

leisure lines

There are plenty of rugged boys' games in *Screenplay* this month: **PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL MANAGER 99**, the Speed Busters racing game, and Squad Commander, based on the movie, *Small Soldiers*. There's **PINBALL ARCADE** and the strategy war game, *101: Airborne Invasion of Normandy*, plus a fun, face-filching game called **HEDZ**. Tradition is the theme of our *Kids* section. We present the **GREAT GAMES COMPENDIUM**, full of the favourite games children used to play in the days before PCs. And, Noddy stars in the second of his children's activity games, **LET'S GET READY FOR SCHOOL**. *Parlez-vous français?*



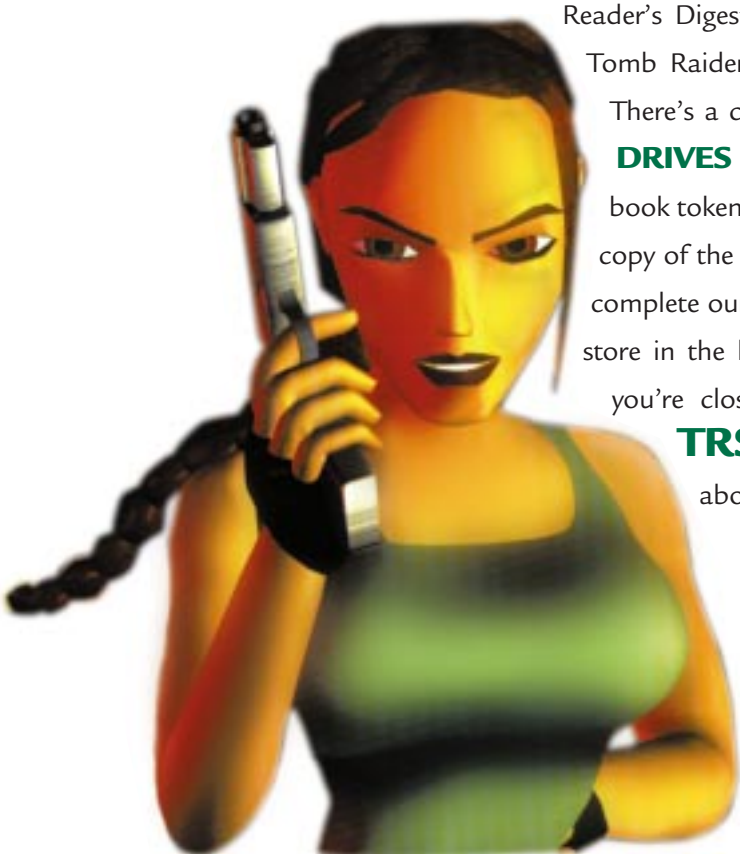
[ABOVE RIGHT] ▲
SPEED BUSTERS
AND SQUAD
COMMANDER
◀ [LEFT] LET'S
GET READY FOR
SCHOOL

Trueman positively purrs as, in his review of **CATZ 3**, he tells us about life with his three virtual pets. In our *Books* section are *New Rules For The New Economy* and the

Reader's Digest Beginner's Guide To Home Computing, and Tomb Raider fans will want to read **LARA'S BOOK**.

There's a chance to win one of ten **PIONEER DVD DRIVES** in our *Competition*, you could win yourself a £20 book token by solving our **BRAINTEASERS** puzzle, or a copy of the new Chambers dictionary could be yours if you complete our *Prize Crossword*. Meanwhile, if you pass a Tandy store in the high street, stop for a moment to reflect that you're close to a piece of computing history: Tandy's **TRS-80 MODEL I** was a PC pioneer. Read all about it in this month's reflective *Retro* section.

ETELKA CLARK, LEISURE LINES EDITOR
ETELKAC@VNU.CO.UK



Hedz: Head Extreme Destruction Zone

This game gives new meaning to **'You're doing my head in, man'.**

A big purple alien with green eyes and long, horrific teeth grins malevolently down from the billboard for Hedz, the face of a punk rocker hanging limp from its gloved fingertips. It's enough to put you off your food. But don't let this stop you from trying it out: despite the nightmare-inducing advert, this game is a cracker.

Hedz is simple yet devilishly twisted. You are part of a savage alien race which has taken to wearing the heads of its human victims, not just because they feel nice, but also because they

► IF YOU WANT TO GET A HEAD, GET A WEAPON. STAB 'EM, HOSE 'EM, WHATEVER — IT'S YOUR CHOICE

convey unique powers upon the wearer. Unfortunately, everyone has got a little too enthusiastic about building up their cranial collection, so it has been decreed that a nearby asteroid belt will become a free-for-all arena where everyone can



duke it out, thereby wreaking minimal havoc on the luckless human population.

The number of characters and level of detail in Hedz is impressive. My favourites were the Little Old Lady with her deadly teeth, the Highland Hammer Thrower and the Elvis Impersonator. Finding the keys and gathering enough cash can be a real challenge, although not overwhelmingly so. Hedz also has one of the grooviest soundtracks I've heard in a while. The only quibble is that users with lesser graphics cards might have a few problems, but this gives you all the more reason to upgrade. Hedz is fast, furious and seriously fun.

SUSAN PEDERSON

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £39.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Hasbro Interactive
01429 855038 www.hedz.com

System Specification Windows 95 or higher, Pentium 100 or higher, 16Mb RAM, 2Mb graphics card, 4X CD-ROM, 30Mb free hard-disk space.

Pinball Arcade

Pinball wizards will **flip out** over the choice of seven tables.

Microsoft's latest release is a budget affair; another piece of software that continues the Seattle giant's love affair with Americana. And as you can see from the screenshots, the designers have done a great job with the look of this game.

The tables look wonderfully realistic and Microsoft has obviously done its maths. The reflections off the ball as it spins around the table are utterly believable, and on some of the tables

there are up to three balls flipping their way around simultaneously. Granted, this is not necessarily any great graphical feat these days; but Pinball Arcade is the first game to look 100 percent real — at least in 2D.



▲ WHAT A CLASSIC — 'SLICK CHICK' IS SPELT OUT ON THE BUMPERS!

◀ THE SPIRIT OF '76 IS A TRULY GREAT TABLE

There are seven tables from which to choose, each reflecting the evolution of pinball since the Baffle Ball table in 1931. My personal favourite is the Spirit of '76 table, and the last table is the Cue Ball Wizard from 1992.

It's typical of Microsoft to approach the game so seriously, as though it were presenting itself as a pinball-museum curator. In some ways this strategy backfires, as pinball only really took off in the fifties. Games were rather dull before then, but here you get a chance to play Baffle Ball, a 60-year-old game that is interesting, but only for about three minutes.

This is a lovely game to look at, however, and probably as good as pinball is ever going to get on the PC. Just make sure, before you buy, that you really do love the flippers'n'tilt.

PAUL TRUEMAN

PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £19.99

Contact Microsoft 0345 002000
www.microsoft.com

System Specification Windows 95/98/NT4.0, Pentium 90MHz processor, 16Mb RAM, 15Mb free hard-disk space, double-speed CD-ROM drive.

Small Soldiers: Squad Commander

Battery-powered **toy soldiers** slug it out.

Small Soldiers is structured around the simplest of real-time strategy games and is aimed at 8- to 14-year-olds. You command one of two squads: the Gorgonites, a rabble of monstrous mutants, or the Commandos, your standard "rednecks". Your opponents are the squad you didn't choose. Through a succession of missions you complete campaigns to either save or conquer, depending on your choice of squad, the vital strategic areas of a quiet, unsuspecting town. The squad consists of battery-powered toys and the battlefield could be anything from a bedroom to the back porch.

The **graphics are large**, well animated and good-humoured. Any fear of child corruption is eliminated when you observe that a dying toy merely falls to pieces when its battery runs out and can easily be replaced from the toybox.



▲ YOU CAN CHOOSE A TEAM OF SIX UGLY GORGONITES...
▶ ...AND PIT THEM AGAINST THE REDNECK COMMANDOS



Control is easy, using basic mouse functions. But the lack of intelligence in your soldiers is frustrating: without specific instructions, they tend to wander into danger or just stand there while their comrades are cut to pieces. You might think this game would present a challenge for the younger end of its target age group, but I bet your kids will surprise you.

IAN ROBSON

PCW DETAILS



Price £29.99

Contact Hasbro Interactive 0990 745745

www.hasbro-interactive.com

System Specification (minimum)

Pentium 100 or equivalent, 16Mb RAM, 4Mb video card (3Dfx card recommended), 4X CD-ROM, 25Mb free hard-disk space.

Premier League Football Manager 99

Is your team a winner, or is it **early doors** all round?

There was a **rash** of World Cup cash-in attempts last summer by football personalities such as Ron Atkinson (commentating legend he may be, great manager he is not), none of which were

really any good. So, along comes the "official" Electronic Arts version to clear up. Or does it? Because this is official, you get all the real players and teams, rather than the knock-off "Manchester United" or "Liverpool" teams from which you choose in unlicensed games. So, posing as the Greatest Living Englishman, John Gregory,

we took charge of the claret and blue glory of Aston Villa at the start of the 1998-99 season. And promptly lost. Every match. For a whole season.

A **lot of work** appears to have gone into the design of this game, so it's all the more frustrating when you cannot figure out how to win a match. It all looks great, and, unlike real football management, you can control every aspect of your club, from the buying of players to the leasing of the ground and stadium. Alternatively, you can switch off all that day-to-day stuff and concentrate on winning a game.

It will take you forever to learn how to play, and it will drive you bonkers watching your team lose week in, week out. But Premier League Manager is monumentally playable.

PAUL TRUEMAN



◀ FANTASY FOOTBALL: TEDDY GETS A FIRST-TEAM GAME FOR UNITED

PCW DETAILS



Price £39.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

www.easports.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, Pentium 133MHz processor, 16Mb RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 2Mb video card, 110Mb free hard-disk space.

Speed Busters

Fast fun and some **silly surprises** for fans of US gas-guzzlers.



▲ **TIGER IN YOUR TANK...
TREE IN THE ROAD... AAARGH!**
◀ **IN YOUR LITTLE DEUCE
COUPE, YOU COULD 'WHUP A
THUNDERBIRD LIKE SHE'S
STANDING STILL'**

Speed Busters is not just another Sega Rally-alike. In the spirit of individuality, it falls into the "slightly silly" category. For instance, on the Hollywood track there is a giant gorilla and an escaped Tyrannosaurus Rex!

Speed Busters is published by Ubisoft, maker of POD, the first driving game to make use of MMX enhancements. You

can drive one of several fifties-style souped-up US gas-guzzlers, with the option of customising them with existing paint-jobs or painting the car yourself. Plus, there are the usual engine enhancement and tune-up options to buy if you do well enough. It's good fun, and the physics programmers have done well to give the cars the feel of big, heavy

brutes with rolling suspension. With the appropriate 3D hardware (Voodoo or Direct3D-compatible), the graphics look fabulous.

The tracks are more akin to levels in Quake II, with weird surprises and shortcuts to find, including the ability to jump on to the back of a moving train. There's a hidden car and track to find, too. But with the emphasis on silliness, you'll find this game doesn't have the engrossing longevity of something like Colin McRae Rally.

Overall though, Speed Busters is an expertly programmed, good-looking slice of four-wheeled fun that's well worth the price.

DAVID FEARON

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £29.99

Contact Ubisoft 0181 944 9000

www.ubisoft.com

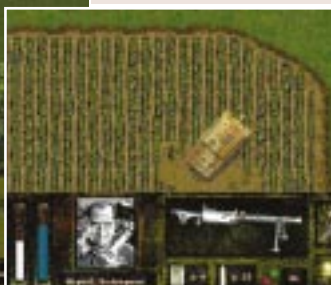
System Specification Pentium 166, 32Mb RAM. Direct3D or 3Dfx accelerator recommended.

101: The Airborne Invasion of Normandy

War games with an emphasis on reality that's a bit too heavy.



◀ **HAS MIGUEL MADE IT?
HOW'S HIS MORALE?...
▼ ...WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE
WHEN HE'S FACE-TO-FACE
WITH A BATTLE TANK?**



If you like a bit of fun in your strategy games, stop reading right now. Empire's latest war game requires you to live and breathe strategy. Fun doesn't figure. This is the only strategy battle game I've played where most of your units are out of action before missions even start: jumping out of aeroplanes at night behind enemy lines is a dangerous

business, and 101 models it accurately — and I mean *accurately* — with a couple of minutes of full-motion video showing what happens to each soldier as he parachutes in. If the planes do manage to get that far, they tend to get shot down, with most of your men still aboard. Of course, all this happens only after you have spent an hour or so

studying the mission brief, picking your team and mulling over what weapons and supplies to give them, right down to whether or not a change of clothes would be advisable. Each soldier in the game has an individual personality and a unique voice, as well as a load of personal statistics, such as morale and initiative, which change during combat.

101 is a seriously hard-core strategy game. Such strategy games are usually turn-based and this is no exception. No frenzied action here, just "action points" and statistics. You get the gist: if you're into this kind of thing, you know who you are. If you're not, 101: Airborne Invasion of Normandy will bore you witless. It's so obsessed with modelling the realities of war that I actually found it somewhat offensive.

DAVID FEARON

PCW DETAILS

★★★

Price £39.99

Contact Empire 0181 343 9143

www.empire.co.uk

System Specification Windows 95/NT4, Pentium 90, 200Mb free hard-disk space, 16Mb RAM (32Mb for NT), 2Mb SVGA graphics card.

Virtual Visits to the Cities Of Europe

Look before you book: it's the **continental highlights** in a nutshell.

The concept behind this CD-ROM is pretty impressive. It was just a shame I didn't get the chance to use it to its full potential, as it ran slowly and crashed more times than I care to remember.

The theory is that you take virtual tours to cities in Europe and get a taste for the sights, before having to pay hard cash to go there in person. For example, you can experience the canal bikes of Amsterdam and the gondolas of Venice, or visit famous churches, museums and parks. You can take a trip on the London Underground or visit Red Square in Moscow, all with full-circle panoramic viewing. As well as the virtual tours, there is a section



◀ **PLANNING A TRIP TO AMSTERDAM? DON'T FORGET TO PACK YOUR CLOGS**

full of practical information, ideal for anyone actually planning to travel. For each city there is useful advice on flights, booking accommodation, metric conversions and restaurant recommendations, and you can brush up on languages with simple phrases included in the interactive phrase book.

There are 450 sights to visit and information on over 700 subjects, so this is a fairly jam-packed CD-ROM; maybe all my hardware problems were caused by the PC version of jet lag. It's not the best Virtual Reality software to hit the market, but it beats having to endure bad flights, weather and food in order to enjoy a nice bit of sightseeing.

ETELKA CLARK

PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £39.00

Contact Netgate Publishing
(available from the internet only)

www.netgate.co.uk

System Specification Windows 95/98/NT, 486 processor, 8Mb RAM.

Catz 3

Meet Jester, Barney and Smudge, the **friendly PC felines**.



▲ **EIGHT OUT OF TEN OWNERS PREFER WATCHING CATZ AT TEA-TIME**
◀ **BARNEY AND SMUDGE DISCUSS WHO SHOULD FINISH OFF THE FISH BONES**

The team behind the Virtual Petz have sold a phenomenal two million copies of Catz (and Dogz, in fact), the software that lets animal-lovers bring their pets to work with them, having chosen them from the Adoption Centre. You can take your cats down to the beach or the

garden, and there is a packed toy cupboard for them to explore.

This isn't a game, you understand: there are ten breeds to choose from and you can adopt as many as you like, giving them names and dozens of toys to play with. Bear in mind that you can only play

with two cats at a time, so don't adopt too many — it wouldn't be fair to devote all your attention to one particular furry favourite.

The cynical side of you might say that the little tykes are only as "real" as the talking paperclip in Office97; but it's no good. This reviewer and his girlfriend became hopelessly attached to their three kittens, and gave up their lives for weeks on end to concentrate on trying to mate Jester (F) and Barney (M). Yes, a new feature of Catz 3 is that your cats procreate! You've got to hope they like each other, of course: our third cat, Smudge (M), was a bit of a non-starter as Jester didn't find his nasty temper remotely attractive. We've had no luck with Jester and Barney so far, but we're still trying...

PAUL TRUEMAN

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £14.99

Contact Mindscape 01444 246333

www.mindscape.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, Pentium 90MHz processor, 32Mb RAM, 85Mb hard-disk space.



The French collection

Parlez-vous français? You will, after you've spent time with these **teach-yourself French** CDs.



If the only French phrase you know is "voulez-vous coucher avec moi, ce soir?", then maybe it's time to learn more. There is a world of language software titles on the market, from which we've picked three to compare.

Language Labs

This is a surprisingly basic learning tool that at the very least is disappointing. It's also quite difficult to get it to work, as the cursor fails to react to mouse-clicks and the screen is strangely minimised. The teaching methods are not particularly stimulating, being repetitive and simple, but the use of techniques from the Rosetta Stone courses is a redeeming factor.

This particular series is based on the principle of learning in the way we do our own native tongue: that is, using the association of objects, and written and spoken words, in specific sequences and contexts. In this sense, Language Labs would be a good option for beginners of any age, but some patience is required with the CD itself.

Tell Me More

Auralog's contribution proved to be a vast improvement. An interactive program based on voice recognition, Tell Me More represents a thorough and comprehensive approach, combining conversation practise with grammar, written exercises and vocabulary. It works on a listen-then-speak basis and offers a good variety of exercises designed to test all aspects of your learning abilities. Navigation is exceptionally easy, as the shortcuts are

permanently sited at the bottom of the screen. Accessing the different sections via the main menu gives you further choices by displaying each available theme for every section — dialogue or pronunciation, for example — so you can go back to those you had trouble with.

A unique feature of this program is the set of video clips that correspond to each lesson. They test your listening and understanding by asking you, in French, a number of questions relating to the sequence you've just seen. Other activities include crosswords, hangman and word association, all of which serve as revision and vocabulary exercises. You can view your lesson report at any time, enabling you to gauge your progress and see where your strengths and weaknesses lie.

Overall this is a well produced and smoothly presented program, and it is very enjoyable to use. The fact that you can set the acceptance level to make it easier or harder means it will carry you through a good distance of learning.

Speak Fluent French

GSP's program is an impressive piece of work, suitable for all study levels. The only problem is, it's almost exactly the same as Tell Me More; that, too, is produced by Auralog, so this probably explains the striking similarities. The pronunciation exercise is more sophisticated on Speak Fluent French, though. Here, the same listen-and-repeat mode is used, although

the actual sound waves of both the native speaker's voice and your voice are comparatively displayed. This is particularly useful, as it lets you see where your pronunciation needs attention.

It appears that in order for Auralog to get away with making two very similar products and sell them as separate programs, each CD has something the other lacks. Tell Me More includes video sequences, while Speak Fluent French has the special pronunciation feature which registers and analyses your voice. I preferred the presentation and ease of use of Tell Me More, and found the video sequences potentially more instructive. However, the £25 difference in price may ultimately sway me.

HELEN FORTGANG

PCW DETAILS



Language Labs

Price £19.99

Contact Europress 01625 855000

www.europress.co.uk

System Specification MPC or equivalent, Windows 3.1 or 95/98, 486 DX, 4Mb of hard-disk space, 4Mb RAM, CD-ROM, SuperVGA monitor and video card (640x480 resolution, 256 colours), SoundBlaster-compatible sound card.



Tell Me More

Price £44.99

Contact Auralog 0171 926 6266

www.aurolog.com

System Specification IBM PC or compatible, 486 DX4 100MHz, Windows 95/98, 8Mb RAM (30Mb available on hard drive), 16-bit Windows-compatible audio card, SVGA video card (640x480 resolution, 256 colours), speakers or headphones; 2X CD-ROM drive, microphone (not included).



Speak Fluent French

Price £19.95

Contact GSP 01480 496600

www.gspltd.co.uk

System Specification IBM-compatible PC, 486 processor or above, Windows 3.1 and above, or Windows 95/98; 8Mb RAM, 20Mb to install, 10Mb when installed; 16-bit Windows-compatible audio card, speaker or headphones; 2X CD-ROM drive, microphone (not included).

Noddy – Let's Get Ready For School

Children can have **fun with learning** as they join Noddy and his Toyland friends.

Although there has emerged a certain amount of controversy surrounding Noddy and his friends, the little chap always seems to come back fighting. Alongside a new TV series, the BBC has compiled this children's CD-ROM based around Key Stage One of the National Curriculum.

Let's Get Ready For School is aimed at children between three and six years. The player assumes the role of Noddy and has to earn pocket money by completing the ten activities in the game. These include helping to fix Mr Spark's ice-cream van, trying to put Toyland back together after a storm, helping Master

Tubby Bear with his homework, and learning to dance. After each activity Big Ears gives Noddy a

sixpence as a reward for his hard work.

When Noddy has enough money, he can go to the fair. These activities are very different from

the usual children's learning software, but they are undoubtedly valuable. Key educational areas

include spelling, following patterns, colour recognition, simple arithmetic and a basic musical understanding. Parents can set a difficulty level to suit their child, and check their progress along the way.

This CD-ROM is beautifully presented and includes all of Noddy's Toyland friends with the original voices, characters and sets. And for anyone with any concerns, be assured that Noddy sleeps alone in his bed.

ETELKA CLARK



PCW DETAILS



Price £24.99

Contact BBC Multimedia Section
0181 576 3592

www.bbc.co.uk

System Specification Windows 95/98,
P100 processor, 16Mb RAM, sound card.

The Great Games Compendium

Bored with shoot-em-ups? Then perhaps **board games** are more your style.



▲ YOU CAN CHOOSE FROM FIVE FAMILY FAVOURITES

▶ PIG DOMINOES ADDS A DECIDEDLY PORCINE SLANT TO THE CLASSIC GAME



Rather than try to reinvent the wheel, Tivola has gone back to the classics. The company has produced The Great Games Compendium as a throwback to the time before personal computing, when "game-playing" meant purchasing a large box full of all types of board games, and everyone would be entertained without recourse to a box in the corner of the room. Tivola claims

that The Great Games Compendium is suitable for anyone aged 4-102, and they're right. Beautifully animated and designed, it features five games from before anyone had ever heard of a PC, and gives them a nineties spin. So, rather than flying spaceships and blasting aliens halfway across the universe, the whole family can load up this CD-ROM and enjoy a game together, safe in the

knowledge that the content is entirely suitable for children.

There is a version of BattleShips played against the god of the sea, Neptune; Tic Tac Toe played in an apartment block; as well as Pig Dominoes! All very quaint and old fashioned, maybe, but the main reason these games are all still around is precisely because of their undeniable playability. They all look fantastic, they're perfect for all the family to play, and this is a great way for children to get familiar with both their PC and the games people used to play.

PAUL TRUEMAN

PCW DETAILS



Price £12.99

Contact Tivola 0181 741 8011
www.tivola.com

System Specification Windows
3.1/95/98/NT4.0, 486 processor,
8Mb RAM, 2X CD-ROM.

Win a Pioneer DVD-ROM drive!



Pioneer Multimedia is launching the world's fastest DVD-ROM drive. To celebrate, the company is giving away 10 of them to lucky PCW readers.

➤ The new drive, the **DVD-A03S** (ATAPI), will be bundled in retail outlets throughout Europe with a cutting-edge package that includes interactive DVD formats of Westwood Studios' **Blade Runner** game and Electronic Publishing Association's **LANGMaster Collins COBUILD Student's Dictionary**.

With market-leading transfer rates of 6X for DVD-ROM (8.3Mb/sec) and 32X for CD-ROM (4.8Mb/sec), the new drive operates 30 percent more efficiently than its predecessor and supports multiple disc formats including DVD-R. It comes with improved seek and access times of 100ms and 110ms for DVD-ROM, and 75ms and 80ms for CD-ROM.

The DVD-A03S is equipped with

Pioneer

Pioneer Multimedia's slot-in disc loading mechanism for safer disc handling and added flexibility.

The drive can read both single- and dual-layer DVD discs. In comparison with a CD-ROM disc, a single-sided, single-layer DVD disc offers seven times the capacity, and a double-sided, dual-layer DVD disc, 26 times the capacity.

Both Blade Runner and LANGMaster Collins COBUILD Student's Dictionary incorporate visual and audio DVD quality, and are indicative of the capacity and flexibility of the new technology.

➤ For a chance to win one of these great prizes, just answer the following question:

• What game comes bundled with the Pioneer DVD-A03S drive?

HOW TO ENTER THE COMPETITION

1. Via our web site at www.pcw.co.uk, or
2. Write your answer, name, address and daytime telephone number on a postcard or on the back of a sealed envelope. Mark your card "PCW/Pioneer Competition" and send it to: P.O. Box 191, Woking, Surrey GU21 1FT, by Friday 5th February 1999.

Please state clearly on your competition entry if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies.

RULES OF ENTRY

This competition is open to readers of *Personal Computer World*, except for employees (and their families) of VNU Business Publications and Pioneer Multimedia. The Editor of *Personal Computer World* is the sole judge of the competition and his decision is final. No cash alternative is available in lieu of competition prizes.

High and mighty

Tandy's TRS-80 Model I was a **hit in the high street**. Simon Collin salutes a micro pioneer.

If you happen to stroll past a Tandy store on your high street, slow down, because you're walking past one of the pioneers of home computers. It's rather unusual for a shop — OK, a vast international chain of shops — to develop a computer, but Tandy (Radio Shack in the US) led the field with its TRS-80 range of computers developed in late 1976. By the summer of 1977 it had announced its first computer, the TRS-80 Model I, available in the US for \$600.

The TRS-80 was a humble home computer. Like the Commodore Vic 20, it was designed in the "fat keyboard" style which squeezed all the electronics under the keyboard. As a result, the computer was neat and compact but could be a pain when it came to rewiring the internals, which was necessary for reliable operation. The keyboard, incidentally, followed the Star Trek trend of the time with black keys on a black background and a solitary white Return key. The case was painted silver.

For your \$600 the basic Model I was driven by a Zilog Z80 processor at 1.774MHz and sported just 4Kb of RAM. Radio Shack kindly provided one of the world's worst versions of BASIC in ROM, which limited developers to 26 variables (called A-Z) and one array (A). In common with other home micros of the period, software was stored on cassette tape and text displayed on a rebadged TV.

To get the most out of your TRS-80 required a large silver box, grandly called the Expansion Interface. This plugged into the back of the keyboard via a notoriously unreliable cable and allowed you to "spoil" your TRS-80 with an extra 16Kb of RAM, serial ports, and either two cassette decks or up to four floppy-disk drives. Once the disk drive had been fitted and was up and running, you could even try out a new operating system called MS-DOS, from the West Coast startup Microsoft, or you could be dull and stick to either CP/M or the native TRS-DOS.

Unusually, and possibly a first for a micro, the TRS-80 Model 1 spawned clones



▲ TANDY HIT GOLD WITH THE SNAZZY SILVER AND BLACK TRS-80 MODEL I

The TRS-80 hit the market running and became an immediate success. It was launched in the days when "compact computer" meant a Digital PDP-11 which was the size of a small filing cabinet. As a result, it provided a great way for millions of users to get their hands dirty learning how to extend and enhance the computer.

One of the reasons for the Model I's success was the strength of the third-party software market. There were

dozens of replacement BASIC interpreters, Pascal and Cobol compilers,

and masses of rather good games.

Unusually, and possibly a first for a micro, the TRS-80 Model I spawned clones. Everyone assumes that the IBM PC was the first to engender copycat products, but the PC was launched four years after the TRS-80. In the early eighties there were several manufacturers producing Model I compatibles with more memory and better graphics. But Radio Shack designers stayed busy and, two years later, the TRS-80 Model II was announced. Unlike the Model I, this new computer was aimed at a different

market, the business user. The Model II

was seen as dull but worthy and only survived six months. The following summer three new computers were launched, with a new TRS-80 Model III heading the line-up. It was a neat-looking computer and took its design cue from the mainframe terminals of the time. The big plastic casing had swooping sides and curves that enclosed keyboard, monitor and drives. Unusually, the designers kept the back of the case smooth by moving all the expansion connectors to a position beneath the case. It was odd, and a trifle inconvenient, but it all worked perfectly.

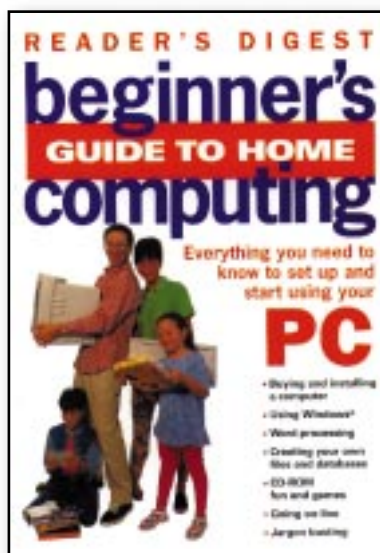
All this time though, the Model I was still selling as an entry-level home computer. But the summer launches brought a new home computer to replace the venerable beast. The TRS-80 Color Computer had new graphics and a new, incompatible processor. Unfortunately, the Model I did not stand up to internal competition. It even failed to meet new regulations, so Radio Shack ceased production of this trailblazer. Unlike many other early manufacturers, Tandy still survives and continues to sell PCs on the high street.

books

Reader's Digest Beginner's Guide to Home Computing

Buying a first computer can be a daunting task, especially if you know nothing about PCs. What will you need? Why will you need it? Where will you get it? Of course, these are questions PCW answers every month; but really, if you're a novice, it does help to have things spelt out in jargon-free language. The *Reader's Digest Beginner's Guide to Home Computing* sets out to provide a quick reference that doesn't go into depth, but instead gives the basics to enable informed decisions.

This guide is primarily aimed at family users, incorporating ideas for home business, housekeeping, kids' "edutainment", the internet and multimedia. Around these main subjects the book weaves its instruction, bringing ideas together to demonstrate how



you can benefit from the different functions and possibilities that a PC and all the various peripherals provide. You can learn how to do your own desktop publishing, create your own files

and databases, and get acquainted with the rest of the world by email.

Opening with clear advice about what to consider when buying, the guidance remains user-friendly throughout the book, accompanied by clear colour-screen references and the happy faces of the models who are no longer baffled by the uncompromising world of personal computing. There is also a glossary giving brief, jargon-busting explanations.

The Guide may not be the Rosetta Stone of deciphering your computer manual, but it will dispel those clouds of confusion previously hovering over your PC. Because of the limited depth of the information, it offers no troubleshooting tips and will not serve as a long-lasting reference. However, it does provide a good basis with which to improve your familiarity with PCs and will help to increase your computing confidence.

HELEN FORTGANG

PCW DETAILS



BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO HOME COMPUTING

Publisher Reader's Digest Association

ISBN 0-276-42397-6

Price £18.99

Lara's Book — Lara Croft and the Tomb Raider Phenomenon

Douglas Coupland is probably one of the finest writers of his generation. He followed up his masterpiece, *Microserfs*, with the lyrical, elegiac *Girlfriend in a Coma*. What no-one could have predicted was that his next prose effort would be an ode to the digitally babelicious, all-conquering adventuress Lara Croft.

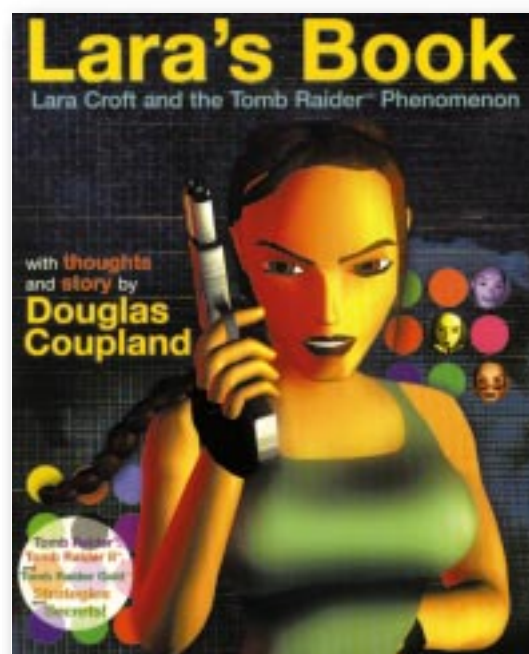
In a previous book, *Polaroids from the Dead*, Coupland discussed his idea of becoming "hyper-real" through technology; a phenomenon peculiar to the late 20th century. No character better illustrates his idea of being virtual while

becoming ubiquitous better than the curvy heroine of the Tomb Raider series. In *Lara's Book*, Coupland writes a short introductory piece from Lara's perspective and,

as usual, he is insightful and humorous. After the mournful *Girlfriend*, it's a relief to see him writing something as skittish as this.

As well as an arty look inside Lara's head, there's a hilariously camp comic-book story, also written by Coupland, to finish the book off. In other chapters, hundreds of glossy, easy-on-the-eye pictures of the lovely Lara are a visual treat, there's a light piece about the making of the games, and some insight into Lara's huge internet following. There are also walk-throughs to Tomb Raider and TRII, as well as the various add-on packs. Frankly though, there are better ones available for free on the internet.

It's all very light and frothy, but is nonetheless thoroughly enjoyable. As to whether it's worth nearly £16, I'm not so sure. Probably the best gauge of its



worth will come from the hordes of 15-year-old boys who will surely buy it just for the pictures of Lara in various states of undress. In the end, Coupland may find that his digital wisdom falls on deaf ears.

PAUL TRUEMAN

PCW DETAILS



LARA'S BOOK

Authors Douglas Coupland and Kip Ward

Publisher Prima

ISBN 0-7615-1580-1

Price £15.99

New Rules for the New Economy: 10 ways the network economy is changing everything

Unless you've been living on a desert island for the past few years, you could hardly have failed to notice that there is a technological revolution in progress. The birth of e-commerce, the explosion of individual networks and the world wide web are all leading to a network economy that will transform how we run our businesses and our lives. But if you don't know which way the tide is turning, how can you possibly hope to keep your feet dry?

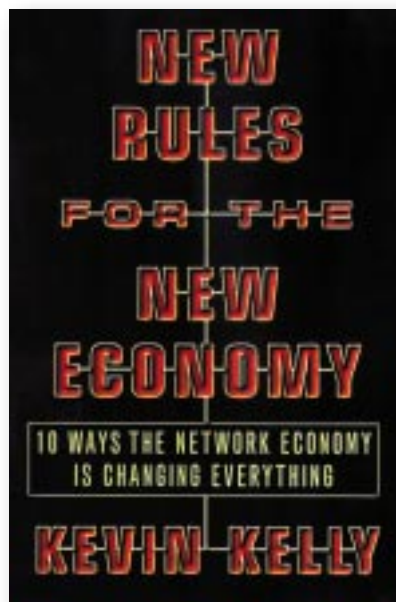
Kevin Kelly, executive editor of *Wired* magazine, has written a book that sets out to give us a few answers. At first glance, *New Rules for the New Economy* seems to be a rather disappointing follow-up to *Out of Control*, his entertaining treatise on the new bionic frontier. But after a slow start Kelly gets into the groove, using entertaining anecdotes to illustrate his ten theories about network development, behaviour and applications.

To start off, Kelly states that the forthcoming economic revolution will not be about computers. In fact, he

*If you're after hard
and fast answers,
you might come
away disappointed*

claims that "computers are over". Rather, it will be about communication, about computers and networks talking to each other. He asserts that this communication will transform all other sectors as well, including "manual" industries such as farming, trucking and

manufacturing. The web will drive an unstoppable demand for free products, flexible partnerships and a global economy. The question is, how will this come



about? Well, Kelly believes that it will not actually be dependent on the number of chips in computers, but in all manufactured objects: a can of soup, a book, or a shirt. These cheap, throwaway "jelly bean" chips will give us the power to connect everything to anything. He also talks about the power of the "swarm", a large number of connected objects which, acting together, can achieve what could not have been achieved individually. He writes: "A standalone object, no matter how well designed, has limited potential for new weirdness. A connected object has unlimited possibilities."

At the end of each chapter, Kelly outlines a number of different strategies for maximising the business opportunities provided by a network economy. These are not so much specific pieces of advice, as much as ideas about how to think differently about the underlying frameworks and principles of your business. If you are looking for hard and fast answers, you might come away disappointed, but *New Rules for the New Economy* is nevertheless a thought-provoking primer.

SUSAN PEDERSON

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**NEW RULES FOR THE
NEW ECONOMY**

Author Kevin Kelly

Publisher Fourth Estate

ISBN 1-85702-871-6

Price £15.99

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Prices include VAT on disks and CD-ROMs. List supplied by The PC Bookshop, 21 Sicilian Avenue, London WC1A 2QH. Telephone: 0171 831 0022 Fax: 0171 831 0443

brainteasers

Quickie

Can you solve the following division problem:

$$\text{DROP} \div \text{CARD} = \text{C}$$

Each letter represents a different non-zero digit and C is greater than 2.

Prize Puzzle - February 1999

This month's puzzle is a variant on an old chestnut. And although you might recognise it, it's unlikely you will have a solution to hand. Here goes...

Seven pirates find an old treasure map and sail to the island where the treasure is purported to be. Sure enough, they discover a cave full of Spanish golden doubloons. They work all morning to bring all the coins from the cave into a single heap, and then decide to take an afternoon siesta before sharing the booty.

During the siesta period, one pirate awakes and decides to take his share and hide it before the others awake. So he divides the coins into seven equal amounts — there's an odd one left over which he throws into the sea — then hides his share and goes back to sleep.

Shortly after, another pirate awakes and also decides to take his share before the others awake. So, he divides the coins into seven equal amounts — again there's one left over which he



throws into the sea — then takes his share, hides it, and goes back to sleep.

The same process is repeated for each remaining pirate: every time, there is an odd coin left over after the division, which is discarded.

Finally, they all awake, and admit to each other what they've done. Not being very numerate, no-one seems to mind, and they decide to share the remaining coins equally between themselves. There's one left over, which gets thrown into the sea.

What is the least number of coins that there could have been originally?

Send your answers on a postcard or on the back of an empty sealed envelope, to:

PCW Prize Puzzle - February 1999
Harrogate, N. Yorks HG2 0XJ
to arrive not later than 20th February 1999. Or you can email your solution only (no explanatory notes or program listings, etc.) to jj.clessa@btinternet.com

Please do not send solutions on floppy disks or in envelopes.

Good luck!

The Prize Crossword will reappear in the next issue of PCW, on sale 28th January 1999. The solutions to last month's crossword are in this month's ChipChat.

NOVEMBER 1998 PRIZE PUZZLE

We apologise unreservedly for the mess we seem to have made of our November problem. On learning from the Editor that the problem contained an error, we made a quick fix in time to catch the (then) imminent issue of PCW, only to realise a day or so later that the "fix" hadn't gone far enough.

Although quite a few entrants guessed the solution we were seeking, we have decided that the fairest way of dealing with this is to re-present the entire problem in this edition of the magazine, along with the February Prize Puzzle [above]. Last date for entries for both puzzles is 20th February 1999. Anyone who has already sent in a correct solution, need not re-submit.

We shall still call it the **November '98 Prize Puzzle** and it should be stated as follows:

Four men, Alf, Bob, Colin and Dave, are married to Kath, Liz, Mary and Nell — though not necessarily respectively.

Each of the eight people buy postage stamps, each buying as many stamps as the denomination of the stamp in pence, and no two people of the same sex buying the same denomination.

Each husband spent exactly P more than his wife, P being less than £1. Colin spent 9p more per stamp than Nell, and Dave spent 23p more per stamp than Bob's wife. Mary spent more than everyone else except her husband, and Liz spent the least.

Who is married to who?

Let's hope we've got it right this time! Anyway, one good thing has come out of this. We have decided to accept *Brainteasers* entries via email, although, for obvious reasons, only



basic solutions may be sent — i.e. just as you would send on postcards. No supporting analysis or email attachments, thank you, since we don't want the computer clogged up with long-winded explanations. The email address to use is jj.clessa@btinternet.com and we expect shortly to open a web site with the same name where we plan to give answers to Quickies. With a direct connection between *Brainteasers* and you, we'll be able to get any future cock-ups and queries sorted out much more efficiently.

JJ CLESSA