COMPUTER, VIDEO & ON-LINE GAME NEWS

FORE-PLAY
When gamers demand the best in sports sims, they look to only a few companies for such programs. One is Access Software Incorporated, famous for their LINKS golf sim titles. Now Access is announcing that their next generation golf sim product, LINKS LS, will start shipping in May of this year. The golf engine has been completely redesigned and a number of enhancements have been added to the environment. The game will now support res's up to 1280x1024 in 16 million colors and 1600x1200 in 65,000 colors. The new title will feature the Kapalua Resort in Maui as its "home" resort. Many of the highlights in the Maui area are included by way of special multimedia presentations on this title's CD-ROM disc. You can explore the clubhouse with full 360-degrees of movement via the company's new Virtual World Engine--the same engine that was used in the company's best-selling Under A Killing Moon entertainment title.

Other enhancements include camera angles that you select for each shot, with as many as four cameras. You can play with a partner located anywhere in the world, thanks to the built-in modem and network play features. Live Action stereo sound automatically tracks the game's action. Also included in LINKS LS is the first Tour Player--Arnold Palmer at the La Trobe Country Club. You can play with the legendary golfer, or play as him. You'll also get a look at Arnie's personal library and workshop.

The great news is that LINKS LS will be fully compatible with all existing LINKS 386 PRO courses. No need to rush out and buy new courses simply because you've managed to obtain the most recent software. And you'll also see two extra course series from Access Software that will be created in addition to the Links Championship Courses. They are The Tour Player Series and the Resort Series. This new golf sim is for IBM and compatible computers. [Editor's note: By the way, the LS stands for LEGENDS IN SPORTS.]

FORBIDDEN LANDS YOURS TO EXPLORE
Well, friends, it finally happened! Activision is now shipping ZORK NEMESIS, a title that continues the 15-year Zork adventure game tradition. Using Z-Vision, this game for Windows(R) 95 and MS-DOS(R) CD-ROM machines features some of the most highly advanced graphics yet seen. The adventure is set in a desolate corner of the Great Underground Empire. You'll travel to five richly detailed worlds where you'll uncover a terrible tragedy and master the ancient science of alchemy. This art enables you to purify lesser, gross matter into greater, more refined substances. The alchemical elements of

earth, water, fire and air are the themes for four of the worlds, while the fifth world is the location from which you start your journey--an abandoned, 17th century-style temple.

Once you're in the temple, you'll discover an altar surrounded by four ornate sarcophagi. By clicking on these four tombs, you are asked to help the spirits of the Underground Empire's four great alchemists who have been trapped by an evil Nemesis. The alchemists urge you to return to your individual worlds to recover rare alchemical metals which will enable the four of them, plus you, to eliminate the Nemesis forever. You must uncover the reason why the Nemesis has captured these poor souls and why he seeks their knowledge. And you won't be able to do this unless you learn the art of alchemy during your adventure.

You'll meet highly interesting characters, test your knowledge and utilize deductive reasoning to solve all of the puzzles. When one is completed, you're rewarded with live-action video flashback sequences that reveal each character's background and provide information about the four environments. With Z-Vision, your get a surround, 360-degree perspective with thousands of animations and 50 minutes of live-action video footage.

[Editor's note: Mudgeon has started his review of the game and his initial reaction to the visuals was "bloody amazing!" Rarely does our publication's elder statesman ever offer such verbiage without just cause! This is truly a good sign that Zork Nemesis is a totally awesome game! We'll learn more when Mudgeon completes his review.]

JACK IS BACK--WITH MORE!
One of the "hit" titles a few months ago was an interactive game show title entitled YOU DON'T KNOW JACK. The action was intense, the questions totally absurd, and the entire offering was a complete waste of time--valuable time--but proved to be one of the most engaging entertainments available for any computer platform. THe game combines classic trivia with pop-culture references in a witty, brain-twisting mixture that is truly quite challenging. There's an audio track with original music, sound effects, and dialogue that can only be considered hilarious. There are three categories of questions: Gibberish(TM), Jack Attack(TM) and Multiple Choice. The subject matter ranges from Scooby Doo and The Love Boat to Hamlet and Greek mythology. The games themselves are organized into 21 questions, with 10 questions in rounds one and two, followed by the Jack Attack third round. A seven question game is also included.

Now YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Question Pack has debuted. This add-on software offers 400 new questions for the wildly popular quiz show game. Plus, YOU DON'T KNOW JACK X-tra Large is shipping which not only includes the new 400 questions, but the original 800 as well. From Berkeley Systems, the game is for Windows 95 and Macintosh. The game was developed by Chicago-based Jellyvision.

COMPLETE CARNAGE
One of the most appealing and most dynamic game companies within the Macintosh development environment is Bungie Software. Naturally, because the folk who run this company are rather smart, they are also working on porting their leading titles to Windows as well. However, that does not mean they intend to neglect the Macintosh gamer. Far from it! In fact, Bungie has a new product entitled Marathon Infinity. This new title will let you continue playing Bungie's initial smash-hit, Marathon, and play on in the Marathon world forever--if you so desire.

Marathon Infinity elaborates on the Marathon story and reveals many of the mysteries

exposed in the first two games about Durandal, Tycho and the player. Either through a network, or as a single plyer, you can play through the story and the maps are also designed for multiplayer network combat. Truly considerate, folks! The game environment is now more unpredictable and demanding as different physics models are applicable to consecutive levels. The Map Editor that was used to create Marathon is now included, enabling you to create and distribute maps on-line. The Editor possesses a fully-integrated texture mode so you can walk through your blank levels and paint textures on surfaces--at will. Included is a Physics Editor and Shape and Sound Installers which allow you to customize the Marathon world to your specific taste.

Marathon 2: Durandal Strategy Guide is also now available. Written by our Associate Publisher, Tuncer Deniz, he is also the editor-in-chief and publisher of Inside Mac Games and he knows this guy as well as the actual developers. He is a Marathon authority and this guide not only gives the wherewithal to complete Marathon 2: Durandal, but also a glimpse into the way Bungie designers produce these outstanding levels of play.

Marathon Infinity is native to the Power Mac and requires a 68040 or higher, a CD-ROM drive, 8-bit color monitor and Macintosh System Software v. 7.x or later.

Now here's something we alluded to earlier that should be of EXTREME interest to Windows 95 gamers. Marathon 2: Durandal has now been released for Windows 95 machines. With 16-bit, texture-mapped SVGA graphics, movement through multiple elevations with 5 degrees of freedom, 16-bit sound in active panning stereo, you'll be able to experience first-hand why this game took the Macintosh world by storm. The title boasts easy installation, a replay feature to review your carnage, performance-boosting options, and a gripping science-fiction story that becomes more and more complex as the game is played.

For more information on all of Bungie's products, check out their World Wide Web site at http://www.bungie.com/.

CLASSIC MAC GAMES TOGETHER
One of the leading publications in Macintosh environs is MacWorld. One of the leading Macintosh game developers is Casady & Greene. Combine the two and you get Casady & Greene's MacWorld Game Hall of Fame(TM) CD-ROM release. This CD-ROM packs five MacWorld Magazine award winning games that were developed by Casady & Greene. The disc contains Crystal Quest(TM), a fast action game of grab-and-shoot where you must try to collect as many crystals as you are able and escape through the gates in record time to collect bonus rounds. Then there's Sky Shadow, a fast-action shooter where its interceptors versus aliens and screaming air raids. Glider 4.0(TM) is another hot title which is an acrobatic paper glider classic with some great graphics. Crystal Crazy(TM) is the sequel to Crystal Quest and offers more lunatic special effects where you must solve the puzzles, grab the crystals and avoid those hatching space bunnies. Mission Thunderbolt(TM) is a role-playing game of intrigue and espionage that takes place in the future. You must recover the anti-matter weapon from the evil aliens who have hidden this powerful item underground. A couple of provisos for this CD-ROM! First, these five games will ALL work on NON Power Macs. Sky Shadow and Glider 4.0 ONLY work on 6100 and 8100 and Performa 6100 series of Macs.

FLIGHT SIM SUPREME
Anyone who delves or dabbles in the world of military simulations knows that Jame's Information Group is the premier international defense-industry publisher. Electronic Arts certainly understands that company's expertise and signed an alliance not long ago with

Jane's to produce tactical sims under the Jane's Combat Simulations brand. The first product resultant of this agreement is now available--Advanced Tactical Fighters(TM). The most advanced jet fighters in the world are simulated thanks to Jane's vast resources of recently declassified information. This is the only flight sim that features seven of these cutting-edge aircraft in one title: the Boeing F-22, F-117A Nighthawk, B-2A Spirit, X-29, X-31 EFM, ASTOVL, and the Dassault Rafale C. This offering will support as many as eight players on a net, or two players via modem. You can combine forces or go head-to-head in dogfight action. In multiplayer mode, over 30 aircraft are available to fly in the network.

There are digitized special effects, including realistic damage to the aircraft, detailed explosions, and movable flight surfaces. You'll be able to experiment with new dogfighting techniques plus get "hands-on" with new weapons systems and flight modes. There's realistic sights, sounds, and thinking with this new offering.

SPEED NEED
Electronic Arts has also released, for the Sony PlayStation, Road & Track Presents: The Need for Speed. This is a fast-paced, realistic driving sim that lets you compete with a friend in either the single monitor split screen, or using the video console's link-up feature that connects two monitors and game systems for game play. This is the first time a PSX title actually combines these capabilities in a single title. Plus, the game employs a frame rate of 30 frames per second (fps). You drive one of eight exotic sports cars, all employing an improved physics model, photorealistic graphics and a new light sourcing technology that lets you set the time of day for each track. You switch, on-the-fly, between four real-time racing views and audio samples taken on a test track are used in the game, all encoded with Dolby Surround Sound(TM) Digital playback. Plus, there are 14 music tracks. Watch for a Sega Saturn version to release this summer, and a PC CD-ROM version was released in September of last year.

DISTRIBUTION CONTINUES
An extremely lucrative distribution agreement has been renewed between Interplay Productions and LucasArts Entertainment Company. This agreement calls for Interplay to be the exclusive Norht American OEM distributor of LucasArts software for PCs and Mac computers. The OEM division is a leading provider of entertainment, educational, sports, arcade, reference and edutainment software to the hardware community.

A BETA PROGRAM
If you're very keen on beta testing, here's quite an opportunity for you. Kesmai currently is running an open beta on the Internet for their new Air Warrior for Windows multiplayer air combat sim. This sim features World War I, II, and Korean War aircraft. Just for a short period of time, you can play Air Warrior over the inet with free flight time. Of course, you regular inet service provider charges will still apply, but you can test your flying skills against some of the best sim pilots in the world. This beta program goes through April 21st. If you're interested in becoming part of this beta test, visit the Kesmai WWW site at http://www.kesmai.com. You'll learn about system requirements, what software to download, plus complete flying instructions.

CHEERS IN SPACE
Laughter and friendship make for fine adventures. And Legend Entertainment is going to accomplish just that with their October 1996 release of Callahan's Crosstime Saloon. This

game is set in what appears to be a present-day bar. Uh, that is until you note that the regulars of the establishment are actually space aliens, travelers and other unusual folk. This game, according to Legend, is "friendly like the Cheers bar, but has a cosmic clientele like the Star Wars cantina. It's the place where every being knows your name." This game is comprised of six adventures, all organized similarly to a TV sitcom where each episode presents the band of regulars with a new challenge. These episodes may be played in any order and offer comic insights into the human condition. You'll travel from the streets of Transylvania to the rain forests of Brazil and the edges of the Universe as you help the Callahan's regulars solve some thorny problems. This theme was popularized in the seven Callahan Crosstime Saloon novels created by author Spider Robinson, who has won three Hugo awards and a Nebula. The game will be released for PC CD-ROM.

INTERACTIVE GIFFORD, MICHAELS & DIEDORFT
Thanks to the work of OverTime Sports, a new ABC Monday Night Football interactive game is en route! The company, formed as a joint venture between Capital Cities/ABC Inc. and Spectrum HoloByte, will create games based on the former's sports properties. The game will be "hosted" by television luminaries Al Michaels, Frank Gifford and Dan Dierdorft, with additional color commentary from folk like Brent Musburger and Lynn Swann. The game even includes the theme song by Hank Williams, Jr., All My Rowdy Friends Are Here On Monday Night."

Players from the 30 NFL teams will actually have their player number on the back of their jerseys and they'll perform according to their stats for 20 categories. Plus, there will be full-motion video highlights, all supplied by NFL Films.   The game features texture-mapped polygon players with life-like passing, running, catching, blocking and tackling skills. Plus, there are nine TV camera angles and on-field mikes that capture sound effects, and on-air TV graphics as well. The game will also have an on-line presence, in conjunction with ABC Sports/America Online, Spectrum HoloByte and OT Sports WWW sites. These sites will feature national on-line tournaments and leagues. The title is being released for PC CD-ROM and Sony PlayStation computers.

[Editor's note: In the RUMOR department, we hear that OverTime Sports is being considered for acquisition by Disney! Naught confirmed, but plenty of speculation.]

START YOUR ENGINES
Papyrus' IndyCar Racing II, originally released in 1993, has been enhanced in a number of ways and was re-released in November '95 when it received high praise from many as a result. Described as the definitive computer racing experience, IndyCar Racing II earned the following: Editor's Choice Award, PC Gamer; Golden Triad Award, Computer Game Review; Five Star Review, Computer Gaming World; Critic's Choice Award, CD-ROM Today; Codie Awards for Best Sports Program and Best Simulation.

Officially licensed by IndyCar, IndyCar Racing II's 15 tracks accurately represent the 1995 racing season's cars, tracks, drivers, sponsors, track-side scenery and billboards. IndyCar Racing II for DOS CD is available through multimedia retailers at an estimated street price of $54.95. A Windows 95 and PowerMac hybrid will be available mid-1996.

COOL SOUNDS FROM NEW LOCATION
One of the premiere developers in the digital music field has decided to move to larger quarters. Passport Designs is en route to new facilities: 1151D Triton Drive, Foster City, CA

94404. Their telephone number is 415-349-6224 and their fax number is 415-349-8008.

FREEBIE
Ah, the magic word -- FREE! Sierra on-Line, inc., has decided to release what they call an anti-utility as part of their Leisure Suit Larry 7: Yank Hers Away promo plan. Scheduled to release late this year, this new "Larry Pops Up!" works on Windows machines. You put it into your Windows Startup directory and, as long as you keep working on your computer, nothing happens. However, leave your computer unattended for a certain amount of time, and Larry will pop up with verbal assaults aimed at you, your job, your sister. You never really know what Larry will say. You can control the time between pop-ups but you cannot control what he says. Plus, the company will post new collections of Larry lines at its WWW site each month from now until the title ships this fall. The site may be reached at http://www.sierra.com.

GAINING GOODIES: COMPANIES & PERSONNEL
Amusement is a high value commodity item. These days, everyone wishes to be amused, entertained, and want high quality products to satisfy those needs. To continue their foray into the amusement market biz, Sega Enterprises has now agreed to glom onto the JPM Group. This group of four companies (Ace Coin Equipment Ltd., Crystal Leisure, Ltd., JPM International Limited, and Negocia Internacional de Technologia SA) comprise Great Britain's largest game equipment manufacturer. This acquisition is going to enable Sega to become a real player in the European amusement market with everything from carnival games and pinball machines to sim rides and video games.

Joining Sega of America from Atari North America is none other than Tedd Hoff, who will become the new senior vice president, sales and marketing services. Prior to becoming Atari North America's president, Hoff launched Fox Interactive and the interactive division at 20th Century Fox.

AQUATIC HUNTING
The first sub sim from Strategic Simulations, Inc., is now available. Entitled Silent Hunter(TM), this is a full-featured and comprehensive game that involves you in World War II sub warfare. You command an American sub in the Pacific and your duty is to sink as much enemy tonnage as possible. If you do you job well, you'll become a decorated naval hero earning assignments on bigger and better class subs as your career progresses. Even weather and sea conditions realistically impact your game play. You use your mouse to easily control your sub through pull-down menus and a point-and-click interface. Technical advice was provided by William "Bud" Gruner. He was the commanding officer of USS Skate during World War II and was awarded both the Navy Cross and Silver Star medals. In fact, he is featured in portions of the multimedia presentations where he provides narration of technical and tactical matters. You'll see your ship from a first person perspective and get an eagle's eye view of maps that keep you up to date on your tactical situation. This product is for PC CD-ROM computers.

PACKED WITH POWER & GAMES
Acceleration is a key to the popularity of many PC-based games these days. For those with older CPUs, and those with Pentium processors, acceleration adds to the enjoyment of algorithmic intensive titles. Available now with full Windows 95 compatibility is the Paradise Tasmania 3D game acceleration board from the Multimedia PC Group of Philips

Semiconductors and Philips Electronics. This product offers low-cost, high performance PCI 3D acceleration running under Windows 95 Direct3D API. You'll find pricing around $250 for this board and it plus into any available PCI slot. Plus, the board uses your current 2D video card so that nasty problem of having to change drivers is nonexistent. The board comes with GTE Interactive's FX Fighter and Tank Commander from Domark. Plus, once you register with the manufacturer Philips, you'll receive Mindscape's SU-27 Flanker, CyberSpeed and Air Power. The board offers 640x480 res with 64,000 colors, texture mapping, Z-buffering (for hidden surface removal), and Gouraud shading and alpha blending. The board has a five-year warranty and driver updates are available at http://www.paradisemmp.com.

VIRTUAL PRESIDENCY

The thrill of running a presidential campaign may be yours in President '96. This is the on-line Presidential sim now appearing on Time/CNN's AllPolitics site which you may reach at http://www.allpolitics.com, plus in the bulletin boards and chat rooms at Time Warner's Pathfinder site at http://www.pathfinder.com. You become a presidential campaign manager for one of ten fictional candidates. You must shape the political platform in this race for the White House. The electoral processes are closely mirrored in this game which also contains those marvelous political scandals.

At the home page, you can decide if you wish to go to the candidate's HQ. There you'll find bios, video clips you can download of commercials and debates, RealAudio soundbytes of speeches and theme songs, election charts, political cartoons and photos. The latest gossip and news may also be read, all to keep you informed and moving your candidate's poll numbers upwards. You can also meet at these sites to discuss the real political campaign, as well. President '96 is the second on-line venture from Crossover Technologies and The Markle Foundation.

MTV'S INTENSE HEROINE, AEON FLUX, BECOMES ACTION GAME

Viacom New Media has announced the development of MTV's Aeon Flux in an action game for Sony PlayStation and PC CD-ROM.   Aeon Flux is described as a spellbinding heroine hellbent on completing her dangerous missions in a bizarre battle of spy vs. spy in an industrial-techno futuristic world. This leather-clad, lethal beauty is created by the animator Peter Chung and is in development by Cryo Interactive Entertainment, a Paris-based developer.

The concept is for players to guide this real-time, 3D babe in black leather, through six missions that involve more that 35 levels. Of course (mai oui), she's forced to resort to reconnaissance, sabotage and theft, not to mention general havoc.

Some of Viacom New Media's current line-up of games are Star Trek: Deep Space Nine--Harbinger, MTV's Beavis and Butt-Head in Virtual Stupidity, as well as the product line aimed for kids, The Indian in the Cupboard and Nick Jr. Play Math!   For more information Viacom New Media's World Wide Web address is http://www.viacomnewmedia.com.

VR CONFERENCE

VR NEWS has organized Virtual Humans '96. This is the world's first conference that focuses on business uses of virtual humans living in virtual reality worlds. The conference is going to be conducted at the Hyatt Regency Alicante in Anaheim, CA, on June 19th and 20th. The conference is supported by Silicon Graphics, Inc. Leading researchers and practitioners from a wide range of disciplines will join together to discuss the development of humanoid

technologies. There will be experts in computer animation, real-time simulation, artificial life and intelligent synthesis discussing and demonstrating their current work to the audience. Info on registration may be obtained from EDS Detroit Virtual Reality Center at 313-974-5686.

POWERING 3D DEVELOPMENT
The use of offshore talent continues to build steam as the costs for such work makes overall production budgets somewhat less debilitating for software publishers. Taking this scenario even one step further is 47-Tek, Inc. The company has just acquired over 300 software engineers in China who will develop 3D content for digital media. The engineers are from Inventec in Taiwan who owns some 40 percent of 47-Tek. The new goal for the company is to bring multiplayer games to ITV and the Internet.

3D TOOLS GENERATE NEW UNIT
As the appetite and demand increase for more and more 3D content, company's formerly heavyweights in the CAD industry and the high-end graphics biz are now devoting more and more of their R&D rolls to the creation of new 3D tools. Such is the case with Autodesk who has now started an independent business unit to do just that--Kinetix. The unit will work on design, film, interactive game and video technologies and leverage those capabilities into tools for the WWW and MS Windows NT workstations. The company's award-winning 3D Studio modeling and animation app will soon ship, reworked, into 3D Studio MAX for Windows NT. Plus, Kinetix has already revealed Hyperwire, a WWW authoring tool that is icon-based and uses Java to create 2D and 3D titles.

WAIT NO MORE
What wonderful expressions of glee formulate upon our lips when networks jam--sometimes thanks to Sprint closing off access--just as you were about to re-connect with that marketing page containing all of that new, super info you need for your product intro.   Again, additional comments of rather singular hostility occur when the graphic downloads require the patience of a saint. Open Market, Inc., is attempting to do something about cybercramming with the introduction of their OM-Express product. This offering will retrieve desired WWW info, independently, making that data available for perusal at accelerated viewing and offline access. The program will reach out and grab requested pages at times you specify, interact with on-line info seamlessly so that when you click on "purchase" on your locally-stored page, the program will connect you to the site for payment. Plus, you can do your WWW page monitoring easily and quickly, just saving those pages that have actually changed. The program monitors all passwords and user IDs as well. Content providers, on-line service providers and commercial Web sites as well as frequent WWW users, are all considered prime potential customers for this offering. You can check-out the beta software at http://www.openmarket.com/express

SHOCKWAVE SUPERIORITY
For those of us involved in the development of super-special effects for our World Wide Web sites, visiting sites of interest can help with our own work. One of the newest sites that incorporates Macromedia's Shockwave is the new Nissan Pathfinder Web site. Here you'll actually take an African safari without leaving your office, entering an interactive tour of Botswana. Two more adventures are in the works by the development team, one in Kenya

and one in Tanzania. The site was created by both DBWA/Chiat and Jamison/Gold Consulting and may be reached at http://www.nissanmotors.com.

On-line Stuff

500K PLUS NOW WITH C/NET
That sense of community that so many sites strive for apparently has been successfully attained by C/NET: The Computer Network. They have announced that more than 500,000 folk have registered, voluntarily, as members of this online WWW site at http://www.cnet.com/. Members is not required to enter the c/net area, by the way. All that you need to do to register, though, is simply provide your email address and some demographic info. You can then join in the polls, exclusive contests and areas for posting goodies. You're also eligible to receive the largest email newsletter on the WWW called Digital Dispatch which informs you as to the goings-on within the c/net community.

NOW OFFERS INTERNET USERS CALENDARS AND ADDRESS BOOKS
Two new products have been announced by Now Software Inc., time management software developer for Mac and Windows computers. This software is the solution to publishing, updating and capturing calendar and address book information on the World Wide Web.

Now's Up-to-Date Web Publisher automatically creates and maintains calendars and address books in familiar formats within Web pages--with no HTML (hypertext markup language) programming required.   Now's two new titles; Now Up-to-Date v.1.5 for Window and Now Up-to-Date & Contact v.3.6 for the Macintosh, allow users to drag-and-drop published information from Web pages into their personal calendars and address books.

Now Software has also restructured their Web site (www.nowsoft.com) to serve as the source for calendars and address books on the World Wide Web. The new Now Software Web site, dubbed the Time Management Network, serves as the central clearing house for Internet users to locate calendars and address books.Time Management Network generously offers individual users and Web publishers free software to download and try for both Windows and Macintosh platforms. Folks that are interested in viewing Web locations that publish calendars and directories using Now Up-to-Date Web Publisher should view Atlantic Records (www.atlantic-records.com), Now Software (www.nowsoft.com), Sports Illustrated (//pathfinder.com/si) the Wall Street Journal (http://adsales.wsj.com), Working Solo (www.acmedia.com), and Four11 (www.Four11.com/).   Later this month some biggies who will seek the assistance of Now's calendars and directories are: American Comedy Network, BankAmerica Ventures, Dartmouth College, Disney Interactive, FMS Techniques, Golden Apple Network Services Inc., HotWired, InfoWorld Electric, Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts General Hospital, Maxperts, Showtime Networks and Sony Music Corp.