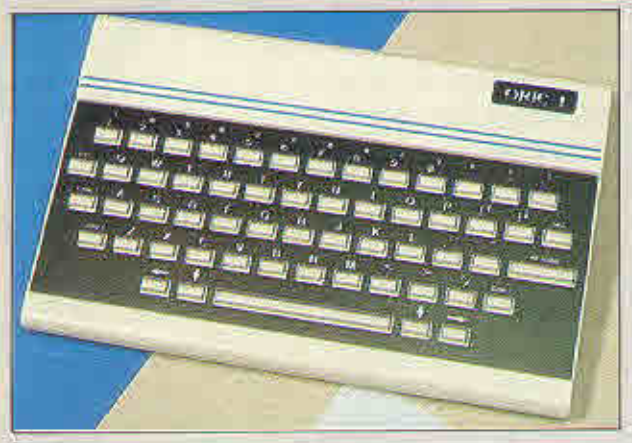

Oric-1
The Atmos is an updated version of the Oric-1. It uses the same circuit board but has a different ROM chip that holds an improved version of BASIC. These changes are sufficient to make the Atmos a far better machine. Owners of the Oric-1 can pay £60 to upgrade to the Atmos standard. However, much of the Oric's software will not work on the Atmos, so users may find themselves unable to use their favourite programs

the various sound commands. The Oric also introduced spurious control codes when evaluating the STR$ function and gave incorrect results when LEN or VAL were used. The new ROM overcomes these difficulties. An unfortunate side effect of these improvements is the fact that Oric-1 machine code programs are unlikely to work on the Atmos, as several ROM routines have been relocated in memory.

The BASIC is an extended version of the Microsoft dialect, developed by Tansoft from the original Tangerine BASIC. It supports the full IF...THEN...ELSE structure (Oric-1 BASIC had a bug in the ELSE segment of this command) and also provides the REPEAT...UNTIL loop instruction. An unusual feature is the provision of POP and PULL commands, which are used to jump out of GOSUB and REPEAT...UNTIL routines without producing an error report. Oric-1 BASIC would not allow the user to POKE an address with a hexadecimal value; this too has been corrected in the new ROM.

On early versions of the Atmos there were some problems with the new ROM. When designing the new chip, Oric included an updated error-checking routine for LOADing cassette tapes. This routine was so effective that users quickly discovered that the software found errors in programs on all but a very few cassette machines. However, Oric's redesigned ROM allows programs to LOAD satisfactorily.

To coincide with the new Atmos, Oric has redesigned its printer/plotter, which is now finished in the same red and black livery as the computer. Four small ballpoint pens (black, red, green and blue are the colours supplied with the unit) are set in a revolving plotting head; any colour may be selected under software control. The printer/plotter has a slow text speed of 12 characters per second but prints on plain paper.

The long-awaited microdisk drive has also been redesigned in the new Atmos colours. Oric has opted for the Hitachi 3" disks; these are encased in a rigid plastic shell. The Atmos can use up to four drives — a single master unit with an on-board disk