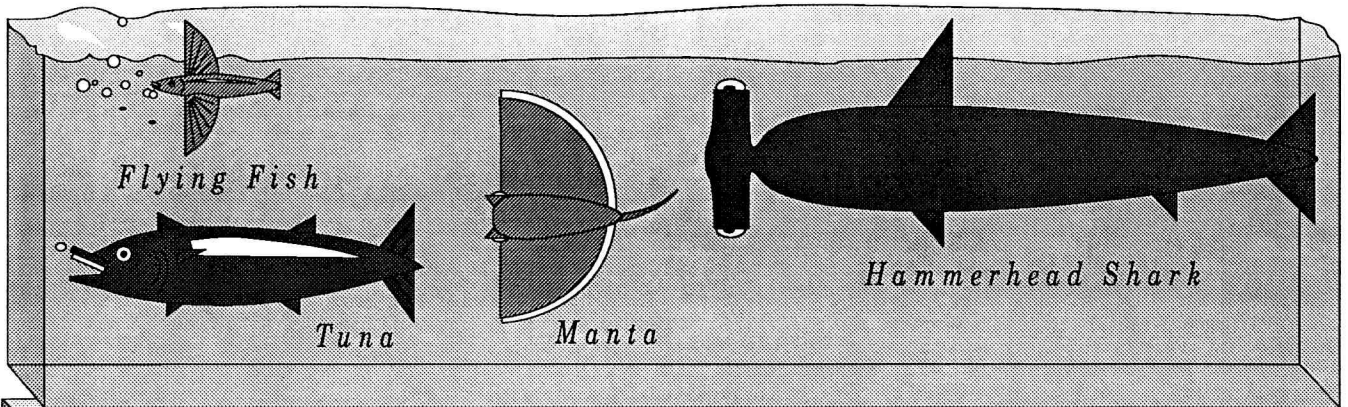
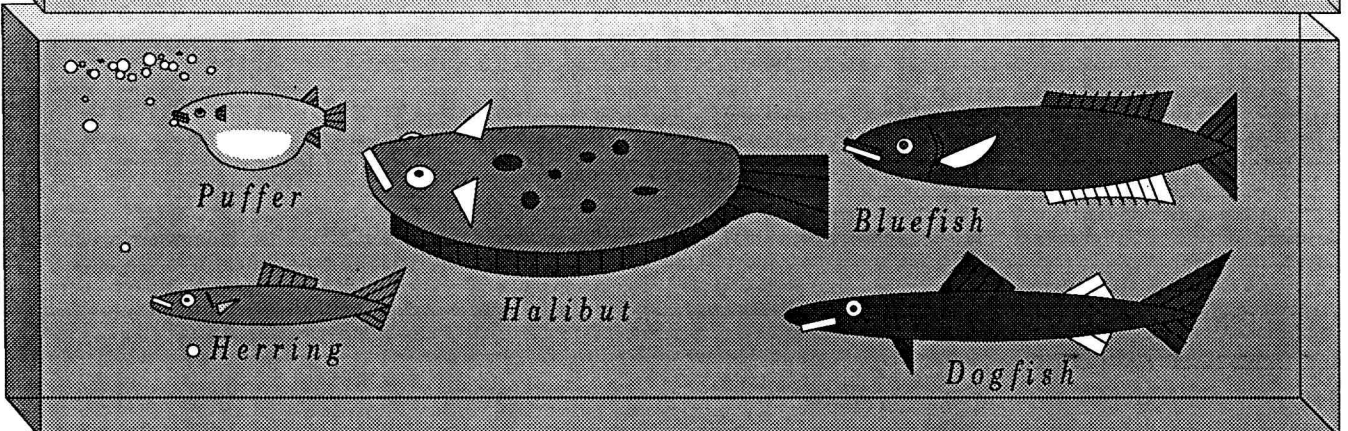


Alberts Bi-Monthly Review

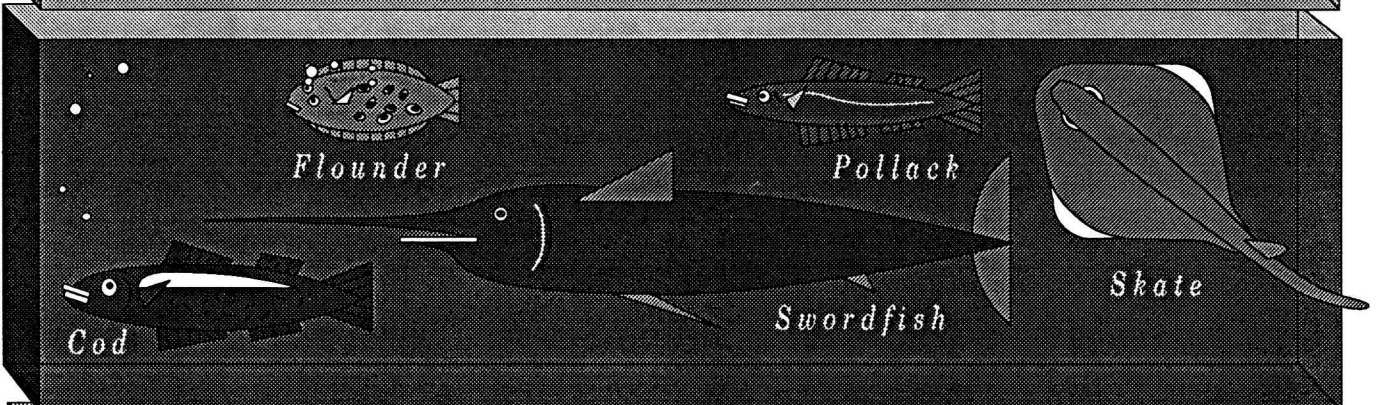
Surface



Continental Shelf



Continental Slope



Deep Sea



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Page 21-22..Aaaaargh! Hyperball 2 is reviewed. This could be the death of the reviewer!

Page 23.....Special Offer of the Month! The Prime PC up for grabs!

Page 24.....Credits and Helpline. Thankyou! and where to get help!

Page 25.....Bapckpage information. Where to send all your questions, money, discs, letters and if you are feeling rich, computers!

Additional Sections.

Dbase II. Sections 3 and 4 of the Dbase tutorial by Steve Ryder. (Phew! I remembered to post his disc back!)

Public Domain Catalogue No. 2. Including new price list.

Price List No. 1. For all the items I have for sale.

Albert's Bi-Monthly Review

Well, here I am again writing more things for the group. I know this might sound a little strange, however I'm writing this just after I have finished writing and printing the December News Letter.

Right. So far not a lot has happened. Commodore is still to announce the price of its new Commodore Amiga 1500 and IBM is still to announce the price of their latest 486 Pc, so a lot of people are sitting tense in their seats wondering what exactly all the fuss is about! I'm afraid that this also includes me. I'm getting a little fed up with all the fuss that is being made over the "Latest" computers. So after saying that, what do you think about it? Later in the magazine, I will review 2 hot favorites for the "Next generation" in computing and (If they are announced) I will give you the prices.

Backups and Hard drives.

Have you been longing for a hard drive for the Einstein? I know that I would love to get my hands on one, however that seems to be a little impossible now, or is it. There is now 2 members in the group who own hard drives and have attached them to the Einstein, later in the mag I will review one and tell you is it really worth it!

Ideas?

As I have asked many a time! If you have any good ideas about what would make the perfect article for the magazine, please write in! I can only write about things I know, so I would be very happy to hear from anybody in the group who has any suggestions or problems.

Problems?

For those people that live locally, if you have a problem and you would like to have a chat about Albert, give me a ring and pop round! I would be only to happy to have a chat!

For those people that don't live that local, well try and arrange a day when you can pop down (or up) for a day! As I said I would like to get to know all the members of the group and not just as a voice at the other end of the Phone!

Well, I hope you enjoy the magazine.

Roy Prime. Chairman.

The Apple Macintosh FX

When I first saw the Apple Mac FX in December, I thought that Santa had really brought a nice present for me to review, however it turned out that the machine wasn't for me but the "Catalogue Editor" Jason Woolf (Who also can draw as well!).

Although I have now been using this system for about one month (The catalogue editor and I have fights for it in the morning), I find it hard to get over the speed and quality of this machine. The processor is the 68030 made by Motorola. It also has a maths co - processor to help speed everything up a little. The 68030 is a 32 bit processor and runs at 40 mhz, which is very fast, if you want to gauge it with the Einstein (For relative speed anyway!) you can do it like this.

$32 \text{ times } 40 \text{ divided by } 4 = 320 \text{ divided by } 8 = 40$. Which means that this computer is just about 40 times the speed of the Einstein. Now this figure might be out a little, because of the maths co-processor, and I would place bets on the machine being at least 50 times the speed of the Einstein!

Graphics.

Graphics wise you might begin to think it is a little over the top. You can have a pallet of about 4 million colours and you can mix tiny quantities. The screen display is very fast. You can have a high resolution picture as taken from my Optical Drive (About 1.4 mega bytes), and you can move it around the screen, now on my 486, if you load a picture like that into the computer, you can expect to wait a couple of minutes before the computer will even think of letting you move it.

Sound.

This is the strange thing about what is classed as a big powerful business computer. You have Stereo sound! You would expect that from small computers like Amigas, however on a Macintosh? The quality is good, there is even a stereo jack plug to allow you to connect it to a Hi Fi or to headphones!

Memory.

I think 2 mega bytes is the standard size, however I wouldn't really know as the one that I'm reviewing has 32 mega bytes (This is one of the reasons it can move a picture so easily on the screen).

Hard Drives and Interfaces.

One thing I do like about the Apple Macintosh range is the fact that it uses SCSI interfaces (Small Computer Systems Interface), this I think is just about the fastest

interfaces known at the moment, and when you couple that with an Optical Drive (Like a CD player, and takes CD like discs) and a 300 mega byte hard drive, you have really got a lot of FAST storage. To give you some idea of the speed, we had a demo given to us when the company purchased the machine and it runs an animation from the hard drive as a series of 100 pictures, and it looks like an animation not 100 pictures!

Monitors.

You have a wide range of monitors from 10" to 16". We are using the 16" model, which allows you to create large documents and still fit it on the screen, for example while I was writing the magazine I had 2 pages on the screen at one time!

Overall Value for money.

I have decided after looking at and using a Macintosh FX that this is the machine for me, totally mouse driven (You still have lots of keyboard short cuts though!) it is easy to use, and you don't have to wait around for 2 hours for it to draw a picture! I would defiantly say that once you connect this beast up to a laser printer or a colour ink jet printer, you will have a machine worth talking about.

The Price is about £7900 depending on what you buy with it, however to get the kind of machine that I'm using (And how I wish I could take it home!) it would cost around £15000. Maybe I'll buy myself one when I get a promotion, like to being a chairman!!

The Elonex 486.

In the wave of computer purchases I was lucky enough to end up with an Elonex 486 sitting on my desk (Or should I have rather said sitting on the floor). Before I used the Macintosh FX I would have said that the Elonex 486 was the fastest machine that I have actually used. The Elonex 486 has the now very famous Intel® 486® chip in it. This chip is a 32 bit chip running at 33 mhz, if you work this out as before you will see how fast it is (Relative speed) to the Einstein, so.

$32 \text{ times } 33 \text{ divided by } 4 = 264 \text{ divided by } 8 = 33$. This means that the Elonex 486 is about 33 times the speed of the Einstein.

Graphics

Graphics wise it still looks very much like the run of the mill PC. I have run Pagemaker 3.0 on it and it does not really go much quicker than my 286, which I was very disappointed in.

Sound

Well, if you have heard one PC you have heard them all! This case is very true when it comes to this one. The sound is no better than my little old 1981 XT machine, mind you most PC fans would probably be shocked to the core if they heard a standard PC play a tune!

Memory

Back to the usual PC problem, run out of memory. This one is not really an exception, however MS Dos 4.01 has just about fixed that. In some applications even though I have 16 Mega Bytes ram, I still am limited to 640k, which seems to be a bit pathetic when you consider the power of the machine.

Hard Drives and Interfaces.

This is where the PC is beginning to hold it's ground against the Apple Macintosh FX. The PC that I'm using has a 300 mega bytes hard drive. This hard drive has an ESDI interface, ESDI is second best to SCSI at the moment, however it is quite quick.

Monitors.

You are offered the standard choices when it comes to monitors. First you are given the choice of EGA (Aaaaaaaargh!) or VGA (Humm) or Super VGA (Yipeee). I managed to get the Super VGA, however with only a total of 256 colours on the screen at one time, you are slightly limited. The one good thing that I have to say about super VGA is that is very clear, however it still is nowhere near the quality of

the Macintosh FX.

Overall Value.

For programs such as Dbase III+ and Wordstar it is great seeing as the machine is so quick, however when it comes to serious number crunching and heavy disc accessing it is let down badly. A 486 machine (Elonex is just about the quickest) is very good for accounts, database use and wordprocessing, however don't use one if you think that you are going to use a Desk Top Publishing System!

The Elonex 486 with 300 mega byte hard drive and Super VGA monitor costs around £8000 (Why oh why couldn't they have bought another Macintosh FX!).

A quick review on a laser printer.

This is another one of the firms old pieces of equipment. It is a QMS - PS810. It runs at the relatively slow speed of 6 pages per minute, however you get very nice quality text from it with the built in fonts.

Using the laser printer is fairly easy, except you get quite a long wait before it prints, it seems strange that when you print a document that you have to wait for about a minute before it starts printing.

I set up the laser printer on my little Apple Macintosh +, and although I found it was fairly hard to set up, when it was set up it was very easy to use. The printer will allow you to set up a number "Built in" fonts including, Times, ITC Avant Garde, Helvetica, Palatino, ITC Zapf Chancery, ITC Zapf Dingbats, Courier, New Century Schoolbook and ITC Bookman. When these fonts are used you get a fantastic print from the laser printer, however if you ask for something which is not on the laser printer such as venice, it will either default to Courier (The horrible American look!) or it will download it from the computer, which looks almost as bad.

Printing.

The actual printing is rather strange. Instead of having to manually feed paper there is a photocopier type sheet feeder when you print a letter or something similar it will automatically feed one sheet into the printer. This is very good when you have 30 plus pages to print, as you can set the printer going then forget about it. When I first used a laser printer I must admit I was fairly shocked when I heard how quite it is, however you get used to it after a while!

Conclusion.

Well, it is a nice printer, you have the options of connecting it up to just about any computer, including Apple Mac, IBM, and even good old Albert! It is quiet, so is ideal for use somewhere where you need it to be quiet.

Overall Value.

Well, laser printers like this cost around £800 now so, it is not cheap, however for quality, it is unbeatable.

AEGOS! The Review.

Well, now it has been released I have decided I'd better review it for you to tell you what you have been missing. I will not rate it however, I will let you judge for yourselves as I might be just a little biased!

The AEGOS games pack has 7 games for all ages. First there is my personal favorite, Dice. This is based on the Yahtzee™ game by Waddingtons®. You have 5 dice and you have three throws get the dice in a certain order. Some of the orders are:-

3 of a kind

4 of a kind

Dice (5 of a kind)

Full House. Three of one and two of another. I.e 2 Sixes and 3 Ones.

Low Straight. I.e 1,2,3,4 or 2,3,4,5

High Straight. I.e 1,2,3,4,5.

The game is for up to 6 players, and each player has 6 games. The winner is of course the person with the most points.

Concentration.

Well, this is easy to play, yet hard to remember! You have a full deck of cards face down, the idea is to match up every card on the deck. You type in a number from 1 to 52 and the computer will turn over a card for you, then you have to try and match this card with another, once again you must type in another number, hopefully they will match, if so they will remain face up, if not however they will turn face down again! This becomes a lot easier as you progress as there are less and less cards to choose from. The quickest I have seen anybody complete this game is in 43 turns.

Blackjack.

Well, this game speaks for itself! Based on the famous game Blackjack. You are dealt the standard 2 cards. If you are lucky you might just get a 21, if not you can decide whether to stick or twist depending on how lucky you feel.

In Between.

This was the last minute entry. In this game you are dealt 2 cards. If you think the next card will be in between the first 2 cards you were dealt, you type Y and enter the amount you want to bet, if you think it isn't going to be in between, you type N and again enter the amount that you wish to bet. If you win you will double your money, however if you lose your money will be halved. The game ends when either you run out of money or you break the bank (over £500!)

Here's two for the kiddies!

Plank. Very similar to Hangman, the only difference being that he jumps off a plank.

Romulans. This will show that even if you have a quick eye you are not likely to see this. You are shown up to 99 Romulans on the screen, you are given about 2 seconds to estimate the number, then type it in! If you were dead on you will be given about 10 laser points (You start off with 100). If you were too far over or under, your lasers will jam (Game over!), if you were quite a bit over or under you will be shot at and lose 20 laser points, if you were about 10 over or under you will lose 10 laser points and if you were only about 5 out you will be given about 5 laser points. The game ends when you have either amassed 500 laser points (Very unlikely!) or you lose all your laser points (Very likely!) or your lasers jam!

Golf

Golf is Written By Ted Cawkwell.

There is a total of 18 holes waiting to be conquered, and you are just the person to do it! You are given a full set of clubs and are asked to go play golf! This requires a bit of mathematics and you are likely to find yourself in a bunker, up a tree or in the middle of a lake. This game is fun when you get to master it, however before you do that you will get used to seeing "Sunk Putt" or "Double Bogie" quite a lot!

The AEGOS pack is available from me (Roy Prime) and comes with the usual 3 month warranty + instructions. Price is £9.95. Call 0525 210868.

PC Review 2 The Revenge!

Well, after reviewing the super powerful Elonex 486, I decided it might be a good idea to review my old machine (Please Boss, can I take the old one home now I have got the Elonex!). My old machine was a Viglen 286. This was in it's time a fairly powerful beastie with 1024k ram, 40 mega byte hard drive and an EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adaptor) screen. Right to give you some idea of the speed again here comes some sums!

The Viglen II runs a 16 bit Intel® 286® Processor at 16 mhz.

So 16 times 16 divided by 8 (For the 8 bit Z80A of the Einstein), divided by 4 gives us 8 times the speed of the Einstein, now when you compare this with the 45 - 50 times the speed of the Macintosh, this sounds very slow, however it isn't. It is very slow when it comes to serious number crunching (Like most Pc's), however it had a fairly fast graphics adaptor, which helped quite a lot.

Monitors.

With the monitor being EGA, you get a fairly high resolution display and nice colours (for a PC).

Sound.

Who are we trying to kid here! One little speaker, and 1 channel, lets be serious it's a PC!

Memory.

Well, I have got 1 mega byte memory, but of course thanks to MS Dos, I can only use 640k!

Hard Drives and interfaces.

The Viglen series comes with 20 - 80 mega bytes hard drives with the Standard MFM interface. Now, when you look at the Macintosh or even the Amiga, both use Quick SCSI drives, a Pc that still uses MFM, Groan! You seem to be waiting round for ages!

Overall Value.

I think that a PC like the Viglen is better value then a 486, mainly because I didn't really ever run out of room of find the 286 too slow. ok so now I can do my work at about 5 times the speed, but the 486 costs about 5 times the price!

Viglen II now costs around £1200 with EGA monitor and 20 Mbyte Hard Drive.

PD.. The Review!

Well as promised I have finally got round to reviewing the PD. I'm at this moment sitting down at work pretending that the phone is ringing and lots of quotes and things are piling up on my desk, however I have had one inquiry and the phone is quiet, so I thought why not use this moment to write about PD! Jason Woolf (Sorry I spelt your name wrong in December Jason!) is on holiday all this week, so I have been able to hop on to the Macintosh as soon as I got through the door! Now, back to the Pd.

The first thing that I'm going to review is the games section, why you might ask? Simple! The games section is at the start of the PD catalogue and it is the easiest to review!

Ok. PD G001 has the following titles on it:-

ANIMAL.DAT ANIMAL.XBI
CALENDAR.XBI
DRAUGHTS.XBI
FRACTALS.XBI
FRUIT.XBI
GRUFF.XBI
HANGMAN.XBI
ITALICS.XBI
JUKEBOX.XBI
MANDAL.MAN
MANDAL.XBI
MATCH.XBI
READ.ME
RUNOFF.COM
RUNOFF.DOC
TESTCARD.XBS
UNDER.DAT
UNDER.XBI

This disc is a collection of various games. It covers a Fruit machine, An adventure, draughts. It even has a Mandlebrot program (How I wish it was a Mandlebrot generator!). All the games work well and fairly fast due to the fact that they have been compiled. TESTCARD.XBS looks like the BBC testcard and Jukebox is a collection of Josef's music. This disc is good value for money, as it is one disc that I can guarantee will work on any Einstein, providing you have System 5's XR.COM program, if you do not have that, please don't bother buying it.

PD G002. This has the following titles on it.

ADVICE.
ADVERT.
BUZZ.C
BUZZ.COM
BUZZ.DOC
CHAT.
CRC.COM
NSWEEP.COM
PCAT.C
PCAT.COM
PCAT.DOC
READ.ME
WAFFLE.COM
WAFFLE.CQ
WAFFLE.DQC
WISECRAK.COM
WISECRAK.CQ
WISE.COM

These have to be some of the most entertaining programs for a good laugh. BUZZ.COM will allow you to create adverts or notes. Unlike using a wordprocessor all you have to do is enter the main details like name of company, name of director and things like that, and hey presto! you will have a funny advert in only a few seconds!

WAFFLE.COM works in a similar way, however you can just create statements out of thin air, and it reads just like a letter from the council!

These programs can be run on any Einstein without any problems!

There are already some documents in there that you can read, these can be read by typing DISP. For example DISP CHAT or DISP READ.ME.

PD G003 Contains the following files:-

BLKJCK.BAS
BOGGLE.BAS
CALCULAT.BAS
CHASE.BAS
HORSE.BAS
LABELS4.BAS
LOANAMOR.BAS

MBXREF.BAS
MERCHANT.BAS
POSTER.BAS
PRINTTEST.BAS
REALEVAL.BAS
ROCKET.BAS
TRADE.BAS
WUMP.BAS

Ok So, this is the Mbasic games disc. MBASIC is available from me (See language section), however it really needs the £110 version! There are the usual type of games here including Black Jack, horse racing, however due to the fact that it requires a new version of Mbasic, this isn't really a good seller!

PD G004 Contains the following files:-

AUTOST.COM
BRUN.COM
CAS1.COM
CASUALITY.COM
CHESS.COM
CHESS.DOC
CONTROL.COM
FIRING.COM
FORECAST.COM
MELEE.COM
MENU.COM
MORALE.COM
WARGAMES.DOC

Aaarrgh! I don't like war games, however they seem to be very popular? This is a text interactive type game, almost like an adventure, except in an adventure you have a lot less control over what happens.

I would strongly recommend that you read the WARGAMES.DOC before proceeding!

PD G005 Contains the following files:-

ALLEGRO.MUS
APPLE.PIC
ARIA.MUS
BABRA.PIC
BECKMAN.PIC
BOURREE.MUS

CALLIOPE.MUS
CHOPSTIX.MUS
COWBOY.PIC
DRAGON.PIC
ELEPHANT.MUS
FLUTTER.PIC
HOPPY.PIC
JESU.MUS
LADY.PIC
MAPLE.MUS
MICROM.PIC
MINUTE.MUS
PRELUDE.MUS
SARABAND.MUS
SLIDES.BBC
SQUEEZE.PIC
TOYTOWN.MUS
WATCH.PIC
WHATIDID.MUS
MUSIC.BBC
WINSTON.PIC
YANKEE.MUS
RUN.COM

There are 2 programs on this disc. First there is a slide show program, which can be run by typing RUN SLIDES, from dos, secondly there is a music program which can be run by typing RUN MUSIC. Both these programs are good to look at, and I sometimes use them at computer shows for a demo!

Might be a good idea if you get bored one day!

PD G006 Contains the following files.

BARChart.XBS
CHARDISP.XBS
CLASTIME.BBC
COCKTAIL.XBS
CONV.XBS
DEMOS.XBS
DICE.XBS (Not from AEGOS pack!)
FUNKEY.XBS
GALAXY.XBS
GDUMP.COM
GDUMP14.SRC
GOLF.XBS

GOLF1.XBS
GOLF2.XBS (Not from AEGOS pack!)
HOL.XBS
JOYDRAW.XBS
JUNK.XBS
M-DAT.UFT
MORSE.DOC
MORSE.XBS
MORSE2.XBS
MUSIC.XBS
PRINTSET.XBS
PROG1.XBS
PSGVIEW.XBS
PSTRINGS.XBS
RACER.XBS
README.151
SHAPER.XBS
TEST.XBS
TEST1.XBS
TEST2.XBS
VUMETERS.XBS
WIZARD.XBS

Well, what can you say?

There is an arful lot of files on this disc, some I think must be a load of rubbish, however there must be some useful files on here somewhere! The dice program is just a random throw type of thing while JUNK.XBS is a very nice trading game. WIZARD.XBS is a nice little adventure game and MORSE and programs like that are just useful!

It might be fun to give this disc a try out, who knows!

PD G007 & PD G008 have to be put together before they will really run properly.

The files contained on these discs are:-

ADVI.DAT
ADVT.DAT
ADVI.PTR
ADVT.PTR
ADV.COM
ADVI.PTR
ADVT.PTR

This program is the very famous Level 9 adventure "Clossas Cave"

Although you will see duplicates above there is a reason for this. This program won't really run on 1 3" disc, because of the number of files it needs and the size of those files, however you can cheat the computer into thinking all the files are there by duplicating them. The program might crash like this, so I would advise unless you have a 5.25" drive or a 3.5" drive or a double headed 3" drive, to give this program a miss.

PD G009. This disc has proved to be faulty.

PD G010. This disc contains:-

3WD.DAT
4WD.DAT
5WD.DAT
6WD.DAT
7WD.DAT
8WD.DAT
APPONLY.XBS
DICREAD.XBS
LOADER.XBS

Well, not as hard as it looks. Stuck looking for words to finish off your cross word? Not now! A great little program, even if it is cheating!

PD G011. This contains the other half to PDG010. The files are:-

9WD.DAT
10WD.DAT
11WD.DAT
12WD.DAT
13WD.DAT
14WD.DAT
15WD.DAT
16WD.DAT
17WD.DAT
18WD.DAT
19WD.DAT
APPONLY.XBS
DICREAD.XBS
LOADER.XBS

Now this is really what you need for those complex puzzles! You will be able to find just about any 3 - 19 letter word! What more could you need?

PD G012. This disc contains the following files.

BATTACK.COM
GOLF.COM
MAZE.COM
MILPEDE.COM
OTHELLO.COM

Well, not a lot here, however there are some very quality games, such as BATTACK.COM (Bat Attack) and MILPEDE.COM (Milipede). The other games on the disc are fairly good, however the two mentioned above really sell this disc as they are pretty good!

PD G013 and PDG014. These discs contain music for the DAC music interface, do not buy them unless you own a DAC.

The files on these discs are (A big breath!):-

2PART01.MUS
2PART03.MUS
2PART04.MUS
ABIDE.MUS
BIRTHDAY.MUS
BOURREE.MUS
CLAIR.MUS
CRACKER.MUS
CRADLE.MUS
CRC.COM
CRCKLIST.CRC
DANKET.MUS
ELITE.MUS
FAURE.MUS
FIGRAG.MUS
FUGUEG.MUS
GAVOTTE.MUS
INSTALL.COM
LILLY.MUS
LULLABY.MUS
MAGNIFIC.MUS
MAZURKAS.MUS
MEDLEY5.MUS

MEDLEY6.MUS
MEDLEY7.MUS
MEDLEY8.MUS
MESSIAH.MUS
MOZART.MUS
MUSIC.COM
PASTORAL.MUS
PETIT.MUS
PIFFERAR.MUS
POLLY.MUS
PRELUDE.MUS
READ.ME
And on PD G014.....

SCARLATI.MUS
SCHERZO.MUS
SKATERS.MUS
SOLDIERS.MUS
STING2.MUS
SUSSEX.MUS
TEARAG.MUS
TOCFUGUE.MUS
TOFAIR.MUS
VERONICA.MUS
WALTZ.MUS
WESLEY.MUS

Right! A fine lot of music we have here! All works fine and plays well, you might even be able to recognize some of the tunes!!

Finally we have what I consider to be the best bargain for the Einstein!

PD G015 contains the following files:-

INDEX.BBC
FIRE.BBC
FIRE2.BBC
GOLF.BBC
HOLE1.BBC
HOLE2.BBC
HOLE3.BBC
HOLE4.BBC
HOLE5.BBC
HOLE6.BBC
HOLE7.BBC

HOLE8.BBC
HOLE9.BBC
GOLF4.BBC

These are 2 of the finest programs for the Einstein in the Public Domain catalogue. The First program, 3d Golf is the average golfing program (Very slow, due to the fact that it is written in BBC BASIC), the second program Fire! is fantastic. You have to be playing with someone else when you play this game. There are 2 armies on either side of a hill. You have to type in the angle of fire, the forward velocity and the spread you wish to fire, when you have done this your gun will fire, and hopefully you will hit your opponent on the other side of the hill. If you hit your opponent exactly he (or she) will blow up, but if you miss it might only involve a few casualties!

These programs are autobooting and easy to understand! A definite for your collection!

The Alternative Micro Show (AMS4).

Well, the 4th Alternative Micro Show struggled up to Stafford in November, and I have decided to look back on what those who didn't go are missing. Well, it was easy enough to get there whether you went by car or train. If you went by train, there was a bus waiting for you at the other end, however if you went by car then you could easily find space in the HUGE car park!

Once inside the show, it seemed a little empty, however the hall was very big, so it would look empty even if it was totally full! There were quite a few "Alternative" micros floating around and a lot of familiar faces. The Einstein was still as well supported as ever, with myself, Sharwood Services / U.K.E.U.G, Mick Pugh and Chris Cook, showing his latest game for the 256. There were a few other groups with Alternative computers, and one of the most popular Alternative computers was the Atari 800xl. No matter where you looked you could see someone walking round with an Atari. A lot of not so alternative computers were there as well. One mob were selling off the "Screen Gems" pack (Commodore Amiga 500), and there was a lot of PC stuff up there. There was still response to computers like the Jupiter Ace and a Phillips machine (Sorry folks I forgot the name!). This show I can say was really a buyers show, had I have sold more, I would have certainly gone and bought something with it!

Well finally I will say thanks to Graham Bettany, because it was really a good day out (If not financially!). And I will look forward to the Show in Birmingham (Motor Cycle Centre I hope!) around about April time!

Druid..The Review.

As there is not an awful lot happening on the Einstein software scene, I have decided to review one of the oldies and also one of the new ones!

Druid was written by Firebird for the ZX Spectrum, and was converted in 1987.

Due to the fact that it was converted from the Spectrum, the sound effects are pretty naff! However it is still a very good game. It is a graphic adventure / shoot 'em up style. You start at the beginning, a half wit with only 4 types of spells, Water, Fire, Lightning and Invisibility. The idea of the game is to progress through the levels and destroy the 4 Princes of darkness. To do this you will have to build up a better inventory of spells and kill lots of baddies who are trying to kill you. For every baddy you kill your rating will go up, but for every baddy that touches you, your energy goes down. To make your life a bit easier, I will tell you what kills what.

Ghosts. These can be killed by one water spell or one fire spell or three Lightning spells.

Beetles. These can be killed by one fire spell or two lightning spells or three water spells.

Slime. These can be killed by one fire spell or two lightning spells or three water spells.

Skeletons. These can be killed by one water spell or two lightning spells or three fire spells.

The Unknown. Yes I admit it! I have forgotten the name of these beasties, however you will know them when you see them because they look very much like you! They can be killed with 2 fire spells or 2 lightning spells or 3 water spells.

Snakes. These are nasty things, but easy to kill. They can be killed by one fire spell or 2 lightning spells or 3 water spells.

The Birds! Well, they look like vultures, but I have forgotten their names again! This is the trouble when writing something while you are still at work! However these can be killed by 1 water spell or 2 lightning spells or 3 fire spells.

Demons. These are lively little things! These can be killed by one lightning spell or 3 water spells or 3 fire spells.

Finally, the Princes of Darkness. (These are the ones that spit at you). The Princes of darkness (All 4 of them) can only be killed by 1 Chaos spell. This spell has be set off when you are touching them, which when you are being spat at, is not a pleasant prospect.

The spells are listed in order of seing them.

Water. Up to 99 water spells can be collected. Fired at a distance from the baddy by pressing space.

Fire. Up to 99 fire spells can be collected. These to can be fired from a distance.

Lightning. Up to 99 lightning spells can be collected. These to can be fired from a distance.

Invisibility. This spell only lasts for a short length of time. All the creatures on the screen freeze, very handy if you get into a tight spot. This spell doesn't work on the last level before you kill the last Prince of Darkness.

Key. A very essential spell! Unless you collect the key on level 1, you will not be able to go beyond level 1.

Golum. This is a really nice spell, well it is and it isn't. This spell creates a hulking monster, who basically kills any badies that come near you. The only bad thing about him is the fact that he often gets lost when he tries to find you and sometimes he even blocks your path, which is sometimes very dangerous!

Chaos. This is the all powerful spell, you can either just activate it to wipe out all the baddies in the area for a while or you can activate against a Prince of Darkness. Just activating it near a Price of Darkness will not do a lot, however if you are touching one when you activate it then you can say goodbye Prince!

All the spells can be collected from yellow chests which are spread around the 8 levels. The chests are opened just by walking up to them and they will show you what they contain, however you may only chose one type of spell, this means that if you are offered 70 fire spells and 80 water spells, you have to make your choice.

Overall Value.

What do I think of the game. Great, Wonderful! This one has quite a lot of playablity! It is great for when you have a spare half hour to kill!

Hyperball 2.

Aaaaaargh! Owwww! No more, help, panic! Hyperball 2 is here! After being driven up the wall by Hyperball, Sharwood Services have produced another one Aaaaaargh! The torture of it! Well, it even faster and a lot harder to play, but one of the good features is that it gives you a code after you have completed the level, then from the start you can enter this code to progress to ther next level, this as far as I'm concerned is the best part of the game.

Well, what is new? You now get 2 bonus bats instead of one for completing a level + you start of with 20 bats, sound a little over the top... Nope! you need every single life you can get your hands on. From level 1 you can tell that this isn't going to be easy when you see that half the blocks on the screen can't be destroyed.

Bonus Blocks.

As before like the original, when you hit a certain block, of bonus brick falls from the screen, unlike the original these blocks are not so much of a bonus as before..

Some of the features now include.

Extra Bat

Laser

Lots of Balls!

Large bat.

Sticky bat.

Entry pass to next level.

Double Bats

The bad blocks are now.

Restart level. Very irritating when you are on your last 5 blocks.

Sinking bat. Your bat dissapears from the screen! Makes it kind of hard to hit anything!

Baddies block. Well you seen them before. The baddies appear again, however this time they are twice as quick.

Bouncing bat. This is a real pain! If you collect this block then your bat bounces up and down!

Zero! This is another really bat object, i got as far as level 10 with 11 million points, then I got a Zero, and my score went down to 2 million before I got killed!

This game has another very bad point. When you go past a certain time in the game (Either 2 or 3 minutes), the entire background starts scrolling in one of eight directions, this makes playing the game very hard, and on certain levels totally impossible!

Overall Value.

Well, I thought that Hyperball was just about the best game on the Einstein, however I don't think it was a very good idea to bring out Hyperball 2 because of the fact that we have seen it all before. Hardened Hyperball fans will love the game but the average gamer will probably hate it.

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