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M-NETWORK OVERCOMES LAUNCHING PROBLEMS Retailers found a high number of defective cartridges among the initial shipment of M-Network, Mattel's new series of games for the Atari VCS. Seems the games couldn't be properly inserted into the

VCS because of poor construction of the casing. To get them to play, some people cracked open the plastic housing and plugged the program board directly into the entry slot by hand.

Arcade Express talked with Mike Doepke, Mattel's Director of Marketing of M-Network. Mike explained there had been a problem in production of the housing and some batches were shipped before the flaw was corrected. Most of the faulty cartridges went to West Coast dealers who have since been advised by Mattel to return them, so hopefully most are now out of circulation. But anyone who buys a defective game should return it to the retailer or direct to Mattel.

In addition to the problem with the casing, a small portion of the initial ROMs were incompatible with older models of the Atari VCS. Once Mattel engineer's realized this, they made the small modification necessary to make the games playable. But a few of the non-compatible games are in circulation. These won't play on the VCS with the difficulty switch in the front of the console, and should be exchanged for playable versions.

The problems were confined to the first four M-Network games, "Astroblast", "Space Attack", "Super Challenge Baseball" and "Super Challenge Football".

ARCADIA TO Arcadia is the company marketing the Supercharger for the Atari VCS, a RAM CHANGE NAME cart that increases the graphic resolution capabilities of the VCS, making possible games that move more objects on the screen simultaneously. And the

Arcadia 2001 is a new videogame system from Emerson Radio Corp. Names too close for comfort, you think? Well, so did they, and Arcadia is going to have to come up with a new moniker. Seems that the Emerson Arcadia 2001 beat the Supercharger onto the retail shelves, and they have first dibs. No word yet on the new name, but watch this space.

MORE GAMES BY APOLLOThe folks at this Texas-based company are keeping themselves busy.COME UP FROM TEXASGames By Apollo will release six new game titles in September."Kyphus" casts the gamer as a powerful sorcerer exploring a pyramid.

"Guardian" is a space game, and "Final Approach" involves air traffic control. "Squoosh" has a busy man stomping grapes into juice. "Pompeii" dares you to treasure hunt in that ancient city. "Wabbit" requires an egg-throwing farmer's daughter to defend a carrot patch. This game, designed by a lady programmer from Vietnam, is described by GBA President Pat Roper as introducing "a new day in graphics for the VCS". Games By Apollo will spend \$7 Million on t.v. ads between now and the end of January '83 to promote their line.

This fast-growing company entered the field with its first cartridge for the Atari VCS in late 1981. A new plant providing 75,000 square feet of space is now under construction. They'll need it. GBA expects to introduce 18 games at the January Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas: 4 for Intellivision, 6 for the Atari VCS, 2 for the VIC-20, 2 for TI-994A, and 4 games to be released for the Atari 400, Atari 800, and Atari 5200. Pat Roper forecasts that Games By Apollo will be the country's #1 software company before the end of 1983.

ATARI BUYS HOME RIGHTS Atari now holds the home rights to three coin-op hits, "Ms. Pac-TO COIN-OP CLASSICS Man", "StarGate", and "Robotron". So far there have been no announcements about when any of these games will be adapted for home play, nor which system the games will be programmed for. HAYDEN PUBLISHING FORMS NEW SOFTWARE COMPANY Hayden Publishing Co., actively involved in the production of microcomputer software since 1979, has formed the Hayden Software Company. James Mulholland, President of the publishing

firm, says the new company is in response to the rapid growth of the software area, and a reflection of Hayden's commitment to continue as a leader in this field.

INTELLIVISION PLANS A new model of the Master Component for the Intellivision will soon NEW MASTER COMPONENT be available from Mattel. The unit plays all the old cartridges, but will be much smaller than the current console. There are unconfirmed rumors that it will interface with a smaller Mattel keyboard.

X-RATED VIDEOGAMES ARE ON THE WAY Massacre" and "The Driller Killers", plans to market games based on cult faves. One title mentioned is "I Spit On Your Grave"....Swedish Erotica, longtime king of high-class porno loops, is readying a line of videogames based on its best known properties. The box art has already been previewed, and the games are about to be shipped.

GAMESTAR PREVIEWS SOLITAIRE FOOTBALL Computers. Gamestar, founded largely by personnel from Arcade Plus, the company that created "Ghost Hunter", also plans early release of "Baja Buggies", a desert road race game.

SPECTRAVISION ANNOUNCES
NEW CARTRIDGES FOR VCSSpectravision doubled its line of game cartridges for the Atari
VCS with the shipment in September of two more titles. "The
Challenge of Nexar" is an arcade-style action game that Spectra-

vision's President Josh Kalter says requires constant movement by the arcader. "You can't sit still in this game," says Kalter. "It's really different." The other addition to the line is "Tape Worm". The slithery creature crawls around the screen eating vegetarian prizes while avoiding spiders and birds.

CYNEX MARKETS REMOTE CONTROL JOYSTICK FOR ATARI & VIC-20 that send signals by radio waves. The remote controllers work with the Atari VCS and Commodore's VIC-20. Game-Mate II, retailing for around \$100, has two joysticks and the receiver and is designed to operate smoothly up to 20 feet away from the game unit.

CASH REBATE AVAILABLE Anyone who buys an Odyssey² videogame system between August 15 ON ODYSSEY MASTER UNIT and October 1 is eligible for a \$15 cash rebate. Consumers fill out a certificate and submit it to Odyssey for their rebate. The promotion will be supported by newspaper advertising and point-of-purchase materials, in Odyssey's "early buy" special offer.

COMPUTER CHESS PROGRAM BREAKS NEW FRONTIERS rating of 2046, putting this program securely into the "Expert" category of chess player. This is the first time any microcomputer chess game has reached the "Expert" class.

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EDITORIAL STAFF: Arnie Katz, Co-Publisher; Joyce Worley, Editor; Bill Kunkel, Editorial Director

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Jay Rosenfield, Publisher: Rena Adler, Subscription Manager: Janette Evans, Business Manager

CBS RECORDS BLAMES SLUMP ON VIDEOGAME POPULARITY CBS Record officials put the blame on us, saying the major cause of the slump in record sales is videogames which "draw entertainment dollars away from record buying". This accusation

followed the layoff of 15% of the non-hourly employees of CBS Records, a move affecting 300 employees, including 5 or 10 vice presidents. Oh, come on, gang! Trying making better music!

ATARI COIN-OP An unspecified number of manufacturing workers were transferred from Atari's CUTS MANPOWER coin-op division to other sectors, and a 4-day workweek was instituted in that sector. Atari spokeswoman Helen Gray said the transferred workers will

substitute for vacationers in other divisions, and that the affected employees won't lose any pay if they attend educational seminars sponsored by the company. Ms. Gray said that although sales are slower of arcade games, this is usual for the time of year. It's nice to note that Atari didn't blame the record industry for their slump.

DATA AGE GIVES In a unique marketing move, Data Age will provide distributors and retail-FREE RECORD ers with free records to pass out to customers on Sept. 17, 1982. On that

date, 3¹/₂ minute stereo discs will be given away by dealers to promote the Data Age product line. Data Age has 5 videogames: "Sssnake", "Warplock", "Airlock", "Bugs", and "Encounter at L-5". Elements of each game are contained in the record produced by Craig Hundley, creator of special electronic music for films such as "Star Trek: The Movie", "The Black Hole", "Firefox", and others. The disc, called "Mindscape", is said to "blend the imagery and action of Data Age's first five videogames"

ATARI DEBUTS "Gravitar", new from Atari, features numerous planets and three solar 'GRAVITAR' COIN-OP systems, each progressively more difficult. Positive and negative gravity on hazardous planet surfaces threaten to suck in the gamer's

ship as he either fights or outruns aliens. If captured in the battle, the player is transported to deep space for a dogfight to the death. On each planet, the mission is to destroy the firing bunkers and capture all fuel, while avoiding rammer crafts. If the gamer likes risk-taking, he can skip the first four planets in the solar system and progress directly to the Alien Planet. If successful in this fight, he wins the point value for the entire solar system and is then transported to the next one.

CREATIVE SOFTWARE BUYS THREE LICENSES FROM BRODERBUND FOR VIC-20 Creative Software has licensed three titles from Broderbund Software, breaking its longstanding policy of non-licensing. The titles are "Apple Panic", "Choplifter" and "Serpentine". The games will be converted for use on the Commodore VIC-20. Elliott

Dahan, Marketing Director for Creative, said, "When you are presented with the opportunity to produce games from Broderbund Software, you have to take advantage of it." The three ROM cartridges will be shipped the first week of October.

TIRES, PICKLES STAR IN Telesys has found a new way to attract attention. This fall, the TELESYS PROMOTIONS company is sending boxes of used tires to hundreds of game distributors. Each tire is attached to a note saying, "Enclosed is a

3000-pound gorilla's favorite toy which he has just noticed is missing." The tires, ranging from Toyota- to truck-size, introduce "CocoNuts", a game for the Atari VCS which calls on the gamer to avoid thrown nuts with a little help from the gorilla.

Telesys heralded its own entry into the game industry by mailing large satin purple pickles to distributors. The pickles went with "Fast Food", its first VCS-compatible cartridge. Arcaders feed a gobbling mouth acres of burgers, popsickles, shakes, and, of course, pickles.

The third game in the Telesys line, which a company spokesman describes as "non-violent, with broad appeal" is "Cosmic Creeps". Earth is threatened by meanies, and the gamer must get to the space station and hold back the baddies while civilization escapes the doomed planet. All three games should be in the stores by the end of this month.

ATARI TO BRING E.T. TO HOME AND COIN-OP Atari has purchased the coin-op and home rights to videogame versions of the blockbuster hit, "E.T." The film's director, Steven Speilberg

a self-confessed videogame fanatic, will work closely with Atari on the design, content and execution of the games. This news, coupled with the Atari/Lucasfilm connection, puts Atari in the catbird seat with regard to film-based videogames.

BRODERBUND SPONSORS GAME DESIGN CONTEST Broderbund Software announces "The Arcade Machine" to guide you step by step through the design of your own computer arcade-style game, even if you don't know how to program. Broderbund promises you'll be

able to animate full-color monsters, as well as create dramatic explosions and sound effects. Your completed game will boast automatic scoring and a colorful title page, one or two player options, and "fast and smooth arcade-quality animation", for the 48K Apple II Plus.

NOLAN K. BUSHNELL When Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari, left that company, he agreed not HAS PLANS FOR '83 to compete with Atari for 7 years. The agreement expires this year, and Bushnell says he plans to reenter the videogame business. "I don't

think the spectacle aspect of videogames has been exploited enough," he says. "We're trying to merge the flight simulator with the videogame to create a feeling of movement and acceleration." Bushnell predicts he will capture a 40% share of the videogame market within four years of his reentry into the field.

THORN EMI COMES The redcoats are coming! Thorn EMI, the multi-billion dollar conglomerate TO THE COLONIES To London, and leading videocassette marketer in Europe, will introduce its new computer games division to America's holiday shoppers with an ad campaign starting late in November. The Thorne line currently has 21 games for home computers such as the VIC-20 and Atari's 400/800. Thorn's designs are said to stress graphic impact, complexity of play, and strategic challenge.

ATARI, COMMODORE SLASH Price cuts continue to ripple through the videogaming industry. MICROCOMPUTER PRICES Commodore announced an additional \$25 to \$40 cut in the VIC-20 price for retailers increasing purchase commitments, bringing the price of the VIC-20 as low as \$199 retail.

In a separate announcement, Atari indicated it would offer purchasers of the Atari 400 coupons totalling \$60 good for discounts on software programs, but said the rebate applies only to software. Geoffrey Holmes, Vice President of Warner, said that the company does not plan reductions in the price of the 400, indicating that the 400 is "sold out for the year".

CITIBANK TO ISSUE Citibank and Tandy Corp. introduced a joint bank card providing custo-TANDY CREDIT CARD mers a revolving loan account for purchases of \$225 or more at Tandy's Radio Shack stores. Interest on such loans will run 2% per month. The

card, introduced in August, will be honored at 4000 stores by the end of October. A Tandy spokesman indicated the company expects the cards to be used primarily for big-ticket items such as computers and radio scanners.

FLORIDA PRISONERSIn Jacksonville, Florida, the mayor's budget committee barred the
purchase of a "Ms. Pac-Man" videogame for the correctional facility.
This was despite estimates that the game would raise at least \$100
weekly from the inmates of the facility.

Funds for the game would have come from money generated from a coin-operated pool table in the prison which now houses 85 inmates on a work-release program. The city opted instead to spend \$1700 for a hamburger press to make more than 900 patties an hour, work that is now done manually by the inmates.

The mayor's aid explained, "I'm not sure we ought to be in the amusement business..." but he didn't say why videogames should be disallowed and pool permitted. Sounds pretty prejudicial to me, don't you agree? VIDEOMASTERS OFFERS TOURNAMENT KIT Planning a tournament? Video Masters, Box 101, Doylestown, Pa. 18901 has just the thing for you: The Video Masters Tournament Kit. For \$6.95 you get enough stuff for 16 players and 8 different game carts,

suitable to any home videogame system. The kit includes registration forms, scorecards, playoff ladders, rules, and step-by-step instructions to assure a successful contest. The kit even has award certificates for the winners!

MEREL WINSThomas Merel, Miami, Fla., won the title of Regional Champion in theCHESS TOURNEYJune 30 semi-finals of Fidelity Electronics' Computer Chess Tournament forSEMI-FINALShighschool or younger ages. Merel will take an expense-paid trip to NewYork City this November for the National Grand Finals. The top three winn-

ers in the playoffs will receive scholarships of \$15,000, \$7,500, and \$2,500.

The contest started May 22 with over 250 players in the initial round. The second round of play narrowed the field from 86 to 21. Merel was the victor over 7 other semi-finalists playing at tournament level 6 on the Fidelity Sensory Chess Challenger "9", making him the best chess player in Southern Florida in his age category.

Avant-Garde Creations announced the appointment of Robert M. Tappan as Sales APPOINTMENTS & Marketing Director. Tappan says, "The potential for growth in the software industry is unquestioned", and promises a new advertising campaign as Avant-Garde upgrades packaging as well as distributor and dealer support programs.... In a related move, Avant-Garde named Steven D. Hanson National Sales Manager. Hanson promises to bring a personal touch to sales.... The Game Peddler named Tim Swem as Operations Manager, and Sam Platt as Office Manager. Swem's previous experience was with Fun City Toys and Toys-R-Us. His primary responsibility will be staff training, recruitment and new store setups and supervision. Platt will head up the personnel and accounting functions for this multi-locationed chain Art Kohrmann, Manager of Quality Assurance for Sega/Gremlin, was elected Chairman of the San Diego Chapter of the American Society of Quality Control. The Society has more than 35,000 members worldwide, and 470 members in San Diego, pledged to provide a network of professional expertise to establish international quality standards in the design and manufacture of commercial and military equipment.... CBS Video Games announced the appointment of Robert L. Hunter as Director. Mr. Hunter will head up marketing, product development, product licensing, and acquisition of videogame software. He was previously with the CBS/Columbia Group, and was responsible for the start-up planning of the videogame unit Imagic has a new Vice President of Legal Affairs, Bruce Davis. Davis' former experience was with a San Francisco lawfirm Margaret Davis, formerly with Johnson Wax, joined Imagic as Manager of the Public Relations Dept.... Oscar Ray Rodriguez has been appointed President of the new Hayden Software Co. Formerly President of American Business Systems, Rodriguez plans rapid expansion through acquisition of high quality products for business, education, games, professional and utilities, as well as expanded distribution.

INTELLIVISION SCHEDULES SECOND VIDEOCHALLENGE

The second series of Intellivision VideoChallenges has started. Parent/Child teams are competing on the Intellivision Skiing game cartridge in 18 major cities. The semi-finals competition will

be on "Astrosmash", and the two top scoring teams will compete for the grand prize in "Bowling". The grand prize for each local tournament is a trip for the team and two additional family members to the national finals in Los Angeles. Other prizes include t.v.'s, luggage, stereo cassette players, cameras, and books. Mattel will also make donations to local fund raising organizations for handicapped and underprivileged children, corresponding to the number of parent/child entries in each city.

Here is a list of locations and dates: Dallas 9/11; Portland 9/18; St. Louis 9/25; Minneapolis 9/26; Chicago 10/2; Detroit 10/3; Pittsburgh 10/11; Baltimore 10/16; Washington D.C. 10/17; New Jersey 10/23; Long Island 10/24; San Francisco 10/30; Boston 11/6; Philadelphia 11/7; Atlanta 11/13, and Los Angeles (for the finals) 12/9 thru 12/12. In each city, the VideoChallenge will be in a major mall, and there is no entry fee. Check local papers for exact locations and times.

THE HOTSEAT Reviews of New Products

RATINGS: 1-4 The item has serious flaws.

- 5 An average game that does what it promises.
- 6 Better than average.
- 7 A good game, but maybe not for everyone.
- 8 A very good to excellent game.
- 9 An outstanding, state-of-the-art game.
- 10 Pure gold and about as good as a game could be. A rare rating.

KEY: The information which heads each review follows the same simple format: First comes the name of the item, then its classification and if it is a home arcade software program, the system or systems with which it is compatible. Finally, there is the manufacturer's name.

INVADERS OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB/Stand-Alone/Bandai Electronics

Solar power cells inside the compact-sized hand-held absorb all the light needed to operate the game in just a second after opening the case. Arcaders battle snakes and scorpions as they attempt to enter the pyramid. Inside the tomb, the on-screen adventurer fills his poke with loot, but only if he can avoid the angry mummy. Play action is limited to moving the adventurer back and forth on the field. But it's fast, the animation is cute, and the tiny unit is the first application of solar power in the videogaming world, which makes it remarkable. Rating: 7

SENSORY CHESS CHALLENGER "9"/Stand-Alone/Fidelity Electronics

The program for the Sensory Chess Challenger "9", written by Kathe and Dan Spracklen, plays at nine different skill levels. At its best, it's rated 1771 by the U.S. Chess Federation. The board electronically senses every move, and indicates by flashing lights what the computer wants to do. A whole library of special options makes this highly versatile for either a beginner or advanced pawn pusher, playing either against the computer or a human opponent. Rating: 9

BANDITS/Computer Program (Apple II)/Sirius Software

Just when it seems publishers have wrung every ounce of interest out of the invasion game format, along comes a piece of software like "Bandits" to prove that there's still plenty of life in the genre. The arcader moves back and forth across the bottom of the screen, shooting upward at a variety of enemies. If one makes it over to the right side of the screen, it can steal some of the supplies which the gamer is attempting to protect from such thieves. Shooting a bandit while it's zipping across the very top of the screen with its ill-gotten gain yields a score-doubling bonus. Sirius scores again with a hot action contest that will delight most computer gamers. Rating: 8

DONKEY KONG/Videogame Cartridge (Colecovision)/Coleco

The game that comes packed with the system is certainly a harbinger of good things to come from this source. Blessed with fine sound and graphics, this home version of Nintendo's coin-op is definitely one of those contests arcaders will want to play and play again. The player uses the joystick to make Mario climb through 3 different scenarios in the quest to free his kidnapped girlfriend from the giant ape. As in the original, there are obstacles like barrels and fireballs to dodge or smash, and hammers to help with the job. It's a flying start for the new system. Rating: 9

ATLANTIS/Videogame Cartridge (Atari VCS)/Imagic

This distant cousin of both "Missile Command" and "Air-Sea Battle" asks the player to defend the fabled city of Atlantis from attack from the skies. There are three guns, one in the center which fires straight up and cannons at the sides of the playfield which fire diagonally across the screen. A clever control system allows the gamer to fire any of these three weapons at will. "Atlantis" is definitely one of the best action videogames published this year. Rating: 9

NAUTILUS/Computer Game (Atari 400/800)/Synapse Software

The split screen display makes this one of the more exciting naval battle games yet produced for home computers. The confrontation between submarines and destroyer escorts has always been a popular theme for non-electronic contests, and the concept has made the jump to the computer screen in fine form. Synapse regularly produces unusual and entertaining games, and this is a pretty fair sample of their creativity. Rating: 8

COSMIC AVENGER/Videogame Cartridge (ColecoVision)/Coleco

Anyone who liked the Universal coin-op game -- and probably most of those who never even saw it -- will love this home edition. Superior ColecoVision audio-visual effects make quite an impression when backed by the fast-paced action generated by this futuristic scrolling shoot-out. The arcader commands a heavily armed ship, which he must navigate through three land-and-sea combat scenarios. Rating: 9

INFILTRATE/Videogame Cartridge (Atari VCS)/Games By Apollo

Trigger-happy aliens have taken over a skyscraper, and gamers must feret them out by using the building's elevator system to patrol from basement to roof and back again. Crossing the screen from top to bottom or vice versa confers a bonus score on the player. The intruders shoot first and ask questions never in an attempt to prevent the arcader's electronic representative from completing this trek. The graphics are simple, yet highly colorful and quite effective. It's a strong game in the climbing genre with enough maze-shoot action mixed in to keep things lively. Rating: 8

MISSILE COMMAND/Videogame Cartridge (Atari 5200)/Atari

This is, to all intents and purposes, a virtual copy of the version of "Missile Command" which has won such favor as a ROM cartridge for the 400 and 800 computer systems. Now owners of Atari's new "third-wave" videogame, the 5200, can enjoy the same brand of action. Players use a cursor to direct the fire of a centrally positioned cannon to prevent rockets streaking down the screen from destroying the six cities under its protection. Multiple warhead missiles, bombers and other dangers prevent the player from getting too confident when the regular barrage from space doesn't smash the metropolises flat. Rating: 9

SPACE ATTACK/Videogame Cartridge (Atari VCS)/Mattel

"Space Attack" is one of the first releases in the M-Network series of games for the Atari VCS. First a radar screen displays alien fleets moving through space toward your mother ship. Choose the most threatening, then dispatch one of your three squadrons of fighters. When your flight reaches the alien, go to battle mode. This is where the fun begins. Alien ships engage your troops in a space shootout. Your fighters use laser cannon, and the alien fires photon blasts. Destroy one squadron of enemy ships, and the radar screen shows where the next battle is. The war goes on in this fashion until all aliens are destroyed, or until the mother ship is attacked by invaders. The game ends if the mother ship is destroyed, or when all enemies have been killed. This is a very attractive solitaire game with pretty graphics, good action, and plenty of excitement. Rating: 8

ARCADE AWARD RULES FINALIZED The editorial board of Electronic Games magazine has finalized the rules for the Fourth Annual Arcade Awards. The coveted prizes salute design excellence in all major areas of electronic gaming,

including videogames, coin-ops, computer simulations and stand-alone devices. "The Arkies will be bigger and better than ever," promises Arnie Katz, Editor of

Electronic Games and Chairman of the judging committee. "Reese Publishing Company, which sponsors the awards, has responded to the electronic gaming boom by both increasing the number of Arkies and instituting Certificates of Merit to honor outstanding games in all major categories."

The rules governing gaming's most prestigious set of awards are as follows:

1. All electronic games marketed nationally between September 1, 1981, and September 1, 1982, are eligible.

2. No game may win both an Arcade Award and a Certificate of Merit.

3. When, as in the case of videogames or computer games, the same design is published for use with more than one system, only one version will be considered. This will be either the original version, or if several are published simultaneously, the one which the judges feel has the greatest merit.

A complete list of Arcade Award categories will be printed in the next issue of Arcade Express.

HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO KEEP MEETING THIS WAY? This is the fourth issue of Arcade Express, marking two months of publication of the electronic gaming bi-weekly newsletter. I hope this is just the start of a long

relationship between us. I'm having a lot of fun, gathering all the news, talking to other people in the industry, and previewing the finest games that technology has ever produced...and I hope you're having fun, too. I'd like to hear from more of you. Gamers, send me your opinions, your high scores, and any gaming news you learn. Tell me about tournaments and special promotions in your area. Manufacturers, let me know what's on the agenda. How's business? What's new? By keeping a constant dialogue, we'll all be better able to keep abreast of this fast-changing industry.

I, along with the other editors of Electronic Games magazine, will be traveling around the country in the next few months, looking at what's coming for 1983, and Arcade Express will carry all the information I gather. This is the place to stay up with the latest news in this, the hottest hobby in the country!

How long are we going to keep meeting this way? A long time, don't you hope? Joyce Worley, Editor

arcade express

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