

KONAMI

SOFTWARE CLUB

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Title: Top Gun
Machine: Nintendo Entertainment System
Format: Cartridge
Price: T.B.A.

Konami have released very few film licences in the past, the most notable being 'Goonies', which appeared both on the MSX and NES. However, *Top Gun* must have been one of the most successful games of recent years, and it will be no surprise if it turns out to be one of the best selling games on the Nintendo either.

The game lets you play the role of a pilot in a F-14 jet fighter, the American Navy's premier fighting plane. Your orders are to join up with a carrier, the 'USS Enterprise', and command a squadron of F-14's against the enemy, who have invaded vital oil fields, and are preparing to advance on our allies. Your primary mission is to knock out the leading air, sea and land forces before proceeding forward and destroying the enemy's space base. If you succeed, then World War III will be averted. If you fail...well, don't, the whole world's relying on you!

At the start of the game, you must choose which missiles your plane will carry. There are three types to choose from, varying in power and quantity, with the more powerful the missile, then the less you are able to carry.

Controlling the aircraft is quite simple, and the same as any real aircraft, as you have to push up to dive and down to climb. Your unlimited cannon supply can be shot using the A button, while the missiles are aimed and fired by pressing the B button.

On your screen you have two sights, one for using the cannon and the larger sight determining when you can aim your missiles. Also displayed is your speed, the plane's altitude, the amount of missiles remaining and your fuel.



Each different level presents you with a new mission. For example, you may have to destroy an aircraft carrier, or track down a Nuclear Missile Silo. Before you can reach your target you first have to contend with the many defences, which include fighters, battle cruisers, attack 'copters and tanks, so be careful!

Once you have successfully completed a mission then you have to fly back and dock on the USS Enterprise. Following the instructions on screen, you have to move around and change speed so that you can land on the ship. Failure results in the loss of one of your three lives.

The various enemies attack you either with bullets or missiles, which must be dodged or shot. A missile that hits you will cause you to lose a life, while bullets which are on target decrease the plane's shields. If the shield indicator falls below zero you will lose yet another life!

You are given a cockpit view of the action in *Top Gun*, with you looking out of the F-14 fighter. The graphics are fast and effective, with excellent colouring on the enemy ships and planes. The detail inside the cockpit is realistic, and the speed of the game allows for some frantic fighting! The re-fuelling and landing sequences are spectacularly portrayed, and add more class and style to the *Top Gun*.

Also used to good effect are the engine noises and explosions. The music is of a very high quality, and is both original and interesting. The title screen even includes a great version of the original *Top Gun* theme!

I doubt that *Top Gun* would work as well on any other 8-bit machine, as the Nintendo version is superb, and has obviously been created with a great deal of thought and research. A very enjoyable and stylish game, it should be on all Nintendo owner's shelves as soon as it is released!

Arcade Release

Labyrinth Runner

In this latest medieval/sci-fi game from Konami, you have to save your beloved Papaya from the evil clutches of the devil. She is held in his satanic castle, but, before you can reach her, you are going to have to fight through forests, stumble along castle walls, and navigate your way through mazes. Only then can you contend with the monsters in the castle in an attempt to be re-united with Papaya.

At the start of the game you only have a single fire gun at your disposal. By shooting the creatures that swarm in on you, though, then new weapons, such as lasers and bombs, can be collected. If you accumulate enough of each weapon then you can fire three or five shots simultaneously too! Also available is a magic symbol which has the same devastating effects as that of a smart bomb!

The first level is set in a forest, with a wonderful variety of wierd aliens trying to prevent you from reaching the end. These include dancing skull-and-crossbones, leaping potatoes and furry balls, all of which are lethal.

After you have fought through the trees and rivers, you are confronted with two oval heads, continuously spitting bullets. Only with practice and patience can you learn their vulnerabilities, and, consequently, defeat them.

Next you have to push your way along the castle walls, and past enemy soldiers. They start attacking you in groups of eights and twelves, and, to make matters worse, giant spiders frequently appear. An ingenious creation, in the form of a demon on a moving wall, greets you at the end of the level.



In the two mazes even more creatures home in on you, some taking many more hits than normal to kill. After you have found both of the exits, you have to destroy a jumping alien who pours out stream upon stream of bullets. These can be shot in order to find new weapons.

The fourth level, and possibly the most enjoyable, has you driving around in a truck, lobbing petrol bombs at passing enemies. Rocks also obstruct your path and must be destroyed if you don't want to be abruptly thrown out of your truck! After you have successfully progressed past the train tracks then you are given a chance of rescuing Papaya from the castle.

Although the graphics in *Labyrinth Runner* are far from spectacular, they are cleverly animated and well detailed. You have a bird's-eye view of the action, yet the screen never gets cluttered. The backgrounds, like the sprites, are adequately coloured, but, for once, are not an outstanding part of the game.

Labyrinth Runner is certainly an enjoyable game, with the emphasis being on fun rather than serious competition. Unfortunately, there is no simultaneous two-player mode, nor will the game appeal to all tastes, but it is certainly worth a look if you are after some light relief from the more hectic arcade games!

Place Your Bets!

Editorial

There are many debates concerning the future of games consoles, notably the Nintendo, in the European market. The Nintendo itself has been in the UK for a year now, but has yet to make an impact. Will it succeed?

If Japan and American is anything to go by then there is little doubt that it should. Currently, both countries boast millions of users, and it is the largest selling machine in the world, with high quality software and strong backing. But this doesn't mean instant success over here. Take the MSX, for example — it is very popular in Spain and Holland, as well as Japan, but has been discarded in most other European countries by a lot of the press. An ageing specification and lack of support could be blamed, but, thankfully, this cannot be aimed at the Nintendo, which has high budget backing and great software. Success should be its second name.

On the other hand, there is a lot of competition in the UK computer industry, with many worthy computers to consider purchasing. There are also many critics of the game console, pointing out that there is little room for innovative software other than arcade conversions, which computers can supposedly handle anyway. This may be so, but no other machine is as good as the Nintendo when it comes down to conversions, be it the MSX or the Amiga; after all, the Nintendo was created to simulate the arcades.

It is true that the NES would not be able to handle games such as *Metal Gear* or *Elite* as well as the MSX2, yet the MSX2 would not be able to match the speed of *Top Gun* or *Rush 'n' Attack* as well as the Nintendo. Konami have certainly got the right idea when they convert arcade games, such as *Salamander* and *Nemesis*, to the MSX, as they realise the machine's deficiencies and include options not found on the original game. Consequently, this makes up for the features that have had to be omitted because of the computer's limitations. A conversion to the Nintendo is usually faithful to the original, and shows that it is unbeatable at what it does best.

I'm not saying that you should sell your computer, as there are certain feats that it can perform that the NES can't, and vice versa. What I am saying is that there is room for the Nintendo in any game player's home. And at just £100 (or less) it is unbelievable value! It's two to one on that it is going to be a winner!

Konami Helpline

The Konami Helpline is here for you to use so that you can ask us questions about your favourite games. We should be able to give you a helping hint for most games that will set you on your way again.

We will also be answering any queries that you have about the Konami Software Club, and letting you know about forthcoming releases on all machines. You can also find out all about the new titles by phoning after five and listening to the Helpline Hotline.

Tel: 0626 56789

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Where are the newsletters? After receiving the January issue (two months ago), I have not laid eyes on another one. What's up? My subscription hasn't run out, that's for sure, as I have only received five issues to date, and I am quite sure that a year's subscription implies 12 issues.

I never did much like your 'poxy' newsletter anyway, always harping on about Japanese stuff (yawn). Whilst I'm on it, I might as well slag down every single game Konami has ever released on all of the home computers, they are CRAP (Your English astounds me — Ed!) The games that Ocean converted are 300 times better!

You may be wondering why I didn't enter your games review competition, as it was originally my idea. My computers are both broken, that's why. Maybe the reason that you haven't produced any more newsletters is because you are sulking 'cos nobody entered your stinking competition:

Stephen Fernandez,
London

By now, Stephen, you should have received four more newsletters. The reason for issues 7 and 8 being delayed was because of technical problems, and we apologise for any concern.

Maybe the real reason for you not entering the competition was because it would require any entrant to have at least a basic knowledge of the English language, something which your letter proves that you have yet to grasp. Last issue we printed the winning entry, selected from the many reviews that we received, contrary to your suggestion that we did not get any! Let me also point out that Salamander on the Spectrum, and Nemesis on all major machines received excellent reviews from the computer press, and that our Nintendo and MSX games are difficult for any other manufacturer to surpass, even on the 16-bit machines. 'Nuff said?!

Dear Editor,

I am writing to inform you of Micropro MSX, a monthly club magazine for MSX1 and MSX2 owners. The magazine includes news, articles, reviews, competitions and much more.

The subscription price is £8 for the UK, and £15 for overseas. This includes 12 monthly newsletters and membership for a year. If you require more information, please send your cheques or a stamped addressed envelope to P. Reid, Micropro-MSX, 35 Avison Road, Cowlersley, Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire, HD4 5TL.

The first magazine is out now, so order soon for secured membership.

P. Reid
Huddersfield

That's all very well, but let's see some magazines so that we can comment!

Dear Editor,

I have had six newsletters so far, and I am waiting for the 7th and 8th issues. Why?

I have some tips for you on level 13 in *Penguin Adventure*. On the 13th or 14th level, at the very beginning, go to the left hand side of the screen, dodging obstacles in your way, but no moving from the left. Soon a question mark will appear, and will give you some red boots if caught!

Also, could you tell me if *Treasure of Usas* is out on the MSX1 and, if not, when will it be out?

So far I am pleased with the newsletters — apart from the frequency — they are brilliant!

Andreas Costas,
London

Thanks for the tips. Currently, Treasure of Usas is only available on the MSX2, and there are no plans to convert it to the MSX1.

The delay in the publishing of issues 7 and 8 was really a ploy so that you would all write in. It worked too well, as we were bogged down with letters about the good quality of the two newsletters as soon as they were released! In future, all of the issues will be out on time, as long as we don't run into any more problems!

Send your comments and criticisms to the Editor at Konami Software Club, Bank Buildings, Bank Street, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 2JL. And please keep those fanzines coming in, light entertainment gets us through each day!

News in Brief

After a few specialist titles in the arcades, such as *Rack 'Em Up* (see review last issue), Konami look set to bounce right back into the limelight with *Vulcan Venture*, the sequel to *Nemesis* and *Salamander*. There are seven stages in the game, with some of them featuring ingenious renovations of the aliens found in *VV*'s two predecessors. For example, the Moais (large heads) are twisting and jumping on one level, whilst another stage is made up solely of the motherships in *Salamander* and *Nemesis*! There are also some inventive new ideas, with a large Phoenix, crystal rocks and a rapidly scrolling enemy base having all been included.

The weapon selection is similar to *Nemesis*, but this time you choose a combination of six weapons which will be available to you when playing. There are four combinations, combining of 12 weapons in all, so only with practice are you going to be able to figure out the best weapons suited to you.

Hopefully we will have a full review within a couple of months, but keep your eyes peeled until then. It looks set to hit the competition where it will hurt most!

As with some other major manufacturers, this year's Personal Computer Show (formerly the PCW) will not be graced with Konami's presence. Instead, they will be occupying a nearby hotel suite in which they will be discussing business with distributors and dealers. Any Nintendo products available at the time will be demonstrated by the distributor.

Knightmare III on the MSX has been held back for the time being, and the situation concerning its release is being assessed. We will keep you posted, via the newsletter, on the outcome.

The new Gamesmaster, which was for use solely on the MSX2 will not be released in Europe, due to the lack of games to use it on outside of Japan! Another product that won't be appearing on the MSX is the 3-D glasses and light gun, which was for the Nintendo and not the MSX.

Possibly the next game that will appear on the MSX from Konami is *Kings Valley 2*, which will include enhanced graphics, the sound creative chip and enthralling gameplay. No release date as yet, but we will be the first to let you know!

Combat School and *Gryzor* are now being programmed on the Atari ST and Amiga, and we will be bringing you reviews and screen shots when we receive our copies. We can't wait!

Latest Release

Title: Konami's Arcade Collection
Machines: CBM 64/Amstrad/Spectrum
Format: Cassette/Disc
Price: £9.95/£14.95

Over the past few years, there have been some great Konami conversions released by both Konami and Ocean. Ten of these games have now been brought together on one package, at a ridiculously low price, and is well worth considering if only for some of the titles. The following games are included on the collection:

Green Beret

As a highly trained Green Beret combat soldier, it is your task to rescue the POWs held by the enemy. There are four gruelling levels to fight through, with a variety of soldiers to overcome.

Scattered throughout the levels are weapons that will help you defeat the enemy, such as fire blasters and guns. Alternatively, you can use your knife to cut through the enemies.

Excellent graphics, effective sound and arcade style gameplay make *Green Beret* a great conversion and fantastic game.

Yie Ar Kung Fu

This first appeared in the arcades some time ago, and must be the most used game on any compilation, yet *Yie Ar Kung Fu* is still a welcome addition to this top quality package. The idea is basically to use a number of different combat moves against various kung fu and weapon masters, proceeding to the next villain after defeating the previous one. A great beat 'em up with beautiful backdrops and spectacular moves.

Nemesis

The classic shoot 'em up. Your task is to take on the bacterion forces in an attempt to save the planet Nemesis from imminent invasion. There are eight wonderfully designed levels to fight through, with the backgrounds including Maoi heads and expand-skeletons.

Nobody has ever repeated the success of *Nemesis* on such a scale and the conversion is far from disappointing. A worthy inclusion to a worthy collection.

Jail Break

A prison warder's life is difficult enough when the bad guys are inside, let alone when they break out as they have done in this game! Your job is to prevent them from terrorising the town and rescuing innocent bystanders from inevitable death.

As you gun down the criminals you will come across weapons which can be used in your fight against crime. This helps *Jail Break* be one of the best games of its genre, and represents great value for money if bought as part of the compilation.

Yie Ar Kung Fu 2

A conversion from the classic MSX game! There are eight foes to defeat, against a stunning array of backdrops, with some wonderful tunes to fight (and dance!) to.

There are less combat moves in *YAKF2*, yet it has the same unmistakable style which made the original so successful. The addition of a two-player option makes this a top quality beat 'em up.

Shao-Lin's Road

The third in the Kung Fu series, and an excellent arcade adventure. Your aim is to escape from the Triad's temple using your newly acquired kung fu skills, but all is not as it seems, with many different enemies to dispose of! To help you there is the occasional bolt of magical energy which can be used to devastating effect.

A different approach to a popular theme, *Shao-Lin's Road* is a sure fire winner. One for the arcade adventurers!

Hypersports

The arcade classic hits your screen! Hypersports, possibly the start of an arcade revolution, consists of six events, such as swimming, skeet shooting, triple jump and weight lifting. Each event requires different playing techniques, which take a lot of enjoyable practice to master.

A great conversion of a thrilling arcade game, which will bring the best out of you and your joystick!

Mikie

One of the most original arcade concepts ever devised, *Mikie* must rush through high school in a frantic attempt to deliver a love letter to his girlfriend. Using balls and chickens for protection, you must guide Mikie through each section of the school, collecting the hearts that make up the letter.

Fun to play, and humorous to watch, *Mikie* promises hours of entertainment.

Jackal

In a bid to rescue dozens of POWs from the enemy camp, you have been volunteered to go on this suicide mission with just a jeep and ammunition to help you succeed. If you manage to rescue all of the prisoners then you must go on and destroy the enemy base. You aren't even expected to survive!

A number of enemy vehicles try and halt your progress, including soldiers, tanks and aircraft, but using your bombs and bullets, you can defeat them. Bridges and hills must also be overcome.

A frantic arcade game with excellent graphics and fast gameplay (please note that *Iron Horse* replaces *Jackal* on the CBM 64 compilation).

Ping Pong

The last game, but certainly not the worst of this excellent package. Either play against a friend or the computer in an exhilarating game of table tennis, with a variety of shots to use in order to score points. Also available is a 'smash' shot which allows you to hit the ball really hard whenever your opponent mistimes his shot.

Ping Pong is a fast moving, graphically inspiring sports simulation which should appeal to all table-tennis fans. It also adds one more reason to purchasing this well presented and low priced compilation!

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