each period ends, most of the ice is white. The big-screen, overhead scoreboard shows you the team filing out to the locker room. Out rolls the Zamboni to clean up the ice.

TWO MINUTES FOR ROUGHING

Most of all, the game is true to hockey. Want to check a player? Click the mouse as you run into him. Hit him hard enough and you can savor the image of him sliding spread-eagle across the ice. You are also liable to see the referee on the overhead scoreboard giving the official signal for a penalty. Tripping, high-sticking, elbowing—I've had them all. Be prepared to sit out your five minutes for fighting, too. At least you can watch the action on the overhead scoreboard as two players hit each other for no apparent reason.

To top it all off, this game has tons of customizing options and keeps enough statistics for even the most maniacal sports statistician. Each player has twelve characteristics, such as position, aggressiveness, quickness, checking, passing, and shooting. You can play, coach, or both. You can set up your lines, including penalty-killing and power-play lines. You can handicap yourself, your opponent, or the computer. You can even save your game and restore it later.

The replay facility is my favorite; it's wonderful, particularly after a goal or a penalty. The replay goes back ten seconds or to the previous face-off, whichever was more recent. You control a slide bar marked Forward at the top and Reverse at the bottom. Move the sliding line to the center and the action stops. You can back up the game to the desired point, then watch the play very slowly unfold again. It's a great way to learn what you just did wrong or to enjoy again the murderous check you put on some poor soul.

Don't get me wrong: This game is not perfect, but most of the flaws I found were related to the fact that I was playing a beta version. For example, my team's

coach assembled some weird lines. One time I had the same player at both center and right wing. I also ended up with some amazingly wimpy players. One was exhausted after spending two minutes in the penalty box! I've never actually sat in one, but it doesn't look like hard work.

More annoying was the fact that the version I played had only two teams, the Washington Capitals (Bethesda Softworks is in Maryland, so I can forgive them a little local color) and the New Jersey Devils. The Devils? Where are the L.A. Kings? It *is* Gretzky's game, after all. Who are those Devils players, anyway? Fortunately, Bethesda promises that the final version will include four great Stanley Cup teams. The company also plans to sell data disks of all of the 1987 and 1988 NHL teams.

My final complaint is that currently you can't administer a whole league, although Bethesda plans to add this before the game's release. According to the company you will have a module of "commissioner" functions, such as trading and creating new teams.

Still, it's hard to complain, because Bethesda plans to address all of my gripes in the final version. It's great to see a game that's so faithful to real hockey. Once again Gretzky proves why he is The Great One. □

Although not the type to be caged in an office, B. G. Hunter does skulk in occasionally to pick up his mail. Write to him c/o AmigaWorld, Editorial Dept., 80 Elm St., Peterborough, NH 03458.

Wayne Gretzky Hockey
Bethesda Softworks
15235 Shady Grove Rd.
Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850
301/926-8300
$49.95
No special requirements.

G A M E   R E V I E W S

DUNGEON MASTER

By Louis R. Wallace

DUNGEON MASTER IS a role-playing adventure that carries you and your troop on a mission to recover the Fire Staff, which Lord Chaos has stolen and hidden deep in a dungeon.

You choose your four party members from among many

champions, each of whom has a unique set of characteristics. Each adventurer's skills, possessions, strength, and knowledge will increase during the course of your explorations.

Inside the dungeon, you will find weapons and armor that can help you survive fights. You must also find food and water; your people need to eat, drink, and rest regularly

(the game is played in real time) in order to maintain their health and stamina.

Dungeon Master is completely mouse driven. The screen is divided into two sections: the dungeon display window and a menu-and-icon panel. Simply by pointing and clicking, you can select a sword

from a character's backpack, for instance, and tell him how to use the weapon and how to attack. In the dungeon display, your mouse pointer appears as a hand. With it, you can pick up items, pull levers, press buttons, and unlock doors. You ▶

can also carry and throw weapons with this hand, as in an arcade game.

Most characters can use magic, but a spell's success depends on the amount of Mana (magical energy) the character possesses and his knowledge of symbols and runes. You must figure out which spells are available and how to cast them. While scrolls scattered throughout the dungeon offer some clues, for the most part you learn by trial and error. On the icon panel are four groups of six runes. By combining the runes in various ways, you can cast a multitude of spells. To achieve proficiency, you must experiment with combinations; some do nothing, but others can help you overcome obstacles and creatures. The more spells you attempt, the more your Mana increases.

You see the dungeon and its inhabitants—mummies, purple blobs, stinging rock-pile dwellers, and walking mushrooms (you can use the latter for food)—through the eyes of your characters. If you keep your ears open, however, you will often hear the monsters first through digitally-sampled sound.

I became more intrigued with Dungeon Master the longer I played. The animation, detailed-perspective graphics, and sound are excellent, and the menus and icons are easy to use. The challenge of learning the magic spells makes the game realistic. Dungeon Master is one of the best programs of its type. It is complex enough to hold the interest of the most seasoned role-player, and its simple interface makes it ideal for those new to fantasy adventures. I recommend it!

Dungeon Master
FTL Games
6160 Lusk Blvd.
Suite C-206
San Diego, CA 92121
619/453-5711
$39.95
No special requirements.

Footsteps warn of the monsters' approach...are you prepared?

## CARRIER COMMAND

By Chris Dickman

AT THE HELM of a carrier transporting amphibious assault vehicles and fighter planes, you find yourself wreaking wholesale havoc in a 3-D arcade environment, strategizing all the way. Carrier Command's universe consists of about 60 mythical islands. Your mission is to establish a base on each one while the bad guys, equipped with a similar vessel, are bent on doing the same.

To track your progress, you can display a map that indicates the status of the islands (neutral, friendly, or hostile), as well as the colored network links between them. Prematurely attacking the enemy ship or its heavily-defended home island is deadly, so you must first colonize a group of isles around your home, then extend your network by creating protective clusters until you are in a position to make an assault.

You will need a resource island on which to construct mines, oil rigs, and fuel dumps. Output from these is shipped to factory islands for use in manufacturing weapons and refining fuel. Defense bases can protect other more vulnerable islands, and you can store constructed weaponry, fuel, and equipment on stockpile islands. All this stuff is shuttled through the network and finally to your ship. Meanwhile, the computer-controlled enemy is establishing bases for itself and trying to capture your colonies.

While engrossing, the colonizing process can become exhausting with its rigorous attention to detail. You must set a slew of priorities, for example, to indicate the rate at which the resource network manufactures replacement
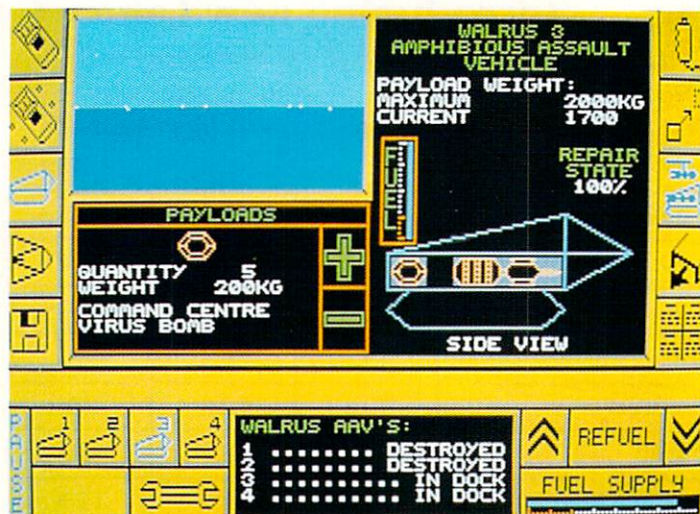
You started your mission with four Walruses, but lost two in combat.

weaponry and fuel. Sound too much like work? Then it's time to take a break from colonizing neutral islands and launch an attack on a hostile one. To accomplish this, you can use the ship's cannon, but ▶

you'll also want to engage an amphibious Walrus and a flying Manta—both of which carry a wide range of weaponry. The latter will be familiar to anyone who's piloted a flight simulator; its 3-D graphics and animation are very fast and smooth. You can dogfight with enemy aircraft, or swoop down and hammer vital installations (which blow up in a very satisfying manner). Although you can opt for a joystick, the mouse provides firmer control and is easier to use given the many icons throughout the program.

A game of Carrier Command typically takes days to complete. Combining the best elements of the arcade and strategy genres, it's one program you won't easily tire of.

Carrier Command
Rainbird Software
distributed by Mediagenic
3885 Bohannon Dr.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
415/329-0800
$44.95
No special requirements.

SWORD OF SODAN

By Bob Ryan

IN SWORD OF Sodan you take the part of a young hero (or heroine—the game is an equal opportunity destroyer) who attempts to avenge his (or her) father's death by storming Castle Craggamoore and obliterating Zoras the Necromancer. Your only weapon is your enchanted sword and the lessons you learned on your granddaddy's knee.
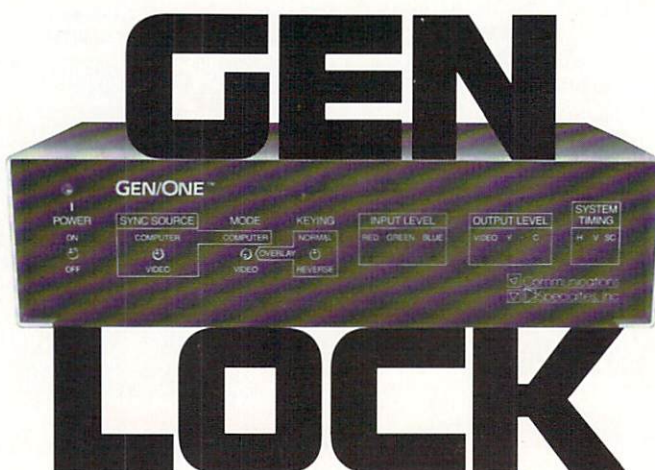
The movie-like game is divided into levels that correspond to the stages of your quest to destroy Zoras. You begin outside the city gates and must hack your way through the city and the castle until you reach the throne of Zoras for your final confrontation. Some levels require a brute force attack. Others demand delicate timing to avoid traps and obstacles. Finally, some levels require you to use magic items that you pick up along the way. Judicious use of these magic items—a zapper that kills your nearest opponent and a power

Sword of Sodan lets you meet interesting people.

Circle 146 on Reader Service card.