Oric-1

This low-priced British computer has impressive colour graphics and a wide variety of sound effects

The Oric-1, a small British-made computer, competes with the Sinclair Spectrum in both cost and capabilities. It comes in a neat grey plastic housing with the keyboard tilted at a comfortable angle for typing. The keyboard has individual moving keys and touch-typing is just possible.

Two versions are available; the more expensive offering 48 Kbytes, enough to store substantial programs.

The Oric has the usual connections for television, cassette and other units. It can be linked to a printer and has another socket for plugging in extra memory, program cartridges and a modem.

The modem is a particularly exciting add-on. It allows the Oric to communicate with other computers by telephone. The modem can give the Oric access to the Prestel computer, enabling the user to send and receive 'electronic mail'.

The Oric has BASIC built in and it is also possible to work with other languages. The 48K version is supplied with FORTH as well as BASIC.

Colour graphics and sound can be generated using the Oric's resident BASIC. Eight colours can be displayed and characters of any shape may be created and stored. PAPER and INK commands allow one to change the colour of any of these 'defined' characters and the colour of the background against which they are set.

The Oric's sound is as impressive as its graphics. Special commands permit a wide variety of sounds and music to be produced. Musical notes and chords can extend over six octaves.

The Oric is an inexpensive micro of great versatility. Its potential for expansion makes it particularly attractive, but its ability to communicate via the telephone adds a special excitement.

Keyboard
The Oric's keyboard has 57 moving keys. The letter and numeral keys are arranged in the standard QWERTY layout. The ESCAPE and CONTROL keys are on the left, and DELETE and RETURN on the right. The bottom row of the keyboard contains the space bar and cursor control keys. Because the keys are arranged in the same way as on a typewriter, and move individually, it is possible with experience to type at considerable speed on this keyboard

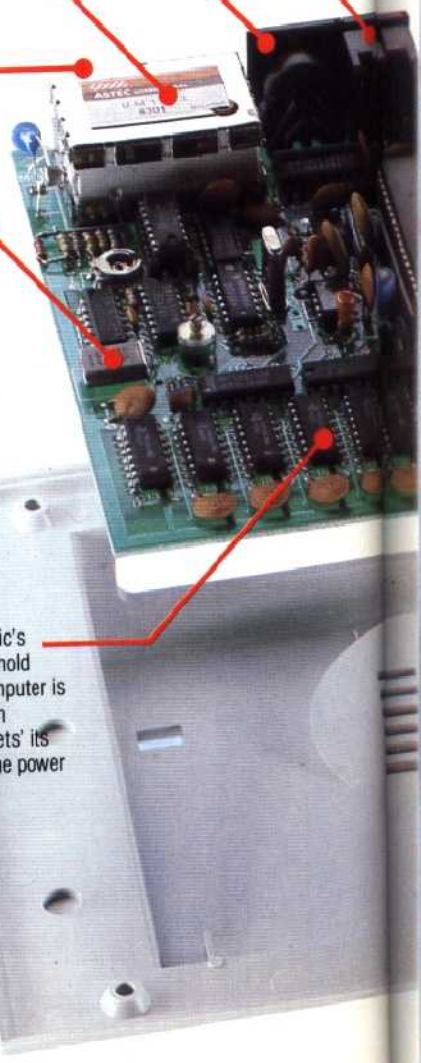
RGB Socket
This allows the Oric to be connected to colour monitors using separate red, green and blue (RGB) signals for better quality screen displays

RF Modulator
The video signal produced by the computer cannot be fed directly into a television aerial socket. This circuit converts the signal into a form suitable for an ordinary television

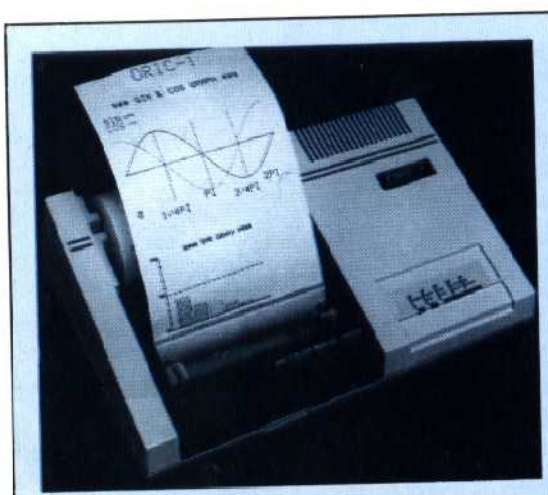
Television Socket
The Oric is connected to a television set through this socket

Clock
The electronic clock beats one million times a second to provide the timing and synchronising of all the operations carried out by the Oric

Cassette Socket
The cassette recorder is connected to the computer through this socket



RAM
These chips are the Oric's main memory, used to hold software while the computer is running. RAM (Random Access Memory) 'forgets' its contents as soon as the power is switched off



The Printer
The colour printer is styled to match the appearance of the Oric-1. It can print text and plot graphics in the four colours of red, green, black and blue.

The printer uses four small ball-point pens, with one for each colour, and they produce its plots by writing on an 11cm wide roll of paper. When writing text, it can produce characters in any of 15 different sizes and at four different angles.

With this degree of flexibility the printer can do far more than simply produce permanent copies of program listings