

Commodore

M A G A Z I N E

The Magazine for Commodore and Commodore Amiga Users

Roundball EA Style

Featuring
Interview with
**Michael "Air"
Jordan**

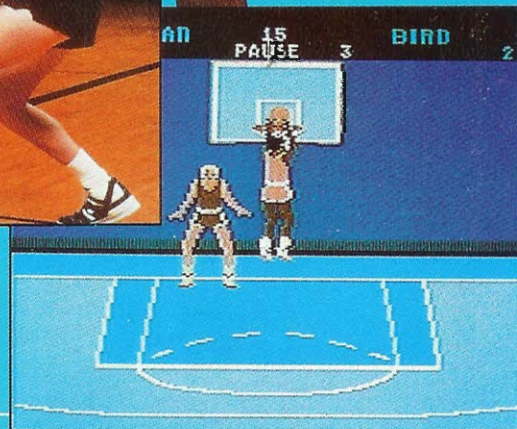
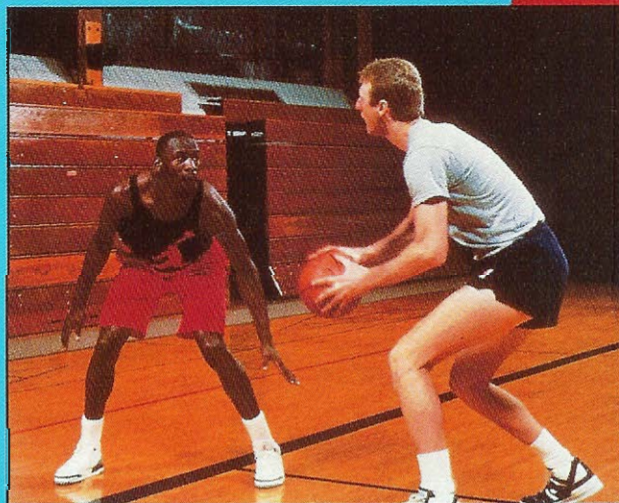
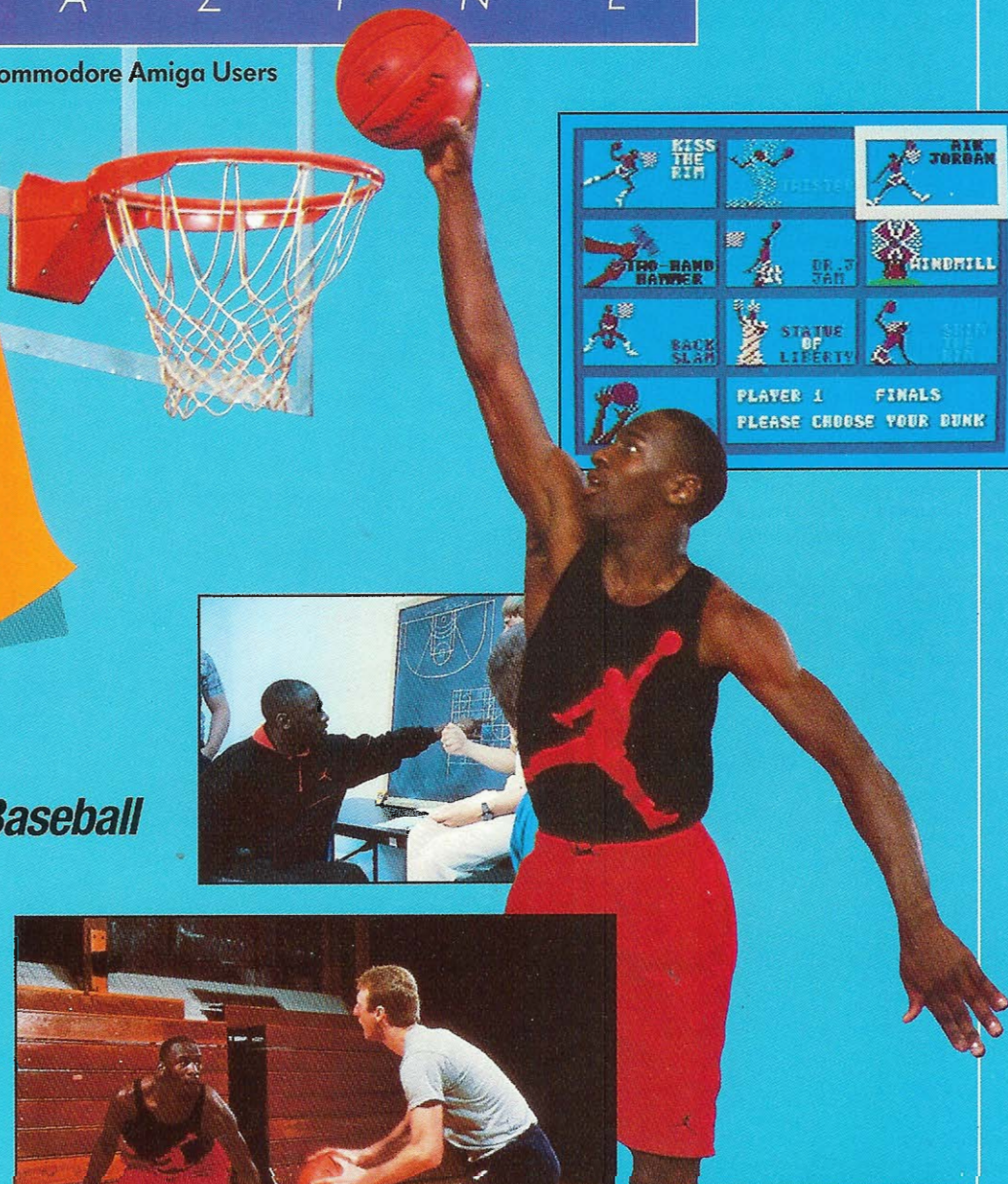
Software Reviews

64 & 128 *Sporting News Baseball*
AMIGA *Starglider II*
...and more

Type-in Programs
for the Commodore
64 and 128

Plus

The Red Storm Rising
Ultimate Challenge
WIN A TRIP FOR TWO!



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FEATURES

PERFECT IMPRESSIONS 70
Desktop publishing programs for the Amiga have come a long way in the past year. New and updated programs have been released for every publishing need (and budget). Here's a survey of what you can do with what's available and how much it will cost.
by Gary V. Fields

ACTIONWARE TAKES AIM AT THE AMIGA GAME MARKET 74
Actionware has released a series of Amiga titles (Commodore 64 versions to come) to be used with the Actionware Light Gun. Actionware's light gun gives new meaning to the "shoot-'em-up arcade game."
by Russ Ceccola

COVER STORY

ROUNDBALL SOFTWARE: EA STYLE 66
Electronic Arts' best selling program of all time (*Dr. J and Larry Bird Go One-on-One*) has spawned a follow-up match: *Jordon vs. Bird*. We talked to the programs' designers to find out how they turn basketball superstars into software superstars, and to Michael Jordon about his future on and off the court.
by John Jermaine

COVER PHOTO: Photographs of Michael Jordon and Larry Bird are courtesy of Electronic Arts.
Software: *Jordon vs. Bird: One on One* by Electronic Arts

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Handling Archives

Explore the inner workings of the Q-Link telecommunications service with network pro Bob Baker.

I have received several questions on the ARC utility that seem to indicate how confused some people are about this very handy program. So this month I'll go over some helpful hints on making the most of ARC in relation to your telecomputing efforts.

First of all, when you attempt to download files from the public domain library areas of Q-Link or other online services, you'll soon notice a number of common file suffixes that are used. Of particular interest are the ".ARC" suffixes that indicate file archives created with the ARC utility. If you download one of these files you cannot use the file as received until you "unarc" the files. This involves using the ARC utility to extract the original files from the archive file you obtained.

When you go to extract or unarc the files from the archive file, first be sure you have enough room for all the files that will be created. Don't forget that the files are compressed when put into the archive file, so the final files can take up much more disk space than the original archive. You can easily check the number and size of the original files with the arc utility without changing anything on the disk. Just use the arc LIST option:

```
arc/l file-name.arc
```

This will give you an idea of what is included in the archive file and whether or not it will fit on one or more disks. If there is enough room to unarc all the files to the same disk, it can be done with one simple command:

```
arc/x file-name.arc
```

Otherwise, you may have to extract only a few files at a time and move them to another disk. To extract individual files you use the same extract option, but simply list the desired files following the archive filename:

```
arc/x file-name.arc file.1 file.2 file.3
```



MIA BOSNA

If you have two disk drives, the process can be much simpler and faster. Simply put the archive file in one disk drive and a blank formatted disk in the other drive. Make the blank disk your current disk, by entering the drive letter followed by a colon and RETURN. Then, enter the "arc" command with the drive letter indicated as part of the arc-file's filename.

As an example, let's assume you have two drives that are set up as device 8 and 9 on your 64. With arc, your main device 8 drive will be the A: drive, while the device 9 drive will be the C: drive. Put the arc file into drive 8 and the blank disk in drive 9, then enter the following commands:

```
c:
arc/x a:filename.arc
```

to extract all the files from the archive file on drive 8 and place them on drive 9.

As mentioned, having two drives when extracting ARC files also helps speed things up. With a single drive, the drive read/write head must be constantly moving between the input file being read (the archive file), and the new files being written (the files being extracted). With two drives there is much less head motion, so everything is much quicker.

As a general rule, I always list the contents of an archive file before I attempt to extract the files. Not only does it tell me how big the files are and how many there are, but it also gives me some hope that the file is a valid archive. Actually, there

is a test option under arc that allows you to test the archive file integrity. However, this is generally of more help when creating archive files when you want to check that the file was created OK without extracting the individual files.

If you're downloading files from other networks or local bulletin boards, keep in mind that archive files created on different systems may not be compatible. Archives created on an IBM system usually cannot be extracted on a Commodore 64 or 128 system or vice versa. One handy exception, however, is the ARC utility on the Amiga which has an option to process IBM archives. The "P" option on the Amiga ARC allows you to read or write IBM-format archive files.

If you are using the Amiga or IBM ARC utilities, bear in mind that the command format for these versions of ARC are slightly different. On the 64/128 version, the option is entered after the "arc" command with a slash between them, like: arc/x filename.arc to extract files. On the IBM version, the options are entered after the "arc" command with a separating space: arc x filename.arc

The Amiga version uses a syntax that is identical to that used on UNIX systems, with the options having a dash prefix: arc -x filename.arc and multiple options may be combined. So, be sure to remember to use the proper syntax for the correct system. If in doubt, entering the "arc" command with no options or parameters will usually give you a list of the proper

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pay many tolls along his road to success.

First, let's look at the title character. As the name would imply, your bird is noted for land speed. In a word, this fowl is fast. With rocket acceleration, incredible quickness and superb cornering ability, the Road Runner might be considered the Formula Racer of the bird kingdom. Now you see him, now you don't. But like his auto counterpart your hero also needs some "gas" to keep moving, and that's the catch.

As your winged wonder is buzzing down the road, you will notice that he will periodically come upon hefty piles of birdseed. This is your Runner's food fuel. By passing directly over the grain, your bird can quickly gobble the grub, keeping nourished and fit. But if the heat of the hunt causes your surrogate to bypass a few too many of these piles, his energy will eventually be sapped, leaving him collapsed helplessly on the pavement—a sitting duck, of sorts. To help you keep abreast of the Road Runner's hunger pains, a Seed Meter—which uses a handful of rapidly-draining bowls of seed to represent your bird's waning verve—is provided at the screen's upper edge. Keep an eagle eye on the seed meter.

Now in a foot race, Mr. Coyote wouldn't stand a chance against your speedster. But this crafty creature, realizing his limitations, has equipped himself with all kinds of contraptions to try to even the odds. He'll come at you on rocketback, skateboard, supercharged pogo stick and booster jets, using everything from land mines to aerial bombs to do you in. And talk about resilience, Wile E. can be run over, blown up and shot a dozen times, and he'll just pause for a second, shake it off and keep on coming. You can't afford to slow down for a second. Even a glancing blow from one of his persistent paws will snatch away one of your five lives.


But even with this dangerous Coyote on his tail, the Road Runner can't spend too much time looking over his shoulder, for what's approaching can be just as deadly. The highway course is divided into four separate sections, each presenting its own pitfalls. The initial segment starts you off running headlong into oncoming traffic on a four-lane spread, asking you to pick up seed while dodging the bumpers of speeding trucks. The next area contains a narrow zigzag course to be negotiated, followed by a length of road in a nonstop falling rock zone.

Survive this and it's on to phase three, a

frustrating stretch of intersecting highways that offers very few through streets and plenty of dead ends. You'll find yourself retreating more than advancing as you run into a multitude of impasses, including a few ball-spitting cannons which have been included to keep you on your toes. And then there's the final section, which first pits you against Wile E. the bombardier, and then tests your leaping ability over a series of hair-raising ravines. One wrong move, and it's an unscheduled free fall. If you're lucky enough to survive this four-part trial, you'll get to start it all over again with added obstacles, like more trucks, rocks and land mines. The going can get pretty rough, and chances are that you'll run out of lives long before you run out of road.

Road Runner's scoring system is well designed, leaving enough strategic latitude to keep you forever scheming. Not only can you earn points by avoiding hazards, collecting seed and covering ground, but you will also be rewarded if you can get any of the traps to backfire on the Coyote. Sidestep an onrushing truck at the last second, and your nemesis in pursuit is bound to get grilled. Jump over a cannon ball and see if it doesn't help Wile E. cut down his waistline. And then there's my favorite setup, where you rush at a land mine and quickly cut away, watching the wide-eyed Coyote skid by and trigger the fireworks. What fun! It's just like the cartoon.

As far as visuals go, *Mindscape* hasn't missed a detail. The colors are perfect, with brown and yellow hues painting a sandy desert against a clear blue sky. The landscape is dotted with all the appropriate ground-hugging vegetation and rocky outcrops, with various imposing stone formations climbing to backdrop every scene. And all these beautiful graphics are accented by some spectacular animation. It's all here: pinwheeling legs, turning heads, reaching arms and flapping ears. And if your bird does slip and inadvertently set off an occasional explosion, you'll get to witness one of the funniest shocked reactions ever portrayed on a computer monitor. It's terrific stuff, all presented with a musical sound track covering everything from "Flight of The Bumble Bee" to the famed Looney Tunes sign off. And yes, when prompted, your surrogate will even let out a engine-like "p-u-u-n-c" or his signature "Beep-Beep." It's a thoroughly professional job.

Move quick and act like Wile E. Coyote. This is a *Road Runner* you definitely want to catch. 

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tax and options with most versions of ARC.

Besides the obvious usefulness of combining and compacting files for telecommunications work, ARC can be a very handy utility for other purposes too. I usually have trouble remembering how to use all the various utilities I collect from the boards, so I try to put a bunch of documentation files into one archive file. Most versions of ARC include an option that lets you display or print a file from within an archive file without extracting the file and writing it to disk.

So you can keep a number of documentation files handy without taking up much space on your disk. If you have several documentation archives and forget what files are where, you can always list the contents of any archive to find the file you want. Plus, if you get a later update of a program, you can replace the existing copy of any given file in an archive with the update option of ARC.

I'm sure this only scratches the surface of what you can do with the ARC utility, but I hope it helps get rid of some of the confusion over how to handle file archives downloaded from the system. There are several other similar utilities in use, such as LYNX, LIBRARY, Compress and Uncompress, self-dissolving archives, and others, each using specific file suffixes to indicate which utility was used to create the file. Always be sure to check a file's comments and description on Q-Link to see if a special version of a utility is needed. If you're still having troubles, check the Beginner's section of Q-Link for additional help.

On the other hand, when uploading archive or compressed files to Q-Link, be sure to use the proper file suffixes and include a quick comment in the file description to indicate how the file was created. Also, try to keep the size of archive files to a reasonable length. It's usually easier to download a few medium sized files than one very large file. If unsure how big a given archive file will be, you can always create it in stages. The ARC utility allows adding files to an existing archive file. So put a few files into the original archive file and check the file size as you add the additional files. If you go a little too far, you can even delete a file from an archive file.

Guess that's it for this month. Please let me know if you have any thoughts or suggestions for future columns. As usual, you can reach me via E-Mail to "RBaker" almost daily. By the way, I'm now on PC Link too where you can reach me via E-Mail to "RBaker PC". 