

CRYSTAL CASTLES



1984 Thundervision Programmed by ?

Most text of the present article comes from the feature on American imports by Julian Rignall, as published in the fourth issue of the British C64 magazine ZZAP!64 (August 1985).

Crystal Castles appeared in British arcades last Easter and gathered quite a cult following. It's rather like a 3D Pacman with lots of extra features. You take the role of Bentley Bear, who has to run round the many weird constructions of Berthilda the Witch and collect the gems littering the floor by running over them.

The constructions themselves fill a whole screen and are true 3D with ramps and lifts connecting the different levels. You can run about everywhere and some screens contain hidden passages, walls you can run round and doorways which lead to hidden stairways which sometimes provide a quick route to a higher floor of the building.

Wandering around these buildings are Berthilda's evil minions. On just about every screen appear the Gem Gobblers who go round eating the gems. You can destroy these by running through them when they're in the process of digesting a gem. There are also spheroids and trees which track you at extremely high speeds and follow your every move. Acting as a timer are the bees. If you take too long on a screen, they will form a swarm, drop from above and chase you.

The longer you take the more frequent their visits and the faster and more vicious they become. You can give yourself more time to finish the screen by collecting the honey pot, which will keep them away. There is also a magic hat which you can wear, which makes you invincible for a few seconds and allows you to run through everything.

In this absolutely faultless conversion there are all the features of the arcade game. The screens and graphics are identical to its big brother and if you are any good at the arcade game, then you'll be able to use all your tactics and patterns down to the last manoeuvre. All three secret warps are included and the game allows you to pick up from the level on which you just died.

I'm not sure when this will be released in Britain, but this is simply THE finest arcade conversion for the 64 yet.

