Best Quest of the Month

BattleTech: The Crescent Hawk's Inception

By Stephen King

Not so long ago, the announcement that Infocom just published a role-playing game would have been met with deafening laughter. Many people probably expected it would turn out something like *Zork Zero*—a predominantly text-based adventure with some graphics here and there to spruce it up. If that is what you expect, you're in for a pleasant surprise—with the release of Westwood Associates' *BattleTech*, Infocom has jumped into the graphics arena with both InfoFeet.

Star League Collapses!

It is early in the 31st century, when mankind's sphere of influence has expanded to the faraway stars. Because of the tremendous logistical problems of common rule, the Star League has fallen apart and been replaced by several large feudal societies.

The current setting is a retrograde civilization. Hundreds of years of war have resulted in all the smaller groups being absorbed into five major combines. Most of the technology that brought man to this pinnacle has been destroyed, but his legacy remains.

In the continual skirmishes between the various combines, the major weapon is the Battle-Mech, a converted mining robot. There are 55 major types of BattleMech, many of which have several varieties that are equipped with different weapons and defensive abilities. The smallest Mechs weigh in at 20 tons, and the largest can be as heavy as 100 tons.

The game begins at the Pacifica Training Academy, sponsored by the Lyran Commonwealth. You take the part of Jason Youngblood, an existing character in the *BattleTech* universe that composes the paper and pencil game system published by FASA for several years. Your initial goal is to find your father, but as the game progresses, you'll discover a second quest that is tied into the search for the old man.

You have three major attributes: Body, Dexterity and Charisma. These are preset and can't be increased for the duration of the game. The Body attribute, which roughly corresponds to strength and stamina, is the only one that changes as you are wounded and healed.

In addition to these, you have personal skill attributes. At the outset, you're completely unskilled in all areas and must pay for training to boost the attributes: Bow/Blade, Pistol, Rifle, Gunnery, Piloting, Medical and Technician. The first three relate to your proficiency with hand-held weapons. Gunnery and Piloting correspond to handling a Mech and its weaponry; Medical experience affects your ability to heal the wounded; Technicians can repair Mechs and equipment.

Unlike characters in many RPGs, all people cannot be trained to the maximum in a given skill. Because Jason's chosen profession is MechWarrior, he can be trained to perfection with hand-held weapons. If he has time, he can do likewise with Piloting and Gunnery—but since he is not a Mechanic or Doctor, his expertise in these areas will always be limited.

Don't worry, for other inhabitants will wish to join you, for a maximum party of five. But be careful, because a few treacherous infiltrators lurk among the trustworthy volunteers. Be sure to keep one eye on them during a fight, or you might end up with a knife in your back.

Pacifica High

The Pacifica School is basically a quiet place where you can familiarize yourself with the game system. In most towns you'll find weapon and armor shops, lounges and Mechit-Lube service centers. Besides such mundane places, Pacifica also offers a Barracks, a Mech
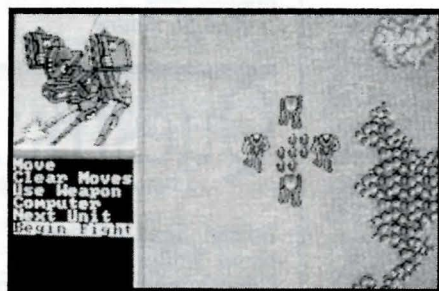
IBM EGA/Tandy version

Type:	Science Fiction Role-playing
Systems:	Apple (128K), C 64, Amiga, IBM (MS-DOS 2.1 or higher and 384K of RAM required; EGA, MCGA, VGA, Tandy 16-color supported)
Version Reviewed:	IBM

The Best Quests of 1988

After months of voting, vote-counting, recall votes, demands for a recount of the votes and demands for a recount of the recalled, recounted votes, these are our contributing editors' choices for best adventures of 1988.

Best Quest of the Year
Wasteland

Best Fantasy RPG: Ultima V
Best Science Fiction RPG: Wasteland
Best All-text Adventure: Beyond Zork
Best Graphic Adventure: King's Quest IV
Best Action Adventure: Times of Lore
Best Story-line: Neuromancer
Best Music: King's Quest IV

New Quests

What's *definitely* out (which means we've actually seen physical copies of the games, not just the press releases): *The Magic Candle* for 128K Apple and 256K IBM (look for C 64 by May), Mastertronic's *Barbarian* (IBM), and *War in Middle Earth* (GS, IBM, Amiga, ST, with a C 64 version planned.) The Apple *Pool of Radiance* calls for 128K.

In the "Press Releases Only" Category...

Cinemaware scheduled three adventures for April. *Deathbringer* is a fantasy RPG for Amiga and ST (IBM set for August). *Federation* is a "strategic space trading and combat adventure with a built-in space flight simulator" (same machines and dates). And *Total Eclipse* casts you as an archaeologist who explores a giant pyramid; it features FREESCAPE, a 3-D graphics system (IBM, Amiga, ST, C 64). ORIGIN (that's their official name now, not Origin Systems) says *Tangled Tales: The Misadventures of a Wizard's Apprentice*, will be out for Apple and C 64 by now. So should *The Ultima Trilogy*, which includes the first three games for $59.95 (IBM, Apple, C 64).

Infocom Updates

The Amiga versions of *Zork Zero, Shogun, Journey* (also Mac on the last two) and *BattleTech* (C 64 too) shipped last month. All Apple conversions are set to ship this month, with IBM planned for the summer.

M & M II Bug & Conversion Updates

A variety-pack of bugs cropped up in the first shipment of *Might & Magic II*, which was version 1.0. The problems were mainly "generic stuff," like the fact that it was impossible to complete Lord Haart's quest (a side-quest not essential to completing the main quest). Some clues were made clearer and easier to understand, the combat system was improved a bit for higher level encounters, and a few spells were modified slightly. If you have 1.0, you can swap your disks by sending them to New World Computing with $1 for postage. Due to the bugs, conversions have been delayed: IBM *should* have shipped by now, and maybe the C 64 too.

Interplay's First Original Nintendo Game!

Brian Fargo says Interplay is working on an original, adventure-style videogame for the Nintendo: "We'll be bringing some of the experiences normally found in computer games to the Nintendo, something a little more sophisticated." Fargo envisions a promising future for videogame machines, predicting that "...pretty soon the line between videogames and computer games will completely disappear." Their *Dragon Wars* RPG should be out for the Apple (128K) by June, C 64 in August and later for the IBM. Programmed by Bill Heinemann, who did *Bard's Tale III*, it uses the combat system from the *Champions'* paper and pencil game system designed by Steve Peterson. Paul O'Connor designed the scenario. The *Neuromancer* clue book should be out by now ($12.95).

Look Out, Spidey!

Good news for comic book fans: two of your favorite heroes will star in an "interactive, electronic comic book" called *Spider-Man and Captain America in Dr Doom's Revenge*. The bad news? It's being produced by Paragon Software.

Mediagenic Signs Up Dynamix

Dynamix, Inc., is the latest developer to sign an affiliate labels deal with Mediagenic (Activision). Dynamix's most recent release was *Project Firestart*, distributed by EA. They've done lots of sports games in the past but plan to focus more on adventures now.

Three More Years!

Thanks to the following QuestBusters for their recent three-year renewals: Edwin Jones and Nathaniel Nerode.

Cinemaware's Special Offers

Buy any two games in this list—*Lords of the Rising Sun, Rocket Ranger, Three Stooges, TV Sports Football, Deathbringer, Federation, Dark Side* and *Speedball*—and you can get a coupon good for a free copy of *Defender of the Crown, Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon*, or *King of Chicago*. (Offer good while supplies last.) *King of Chicago, Sinbad* and *S.D.I.* have been moved to the "Cinemaware Classics" line, so look for specially marked boxes with new, low prices ($14.95-$24.95, depending on computer).

Where Are They Now?

Chris Cranford, about whom we've heard so little since he did *Bard's Tale II*, has put together a science fiction RPG called *Centauri Alliance*, but—get this!—the company considering publication is so

Dear QuestBusters:
After reading in your letters column that you're going to start a column about videogames, I'm a little upset. Don't you know there's already a magazine devoted entirely to these games? I subscribed to *QuestBusters* because it is devoted completely to adventure games. I think the only fair way to decide on having a Nintendo column is to have a vote, and I'm not in favor of one.
Julie Freeman

Don't panic! We have no plans to do such a column. But since QB is devoted entirely to adventure games, we will cover adventure-style videogames that are deemed worthy of your attention. (like Legend of Zelda II in this issue). And we welcome more comments on this subject. It's still your journal, and that's the only way we know what you want.

Dear QuestBusters:
Why was Ken St. André's *Sorcerer Lord* review in *QB* so much more negative than his *Computer Gaming World* review of the game?
Jean Sinclair

I wrote the QB review several weeks later—and the more I played it on the higher levels, the more mad I got. It seemed the programming talent was adequate, but the designers didn't consider the logical implications of their own design.
Ken St. André

QuestBusters™
The Adventurers' Journal

Corruption: dirty, no-good scoundrels

By Shay Addams

In *Corruption*, Magnetic Scrolls steps out of the misty worlds of Evil Wizards and into the real world of Evil Stockbrokers. And the London stock market, rife with exploding BMWs, coke dealing, illegal gambling casinos, insider trading and the usual corporate backstabbing, is as deadly as the darkest dungeon. Naturally it's your back getting stabbed, your BMW that explodes, your veins into which the "doctor" injects a deadly poison—unless you get convicted for insider trading, which means spending the next two years in jail (without any adventure games!), or manage to prove someone else did it, in which case you win the game.

The scene of all these crimes is a two-story office building, headquarters of Rogers and Rogers, a trading firm where you've just been promoted to full partner. David Rogers, your boss, congratulates you on a major stock deal you recently concluded, one that made you a bundle—but which may return to haunt you later if you don't play your cards right (particularly when gambling at Trente et Quarante in the casino).

What David doesn't tell you is that someone at Rogers and Rogers is looting the company by transferring funds to a phony security

> **Type:** Illustrated Text Adventure
> **Systems:** Amiga, ST, C 64, IBM (256K required for text-only, 640 for EGA graphics), Mac (512K), Apple (64K—has graphics)
> **Version reviewed:** Amiga

outfit. And since the fraud is bound to be exposed, this someone has decided to set you up as the culprit by planting evidence that your recent stock deal was a result of insider information, hoping you'll take the fall for the fraud case. If you don't pry into the affairs of everyone you meet in this world, Inspector Goddard soon arrives and takes you to jail. But *Corruption* offers multiple endings, and death is much higher than success on the list of possible outcomes.

A Mystery to Me

Corruption reminds me of *Deadline* and Infocom's other early all-text mysteries. Everything happens according to a predetermined chronology, as if you're walking around inside an interactive play. Hang out and wait at certain places, and you'll see people walk in, do something and leave—one good way to pick up

clues. This also means that if you miss such a clue, it may be gone for good. Another similarity is the way you glean clues and background information by conversing with fifteen characters: secretaries, lawyers, even the cleaning woman. You'll spend plenty of time phrasing commands like: "Ask Theresa about David" and "Ask David about affidavit."

It's the affidavit and two other pieces of evidence that are used to convict you of insider trading if you don't find at least one of them in time. While doing so prevents Inspector Goddard from arresting you, it also tips off the person that set you up, who sends someone to kill you. This occurs in the hospital ward, after you get knocked on the head, hit by a car, or suffer another "accident." But it's possible to escape this fate, so don't count yourself out just because you missed a Blue Cross payment.

Another piece of evidence, a tape of a meeting you had with David about your promotion, is included in the packaging. After finding the cassette in someone's office, you play the real one to learn more of what David is up to, a clever way of adding atmosphere to such an adventure. Besides the three key pieces of evidence, which you must turn over to Goddard (as in a few other mysteries), you've got to round up ledgers, letters, files and other evidence to support your case and prove your innocence. If you need help, the program offers on-line clues, though you must type in a series of coded letters from the manual.

The prose is Magnetic Scrolls' best yet. When you examine a person or thing, you usually get at least two sentences of well-written, evocative descriptions. (The verbs "examine" and "read" yield different results, so use each one on all the evidence.) And if you get busted and go to court, the final scene stretches across several screens of texts—rewarding you with more than just a variation of "game over." *Corruption* winds up with one of Magnetic Scroll's most effective end games and conclusions, too. (You get points for puz-

Amiga version

zle-solving; top score is 200 points.)

No Laughing Matter

There isn't as much wacky humor as I've come to expect from Magnetic Scrolls, and what's present is more subtle this time. When I asked something about David, I was told: "You don't look cunning or devious enough for this game." Upon awakening in the hospital ward, I read a passage that said I felt like I'd "been fifteen rounds with Mike Tyson." Many jokes are in the parser's responses.

Rather than reply "I don't understand you" to a command the parser doesn't understand, it might say, "I don't follow you," which is amusing in a game that allows you to "follow David" or other people. I also liked carrying on brief "conversations" with the parser. After being stuck in one situation for an hour, I finally typed in my usual string of orc-inspired obscenities (which the parser couldn't begin to fathom) and was asked, "Are you talking to yourself again?". I said "Yes," and the parser replied, "Just checking."

Graphics look sharp and clean, like the commercial art in slick magazine ads. (At

Interview: Those Two Guys from Andromeda—Mark Crowe & Scott Murphy

Yes, yet another QuestBusters' exclusive—the first major interview with the authors of Sierra's hit *Space Quest* series! This interview transpired while we stretched out in Sierra's stretch limo, returning from lunch (see April issue for menu) to a top-secret location where they gave us a fly-through of *Space Quest III*'s stretching highlights at the January CES in Las Vegas).

QB: How did you become the Two Guys from Andromeda?

Mark: What is Andromeda, anyway, a planet or a star system?

Scott: It's a star system. (Obviously we're not hard-core astronomers.)

Mark: That shows you what I know...so forgive my intergalactic ignorance.

Scott: We liked the name because it rolls off the tongue easily, so we thought it was a good one.

Mark: But as far as the "Two Guys" thing, it's really a take-off on the "Two Guys from Italy" pizza chain. Unfortunately, I don't think anyone ever got it.

QB: Oh, *that's* it.

Scott: When we did *Space Quest I*, we thought it would be funny to have these alter egos. We thought it would be a neat gimmick, that it would sell a lot of games.

Mark: Yeah, ok, that's it, that's the bottom line! Actually, we just figured that if we were going to be silly about it, we might as well be silly from start to finish.

Scott: Everybody's real big on having their names on the box and all that stuff. It was our little way of poking fun at that, I guess.

Mark: We don't care, as long as they spell our names right on the checks!

Scott: Definitely!

QB: And who does what on the games?

Mark: I do the graphics, he does the programming.

Scott: I've really enjoyed it. I had no idea anything like this existed. It's funny being the only person in the room programming who doesn't have a college education.

QB: So tell us a little about yourselves: how long have you been writing games, what did you do before then, what did you do in your previous lifetimes?

Scott: I have no idea what or who I was in my previous lifetime, though I may have been a doormat. I came to Sierra with no computer background as far as school goes. No college time except one course in vocabulary and entomology, which I sometimes don't believe I actual-

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> *"I totaled my car once, out in the middle of nowhere, and was wearing a belly-dancer outfit at the time."*

---

ly passed. I moved to Yosemite because I liked the outdoors, and I was working in restaurants when a friend (also working restaurants) got a job at Sierra. The first adventure games I played were *Wizard and the Princess* and *Softporn Adventure*. All I had seen till then were arcade games, and I was really fascinated by the adventures. So I started reading books, manuals for Sierra's products, and got a feel for what was going on—so that they'd *have* to give me a job eventually, if I knew enough and was standing around not doing anything. And they did.

QB: How long ago was that?

Scott: That was almost six years. I started out handling paperwork in dealer returns, answering questions about adventure games, data bases and word processors in customer support. In six months I ended up managing that department, before the big crunch, or crash, I forget when that was.

QB: '83, early '84.

Scott: Yeah, right in that area, when we almost took the big dive.

QB: So how old are you now?

Scott: I'm 34, couple of kids, a wife, and even a grandchild, as a matter of fact.

QB: So you went to Yosemite to back-pack and ended up writing *Space Quest*?

Scott: Yeah, I started working for Sierra and never getting a chance to go out hiking or backpacking, because I've been so busy since.

QB: And how did you actually move into writing games? Did someone just walk in and say, "Quick! We need a funny game!"

Scott: I was working in customer support, and was burned out on phone calls and explaining things to people, and so on. And I saw the games being developed, being worked on. I had some ideas, and I knew this one guy who was working on a game, and I thought, "If he can do it, I *know* I can." It was that kind of a deal. So I kept bugging Ken [Williams], saying, "I'd like to be involved in product development. Why don't you give me a chance?" And he gave me a shot working on *Black Cauldron* with he and Al Lowe, so I ended up debugging the thing, fixing all their code and stuff (not that they code bad).

Mark: That was our first project together.

Scott: Mark was in the art department, doing a lot of box art, and got drafted into graphics for the computer. We'd be sitting there messing around, thinking up funny messages and things.

Mark: Like the Bat-Mobile in *King's Quest I* or *II*. It comes out of this cave, turns around and goes back in. We didn't tell Roberta about it until after it was shipping [maniacal laughters ensues from the Two Guys].

QB: So Mark, how old are you?

Mark: Twenty-nine.

QB: And what did you do before Sierra?

Mark: I was going to school for awhile and decided to quit delivering singing telegrams.

QB: What did you dress up as when you did the telegrams?

Mark: You name it—a gorilla, Cupid, Superman (that was back when I had a build) and all kinds of crazy things.

Scott: He had a beeper, and they'd beep him when they had to dispatch him somewhere.

Mark: I totaled my car once, out in the middle of nowhere, and was wearing a belly-dancer outfit at the time. Which consisted of pants. Baggy pants and shoes with curled-up toes. The Highway Patrolman really got a kick out of that. I did some graphic arts jobs, then got a job at Sierra designing packages for games like *Flip 'n' Match* and *Lunar Leeper*. *King's Quest I* was in development about that time, which was a real hush-hush project, since IBM was in on it. That's when I got moved into the graphics department, because everyone was working on that, so they were shorthanded. My first project was *Winnie the Pooh and the Hundred Acre Woods*. From there I worked on animation for *King's Quest II*. It was when I was doing some animation on *Black Cauldron* that Scott and I thought, "Hey, let's do a space game, let's get together and do something fun." Because we weren't really into the medieval, swords, dungeons and dragons-type stuff. And we wanted to do something funny, because we both have a pretty sick sense of humor.

Scott: So we did a demo. Mark drew up a few pictures and I coded them and put in some funny messages. And we showed it to Ken: "Come here and take a look at this." And he looked at it and said, "Ok, make me a map." [Both laugh so hard at the memory, they fall out of their seats and onto the plush floor of the limo.]

Mark: That's exactly what he said. "Ok, it's a game, it's a project, let's go."

Scott: I don't think he or anyone else ever thought we'd do it, because at that time, Roberta was the only one who'd designed a game. Now everybody's doing it, which is great.

QB: So the "Two Guys" led the way?

Mark: Yeah, and I feel we kind of helped with the recovery of the company, because it was a project that came out of nowhere and really helped us to stabilize after the shaky times. It just came out of the blue, so it was revenue the company certainly didn't expect. And the development cost was quite low, so the profits were good. We weren't paying out huge royalties all over the place. I don't think they expected it to do as well as it did. I wasn't sure.

Scott: I never thought we'd be doing *Space Quest III*—or *II*, for that matter.

QB: What can you tell us about *Space Quest III*?

Scott: Take it, Mark.

Mark: Let's see, duh…the universally acclaimed software authors, I guess—The Two Guys from Andromeda—have been kidnapped by the Pirates of Pestulon and forced to churn out boring arcade games for a disreputable software company known as ScumSoft. And Roger Wilco's challenge is to rescue them, which becomes your goal in the game.

Crowe & Murphy, headed back to Andromeda after a hard day's night at Sierra

Scott: Of course, after you get yourself out of the mess that you're in with the robots in the garbage freighter, you have to build a space ship from parts you find in this intergalactic junkyard. From that point, you can fly to several different planets. You actually have control of your ship, whereas in the previous games you were kind of limited as to where you could go.

Mark: It's a little less linear than the other games have been.

QB: Yeah, the controls looked a little more sophisticated.

Scott: You have more control over where you go and when you go there. It's not a set series of areas that you have to go to one after another; you can go just about anywhere you want.

QB: So it's not as linear.

Mark: *That's* a good way to put it.

Scott: Are you saying that our other games were?

Mark: Truly, they definitely were. We're trying to improve on it. As we go along, we become more sophisticated as designers. We've got two games on the market, but they were our first two games. We're learning as we go along. Hopefully we're learning from the criticisms and so forth that we've heard. With the exception maybe of the arcade sequences, learning what people like and don't like, and trying to keep them happy. We like people telling us they enjoy playing the game.

Scott: When they say things like, "I really had a great time and I laughed a lot," that's really important to us. It makes it seem worthwhile. Aside from the checks…

Mark: The money doesn't *really* matter—it's the acclaim.

Scott: Yeah, yeah…

Mark: Yeah…

QB: Hold it—you're starting to sound like the Beatles.

Scott: What really feels good is when someone tells us something was funny. Or when Roberta walks up and goes (he makes sound of resigned exasperation), then we *know* it's good. I shouldn't say that.

Mark: But if you can't kid (pauses to flip through *Bartlett's Book of Familiar Quotations*)…

QB: If you can't kid yourself, who can you kid?

Mark: Who said that?

Scott: Can we take our nap now?

QB: This is the third *Space Quest*? Will we see another? Is it going to be *Space Quest* forever?

Mark: We're kind of doing a "wait and see" to find out if people are getting tired of it or not, if we've gone too far already…

Scott (shouts): It depends on *sales* for this year!

Mark: Or on whether or not everyone

Star Saga One: Beyond the Boundary

By William E. Carte

"Have a nice weekend exploring the universe," were the final words I heard from the woman on MasterPlay's tech support line after I called on a Friday afternoon with a few questions about *Star Saga: One*. Was she serious? A quick look inside the game box revealed one manual, six instruction sheets, six player booklets, two maps, six tokens and thirteen reference manuals. Have a nice weekend, indeed! I figured I was more likely to wind up in a black hole somewhere.

Make no mistake about it, this game—the first installment in a trilogy—is a real piece of work. First of all, you and your friends (or enemies) decide which of six characters they want to play in the story. (Though fewer than six can play, a solo game won't be as much fun.) Will you be the noble scientist who wants to help mankind, or the dreamer who wants to build the ultimate space ship?

Whichever role you choose, you and everyone else are about to be sent out into space on different missions. Your mission is to be kept secret from the others, for the ultimate goal is to be the first to complete his or her assigned mission. I chose the hotshot pilot who "refuses to play by the rules" (a la Tom Cruise), and my mission was to build a ship powerful enough to catch a notorious space pirate. This involves careful planning, exploration, trading—and many hours of play.

It's not a typical computer game. After choosing your characters, you plot coordinates into the computer to tell it where you want to move to on the map. The program responds with a reference number that you write down before turning the keyboard over to the next player. In the appropriate reference manual, you then read what has just happened to you (somewhat reminiscent of the "Paragraphs" booklet in *Wasteland*).

Upon landing on a planet, you'll get several choices, such as talking to the na-

tives, trading at the market, or exploring buildings. Each activity sends you to a different passage in one of the reference manuals. These passages may consist of a single paragraph or up to three pages of text. Multiply that by three or four activities on a planet, and you'll quickly see that most of the game is spent reading. The computer serves mainly as a moderator or game master. And when you consider that there are nearly 900 pages of reference material, *Star Saga*'s magnitude begins to dawn on you.

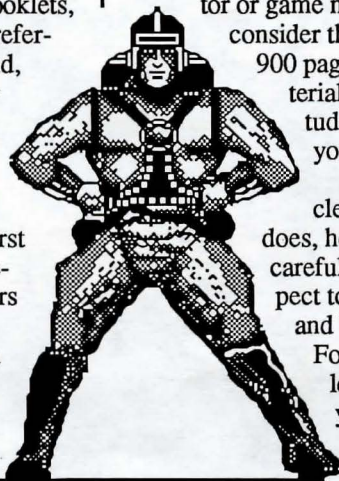Documentation is clear and thorough. It does, however, demand careful reading. Don't expect to open the package and boot up right away. Fortunately, the game leads you through your first five turns, treating them as a tutorial. After that, you're on your own.

To avoid confusion later in the game, I recommend graph paper for charting your moves and actions on each turn. The computer, you see, keeps track of all your turns and actions—but much of the time your opponents will be at the monitor, and you may forget exactly where you are.

Conclusions: It's quite a game, but I'm not sure of the audience for *Star Saga: One*. It's not really for those who play solo games, but can't be classified as a party game. Not unless your party is going to last 30-50 hours! People who enjoy reading novels will probably like it, as well as those hopelessly hooked on space games. But the most important criteria is people who have at least two friends who can devote several hours a week to the game. Even at this rate, it would take a month to finish. An impressive game, *Star Saga: One* is a breakthrough concept. Still, it's not for everyone.

> **Type:** Multi-player Science Fiction Role-playing
> **Systems:** GS (500K required), Apple (64K), IBM (256K required, separate packages for 5.25" and 3.5" disks), C 64
> **Planned Conversions:** Macintosh (summer), Amiga, ST
> **Version Reviewed:** GS

Skill Level: Variable
Protection: None
Price: $79.95
Company: MasterPlay

Corruption

the outset, you are advised to turn up the brightness. I did, and the game didn't get any smarter.) As good as the pictures are, my favorite scene (to which most office workers can readily relate) was in all-text mode and went like this:

```
YOUR OFFICE
> z.z.z.z.z. (abbreviation for wait)
Time passes.
Time passes.
Time passes.
Time passes.
Time passes.
```

Versions for machines such as the Amiga, ST and other advanced computers support the mouse and pull-down menus. (See last month's *FISH* review for more details.) Actually (on the Amiga version at least), you don't really pull down the menus now. Hit the "scroll" and they fold down like a set of blinds. It's a one-disk game on the Amiga, ST and Mac; the others are two-disk packages. None are protected, so you can copy them to back-up disks or a hard drive. (The insidious protection scheme will ask you to type in a key word *after* the first 100 or so moves.)

A warning on the package says *Corruption* is for "adult minds only." That's due to scenes like the one in which you find a plastic bag of cocaine in the bathroom. Say "snort powder," and "it has an immediate effect. You feel really good…You'd better watch out; you could get to like this feeling." Another thing that never happened to me in an adventure game occurred when I ran into my wife outside a restaurant and she yelled, "I want a divorce, you bastard." (OK, so it has happened in *real* life.)

Conclusions: The Magnetic Scrolls variation on the puzzle-intensive, parser-based adventuring has become one of my favorites (the other? Sierra's animated games). It features an exceptional parser, inviting prose, intelligent puzzles and refined artwork that you can get rid of by "pulling" it up over the text. *Corruption* also profits from the best plot Magnetic Scrolls has yet dreamed up. This one's recommended for hard-core detectives with time on their hands.

Skill Level: Advanced
Protection: Key Word
Price: Mac, Amiga, ST $44.95; others $39.95
Company: Magnetic Scrolls/Activision

The Legend of Zelda II
The Adventures of Link

By Stephen King

In 1987 Nintendo startled the world by wedding the fantasy role-playing game to the video arcade game. *The Legend of Zelda* became an overnight success and is still their top-selling game cartridge. As soon as it became clear *Zelda* was going to be such a huge success, a sequel was planned. Two years later, *Zelda II: The Adventures of Link* is finally on the shelves.

Over the course of the first game, you, as Link, had to find the eight pieces of the Triforce of Wisdom and unite them. Then he had to use it to defeat the evil prince Gannon, who possessed the Triforce of Power and also held princess Zelda captive.

Who Is This Really?
On Link's sixteenth birthday, he learned that he did not rescue the *real* princess back in the first scenario. It seems that she had been under the influence of a sleep spell for many years. So Link must now find the third, and final, Triforce of Courage and use the united power of all three to remove the curse and become ruler of the kingdom.

Unlike the first quest, *Adventure of Link* relies more on strategy and tactics than killing everything that moves. The countryside is still represented from an over view, with the hero in the center of the screen; instead of walking to the edge and then onto another screen, however, you watch the whole view scroll past as you move.

Type: Action/ Adventure Videogame
System: Nintendo

The Monster Mash
If you happen to walk off the road, three monster images appear. Touch one of these, and the scene changes to a side-view where you do battle. You'll recognize some of your old buddies from *Zelda I*, including Stalfos, Octorok, Molblin and Goriya. For the most part, however, all the monsters are new, and since combat is no longer depicted from an overhead view, your strategy will have to be completely different.

Overland combat can be avoided in most cases, but not completely. Points are acquired by fighting monsters: the tougher the creature, the more points awarded.

These points are necessary to build up your power attributes of Life, Magic and Attack. Life power means you can take more hits before you die, Magic means you can cast more spells, and Attack makes your offensive hits more powerful.

This Magic Moment
Did I say magic? Yes, I did. There are eight different spells Link can learn from each of the town wizards. One turns Link into a fairy (all right, I heard that!), another reflects evil spells, while a third is completely unpredictable. Several of them are not so mundane. They're primarily used during combat, but from time to time prove useful in the towns too. The effects of these spells last only a short period of time.

Another difference in this quest is the towns. In *Zelda,* people who would aid Link and give him hints were scattered about the land. In the sequel, there are several entire towns. Many inhabitants walk back and forth about their business. If one walks close by, pressing the "B" button allows you to talk to him. Some offer hints, while others restore Link's life or magic power.

We're Off to See the Wizard
Each town houses a wizard, and a couple of towns also have masters at arms to teach you new sword skills. Many times you'll have to go on a short quest to get the town wizard to help you. The masters at arms are even more difficult to reach, and you'll have to muster all your reasoning skills to find them.

Besides all this, there are nine dungeons to explore. Each of the first eight conceals a special item of power that allows Link to range further in his quest. After getting his hands on this item, Link must then defeat the temple guardian and place one of eight special crystals in a statue to seal the dungeon. When all eight dungeons have been sealed, the force field that bars Link from the ninth dungeon, where the Triforce of Courage is hidden, will be deactivated.

Each dungeon is harder to finish than the last, but the layout of the early one is easy to remember. Mapping will probably not be necessary until you reach the seventh or eighth dungeon. There are also several caves that must be negotiated in the early game.

Graphics in *The Adventure of Link* are better than ever, and the music is also great. Depending on whether you are traversing the countryside, battling monsters, or exploring a town or dungeon, you'll hear several different catchy tunes.

Zelda II comes on a 512K battery-powered cartridge with an owners' manual that gives some background information and explains the operation of the various tools and magic, as well as verbal interaction and combat. The cartridge 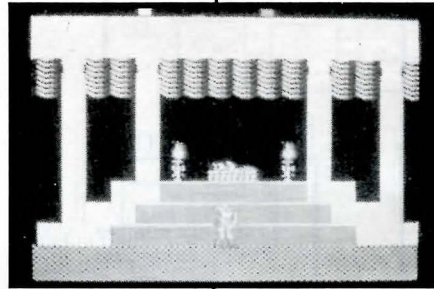is capable of saving three games in progress for up to ten years. What happens after that, we'll just have to wait and see. [Hopefully you'll be able to solve it before the ten years is up!] A games hotline is available for people who are seriously stuck (206 885-7529), plus game hints are published regularly in the Nintendo *Power* magazine.

Conclusions: *The Adventure of Link* is one of those rare examples of a sequel that builds successfully on the original. Far from being "more of the same," it is indeed a truly unique offering that is bound to give you hours of entertainment (if you can only get past the frustration of the first day or so).

Skill Level: Intermediate
Copy Protection: Cartridge
Price: $39.95
Company: Nintendo

IBM Reviewers Update

To the many IBM gamers who responded to our recent news item seeking reviewers for IBM adventures, we want to say thanks. Several names have been selected and asked to send in sample reviews. Don't worry if you didn't hear from us— we'll keep all your names on file, in case any more of our reviewers get eaten by orcs or fall into various pits of doom.

Walkthrough: Gem of Zephyrr

By William E. Carte and Linda Brooks
Verified by Linda Brooks and William E. Carte

The Solution

Desert
N (10 times). Fight. N (3). E. N. E. E. N. E. Fight. Get emerald. E. E. N. N. E (3). Read sign. S (3).

Xeroat
S. Fight. S. E. E. N. N. Listen to Gatekeeper. E.

Road to Fontasy
N (3). E. N. E. Fight. N. E. N (5). E.
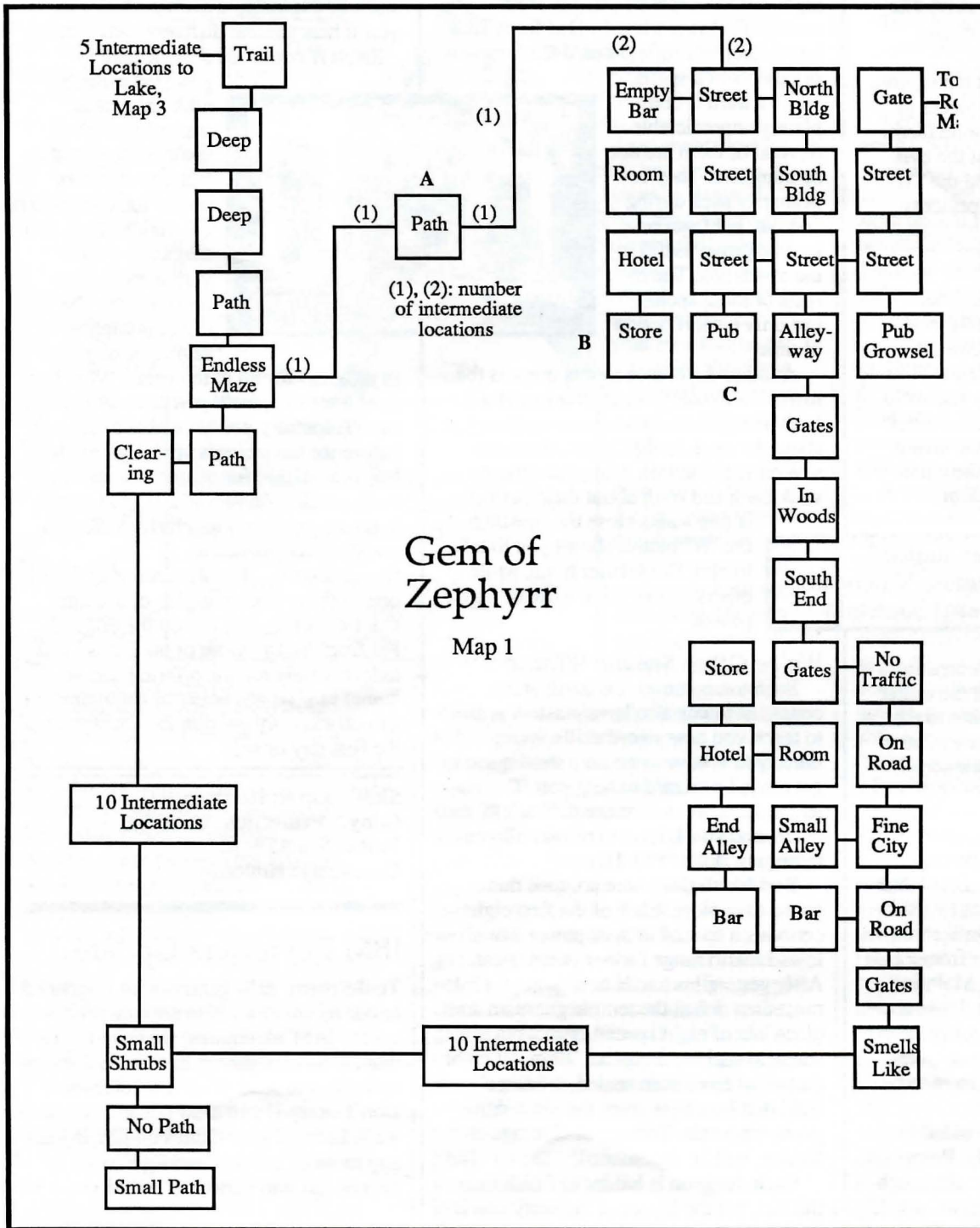
Fontasy
Listen. E. E. N. N. W. W. N.

Road to Mountains
N. N. Get aquamarine. W. Fight. Get sapphire. W (7). Get staff. Get gold. Get silver. Get platinum. N. W (3). Vtf tubgg. W (3). S (4). Fight. Get ruby. Get diamond. N. N. E. N. E. S. S. E. Sfbsdi dsbdl. Yes.
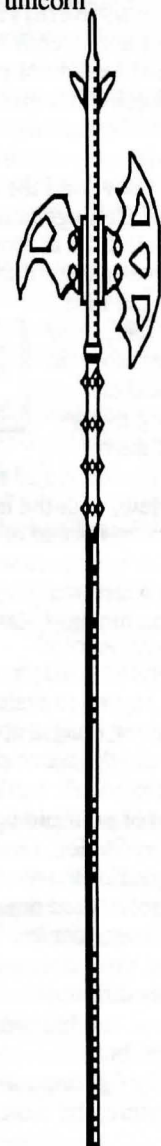
Laboratory
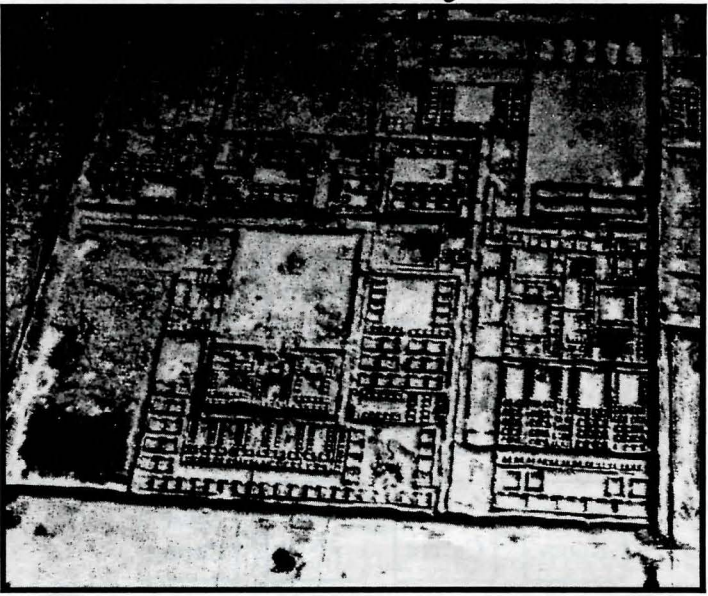Vtf tubgg. Vtf tubgg. Vtf tubgg.

Gem of Zephyrr
Map 1

Map Key: Gem of Zephyrr
A: emerald
B: scroll
C: Xeratonia
D: aquamarine
E: sapphire
F: dragon, staff, gold, silver, platinum
G: diamond, ruby
H: unicorn

5 Intermediate Locations to Lake, Map 3

(1), (2): number of intermediate locations

Map 2

Junction — Corridor — Corridor — Banshee — Crawlway — Corridor — Hall — Rock Slide

Corridor — Passage — Hall — Hall — Cul de Sac — Cavern — **F** Dragon — Ledge — 5 Intermediate Locations — Path — **D** Path

3-way — Hall — Small Draft — Zephyrr — Corridor — Eons — Poorly Carved — Cavern

Entrance — Dungeon — Hall — Corridor — Intersection — Deep in Dust — No Sound — Runes

E

Path

Path

Gates — Alley — Street — Pub Dread

Room — Hotel — Street — Store

West of City — Gates — Street — On Corner — Office

I

4 Intermediate Locations

Dock

Lost — Paved Road

Lost — Lost

On Road — Suddenly

2 Intermediate Locations

To Gate, Map 1 — On Road

G

Path — Path

Base — Peak — Road

Border — Alongside

Barely — Road

Dock — Road — More Solid — Road — Dock

Map 3

North Edge — Border — Well Traveled — Well Traveled — Swamp — (3) — Cool Voice

H

In Forest

N. Perimeter

Dock — Lake — Lake — Lake

Mushy

Lake — (3) — Lake

Lake — (2) — Lake — (5) — To Trail, Map 1

Lake — (2) — Lake

Name the Lost City Contest

Name this maze—a city somewhere on this planet—and be 1 of 3 people to win two years of QuestBusters, plus a set of QB Map Kits. If more than three people identify it by July 15, 1989 (or if no one does), a random drawing will determine winners.

Walkthru: The Pits of Doom

By William E. Carte

The Solution

Cavern
W. W. Get rope. W. Get sword. N. N. Get armour. Wear armour. N. D.

Boring Cavern
N. E. S. Attack. W. Get parchment. Read parchment. E. Tfbsdi. Yes. E. E. S. S. Get staff. N. N. W. S. W. W. S. E. E. S. S. W. Get emerald. S. N. N. W.

Oval Caverns
W. N. N. E. E. N (3). E. Get sapphire. W.

Small Caverns
Search. Yes. W. S. Up.

Sloping Corridor: First Floor
N. E. Use staff. E. E. SW. W. S.

Room with Minotaur
Use staff. Get silver. S. W. S (4). Get diamond. E. N.

Hot Room with Balrog
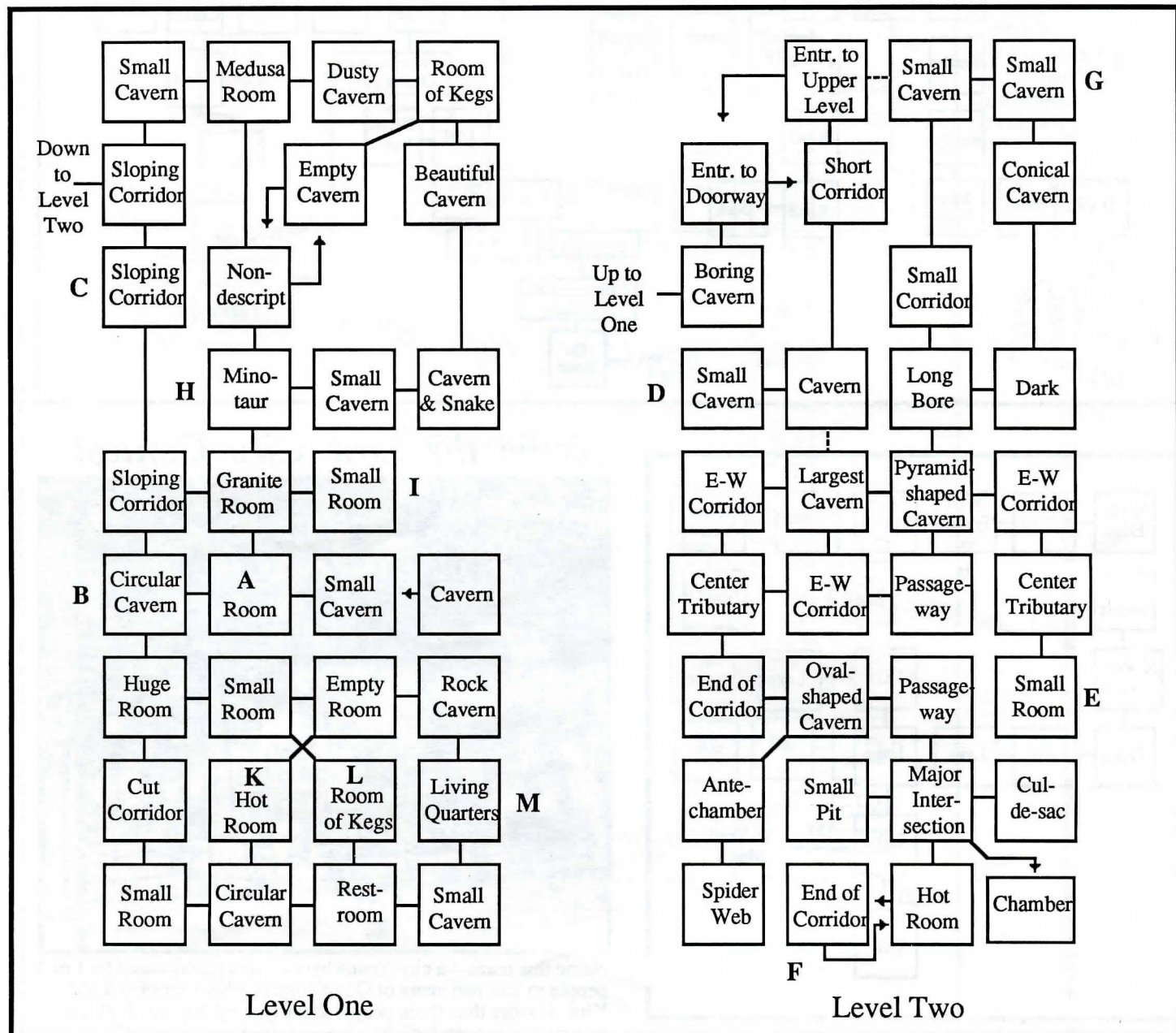Tfbsdi. Get ruby. S. E. N. Get keg. S. E. N. Get pouch. N. W. Attack. W. W.

Huge Room
N. N. E. N. E. E.

Room with Snake
Tfbsdi. Yes. Get ring. Use staff.

Map Key: Pits of Doom
A: rope
B: sword
C: armour
D: parchment
E: staff
F: emerald
G: sapphire
H: silver
I: gold objects
J: diamond
K: ruby
L: keg
M: pouch

Level One

Level Two

Those Two Guys
Continued from page five

reads the press release that calls it the "last of the *Space Quest* trilogy," which we knew nothing about.

Scott: But I think it's inevitable there'll be another one, because they've all been real successful.

Mark: It seems like we have sequel fever, but there appears to be a good following. We keep getting calls and letters asking when the next one will be out. As long as they keep doing that, we'll keep turning something out for them.

QB: Technically this stands out from your previous games because it has the double hi-res graphics and the improved music. Is there anything new or different in terms of puzzles and other aspects?

Scott: There are more close-ups of the characters [also referred to as first-person illustrations]. We're trying to give more of a feeling that you're taking part in a movie rather than a game—that you're actually *in* a movie. Showing things in different perspectives, rather than just flat screens with a little character walking around…

Mark: Try to give it a little different feel…

Scott: …show close-ups of the aliens you encounter, to give them more personality…

Mark: Yeah, that's one thing that's really good. We had Tiny's Used Space Ships in the first game, and he seemed to go over quite well. He had a personality, even though it wasn't large: a salesman-type rap, he's a sleazy guy, selling you a ship he doesn't even own. That kind of thing. So we're trying to put even more personality into the characters in the game. Puzzle-wise, I don't know that we've done much better. We've got puzzles, obviously, but sometimes I think that all puzzles are recycled [laughs] from game to game.

QB: Or a lot of the objects, at least. I forget which games were involved, maybe *Manhunter* was one of them, but I was going over two solutions that turned out to use almost identical objects in the end game. You know what I mean: crowbars, shovels, keys…

Scott: Yeah, we've been trying to come up with some real off-the-wall puzzles and tools.

Mark: Like using a jock-strap for a sling.

Scott: That was pretty unique.

QB: Wait—it was *Space Quest II*, not *Manhunter*. Wasn't that the one that used a toilet plunger at the end? Because there was another game, out about the same time, that used a toilet plunger in one of the last puzzles—*Dream Zone*—and I was going, how can that be?

Scott: Yeah, it's strange. And it bothers me—I hate it when things like that happen, where you seem to have done something that someone else has already done.

Mark: It gets tougher and tougher each time you do one of these, to come up with something original.

Scott: It's hard to break out of the mindset. You kind of get locked into things and seem to have trouble thinking differently. One of the reasons we don't want to do another one too soon is to give ourselves time to come up with some more original stuff, not just keep following the adventure game pattern.

Mark: I find that real frustrating. I hate it when I look at stuff and say, "We've done something that's pretty close to what they've done, or isn't that original, maybe just in a different form."

QB: Well, the keycards are in the game again, right?

Scott: No. They were in the first two, but not in this one.

Mark: In a futuristic game, keycards are as common as keys are in any other adventure.

Scott: Yeah, we're changing them to keypads, so you have to punch in a code to get into your office. We're becoming more sophisticated, so we're going to get rid of the keycards.

Mark: No, actually, we don't have anything like that. In fact, you're not locked out of anything, really.

Scott: It's kind of a throw-away puzzle [both Guys from Andromeda erupt in un-controllable fits of chuckles, snorts, guffaws and rabid belly-laughs].

QB: Where did Roger Wilco come from?

Scott: Wasn't it an old World War II thing? Like "four-niner-bravo, roger wilco?"

Mark: The reason we used it was because of a cartoonist, Kliban, the one who did cartoon books like *Never Eat Anything Bigger than Your Head*.

Scott: Stuff that was so bizarre…he's like Gary Larson, only a couple of steps weirder.

Mark: And he was doing it before Larson. He did drawings of people and had weird names for them—and one of them was Roger Wilco. He looked like one of the guys in high school who was in audio-visual or something: not quite a nerd, but sort of.

Scott: We thought it was appropriate, a space jockey type of guy.

Mark: In reality, we gave people the opportunity to name their character in the first two games, so Roger Wilco probably wasn't the name used by many of them.

Scott: So, are we done?

Mark: Are you out of tape yet?

QB: No, the tape's still running, so we're still stuck here.

Scott: Can't leave till the tape's finished.

QB: Let's see, it's 2:35, it's still Monday. I don't know, is there anything you wanted to say about *Space Quest*, or about anything? (I can't get any more vague than this.)

Mark: Just keep that fan mail comin' in.

Scott: That's true, we do get a lot of letters, and it's really great to read some of them. We get them from parents, from kids, so we've got a pretty wide audience. That's been a challenge, to keep it clean.

Murphy & Crowe: those Two Guys again, lounging in the five-acre terrarium inside Sierra's Coarsegold, California, headquarters.

BattleTech

training area, The Citadel and a Com-Star communication center. Use the time in Pacifica to train yourself as a Rifleman and to buy a weapon and armor. Since you can only have one weapon at a time, make it a good one like a Short Range Missile launcher.

Of course you will need money to do this. When the game starts, there are 35 C-Bills (Com-Star Bills) in your bank account, along with a periodic stipend of 15 C-Bills from home. A shrewd businessman can parley this pittance into a virtual fortune by playing the stock market. There are three stocks that can be traded at the Com-Star building: DefHes (a Lyran blue chip stock that goes up slowly but surely), NasDiv (which gives greater returns at a higher chance for loss), and BakPhar (a failing company trying to make a quick comeback by betting on highly volatile ventures). By coupling bold trading with discrete game saving, you can build your stake up to a respectable sum.

When you feel you have enough cash, complete your Mech training. After seven or eight missions, soldiers from the Draconis Combine attack the base, and from that point you are on your own in hostile territory.

Three Windows

The screen is composed of three individual windows. In the right one you see an overhead view of your party and the surrounding area, which is covered from time to time by descriptions of events. The lower-left window offers a quick look at your condition. During combat, this information will be replaced with a battle menu. The upper-left window normally shows direction, but battle reports appear here during combat. And a short animated out-take might be seen here if you make a particularly good hit.

By pressing the space bar, you can access a menu and change the game settings. You can change the movement rate of your Mech while in combat mode, or slow down the battle descriptions. You can also toggle the sound off or on, change the frequency of the animated out-takes, or quit the game. Other options let you redistribute men in Mechs, inspect detailed information about a Mech or party member (this one also allows you to detect spies), heal a character, save or load up to six games, or show an overhead map that displays a greater area in less detail. This auto-map starts out completely dark, but fills in as you explore more of the planet.

The only real quibble I have about the interface is that control is limited to the cursor keys. It's possible that was the best choice for this game but it would have been nice to have included mouse and joystick drivers so people could gravitate to their own favorite.

Truth, Justice and the Lyran Way

Once Pacifica is destroyed, the game becomes one of battle and exploration. From the very beginning you will be attacked by House Kurita. Until you have your own Mech, my advice to keep a phrase from Little Feat at the top of your mind, "Feets, don't fail me now!" Usually you'll be outnumbered, and even if you have one of the only two hand-held weapons that will damage a Mech, they won't do much damage.

Use your time in Starport to locate potential party members. Probably the most interesting thing you can do in Starport is to hi-jack your own Mech from the arena. I'll leave it to you to figure out how this works, but suffice it to say that you shouldn't rely too much on your battle computer.

The combat menu includes several options. If you own a Mech with jump jets, you can set a direction and number of paces to walk, run or jump. If standing next to an enemy Mech, you can Kick it, and you can Scan any Mechs or Warriors on the field. The Use Weapon option allows you to select your weapon and target. Next Unit will let you set the actions of your other party members. You may also attempt to Flee.

Finally, you have the choice of directing the battle or letting the battle computer handle it. Early in the game you'll want to do it manually to familiarize yourself with all the functions, but as you become used to combat, it's safe to let the computer handle situations where you have a clear advantage.

One interesting difference between the main game and combat maneuvers is movement. Ordinarily, just hitting the appropriate cursor key causes you or your Mech to hustle off in any of the eight directions. Because there are many things happening simultaneously, this gets a bit more complex during combat.

While you still use the arrow keys to indicate direction during battle, movement doesn't occur immediately. For each step you take, a black marker with an arrow in it will appear, forming a line in the path you trace, until you exceed your maximum number of moves. You can extend the cursor further at this point, and any leftover steps will carry over into the next combat round.

The number of steps you take depends on your Mech's design. The engine's size, weight and armor are combined to determine the number of spaces you can walk, run or jump per round, which corresponds to your current speed. Moving faster or erratically will increase your defense bonus, but also generates more heat, which can lead to total shutdown if a critical state is reached.

Worth a Thousand Words

The graphics are exceptional. CGA is supported, but for the full effect you need EGA, MCGA, VGA or Tandy TGA. The background is colorful and filled with various types of terrain (Lionel, HO gauge...oops, just kidding). Jason ambles along in a realistic depiction of motion, the lower part of his body disappearing as he walks through a puddle. Similarly, traveling through dense forest might obscure him entirely.

Mechs move in mighty, mechanical splendor. Looking closely, you'll see they even reflect sunlight as they move. In battle, lasers of red and blue or missiles in flight shoot through the air. If a MechWarrior fights from behind trees, he may find enemy lasers encircling him with fire that makes his Mech overheat and shut down.

The animated out-takes are done in Japanese cartoon style, complete with comically overplayed expressions of anger and dismay. In a couple of the smaller towns, there are even movie theaters that string several of the animated spots into a short feature film. (I wonder how many C-Bills popcorn costs?) When the film breaks, a crowd of disgruntled patrons walks out with you.

By far, my favorite graphic effect was in the aftermath of battle. If a Mech was destroyed, a pile of junk metal remains at that site for the rest of the game. If the casualty was human, you'll see a bloody splat mark. Sound seemed to be somewhat more limited. There was an off-key tune that played with the title screen, which sounded quite a bit better with the three-channel Tandy sound chip; unfortunately, there is no provision for using Tandy sound with EGA. You'll hear a few regular sound effects like the firing of lasers or whistling of missiles in flight, and the opening of doors in the final maze of the hidden Star Fleet cache. (All weapons have individual sound effects.)

BattleTech

We'll Be Right Back

Fans of the paper and pencil RPG may recognize that this game barely touches on the totality of the *BattleTech* universe. Don't be distraught, for a sequel is already in the works. The owners' manual explains the operations of the game and gives some history of the successor houses and biographies of important members of the Youngblood clan. A flyer will familiarize you with hand-weapons and the four light Mechs.

There's also a FASA ad highlighting no fewer than 44 *BattleTech* products: from complete board games and individual RPG campaigns to technical blueprints and biographies of the five houses. Even novels about some of the major characters and battles are offered (some written by *Wasteland* co-designer Michael Stackpole). With this incredible wealth of history from which to draw, it's easy to predict that this may turn into the next major game series.

It supports one or two floppy drives and hard disks. Two 5.25" disks and one 3.5" disk are in the box. There are two variations of key word copy protection. Every time you go to the Mech training facility, you have to identify key parts of a Wasp Mech from a diagram in the manual. This repetition would get annoying, but you never have to do it again after completing the training missions.

Additionally, there is a star map that you need to solve the final puzzle. This is far more subtle than the first scheme, because it really is a legitimate game puzzle. It's up to the player to figure out which of the many planetary common denominators define them as a likely part of the ultimate password.

Conclusions: If *BattleTech* is any indication, Infocom's commitment to the all-text adventure will surely carry over into graphics gaming. The visuals are excellent, yet don't suffer the corresponding loss in speed that hampers games like *Future Magic*. I'd like to hear better sound and see a larger slice of the *BattleTech* universe in the sequel—but as the first game in the series, this one is top-notch.

Skill Level: Intermediate
Copy Protection: Key Word
Price: C 64, $39.95; others, $49.95
Company: Westwood/Infocom

What Two Guys?

Mark: But we don't need any more game ideas.

Scott: Yeah, people keep submitting things like 'Attack of the Killer Turtles.'

Mark: We laughed at 'Killer Turtles,' and now 'Teenage Mutant Turtles' is a big hit!

Scott: But I really appreciate people who take the time to sit down and write a letter and tell us their judgement on what we did—that's really gratifying.

Mark: Yeah, that's almost as important as the check! I remember one call I got before my phone number was unlisted (people will call any name on the box). It was from some guy in the Deep South, who sounded like: "Ah'm playin' yall's *Space Quest* gaaame heah, and ah'd lahk ta know how ahm s'pposed ta get past these heah lazuh beems." It seems like the most unlikely people are playing these games.

Scott: Another thing that's been a surprise is that the age range we appeal to is so wide. It's so tough to put stuff in that will entertain adults without offending younger people or their parents.

Mark: I got one letter from a feminist who was upset about the jock-strap, she called it a male-oriented game that had no females in it. Supposedly her thirteen-year old son was offended by the fact that there was a jock-strap in it.

Scott: I still wish we'd sent her a *Leisure Suit Larry*. But *that* wouldn't be right.

Mark: I'm too tired from lunch, I can't think anymore.

Scott: I remember one letter we got from a guy, who obviously wasn't very bright and didn't know how to write, either, or spell…

QB: That was *my* letter!

Mark: Oh, *you're* the guy we sent the *Wizi-Type* to.

QB: Any more interesting behind-the-scene stories?

Waiting for Duffy

Duffy's busy studying his "Be a Super Tanker Captain" mail order course, so contact these people if you can help.

Need maps to Wizardry 1, also Book of Adventure 1 & 2. C. Gregor, 4260 Clayton Rd #74, Concord, CA 94521

Manhunter: what do I do on day 3? What's note UCUCC for? Dan Bartram Jr, Box 2398, APO NY 09009

Wizardry 2: Found the 3 clues, still don't know what killed the king. Joseph Cade, 9009 N McGee, Kansas City, MO 64155

Neuromancer & Ultima 4: need help, maps, tips. J. Ransbottom, POB 491, Chesapeake, OH 45619

Corruption: How do I get out of hospital ward? J. Figaro, 3538 Grantwood Way, Carmichael, CA 95608

Usurper: how do I light the lantern? R. Loveland, 7721 Sundial Lane, Orlando, FL 32819

Manhunter: What do I do after getting the message "UCUCC"? Police Quest 2: Have field kit but can't get out of station. Fletcher tells me to answer calls about "dirtbag" but yells at me when I get in the car. How do I drive around? Kevin Wagner, POB 36, Fombel, WA 16123.

Neuromancer: need more Zen, money & chips. How do I enter Biolabs? Gary Hollis, HHC 4-67 AR, APO NY 09074 Wizard's Crown: Can't get good party started, need tips. Joseph Smith, 69-43 B 210 St, Bayside, NY 11364

Ultima 5: How does Lord Kenneth help me get Sandalwood Box? Matt Danbenspeck, Rte 2 Box 466, Tuttle, OK 73089

Ultima 5: How do I get through Dungeon Hythloth to Underworld? Where's the Sandalwood Box? How do I get out of first room in Shame? P. Gardner, 2038 New York Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11210. Same questions, plus will playing harpsichord help me? R. Loveland, 7721 Sundial Lane, Orlando, FL 32819

Neuromancer: Where is Commlink 4, what are passwords for Chiba Tactical Police and SEA? P. Meehan, 2555 Giant Oaks Dr, Pittsburgh, PA 15241

Police Quest II

At the beginning, check out the Captain's desk for computer passwords. Get Bains' file at the jail to get his *new* mugshot. To safely enter room 108 at the motel, go back to your car (after talking to the clerk) and dbmm ejtqbudi to get a tfbsdi xbssbou. Give xbssbou to desk clerk and get key. When you unlock the door, stand at the far right, near the wall, so you don't get blown away. Don't forget to call the cops in Tuffmupo, so they'll ubq Dpmcz't qipof.

Marlene Simmons

Might & Magic II

To get gems: pick a fight in the Tboetpcbs Tavern; walk on water one space offshore of the Emerald Coast; go to 15, 0 in the Uvoesb Dbwf. (Caution: leprechauns will vaporize your gems, so run from them if you're not strong enough to nuke them with your first shot.) For more than a million experience points, whip the Cat from Hell in the Gpscjeefo Gpsftu (you'll need a couple of Pathfinders in your group to find it, an-dat least a spell level nine Cleric and Wizard). (You also get over 200 cat corpses that can be dispelled by invoking Holy Word.) You can return and slay the Cat as often as you wish. Medium-strong characters can rack up experience points by fighting the mounted patrols in the Queen's Orchard near Vulcania. You can trade gold for experience points at 5, 11 on level one of Ijmmtupof Dungeon. Tifsnbo must accompany you to Castle Pinehurst if you want to time travel. Locations of all hidden spells and hirelings are revealed in the hall of spell corridors in Castle Ybcsbo (14, 8 in the 8th era). The password for the Druid Cave is esv-jet. The Sword of Valor is at A-2, 11, 2. The Sword of Nobility is at D-4, 14, 11.

William M. Hays

Character development tips: When characters reach level nine, fly to E-2, go two north and teleport eight east. Drink from the Fountain (your traits will equal 200 and level will be 50). Then fight the very hard monsters in one of the four trees surrounding the Fountain. After each fight, return to the Fountain and drink again. To boost all traits to 100 *permanently*, go to the Circus (days 140-170) and win as many kewpie dolls as you can carry. Fly to D-3 and go to 7, 13. Give a doll to the man and fly to D-3, teleport six west,

then teleport three south. Enter the pool and return to the Circus. You'll be able to win one event to increase the trait (that's pertinent to the event) by ten points. Repeat this process until all traits hit 100.

Algis Woss

For more hit points, go to the dungeon under Wvmdbojb. At 14, 15, listen to the ballad and you'll get ten endurance points. Leave the dungeon and return, and you'll get ten more. Repeat till you max out at 60 Endurance points. You'll find two good hirelings at 14, 2 in the same dungeon. Keep the Levitate spell going at all times there.

Robert Breezley

For an easy 10,000 experience points, buy a Witch's Broom, fly to A-2, walk to 2, 9 and answer lfzt, fly to C-1 and walk to 1, 1. Repeat as often as you like.

James B. Simpson

Wasteland, IBM version

Don't try selling stuff in a store, then leaving and turning off the computer. *Always* save after leaving a store, or you'll never be able to enter the store again.

Brian Riggs

Wizardry V

The Mad Stomper will sell you a Rubber Duck that can be used to swim to any level of any pool. Big Max will sell you a ticket to Manfreti's.Gold key is in pool on level 3, 26E, 14S. Silver key is on level 1, 27E, 14N. The Staff of Water is in a pool on level 7, 10E, 13N. Spirit Away potion is on level 2, 8E, 0N. Battery is on level 4, 10E, 7S. There's a secret door at the end of the conveyor. Cast Litofeit to use it and take the short cut to level 6. To use the Ice Ferry, H E B G F C D (coded). The gost nest is on level 777. Use chute on level 7, 14E, 14N.

Claude Giralte

Times of Lore

Contrary to a recent Keys clue, you *can* retain the Voyagus Scroll throughout the game by doing this: (1) save before using the scroll (2) use it (3) check inventory for the scroll (4) save again and review inventory for the scroll (5) if the scroll *is* missing, restore the last saved game. Also, after killing Lich, visit the Wizard north of the Enchanted Forest to get the key that lets you enter the Mountain

(dark mark on map, south of Realean), where you'll find the chimes. At the Temploe of Angor: (1) use ring (get by killing Giant west of Rhyder) (2) go upstairs, find bedroom, look under bed (3) get globe (4) go downstairs to High Priest and use globe. A good weapon is the ax at Lankwell.

Charles Jones

The Usurper: Mines of Qyntarr

To deal with the Pirate, give qfo to pirate (it's in the Tmpqjoh Dsbxmxbz). To get the book in the Library's glass case, go to the Hbscbhf Room, where the Cmppcmf will follow you back to the Library and eat the glass case, leaving the book for you to grab. First, look at the book, which turns into a pill when you pick it up (use this to get by the Esbhpo). To cross the Great Chasm, xfbs the Hpme Nfebmmjo-po.To get rid of the Scorpion in the Steel Monster Room, lead it SW, then S to the Rainy Room, where it will rust. When you confront Aken, remember what's on the qbsdinfou and what the skull in the Moldy Room says.

Sandra K. Walton

Neuromancer

When fighting an AI, first use Psychoanalysis to learn its weakness, then use that skill first. Next use all four skills to attack, and Zen to recover from mental damage. When you defeat an AI, all four attack skills are boosted. You'll be arrested each time you talk to Akika (just plead innocent). Remember: entering a Base from Cyberspace is different from using the link code, so enter *all* Bases from Cyberspace. ArmorAll 1, 2, etc. are considered different programs, so keep the two highest levels to restore your deck's armor while ICE-breaking. Keep only the highest number of each attack program. Use Probe to find out what you're fighting; then back off, reenter the Base and use ICE-breaking skill, Slow, a Virus, then the attack programs. High-level Jammies stops the revolving ICE for one attack (and may be reused).

James B. Simpson

The DIBO DIBO edition of the QuestBusters Code: count one letter back—RC = QB.

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The Two Amigos of Outer Space

Scott: We got into a little bit of trouble with Disney for putting messages in *Black Cauldron* that they didn't find particularly tasteful. I remember writing my first message: when I saw it on the screen, it made me chuckle, and I thought, "This is really fun." The Disney people didn't think so, though. I didn't know Disney was going to get a copy of that version, because I thought I'd get a chance to clean it up first. When they saw it, I had to print out all the text files for them, so they could look over them and make sure we hadn't screwed anything else up.

Mark: They had no sense of humor.

Scott: Oh, it was *fun* working with Disney. In fact, they gave everybody a list of words that could not appear in the software, or anything Disney ever published, for that matter. And it was the most obscure list of words: all the dirty words, of course, but then there were some that could mean just about anything...

Scott: Another interesting story involves *Space Quest I*, which had the robot place called 'Droids R Us.' We got a nasty letter from Toys R Us, who wanted to sue us, wanted us to 'cease and desist.' Change it, or take it out, whatever. They thought we were infringing on their trademark. I guess they have a trademark on the 'R' or something, even though ours wasn't a backwards 'R' like theirs.

QB: That's funny, because the masthead in a recent issue of *QuestBusters* said it was published by 'Orbs R Us.'

Mark: Then a few weeks later, Ken walks up and says to change it.

Scott: We changed it to 'Droids B Us.'

Mark: So anyone out there who has a *Space Quest I* with a 'Droids R Us' in it has a collectors item.

Scott: Not many of them got out the door.

QB: Well, I'm out of tape, I'm out of questions, you're out of answers...

Mark: How much can you write about Two Guys from Andromeda, anyway?

Adventure Hotline

unsure of it, they sent it to game reviewers (!) to find out if it was any good.

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ATARI

8-bit—sell only: Alternate Reality, Ultima 1 & 2, 7 Cities of Gold, Gemstone Warrior, Return of Heracles, Zorro, more. Write for list. Bob Albright, 912 Mt Rose Ave, York, PA 17403

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