

Joystix Issue 2 from IQ-Dna/POL



Hello everyone and welcome to Joystix #2. It has been a while since the last issue, but thanks to the hundreds of people that downloaded it! Some of you may be hesitant to download this very issue, because the standard last time was below average, but time has passed – and I am determined for this issue to be of much higher quality. All the games that I review are mostly one's that I play on a regular or semi-regular basis on my real C64. That way it is easier for me to make an informed comment on what I like or dislike about a particular game.

Even now, I still come across a C64 game that is great, which is excellent – because I do not have the time to search through gigabytes of D64 files. We are soon approaching the 25th anniversary of the Commodore 64 – a milestone that heralds the echoes of 8 bit brilliance spanning 3 decades and a part of 2 centuries! The scene has been very active lately, something which always impresses me... A special thank you to those in and out of the scene who had some nice words about Joystix #1. A kind word goes much further than an insult...

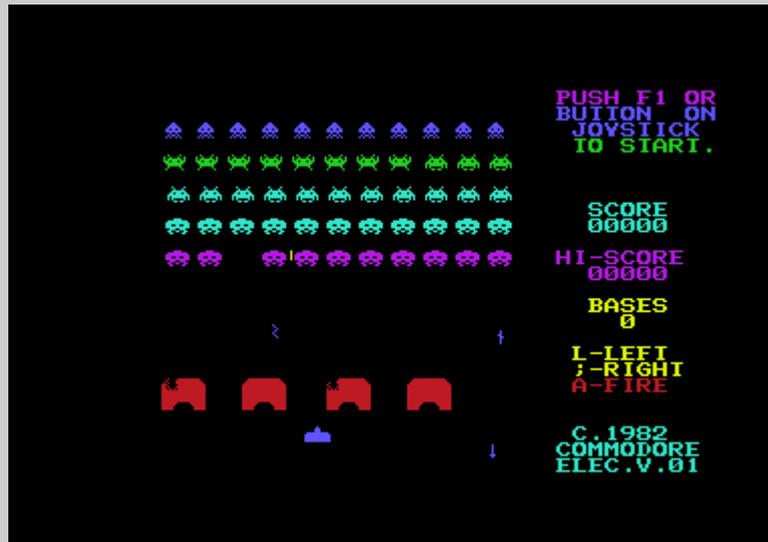
Not much else to say here, but on with the reviews... I hope that 10 reviews is enough. The curtain raises... Act 1:

AVENGER – The Invaders Return...



The game Avenger here is the Space Invaders program released by Commodore in 1982. Yes, all those long years ago, a game like Space Invaders would actually make someone want to buy a whole expensive computer system! Now we have X-Box 360, how times have changed. There are a lot of Space Invaders clones on the Commodore 64, but Avenger would be almost the most authentic and playable of them all. Looking at a game made in 1982 and by Commodore, who let's face it, were not much good with their game releases (International Soccer, any one?!) – this title is an absolute gem.

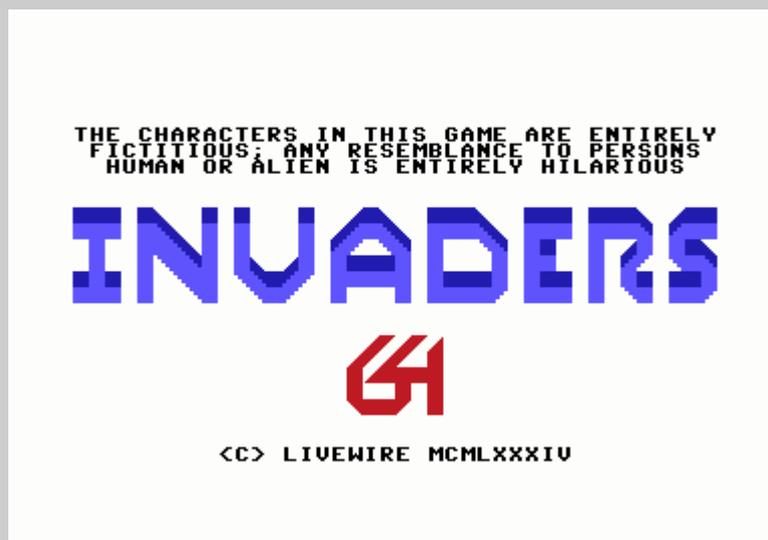
Basically, aliens slowly hover down the screen in decrements, so using your ship – you must clear the screen of all alien sprites – to progress to a slightly faster and/or more difficult screen. Avenger is presented very nicely, it is a very authentic representation of what a Space Invaders game should be. It is very playable, there is time to improve your skills under repetitious game play – but for a first time player, the game will hook you in with the simple thrills of it all. Simple addictiveness is what made such an arcade game a true classic, something to remember, and something to relive whenever you feel like a simple but effective trip down memory lane...



OVERALL: 8.8

COMMENT: Hard to believe that not many better Space Invaders games have been made since this one, but the Gods from Commodore were actually looking down upon us – when they made this nice little one-filer. Now, to Invaders...

INVADERS – Help me Mum!



While we are on the topic of Space Invaders, I cannot let this title slip my mind. It is much different to Avenger in it's graphical presentation, feel, and style – the only similarity is

that it is based on Space Invaders. When I first played this, I almost thought – oh, this is crap. But once you start to play it, you realize that some thought has gone in to making this game a totally enjoyable and addictive variant. While the playing area in Avenger is much more compact, the extra size makes Invaders just as enjoyable – if not more, eye candy.

It is easier than Avenger, as you will notice, but I subscribe to the theory that a game that let's you play longer (less difficulty) is a game that will keep you coming back to play again (as long as it is a good game!). Invaders is a seminal C64 game to play, everything feels so right, and there a number of options to choose from with the function keys. A high score table is included, as well as a humorous introduction screen. Sometimes it seems that everything is a bit off, referring to the timing, but this game works, somehow. Probably my favourite Space Invaders game on the Commodore 64, at the moment...



OVERALL: 8.9

COMMENT: Invaders initially seems to be a little askew in the timing, but it is a very entertaining version of Space Invaders, that almost anyone would enjoy playing. I find this game slightly better than Avenger, because it has a little magic

to keep me coming back to play it again and again. Avenger however would rate higher for originality and authenticity, and is a true runner up for a close second.

FRUITBANK – Save your money...



Well in Australia we called them “Pokies”, short for Poker Machines. Basically, spin the wheel, and line up some symbols to win some money. There are a lot of these machines in Australian Pubs, and there is also a lot of serious gambling problems as a result of this. Anyway, it is always fun to play a fruit machine simulator on a computer, and this version of the popular concept (though far less advanced than what poker machines now look like) is excellent. Ash and Dave are the brains behind this game, and what you get here is an entertaining and playable gambling game – that features absolutely brilliant graphics for a Commodore 64 standard.

The fruit machine is entirely joystick controlled, except for using F1 for putting some money you have earned during the spins, back into the machine. This game is obviously not authentic, because most of the time you win! However, it is a game that is worth playing, if not only for the fact, that the

presentation and graphics are flawless. There are numerous features that are activated on certain lucky spins, most of what you will find in many fruit machine simulations released around this time. This is a far safer bet, playing this, than wasting money down the Pub.

OVERALL: 9.4

COMMENT: Presentable is what this game is, if summed up in one word. It is very playable, and overall – a polished product that is hard to fault. Maybe it should not be so generous in letting you win some coins, and there is some bugs where it is easy to repeat a feature to easily obtain more money, and some other nuances. Anyway, a great game none the less.

MEGA PHOENIX – It's Mega?!



If Eagle Empire is a game you are familiar with, on C64, then this is basically the same concept – but on a much larger scale. The graphical detail of the game is excellent, and the size of everything is large, especially the space craft at the bottom of the screen, used to blast the alien birds. Well, I don't really

know if many game programmers on the C64 take drugs, but an alien species of metallic birds, or whatever the storyline of a game such as this is, is bizarre. I find that the size of this game is just a little too big, and due to the fact there are only about 4 or 5 different screen variations, makes lastability very short. However, it is a nice game, and will provide you with some enjoyment. Eagle Empire, however, I prefer – because it seems to have more old school charm.

Basically, you shoot some birds, then hatched eggs, then one small end boss, one large end boss, and the game repeats with better weaponry. The graphics of this game of course are very nice, and make it more interesting.



OVERALL: 7.9

COMMENT: The whole game comes across as something quite bizarre, but it works well in what it does. If you like Eagle Empire, you will like this game – which is kind of a twisted-update-variation of a theme that goes back to the Atari 2600 days. Kind of a cross between Galaga and Galaxian, which I suppose owe their success to the original Space Invaders arcade game itself.

PARK PATROL – Activision... cool!



Activision are known for their excellent games, especially on the Atari 2600 – but the point is, the Commodore 64 is the home for the best Activision titles on any format. Park Patrol places you in the shoes of a Ranger: who must get in his boat, going left and right along the river, picking up rubbish, etc. He can also go on shore, but watch for the crabs. Bumping into a log with your boat can lose you a life, as by getting attacked by a crab, or overthrown in a wave. I just started playing this recently, and some memories were coming back on how much I enjoyed this game.

There are some in-game options, where you can set how many enemies and obstacles are in your way for each level. Collecting a certain number of items, lets you advance to the next level. Beware the many hazards. This is a unique game, in that it has not been infinitely copied by another similar game concept, which seems to be the fashion for computer games. Originality goes a long way here, and makes this game a very fun and enjoyable rumble in the jungle...



OVERALL: 8.6

COMMENT: A simple and addictive classic from Activision.

***PEOPLE OF
LIBERTY
IN 2006
> CBM #64!***

FIXING PROBLEMS WITH C64!

Well, this is a Project 64 document, I found on one of my disks. It is very handy if you can't figure out which chip to replace, if you have to repair your Commodore 64. I have included it here, because it contains invaluable information.

SYMPTOMS & POSSIBLE SOLUTION

- * **Cursor jumps back to home position.** 6510
- * **Abnormal colours appear in the letters.** PLA
- * **Different characters are displayed and cursor is locked when turned on and off.** 6510, 6567
- * **System does not reset and the 'RESTORE' key does not work.** 6510, PLA, ROM 227
- * **Cursor disappears after the system warms up.** 6526
- * **SYNTAX ERROR displayed after system warms up.** ROM 226
- * **The system resets when it warms up and long programs do not load.** 6510, ROM 226
- * **Keyboard does not operate correctly when the system warms up.** 6526, ROM 226
- * **Cassette motor keeps running.** 6510
- * **The cursor disappears when the cassette is plugged in.** 6510
- * **Cassette runs extremely slow. The program seems to load but will not run.** 6510
- * **Blank screen on power up.** 6510, 6567, PLA, 8701 [, RAM]
- * **No cursor displayed. Intermittent blank screen. Intermittent graphics.** 6510
- * **Powers up with 'PRESS PLAY ON TAPE' message and the display blanks.** 6510
- * **On power up the cursor locks up.** 6510
- * **When 'RETURN' is pressed after a run command, the cursor goes back to home position.** ROM 226
- * **Poke command does not work.** ROM 226
- * **Joystick does not operate correctly.** 6526
- * **No character lettering is displayed on the screen.** 6526, 6567, PLA, ROM 225
- * **Graphic characters instead of letters displayed.** 6526, 6567
- * **Power up message appears but no cursor.** 6526, ROM 226
- * **DEVICE NOT PRESENT ERROR is displayed when disk is used.** 6510, 6526

- * **Disk drives continue to search when trying to load.** 6526
 - * **Incorrect screen colours or no colour at all.** 6567, **PLA**
 - * **Keyboard does not function.** 6526
 - * **Cassette recorder problem.** 6510, 6526
 - * **Flashing colour or blocks.** **PLA**
 - * **Game Cartridge does not function.** **PLA, ROM** 227
 - * **Unit dead (30–40% possibility PLA).** **PLA**
 - * **User port does not function (eg. modem).** 6526
 - * **No sound.** 6581 [, **Bad RF Modulator**]
 - * **Missing notes.** 6581
 - * **Game paddles do not function.** 6526, 6581
 - * **White band scrolls down the screen (60 HZ HUM). Check power supply and VR2 regulator.**
 - * **Wavy screen after the system warms up. Check external power supply and 6567 chip.**
 - * **Black band scrolls through screen when system warms up. Check external power supply and VR2 regulator.**
 - * **Out of memory error on power up. Check Rams** 4146 **U1–U12, U21–U24.** [**May be Hot!**]
 - * **Powers up with graphic display and blinking cursor. Check U14.**
 - * **Powers up with all the characters displayed as blocks. Check U26.**
 - * **Unit completely dead. Possible power supply failure.**
 - * **After a few minutes, characters are all over the screen, then the unit locks up. Possible power supply problem.**
- > **Note–PLA chip is an 82S100, ROM chips are 901226–01 (Basic), 901227–01 (Kernal), 901225–01 (Character)**

COMMODORE 1541/1571 FLOPPY DRIVE

SYMPTOMS & POSSIBLE SOLUTION

- * **Error LED stays on all the time.** 6501, **ROM** 32530201, **ROM** 90122905
- * **Drive motor runs continuously and red LED stays on.** 6522 [, **LED Flashes: UC7**]
- * **Drive motor runs continuously and red LED stays off.** 6502, **ROM** 90122905
- * **After the drive warms up the motor runs continuously.** 6522
- * **Does not load when hot or LED flashed 3 times.** **ROM** 90122905, **LM311**
- * **Searches with LED flashing continuously.** **ROM** 90122905
- * **Searching with no red LED.** **ROM** 3253021
- * **Drive fails to read.** **LM311, 592, 9602**

- * **Fails to format disk.** 6522, ROM 32557201
- * **Stepper Motor does not step forward.** 6502, 6522
- * **Will not save when the drive heats up.** 6502
- * **Lights stay on, motor runs continuously. Is Power cord plugged into wall outlet correctly? Is Power cord plugged into disk drive correctly? Check line fuse and power switch. Check +5/12 volt lines.**
- * **No LED's on power up. Check all RAM and ROM locations.**
- * **Error LED flashes on power up.**
- * **Drive motor runs continuously with no red or green LED'S. Check VR2. Check Power Transformer. [Hint: No Reg. +5V]**
- * **Loads programs with red LED flashing. Check drive speed. Check stepper motor.**
- * **Loading is intermittent. Check ROM's and drive alignment.**
- * **Message of 'FILE NOT FOUND' is displayed. Clean drive head w/alcohol. Check 0 stop adjustment. Check alignment. [Check for sticky slide rails. 1571: Check head lifter release mech.]**
- * **Drive speed will not stabilize. Check DC motor. [Check belt (old drives)]**
- * **Locks-up when loading. Check serial port components. Check 901229-05.**
- * **Fails the performance test and displays a 21 read error. Check test diskette. Check Drive Motor.**
- * **Fails the performance test and displays a 27 read error. Check stop adjust.**
- * **Passes performance test to track 18 then displays 21 read errors. Check read/write head.**
- * **Passes the performance test but will not load certain programs. Check stepper motor.**
- * **Flashing light on and off during loading. An alignment problem or bad diskette.**

HINTS:

- 1) **Over 50% of faulty computers are caused by the external power supply delivering excessive voltages.**
- 2) **Check power supply to see if your unit has a fuse which could be changed.**
- 3) **Check all interconnecting cables.**

NOTE. Magazine continues after credits ok

CREDITS FOR THIS ISSUE OF JOYSTIX #2 November 2006

Text, Idea, Design, Production, Game-testing, Revisions, Coffee and Cigars – IQ-Dna/People of Liberty (Luke Lynde)

PC Tools Used – WinVice 1.19, OpenOffice.Org 2.0, Adobe Acrobat 7.08, Windows XP September 2006 Version.

MARBLE LOGIC – Non Illogical



A 2006 release, this is a new game based on a puzzle concept that I have seen before many times on other platforms. I don't recall seeing it before on C64, not that it matters – as this is the game I am reviewing, and not any others. Anyway, PCH and Factor 6 collaborate to bring a simple but devious puzzle game to the blue screen. You are presented with a screen of marbles which you must align to remove them (3 or more aligned vertically or horizontally). Aligning the marbles means moving the joystick and switching the positions of certain colored marbles to align them against others of the same color.

Once you align and remove certain number of marbles, it is on to the next level. Simple? Well the program is a bit difficult, and I get frustrated at the “No more moves” end of game sequence after only playing for less than a minute. However, perseverance will mean you can get a game that lasts for a while, and it is an enjoyable puzzle based game. The in game musics are of course cool, and the design and graphics of the program is excellent. You may get bored with this game after a while, but after all that seems to be the fate of many puzzle games. Is it a puzzle game or a logic game? I don't know, was

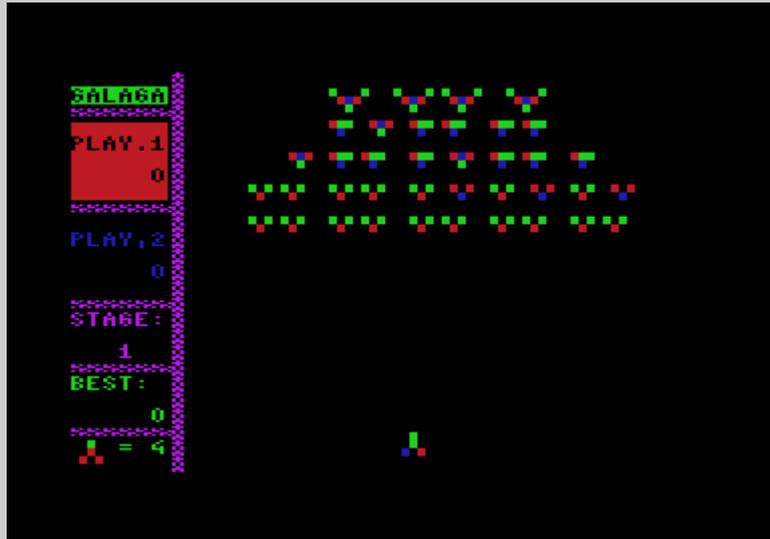
GALAGA (RGB) – Text Destroyers



Well there are two versions of this old game. One without Color, and one with Color. As a game it is very basically made, it must be that everything resembles, or is, text mode.

Anyway, this may put some people off, but the game is so nicely done, I am sure many would enjoy playing it. Galaga is a legendary game, so I am sure you all know what it is about. Screen after screen of enemy aliens hurtle down towards your ship, you must keep them from killing you with enemy fire – by navigating your little craft and killing them all first.

It is easy to get into, as the difficulty is not that hard, but gradually increases. I usually reach up to Level 11. There are bonus levels in between where a perfect score is 40 hits, this though is not that easy to do though. Each screen offers no real variation, like the original Galaga, but there are some sufficient space effects throughout the game. If this was done with some well defined graphics, it would be great – because, the game engine seems adequate. For how the game appears, it is amazing it plays well like it does.



OVERALL: 8.0

COMMENT: The fact that it is a kind of “text destroyers” may put you off, but the game itself is fun to play, if not a bit basic. Something to pass away a little time. There is also a non-Color version you may want to check out as well, though I would recommend this one.

VIDEO POKER – Nice and Sweet



A nice title screen before the game starts, and it is time to play Poker. Video Poker is keyboard controlled, initially allowing you up to 20 coins to start with. You can bet a maximum of 5 coins at a time. Everything is on the one screen, a nice nifty little package for Poker fans. When the cards drop, some quite weird sounds come out of the Sid chip – which I think could have been done differently, even no sound at all would not really have mattered, considering the type of game.

When your hand of cards appear, there are 5 – and you can choose which cards to hold (the rest are then disregarded) before a final outcome of you cards are revealed. This game is an authentic variation of the Poker theme, and probably the best I have come across so far on C64. The graphics are nice, and the game play is realistic. Overall, a well presented and playable game. You don't win all the time, so thumbs up for authenticity!



OVERALL: 8.3

COMMENT: A nice game, resembling Poker in a polished and professional manner. Try it, the graphics are good, the sound effects are a bit awful.

DNA Warrior – Hey, they name it after me... :)



Well, this game is a horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up with a twist. You navigate the alien landscape, which is well defined graphically, in your space craft – and on the way, you come across all varieties of alien debris to avoid and kill. You must collect certain objects, and go through certain portals, to advance through the game. Honestly, I have never completed it, because there must be something I am unaware of, which I have absolutely no idea about! Someone give me the instructions...

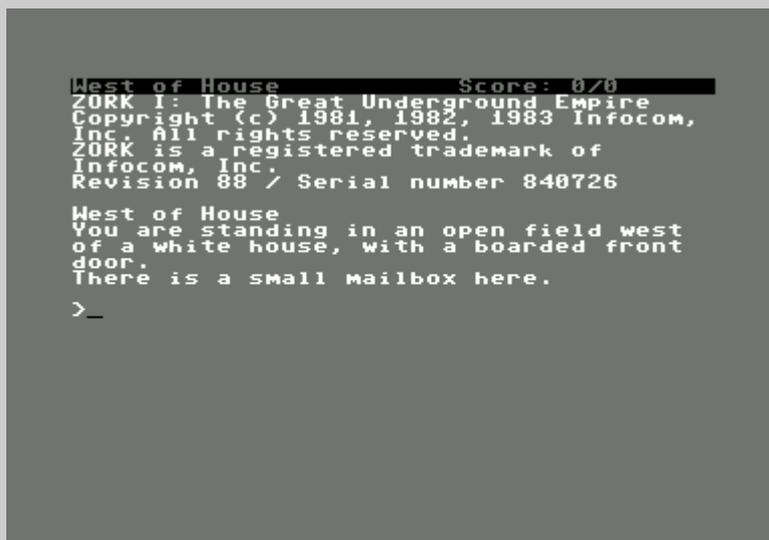
A novel idea is that you can change directions, and instead of the standard scrolling in the right direction, you can go back across heading where you came from, scrolling left. When you do change directions, there will appear more alien debris to consume, as always. As a shoot em up, it is amongst the best in the terms of design, though for the lack of instructions – I have no definite idea what this game fully involves. It is an enjoyable blaster anyway.



OVERALL: 8.5

COMMENT: It's good, the controls are a bit tight, but the graphical detail more than makes up for any deficiencies in this game – and there are not that many.

ZORK 1-3 – Where's the beef?



```
Inside the Barrow          Score: 0/0
ZORK II: The Wizard of Frobozz
Copyright (c) 1981, 1982, 1983 Infocom,
Inc. All rights reserved.
ZORK is a registered trademark of
Infocom, Inc.
Version 48 / Serial number 840904
```

```
Inside the Barrow
You are inside an ancient barrow hidden
deep within a dark forest. The barrow
opens into a narrow tunnel at its
southern end. You can see a faint glow
at the far end.
A strangely familiar brass lantern is
lying on the ground.
A sword of Elvish workmanship is on the
ground.
>_
```

```
Endless Stair             Score: 0/0
As in a dream, you see yourself
tumbling down a great, dark staircase.
All about you are shadowy images of
struggles against fierce opponents and
diabolical traps. These give way to
another round of images: of imposing
stone figures, a cool, clear lake, and,
now, of an old, yet oddly youthful man.
He turns toward you slowly, his long,
silver hair dancing about him in a
fresh breeze. "You have reached the
final test, my friend! You are proved
clever and powerful, but this is not
yet enough! Seek me, when you feel
yourself worthy!" The dream dissolves
around you as his last words echo
through the void...

ZORK III: The Dungeon Master
Copyright 1982 by Infocom, Inc. All
[MORE]
```

Zork 1, 2 and 3 are basically text adventures – that are very large in size, each adventure taking up about a disk side each. I am not a great fan of text adventures, but if someone were to ask me an example of how a great text adventure can be done – I would point them towards the Zork Series. These adventures are very descriptive, and there is a good feeling as you progress further and further in the adventure.

OVERALL: 8.3

COMMENT: Try it, there is a large adventure to partake in, lots of different locations to peruse, a veritable mythic quest to be had here in these seminal text adventure standards.

IN CONCLUSION

Well I surely consider this issue of Joystix to be much better than the first episode. I guess that I was testing the waters for the first issue, but I hope that everyone will like this better. I have eliminated most mistakes that were brought to my attention in regards to Joystix #1. Ten games reviewed, some with similar themes, though I try to mix it up with some variety. In total this issue took up about 4 days of “part-time hours”: typing in text, taking screen shots, adding background colors, saving in word processor, exporting to pdf, viewing in pdf, back to word processing some more, adding personal touches here and there, and on and on it goes!

When I think of the Commodore 64, the fans, and the scene, also the outer communities – it cannot but motivate me to keep continuing on with this Joystix concept. PDF seems to be the in-thing at the moment like MP3, so why not use it? Anyway, it's a good use for the PC, being a slave to the C64 – which it will always be?! Ha! When I sit in front of my real C64, I wonder how times changed, and how it could all be the way it used to be, but that will never happen. Yet it is a computer that has taken 18 years of my life (I am only 32) and I am happy to let it have the rest of the years I have left, for always 8 bit rules! Or as the man said to the dog, 8 bites are enough!

Sound fanatical? No I won't go that far, I am not the type of person that would pay \$300 for a SX model on E-Bay. I keep my retro interests on a realistic budget – and all in all, within reason. There will never be a new C64 with disk drive you can buy at the shops, bad isn't it? Well, technology must move on, and on, and on. Will it ever end? I'm glad that C64 has been a long term interest for me, for so often I change like the weather. Anyway, farewell for now, and C-U-in Joystix #3!