETE: My first video game shoot-em-up was Galaga at a motorway services. My Dad put in a coin and said "let's see what this is like"... he took the first turn and was almost immediately bombed - neither of us knew the 'rules' for these things having missed out on Space Invaders entirely. I got a go with the second life and managed to survive until the first swooping ship comes up from the bottom (which seemed really unfair at the time). After our dismal defeat he was bothered by how short an experience it had been, but I remember thinking that 'with just a little more practice...' - I guess I was the target audience (apart from not having enough coins).

PAUL: I used to play arcade games with my dad on holiday. The same place that had the Sega Dive Bomber machine had all the early games... I distinctly remember playing Carnival there with my dad, and that was also where I was utterly hooked by Gorf. Not only did it speak, but it said "Insert Coin" right as I walked past. I was convinced it was actually talking directly to me, somehow!

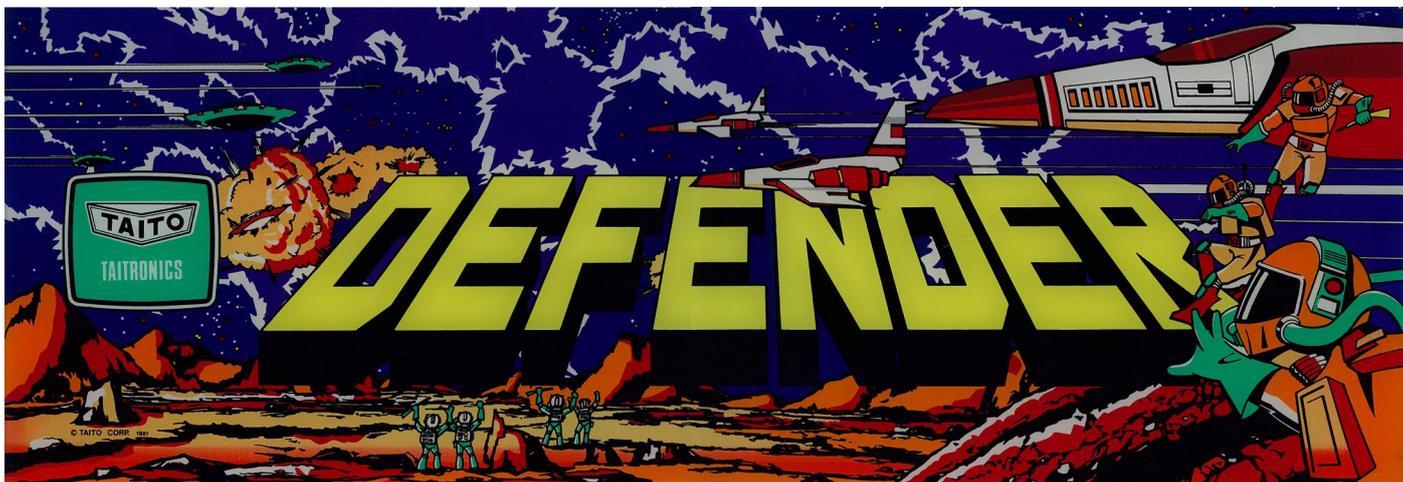
The games we've mentioned are all early classics, but was there any specific shoot 'em up that made you want to try writing games? If so, what was it about that game that grabbed you? Alternatively, was there a particular shoot 'em up that got you hooked on computer and video games, or is there one that's particularly important to you?

JAY: Thinking back over those early years, it is a nice way to remember my childhood, from Sea Wolf, Space Invaders, Galaxian to the



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mighty Galaga! Galaga was the game changer for me, the other games seemed to become predictable after a while and harked back to the earlier electro-mechanical games for me. Sure they provided excitement and novelty, but nothing had come close to the organic feel of the circling, swooping patterns of Galaga. The challenging stages, dual fighter ability, military rank – all these elements had me hooked... for years! If I had to pick an influential shmup, this is the one for me.

ANDREW: I was working in a mainframe environment which had no real concept of real-time responses, let alone graphics. All of the games on there used text to express the graphics, and the games patiently waited while you entered your moves. I wrote some games that worked on the same principles.

Scramble was the first scrolling game we saw, which suddenly made the game world bigger than the screen. This really got us interested. The graphics were still quite simplistic using yellow, red, blue and black. I didn't really think about how it was coded at the time as I had no way of doing graphics.

It was only when we got our hands on the technology to display a screen and not wait for input that we had the ability to run a real time display. One of my colleagues had written

a Space Invaders game that waited for the player's move. I wrote another version that didn't need to wait. We had our first real-time game.

SIMON: I was fortunate enough to write the C64 version of Nemesis; it moved me from the world of budget software into arcade conversions – so Nemesis has a place in my heart. Power-ups were a new thing at the time (Both R-Type and Super Mario Bros were around and also had power ups). It was great to see the invention of a new game-play element that has become so ubiquitous these days.

JON: Well I have to say that Wizball was very heavily influenced by Nemesis, Salamander and Archer Maclean's Dropzone, which was of course a great Defender clone.

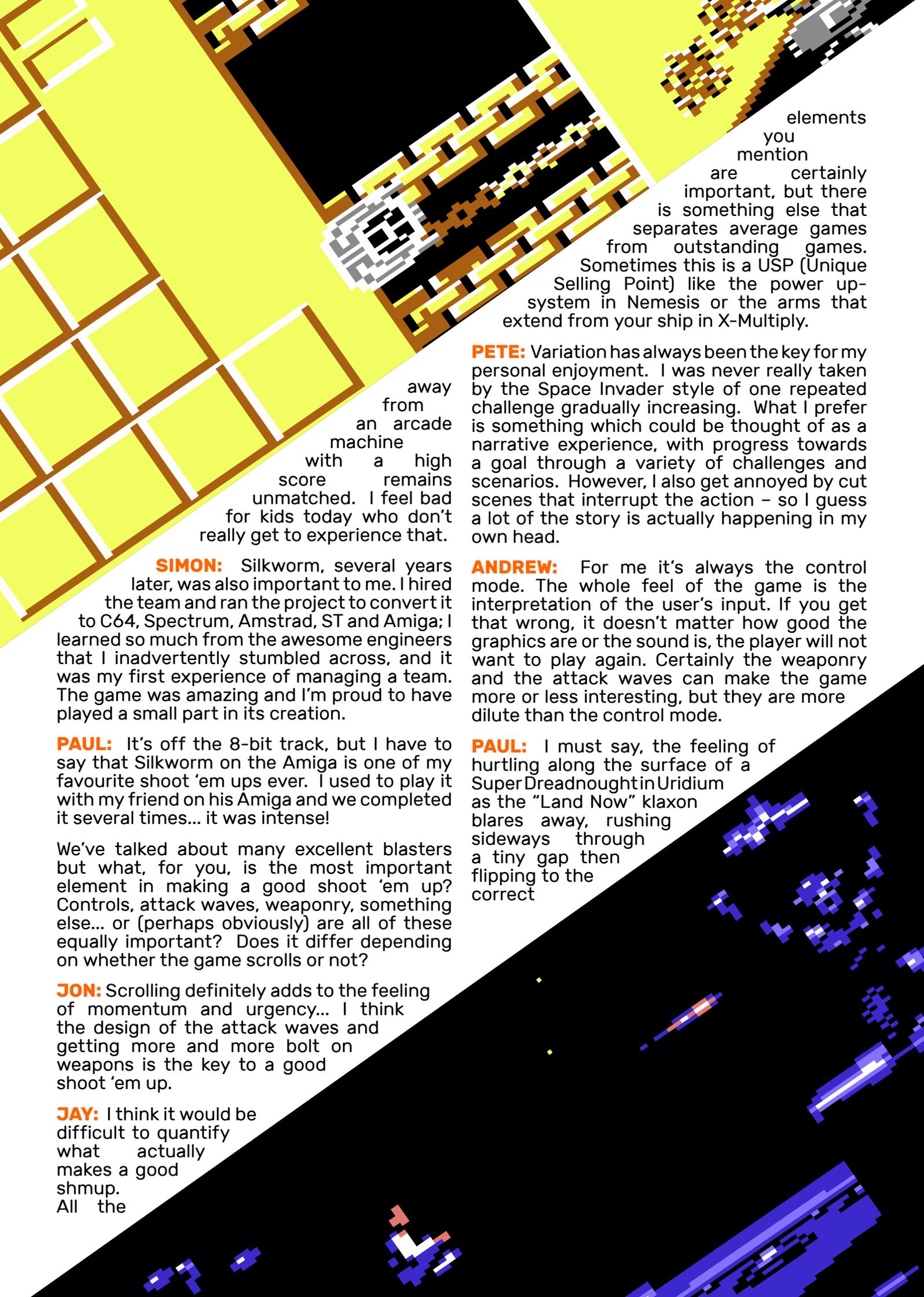
PETE: Moon Patrol was probably one of the big ones for me. I ducked out of a class at school to grab lunch early with a friend and we went into the local arcade where they had this as a table-top machine. He didn't believe I'd never played it before because I got onto the high-score table on my first game... something about the rhythm of that game just suited me and it was my first really positive experience with an arcade game where I felt like I'd had my money's worth and then some.

PAUL: That feeling you get when you walk

“ That feeling you get when you walk away from an arcade machine with a high score remains unmatched.

-PAUL





elements you mention are certainly important, but there is something else that separates average games from outstanding games. Sometimes this is a USP (Unique Selling Point) like the power up-system in Nemesis or the arms that extend from your ship in X-Multiply.

away from an arcade machine with a high score remains unmatched. I feel bad for kids today who don't really get to experience that.

PETE: Variation has always been the key for my personal enjoyment. I was never really taken by the Space Invader style of one repeated challenge gradually increasing. What I prefer is something which could be thought of as a narrative experience, with progress towards a goal through a variety of challenges and scenarios. However, I also get annoyed by cut scenes that interrupt the action – so I guess a lot of the story is actually happening in my own head.

SIMON: Silkworm, several years later, was also important to me. I hired the team and ran the project to convert it to C64, Spectrum, Amstrad, ST and Amiga; I learned so much from the awesome engineers that I inadvertently stumbled across, and it was my first experience of managing a team. The game was amazing and I'm proud to have played a small part in its creation.

ANDREW: For me it's always the control mode. The whole feel of the game is the interpretation of the user's input. If you get that wrong, it doesn't matter how good the graphics are or the sound is, the player will not want to play again. Certainly the weaponry and the attack waves can make the game more or less interesting, but they are more dilute than the control mode.

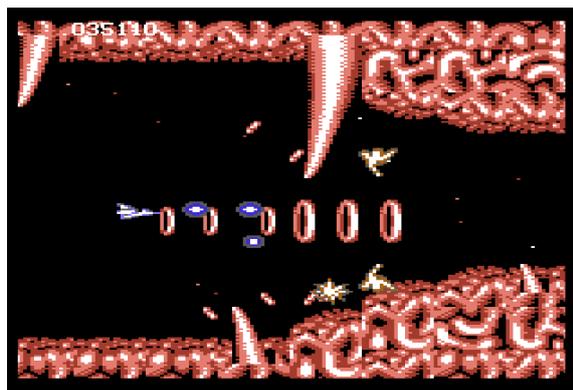
PAUL: It's off the 8-bit track, but I have to say that Silkworm on the Amiga is one of my favourite shoot 'em ups ever. I used to play it with my friend on his Amiga and we completed it several times... it was intense!

PAUL: I must say, the feeling of hurtling along the surface of a SuperDreadnought in Uridium as the "Land Now" klaxon blares away, rushing sideways through a tiny gap then flipping to the correct

We've talked about many excellent blasters but what, for you, is the most important element in making a good shoot 'em up? Controls, attack waves, weaponry, something else... or (perhaps obviously) are all of these equally important? Does it differ depending on whether the game scrolls or not?

JON: Scrolling definitely adds to the feeling of momentum and urgency... I think the design of the attack waves and getting more and more bolt on weapons is the key to a good shoot 'em up.

JAY: I think it would be difficult to quantify what actually makes a good shmup. All the



“ The power-ups really brought a whole new excitement to the genre for me, I loved to see new combinations...
-JAY

orientation and landing just as attack ships arrive to blow you away is a piece of control scheme joy.

SIMON: I love powering up and destroying a huge number of enemies at the same time. Defender had the Smart bomb which was just fantastic to use; the game would be chucking around so many pixel-explosions that it would drop to two or three frames per second. The feeling that you were stretching the hardware to its limits was great - today it would be reported as a bug, but at the time it felt like a massive achievement to “beat the machine”.

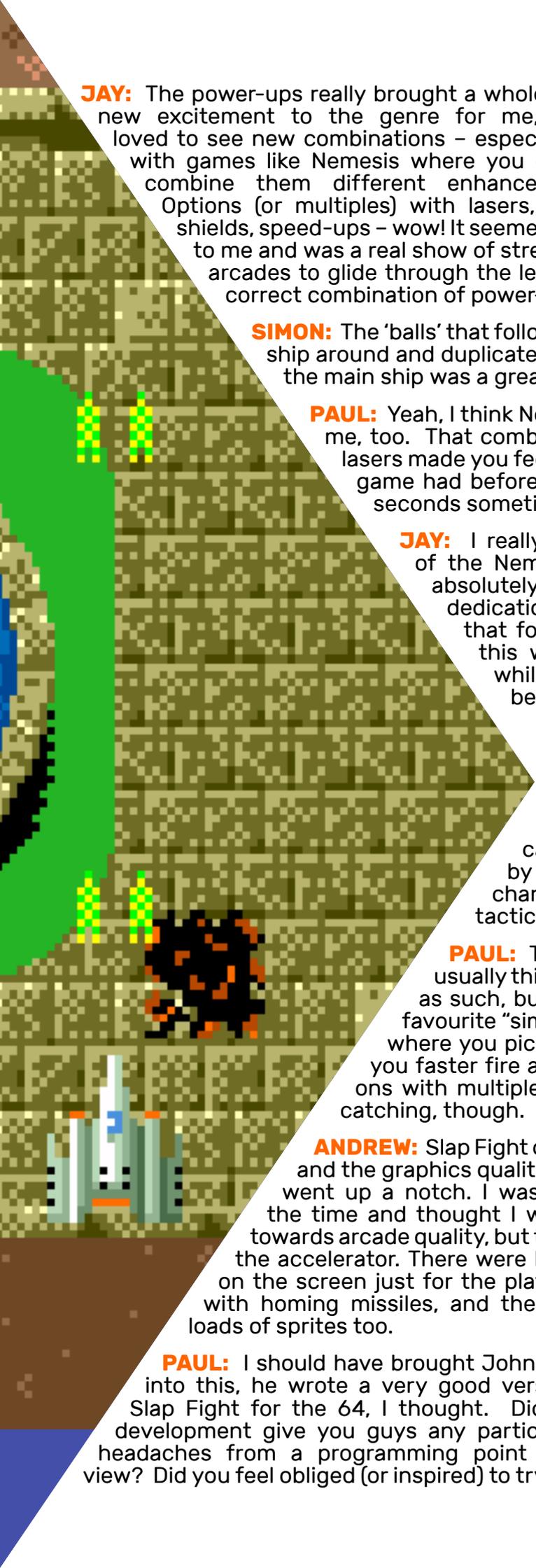
PAUL: Speak for yourself... I was always using Defender's Smart bomb out of panic and desperation; I don't think I've ever walked away from it feeling anything other than embarrassment!

JAY: In my opinion the components that make a game great are pacing and fairness; you need to get into the rhythm of the game and understand where you are in the difficulty curve and how the scoring and power-up systems work. When you die, you need to feel it was because of your own actions and not a 'cheap' death. There is nothing worse than playing a vertical scroller, spending five minutes powering up your ship, then an enemy appears from the bottom of the screen, directly behind you, wiping you out without any chance to react!

PETE: For the basic mechanics I think that good wave design is absolutely crucial. Many amateur games start off using $x = \text{Random} * \text{Width}$ or similar... it's soul-less and uninteresting. With only a small amount of work it is easy to knock together a 'wave generator' which spits out enemies in more interesting patterns, gives them a route to follow, and allows you to time the groups and gaps to maximise the experience. Space Invaders vs Galaxian, perhaps?

PAUL: Yeah, I see what you're saying there. Certainly, Galaxian grabbed me more than Space Invaders and I think those swooping attack patterns had a lot to do with that. Those two games, and in fact most early shoot 'em ups saw the player relying on nothing but their standard laser and their reactions. In the mid-80s, extra weapons pickups came to the fore in the arcades and changed shmups forever. Was there any game in particular where these additions really wowed you and made you think that this might be the way all shmups would go?

JON: Yes, Nemesis and Salamander. I wasn't too great at them but watched Chris Yates, my partner at Sensible, rack up big scores on those machines.



JAY: The power-ups really brought a whole new excitement to the genre for me, I loved to see new combinations – especially with games like Nemesis where you could combine them different enhancements. Options (or multiples) with lasers, bombs, shields, speed-ups – wow! It seemed limitless to me and was a real show of strength in the arcades to glide through the levels with the correct combination of power-ups.

SIMON: The ‘balls’ that followed the Nemesis ship around and duplicated the fire power of the main ship was a great idea.

PAUL: Yeah, I think Nemesis was the one for me, too. That combination of multiples and lasers made you feel more powerful than any game had before... even if it only lasted for seconds sometimes!

JAY: I really love to watch skilled players of the Nemesis family of games, they are absolutely unforgiving and require true dedication to master. The wave of games that followed Nemesis seemed to hint that this was the way forward and for a little while, it seemed like this foundation would be a cornerstone for all future games.

PETE: I loved the bit in Galaga where you get the second ship, the first time I saw that I was blown away. It was obvious that our previous expectation of one ship, one gun was flawed and the next question was clearly, how far can this go? The next time I was surprised by a weapon wasn't until R-Type with its charging mega blast which I loved for the tactical element it added.

PAUL: That's a good one, because we don't usually think of that as being an extra weapon as such, but it most certainly is. I think my favourite “simple” upgrade was in Star Force, where you pick up a little bolt-on that gives you faster fire and a jollier tune! Huge bolt-ons with multiple projectiles are more eye-catching, though.

ANDREW: Slap Fight came out in the arcades and the graphics quality and weapons arrays went up a notch. I was writing Uridium at the time and thought I was making a step towards arcade quality, but then they pushed the accelerator. There were loads of sprites on the screen just for the player, especially with homing missiles, and the enemy had loads of sprites too.

PAUL: I should have brought John Meegan into this, he wrote a very good version of Slap Fight for the 64, I thought. Did this development give you guys any particular headaches from a programming point of view? Did you feel obliged (or inspired) to try



Nemesis on the C64 was a pain; a fully powered up ship fired too many bullets!

-SIMON



and add extra weaponry to your next games?

JON: We were always inspired, never obliged. Other people's ideas just give you more ammunition to shape your game.

ANDREW: Extra weapons necessarily have to be showy and bold, and that usually means bigger and more sprites, and often centred around the player. This would give us technical problems on the C64. Even if you have time to run extra multiplexed sprites, you'll always have the limit that the graphics chip can only fetch data for eight sprites in a line. Writing a horizontal scroller then tends to collect more sprites at the level of the player.

SIMON: Nemesis on the C64 was a pain; a fully powered up ship fired too many bullets! I didn't know about sprite multiplexors at the time and decided to use characters for bullets. This worked fine but gave me some processor-power headaches. Being new to sideways scrollers I scrolled the screen all in one go every eight frames. This burned so much CPU power that I couldn't afford to update all the bullet locations on that frame; fortunately the sub-pixel scroll jumping from seven pixels back to zero had the nice side effect of pulling all the bullets a character to the right, so the two problems cancelled out!

PAUL: That was handy! It worked well enough for me, it certainly gave me the Nemesis fix I wanted without having to save up for a trip to the seaside. I do think that game, above all others, kicked off our lust for power!

JAY: It was certainly an essential trend for a couple of years, there had been some stunning efforts to replicate these impressive power-up systems on the C64 - Salamander is a stand out title for me. I was working on different styles of games during this period and did not have any published works with these types of systems.

PETE: The Salamander conversion was my first shmup, and as soon as I started playing the arcade game I began mentally separating the game elements into Sprites, Character Effects, Scrolling Effects etc. I didn't expect any real problems with the weapons provided the artist was able to draw the effects directly into character set. Moving a small block of characters on a C64 is extremely cheap, so bullets, missiles, lasers and ripple weapons were all very easy and made very little impact on the performance even with maximum multiples.

SIMON: On Revolution (a cover mount game) I played with the idea of earning credits that could be spent on ship upgrades between levels. This worked well and due to the weird (rotating) nature of Revolution I was able to have some unusual power ups (a tractor beam, auto-lock-on-enemies, and increased acceleration come to mind!).

PAUL: I remember our local pub once had a game called Ordyne in. I have no idea how a pub in a remote town in north-east England got hold of that. It's a strange Japanese shmup that has odd, Wonder Boy in Monster Land-style shops in the sky! It works quite well, but it's frustrating to be denied more powerful weaponry because you weren't in the right place to wipe out certain waves of enemies and earn the money to buy the best weapons. I much prefer being able to pick them up or select them at will, I think that's important when it comes to giving a player immense powers.

At this point, Reset 64's editor reminded me that our guests had been talking for ages and might need a break. Either that, or our page count for the issue was in danger. Make your mind up which one it was, then make a note to come back next issue where I'll pick up where we left off...

Psytronik Software Presents "ARGUS"

A C64 game by Trevor Storey, Achim Volkers & Saul Cross

COMMODORE
64 / 128



Actual C64 Screens

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ZZAP! BACK

RESET staff look back and reassess blasts from the past!

Everyone loves a retrospective, and one of the better features to appear in Zzap!64 magazine was the Zzap!Back section. The current reviewers of the time would look back at the significant games of a particular past issue, and reassess if the original scores held up, or should be changed with hindsight. That didn't always mean lowering the numbers; occasionally it was argued a game might have been under-rated.

Seeing as the original article back in issue #7 of Reset was so warmly received, Mat Allen and Paul Morrison return to cast a further eye over some of the better shoot 'em ups that the Commodore 64 had to offer and evaluate how they fare today.

DROPZONE

US Gold. Originally reviewed in Zzap!64 #3

Converted from the Atari original in just four weeks, Dropzone was the first and only release on the incredibly short-lived "UK Gold" publishing label, designed to highlight British programming talent. That didn't stop the reviewing team raving over

this impressive Defender clone with knobs on. Jaz insisted that you "go out NOW and buy it", Bob Wade thought "he'd be battling it for months", while Gaz decided he had to stop writing trivial comments when he had Dropzone to play!

▼ Looks like a storm's a brewin!



It took me a long, long time to like Dropzone... unsurprisingly, as I was always rubbish at Defender. Perseverance paid off though and once I got to grips with the game and its control method I became a devotee. It's a true classic.

Interesting one, this. I think I'd knock Hookability down to the high 70s, it's difficult and daunting for newcomers or Defender haters. I'd put Lastability up to 98% though, and Overall to 97%, a proper Gold Medal score for a Gold Medal game.



Let's get the elephant in the room out of the way first, yes, the Atari version is better. Having said that, it is still one of the finest games on the Commodore 64, and at its heart totally separates the men from the boys, and the Competition Pros from the Quickshot IIs. Archer Maclean certainly created one hell of a masterpiece.

Originality up a few percent, having to ferry the men back to base changes a fundamental aspect of how you play the game compared to Defender, new aliens aside. I'd probably leave most of the other marks as-is, even Sound, the game is a class act that hasn't waned with age.



PRESENTATION 85%
Excellent opening sequence and high score table.

GRAPHICS 89%
Fast, smooth scrolling, great planetscape aliens and explosions.

SOUND 61%
No music but lots of great effects throughout.

HOOKABILITY 97%
Fast blasting that's so compulsive you won't be able to leave it alone Lastability 96%

LASTABILITY 96%
The waves are still getting harder at one million points.

ORIGINALITY 53%
Based on Defender but with new aliens, new scenario.

VALUE FOR MONEY 95%
Shmup fans can't afford not to have this one.



ZZAP! BACK



HAWKEYE

Thalamus. Originally reviewed in Zzap!64 #40

This impressive run and gun platform game certainly wowed the reviewers at the time, although it was later to transpire certain pressures had been put upon the team to give it a good mark. Paul Glancey said that in buying the game "you wouldn't regret it," and Gordo enthused that the game "should not be missed." Paul Sumner, careful as always, praised the strategy required to navigate the platforms and deal with the enemies coming at you. So, in the light of day, how does it shape up now?



Bring da ruckus! ▲



I liked Hawkeye a lot. It was

incredibly polished and a lot of fun to play. Was it a Gold Medal game, though? I'm not so sure.

Most of the marks were fine by me, but I'd take Presentation, Lastability and Overall down by 4% each. It's a very good game, but probably 'only' a Sizzler.



▲ I don't know what you are, but I do know you'll be dead shortly!



I really liked Hawkeye back in the day, despite the reasonably simple gameplay. Great graphics, great sound, and a degree of micro-management for your weapons to work out whether it was better to kill, or aim for a higher

score by preserving the ammo. It's still a good game, just not Gold Medal material.

Presentation is still amazing, despite the years, Mix-e-Load mark 2 and spooling the next level data during the score summary. Likewise, Graphics and Sound. In fact, the only things I'd alter would be Lastability, down 10%, and the Overall, down 10% likewise. The revelations haven't really harmed my opinion of the game.

PRESENTATION 99%

Amazing animated Xaroxian, mix-e-load, practice mode, secret level, attractive demo/title screen sequence and much more besides! .

GRAPHICS 94%

Excellent use of colour throughout, smooth sprites and parallax backgrounds.

SOUND 91%

Some great music and appropriate spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 93%

Opening sequences lead to instantly playable platform/shoot'em up action.

LASTABILITY 94%

12 puzzle-piece levels to complete with many weird creatures to defeat.

OVERALL 96%

An addictive and beautifully presented shoot'em up of the highest calibre.scenario.



ZZAP! BACK



ARMALYTE

Thalamus. Originally reviewed in Zzap!64 #43



I played Armalyte before it was released

at the Commodore show in late 1988, and chatted to Gordo then where he couldn't stop raving about it. Not much has changed since, it's still one of the pinnacles of the shooter genre for the C64, perhaps any 8-bit format. Good controls (even having to use the keyboard), tons of action, bags of challenge and maybe mild annoyance at having your weapons wiped at the start of each level!

Good as the Graphics were, the original mark was a little overboard, so down 5%. Hookability, Lastability and Overall down a couple points each. It's quite hard during some parts of each level but the bosses are a bit of a pushover at times! Other marks as is, even Sound. The game is a class act that hasn't waned with age.



▲ Enjoying a brief moment of respite



▲ Something else to shoot - is there ever any (bas) relief....?



The Commodore 64 had a wealth of horizontal scrollers but many of them didn't play that well. I always felt that Armalyte did and I probably played it more than any other such game on the machine.

It's hard to find fault with any of the original marks. Maybe Hookability could have been bumped up to 97%. Armalyte was a stunning achievement and a great game. I think it deserved that Gold Medal.

Taking its cue from a number of popular arcade shooters of the day, coupled with some marketing magic in the form of dubbing it a sequel to Thalamus' earlier release Delta, Armalyte powered its way into the hearts and minds of many a fan with a firm Gold Medal. Maff Evans argued it "blows every other game of the type out of the water", Paul Glancey stated it was "staggeringly good", while Gordo thought it was "one of the best 64 shoot 'em ups of all time."

PRESENTATION 91%

Options include two simultaneous players, one player with remote ship, choice of super weapons, scrolling starfield on/off. Reasonable level multiload and easily-read status displays.

GRAPHICS 98%

Probably the best looking sprites and backdrops ever seen in a Commodore game of this type.

SOUND 81%

Good Martin Walker title screen/loading music and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 95%

Beautiful graphics and exhilarating blasting action suck you in.

LASTABILITY 93%

Eight lengthy levels to see and the craving for ever larger scores will keep you at it.

OVERALL 97%

A brilliant blaster whose graphics and gameplay knock others for six.



CITADEL

Electric Dreams. Originally reviewed in Zzap!64 #52



While it has tinges of Paradroid from the outside, it's a lot more thinky than shooty compared to Braybrook's classic, and as Stu theorised in his opinion piece I suspect that put some people off. Not me, I loved the combination of working out how to beat each floor, but fully accept not everyone wanted to be as patient!

Normally I'd be tweaking at least one or two marks, but I'm honestly struggling to see anything I'd alter about the original critique of the game. Yes, it's tricky to grasp initially, hence the Hookability rating, but once that falls into place there's a substantial challenge on offer.

Following a very long gestation period that included being covered in depth by a Zzap!Diary feature, Martin Walker finally unleashed Citadel into the world, a combination of puzzler and shooter in one go, and was rewarded with a Sizzler for his troubles. Robin Hogg thought the combination of genres was "first class", Phil King recommended it was a "classic not to be missed", though Stu noted "if you're prepared to persist for an hour to get the hang of it, then you're in for a real treat."

PRESENTATION 88%

Demonstration sequence, random / normal trap layout with a superb attract mode showing what's lined up.

GRAPHICS 85%

The enemy robots are so well polished they look brand new. Subtly different cities contain well-drawn pipes and corridors etc.

SOUND 93%

Each city has its own type of highly atmospheric 'hum' accompanied with above-average tunelets. The pounding title tune is brilliant too.

HOOKABILITY 78%

First attempts will be met with utter confusion but the method of play is quickly mastered and easy to use.

LASTABILITY 93%

Eight cities increasing dramatically in difficulty with the random traps to pose a REAL challenge even if you complete the game.

OVERALL 91%

It's been a long time in the making but Martin Walker's come up with the goods in fine style. An excellent cross-breed of shoot-'em-up and puzzle action.



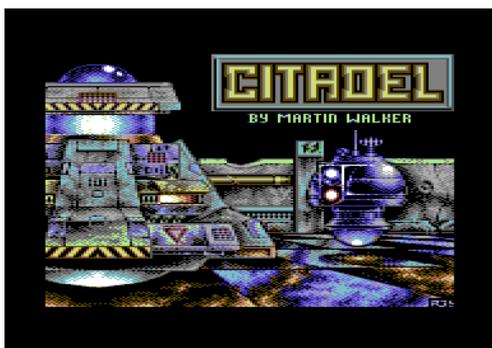
▲ Chess with guns says Paul. What next - Scrabble with knives? Monopoly with nunchuks?

▼ Cluedo with lead pipe? Oh...wait...



Martin Walker's shoot 'em ups are more cerebral than most, they're almost puzzle games with shoot 'em up elements. Citadel plays a bit like chess with weapons which gives it a feel unique among C64 shooters.

Presentation up two marks, Graphics up to 93%, Hookability up to mid-80s and Overall also up to 93%. It richly deserved its Sizzler but a higher set of marks would have been more appropriate.





ZZAP! BACK



DELTA

Thalamus. Originally reviewed in Zzap #24

Following the success of Thalamus' first release Sanxion, anyone under the opinion that the magazine would automatically lavish the sequel with similar praise due to Newsfield's involvement received a sharp wake-up call. Jaz thought you "can't get much better within the horizontally scrolling format," although Steve liked the game but warned it "may lose its appeal quite quickly due to the predictable gameplay." Gaz went full grump and concluded he "enjoyed the mini mixing deck loader more than the game itself."



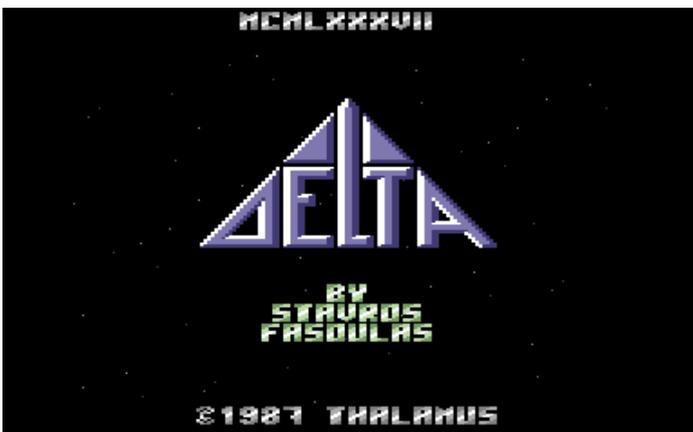
▲ The pilot was regretting agreeing to play the 'Circle Game' before blasting off.



Incredible music. Stunning graphics. Tons of enemy attack waves to destroy. All the ingredients are there for the ultimate shoot 'em up. And yet, it doesn't quite work. Unfortunately, the credits system used to "buy" extra weapons devolves the game into a memory test and if you forget what you need just once, it's almost certainly game over. Shame, it could have been the greatest.

In all fairness, I'd raise Hookability to 90%, it's very addictive, initially. I'd also increase Lastability to about 70%, but I'd leave everything else exactly as it is, including that controversial Overall rating. It's not a bad game, but that one design choice limits its appeal.

▼ A belting Rob Hubbard tune accompanies the title screen & attract mode.



Mmmm, marmite time! There are a few occasions where my opinion goes against the general grain (Microprose's Pirates is another) and Delta just didn't tickle my fancy whatsoever. Not that at its heart it isn't a well-designed, challenging shooter, that isn't in doubt. But the game is far too much a memory test, both for the attack patterns and picking the correct power-up to progress successfully. That's too much of an obstacle to overcome and ignore.

Presentation down 5%, the Mix-E-Load is still excellent and most of the in-game touches work well. Hookability up 5%, shooters don't tend to be hard to get into. And Overall down 5%, once you start playing, you soon realise it's firmly on the side of boring.



Whilst the game may have divided opinion, everyone is in agreement about how top notch the Mix-E-Load was which enabled you to pretend you fronted a dream band with Jon Bonham on drums, Martin Gore on synth and Mark King on bass all playing Ron Hubbard's amazing music whilst the game loaded. Well... kind of... Regardless - it was ace!

PRESENTATION 97%
Innovative loading system and slick in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 92%
Very effective parallax starfield, pretty sprites and landscapes, and varied alien movement patterns.

SOUND 97%
Excellent Rob Hubbard soundtrack and some good spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 79%
Beautiful graphics and exhilarating blasting action suck you in.

LASTABILITY 63%
32 levels and roughly 200 attack patterns, but very little real variety.

VALUE 72%
There are cheaper shoot 'em ups, but few as polished.

OVERALL 74%
A high quality production which lacks substance.

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FORMAT WARS



by Jari Karjalainen

Jeff Minter's games have a reputation of being dubious, mostly psychedelic and mostly repetition of either his own form or of others. There are some exceptions to all that, but because his best titles were made either solely for the C64, or for too many machines to make compact comparisons of, I decided to take a leap of faith and do a comparison of Minter's second sequel to *Gridrunner*, regardless of it having four different versions.

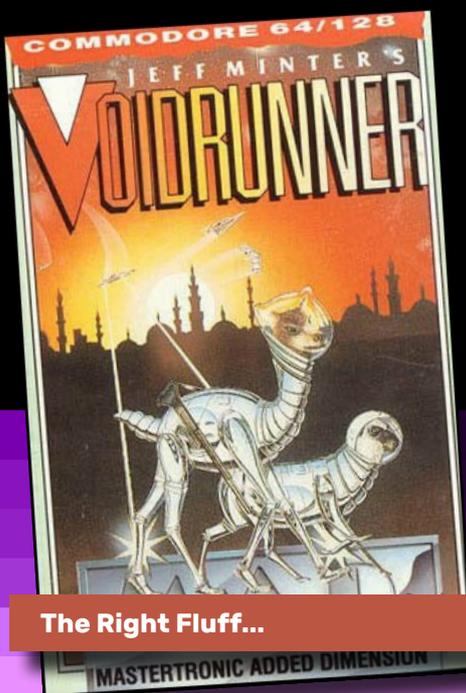
From all evident sources, it's clear that *Voidrunner* is not even nearly one of Minter's finest hours, nor the best remembered. After all, this was still practically the same old Minter stuff going on in 1987, so it's no wonder people were expecting a little bit more. The evidence of *Voidrunner*'s relative lack of exposure and, very likely, public interest, can be found in the game's current ratings at our favourite haunts: the score at *Lemon64* is 6.7 from 23 votes; the *Plus/4 World* score is 7/10 from 8 votes; the *World of Spectrum* score is 6.11 from 9 votes, and the rating at *Generation-MSX* is 3.5/5.0 from 4 votes. If *Voidrunner* was ever in need of more exposure, this is a good a time as any to do a comparison of it.

First came *Gridrunner*, a frantic grid-based single-screen shooter loosely based on *Centipede*. This was followed by *Matrix*, which merely enhanced the experience. Both of these Minter classics were made in the very early 1980's, so I can imagine the gaming press' surprise, when another Minter game bearing a similar title to the two classic shooters was announced in 1987. While

it has been called a sequel to the other two games, it doesn't appear to have much of similarities to the two *Gridrunner* games apart from the

name... and the fact that it's a single-screen shooter with a good amount of clear Minteresque psychedelia and evidence of his obsession with farm animals.

The reasons why *Voidrunner* is so badly remembered these days are obvious: despite its changes into the old form, it was still a helplessly old-form game; the game being published through one of Mastertronic's budget labels instead of Llamasoft; and it was one of the last games Minter ever did for the 8-bits along with *Revenge of the Mutant Camels*. Clearly, after he did *Iridis Alpha* for Hewson in 1986, there was no way but down. But for fans of Minter-psychedelia and this type of shooting, *Voidrunner* is a nice, cleanish arcade game, which would have been a masterpiece in 1984. Give it a try, but don't expect anything groundbreaking.



The Right Fluff...

Voidrunner

LOADING

One rather curious thing about Voidrunner is its decided lack of any loading graphics - after all, there's a certain nothingness in the name, too. Apart from the SPECTRUM and MSX versions showing an obvious "Voidrunner is loading" text in the middle of the screen, you don't get much more than that. The PLUS/4 version takes the idea even further, and once the main bit of the Novaload scheme has been dealt with, the loader erases the Novaload text bits for the remaining duration. In a way, it's a bit disturbing, but it's Minter - what did you expect.

C64: 1 minute 39 seconds

C16/+4: 2 minutes 46 seconds

MSX: 2 minutes 9 seconds

SPE: 1 minute 51 seconds

Curiously, the two Commodore versions represent the opposite ends in loading times, but it's still obvious from all versions that this game was created for a quick blast, taking the idea all the way to minimizing the loading time as much as possible. Have to give Minter credit for that at the very least.

Commodore 64 loading screen





C64



MSX



C16/+4



SPECCY

GRAPHICS

Like most other Jeff Minter games, Voidrunner needs to be seen in action to get a better idea of how well these odd character-based graphics actually work, but hopefully, some aspects of Voidrunner's graphics can be shown well enough in screenshots.

Considering the loading screen was so completely about emphasizing the void, it's a bit silly that Minter took the completely opposite approach for the title screen. There's all sorts of flashing and colour-cycling going on in the logo section, which features the name three times just to make sure you notice it; and there's also these animated dot patterns doing some funky psychedelic things in the surrounding dark areas. The top and bottom areas of the title screen are taken by info panels with different kinds of shading patterns for the two COMMODORE versions. Already from the title screen, you can see some hints to Voidrunner perhaps having been tailored for the C16 instead of the C64, judging by all those more natural shadings and all. The MSX and SPECTRUM versions have a more standard control menu with no psychedelia at all, and only the SPECTRUM version features a nice single-colour alternative rendition of the game logo.

If you're a Minter fan, you might enjoy all this graphical madness about to happen, but I would hazard a guess, that even the most obsessed of you might become a bit tired of what happens before each level. At first, entering a new

level can be a fun - and even somewhat impressive - thing to watch, but... it's a bit much, to be honest. Let me explain: on the COMMODORE machines, the words "ENTER" and "LEVEL" in the above picture and its 29 other variants alone get shown line by line (happily, the lines are thick), before the middle word is shown. The SPECTRUM and MSX versions differ from each other by the MSX version just showing it all at once, probably just to save time, while the SPECTRUM version brings all the lines one by one from below. As we move on...



There's no heading BAACK now!

...you get the actual level-entering animations, which in the original order goes: fade-in of the top and bottom coloured bars; the top bar melting down from the middle; the screen filling up with animated dot patterns onto a grey/blue background and the appearance of the info panel at the bottom; the top and bottom bars reappearing and

making the background in both versions black; and finally, the four pieces of your ship being spawned by beams coming from all four main directions. That's a whole lot of animation to endure at the beginning of each level. At least you won't have to deal with the same thing after each death - it's just the spawn animation then. The SPECTRUM and MSX versions have dropped the fading bars element, which I have to admit, makes the levels look less interesting and psychedelic, but at least it eats up about 10 seconds of time for each level. Of the said two, the SPECTRUM version looks a tad better, since it reveals the starry background as the "melt" animation happens, while the



C64



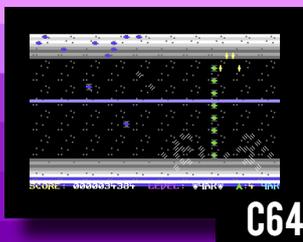
MSX



C16/+4



SPECCY



C64



MSX



C16/+4



SPECCY

MSX version does the melt bit first, then drops the background unceremoniously to the background as you start spawning.

The in-game graphics are more logical to look at each version on its own, so let's start with the C16/+4. Most notable graphical element you will notice are the bars at both vertical edges that fade into darkness towards the center of the screen, and each level uses a different colour for the bars. Also, the animated star patterns in the background are different for each level. Although the least interesting part of Voidrunner's graphics are your own ship and the enemies, since you can't put much of details in single character blocks, you might want to take a closer look at all the enemy formations - the formation's colour shadings often change within the lines. Very cool, but not very noticeable in action.

It's not that often that a C16/+4 version can boast of higher quality graphics than a C64 version of the same game, but this time, it's a clear win for the former. The neat shading tricks are gone, the vertical edge bars are always oddly grey-shaded, and it's only the weird star patterns in the background and your ship form that somehow convey your current level elsewhere than in the info panel. Still, it's much better than the remaining two.

The SPECTRUM and MSX versions look very much alike - at least I wasn't able to detect any real differences between the two after the level-entering animations. Comparing them to the two COMMODORE versions, for starters, you get no vertical edge bars at all, and the animated star patterns aren't quite as varied, and due to understandable technical difficulties, never change colour. Also, due to the game speed, you never get quite the same feel of on-screen traffic as you get on the C16/+4 and C64 versions, which makes the SPECTRUM and MSX versions,

in a way, more sedative to look at.

Even Game Over has been made into a proper graphical occasion in both COMMODORE versions, as a large blocky text comes from the top-left corner, leaving a trail of different coloured/shaded Game Over texts as it arrives to the center of the screen, which is otherwise occupied by the same starry background as you saw in the level-entering segment before spawning. The SPECTRUM and MSX versions only have a regular small text in the middle of the starry surroundings.

Last and in many ways the least, COMMODORE gamers can boast of getting a high score table, into which you can write a small novel. Graphically, it's nothing of real interest after all the earlier show, but very few games have ever allowed as much of characters put into your high score entry than what Voidrunner did. Then, of course, the other two versions don't even keep a top score in memory, let alone a list of the highest scores.

It's pretty clear that Voidrunner is essentially a Commodore game as far as its graphics are concerned, but more specifically, the C16/+4 machines seem to have been more suitable with their less restrictive palettes, allowing for better use of shading, rather than a seemingly random mish-mash of available colours. From the other two versions, the SPECTRUM version is the more advanced option.

1. COMMODORE 16/+4
2. COMMODORE 64
3. ZX SPECTRUM
4. MSX



C64



MSX



C16/+4



SPECCY

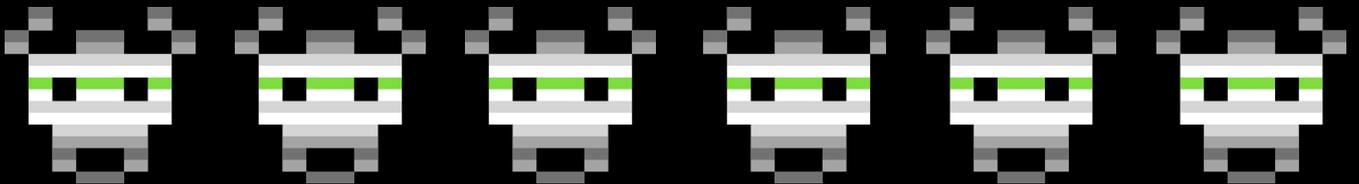
SOUNDS

Brilliant soundtracks is not something anyone would associate with Jeff Minter's games, and Voidrunner makes no exception to this rule. The only bit of music you will hear during the entire game is the familiar five-note melody from Close Encounters of the Third Kind, which is played every time you are introduced to the new level's animal title, with an odd phaser/flanger-like effect. At least this is something all four versions have in common.

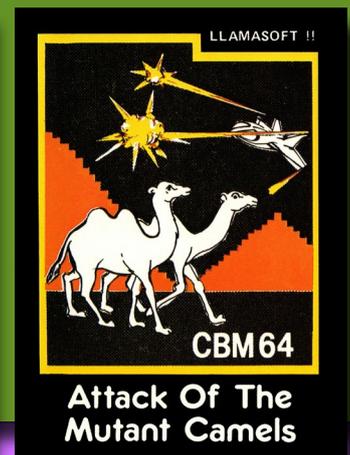
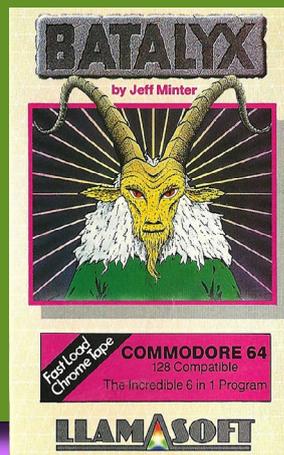
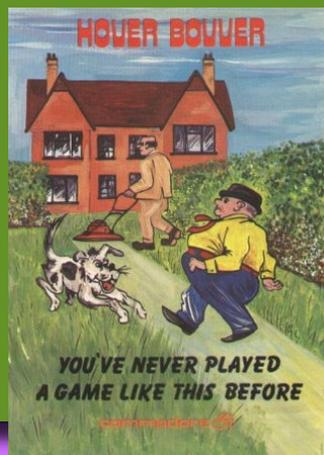
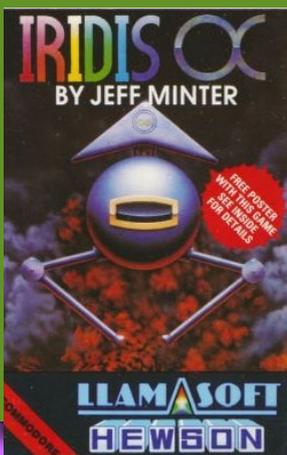
The title screens offer no sounds at all in the SPECTRUM and MSX versions, but in the two COMMODORE versions, you get random outworldly noises at not so random times. Already in the title screen, you can notice there being filters and effects being used in the C64 version, that the C16/+4 version is lacking, and these differences in finesse is evident throughout the game. Similarly, while the SPECTRUM and MSX versions have a similar amount of sound effects between themselves, and are a good notch or two less noisy than either of the COMMODORE versions, the SPECTRUM version has more finesse overall in its sound effects.

I cannot honestly say, if any of these four versions sounds better than the other, since it's all more or less minterishly warped and not very pleasant to listen to in the long run, but based on how long I was able to withstand the noises in each version, and how technically impressive each version sounds, here's what I ended up with:

1. COMMODORE 64
2. COMMODORE 16/+4
3. ZX SPECTRUM
4. MSX



For better examples of why Jeff Minter became such a household name for Commodore gamers in particular, games like Hover Bovver, Batalyx, Attack of the Mutant Camels and Iridis Alpha should suit the purpose just fine. If you feel like exploring his 8-bit catalogue outside of the Commodore realm, there aren't too many non-Commodore exclusives, but Headbangers Heaven, City Bomber and Super Deflex were Spectrum exclusives, and a light synthesizer program called Colourspace was only released for the 8-bit Atari computers. Happy exploring!



C64

Playability: 8

Graphics: 7

Sounds: 7

Replay value: 7

OVERALL: 7.33

SPECTRUM

Playability: 5

Graphics: 5

Sounds: 5

Replay value: 4

OVERALL: 4.75

OVERALL

If you're looking for something innovative from Minter, Voidrunner is not going to be on your checklist, but that doesn't mean it's not a good game. In fact, it's far from being bad, but it was too outdated for its time to ever have a real chance of gaining wider approval. Voidrunner takes an eight-year old concept and molds it like a maniac, which should be - and can be - fun, if taken out from its chronological context. It has its fair share of problems, but more importantly, it's surprisingly addictive. Choosing the most optimal version of the four is difficult enough for me to not go with my usual scoring method - once again, proper scores need to be given.

C16/+4

Playability: 7

Graphics: 8

Sounds: 5

Replay value: 7

OVERALL: 7.25

MSX

Playability: 5

Graphics: 4

Sounds: 4

Replay value: 4

OVERALL: 4.25

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- e) bust your joystick, in the white heat and fury of your blasting

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VOIDRUNNER

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paul morrison interviews michael ware

When you think about it, we weren't blessed with an abundance of high quality vertically-scrolling shmups on the 64. That being the case, when I saw ZZAP! 64's very favourable review of a game called Warhawk, it immediately grabbed my attention. One reason for that was that it looked a lot like my favourite arcade game of the time, Star Force. I'd been desperate for a conversion to appear and although that would never happen, this looked like the next best thing. The second reason was that it only cost £1.99. Amazing! I bought it as soon as possible and played it to death, and it gave me that home Star Force fix I'd been craving.

Over 30 years later, Warhawk seemed like it would be a perfect fit for our shmups issue, so I had a quick chat with programmer Michael "Flash" Ware to get a bit of insight into the game, the man and his thoughts on shoot 'em ups in general.

PM Much to the chagrin of writers and researchers like myself, C64 games did not regularly feature extensive credits. Warhawk's title screen says simply "By Proteus Developments". Why didn't you take the opportunity to let the whole world know you'd written Warhawk? I know I would have!

MW We did have credits in the highscore, they're very vague. They read "ANUBIS AND CAPTN PLUS MR HUGO OK". I was Anubis, Andrew Betts was Captain, and Ian Gogay was Mr. Hugo.

PM Well, you learn something new every day. I'll have a look out for that later. Onto the game, now. Warhawk was clearly inspired by Tehkan's Star Force, a game I have always loved dearly. What made you want to write a version of it for the humble 64?

MW We actually walked around a couple of arcades in our home town of Norwich looking for some inspiration. It actually ended up as a toss-up between Pac-Land and Star Force. I think Star Force won out because we all loved a good shooter. Also, the bas-relief graphics just yelled 'C64'.

PM Well, I'm glad you didn't go for Pac-Land. We ended up getting a really good official conversion of that. Having settled on Star Force, what features of that game did you want to make sure were in Warhawk?

MW The main thing we wanted was the hectic gameplay, something that was pretty easy on the 64. Also, the power-up and the end of level boss were both important.

PM I'm glad you kept that power-up, it's essential! Some readers might not know this, but Warhawk was originally going to be called Proteus. Why the change of name?

MW We originally called it Proteus after Proteus Developments for want of a better name. When we signed to Firebird, they were worried about the end of level bosses being too close to the ones in Starforce, so these were removed and replaced with the alien attack at the end. I cannot remember now if the name change was down to us, or at the request of Firebird.

PM Having played Proteus, I must say I do like those end-level bosses. Shame they had to go. Otherwise, Firebird did a great job pulling in some top additional talent. What did you think of Stephen Robertson's amazing loading screen?

MW The loading screen was wonderful and SIR did a fantastic job (as he did on everything else). He really captured the feel of the game in that static image.

PM I think it's his best work on the 64, actually. I've used it as wallpaper on my PC, it's that good. How about the fact that Rob Hubbard was doing the music for the game?

MW Rob Hubbard doing the music for the game was not to do with Firebird. I had already contacted and paid Rob for the music prior to signing to Firebird. I think we wanted the game to be complete prior to looking for a publisher, so we needed sound effects and music.

PM Ah, nice move! I know it was nailed on to be good, but what did you think of the music Rob gave you?

MW Rob just blew me away with what he came



Chunky, but funky.

up with. I still find the music stunning to this day and could not imagine Warhawk without it. I am also impressed with the many mixes of it that can be found now, and especially Press Play on Tape's version.

PM Yeah, it's a classic track, alright. All things considered, how happy were you with the finished game? Did you achieve everything you'd aimed for?

MW To be honest, I think the game could have done with a little more time spent on it. This was our first game. There are things that I would like to have improved, and some things that still irk. The main one is the bullet detection where sometimes it can pass through an alien or over a ground base. But, we were learning all the time, so we are allowed to make excuses.

PM I suppose you have to draw the line somewhere. It's still a great effort which received some excellent reviews, particularly in ZZAP! 64. How happy were you about that?

MW We were certainly very pleased with pretty much all of the reviews. More than we perhaps had hoped for, though we were a little disappointed at the 63% in ZZAP! For the graphics, and Gary's comments - but... Julian stuck up for us.

PM Yeah, that was a bit harsh. The graphics weren't at Uridium quality, to be fair, but representative enough. Now, for me, as a huge Star Force fan, there were only two games that scratched that itch on the C64. One was Warhawk, the other was Firetrack. Did you ever play that and if so, what did you think of it?

MW Firetrack.. There's an incredible game. I played it originally on the BBC micro and was very impressed, and the 64 version I think is even better. There is a fluidity to the game that astounds even now.

PM Always glad to find another fan of that great game! What do you think about the fact that C64 fans are still playing and loving Warhawk today?

MW It certainly does give you a warm glow inside, and does come as a bit of a surprise. I would never have expected in 1986 that the game would be remembered today - let alone played.

PM It certainly represents great value for our two quid! As you know, this issue is a shoot 'em up special and also has a bit of a Jeff Minter theme. Could you please tell us your favourite C64 shoot 'em up and why, and also your favourite Jeff Minter shoot 'em up?

MW The 64 was/is a wonderful machine for shmups, so it's a really hard call. This is an odd call, but I think my favourite 64 shooter has to be Tony Crowther's Phobia, such a well written game, stunning levels, clever mechanics, and relentless as hell...

PM Phobia! Don't hear that one mentioned very often. Great game, but it's rock hard!

MW But, for a real twitch challenge Hellgate takes some beating. I loved Jeff Minters early games, even going back to the VIC20. I have no idea why I loved Hellgate so much, it's by no means Jeff's best game and it's not down to the era as I still find it a joy to play.

PM Nobody else mentioned Hellgate this issue. You have individual tastes! I'm going to wrap this up now, but tell me, what are you doing these days? Do you have anything you'd like to plug?

MW I would like to mention a few Warhawk related things. I got together in 2009 with my good friend Ben Baker (code), Lobo (graphics), and Space Fractal (music) to code Warhawk for the Nintendo DS (Homebrew) in assembler. What we wanted to do was expand the game and keep the same mechanic and feel, something that I feel we achieved. The game was hugely successful, bolstered by huge enemies, the reinstating of the end of level bosses, and much much more.

So, missing out all the bits in-between, it's gone full circle. I am currently revisiting Warhawk again on the Spectrum Next (get out! - Ed) with Jim Bagley. This is not a straight port, but a very much-enhanced version containing 20 levels, lots of surprises, and (care of Space Fractal) a great 6 channel AY version of the music. This will hopefully be shown at Revival in May.

One thing I should have mentioned is Manic Maker, but it doesn't really fit. This is a little side project I have been working on in my spare time. Its Mario Maker for old platform games and covers several c64 games. It allows you to build new games in things like Manic Miner, Mr. Robot, Blagger, etc. Just thought I would mention it as I will hopefully release this year. Check it out at www.flashbangstudio.uk.

PM That would have fit our last issue nicely. Thanks Michael! I've had a play with Manic Maker and it's great! Everyone, give it a go, and look out for the reappearance of Warhawk, and Michael on the 64...



Proteus. Not Star Force, and definitely not Pac Land.



Reset Q&A

What is Reset Magazine?

Reset Magazine is a free, non-profit fanzine dedicated to the Commodore 64 computer. Our target audience is the casual Commodore 64 user and retro computer enthusiast. Reset is distributed on the internet as a free PDF from our homepage. We do other things too, such as record C64 related podcasts and run coding competitions.

Who produces Reset?

Reset is produced by Reset Magazine Staff. We also have many others who make contributions to the magazine. See the editorial page for a complete list of credits for the issue.

How often is Reset released?

As a hobby project, the release schedule is dependent on time that the team has available to produce each issue. Needless to say, we'd love to release at least 3 full issues of Reset in 2018.

Why bother?

Because we love the Commodore 64. Most of us have owned C64 computers for decades and have a long history with the computer. Our aim is to create an entertaining yet informative, light-hearted, English language magazine in the spirit of Commodore Format, ZZAP!, Commodore Scene and Commodore Zone, that we hope people can enjoy, learn from and have a laugh with.

Can I contribute to Reset?

If you would like to contribute to Reset, please get in touch. New ideas are most welcome. If you have a product that you would like featured, some news to submit, or feel you have something else to offer we'd love to hear from you.

Can I buy a physical version?

A limited number of physical copies of each issue are printed as Special Editions and are available for a very short time at the time of publication for each issue. These are sold on a first come, first served basis. You can join our subscriber list to receive information about when we are taking orders for each issue.

Can I advertise in Reset?

Yes, for free. All we ask in return is that you support us, either by plugging the magazine on your website and/or social media, providing us with news or help us in some other way. If you would like to advertise in Reset please contact us.

What is a Reset Ripper?

The Reset Ripper is an award given to outstanding games we have reviewed, which have received a score of either 9 or 10 out of 10.

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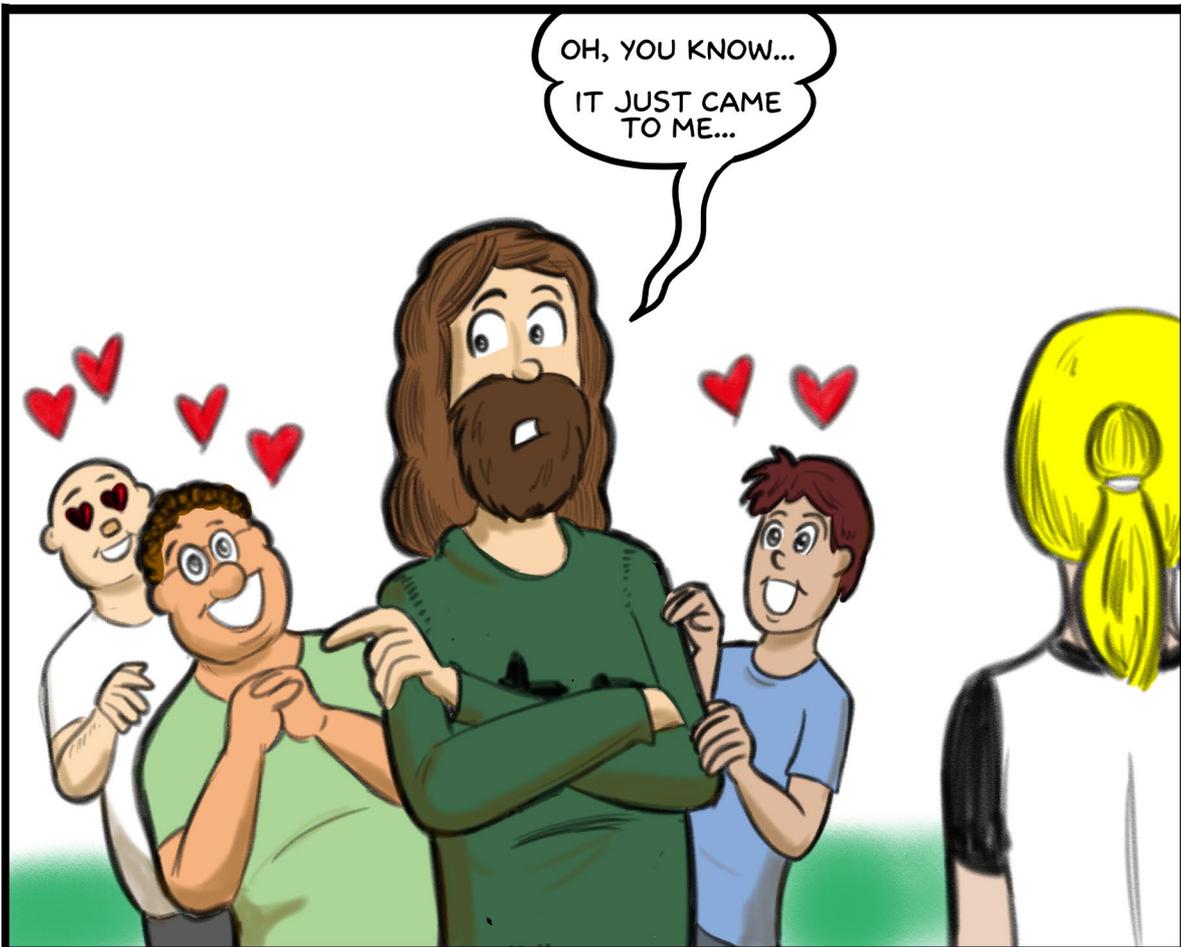
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