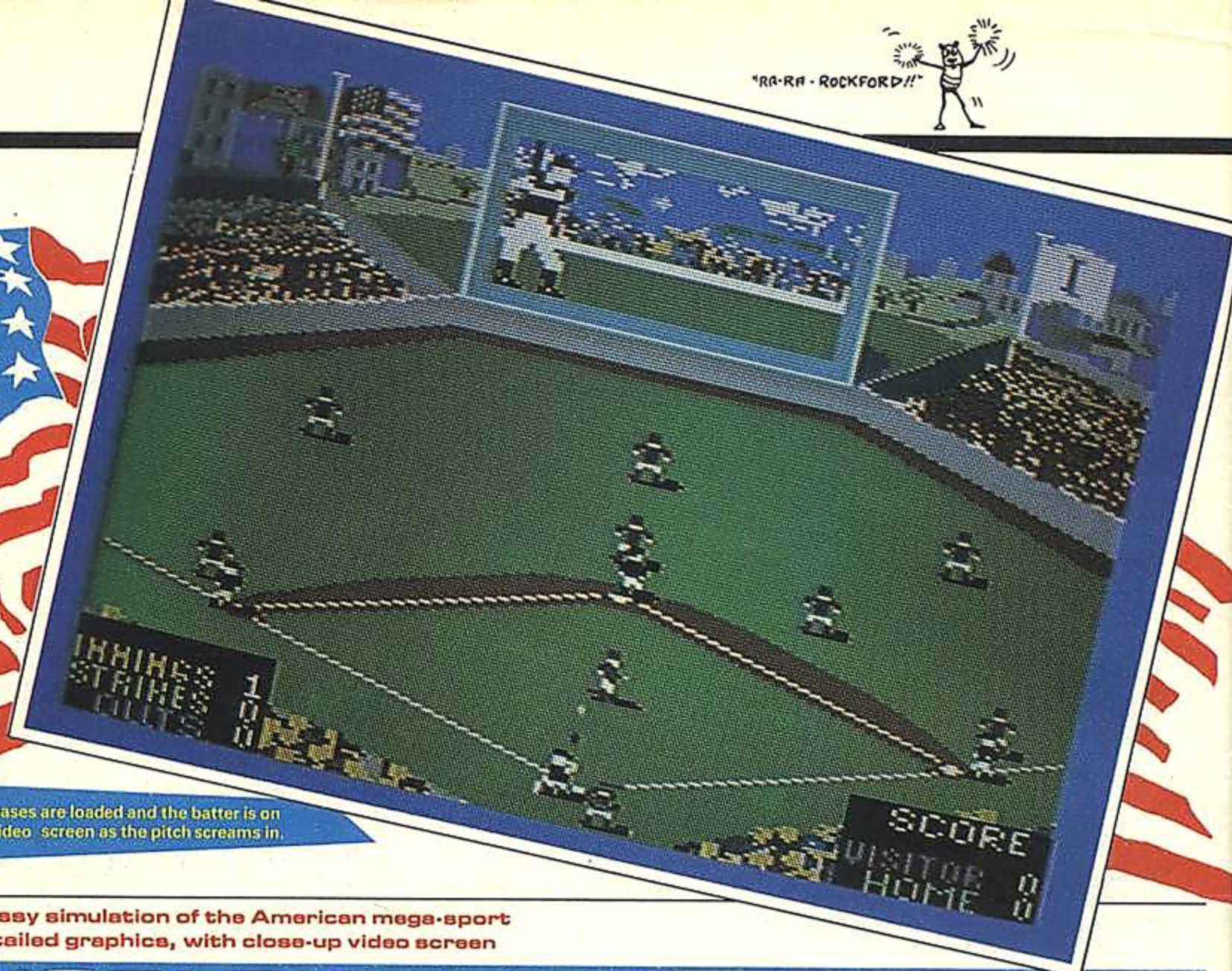


"RA-RA - ROCKFORD!!"



The bases are loaded and the batter is on the video screen as the pitch screams in.

- Classy simulation of the American mega-sport
- Detailed graphics, with close-up video screen

WORLD SERIES BASEBALL

Imagine, £7.95 cash, joystick only.



It's the ninth innings, two men out and the bases loaded, the visitors have a 4-3 lead. You, the visiting pitcher, stride to the mound, spit out your gum and survey the field. Then wind up that infamous sidewinder pitch and let go. CRACK! The ball spins off the bat and high into the air where a grateful first baseman takes the catch and ensures victory over the computer.

I'm not exactly well clued up in the field of baseball and have never thrilled to the delights experienced by your average American. But a couple of plays of this soon changed my whole outlook. Love it! The excellent attention to detail is really good and adds immensely to the game (Not that a lot needs adding).



This tale of thrills and excitement can come true every time you play this baseball simulation. You can take on another player or the ace computer side in a struggle of skill and bluff. The battle is over nine innings of the American game, which is like rounders, except more sophisticated.

There are two sections, pitching and batting, and each needs skillful timing and cunning tactics. The action takes place on a field of which you have a view from above and behind home plate, where the batter stands. There is also a close-up video screen in the stadium which allows you to see the pitching and batting in detail.

When pitching you have sev-

The Imagine name returns to the market with a sports simulation. Will they be lucky second time around? Well, judging by this game's standard they should do a lot better than before. Detailed graphics, jingles and animation all add to the razzmatazz of the game giving it true realism. Control is tricky and the computer will hammer you at first, but with perseverance, revenge will be sweet. An excellent release.



eral types of ball all of which are thrown using the joystick. These range from fast and high to slow and slow. Some of the pitching options are illegal, but still very useful when playing a human opponent (though not the computer!), as you may trick him into swinging at an unplayable ball.

Your initial aim is to 'strike out' your opponent by getting him to miss three balls. If he does hit the ball your control switches to the fielder closest to it. You can either try to catch it, if it is in the air, or field it and try to get the runner out at a base. You can throw between bases as well and even get more than one man out in a single play. Once you've got three men out the sides change roles and you take over the batting.

When batting you see the ball fairly late and have to decide quickly what sort it is and how to hit it. You have fast, normal and slow batting strokes. Pick the right one and time it well and you could see the ball sail for a home run. A little triumphant tune is played as your man steams around the bases celebrating.

Your men run automatically

Stealing bases

If your human opponent is inattentive you may be able to steal a base from him by sneaking your man along before he can get the ball to the base. Don't try it against the computer though since it fields far too quickly for you to catch it out.

The pitcher also has a steal option which allows him to try and catch out a runner at a base by throwing it there instead of pitching. This is particularly effective against players who push continually on the joystick and can absent-mindedly run out of their ground. Once again, though, you can't catch the computer out since it only steals when the ball is actually in play after a pitch.

ZZAP! TEST

PRESENTATION	ORIGINALITY
71% Clear instructions and cute cheerleaders. No congrats on victory.	74% One of first baseball simulators, novel large video screen.
GRAPHICS	HOOKABILITY
73% Small, but nicely detailed characters and a great close-up video screen.	88% Easily mastered controls and gripping action.
SOUND	LASTABILITY
59% Thwack! Roar of crowd and home run victory tune.	86% Tough computer player plus two player thrills.
VALUE FOR MONEY	
87% The better buy of this month's two baseball simulations.	

when the ball is hit, so well placed blows are necessary to avoid getting caught or run out. If you can get the bases 'loaded'

(a man on each base) and hit a 'homer' you'll get four runs and a massive psychological boost over your opponent.

There's nothing quite so much fun as a last gasp win against a frantic opponent, particularly if it's the computer. The graphics are passable and so is the sound but the real key is the two player game and the atmosphere and competitive spirit that goes with it. It's frustrating at first against the computer so I advise you to start against a beginner friend and move up to the expert later.



The computer plays a very canny game, fielding brilliantly and hitting nearly everything you throw at it. The only way to beat it is to close it down as much as possible when it is batting and hope to score some home runs off its pitching. This is easier said than done though and victory over the computer will be harder than against a human.

It is a pity that there are no wild celebrations at the end of a victorious game. However after the first and sixth innings there are sets of cheerleaders who come out and leap about to support their team. These are accompanied by a tune and other ditties play at the start, on the title screen and for home runs.

BW

"HE-ELP!"

