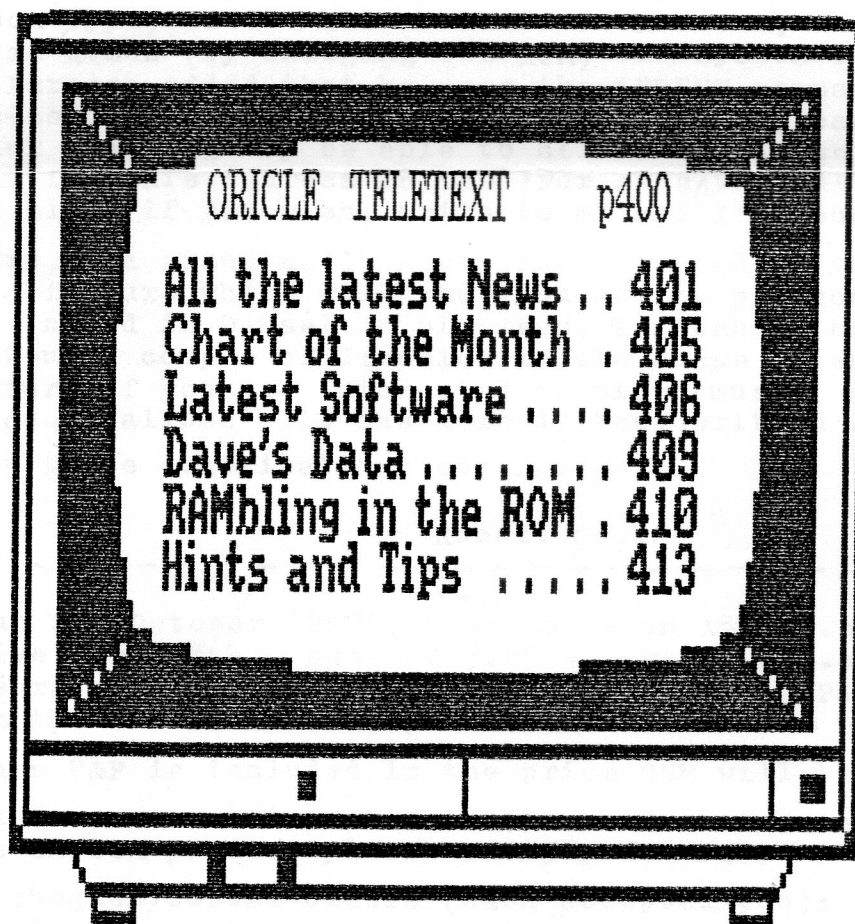




**USER
MONTHLY**

Number 25 September 1989



Issue 25 : September : 1989 : 65p : Edited by R.Cook

This month you have the chance to read the results of the questionnaire which was sent out with OUM issue 23. If anyone who still has a form would still like to send in the questionnaire then please do, it is a very easy way of giving your opinions. The questionnaires are still available should you want one, just ask. The results take-up quiet a large part of this issue, 3 pages to be exact, but they had to be printed sooner or later. Thanks to all who returned their forms.

We actually had about 35 returns, which isn't too bad considering that OUM only has a readership each month of 60 to 70. This isn't because readers disliked OUM (the questionnaires proved that readers are happy) but most Oric owners don't know about OUM ! 99% of readers who send for a sample copy follow-up with a subscription, but when 'Your Oric' magazine closed down they didn't mention OUM, which they'd been promising to do for quite a while, there are thousands (really) of Oric owners who would like to know about OUM, so if you know of one give them a nudge.

I have had a letter from a reader and I have racked my brain trying to figure out which section to put it in, without success - so I'll deal with it here. Mr P. Farnese from Essex has a problem that he hopes one of you lot can answer for him. He has an Oric-1 which is installed in a full-size keyboard complete with it's own power supply and printer (an Epson type) and it all works fine. However, when he changes the Oric-1 to an Atmos (by changing the ROM) the system crashes and hangs-up ! Mr Farnese added that he uses the LPRINT command. He says that he has dis-assembled the ROM and found it correct, can anyone help ??? If you think that you may be able to help then please write to Mr Farnese, you will find his address in the 'For sale/wanted' section this issue. You can also, if you wish, write to me and I'll pass on any help offered.

There is a brand new 7 month feature heading your way, 'Let There Be Music' is a feature which will show you how to produce music at least equal to that heard in Damsel In Distress, Trickshot, etc. Along the way you will pick-up a couple of freebies in the shape of essential charts. See this feature if you are interested in micro-music, at an OUM near you as soon as space allows - it has already been written !

Keep those contributions coming.

Robert Cook

Issue 26 (October 1989) costs 65p + an A5 s.a.e. or £ 1.00 inc. P&P *
 A five month sub. costs £ 3.25 + five A5 s.a.e's or £ 5.00 inc. P&P *
 A years subscription costs just £ 11.00 inc. P&P * , which is discounted from the normal £ 12.00 price.

* When P&P is included in the price OUM will be sent by 1st class postage.

Back issues are 60p each, maximum order of 3 each time - if not ordered with an OUM product please add 30p for P&P.

All cheques/postal orders (cash accepted too): " O.U.M. (R.Cook) "

All orders/contributions for issue 26 should arrive by no later than the 20th September 1989 please.

RESULTS

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Here are the eagerly awaited results of the OUM questionnaire, I found the results just as interesting as you will. The inclusions were blunt, straight to-the-point, and they often went on to the other side of the sheet, you certainly had alot to say ! 'What will our opinions do ?' I hear you cry, your views certainly haven't fallen on deaf ears. Changes and new features have already been made and written, and possibly a few things will drop from OUM to make room for new ideas. The results....

Question 1 was 'where did you hear about OUM ?', the results were:

HGC: 19% A friend: 22% I.O.U.G.: 37% Micro-mart: 11%
New computer Express: 3% Popular Computing Weekly: 4% Micro Show: 4%

Question 2 asked you which Oric micros you owned, and the results were very interesting, only two people owned a Telestrat, 55% of you owned one Atmos, 15% owned 2 Atmos's, 5% owned 3 Atmos's, and there were a couple of scattered variations, inc. 2 Atmos + 1 Oric 1, 4 Oric 1 + 2 Atmos, no Oric, 4 Oric-1 and 5 Atmos, etc. but there was no-one owning just an Oric-1 !

Question 3 asked which other makes of micro you owned, and this question brought in some very rare computers. 20% of you didn't own a different make of micro, the larger percentages included:

CBM 64/128: 9% Spectrum: 11% Amstrad: 6% BBC/Electron: 14%
Atari 8-bit: 11% Atari ST: 6% Sinclair QL: 6%

There were other computers, including the Apple, New Brain, CBM 500, ZX81 (!), and the Enterprise.

Question 4 asked where you bought your software from, there were no great surprises here with HGC generally winning outright, OPELCO, WE. Software, and Capri Marketing also made guest appearances.

Question 5 asked if you visited the OUM stand at the Alternative Micro Show, simple results:

Yes: 29% No: 71%

Question 6 asked which other magazines you bought, the results are far to scattered to print the full results here, but very popular magazines were New Computer Express, Micro Mart, Atari User and Popular Computing Weekly.

Question 7 asked if you could program in BASIC, M/C and Forth, and:

BASIC: 96% yes / 4% no
FORTH: 32% yes / 68% no
MACHINE-CODE: 48% yes / 52% no

Question 8 was 'what is your favourite part of OUM ?' and among the usual and expected results mainly consisting of news and reviews/hints came the surge of fans of the 'RAMbling in the ROM' series, well over 30% of the votes went to the RAM/ROM series - all credit due to Jon Haworth for a wonderful new section !

Question 9 asked if you found anything in OUM boring, almost all of you were very satisfied or very polite because you said 'nothing', but some disliked book reviews, and the software charts.

Question ten asked how many hours - on average - you used the Oric for in one week. The lowest was $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour and the highest was 40 hours, it all worked out at an average of 9.4 hours a week, but the couple of very high results boosted the average alot, most of you said 5 - 10 hours.

Question 11 asked which issue of OUM was the best in your opinion, this was largely missed-out by alot of you (fair enough: it was a bit difficult to answer) but clearly the last few issues were the best, no. 18 and no.21 got the most votes.

Question 12 asked what hardware you owned, there were many varieties of bits and bobs, but 56% of readers own a disk-drive, 80% of you owned a printer (much high than expected !) and 36% owned a joystick.

Question 13 said more or less the same as question 11, it asked which issue of OUM you had bought first. There were a couple buying OUM issue 1 when it first came out, and a few buying 2 - 4, but most joined at 15 +.

Question 14 was simple to answer, has OUM got better, worse, or neither since you first bought it. 0% of you said worse !!! 40% said it was the same and 60% said it was better.

Question 15 asked what types of OUM software you would want to buy, you were mainly interested in sports games, simulations and utilities.

Question 16 asked how many (if any) other people read your copy of OUM. 50% of you guard your copy closely and keep it for yourself, 42% let one other person read it and others included 2 and 4 other people reading it.

Then with question 17 you were asked what you would like to see appear in future issues of OUM, the suggestions were again wide and varied and all have been considered carefully, some asked for a disk-drive section (voila - you've got one now, we've had a new one for the past two issues), listings, machine-code features, and possibly a feature on the Orics special features inc. the FUNCT key, which is possible.

Question 18 asked which other Oric magazines you bought, before they all closed down, the results were on a 'yes/no' basis on five magazines:

Your Oric: 56% yes / 44% no
 I.O.U.G. : 80% yes / 20% no
 Oric Owner: 48% yes / 52% no
 Oric User: 20% yes / 80% no
 Tansoft Gazette: 8% yes / 92% no

Question 19 was the one which was of most use for me when considering how to change and improve OUM, I gave you 11 sections of OUM (eg. news) and asked you to circle 1 to 10 to express your interest in each, 1 was zero interest and 10 was maximum. The following results are averages:

News: 9.0
 Hints & Tips: 8.5
 Daves Data/Reviews: 7.3
 Book reviews: 6.3
 Top ten software charts: 4.2
 Cover sheet: 5.9
 RAMbling in the ROM: 8.5

Listings: 8.1

For sale / wanted : 8.0

Competitions: 5.2

Editorial: 7.4

Eventually, we got to the final question: no. 20 asked you what was your favourite Oric software title. The only surprise in this set of results was that utilities and educational packages easily, but then again, games simply have one use whereas utilities can be used for different purposes and you are much more likely to find use for a utility, say, two years after buying it, than a game. Out of the business/utility programs the most popular programs were Vortex (stunning word-processor), Composer (near perfect music utility), and Author (Tansofts decent WP). The most popular games mentioned were Zorgies Revenge (not surprising), Insect Insanity (the great but hard-to-find Tansoft game) and The Ultra.

Conclusions: I thought that I'd better add a conclusion so that you can see how your results have contributed to improving OUM. For a start, I can see that alot of you know 'machine-code', but quite a few of you added that you knew 'a little', so would a machine-code feature be welcomed? I could add a monthly section teaching readers how to learn the language, but I haven't the knowledge or time to do it so would any reader like to take up the challenge? Drop me a line if you're interested

I also noticed that RAMbling in the ROM and the news section were popular, and that reviews prove to be useful - the recently added sections obviously improve the magazine. Listings were very popular too, I've got loads of them still to print, so expect them whenever space allows. Hints & Tips were also highly rated, particularly the technical advise.

The only feature generally disliked was the 'software charts'. I admit that they can get somewhat repetitive at quiet times, but some readers did rate the charts as 6 or 7 out of 10, so would I be wrong in taking them away from the minority? Rapidly declining free-space means that the charts will most likely disapear, would readers wantsales figures or high-scores instead? Let me know please.

Another thing I noticed was that people wanted to aquire copies of the old magazines, in particular Oric Owner and Tansoft Gazette. It would be alot easier to get hold of these if someone could set up a magazine library, I would be willing to do this myself as a branch of OUM, but I would need to buy-up quite a few myself, or exchange them for free issues of OUM (extensions to your current sub.). I only ever had copies of 'TheOric' (the French classic magazine) but somebody kindly took them off my hands and promptly disapeared. If you have some to sell/swap please contact me soon.

Overall, expect a load-more of new ideas in OUM, games players will probably notice a decline (not too much though) in games-related material, although we've already dropped it by a great percentage. Graphics and music features have already been written for future inclusion, with some nice digitised pictures.

Thank-you once again to all who helped us in this feature, it wouldn't have been possible without suficient replies.

RAMbling in the ROM - 6

Since this issue is prepared in the holiday period, I thought for a change readers might be interested in what I believe is a definitive list of books published on the Oric in this country. The only omission I know of is the Oric-1 manual, which I do not have. Any additions to the list will be gratefully received.

New Address

Please note that my address for correspondence is now:

3 Madingley Road,
Cambridge,
CB3 0EE

Keep the letters rolling in! And now the book list....

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>ISBN</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
Oric Atmos Manual	Pan	1984	0 3302 8482 7	Ian Adamson ✓
The Oric-1 Program Book	Phoenix	1983	0 9465 7601 7	Vince Apps ✓?
40 Educational Games for the Oric Atmos	Granada	1984	0 2461 2557 8	Vince Apps ✓
Learning to use the Oric 1 computer	Gower	1983	0 5660 3495 6	Steven Blake ✓
Getting started on the Oric-1	Ellis Horwood	1983	0 8531 2656 9	D.G.J.Cole ✓
60 programs for the Oric 1	Pan	1983	0 3302 8261 1	Erskine/Walwyn ✓
The Oric Programmer	Granada	1984	0 2461 2157 2	Gee & James ✓
The Atmos Programmer	Granada	1984	0 2461 2535 7	Gee/James/Ewbank ✓
Exploring Adventures on the Oric 48K	Duckworth	1984	0 7156 1822 9	Peter Gerrard ✓
*A Pocket Handbook for the Oric	Duckworth			Peter Gerrard
Dynamic Games for your Oric	Interface	1983	0 9075 6345 7	Clive Gifford ✓
Getting started on your Oric	Futura	1983	0 7088 2447 1	Hartnell & Shaw ✓
Computing with the Oric 1	Newnes	1984	0 4080 1444 X	Ian Hickman ✓
Getting More from your Oric	Sigma	1984	0 9051 0456 0	H.E.Hicks ? B.S. Jones
The Oric Book of Games	Granada	1984	0 2461 2155 6	James, Gee & Ewbank ✓
20 Games for the Oric-1	Micropress	1983	0 7447 0003 5	Wynford James ✓
The Atmos Book of Games	Micropress	1984	0 7447 0018 3	Wynford James ✓
*Oric Machine Code Handbook	Granada		0 2461 2150 5	Paul Kaufman
Games to Play on your Oric-1	Shiva	1983	0 9068 1248 8	C.Kosniowski ✓

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>ISBN</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
The Oric Handbook	Century	1983	0 7126 0175 9	Lupton/Robinson ✓
The Oric Atmos Handbook	Century	1984	0 7126 0542 8	Lupton/Robinson
Understanding Oric	Prentice Hall	1984	0 1347 7332 2	Ian McLean ✓
Using your Oric Atmos Made Easy	Arrow	1984	0 0993 8790 5	Garry Marshall
*Advanced Programming for the Oric	McGraw Hill	1984	0 0708 4745 2	Gerard Mason ✓
The Oric-1 Companion	Linsac	1983	0 9072 1103 8	Bob Maunder ✓
Oric Atmos & Oric 1 Graphics and Machine Code Techniques	McGraw Hill	1984	0 0708 4743 6	Geoff Phillips
30 Hour Basic - Oric edition	Nat. Ext. College	1983	0 8608 2395 4	Clive Prigmore ✓
Meteoric Programming for the Oric-1	Melbourne House	1983	0 8616 1124 1	John Vander Rayden ✓
Games for Your Oric	Virgin	1983	0 9070 8091 X	Peter Shaw ✓
More Games for your Oric	Virgin		0 8636 9034 3	Peter Shaw ✓
The Oric-1 and How to get the Most from it	Granada	1983	0 2461 2130 0	Ian Sinclair ✓
Oric and Atmos Machine Code	Granada	1984	0 2461 2150 5	Ian Sinclair ✓
Getting the Most from your Oric	Penguin	1984	0 1400 7808 8	Bryan Skinner ✓
Machine Code for the Atmos and Oric-1	Shiva	1984	0 9068 1269 0	Bruce Smith ✓
Easy Programming for the Oric-1	Shiva		0 9068 1243 7	Stewart/Jones ✓
Oric Advanced User Guide	Adder	1984	0 9479 2901 0	Leycester Whewell ✓

* These are three books I have only seen referred to, but never in the flesh - does anyone have a copy? If so I'd be grateful for full details.

Tail-ender

Just a little bit of fun - try the following:

```

10 CLS:A=#E43E (V1.0 #E43A) :B=#BEF5
20 X=PEEK(A)
30 IF X=#CD OR X=#A1 THEN X=X-#80
40 IF X=#89 OR X=#8F THEN X=X-#40
50 IF X=#13 THEN X=X+#40
60 POKE B,X
70 A=A-1:B=B+1
80 IF A=#E434 (V1.0 #E430) THEN END
90 GOTO 20

```

MICROSOFT!

You see, they did leave their mark in there somewhere!

Jon Haworth

Things are still a little quiet in the news department, but gradually picking up, first up is the information on the OUM software front.

'Krystal Worlds' is still coming along slowly, the actual writing and designing of the adventure is now just about done, but it will take some time to enter it fully into the Oric, I've already spent two weeks de-bugging many problems. Release date expected: November 3rd 1989

'Cricket' is almost ready for release, all that needs to be done now is to put together the instructions, enter soundtrack and do the amazing digitised loading screen (if everything goes to plan !), release date expected: October 3rd 1989

Next comes news from CDO (Club Disc'Oric), the French disk & tape based magazine. I've seen the English version (of issue 2) and I have to say that it is very good, the translation is very good and it contains some interesting sections, such as graphics, screen-shots, and reviews. OUM software is reviewed in CDO, which is the only place where you will read them because as you know by now, we don't review our own software - just publicise them until you buy it !

CDO, by the way, is at: CDO, 58 Rue des Sculpteurs, 93240 STAINS, France.

The CDO is also releasing new software to join the compilations already released, the new compilation will contain:

3D-Reversi: A HIRES version, superb according to the CDO

Mizar: An arcade game, no details available as yet

Tetris: A version of the game already on the ST, Amstrad, etc. Tetris on the other computers is highly original (it came from Russia!) puzzle game which has rocked the games market, I'll be interested in seeing how the Oric version compares to others

The price is very reasonable, 59F (tape) / 79F (disk)

There is another compilation on the way, 'Top secret' says the CDO so I'll just say that it is for the more serious users.

Continuing with news, Jon Haworth has ventured into Foyles Bookshop and found a wonderful selection of Oric books, at decent prices. Do you want more book reviews ? Foyles are at:

Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Rd, London.

Jon says that they can be found in the computer department (really ?) and they are all on the shelves and that the nearest tube is Tottenham Court Road. Jon thinks that Foyles are happy to supply by post, and that many of the Oric-1 books contain interesting items for Atmos owners. The books are listed below, with the number in brackets being the number of copies:

The Oric-1 Program Book	V.Apps	£ 5.95 (12)
Getting started on the Oric-1	Cole	£ 5.95 (5)
Exploring Adventures on the Oric 48k	Gerrard	£ 6.95 (3)
Dynamic Games for your Oric	Gifford	£ 4.95 (1)
Computing with the Oric-1	Hickman	£ 6.95 (17)
The Oric Book of Games	James	£ 5.95 (2)
20 Games for the Oric-1	James	£ 5.95 (15)
The Atmos Book of Games	James	£ 5.95 (4)
Games to play on your Oric-1	Kosniowski (what ?)	£ 4.95 (7)
Understanding Oric	McLean	£ 7.95 (6)
Using your Oric Atmos made easy	Marshall	£ 3.95 (4)
Games for your Oric	Shaw	£ 2.95 (20)
Easy programming for the Oric-1	Stewart	£ 5.95 (7)

The authors names are there too, more news next month.

This month some mini-reviews, some easily available, some hard to get.

"Nowotnik Puzzle" - Tansoft

David Nowotnik was a guy who wrote many articles/programs for the computer mags in the early days of Oric. He released this commercially via Tansoft. Basically it is a puzzle very much like Rubik's cube, but with some varying levels of difficulty. If you like to spend hours solving puzzles, you'll appreciate this.

Rating: 7 out of 10

"One-key-BASIC"-F.G.C.

Written by Alan Whitaker of HGC this was released through Ken Smallldons FGC, this is a must for programmers. It allows you to re-define 26 keys by using FUNCT and SHIFT keys, how many times have you wished there was a short-cut to typing in commands such as GOSUB, CURMOV, DATA, etc. ?

This is the answer to speed up your input.

Rating: 9 out of 10

Galaxions (Loricieles) - wasn't it Softek ? - ed.

A nice little 'Invaders' game, no way original but one of the better versions. Rating: 7 out of 10

"Psychiatric" - Sprites

A must for platform fans, this little gem utilises the colours + graphics of the Oric in the way only the French can. Plenty of options, you control your psycho through various stages as he is chased by wonderfully animated characters, when you are caught you frazzle just as though you were electricuted !

Rating: 9 out of 10

"French Linkword" and "German Linkword"- Tansoft

Both of these help you to learn the basics of a foreign language, using the 'Grunnenberg' method, by way of word association. In no time at all you'll be putting together sentences, well put together along with a data cassette, audio cassette (for pronunciation) and a booklet/dictionary. Very handy if you're just starting out to learn a new language, also available in Spanish and Italian.

Rating: 9 out of 10

That's all folks, unless you all gave me zero points in the recent OUM survey (not all did - ed). I'll see you next month.

You've probably noticed that this months issue has missed out some sections, such as charts, hints & tips, and 'for sale/wanted' - this is because of the questionnaire results - everything will resume normal service in no.26.

Capri Marketing Ltd are now at:

Capri Marketing Ltd, 9 Dean St, Marlow, Bucks, SL7, 3AA. The new 'phone number is (0628)-891101. They sell loads of cheap (very) software and some peripherals. Thanks to Alan Beales of Suffolk for the address.

Next month: all usual features re-appear, plus loads more - just 65p, don't miss it, music features very near now.

Editor: Robert Cook

Dave's Data: Dave Dick Cover/ads/RAM.ROM: J.Haworth