

**DUP\_MAR**

Dark Unicorn Productions

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|               | <i>TITLE :</i><br>DUP_MAR   |                   |                  |
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## Chapter 1

# DUP\_MAR

### 1.1 Dark Unicorn Dispatch Newsletter

The Dark Unicorn Dispatch - May Edition  
"An Entertaining and Informative Look Into The Amiga and CD32"

Let's~Rock~and~Roll!  
View~The~Logo

Dark Unicorn Productions is now LIVING on the Internet!  
Get our latest files from ftp site: ftp.netnet.net -or-  
our new WWW page at www.eskimo.com/~drizzit/dup/dup.html

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### 1.3 The Editorial Page

#### THE EDITORIAL PAGE

Finally, the wait is over and good old Amiga is purchased. Since there are already TONS of text files floating around about the C= buyout I have no intentions of carrying on in there about it. Instead I am including the very well written Amiga Report Special Edition to catch everyone up on the C= situation. I have much more important things to discuss other than rehashing old news.

This issue is a special one. We are now located on the Internet. It may not sound like much, but a lot of people have put a lot of time and effort into making this transition, and I want to thank everyone for their personal contributions to the move. You are not forgotten. More about the internet in the net

WELCOME~TO~THE~INTERNET

column. Die hard Dispatch readers will notice the absence of the HARDWARE REVIEWS column. The reasoning is quite good, I cannot afford the latest hardware and we are still not yet big enough to warrant major companies sending the stuff to us for review, sooooo.... Until that time comes, we will keep you hot on the Internet instead.

So, you are wondering what DUP thinks about the new buyout? Well, here is what I think. ESCOM has the power to bring the Amiga back, or to finish her off. The worst part is that I feel for some reason that the descision has already been made and we will have to just wait and see what it is. ESCOM seems to have a good future and with any luck, the Amiga will be part of it. Regardless of the descision, the Amiga will live on for at least a few more years and DUP along with her. With any luck, the Amiga will be back with a vengeance and a slick new process- or and the hottest OS on the planet. Already rumors of a new FMV card are on the horizon. Be sure to check out the rest of the newsletter to learn more about it!

Finally, the last thing on the list. One more plead (then I will leave you all alone) for you all to start supporting the developers. It is going to be a trying time for developers for awhile until ESCOM shifts into high gear and gets products out the door. Remember, good shareware developers go on to become good commercial developers so don't forget them

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when you spend the cash to pick up Image FX 2.0 or plop down the mucho dinero for Final Writer. If you want more CD development, get a CD32 compatible drive and start buying the stuff. Money talks. Write to or send E\*Mail to some of these big guys and TELL them how much you want to get good stuff like a Wordsworth CD chock full of fonts and clip art. Developers listen. In the new column for the Internet we will try and provide you with E\*mail addresses that you can use to get heard. I was talking to a guy from VISION software (yes, one more chance to plug ROADKILL - C'mon go buy the thing) and he said they actually LOST money on Roadkill and that to me is totally amazing. For a change a great game finally poked its nose up and everyone is either pirating it or missing it. They are already making tracks (no pun intended) to the PC realm with Super Skidmarks II and other product. Let's not give them the TIME to write for other platforms. Give them the incentive to ONLY make Amiga products. Don't let these talented companies get away!

Enjoy the newsletter and you all have my best wishes for the future!

- Shane R. Monroe  
Dark Unicorn Productions

## 1.4 Coming Attractions

COMING ATTRACTIONS  
By Shane R. Monroe

With the buyout war finally finished, I have a feeling this section is going to grow quite quickly in the future. Until the mad race of developers starts, I will go ahead and give you all the latest gossip, new releases, and basic talk floating around. Most of this is factual, but some of it is heresay so don't quote me on any of it. If something seems exceptionally hard to swallow, or I know is just a passing rumor, I will indicate it so.

... Microprose announced it will be porting over its popular games COLONIZATION and PIZZA TYCOON for the Amiga. No word yet on the platform but I suspect that at least the initial release will be AGA only. I am not holding my breath for a CD32 version.

... UFO: TERRORS OF THE DEEP is -not- scheduled for release on the Amiga, but now that the buyout is completed, maybe that will change. I would certainly expect it to be AGA only - and certainly no CD32 version.

... Speaking of UFO, those awaiting an ECS version will have to wait no longer. It is shipping in Europe and we should see it on these shores soon. For those of you with bare A1200's or CD32/SX1's, this might be a good way to get a little bit more speed out of the game. If you haven't already bought the game, you might want to hold off and see how much difference there is. The speed trade off might be worth it.

... September marks the month that PRIMAL RAGE will be released on the CD32 and assumably the Amiga AGA platform. God, death games rule. With this hit arcade game in my collection, I may never get anything done.

... Did I fail to mention last issue that Super Street Fighter II is being

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ported? Yee haw. Hope it is dramatically better than SF II.

... Arcane looks like there are going to give us yet another arcade adventure game in the vein of Darkmere. A new Finnish company is doing the code; I only pray they are HALF as good as the Finnish Bloodhouse of Stardust fame.

... Gametek hasn't abandoned the Amiga. Their hot game BRUTAL looks like it is coming for the Amiga. Looking forward to a CD32 version.

... TFX is STILL coming. For those still waiting, they are doing extensive beta testing to make sure it is done 100% right for the Amiga. CD32 version as mentioned before, no no more, and future support of the Amiga will be heavily weighted on sales of TFX, so go out and buy it damn it. The release of INFERNO is the next product to make it if we support TFX.

... Bored of SETTLERS and LORDS OF THE REALMS yet? A new strategy game is coming from Gametek called BALDIES. Looks just yummy. Kinda looks like a cross between Settlers and CIVILIZATION.

... VIRTUAL RACING did well on the Sega Genesis and now we might get a crack at something similar. LEADING LAP will bring a VR meets HARD DRIVIN'. It is being made in conjunction with a Virtual Reality company to enhance the realism of the driving experience.

... Shadow Fighters CD32 is out. Just can't WAIT to get my grimey pause on a copy. Action galore.

... Another trader game is coming for the Amiga. A combination of DUNE II and THE PATRICIAN, VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY is coming from Black Legend soon.

... CRICKET? AGAIN? You have got to be kidding me...

... Could a new image processor be sneaking up on the big guys? Almathera has been working on PHOTOGENICS. This open ended image processor is one to watch. Keep an eye out for it.

... U.S. Gold is looking good with a new golf game. WORLD CUP GOLF is what we have all been waiting for. This CD32 game only will come on 2 CDs and have all Silicon Graphics rendered backgrounds and digitized shots of the golf course. LOOKIN' GREAT!

## 1.5 Shareware Update

SHAREWARE REVIEWS - Shane R. Monroe  
SPRINGTIME - VIPER - MISER PRINTER

|                            |                                       |               |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| TITLE: SPRINGTIME          | CODERS: 'Joker' Brenco & Fabio Corica |               |
| TYPE: ARCADE/PUZZLER       | PLAYERS: 2                            | HARD DRIVE: ? |
| SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: NONE | RELEASE DATE: NOW                     |               |

I was requested by the author to review this game for them and as I have said before, 'Ask and Ye Shall Receive' so all you shareware type developers keep this in mind. I prefer to review the FULL version of the game, but I will certainly be happy to look at the Shareware version too.

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This is by far one of the most unique games I have ever seen to date and believe me, I see alot! <grin> The hardest part of this review is going to be trying to get the basic game concept to you in black and white.

The game is set in 3D and from a top view. It takes place on platforms that rotate as you walk on their walls, making the floor you were just walking on become a wall behind you. Imagine a plus sign in 3D and your player in on the left side of the vertical 'wall'. Now you walk to the right against the wall and the plus rotates, placing you on the right; the wall is now your floor and the floor you just came from is now the wall. Folks, if you can't get it from that, you are just going to get it and see for yourself.

Now for the actual game components. First thing I noticed was how professional the whole package was. From the clean front end to all the little details about the graphics. Very nice. Now the music was okay and the sound effects were all in the right spots. The audio of this game is not its high point. The actual addictive game play is definately the high point. It has that 'play just ONE MORE' quality about it.

The actual game is made up of levels that get progressively harder (and in a HURRY too) and the aim of each level may seem simple. On one of the platforms' surface is a large 'X' and on another is a spring (wondered to this point what the title had to do with the game eh?). The goal? Move the spring to the 'X'. Oh, did I mention that you can't let the spring fall off the platforms? Yeah, that is the trick. Believe me; that is really the part that sucks. Aside from the fact that you have to figure out which platforms can and cannot be rotated, but also predicting the effect that rolling that particular platform will have. Addictive and frustrating too.

Puzzle freaks will have a heyday with this game. Fast action arcaders better go check out something else. Looking for something different, though, you ought to get this. It isn't graphically stunning, but it will keep you coming back for more and in this day and age, longetivity is much more important than eye & ear candy.

|                                |                                       |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| TITLE: VIPER                   | CODERS: Nathaniel Myhre & Rob Drennan |               |
| TYPE: ARCADE                   | PLAYERS: 1-6                          | HARD DRIVE: Y |
| SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: AGA ONLY | RELEASE DATE: NOW                     |               |

From time to time, a game comes along that is so simple and so easy to play that you just get caught up in it and don't want to stop playing. Ah, and you thought the days of games with that draw like CHOPLIFTER and LODE RUNNER were dead and gone! I am happy to say that it is not so. VIPER is a return back to the days of simple and playable games.

Graphics are pleasant yet very simple. Game play (described below) is incredibly basic. Where this game just grabbed and goosed the hell out of me was the AUDIO! Obviously these guys have a great passion for sound. Every sound effect is done superbly and is perfectly placed within the game. Most of them are taken from popular TV shows like Star Trek and the Simpsons. You will love the care taken with the sound.

Now on to the game play. It is a tried and true element. Remember the

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old rehashed game of LIGHTCYCLES from TRON? You know, you drive around the screen leaving a trail behind you, hoping your enemy will run into an arena, his, or your walls. In most versions of this game, you are limited to driving in the primary four directions (up, down, left and right). In this game, you are allowed full 360 degree movement. Sounding cool yet? Well, wait! You don't crash if you run into a wall (well, unless it is actually head on; glancing blows will bounce you off). Running into your own or other players' walls will eliminate your playing the rest of the turn. All players play with the keyboard controls which are logically placed.

Up till now it still sounds like a glorified TRON game, I know. I am saving the best for last. You play for points in this game. How do you score them? Well, as you and your enemies draw the lines, occasional breaks happen in them. Drive through these breaks to score points.

There are some other little goodies too, like when someone dies, the whole game speeds up. There are others, too, but I don't want to spoil it all for you!

The only real problem with this game is that it is AGA. I mean, I can run it, but I know a lot of people who would like an ECS version. Even if you aren't a big fan of the genre, you ought to at least give it a whirl. This shareware version I tested only allowed three players and the registered version allows six. Don't make the mistake of not picking this one up. It is kick butt!

TITLE: MISER PRINTER                      CODERS: Heinz-Gueroter Boettger  
 TYPE: UTILITY                              PLAYERS: N/A                              HARD DRIVE: Y  
 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: HP DESKJET OR COMPATIBLE                      RELEASE DATE: NOW

This is a quick and dirty review of a little tool I find totally and completely invaluable. This simple utility will allow you to print multiple pages of text on a single printed page. Up to four per page are allowed.

It has some very nice simple features such as a print preview, selectable printed pages, font control, paper type, and some others. The cost of HP DJ ink cartridges make this little program something that you can't do without if you own one of these printers. The output is incredibly clean (like a photocopier reduction reproduction) and highly readable.

The only real drawback is the limited market it has. There are actually a couple of printers compatible with the HP Deskjet but for the most part, well, this utility won't do you much good. With the price of the HP DJ 540 clocking in at just over \$200, I have a feeling that this program is going to get a lot of use.

## 1.6 Software Reviews

SOFTWARE REVIEWS/PREVIEWES - Shane R. Monroe  
 ALIEN BREED 3D - GLOOM

TITLE: ALIEN BREED 3D                      PUBLISHER:TEAM 17                      CODERS: IN HOUSE  
 TYPE: ARCADE/DOOM STYLE                      PLAYERS: 2                              HARD DRIVE: ?

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: AGA ONLY

RELEASE DATE: TBA

I know what you are thinking ... "Wait a minute? How many times are we going to read about this program this year? Just in the Dispatch alone?" Well, I understand the frustration. Fact of the matter, we have never gotten to see how this game PLAYS; just the rolling non-playable demo. I decided to go ahead and review it again now that there is more info AND I have gotten to play a level of this kick ass game.

For those of you who just got rescued off of Gilligan's Island or something, AB3D is Team 17's entry into the Amiga 'Doom Clone' market. Right now, the market seems to be expanding at a gruesome rate (considering I didn't really care for the genre - and still don't) with no less than four companies announcing actual commercial releases of these first person perspective (oh, did I forget 'virtual reality' - knock it off) games.

The rolling preview really got people talking about AB3D. Die hard DOOM fans bitched about the chunkyness of the pixels claiming that PD demo engines were much better (yeah, but where are the monsters? The doors and elevators in those engines, eh?). IMHO, the fact that they made that decent of a translation using copper and blitter tricks on a 14 mhz Amiga was amazing to this gamer. But, everyone just complained about the demo and looked toward TextDemo and such for solace. Now, everything is different.

We now have some real release data on AB3D and I have gotten to actually PLAY this cool engine. Now let me fill you in.

First, over 20 levels of super-smooth, 360 degree 3D movement - no jerks, no 45-degree only turns. Full rotational character movement without sporadic jumping. The graphics are fully texture mapped and Gouraud shaded (yes!). The enemies consist of aliens and a host of grisly bad guys. The intelligence is being worked on hard so that enemies won't just aimlessly walk around; they will hear you and seek you out through sound. Two players cooperative (and death match type play) will be achievable through a null modem cable/serial link (modem play please!). Best of all, T17 says that you will NOT have to buy two copies of the game to play two players; backing up of the disks will be available immediately on purchase (um, does this mean we get a HD installable version?). Nice to see someone breaking the norm for a change.

A full screen environment will envelope the character. The cool background throbbing and atmospheric type effects used in other Breed games are present in AB3D and it is reputedly ber 'John Crapenter-like' (I love it already).

"Real-time inverse kinematic objects" ('buzz phrase' I wonder?) will also be present which means the creatures in the game act totally independant and realistically, as if in real-life. Music and sound effects are being provided by that good old chap Allister Brimble and we all know what a great job he does of making up feel 'right at home' during our gaming.

Enough specs. Now let me convey what it feels like to actually PLAY this new hot game.

Feels like DOOM. Plays like DOOM. Even kinda looks like DOOM. Those who know me know that I am not a big fan of the genre, \*BUT\* I am a huge fan of the Alien Breed series. Folks, what these geniuses have done on a 14 mhz machine will astound you. You would have to play DOOM on a 486DX2/66 to get

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this kind of smooth clean gameplay. DOOM didn't have the atmosphere; that brooding music - you know, like Jack Nicholson was going to pop out from behind the next corner with an axe like in THE SHINING screaming "HEEEEEEEERE'S JOHNNY!" and burying it in your chest. (Nice mental image, eh?)

The fact of the matter is that this is a highly playable game. Sure, it is a bit more chunky than others of its class, but I will tell you what. It more than makes up for it in other aspects.

First, the monsters are better than most I have seen. They don't pixelize really bad when you get close. The screams they make are cool. Like DUNGEON MASTER, you can HEAR them coming. Their footsteps echo behind you as you run off. Very nice. There are only two types I have seen; the green aliens that scream when they die and the totally killer 'walker' type creatures (that are not killable in the demo version). Man, they did a sweet job with this enemy. His movements are super smooth, and detailed. I mean, you can read the thing's serial number. They are pretty smart and follow you around like they should.

The demo also shows the multi-level capabilities. There are lots of stairs, platforms, sunk in ground, etc. There are some REALLY nice elevator effects too.

Your traditional doors are there, along with switches and such on the walls for your interaction, too. The standard boxes of ammo, medkits, etc. are abundant.

The coolest part of this game that even DOOM doesn't have is the water. My god, was I ever impressed. The water is not only reflective, but refractive too. You see reflections on the surface, as well as the distortions of the items under the water. Even better, the water is variable leveled; that's right. You can be wading in water up to your chest! And finally, the water actually rushes by you at times like a river. Totally killer. Nice job.

At the time of writing, I still had not finished the preview level but will keep chugging on it. This is a remarkable piece of work and everyone, even if you are NOT a DOOM-type game fan, should check this out. You might be pleasantly surprised.

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|                                    |                          |                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| TITLE: GLOOM (PREVIEW)             | PUBLISHER: ACID SOFTWARE | CODERS: B.MAGIC   |
| TYPE: ACTION/DOOM CLONE            | PLAYERS: 2 TOGETHER      | HARD DRIVE: ?     |
| SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: PAL/AGA ONLY |                          | RELEASE DATE: TBA |

'Tis the season for DOOM clones I guess. Here is yet another entry in the growing list of DOOM style clones. This one is a bit different for a change, and definately has some strong points. To give you my first impression, I thought it totally kicked butt!

First off, the game is more like Wolfenstein 3D versus DOOM since it is a bit more pixely and doesn't have the stairs, elevators, etc. that the DOOM clones tend to have. The doors all seem to open automatically (most people are saying how much they dislike this) so that is one less thing to distract you from the main goal of the game: killing.

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The demo version floating around allows you to set the detail and screen size of the game based on your processor and on the 040/25 you got about 1/4 screen (only slightly smaller for my 020/14). The detail change is actually pretty dramatic. You may also elect to have floors and ceiling graphics on or off for more speed. The coolest thing about the demo is that the two player mode is already in place and you can play cooperative or the infamous "death match" mode. Unlike Death Mask or AB3D, the two player mode is split screen with the playing screens on the top and bottom versus DM's side by side or AB3D's null modem play. There should be null/modem play in GLOOM's final release. Even if there isn't, the two player mode is great.

Sound like I am a bit more enthusiastic about GLOOM versus AB3D? Well, I am; and I will tell you why. GLOOM has some traits about it that I think are just kick butt. While AB3D will appeal more to the die hard DOOM fans with its Gourard Shading, smooth reflective water, etc. GLOOM will appeal to those who are into the basics of the game: death. What's more, it does it with STYLE. On the other DOOM style games, when you kill an enemy, they may scream and fall to the ground (some even keep bleeding), BUT in GLOOM in either of the modes (MESSY is my favorite) has your enemies not only screaming (heh heh heh) but also have their bodies exploding into dozens of pieces, usually littering the ground with carnage. There is very little more satisfying than charging down a corridor filled with enemy and shooting them and finding yourself in a rain shower of body parts.

Weaponry is handled a bit different. You pick up little fists and your 'weapon meter' grows. As you shoot, your meter decreases. Your meter is graduated in increments; each increment represents an increase in weapon power. Drop below the increment, you go to the next lesser weapon. Tell you what; when you peg that puppy out, get ready for some serious death. 'One shot kills all' type thing. Its great.

There are some great extras in the game that I haven't seen in any (including the actual) incarnation of DOOM. Extra hardware such as a thermal imager which allows you to see through walls! Heh heh heh. Now you can look through the doors and see what really awaits you on the other side. A very nice touch. Hopefully the final release will have even more goodies like that.

I have to admit, I liked this one better than AB3D, but each has their own strong and weak points. Myself, I am going to have to buy both. The creepy atmospheric play of AB3D is really cool (as are the Walkers) but GLOOM satisfies my undying need to see the enemy turned into Gaines burger dog food. Those of you who follow the newsletters know what a bloodthirsty kinda guy I am (I mean Roadkill is still my favorite game) so if you find that our tastes are the same, you will certainly not be disappointed.

Both of these demo versions are available on Aminet at FTP site: ftp.netnet.net and many people have them in their own home FTPs. You could also get these from just about anyone hanging out in the IRC's if you have DCC capabilities. Try IRC server irc.virginia.edu 6667 on the #AMIGA channel and just ask. heh heh. Here's to happy blasting.

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## 1.7 Hardware Reviews

Welcome To The Internet  
By Shane R. Monroe

This column is short this month (sorry, I am just one man) but I wanted to let you all know what was going to come in the future.

First, as you already know, DUP has left the realms of standard BBSing and have opted to get on the Internet. Most of us users are on-line now with the Net, but some are still forthcoming so please be patient with them. The locations we can all be reached are noted in the WHERE ARE WE? section of the newsletter.

A little run down of the Amiga interpretation of the Internet. If you are familiar with access on other platforms, you may be familiar with the terms and lingo of the Net. For those of you who are new to the Net, the rest of the column is for you.

Going from BBSing to Internet is a HUGE hurdle. More than some people can even imagine. I was a 14 year BBS veteran and the move to the Net shell shocked me. You can start off by picking up the lingo and learning the basics. Take note. I am NO expert to be sure. This is a column for beginner's BY a beginner. I am sure some of my terminology may not be perfect, so please bear with me.

First, how do you get on the Net? The best way is to locate a local provider that can give you what is known as a PPP account. This basically allows your computer to link DIRECTLY to the Net. By linking directly to the Net, you can do tons of different things all at once and you will find that this is the preferred method of connection. The cost of one of these accounts varies from place to place and is usually paid the month or in 'blocks' of months (usually cheaper that way). I pay \$55 quarterly and for these types of accounts you usually have unlimited access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. No hourly fees, no per connect charges (again I say usually). The cheapest and FASTEST way to go. Connect rates on these type services usually go to 28.8K baud.

Your alternative? Go through a service like GENie, Delphi, Bix, etc. This is NOT the best way. You will pay per hour, get no PPP connections, be restricted in baud rate, be limited on hours of use, blah blah blah. Not worth it at ALL! Do yourself a favor and get a local PPP connection.

Now that you have a service, you need the software. For the lesser connections like GENie, Bix, etc. you will need your standard Terminal Proggy like Terminus, Term, or something with VT-200 compatibility. Once again, this will dramatically limit you to what you can do.

For those with the PPP account, you have two choices, really. MLINK and AmiTCP/IP. MLINK is used by those without deep enough pockets to afford the \$100+ for TCP, but TCP has a lot of functions other than just Net access. A lot of your support proggys have TCP support built in, so if you plan on using the Net a lot, spend the cash.

FAIR WARNING: AmiTcP is no picnic to set up. Believe me, whether you buy it or not, you will run into snags. Future articles will address some of the frequently encountered problems with AmiTCP. Be forewarned that you will lose some hair over the installation. I HIGHLY recommend getting

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someone who has successfully installed it to join up with you.

The terms. Well, there are plenty of goodies here to keep us busy. Let's get started quickly.

FTP - File Transfer Protocol. Basically, a host computer with a huge hard drive on-line ready for you to connect to and get and put files. It is much like MS-DOS (for those of you who have the displeasure of using it). The tree structure of the directories is very similar. If using a 'dialup' connection (like GENie, Bix, etc) you will have some terrible times navigating around since everything is case sensitive and often a pain in the butt. For those of you lucky guys with PPP connection, get a copy of DaFTP, a point and click GUI interface for navigating, getting and putting files. Seems only to work with OS3.x systems (DaFTP that is). Thousands of 'sites' are out there and all you need know is the address to call (such as ftp.netnet.net).

IRC - Inter Relay Chat. For those of you familiar with the CB Simulator on Compuserve, or RTCs on GENie you will feel more or less at home here. For those of you NOT familiar with them, imagine an electronic 'CB Radio' with unlimited channels and nearly unlimited users. Thousands of people are using this at any given time. 'Channels' (which are actually text names) are online with almost any topic you could want to chat over. The #amiga channel alone usually has from 10-50 people in it 24 hours a day and there is someone knowledgeable there constantly, so you can get online help anytime! There are two popular 'servers' of IRCs, the EFFNET and the UNDERNET, each of them have a different group of users.

TELNET - A form of connection to hook you to another computer on the Net. The most popular use of this connection is to link to BBSs that are actually tied into the Net. It can also be used to link up to FTPs and IRCs for those without a PPP connection.

DCC - A method of connection you and another person's system through PPP that will allow the two of you to chat and/or send files directly to each other without any host system to support it. To do this, you simply enter an IRC, then you initiate the chat or transfer. Even if you lose connection with the IRC, your direct connection will be maintained until the session of DCC is ended. Of course, while chatting or transferring, you may still FTP, chat over the IRC, etc etc if you have the PPP connection.

WWW - The World Wide Web. Much like a HUGE newspaper that uses hypertext reading systems (very similar to this newsletter) to link you to other 'pages'. The WWW is immense and almost everyone who is someone (even some that are not anybody) has a 'home page' you can go to. DUP has one too. It not only contains text, but graphics, animations, music, sounds, and more.

That gives everyone something to chew on for now. Next issue we will talk about some other Net terms, and look in depth at some of these Net sites and possibilities.

## 1.8 AMOS Programming

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## AMOS PROGRAMMING - PART 4 BOBS AND AMAL

Last month we completed our little jukebox program. It is plain but still very functional. This month we are going to learn a bit about controllable objects and how they can work for you. Also, controlling objects, animation, movement patterns, and even screen control on interrupt for smooth, unattended work.

There are two types of objects we can manipulate on the Amiga. Sprites and Bobs (or Blitter Object Blocks). They are two means to an end, but they are also very different.

Sprites are hardware controlled and screen independent which means you can do things to the screen (like scrolling, clearing, altering) without effecting them. The mouse pointer is the best example of a well known sprite. Sprites have severe limitations, though, such as horizontal resolution being limited to 16 pixels, etc. Their color palette is much different from the screen and they use hardware coordinates on the screen instead of visible screen coordinates. So why would you even use these things? Well, they are VERY fast and update independent of the screen which gives game programmers much more power when writing games. There are some programming tricks for using what they call COMPUTED SPRITES which combine multiple sprites to make larger ones. This is all very complicated so we will cover sprites in more detail in later issues.

Bobs are another story. Bobs have no size limits and share the screen palette which makes them handy. Unfortunately, they are DIRECTLY tied to the screen and will be affected by changes on the screen; notably screen scrolls, screen clears, etc. In addition, they also must wait to be updated with the screen via a VERTICAL BLANK which is basically done every 60th of a second (50th for PAL machines). It might be handy to do some basic discussion about screen updates.

Every 60th of a second, an invisible scan line travels from the top to the bottom of your screen, refreshing any changes on each line, then returning to the top again to repeat the process. Any screen changes that are made to an area of screen that the 'vertical blank' process has passed, must wait until the next pass to be updated. Now I know a 60th of a second may seem short, but during program execution, this delay can be disastrous to your display. How about an example? Try this. Type this in and run it:

```
screen open 0,320,200,16,lowres ink 1,0:box 0,0 to 50,25
get bob 0,1,0,0 to 50,25: cls 0 :bob 1,100,100,1
end
```

Now, the first part may seem a bit alien. All we are doing is drawing a box and grabbing it as Bob #1 so we have a true Bob to work with. The Bob command in line 5 takes bob #1 and displays in at screen location x=100 y=100. So why can't we see it? Well, you may see it; some of the time, but chances are you will not. Since the command was executed after the screen was refreshed and we ended the program before it was updated, the bob was not displayed. After the bob statement above, add this line:

```
Wait VBL
```

This will force the program to wait until the screen has been refreshed before ending. Voila! Your bob is displayed. This command can really



cause your program to drag if used in excess so use it only where you need it.

Bobs are relatively easy to use for beginners, so we will stick with that for now. Let's take a look at how we can incorporate bobs into our jukebox. One of the most common ways to exploit object movement in demos is to attach them to the music and make them dance or animate in time to the music. This is what we are going to do with the jukebox. First let's make bobs that bounce to the music, then we will work on making them animated while we play the tune.

Included in this archive is a bob bank that contains four bobs; one for each of the four Amiga voices. Load up your current jukebox program and then enter direct mode by pressing ESC. Enter this line:

```
a$=Fsel$(""):LOAD a$
```

Use the file selector to highlight and load the file BOBBANK.ABK. This will load in the bob bank.

Alright, let's get the bobs on the screen for the jukebox. Add the following lines to the beginning of your program right after the UNPACK command.

```
b1=0:b2=0:b3=0:b4=184  
Bob 1,0,0,1:bob 2,304,0,2:bob 3,0,184,3:bob 4,304,184,4:wait vbl
```

This adds the bobs to the screen immediately.

Now in the main loop we need to add something to change the locate/position of the bobs. This will be added to the end of the main loop. Right before your final LOOP command add the following lines:

```
v0=vumeter(0):v1=vumeter(1):v2=vumeter(2):v3=vumeter(3)  
Bob 1,b1+v0,0,1:bob 2,304,b2+v1,2  
bob 3,b3+v2,184,3:bob 4,304,b4+v3,4:wait vbl
```

The VUMETER command reads the volume of each of the four voices and returns the value to the v variables. This is a value of 0 to 63. By simply adding the v variables to the bob's normal positions, it will make them 'dance' to the music. Neat eh?

Sorry so short this issue, but the C= buyout and all my research for the other columns has left me a big dry this issue. We will return next issue with some animation techniques to add to the now dancing bobs. Stay tuned!

## 1.9 CD32 Corner

CD32 Corner - Shane R. Monroe  
KID CHAOS - DEATH MASK - TRIVIAL PURSUIT

My fellow CD32 owners, our lives have never been better. So many cool new titles are coming our way and I LOVE it. In addition to some news, we will review a couple of titles and be on our merry way.

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A lot of CD32 news was covered in the COMING ATTRACTIONS area, but I saved some stuff for you here.

.. Virgin Interactive continues to support the CD32 with new games galore. Highlights include LOST EDEN (a dinosaur adventure game) which could be the 'Jurassic Park' we have all been waiting for and CANNON FODDER 2, which we all have DEFINATELY been waiting for. Now if we can only get them to do the same with ALADDIN and LION KING!

... Golf. Still haven't seen a version I would spit on yet. Well, that is going to change with U.S. GOLD's WORLD CUP GOLF. Slated for summer release, the graphics have been all raytraced and initial indications are that it will take up TWO (!) CDs for the game. This looks like something special. Hopefully the game itself will be as good as the graphics.

... WORMS from Team 17 is one of the best kept secrets around the gaming area. Peter Olafson won't tell me anything (damn Non-Disclosure Statements!) and it sounds like it might be the number one for this Christmas' Gallup Charts. Latest word is that it was pushed back to a Aug/Sep release...

... Feel sparky? Well, Gametek's new BUREAU 13 sounds like it might take care of you. Described as XFILES meets GHOSTBUSTERS, I can't wait. More when I know it.

... Could the classic game PITFALL be coming for the Amiga? Indeed. Activision is said to be making PF: THE MYAN ADVENTURE for us soon. Looks like THE JUNGLE BOOK meets FLASHBACK. Loads of fun (I hope).

... Being a criminal instead of a cop could be a nice change of pace. THE CLUE from Neo is a point and click type adventure letting you be the bad guy for a change. Graphics don't look bad and the change of pace might actually be fun!

... Now for the really cool news. Naturally, you can take this all with a grain of sand, and in light of ESCOM's buyout, this may not even happen. But I can't help spilling a little of what I know. A retired Hollywood producer by the name of Alan Briggs is producing a new 'interactive movie' for the CD32 that will make full use of the new FMV card created by the people at C=UK. The card, slated for a May release (again, figure what you want on this one), will have this new game called SHARC ATTACK. The game revolves around killing a terrifying undersea creature. Filming for the game should be mostly done by now if the timeline held up. According to Mr. Briggs, other Hollywood producers are interested in the technique that he has come up with. The effects are just as good as the hit film "StarGate" according to the producer. I can't wait for more. I will give you all more when I know more next month.

Enough chatterbox for one issue. Let's do the reviews.

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| TITLE: KID CHAOS        | +-----+             |
| PUBLISHER: OCEAN        | Enhanced for CD32   |
| CODERS: MAGNETIC FIELDS | +-----+             |
| PLAYERS: 1              | _X_ CD Music Tracks |
| TYPE: PLATFORM ARCADE   | ___ Rendered/Intro  |
|                         | ___ Other Enhanced  |
|                         | +-----+             |

There have been dozens of platform games released in the last couple years. Many of them have been very good. Of course, many have been not so good. Probably the one that shines the most is SUPERFROG (ah, many an hourwasted on that one) but there has always been a lack of a really good Sonic the Hedgehog clone for Amiga/CD32. The closest one what TEARAWAY THOMAS, but that was only for Amiga and then it felt a little too PD'ish. Finally, we have an entrant to the market that captures a lot of the feel of Sonic, plus adds some unique game play to a tired concept.

KID CHAOS (KC) is a port from the Amiga and still has about the same graphics (with the exception of the totally clean mega-parallax scrolling background) and the same speed. The only real changed is the CD music which is really quite good. The loading speed, etc. are all the same.

The game is your classic horizontal scroller with some very choice looking graphics. You play a kid brought back in time to destroy this plant life (you must destroy a certain percentage to get the exit to open) and of course, take out anything else that pops up. To do this, you jump into the air spinning with your big club. Gotta love it.

|                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| TITLE: DEATH MASK               | +-----+                  |
| PUBLISHER: ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE | Enhanced for CD32        |
| CODERS: IN HOUSE                | +-----+                  |
| PLAYERS: 2 TOGETHER             | <u>X</u> CD Music Tracks |
| TYPE: ARCADE/DOOM STYLE         | <u>  </u> Rendered/Intro |
|                                 | <u>X</u> Other Enhanced  |
|                                 | +-----+                  |

After seeing all the new DOOM clones, this one will likely leave you cold. If you can NOT think of it as DOOM and think of it as a nice first person adventure death game, it will set you up with less of a disappointment.

The game is played in two windows; one per player. Even in one player mode the action is all in the one half of the screen. The graphics are pleasant but not extraordinary and there is very little actual animation. In its favor, the sound effects and music are excellent; the selectable CD music tracks are downright great.

Unlike the game it attempts to emulate, Death Mask's moves are NOT 360 type scrolling but more like Dungeon Master or Eye of the Beholder; 45 degree moves. You do get to see your current weapon and your health and ammo stats are neatly displayed.

The play with a joystick was terrible; no side stepping or anything. Thankfully, the CD32 controller makes all the difference in the play. Side stepping is accomplished with the finger buttons; map is called up with a yellow button. Very nicely adapted and the only real way to play the game.

There are the traditional opening doors and nice clean effects when you pick up the weapons, etc. A couple of types of enemies more or less blindly walk about and need to be sacrificed during the play of the game.

The game, if taken from a non-DOOM standpoint, is really quite decent. There are actual MISSIONS to accomplish for each level and two player co-operative mode is a lot of fun. Two player death matches are

slightly more fun.

Problems? Sure. Mainly it is just a TAD too slow without Fast RAM. If you turn down the detail a bit and play on FAST it is barely liveable. If you are lucky enough to have Fast RAM on your CD32, game play is very smooth and enjoyable. Too bad 75%+ CD32's don't have the RAM. My other bitch is that in cooperative mode there are too few weapons. Basically there is one that is worth a rat's ass each level and if you don't get it... Well, too bad I guess. That sucks. Maybe a shared weapon mode would be cool. And most certainly a shared ammo mode would be cool. You can't move in map mode either, and that more or less sucks. I am sure that it was planned that way, but it still sucks.

In closing, this is a try-before-you-buy game. Give it a chance, but don't expect DOOM 'cause it ain't even close. If that is what you want, save your pennies and nickles for Alien Breed 3D or GLOOM.

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| TITLE: TRIVIAL PURSUIT CD32  | +-----+           |
| PUBLISHER: DOMARK            | Enhanced for CD32 |
| CODERS: HORN ABBOT INTL      | +-----+           |
| PLAYERS: UP TO 6             |                   |
| TYPE: BOARD GAME TRANSLATION | CD32 ONLY TITLE   |
|                              |                   |
|                              | +-----+           |

On Peter Olafson's suggestion, I dug this game up. I was pretty much impressed with this game over all. It was well polished and it is very obvious that they spend a great deal of time making it.

For those of you in another dimension, TRIVIAL PURSUIT is a game of answering questions on various categories like Science, History, Entertainment, etc. You move a little empty pie shell around the board landing on the category of question that is to be asked. Should you get the question right you get to roll the dice again and move again. The object is to land on the six 'wedge' questions (one spot for each category), answer the questions successfully, and thus gain that colored WEDGE for your pie. Get all the wedges, then move to the center of the board, and answer a random question to win the game.

The board game itself is faithfully recreated in shape and in form. The original rules are all the same. The really cool thing about it is the 'multimedia' aspect it takes. There are animated figures that ask the questions (such as Albert Einstein for Science, May West for Entertainment, etc) and every one of the 2000 questions and answers are physically spoken. There is even a full speaking animated tutorial to get you going.

There is an annoying game master that is basically a chicken-man for lack of a better description who definitely has a bad attitude. He cuts you when you answer too many questions wrong (sometimes deep for a game) and will occasionally cheers you on. Up to 6 human players can play and there is no option for computer players.

Every question has a picture with it. Often these pictures blatantly tell you the answer or blatantly lead you astray. Knowing that, you just quickly learn to disregard it altogether. At least the effort is there.

Graphics are only slightly above ECS but all the sound is top notch. The game play is a little lagged and it is really only fun with several people (and in your cups doesn't hurt). You can shut off all the snide comments and that helps the play along, but then it kind of loses its edge. Did I fail to mention that the questions are hard as hell? How about like a Silver Screen or Amiga edition so the rest of the mortals can play it, eh?

In closing, there is a load and save game option for the SX1 users (this game sounds suspiciously like a CDTV title - especially when the guy tells you to push button A) and if you really liked the board game this is a good buy. For those with an interest, as I said before, try before you buy.

## 1.10 Where Are We?

### WHERE ARE WE? - THE DUP DIRECTORY

As you already know, Dark Unicorn Productions is fully integrated into the Internet. All our programs, newsletters, and miscellaneous files are available at your favorite AmiNet Mirror Site.

We can be contacted on the IRCs as well. Look for our nicknames next time you sign on. We are usually hanging out in the #AMIGA channel, but feel free to try and send us a private /msg anytime.

Finally, DUP is proud to announce the opening of our World Wide Web Home Page on the Internet. It is still under construction so please be patient. The site address is: <http://www.eskimo.com/~drizzit/dup/dup.html>.

Lastly, you can resort to E\*Mail to reach us. The below directory gives our Internet mail addresses, and you can also send Internet mail through most on-line services such as GENie, Bix, and Compuserve.

| Member Name     | Internet Address         | IRC Nickname |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Shane R. Monroe | smonroe@awod.com         | DarkUni      |
| John Graham     | virtual@scsn.net         | Virtual      |
| Seumas McNally  | longbow@mcd.co.ca        | Longbow      |
| Kit Felice      | k.felicel@genie.geis.com | <n/a>        |
| Troy Toulou     | <not yet on Internet>    | <n/a>        |
| Sidewinder      | sidewind@crl.com         | Sidewind     |
| Michael Welch   | m.welchl@genie.geis.com  | <n/a>        |
| Sean Emerson    | s.emerson@genie.geis.com | <n/a>        |

## 1.11 THE LATEST C= NEWS

### THE LATEST NEWS ON THE COMMODORE LIQUIDATION

Included in this archive is the well written AMIGA REPORT SPECIAL ISSUE which will neatly bring you up to date on the entire Commodore situation. For copyright reasons, the AR magazine is being kept completely separate from the Dispatch. Special thanks to Jason Compton for permission to distribute this article in the Dispatch archive.

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