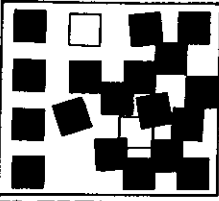
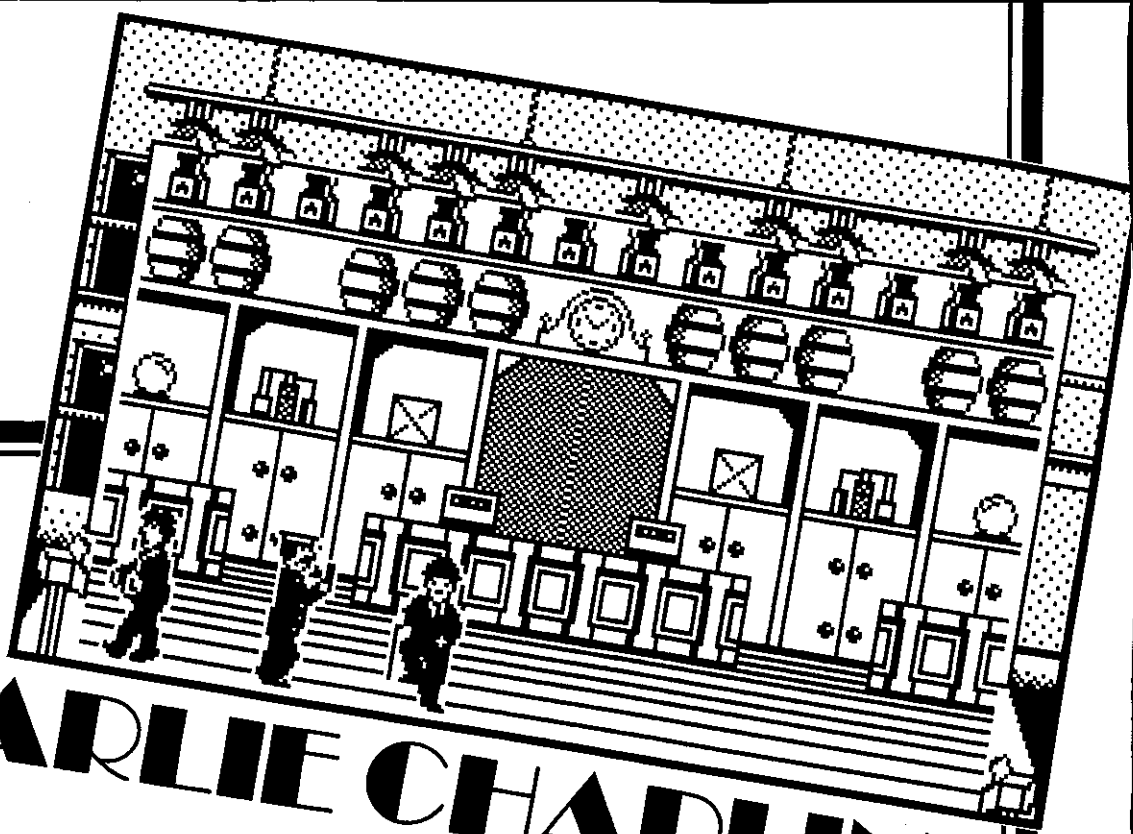


STRATEGY SIMULATION



REVIEW



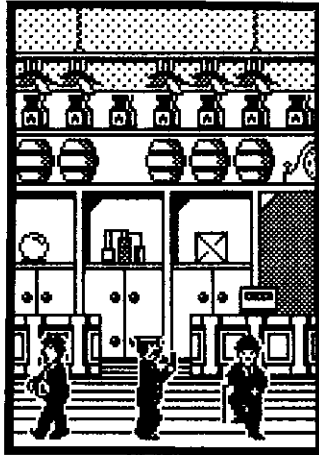
CHARLIE CHAPLIN

As part of the recent trend for digging up dead comedians and turning them into computer games (*Laurel & Hardy*, *3 Stooges*...), US Gold has made a brave attempt to digitise the little tramp aka **Charlie Chaplin**. It could have been brilliant, it could have been a disaster, it turned out to be both.

All you have to do is make a funny movie. Simple, huh? Your first task is to choose a script. Using the joystick, you step through a menu of titles, each one of which is accompanied by a brief description of the number of scenes, actors and props, plus the cost of the shoot. Obviously, you can only choose a script which is within your budget, and the aim is to make enough money from each film to finance a bigger and better one.

Once you've selected a script, choose a scene to shoot and you'll move to the main action.

The beautifully-detailed displays of the film sets are in glorious black and white, so one thing the game doesn't suffer from is attribute clash. I suppose they could also have justified dropping the sound



effects (silent movie, see?) but there is the odd bleep and bloop.

Now, the big problem with the game is that all you are told to do in the instructions is "move Charlie around the set doing whacky stunts." The little waddling figure of Charlie and the other actors are nicely designed and animated, but could I make them do anything funny? No, kiddies, I couldn't. Wiggle the joystick and press the fire button, and if you're lucky someone will fall over or get a smack on the nose, but this is hardly the stuff of which comedy classics are made.

After a minute of this aimless wagging you have the choice of viewing the scene at normal or double speed, and if it's not up to scratch, reshooting it (if your budget permits).

The average film includes four scenes, set in a pretty limited selection of scenes including a garden, a hotel and a shop. Once you're happy with your production, you move to

the Screen routine, where you have to sit through the whole bloody thing again and wait for the audience reaction in the form of newspaper headlines - in my case, something along the lines of "Chaplin Stinker Does Zippo Boxoffice".

The funnier the film, the more money you will find displayed on your accounts sheet at the end of the round. I guess that

the aim of the game is to make all the films available, then die.

The game isn't so bad that Charlie Chaplin will be spinning in his grave; in fact, the basic idea is brilliant and the graphics are extremely cute. The trouble is that the gameplay is almost non-existent, and what there is, is unbelievably repetitive and monotonous. Pity, really.



MODERN TIMES

COST OF SHOOTING \$9865
COST OF SCRIPT \$700
NUMBER OF SCENES 5

FAXBOX

Graphically engaging but ultimately disappointing movie spoof

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
Label: US Gold
Author: Bubbles Inc
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: *Chris Jenkins*

★★★★★ 5

