

GAMES COMPETITION RESULTS.

Thank you for your competition entries. We didn't get the quantity of response that we expected, but if we had I imagine the judging would have taken a week!

Anyway, one evening recently the INMC committee sat down with beer in one hand, sandwiches in the other and keyboard between teeth to judge the games that we had received. The programs had been entered, and stored on cassette during the previous week by our noble secretary. She double checked for errors and so we knew that any programs that didn't run were either incorrect or illegible.

So the judging began with "Burst the Balloon". In this game balloons are released, one at a time, from the bottom of the screen and make an erratic journey upwards, at the mercy of random breezes. The aim of the game is to burst as many balloons as possible by firing your gun, which is situated on the left hand side of the screen. This is an infuriating game as the balloons seem to tease you, pausing just below your line of fire, and then leaping past it just as you shoot. Quite entertaining, although we felt it could be improved by allowing movement of the gun.

We then came to two versions of "Life". Both interesting although unfortunately not necessarily for the correct reasons. We were a little uncertain whether or not to include these, as "Life" is a simulation rather than a game. Anyway, we had them on tape, so we tried them. The first one made clever use of different ASCII characters to give an effective display of 30x48. Various standard patterns were tried, and bred correctly. The speed of the program was impressive too. The second version, however, was not quite as successful, for whatever pattern we loaded seemed to make no difference and just resulted in a varied pattern moving across the screen! We could only assume that a transcription error had occurred somewhere along the line.

We continued with various other games. These included "Darts" which seemed to show promise, but also suffered from some bug; "Submarines" which allowed you to drop depth charges from your ship in a race against the clock to hit 9 submarines; and "Walled chase" a game for two players, with one chasing the other, but with invisible walls in the way.

"Lollypop lady trainer" appeared in the competition, and as many of you will have discovered, this was our "Mystery Program" in the last newsletter. From the same competitor we had "Road Race." This is a very entertaining game where you have to steer along a narrowing road in a bid to get home. There is a choice of three speeds, and the game ends with a comment related to the amount of damage that you did to your car. A must for learner drivers!

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