

# Point of ORIGIN

**Holiday Week Edition**

Volume II, No. 20

Thursday, July 2, 1992

Austin, TX



## Expo-nential...

*Hundreds of hardware manufacturers try to convince buyers that theirs is the wave of the future.*

## Bytes from the Big Apple

There's no place like New York City in the summer: festive rioters overturning cars outside the John Gotti courthouse, bustling crowds of crazed commuters panicking over how they'll survive the Amtrak shutdown, and anxious throngs wondering if this will *finally* be Susan Lucci's year. It's the kind of stuff Chambers of Commerce dream about.

Beneath the web-like superstructure of the Jacob Javits Convention Center, attendees of PC Expo scurried about. PC Expo is a self-described "end-user show," not quite a consumer show but not quite a trade show either. Basically, it's a bunch of corporate computer buyers looking at the latest in hardware. One of the exhibitors was ATI Technologies, manufacturer of the new VGA/Stereo FX, a combination sound and video card. ATI needed a flashy way to show off this latest marvel, so at their invitation, **Anita Lockamy** and I (Galen Svanas) loaded up the truck and we moved to NYC.

Sound Sultan **Nenad Vugrinec** worked tirelessly to transform the Strike demo into a single-card show by reworking the music files. ATI was duly impressed, as were the assorted buyers and press who stopped by the booth. One of them was Tom Wrona, formerly a writer with Computer Retail Week. He's joined the Science Fiction Network that's been the topic of some

(See "Apple" on back)

(1)

## Dear Point Man

*Dear Point Man:*

*Whatever happened to the plan of allowing employees to purchase non-office copies of ORIGIN games at a discount? I would like to have copies of the earlier games—which I could not afford when they were released.*

According to Money Man **Mark Chandler**, that policy is still intact. You can get a copy of any game (which we still have in stock) by contacting Consumer Queen **Kathy Dorsett**. The cost is 45% of the suggested retail price, which segues beautifully into the next letter. Read on...

*Dear Point Man:*

*Why is the employee price of our games so high? I personally know of one company that charges a flat \$10 per game and another that allows each employee 12 free games per year. What gives?*

Reportedly, that 45% of SRP represents the value of each product to ORIGIN, since games are sold to distributors and retailers at a 55% discount. As you know, the current policy is to give each employee one free copy of each domestic product. From what I hear, the policy concerning additional games is being discussed in those P&P meetings (policy and procedures). I'll keep you posted.

*Dear Point Man:*

*Why is mozzarella cheese so stretchy when heated?*

*Signed,  
Mr. Gatti*

(See "Point" on back)



## Apple...

recent BBS chat lately. According to Tom, the network's slated to go on the air September 24. No word yet as to whether Austin Cablevision will be carrying it, but Tom reports that the launch will cover at least 10 million households. In January, parent company CNN will launch a companion magazine to go along with the network, and Tom would like to start doing some stories on computer gaming to go in it. Nice contact.

Publishing powerhouse Ziff-Davis has launched a new rag called "Corporate Computing." As you'd expect from ZD's deep pockets, it's slick and looks very much like PC Magazine. One of the Assistant Editors is Kevin Bachus, who has written about many ORIGIN products in the past for other publications and will introduce gaming articles into Corporate Computing in future issues.

On the sales side, Anita picked up some good leads, including D&H Distributing, a billion-dollar company in more than 200 headliner stores in the United States and Canada. She also chewed the fat with Good Times Home Video. They're the people who manufacture videos like the Disney movies for home sale. Watch this space for developments in both arenas.

Looking around the show, it was apparent that Stacker is a force to be reckoned with in the future. Their booth was constantly compressed with buyers looking for a way to grab more hard-drive real estate. More than a few people have called our Customer Service to see if Ultima VII and Underworld will run with Stacker and we tell them we don't test with it. Since DOS 5.1 will reportedly include Stacker or a Stacker-like data compression utility, it could mean a whole new QA ballgame.

Only one other entertainment software company, Interplay, had any visibility on the show floor. While they were generating a respectable amount of traffic, it didn't compare to the swarm around a shareware dealer with a hot title: Castle of Dr. Wolfenstein, complete for \$7.

## Where Are They Now?

**Sharon Miller** is now in **Robert Garriott's** old office in ORIGIN West. Her new extension is 109. Robert is in the office next to **Scott Russo**, who still has his own place. **Martin Galway** is now in the luxurious digs of the warehouse. His new # is 1419. **Curtis Wood** has moved out of the warehouse to establish ORIGIN North (the new building). He will be "incommunicado" until the move is finished—probably next week. Inside sources say the next set of boxes is reserved for **Fred Schmidt's** future move to ORIGIN East.

## Who Are They Now?

**Scott Biggs** is new in the Programming Department, taking on the Library/Tools position. Scott's a native Austinite with a brand new degree in computer science from U.T. He'll be working on some of the audio tools to be used in all future games.

**Rodney Foreman** started yesterday (Wednesday) as ORIGIN's first full-time Project Scheduler, working with all producers and projects (talk about a handful!) Rodney's certainly qualified; he was a project manager and trainer at CompuAdd and Dell. In fact, he was the PM on one of Dell's recent notebook computers. Good luck to both guys (especially you, Rodney).

**Insert New Name Here** will be our new Creative Services Assistant. The job's described as "an entry-level position in a fast-paced department." The position's posted on the cork bulletin boards. Interested ORIGIN employees should contact Layout Lizard **Craig Miller**, all others should see the radiant **Norma Vargas** (and ask her about the job).

**Don't forget the big bash at Britannia Manor tomorrow!**

## Point...

Dear Mr. Gatti:

Mozzarella falls into the category of "soft cheeses," meaning it is unripened. Hard cheeses contain less than 35% moisture, semi-soft varieties contain up to 50%. Both are usually high in butter fat, which makes them melt a little gooier and oilier. Mozzarella, on the other hand, is a non-fat cheese, hence the stretch. Cheese is produced around the world from the milk of cows, goats, sheep, reindeer, buffaloes and even horses.

Remember: there are no stupid answers, only stupid questions.

## On the Spike

In case you missed them, here are a few highlights from BBS country this week:

**Brian Martin** will soon join the ranks of the nuptial. While vacationing in Great Britain, he got engaged to his girlfriend, **Pam Wenger**. Congrats!

Artist/Fireman **Bob Cook** took part in a woman's rescue from a burning third-story apartment. Crews carried her down the stairs and resuscitated her with CPR. Commendations to Bob, a real lifesaver. He passes his congrats to the crews of Engine 11, Manpower 2 and Engine 6.

Congrats to the team of *Ultima VII "Die Schwarze Pforte"* According to its recent birth announcement, the bouncing baby game is off to Germany this week.

### PC Research Hits List (April, 1992)

1. **Ultima VII**
2. Secret Weapons (Lucasfilm)
3. Sim City (Maxis)
4. Star Trek (Interplay)
5. **Ultima Underworld**
6. Global Conquest (Medalist)
7. Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition (Accolade)
8. Civilization (MicroProse)
9. Risk (Mastertronic)
10. Falcon 3.0 (Spectrum)