

OINK!

CRL, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

The popular fortnightly comic based on the antics of editorial pigs and a cast of other odd characters has now spawned a computer game, fiendishly entitled *Oink!*

Following in the trotter-prints of the editor Uncle Pigg, you have to prepare the comic's next edition by gathering page panels, thereby filling the porky publication's pages. Panels are obtained by playing three sub-games, with the scores from these contributing to the magazine's eventual completion.

The title 'page' displays the current state of proceedings, enabling the player to distribute newly acquired panels between the nine 'pages'. The panels include humorous snatches of dialogue from the comic's main characters which can be read as and when gained.

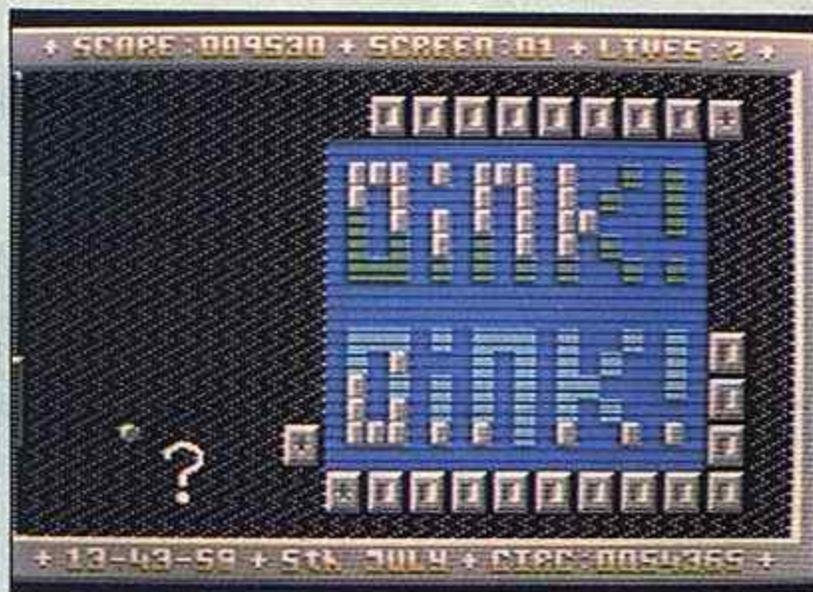
Three sub-games are accessed from the title page, with the program allowing you to leave one game, play another, then re-enter the first with the scoreline and position intact.

Pete's Pimple follows the path of the septic pustule as it bounces around 12 block-filled screens, *Breakout* style. Aliens appear from the side of the screen and are destroyed by using the bat's built-in blaster.

The second sub-game features **Rubbishman**, as you guide the

inept superhero through six hazardous zones, set over 100 screens of tortuous territory. The caped crude-sader negotiates each section by shooting the blocks in his path, avoiding indestructible objects and flying over or under the low-lying hazards. At the end of each zone our hero has to run a gauntlet of flying garbage, avoiding or blasting it as necessary.

Last of the trio sees **Tom Thug** careering round an alien-infested maze in his Thugmobile. Tom has to find and gather bonus blocks –



► Contact between Pete's Pimple and the spinning question mark reveals a hidden bonus

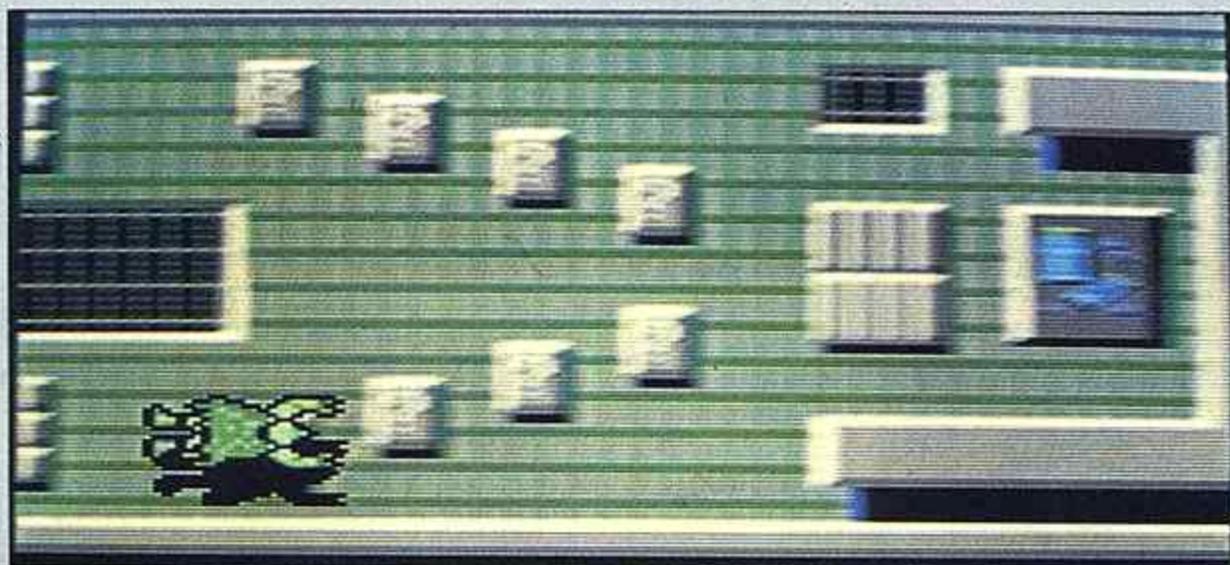
containing extra lives, scores or page panels, and keys which allow access to further maze sections.

The hooligan's path is hindered by zombies and homing mines which constantly pursue the Thug-

mobile, these are momentarily stunned by a shot from Tom's blaster.

Further panels are awarded as the three game's scorelines are increased, with the game ending on completion of the final page before the copy date.

► Rubbishman negotiates the rapidly scrolling corridor of garbage



► Safe within the Thugmobile, Tom beats a destructive path towards the valuable key



OINK-FORD!



If there was an award given to the oddest tie-in of the year, *Oink!* would be one of

1987's front runners. Tie-ins can be judged in one of two ways; either as a game in their own right or purely in relation to the original subject which the licence was derived from. Obviously, the best type would combine a good degree of both, but *Oink!* only really scores in the former. The link with the comic is extremely tenuous – Pete's pimple as a breakout ball and Tom Thug as an armoured zombie-chasing sphere are hardly the most inspired of character tie-ins, but both sub-games play quite well in their own right. The linking section which involves colouring in the pages is quite absorbing, but even here the comic's humour is not translated very well and comes across as quite dull. Not a bad buy, but once again we're presented with a tie-in which doesn't live up to expectations.



Oink! was one of the strangest comics to appear last year, and the game looks like

following the same path in the world of computer games. Just like the real running of a magazine, this requires total concentration over the last few days of production, and because of this the gameplay is particularly compulsive (if a little nerve shattering). The three sub-games are well presented, containing superb colour and some good bas-relief graphics. Oink! was programmed with the magazine always in mind, and this should put it on any Oink reader's shopping list.



This is another poor licensing effort, having almost no relevance to the

eponymous comic - apart from the appearance of certain character's names. When viewed in it's own right, however, Oink! has a lot to boast about. The bas-relief artwork is some of the finest that I've seen, the use of colour is superb and the animation is also pretty good, giving the package a very polished feel. The sub-games play quite well, my personal favourite being 'Rubbishman' which is devious and annoyingly addictive. Not one for fans of the comic, but a worthy purchase nonetheless.

PRESENTATION 92%

Superb in most respects, marred slightly by fiddly control method on Tom Thug.

GRAPHICS 89%

Immaculate bas-relief work, although some of the sprites are a little unimaginative.

SOUND 76%

The array of excellent spot effects make up for the lack of a soundtrack.

HOOKABILITY 75%

The three sub-games are instantly appealing and relatively easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 78%

Meeting the deadline provides a fair challenge, and the games are appealing enough to be picked up and played at any time.

OVERALL 84%

Possibly disappointing for fans of the comic, but still a piggin' good game.