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BOMB JACK

ISSUE 2

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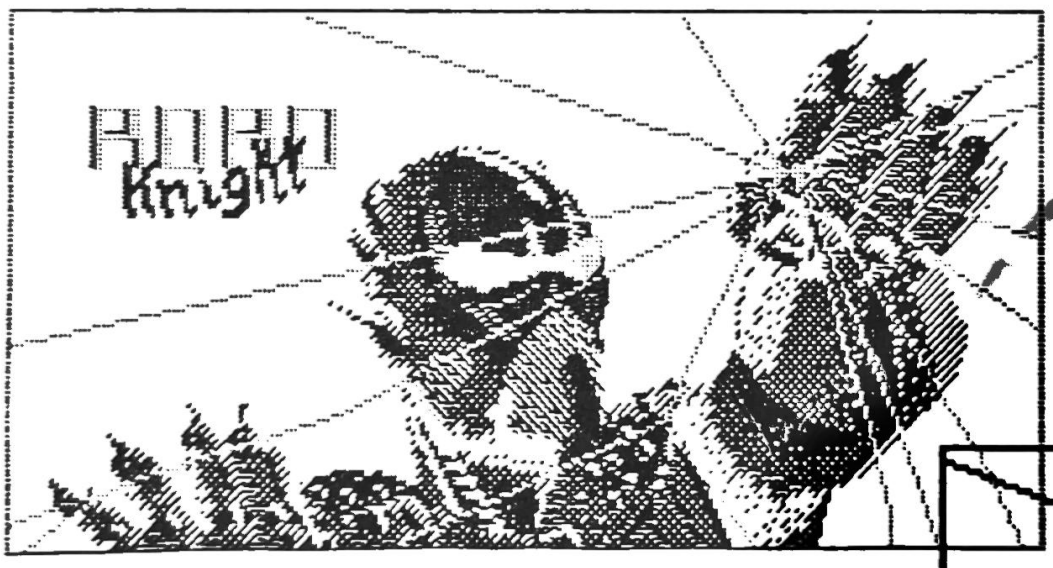

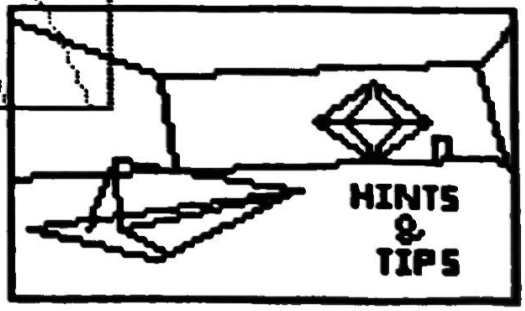

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C16 PLUS 4
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"20 USER" MICRO MEDIA

ISSUE 2 SEPTEMBER

Editor *David Baxter* *Assistant Editor* *Johnathan Gilchrist*

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Editorial

Things are really looking up for the C16 and Plus 4, at last we are getting some exciting new games and utilities like Winter Events (reviewed in this issue) from Anco and Tape 3+1 from Software World (review in issue 1).
It seems that the software industry is beginning to realise that there is a future for these two machines, even OCEAN/IMAGINE are starting to convert their chart busters onto the C16 format. In the next few months we should see even more developments in the C16 and Plus 4 market, lets just hope that all this interest keeps up!

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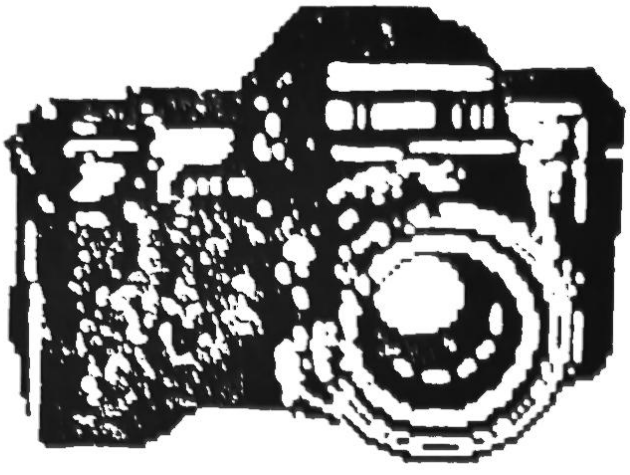
Issue 3 will be published by the second week in October



IN VIEW

MASTERJOYSTICK ?

Mastertronic,who are the market leaders in the C16 software field are to launch their own joystick called the "Magnum". The Magnum has been designed by one of the UK's leading industrial designers and both left and right handed users will be able to use the joystick. The Magnum is quite unique in design (as you can see from the photo right) and should sell in large numbers if Mastertronic market it in the right way. A C16/Plus 4 version complete with adaptor should be out soon!

LIBRARY RETHINK !

The software library we advertised in issue 1 will no longer go ahead, after a lot of thought we have decided that it would be unfair to the software houses who advertise in "20 User". For a long time all the major software houses have been unhappy about the idea of Software Libraries lending their programs and thus reducing sales. We must agree with them and because of this we have stopped all membership to the library and given re-funds to all the people you joined after seeing the advert in Issue 1.

FIREBIRD NEEDS YOU !

We have just received a letter from Firebird Software asking us to mention to you the fact that they are looking for some C16 games to feature on their Silver Range budget label. They are looking for Finished or Part-Finished programs and in some cases even ideas for games. Tony Beckwith at Firebird will evaluate your program within 14 days of receipt and royalty advances of up to £2000 are ready to be taken. What are you waiting for !

Send your programs to:- Tony Beckwith
Software Evaluator
Firebird Software
64/76 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1EU

Publisher:- Elite Machine:- C16/Plus 4 Price:- £7.95 Control:- Keys/Joystick

Elite continue to convert their hits on the C64/Spectrum/Amstrad onto the humble C16/Plus 4. The latest release is Bomb Jack, a big hit in the arcades and a big hit on the other popular formats (C64/Spectrum/Amstrad).

Last month we reviewed Elite's Best C16 game Frank Bruno's Boxing and said that we hoped they could keep the good work up, well with Bomb Jack they haven't come very close. To be honest the C16 version isn't as good as the other 3 versions but what can you expect.

The object of the game is to collect all the bombs from around the screen and avoid being eated by the various flying nasties that inhabit the place. The screen has a background of A Sphinx and a Pyramide and there are several platforms for you to land on. Your little bomb jack character comes complete with a little cape that allows him to fly around the screen reaching the bombs that are at the top of the screen.

When you have collected all the bombs from the screen you are faced with another screen full of bombs except the layout of the platforms are different.

All in all not a bad little game, the only bad points I can think of is the lack of different backgrounds (as in the other versions) but this was almost certainly because of lack a memory. Side 2 of the cassette has a different background but this doesn't really make up for the lack of screens.

< J.G >

SECOND OPINION
This convertion was not as good as I had hoped it would be, the graphics are very good, the sound is passable but I found the gamesplay a little lacking. By no means a bad game but it could have been much better.

< D.B >

SCORES

GRAPHICS	:-	*< 75% >*	*Good Graphics but some colour clashing*
SOUND	:-	*< 75% >*	*Not bad!*
PLAYABILITY	:-	*< 60% >*	*Easy to play but lacking in this department!*
LASTABILITY	:-	*< 65% >*	*Should keep you playing for a while!*
V.F.M	:-	*< 62% >*	*Would have been a better budget title*
OVERALL	:-	*< 70% >*	*Another missed oppertunity by Elite!*

BUDGET ROUND-UP

We take a look at this months Budget Software Releases.

SPEEDKING

Publisher:- Mastertronic Machine:- C16/Plus 4 Price:- £1.99 Control:- Key/Joy

Have you ever though about all those mad motorbike riders going round a race track at extremely high speeds and when they turn round corners their knees are nearly touching the ground. Well here is your chance to compete with another nineteen 'determined riders' on four different tracks. In case you are still not sure what I am talking about then its Mastertronic's new release called Speed King, yet another racing simulator.

This is no ordinary simulator though this is probably about the best one you can find and about the best value for money. It beats Formula 1 and Death Race hands down. The tracks are probably based on their own Formula 1 with the only change being the vehicles used. This does not detract from the game in the slightest as I would still go back and play F.1 after playing this.

The sound is nothing to cheer about with only a drone from the engine and rather small little ditty when you complete the five laps of a track.

About the only fault I can see in this game is the fact that there is only four tracks which after a long playing spell you will probably be able to master. In saying that though since it only costs £2 I am sure that you will probably get more enjoyment out of it than all the other Mastertronics titles.

< KB >

SECOND OPINION
One of Mastertronics best releases to date. At first is looks just the same a F1 Simulator but after a few games you discover that it plays better and has better scrolling and sound. At £1.99, can you afford not to buy it?

< DB >

SCORES

GRAPHICS	*:- < 75% >*	*Watch the way the riders hug the ground at corners!*
SOUND	*:- < 71% >*	*Lots of 'nice' drones and a small tune*
PLAYABILITY	*:- < 92% >*	*No problem!*
LASTABILITY	*:- < 74% >*	*This will hold your interest for days!*
V.F.M.	*:- < 96% >*	*At only £1.99 its a steal!*
OVERALL	*:- < 89% >*	*One of Mastertronic's best!*

BOOTY

Publisher:- Firebird Machine:- C16/Plus 4 Price:- £1.99 Control:- Key/Joy

Booty is a budget game that has been around for about 18 months, since Firebird Software entered into the budget software market in fact, it has however only just been converted to run on the C16 and Plus 4. The Spectrum version sold in large numbers and I am sure the C16 version will too.

The idea of the game is to collect different coloured keys that are scattered about a deserted ship. These coloured keys will open certain coloured doors which in turn will let you collect Pirate Booty (Gold, Cash etc) or another key which will let you open a door somewhere else (Complicated stuff eh!).

The graphics in Booty are very good (there are some super sprites) except for some terrible character clashing when you pass over an object, still can't have everything I suppose.

I hope Firebird don't intend to go back into their back catalogue and release more games that are over 18 months old. Booty gets away with it because it is a good game but the rest of Firebird's old budget titles aren't really worth converting. Come on Firebird, release some original games like Mastertronics.

< DB >

SECOND OPINION
Booty is an above average budget game, and indeed is better than many C16/Plus 4 full price titles but it does show it's age a little. At £1.99 it is a good buy should keep you occupied for a while.

< JB >

SCORES

GRAPHICS	*:- (73%)*	*Pretty Sprites, pity about the character clashing!*
SOUND	*:- (60%)*	*Passable*
PLAYABILITY	*:- (71%)*	*Easy to get into but difficult to master*
LASTABILITY	*:- (65%)*	*Many hours worth of enjoyment*
V.F.M	*:- (85%)*	*At £1.99, need I say more?*
OVERALL	*:- (72%)*	*Not a bad little game!*

SHORT AND SWEET

BUDGET SHORT AND SWEET !

Short and sweet is a column that is just what it says, Short & Sweet. We take a small look at some of this months other budget releases, some good! some bad (Mostly Bad).

Shark By Firebird £1.99
TERRIBLE, TEDIOUS, BORING, DRIVEL ! What more can I say?

The Adventures of Fingers Malone By Mastertronic £1.99
A very good platform and ladders type game, good graphics and good use of colour, smooth animation, above average sound. Well worth buying!

Street Olympics By Mastertronic £1.99
A Track and Field type game, except it is run on a street instead of a track and field. Run along a road, jump a wall, throw a stone, very boring indeed!

Myrid By Atlantis £2.99
This game was written about 6 years ago on the Vic 20 and sold in large quantities, however 6 years on it is a very bad shoot em up with hardly any good points.

Death Race By Atlantis £2.99
A motor racing game where you have to drive through the city streets avoiding other vehicles etc. Not very exciting but at £2.99 its ok.

Space Freeks By Atlantis £2.99
Another old Vic 20 game, another very bad shoot em up, and again no good points!

< DB >

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Hints & tips

Without doubt the best game available on the Plus 4 (and perhaps the CBM 64 and Atari) must be Novagen's Mercenary. The game has both superb vector graphics and that magical addictive quality that keeps you coming back for more. In terms of playability and enjoyment Mercenary is second to none, in the first of a two part series, Johnathan Gilchrist shows you how to get the most from this amazing game.

Novagen's Mercenary must be one of the most enjoyable games ever to grace a home micro, it is very easy to play (well initially anyway) and provides a great challenge to both experts and novices alike. Even after you have escaped from the planet Targ, the game still holds many surprises. In this article (an the one in next month issue) I will try and give you a complete solution to Mercenary Escape from Targ, and also point out some of the little surprises that are hidden deep in the game. If you wish to finish the game on your own then I would suggest that you don't read these articles.

The first thing you should do in the game is to buy the space ship that is offered to you at the start, now fly over to location 11:13. Here you will find the entrance to a hanger, use the hanger lift to descend down into the hanger and then head through the top east door. You will now find yourself in a green room with a very large cheese. This object is not really a cheese, it is actually a very fast space ship (the third fastest in fact, see table below for more details on the speeds of the various ships). Take the cheese and go south until you find the useful armament, take this and head back to the hanger.

Mercenary Ship Guide

Ship	Top Speed (Land)	Top Speed (Air)
Dominion Dart	1650	4950
Palyar Diamond	1650	1650
Cheese	3300	9900
Jet	825	7400
Land Dart	3837	----
Car	825	----
Palyar Brother in Laws New Ship.	1931	5787 (with Plus Key pressed you can reach a speed of **75).
Intergalactic Ship	----	Escape Speed

Now get out of your old ship and drop the cheese, now board the cheese. You will now have to explore the other hangers collecting the various objects you will need for your quest. A table with descriptions and the locations of the various objects is shown over>>

mercinary plus 4 only

Hints & tips

Mercenary Object Guide

Object	Location	Description
Poweramp	09-06	Increases Power of your Ship
Photon Emitter	09-05	Lights up dark rooms
Useful Armament	11-13	Use to Shoot Novabill
Sights	09-06	Gives your ship sights
Cheese	11-13	Fast ship in disguise
Antenna	09-05	For receiving messages in the communications room.
Metal Detector	09-05	Shows which buildings belong to which side, Palyar or Merchanoid
Anti-Grav	09-05	Needed for picking up fuel
Pass	03+15	Needed to enter 03-15 via elevator in hanger

Underground all the hangers are connected, there are several types of doors, each type has to be treated in a different way. The normal door is a rectangle, you can go through a rectangular door by just walking up to it. However you can only go through a triangular door if you have a key that is exactly the same shape, all triangular doors are dark inside so you will have to use the Photon Emitter to look inside them. A door that has two diagonal lines through it is a Transmission room, these rooms warp you into another section of the underground network, however if you are zapped away to somewhere you don't want to be, just go back into the room and it will take you back to where you were before. Doors with one diagonal line through them are also transmission rooms, however they are one way only. The doors with a line from the top right hand corner to the bottom left hand corner act like ordinary Transmission rooms, however they lead to doors with lines the opposite way round, these are exits only and do nothing if entered.

The doors with skull and crossbones on them are Risk doors, they usually have a trap behind them, but not all of them have.

On the colony craft you will find doors with arrows pointing up or down, these are lifts to and from the city.

When you start the game the ship you have is not strong enough to reach the colony craft that is at 65 000 feet, what you need to reach it is the Poweramp, when you have this you can fly up to 65 000 feet and land on the top of the craft. Then use the lift to go into the craft itself. There are several different ways of finishing the game and escaping but perhaps the most basic way is to go to the colony ship and sell some of the objects you have picked up. You will then have enough credits to buy the ship you need to escape.

When on the colony craft you will find a five sided key, if you have this key (and the others) you will be able to use several transmission rooms one of which will zap you to the colony craft. Also the Skull door in the lab (on the colony craft) zaps you back to the city. Thats all for this issue, see you next month!

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PR

ANCO PRESENTS:-

WINTER EVENTS

Publisher:- Anco Machine:- C16/Plus 4 Price:- £7.95 Control:- Joystick

Winter Events must be without doubt the most eagerly awaited C16 game so far. After several months of waiting, Anco have finally released what is without doubt the best game to appear on the C16.

Winter Events is a winter sports simulation (very like US.Gold's Winter Sports) for up to four players. Each player can choose a different country to compete for and if you win a gold medal in any event your chosen country's national anthem will be played.

The game has a fast loading system which first loads in the opening ceremony, then the main menu then the first event. The opening ceremony features a little man running along through a snow filled stadium and then up to light the Olympic Flame with his torch. The animation and soundtrack in the opening ceremony is about the best I have seen on the C16.

After the opening ceremony has finished the computer then loads the main menu from cassette, this menu allows you to choose to number of players (1-4), compete in all events, compete in selected events, practice some events or see the World Records for each event (These can be loaded in or saved when a record is broken). After selecting the events you want to compete in you have to type in the players names and choose the country they wish to compete for. After this the first events is loaded and the game proper begins!

The Events

Event 1 BIATHLON

In the Biathlon the player has to ski across a snow covered mountain shooting targets in the quickest possible time. There are fifteen targets and you have fifteen cartridges, each miss adds a five second penalty to you final score. This event is exactly the same as the US Gold Winter Sports Biathlon except that the background graphics are different (log cabins ets instead of only trees). However the Winter Events Biathlon is more fun to play and is technically better.

Event 2 SLALOM

The object of this event is to ski your skier down a hill weaving in and out of flags, if you miss more than three flags you are disqualified. Each player gets two runs down the hill in order to improve his time. The player has a 3D view of the hill as he ski's down, the trees etc past by and there are also bumps in the snow that make you jump up. Again the graphics are excellent and this is one of the most enjoyable events in the whole game.

Event 3 SKI JUMP

The object of this event is to jump the longest distance possible. You rush down the ski jump at an incredible speed then fly through the air for as long as possible before landing with as much style and grace as possible. The problem in this event is the landing, it does take some time to master. The backdrop in this event is very good, nice snow capped mountains, trees etc. Again, super graphics and one of the most enjoyable events to play.

Event 4 SPEED SKATING

In this event you can race against another player around track for 300 meters. This event is all about getting your skating going rythmically. If you pause in your skating your speed soon slows down. The fastest event in the whole game and one that you will master in time.

Event 5 BOBSLED

My favourite event in the whole game. In this event you must guide your bobsled down the run in as short a time as possible. The graphics for this event are the best you will see on a C16, the screen has a 3D view of the bob run and also a map of the course so that at a glance you can see how far you have left to go. Again thsi event takes some time to master but after a few goes you will soon be whizzing down the course at top speed.

Event 6 DOWNHILL

The aim of this event is simple, get down to the bottom of the hill as quickly as possible. The flags on the course will show you the route to take but watch out for the trees, touch them and you will end up going down the hill on your head. The graphics in this event are much the same as in the Slalom but the event itself is more difficult.

Overall this really is a super game, every C16 owner should have this in his/her collection, the graphics are amazing and the sound is out of this world, Kingsoft (the German company who wrote the game for Anco) should be very proud of this game, taking the game as a whole it is better than Winter Sports on the C64, the C64 game has 2 bad events (Figure Skating and Free Skating), Winter Events has 6 great events. I don't think the C16 is capable of a better game!

< D.B >

SECOND OPINION

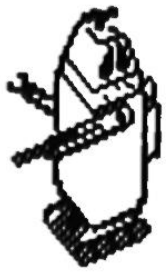
What more can be said? A super game, go out and buy it now!

< J.G >

SCORES

GRAPHICS	:-	< 95% >	The best graphics yet seen on a C16!
SOUND	:-	< 90% >	The best music heard on a C16!
PLAYABILITY	:-	< 90% >	A great game to play with friends!
LASTABILITY	:-	< 86% >	Will keep you entertained for weeks!
V.F.M	:-	< 90% >	At £7.99 you can't buy better!
OVERALL	:-	< 93% >	Best winter sports game available on a micro!

ROBO KNIGHT



Publisher:- Americana Machine:- C16/Plus 4 Price:- £2.99 Control:- Joy Only

"Americana", the new budget label from US Gold have just released two C16/Plus 4 games, The Hulk (a re-release of Adventure International's Hulk adventure, now at a price of only £2.99) and Robo Knight. This month we will take a look a Robo Knight.

The first releases from new budget labels are usually really bad, however Americana have managed to release one of the best C16 games available. Robo Knight looks like a very polished piece of programming. The game has a very classy look about it. The opening screen is very good, good use is made of sound and the actual game graphics and movement as superb.

The object of the game is to collect 15 Magical Shields which will unlock the Castle exit so that you can reach the Sword of Power. Very easy you may think, the castle isn't even inhabited by anything, but what it does have are moving floors, Stepping stones, drills and wells.

The gamesplay is very simple and should appeal even to young players, however it becomes more difficult to reach some of the shields when you are faced with big gaps in the floor and only stepping stones to get you to the other side.

Robo Knight makes the best use of colours I have seen on the C16 or Plus 4, the castle is very colourful and the graphics are very well defined. The movement is the smoothest I have seen on the C16 and there are no attribute problems.

Overall a first rate release from this new label, lets hope they can keep it up!

< D.B >

SECOND OPINION

I was very surprised by this game, the screen shots on the back of the cassette look super, however under the screen shots it says "Screen shots may vary depending on computer". I thought to myself, Oh no! Its a C64 screen shot, however when I loaded the game up,the game was exactly as described on the cassette. For only £2.99, well worth buying!

< J.G >

SCORES

GRAPHICS :- < 94% > Superb!
SOUND :- < 80% > Superb!
PLAYABILITY :- < 90% > A doddle to play!
LASTABILITY :- < 70% > May be a bit suspect
V.F.M :- < 90% > Great Value
OVERALL :- < 90% > Must be a hit!

ADVENTURE PAGE

In issue 3 or 4 we will be starting a page for all C16 and Plus 4 adventure buffs. The page will have news of the latest C16/Plus 4 adventures, hints and tips and any other adventure chit chat. The page will be written by ALISDAIR CREANOR and he is looking for any hints/tips, reviews etc you may have. Or perhaps you have a problem, Alisdair may be able to help! Write to him at the following address:- Alisdair Creanor
31 Williamwood Park West
Glasgow
G44 3TE

CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED

We are looking for reviews or articles of any kind for use in "20 User", if you have written an article on any aspect of the C16 or Plus 4 then please send us a copy and we may print it in "20 User". We are also looking for program listings for the C16 or Plus 4? Readers letters are also welcome. For "20 User" to increase in size we need contributions from our members, that is what a User Club is all about! Go on, get cracking!

MEMBERS REVIEWS

Project Nova By Gremlin Graphics

"From novice to battle weary veteran. This action spectacular will find the flaws in your super-human brain" is what Gremlin Graphics think. However thsi game won't find any flaws in any brain (even Dad can play this one). If you want to play it you will have to read the instructions (and there is plenty of them!) because there are plenty of keys.

The sound leaves a lot to be desired and instead of helping you it is confusing. All the sound is poor except for the Hyper Drive FX. The graphics do look 3D at some points but at others they are boring old 2D. This game took me 2 hours to solve and I won't play it very often.

If you have the money then you could buy it if you really want, but if you don't then don't worry, you are no missing much.

SCORES (out of ten)

Graphics	5
Sound	4
Playability	8
Value	5
Overall	6

Review by Paul Kettrick

BACK ISSUE'S

If you would like a copy of issue one of "20 User" then please send a cheque for £1.25 (£1.50 Overseas) made payable to Micro Media to the usual Micro Media address.