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Devastator II: Better than Before



We all dream of playing all the arcade games like they were in the arcades. With the creation of MAME, most of the arcade games are now available to us! But keyboards and most store bought controllers do little to create this feeling of the arcade. Luckily, there has been some MAME controllers made in the past few years to help improve our gameplay. One of these is the Devastator, a joystick created by Jim Krych, a friend and writer for Retrogaming Times. While the Devastator has had some success, with sales increasing, Jim has listened to what the gamer wants and incorporated that into his new Devastator controller. Now one of the best arcade controllers is both improved and cheaper!

After attending the Phillyclassic and the CCAG video game shows, Jim has collected hundreds of feedback forms on the Devastator and carefully look at what he could do to improve the Devastator. While there were many suggestions, some very good and some a bit unrealistic (sorry, but the added costs of a steering wheel as compared to the small number of games that support it, does not add up), he tallied these and did what he could to incorporate as many of these into the Devastator II as possible. So we will go over the changes in the Devastator II, one by one, so you can see how much of an improvement it is over the current model.

The biggest request he received was for more buttons. Gamers wanted to play their fighting games and the original Devastator with its 4 buttons per controller did not offer this. So the button total per joystick went from 4 to 6, which will allow the Street Fighter II

and Mortal Kombat type games to be played much more accurately. But there was sacrifices to be made. With the Devastator already being a behemoth of a controller, just adding buttons would have made it too big. So he had to remove the right and left buttons he had before. Now a gamer can either order a right handed or left handed model and the buttons will be set up for the gamer. While I personally thought the ambidextrous design was nice, it was a matter of giving the gamers what they wanted.

The second added feature was the inclusion of pinball buttons. Now the Devastator II features buttons on the right and left side of the console to emulate the buttons on the side of a pinball machine. While this may not seem like a big addition to arcade gamers, it is a nice inclusion for the pinball fanatics out there (myself included). And with Pinmame, it makes a wonderful addition.

Another consistent request was for a joystick with a button. With games like Battlezone, Zaxxon, Wild Western and Discs of Tron, a button on top not only helps recreate the feel of the arcade, but it overall improves the gameplay. In the past, playing Battlezone or Discs of Tron almost required three hands to play it accurately. But with a button on the joystick, you can move your tank just like in the arcade and not have to take one hand off the controller to shoot. This simple addition will improve the arcade feeling tremendously as well as your high scores.

Possibly the biggest improvement is the spinner. While the spinner on the original Devastator was very nice and worked well, the new design took it a step further. With an original design (that is in the process of being patented), Jim has found a way to make the spinner have almost no friction. What this does is make it so you do not need to periodically lubricate the spinner. It also makes it so the spinner can consistently spin for up to 25 seconds with one turn. To put this in perspective, that is about twice as long as a Tempest spinner.

The last improvement is that the price has come down. Since the first one was successful, the costs of parts has come down and some modifications were made to make it more cost efficient. So in turn, the price has fallen. The original joystick cost \$450.00 before shipping, but the new and greatly improved Devastator II now costs \$395.00 before shipping! How often do you get more for less? It is usually the other way around.

Look for the website to be remodified in the coming weeks with new photos of the Devastator II! Also, the Devastator will be shown at the Phillyclassic, CCAG and possibly other shows like the Cinciclassic in the upcoming year. Jim strongly believes that the controller needs to be tried to be fully appreciated and will be making every effort to get it out for gamers to try.

[Click here for the Devastator website.](#)

Here is the official press release about the new Devastator:

"Treyonics is proud to present the Treyonics Home Controller System, Model 9908(RF/LF)!!!

The new Devastator II takes all that we have learned about home controllers, and applied in a concept we believe provides maximum entertainment.

The Devastator II comes in two forms, the RF and LF, this means that we offer a right-handed and a left-handed version of the 9908.

We use all arcade parts from Happ. Including a 3" trackball. Joystick#1 is a top fire button stick. Both joysticks can be set for 4 or 8-way per each customer's request.

The Devastator II uses an all-in-one USB port for enhanced connectivity!!!

The spinner is the Fultra-Trey Spinner. We have taken the best of the Fultra spinner and radically changed the rest. We now have 3X the spin time of a normal Fultra spinner, without the need for lubrication ever, or any friction on the T-Plate from the flywheel at all.

We are very proud of the new spinner, and we think that it meets any demand placed upon it. We also use the Excellent Oscar Controls Model 3 encoder wheel for greater accuracy.

We would like to thank the following people:

9908(RF/LF) chassis and top panel designer: Walter C. Krych

Main Contractor: Carter Jones lumber

Manual: Data Designs

Interface: Andy Warne

Logo: Jason Sawtelle

And everyone else who has helped in the Devastator II, including Tom Zjaba and my fiance Lori Geiger. We are selling the Devastator II for \$395."

Twin Galaxies Festival Returns

The 3rd Annual Twin Galaxies Video Game Festival has been scheduled for the Mall of America for the weekend of July 18-20, 2003.

There will be four major championships: The 3rd Annual Console Video Game World Championship, the Annual Classics Video Game World Championship, the 1st Annual Mall Pinball Championship and a PC Games world Championship. As was last year, thousands of dollars in cash prizes will be awarded during these four events.

Plus, a classic games arcade as well as a midway filled with PC and console games on free play for public enjoyment. To see the full news story, go to:

<http://www.twingalaxies.com/>

Also, Twin Galaxies has a new forums section now set up. You can read news updates about the festival by going here:

<http://www.twingalaxies.com/forums/index.php>

COMMERCIAL VAULT

by [Adam King](#)

Welcome back, vault fanatics. With Dig Dug the subject of this month's Many Faces Of, I have commercials for two arcade ports for both the Atari 2600 and the 5200: Dig Dug & Pole Position. Both of the original arcade games were at first created by Japanese giant Namco, then licensed to Atari for release in the States, and both games were big hits for Atari. They also did well when they were released for both the 2600 & 5200. The commercials cover both versions.

You can see both of these ads at the Atari Historical Society (www.atari-history.com).

Dig Dug

Up first is the Dug Dug ad. Here we find people in a living room, falling through holes in the floor that suddenly appear. Maybe Dig Dug is responsible.

"It isn't termites, it isn't mice, it's Atari's Dig Dug, the earth-shattering arcade game. Dig Dug digs his own mazes, he digs for balloon men, he digs for dragons, and now he's digging his way into homes everywhere. Dig Dug. It's under this world."



"You think I should call the Orkin man?"



"Honey, are you down there?"



"Whoa, the house is falling."



This game brings down the house.

[Pole Position](#)

Commercial No. 2 is for Pole Position. Actually Midway had the option to release this for Namco first, but they passed on it and chose Mappy instead, and Atari received the right. I bet they looked stupid when arcade gamers passed on their machine for Atari's racer.

Anyway, this 90-second epic features a family of preppies who get treated to a taste of what Pole Position is about. We first see them on a casual drive when a loud voice shouts out, "Hey! You look like a big jerk!" The man just replies, "Well, I am a corporate executive." and his wife adds, 'He stops exciting things from happening.

The voice then asks, "So whatcha doin'?" When the man answers, "Muffy, Buffy, Biff Jr. and I are going on our Sunday drive", the voice says, "Oh no you're not, your gonna play POLE POSITION!"

Just like that a giant hand picks up their car and drops then into several F1 racing cars that just happen to be passing under them. The rest of the ad becomes a music video, showing several scenes of crashes and explosions as the family races among them, all with gameplay clips scatter throughout. By the ad's end, the family has pretty much become shells of their former selves.

"Pole Position by Atari. It'll bust your crank, and leave skidmarks on your soul."



"Duh, I'm a preppie."



"It's Honey I Shrunk The Kids 3!"



"Good thing we landed in these cars that happen to be passing under us."



This is why we have SPEED LIMITS!



"This is better than some ol' Sunday drive"



Didn't we see this scene in The Phantom Menace?



Be sure you can handle it...



..like these guys thought they could. Sunday drive indeed.

Don't forget, you still have time to send me what you think are the best classic gaming commercials of all time. I will be accepting votes until November 30th, and I'll post the top 20 commercials in the next issue.

The Many Faces of...Dig Dug

by [Alan Hewston](#)

We continue our 20th anniversary salute to games released in 1982 with Dig Dug, an

arcade game with a wide range of fan appeal, particularly from the fairer gender. Let's see, its cute, cartoon-like, very colorful with some pastels, you are free to move anywhere you want and you won't get dirty while playing in this dirt. Oh and let's not forget the violence is funny - watching poor Pooka & Fygar get blown up – literally until they pop! Just like the maze game Pac-Man in '80, Namco brought us Dig Dug in '82 but this time changed the rules. Who needs walls – why not let the player make their own maze path. This was really cool, not to mention how simple the game was and thus easy to learn. You could play for several minutes on one Quarter, but it always got hard enough that you'd lose. Then you think "This is easy, it's not Rocket Science. I gotta try that again". OK well, maybe we could call it Rock Science :-)

See MFof in RT # 56 for the very similar Mr. Do!. Although coming out independently the same year, and a bit more complex, it has a lot in common at its roots. The bad guys chase you through a maze that you create. After a while they get tired and turn into ghosts, exit the tunnels and head straight for you. The bonus prizes showed up in the middle of the screen, and you could dig underneath rocks (apples) and drop them on the bad guys - splat. You should already know how to play Dig Dug, drop at least 2 rocks, collect the prize, then use your air pump (what a weapon!) or drop rocks to vanquish the remaining Fygars & Pookas. Three consecutive pumps and watch them explode!



Dig Dug, sans the AP2, which I won NIB on ebay, but I still have not received.

Arcade: by Namco 1982

Home Versions: all but 7800 & INTV by Atari/Atarisoft.

Coleco ('84, Larry Clague), C64 ('83, Michael Reno), Intellivision ('83 David Warhol, INTV) 1983: Vic 20, 2600, 5200, Atari 8 bit, TI-99. 1987: 7800 (General Computer Corp –for Atari),

Unknown year: Apple II.

Artwork by: Gus Allen

Sequels: Dig Dug II 1985 Namco

Home Version Similarities.

All versions have: all arcade bonus prizes, a variety of unique rounds/screens - enemy & rock placement; the screens (play field) colors vary from round to round; the final enemy runs away to the top left; and the score, number of lives remaining are displayed on the screen. Except for those in (), all home versions; display the round number - most using flowers (2600); keep track of the high score (Vic 20, C64, 2600, 5200 & 7800); a pause (2600 & Vic 20); bonus lives (CV? & TI-99?); the enemies speed up at some point (TI-99); display points for vanquished enemies (2600 & Vic 20); and the bonus vegetable last for about 15 seconds (AP2, C64). In only a few versions: must the rocks be held upwards or fall instantly (C64, Vic 20 & TI-99); there are several choices for the starting round (5200, C64, Atari 8-bit, TI-99 & CV); and for these versions, (2600, 5200 & 7800) there is a demo, plus a continuation option & a child version. One of the most important elements of the gameplay is that you move slower when digging. Unfortunately this has not been accounted for on most versions - but hurrah for the 7800 & C64, and 2600 (sort of) which did this right. Music: Although the sound effects are pretty much all there on every version, some of the musical pieces are missing. I've named these as follows: "I" Intro, "D" During play, "T" Tense when they speed up, "C" Chase when the final enemy is running

away and “E” Ending music for the round. Most versions only have the music play when Dig Dug is in motion, or shortly thereafter.

Have Nots: Vic 20 (31)

This fairly common cart eluded me for quite a while. My first reaction was how poorly the Intro music is looped and choppy. The Gameplay is OK (6), but hurt mostly by the small 10X11 playfield, and also the fewest enemies (max 6) and slow movement by Dig Dug (up/down). There are no starting round options, but of note is that the rocks are correctly done here. That is, if you do not continue to push/point up, the rock will fall once it is dislodged. All but 3 versions did not code this feature, but since it is not essential to the gameplay, I did not add or subtract points either way. Addictiveness is very good (7) enough to make any Vic 20 fan happy, but there is no pause. Somewhat annoying are the ghosts, who can pop in without warning, one spot from where they should. This makes the game more challenging than it should be. Graphics are acceptable (5), and with only 5 different objects, Fygar, Pooka, Dig Dug, rocks and the prizes you can easily tell what is what. The Sound is blah (5), with limited sound effects and the music is not too elegant - also missing the T & C. Controls are well done (9), but I had just a little trouble – so I wouldn’t call them perfect.

Have Nots: Intellivision (37)

My first reaction was the wide playfield - 18X10 high, but still satisfactory. The Gameplay is all there (7) and complete, but the addition of a starting round option would have help. A slight nuisance is that part of the playfield looks playable, but is not. This “fake dirt” can be costly if you do not realize you are digging into ground that cannot be dug. The 5200 has a similar false edge, but it is a little easier to make out the difference on the screen. All other versions you can tell at a glance what is NOT part of the playfield - so learn where the dirt stops here. Addictiveness is enjoyable (8), complete with the usual INTY pause. Not counted in the scoring, but you’ll also get a little more mileage out of this particular cart, which has a hidden game “Deadly Dogs”, (see Digital Press Guide to activate this Easter egg) which is a combination of the game “Tron Deadly Discs” using the Dogs from “Burgertime” (both with origins in ‘82). The Graphics are very good (7) but also small due to the wide playfield. Sound is all there (8) and among the best. Controls are very good (7), but are insufficient for this non-stop pump and run game. This is the hardest released version to find.

Have Nots: Atari 2600 (39)

My first reaction was excitement that Atari packed in a demo and a child’s version. The Gameplay is complete (7), and besides the C64 & 7800 is the only other version where digging is slower than moving. The child’s option is nice, but it’s hard to make up for that small 11X10 playfield. The round number is never displayed, but you can “continue” your next game making the Addictiveness enjoyable (8) when you can practice those harder rounds. To “continue”, press the fire button before the “Game Over” disappears, and start on that round with 3 lives, but of course, no points scored. The remaining versions with continuation also work this way. There is no pause. The Graphics are good enough (6), to enjoy the game, no problems, but little to no details either. Sound is all there (8) in effects and music, but a little weaker than the medal winners. Controls are perfect (10).

Have Nots: TI-99/4 (40)

My first reaction was that the final ghost/enemy was pretty lame. Runs off and you cannot pump him in ghost form and does not actually leave the screen. The Gameplay is impressive (8) with seven starting rounds to choose from and an adequate sized 15X9 playfield. There are no drawbacks, although I may have been too generous as I was unable to determine if there were bonus lives or all the bonus prizes included. It is one of only three versions where rocks must be held in place. Addictiveness is enjoyable (8) with a pause wisely chosen as the <space bar>. Graphics are a little different than the others, but still cool (7) and do not detract. Sound is effective (7), but missing music T & C. The wailing sound often in conjunction with enemies getting ready to become ghosts was fairly annoying and plays almost non-stop. Controls are perfect (10), using the converter and an Atari style stick.

Have Nots: Apple II (40)

My first reaction was that it really has more music & sound effects than I expected. The Gameplay is all there (7), but does not appear to have any options and no continuation (possibly my version is not working properly). The 17X9 playfield is a bit off, but sufficient. The game speed only barely speeds up when one plays too long in a round. A little too much time (20 seconds) is given to reach the bonus prizes. Addictiveness is enjoyable (8) and the pause is the <ESC> key. Graphics are detailed (8) but like the INTY, too tiny to give it any better score. Sound is very nice (8) only missing music C. Controls are well done (9), but the analog sticks promote more mistakes, plus the fire button programming requires the button be repressed each time and cannot be held. The usual joystick or keyboard option can be helpful. As usual, the AP2 version is only available on disk.

Have Nots: Commodore 64 (42)

My first reaction was shock at how much music is missing (all but D & T). The Gameplay is impressive (8) with one of only two perfect 14X14 play fields - allowing for possible exact matches of arcade rounds. A bit too much time (20 seconds) is given to reach the bonus prizes. There is no child's version or demo, but options for 10 starting rounds is cool. Perhaps an overkill is that up to 9 (the most on any system) enemies can be on-screen, slowing the action too much. Thus the Addictiveness is very fun (8) but it could be better if not so slow. The pause is the <space bar> but there is no continuation. Graphics are fantastic (9), with loads of detail. Sound is very good (7) with nice effects, but the missing music essentially costs it a share of a medal. Without music, the "ghosting" sound is thrown in, and thus heard too often. Controls are perfect (10). This version is found on both cart and disk from Atarisoft, and also on disk from Thunder Mountain and Datasoft. I do not have all versions, but Mat Allen says they are pretty much the same.

Bronze Medal: Colecovision (43)

My first reaction was to agree with Sean Kelly (Digital Press). If Atarisoft had finished it, this baby may have been the best. I could disqualify it, since it was never officially released, but then it is now available in cart, and probably ROM format for those who want to play it. The Gameplay is impressive (8) and complete. I gave it a little slack knowing that it was not polished - such as no apparent bonus lives, no "real" demo and a shortened 14X8 playfield. But there is a choice of 3 difficulties or uh starting levels combined. Obviously they couldn't make up their mind so they gave a mix with 5, 4 & 3 lives when starting at rounds 1, 3 & 5 respectfully. But there is no actual difficulty change in any option. Addictiveness is very fun (8) but I didn't add a point for the pause <*>. When using a non-CV controller, you cannot pause. A shame since the second controller can still start a game, but nothing else. Is it unfinished or short-sighted programming? Graphics are wonderful (9), maybe the best, with loads of color and detail, especially the inflation and bursting sequences. Sound is nice (8) only missing one part of the music. Controls are perfect (10) using Atari controllers. Never officially released - too bad.

Bronze Medal: Atari 5200 (43)

My first reaction was that there was nothing missing or wrong - so it should earn a medal. Upon closer examination there is some play field that almost looks like the annoying "fake dirt". But this is not too bad and otherwise, the game only lacks the right controller. The Gameplay is impressive (8) and possibly the best. The 14X13 playfield is almost enough to make exact matches with the layout of the arcade rounds. All the options are here, 12 different starting rounds, the child's version (easier difficulty) and a demo. Addictiveness is outstanding (9) with a pause <pause>, and continuation of the game that may keep you coming back more than any other. Graphics are sharp (8), just a wee bit simplified. Sound is well done (9) with the best sound effects and every piece of music included properly. Controls are super (9), but even with the Wico sticks occasionally fail to be perfect.

Silver Medal: Atari 8 bit (44)

My first reaction was how lame this game was. Fortunately there was a revised/upgraded version. The initial release was sad but fortunately is harder to find. The first version and then revised version was released on both on cart and disk. Digital Press calls the revision the "Dig It! Player Update". There is also the 5200 version made for the Atari 8 bit, which is probably the best of the 3, and what I used to score this system. This only works on the 400/800. It gets the same scores and comments above as the 5200, but

then add in a perfect (10) for Controls. The first version would be scored (7,6,7,6,10 = 36). There's no pause, no Galaxian starting round or prize, no kid's version, a 13X9 playfield, no continuation, all with some very annoying sound and effects. The enemies look like green goblins. If you have this version, just look, but do not touch.

Gold Medal: Atari 7800 (45)

My first reaction was frustration since the 7800 should be capable of including everything. There was no starting round option, but the Gameplay is still very impressive (8). The continuation allows you to practice the harder rounds and there is the child's version as well as the perfect 14X14 playfield. The Addictiveness is fantastic (9), and nothing will turn you away. The pause is <pause>. Graphics are superb (9) with plenty of color, detail and animation. The Sound is wonderful (9) with the best effects and very complete music. Controls are perfect (10) using a 2600 stick. Now if they only would have made a simultaneous two-player version . . .

Acknowledgments: Thanks to those who directly or indirectly help me in my reviews. The Giant list of classic programmers, KLOV, Digital Press Guide, and Yesterdayland 80's. Also special thanks this month for help from several folks, and I may have missed someone too. Andrew Tonkin who sent me FREE from Australia a spare Vic 20 cart to complete my classic collection. Andrew has been a good fan of my column for quite a while and is also a Vic 20 enthusiast. Sorry that it did not score so well, but he made sure that it was not left out. Also Ron Corcoran, <http://www.snipercade.com> & Steve Knox, for the Atari 8 bit details, especially since my cart was no good and I only had 2 of the 3 disk versions. Mat Allen verified the different C64 multiple releases. Finally Sean Kelly for the CV cart, a gem for the CV collection.

Come back next month, just after Star Trek: Nemesis hits the big screen for another arcade game that premiered in 1982, Star Trek: S.O.S and its 7 faces on classic home systems for the Atari 2600, 5200, 8 bit, Vic 20, TI-99, C64 & CV. Alan Hewston can be reached at: Hewston95@stratos.net or to trade see my new pages at: http://my.stratos.net/~hewston95/Hewston_vg.html.

THE ATARI TIMES ANNOUNCES THE 2002 YEAR END ISSUE

The Atari Times Online Newsletter has announced the eminent release of the 2002 Year End Issue scheduled to be completed in early December, 2002. A limited-run of copies will be printed to accommodate the demand.

The issue will include at least 100 page issue of features, reviews, and previews for all Atari home systems that have appeared on the website over the past year. These include articles for the Jaguar, Lynx, 7800, 5200, 2600, and home computers.

In addition, the 2002 Year End Special Issue will include 15 pages of previously unreleased material as well as a color cover.

The pre-order pricing of the 2002 Year End Issue is \$12.00 plus \$4 for U.S. shipping (overseas shipping is \$8.) After December 4th, the price will be \$15.00 plus \$4 U.S. shipping (overseas shipping, \$8.)

More information on The Atari Times 2002 Year End Issue can be found at <http://www.ataritimes.com/yearend>

New Issue of 2600 Connection

The extremely late, but stubbornly un-re-dated, Jul/Aug issue of 2600 Connection is now available. The editor humbly apologizes for the delay to all subscribers. :-)

#73 (Jul/Aug 2002) Autobiography by David Lamkins, Secret Quest Code Is Cracked! by Warren Lawrence, News & Notes, Letters, Classifieds.

Ordering information

Subscription prices for one year (six bi-monthly issues): United States: \$9; Canada/Mexico: \$10.50; International (outside North America): \$12 (payment in U.S. funds please). I can also accept subscriptions for any number of issues at the rate of \$1.50 (US), \$1.75 (CN/MX) or \$2.00 (world) per issue.

I will accept cash, but prefer check or money order, payable to: Russ Perry Jr. Payments via PayPal are accepted if not from a credit card, and I will also accept 4 \$0.37 stamps per issue for US subs, but like cash, these methods are not preferred.

The 2600 Connection
c/o Russ Perry Jr
2175 S Tonne Dr #114
Arlington Hts IL 60005

Letters to the Editor

I beg of you to quit asking for roms to arcade games. I cannot help you. I do not know who has them and do not have the time to find them for you. Use Google or another search engine and find them. Sorry, but I get a few hundred requests a month for this game or that game. Now onto the letters of the month that were not rom requests.

Why didn't you do a Halloween issue of Retrogaming Times?

To be honest, we did it in the past and there is really nothing more to say. Play Haunted House, Texas Chainsaw Massacre and Halloween for the 2600. Then play Dracula for the Intellivision and drink lots of cider. Then try to squeeze into your Pacman costume from your youth and scare the trick or treaters.

I bought an Atari on ebay and it said that it came with paddles, but when I opened it, there was no paddles. I really wanted an Atari paddle, so I could show all my buddies the next time we went canoeing. So I am asking you, do you have any Atari paddles?

It is letters like these that you just hope the person is joking around and not serious. This ranks right up there with the woman who emailed me and said she could not figure out how to keep a roller controller in her hair.

Are there any Atari games that I can play with my dog?

Sure, you can play fetch with a joystick. Also, tug of war with power supplies is always a fun game.

I tried downloading some games off your site, but your links do not work. Please help me.

One day I will find out what these people think are download links on my site. I have never had any games for download on my site, yet I get emails every month from people who cannot get the downloads to work. I just have to laugh or I would end up going crazy.

Stardate 7800
by [Adam King](#)

Greetings, Gamers. Continuing my discussion of 7800 Sports games, I decided to do another of the big three: basketball. Plus I included hockey and some winter sports, seeing how it's that time of year again for skiers to hit the slopes and hockey player to do battle on the ice.

Once again expectations will be high if Atari hopes to compete with Nintendo and Sega.

[One On One \(Atari, 1987\)](#)

Before NBA Live, Electronic Arts had One on One, featuring b-ball legends Larry Bird and Dr. J. Their game on the Commodore 64 was a smash hit, and a fun one to boot, so the 7800 should be no problem, right?

Anyway, here we find Bird and Dr. J in half-court basketball action. One or two players can go at it, and if you're alone you can be either player. You can either play for a set time or play to a set score. As you play, remember that half-court rules are in effect. In addition to the standard fouls, if you get the ball when the other player rebounds it, you must take the ball to the bottom of the screen to clear it before you can shoot it. You can try to block the other player's shots or steal the ball and go for it yourself. If one player slams the ball the backboard may shatter, and the janitor won't be happy about that.

When all is said and done, as the sole b-ball title One on One is decent, but not as good as the C64 version. The graphics are weird and the players look cartoonish. Other than the decent intro tune, there's no music, and the sound effects are sub-par. The controls are sluggish but usable. The game does score points with its options, making it easy to customise your game, and the computer opponent does provide a good challenge. You may still find some enjoyment from this one-on-one game, but the other versions are still superior.

Score: 6/10

[Hat Trick \(Atari, 1988\)](#)

Again, this is the only 7800 game to represent hockey, and it's based on a fun little arcade game. From an overhead view you and a friend play a game of 2-on-2 hockey. Each team has one player and a goalie. Basically you just play for five minutes, seeing who can score the most points in that time. If the puck is coming your way, you take control of your goalie to attempt a save.

The arcade game was fun, but the 7800 game falls short again. The graphics are choppy and the players' movements are jerky. The sounds aren't so great either. Again the music is lacking, and what is there is hard on your ears, and the sound effects are silly. The controls are easy to use yet unresponsive. You just don't have much to do, just get the puck into the goal. Because games are only two minutes long, that hurts the replay factor. If you've played the arcade game, you might enjoy it, but this hockey game should be thrown into the box.

Score: 5/10

[Winter Games \(Atari, 1987\)](#)

Another one of my faves from my C64, Winter Games is one of the few playable 7800 sports games. Based on the real life Winter Olympics, you and several friends compete in four events for medals. First there's the biathlon, a combination of cross-country skiing and rifle shooting. You need to go through the course in the shortest time, and at several stations you need to use your rifle and hit several targets. Next is speed-skating, where you go head-to-head with another player. You need to move your joystick in a certain rhythm to gain speed. Following that is the ski jump, where you fly through the air and attempt to land correctly. Finally is the bobsled race, sending you shooting through the tube in the shortest time.

The graphics are very good overall, especially in the biathlon and ski jump. You also get some good sound effects during the game, and the few musical tunes are nice as well. The events require different control setups, but you'll pick them up soon. My only beef is the game is too short. There's only four events; the 2600 and C64 versions had seven. Plus the closing ceremony to crown the overall winner is missing. Winter Games loses a few points because of that, but it's still a very good Olympic experience. I'll give it a Silver.

Score: 8/10

From what I've seen so far, the 7800 really got short-changed when it came to sports games. Atari should have looked at the games that the NES and Sega Master System were getting and saw the writing on the wall. Players were into actual teams, not simplistic computer ports. Fortunately, thanks to the 2600 compatibility, you can still enjoy the VCS's GOOD sports games. Then again, if any aspiring programmer wants to give the ProSystem some decent sports titles, please hurry.

The TI 99/4A Some thoughts

by [Jim Krych](#)

This article is going to be quick and short. But first, I want to thank Charlie Good for all of the Geneve software he has sent me! That also includes the Tomy Tutor games that can be played on the Geneve. My initial thoughts on them? Well, they are a nice addition to the software library of the Geneve.

However, given the power of the TMS9995 CPU of the Geneve, and the extra memory, and the V9939 VDP, I wonder if a Colecovision emulator would not be too difficult to write. The only thing that would be different is the CPU, the rest of the Geneve's components, the VDP, and sound, are similar to the Colecovision.

I have heard rumors that someone was trying to do such a thing, but I have never seen something like that in the flesh. Another thing too, is that this would be the basis for an MSX emulator too. That would open up a TON of software, and especially games, for the Geneve.

I have been playing around with the ABASIC of the Geneve, and indeed it is much faster than XB on the 99/4A. Plus I have more memory and better video to play with too. The games I have been able to try are fairly responsive and the action fast enough to engage the arcade player.

I have been in contact with a company that actually makes a TMS9995 clone, in an FPGA package. From what I have been told, it is very possible to have a faster version of the CPU!

I wonder, with the OS of the Geneve, MDOS, being very stable-the newest version was released at the latest Chicago Fair, if a Geneve clone would be built. I mention this because the same company that makes the TMS9995 clone has also cloned the V9938 VDP. All we need to do now is reverse engineer the gate array of the Geneve.

Charlie Good posted a recent article on the recent Chicago Fair. And as always, there were nice goodies to play with, new hardware and software. Also, something very dear to my heart was more SAMS software was also released. Thanks guys!!!!

Things are progressing on the CCAG 2003. Though we have an opportunity to use the National Guard Armory this time, only stipulation being that you must have a photo ID on you, the events on Iraq make my situation tough to predict. So, we are again using the school.

Well, by this time next month I will be married! Lori has been such a Godsend in everything; especially with my son Treyton-they hit it off from day one! And, talk about being a real helpmeet too! She will be helping me produce the new Devastator III!! She also loves to thrift, go to Flea markets, and she loves playing MAME32 and the Devastator! As a matter of fact, the first production Devastator II is a wedding gift for her! How about them apples! Love ya Lori!!!

Now that we have mentioned it, we are indeed making the Devastator III! We have taken everything we have learned and applied it to the Devastator II. We have some of the old Devastator boxes left, and those can be had for a small fee. I think that once you see the pictures, you'll agree about the Devastator II being a "Serious Joystick for Serious

Gamers”.

“Hi, my name is Jim W. Krych. I am a 33 year-old electronics technician. I am also a 14-year veteran of both the USCG, active, and the Ohio Army National Guard, reserve with B Co. 112th engineers. I can be reached at: jwkrych@adelphia.net or jwkrych@n2net.net I have a three year-old son, Treyton, and he is the CEO of Treyonics! I have also been blessed with a beautiful fiancé her name is Lori!!! I have founded my own business and, of course, I named the company after my son Treyton!

And now, Treyonics is proud to present the Treyonics Home Controller System, model 9908(RF/LF)!!!

Better known as the ...



Retrovision Great Gaming and Jeff Minter!

This has to be one of the coolest sounding game shows out there! Classic gamers uniting at an English Pub and having Jeff Minter in attendance! Does that sound great or what? One problem, convincing my wife that a trip overseas is necessary for the website. Guess I will have to dream of being there. Anyway, here is a link to the site with all the information you need. If you can attend the show, you will have a great time. Just think of all the fun you can have. Some ale with your Asteroids. Lager with your Llamatron. A pint while playing Pacman, you could go on and on.

[Click here to check out Retrovision](#)

Saving Private Atari

By [Fred Wagaman](#)

How much is too much ?

A little more.

Maybe this has happened to you. You're talking at work or school one day and the topic of old video games comes up. Someone mentions that they had one of "those" machines and has it in the attic or basement or garage and that you can have it if you want it.

Cool.

Then they bring in something that looks like the mice have used it as a chew toy, or it is so moldy that you now know how they discovered penicillin.

What do you do ?

Do you smile, say thanks and chuck the thing when you get home ? (Or before if you don't even want it in your car ?)

Do you try to salvage the good stuff and throw the rest away ?

Is there a part of you that feels guilty when you do ?

Let's face it. There is only so much you can do as a collector. If you are what passes for

normal with us, you understand that not everything that is video game oriented can be kept. There are times when acceptable losses to the collecting community as a whole will happen. Every Atari can't be kept. Every blinking NES console should not be stored. And an occasional O2 can be put out for the trash because it doesn't (and probably will never) work.

Deal with it and move on.

(Fred has been playing games for over 25 years and actively collecting them for over 10. The 2500 + games that he has takes up most of his home office and Living room. He lives in Denver, PA with his understanding wife Jennie, his 6 year-old, button-loving son, Max and his 3 year old, 4th player, Lynzie. He believes the only thing worse than someone offering to bring in something and being disappointed is when someone offers to bring in something and then can't find it. He can be reached at fcw3@mail.ptd.net.)

Sites of the Month

Let us once again illuminate a pathway to some great sites. May you follow the pathway to enlightenment and entertainment. Begone brothers and sisters and enjoy.

[Atari.org](http://www.atari.org)

For the site that is all things Atari (and I do mean all things), you need to go to the site that has Atari in the name. And unlike Atari.com, which is the site for new Atari games (no, not for the 2600, but rather new games with the Atari imprint on them), this site deals with all the classic systems. Everything from the 2600 to the Jaguar. Here is the link to the site

<http://www.atari.org/>

[Ozyr's Classic Video Game Emporium](http://www.ozyr.com/index.html)

This is one of those sites that I found through a search engine and I am glad I did. A lot of information, especially about all of the overseas Odyssey 2 games. Also info on the Bally, Atari and more! If you like to read, this site will keep you satisfied.

<http://www.ozyr.com/index.html>

Video Game Therapy - The Fishing Derby Shark Session

Once again we stop off at the offices of Dr. I.N. Sane, the leading psychiatrist for the video game industry. Today's session brings in the shark from Fishing Derby. Let us sit in and listen to another session of Video Game Therapy.

[Dr. Sane](#)-What brings you in today, Mr. ummm...Shark.

[Shark](#)-I have an eating disorder Doc.

[Dr. Sane](#)-I see, what makes you think that you have an eating disorder, other than your very large girth.

[Shark](#)-You see Doc, I am stuck in this one small section of the ocean, where two fishermen are constantly fishing. And for some reason that I cannot explain, I need to keep trying to steal and eat all the fish they catch. I don't know what it is, but once I see a fish on the line, I have to eat it. Most of the time, I am not even hungry. What is wrong with me Doc?

[Dr. Sane](#)-So how long has this gone on?

[Shark](#)-It began about 20 years ago. I was swimming along, minding my own business, until I came to a section of the ocean that was teeming with fish. At first, I could care less, I wasn't even hungry. But then a fish got caught by a fisherman and suddenly something inside me snapped and I had to have that fish. From then on, I was hooked. Sorry about the bad pun.

[Dr. Sane](#)-So when a fish is caught by a hook, you get hungry and need to eat it, but when

it is just swimming free, you are not interested in it, correct?

[Shark](#)-That's right Doc, one hook and I am in a frenzy. Why Doc, why is this?

[Dr. Sane](#)-Have you tried leaving this area, possibly a change of scenery would help.

[Shark](#)-I have Doc, but everytime I try to leave, I come right back. It is like an endless loop.

[Dr. Sane](#)-Very interesting. What other effects has it had on your life?

[Shark](#)-Look at me Doc, I am a fat shark. I used to be slim and trim, but now I look more like a whale. Have you ever seen a fat shark before?

[Dr. Sane](#)-Cannot say that I have. I do think we need to set up more sessions to find the root of this eating disorder and what is causing it. We will need to set up some more sessions.

Let Us Give Thanks

Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks and here at Retrogaming Times, we are going to take this time to give thanks to an overlooked hero in video games. Someone who has been stepped on and largely ignored. They are there when we need them, but we never discuss them. So on this holiday, we will finally give long overdue thanks to one of the most important and largely forgotten parts of classic video games, the ladders.

Before you laugh, think about how important ladders are to video games. Without their aid in going up and down, we would be stuck on a single level. No matter how great Mario was in Donkey Kong, he would have never made it past the first level without ladders. Take away ladders and Miner 2049er would be a terrible game. Add in Pitfall, Space Panic, Montezuma's Revenge, Lode Runner, Mr. Do's Castle and many other great games. So during this holiday season, let us take a moment to reflect and give thanks to the brave ladders of the video game world. For these tireless souls allowed us to walk all over them and never complained when they were not thanked for their contribution. Stand tall ladders, you will never be overlooked at Retrogaming Times!

Conclusion

Time to wrap up another issue of RT. We had joy, we had fun, we had seasons in the sun. But snow is on the way, so indoors we must play. Good thing we have video games! For all you Playstation 2 owners, check out the new Activision Anthology, which looks to be good. Also, the new Game and Watch collection on the Gameboy Advance shows lots of promise. Remember to give thanks this year for all the blessings we have. After you have eaten the turkey and watched the football games, look at your video game collection and instead of looking at what you don't have, instead look at all you do have and give thanks.

[-Tom Zjaba](#)

(This issue was written while listening to Roland Orzabal and Leonard Nimoy singing Bilbo Baggins. That and I cannot get enough of Linda Ronstadt's rendition of "Long, Long Time" since I heard it on an episode of "Haunted".)