NOT an official Amstrad publication!!
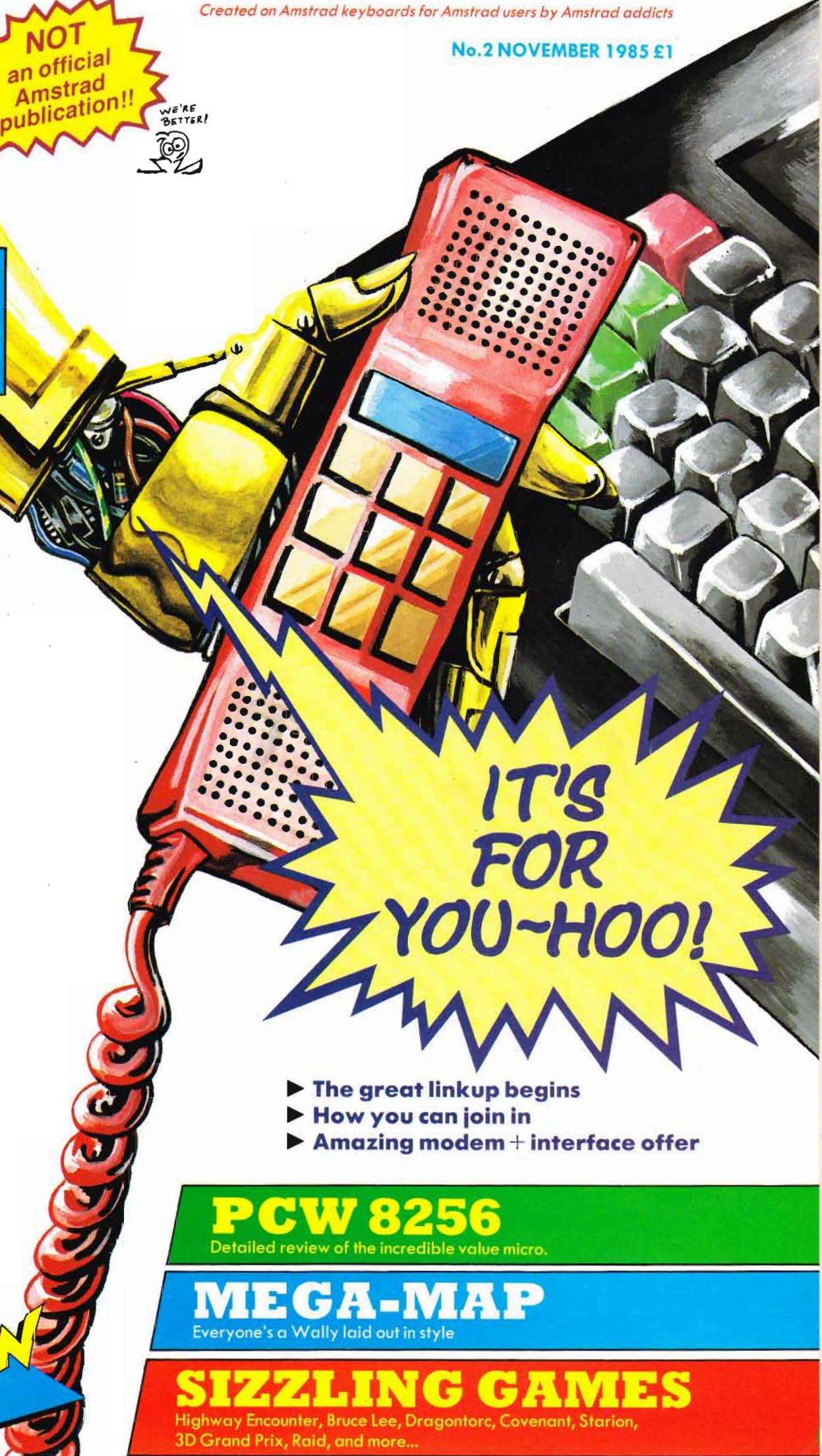
WE'RE BETTER!

AMSTRAD ACTION

THE MOULD-BREAKING MAGAZINE FROM FUTURE PUBLISHING

IT'S FOR YOU-HOO!

▶ The great linkup begins
▶ How you can join in
▶ Amazing modem + interface offer

PCW 8256
Detailed review of the incredible value micro.

MEGA-MAP
Everyone's a Wally laid out in style

SIZZLING GAMES
Highway Encounter, Bruce Lee, Dragontorc, Covenant, Starion, 3D Grand Prix, Raid, and more...

Modern dating techniques

[/Nice little ad this, spotted in one of our rival magazines. Good to see Amstrad software being used in such a worthy cause.

(PS If you spot any other snippets anywhere which might appeal to other Amstrad owners why not send them to us ..?)

(PPS. If there are any females out there (preferably human) who'd like to communicate with our software editor using pen and paper, well, what are you waiting for...).

> Male 34 wishes to communicate with females using mini office word processor. Send your introductory cassette and I will reply using the cassette which can be re-used. Give file name, Mr Harman 74, Arthur St. Withersea, N. Humberside.

Elite Imminent

Those lovely boys at Firebird and their Torus programmers in Scotland have been slaving away over Amstrad *Elite*. The good news is that it's nearly here and although the BBC original is a year old the game is still high in the charts and shows every sign of being better than ever on the Amstrad.

Latest prediction is that it should be in the shops by November. Hold onto your joysticks because this is where the great space battle begins.

Clever programming corner

The sophisticated mathematical manipulation of something called fractals lies at the heart of two big new titles coming your way from Activision. *Ball Blazer* and *Rescue on Fractalus*, programs originally written by the American company Lucasfilms, have created quite a stir on the Commodore 64 and Atari with their fast-moving 3D graphics. Expect the Amstrad versions November time.

Asterisk the Aussie

Not content with taking the market by storm with *Fist*, Melbourne House are planning an even more impressive Autumn schedule. In addition to their adventure releases *Terrormolinos* and *Lord of the Rings* they have games based around that famous gallic fighter Asterisk and a new combat game *Fighting Warrior*.

Fighting Warrior is similar to *Fist* but features two guys battling with swords instead of fists. There's no indication yet of what the Asterisk game will be but knowing what he and his mate Obelisk get up to it should be fun.

Tasword for 6128

Tasman have launched a new improved version of their bestselling word processor Tasword to take advantage of the 6128's spec. The program occupies nearly all the RAM in one bank of memory and stores text in the other 64K.

There are many modifications, but users of previous versions will surely be best pleased with a normal insert mode and instantaneous re-formatting. On earlier versions of *Tasword* the user had to type in the required number of spaces before inserting text. Re-formatting was a lengthy business in which you watched the whole text shoving itself around on screen.

Other major changes are that the main menu does not now appear on overlays, but flips on and off so that there is no need to keep the disc in the drive. The Find and Replace function has been extended and now offers the option of ignoring or taking into account upper and lower case characters.

An interesting inclusion is a Notepad function – four blank pages on the menu where the user can put notes or text to be transfered to the body and vice versa. *Tasword 6128* costs £24.95 on disc and is available now.

Sizzling software dept

Amsoft burns rubber

Among the attractions at a packed Amstrad stand at the PCW show in September was a demo of one of the hot new Amsoft titles *3D Grand Prix*.

Not just another 3D motor-racing game, this. The 3D effect is extremely impressive for a start. Your driver's-eye-view shows the front wheels actually turning, and the road zooming toward you in very realistic manner. A further excellent touch is the provision of views from two wing mirrors. This allows you to see as cars approach you from behind and thereby take suitable action.

It must be said we were hoping to give the program a full review in this issue, but in the end Amsoft weren't able to get a fully-finished version to us in time. Standby for next month.

3D Grand Prix is one of the titles Amstrad are using for a multi-million advertising campaign this autumn. The idea is to show that software on the Arnold is now as good as on any home micro. Other programs being used are *3D Boxing*, another impressive-looking game we hope to review next month, and *3D Stuntrider* reviewed in this issue. All three games are part of Amsoft's new gold range which are being sold in much-improved packaging using mini video cassette boxes.

Vyvyan, you...

The game of the show of *The Young Ones*, from Orpheus, should be on Amstrad screens in mid-October at a price of £7.95 on cassette.

The game features all your favourite creeps from the TV show – Vyvyan, Rick, Mike and Neil. Players of the game have to choose one of the four characters while the computer controls the other three. Characters can speak to each other and speech-bubbles will appear from the animated figures' mouths.

AMSTRAD ACTION HOT 20

Here it is, our first chart of the current top-selling Amstrad titles, as supplied to us by Gallup (to be carefully distinguished from our readers' chart of favourite titles elsewhere in this issue).
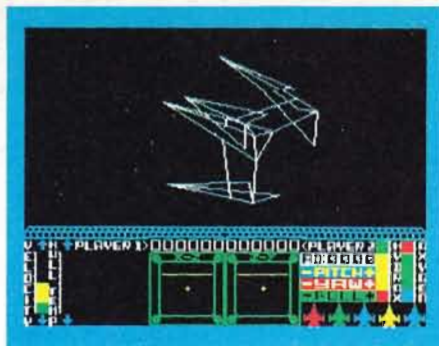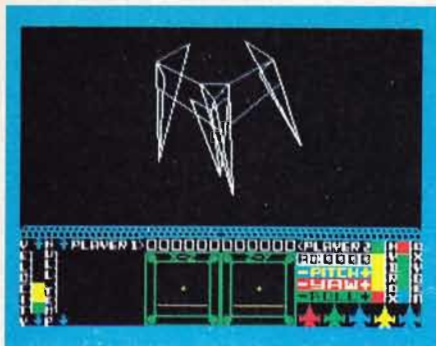
It shows Melbourne House still firmly at number one with *Fist*, probably the biggest selling title ever on the Amstrad. Also selling well, and deservedly so, are the four Mastertronic budget releases which are good value in anybody's book.
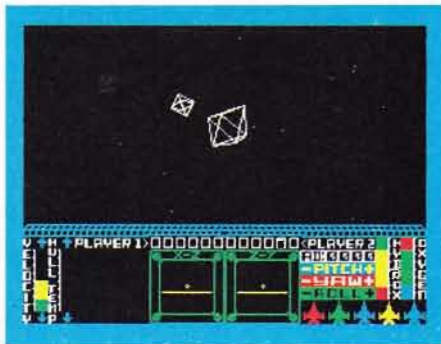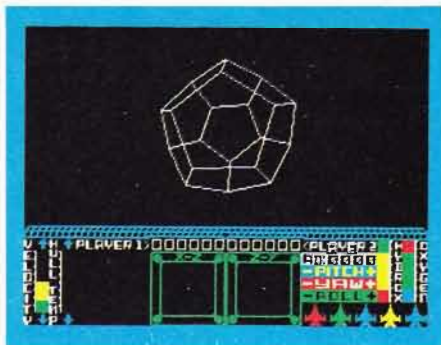
Arnold owners' taste for lots of different software is evident in the appearance of *Scrabble*, *Red Arrows*, *Red Moon* and the still popular *Dun Darach*.

The chart was compiled by Gallup over the four weeks up to 20th September and is now virtually the only sales chart worth looking at. Then again, to see which games YOU actually like turn to Hot Stuff.

1. **THE WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST**
   Melbourne House
2. **FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING**
   Elite
3. **FINDERS KEEPERS**
   Mastertronic
4. **CHILLER**
   Mastertronic
5. **NONTERRAQUEOUS**
   Mastertronic
6. **SCRABBLE**
   Leisure Genius
7. **BEACH-HEAD**
   US Gold/Amsoft
8. **RED ARROWS**
   Database
9. **LOCOMOTION**
   Mastertronic
10. **BRIAN JACKS SUPERSTAR CHALLENGE**
    Martech
11. **STARION**
    Melbourne House
12. **ALIEN 8**
    Ultimate
13. **AIRWOLF**
    Amsoft/Elite
14. **RED MOON**
    Level 9
15. **DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON**
    Ocean
16. **A VIEW TO A KILL**
    Domark
17. **GRAND PRIX RALLY II**
    Amsoft/Loriciels
18. **DUN DARACH**
    Gargoyle
19. **PROJECT FUTURE**
    Gremlin Graphics
20. **SHORT'S FUSE**
    Firebird

STARION
**Melbourne House, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys**

Setting new standards in vector graphics that better even *Tankbusters* and leave you starry-eyed, this deep-space blast moves at tremendous speed and gives you a real mental challenge.

The action takes place in three time blocks, each split into nine time grids, which are further subdivided into nine time zones. This calculates out at 243 time zones in which you have to recover a cargo and return it to its rightful place.

The cargoes are composed of letters stored on alien ships. The aliens had stolen the cargoes from many times in history and to restore order you have to return the objects to their right times.

Once in a time zone the aliens will appear individually to battle with you. They can be tracked on scanners on the instrument panel. These are in two planes, vertical and horizontal, which are easy to use after practice and are much more effective than the kind of scanners normally found in games of this type. Once the alien is in the upper screen cockpit view you can centre him on the target cursor and let him have it with the lasers. A hit will release a letter of the cargo.
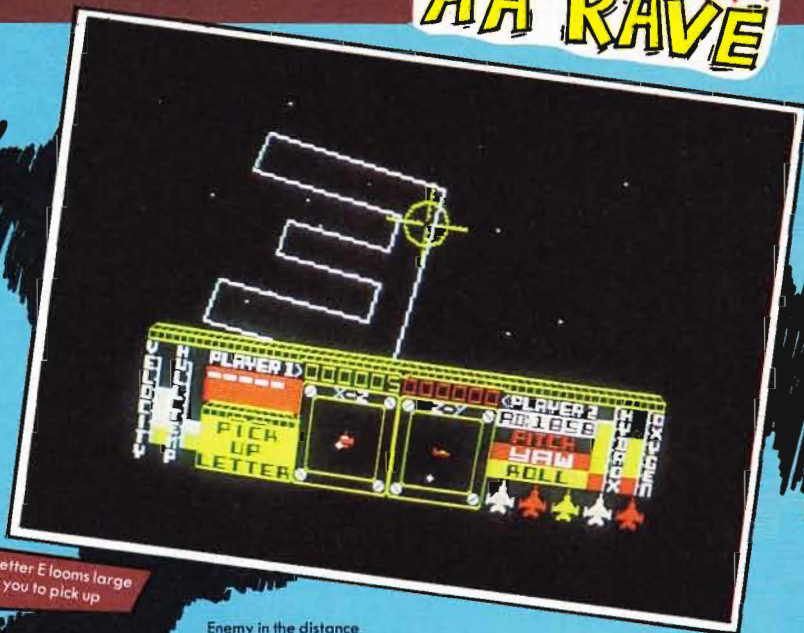
A letter E looms large for you to pick up

Enemy in the distance
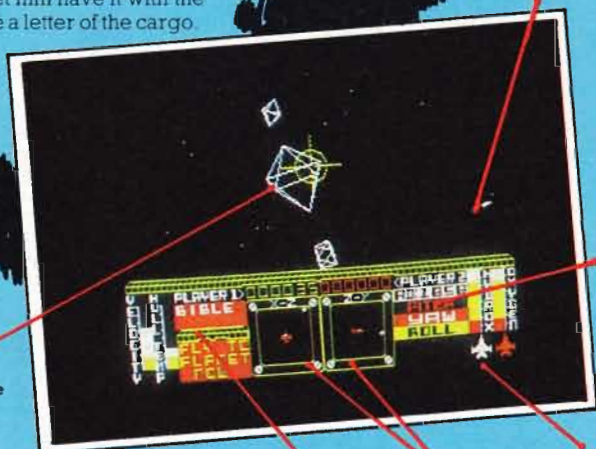
Planet which will take you to next zone

A completed cargo

Radar scanners

Timezone

Ships left

Letters can be picked up by flying into them, although while doing this you will come under attack from further hostile craft. The aliens come in several forms, but all shoot back and with the speed of the action can be hard to hit and easy to be hit by. Once all the letters in a zone have been picked up the computer automatically goes to a screen where you have to organise the letters into a word – the cargo.

into them lets you know if you've got the right cargo for that zone. If correct the oxygen and fuel are replenished and it's off to solve another problem. If wrong though you should note the historical problem for later use (another cargo will solve it), fight your way out of the zone and try another zone.

After completing nine time zones (one grid) a password has to be formed from the nine first letters of the cargoes to allow you to travel to another grid. The action is repeated after nine grids (one block) using the first letters of each grid password. If all three blocks are completed you'll have three block passwords, the first and last letters of which will form a six-letter master password allowing you to become the CREATOR. Gosh!

It sounds complicated but once started everything falls into place fairly easily. The hardest part of the game is the actual fighting. The ship is equipped with five hulls which can be heated up or destroyed completely by collisions with mines, rocks and missiles. In addition to these indicators there are also speed, letters collected, pitch, yaw, roll, oxygen and fuel indicators.

The zones can become somewhat

repetitive but the challenge is still strong. The fact that the password routes stay the same means that you can gradually adventure your way through them learning which passwords go where. Outstanding graphics and gameplay make this another winner for the down-under software house.

BW

GOOD NEWS

▶ Marvellous 3D vector graphics.
▶ 243 zones and 255 passwords.
▶ Strong, lasting challenge.
▶ Shoot-em-up gameplay is addictive.
▶ Well-implemented abstract game idea.

BAD NEWS

▶ Zones become repetitive.
▶ Controls may be too fast.

GRAPHICS	95%
SONICS	42%
GRAB FACTOR	83%
STAYING POWER	90%
A A RATING	88%

In block one, grid one, zone one, the cargo is BIBLE. Armed with this information you have to go to one of the other eight zones in the grid. Here are found planets and flying

KNOW THE ZONES

The make up of the 243 zones is complicated, so here's another run down for easy understanding.

BLOCKS: there are three blocks each accessed by a nine letter password and containing nine time grids.

GRIDS: there are 27 grids in all, nine in each block. Each is accessed by a nine letter password and contains nine time zones.

ZONES: there are 243 zones, nine in each grid. Each one contains a cargo password that solves a problem in one of the other eight zones in that grid.
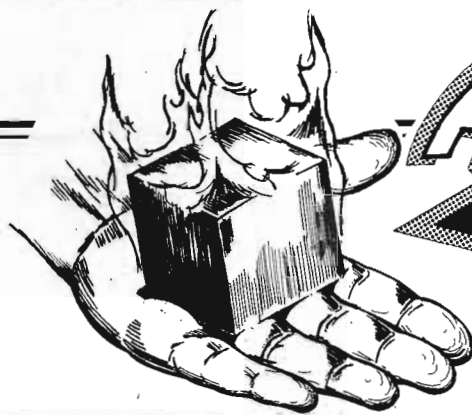
HOT STUFF

AMSTRAD ACTION READERS' CHARTS!

Votes have been flooding in for both the games and serious software charts and the top programs in both have come as no surprise at all. The top two games are *Sorcery (+)* and *The Way of the Exploding Fist*, the two monster sellers on the Amstrad, way ahead of the rest.

We lumped the two versions of *Sorcery* together because one is just an extension of the other. The chart will come as no surprise to Paula Byrne of Melbourne House who told us that *Fist* was the "best selling game on the Amstrad ever" surpassing even *Sorcery*.

Ultimate rolled in at numbers three and four with their blockbusters and the classic

Dun Darach from Gargoyle at number five. After that there wasn't much between the games, as you can see from the percentage of the total vote they each got, but all the big names are there and from your enthusiastic reaction to them likely to remain so.

My feeling is there will be a new number one next month and plenty of big new games threatening to score well. Ocean, US Gold, Amsoft and others all have stunning new games out to capture the Christmas market and as you can see from this month's reviews it should be a bumper Christmas for amazing Amstrad games software.

The serious software chart had a run-

away victor in *Mini Office* which offers astounding value for money. Also well up were *Screen Designer* and *Tasword*. There are lots of different utilities and serious programs in the ten, showing the wide range of software that Arnold users enjoy using.

Word processors, art programs, compilers, databases and assemblers all appear in the top ten making a terrific spread of interest. The response to both charts shows that Amstrad users like to give their machines a real workout both with games and serious software.

GAMES TOP 20

1. **Sorcery/Sorcery +**
   Virgin/Amsoft (14.8%)

2. **The Way of the Exploding Fist**
   Melbourne House (14.1%)

3. **Knight Lore**
   Ultimate (7.8%)

4. **Alien 8**
   Ultimate (5.3%)

5. **Dun Darach**
   Gargoyle (4.0%)

6. **Boulder Dash**
   Mirrorsoft (2.5%)

7. **Frank Bruno's Boxing**
   Elite (2.4%)

8. **Beach-Head**
   US Gold (2.4%)

9. **Daley Thompson's Decathlon**
   Ocean (2.1%)

10. **Starion**
    Melbourne House (2.0%)

11. **Jet Set Willy**
    Software Projects (2.0%)

12. **Dark Star**
    Design Design (1.6%)

13. **3D Star Strike**
    Realtime (1.5%)

14. **Fighter Pilot**
    Digital Integration (1.3%)

15. **Nonterraqueous**
    Mastertronic (1.3%)

16. **Everyone's a Wally**
    Mikro-Gen (1.3%)

17. **Codename Mat**
    Amsoft/Micromega (1.3%)

18. **Fruity Frank**
    Kuma (1.2%)

19. **Chuckie Egg**
    A&F (1.2%)

20. **Football Manager**
    Addictive Games (1.1%)

SERIOUS SOFTWARE TOP 10

1. **Mini Office**
   Database (21.2%)

2. **Tasword/Amsword**
   Tasman/Amsoft (14.6%)

3. **Screen Designer**
   Amsoft (14.2%)

4. **Masterfile**
   Campbell Software (5.3%)

5. **Transmat**
   Pride Utilities (4.6%)

6. **Maxam**
   Arnor (3.8%)

7. **HiSoft C**
   Hisoft (3.5%)

8. **Artwork**
   Kuma (3.0%)

9. **Easi-Amsword**
   Amsoft (2.8%)

10. **Electric Studio Light Pen**
    Electric Studio (1.9%)

LOOK!

Don't be a wally voter!

Some people voting for programs last month didn't quite seem to understand the small print of our state-of-the-art voting system. So here goes with another explanation.

You have at your disposal a TOTAL of 10 votes for each chart. These can be split any way you like on up to five different titles, but the number of votes you give to the different titles must add up to 10.

So for example on the games chart you could give all 10 votes to a single game. Or you could give 5 votes to one game, 2 to another, and 1 each to three others. Or you could give 2 votes each to five separate games. You just have to allocate your ten votes to reflect your preferences as accurately as possible. What you CAN'T do is vote for five different games giving each of them 7 or 8 votes. That's greedy.

Another thing you can't do is send in a photo-copy of the voting form - this could lead to organised attempts to hype particular titles. For example, this last month we were amused to receive a considerable number of forms all apparently copied on the same photo-copier and all, by an astonishing coincidence, giving 10 votes to a certain (very worthy) assembler program. Nice try, chaps.