



**Pass The Buck**

The Buck Rogers game comes on tape for the Adam's own tape drive and makes full use of the drive. The game is split into several stages that are too large to fit into memory at once, so instead the Adam loads one stage from tape and then while that is playing it loads the next, and so on. At the end of each game the tape automatically re-winds, and if a high score has been achieved it is recorded onto the tape. Thus, the high score table shows the best scores ever managed, not just the best since the computer was turned on

256 Kbytes per tape). It is much faster than ordinary cassette tape. It is also under full computer control, so the tape can be rewound by the computer to find a particular file. Tapes (or 'data packs' in Coleco-speak) are supplied ready-formatted, so ordinary audio cassettes may not be used. New tapes cost up to £5. When the Adam is switched on, the program on any tape present in the drive is loaded — this may be a game pack, the SmartBASIC cassette or a program of the user's own. If the drive is empty, the system defaults to 'electronic typewriter' mode.

The daisy wheel printer uses either fanfold or single-sheet paper, and gives a print quality that is comparable to an electric typewriter, but it is extremely slow and noisy.

Despite the 80 Kbytes of RAM, the cassette-based SmartBASIC leaves only 28 Kbytes for the user. SmartBASIC itself is similar to Apple's version of BASIC, and so is easy to use, with good graphics and a choice of 16 colours. The BASIC manual, however, is truly abysmal, written in a condescending tone and full of twee expressions, such as 'boo-boo' for 'error'. But the similarities between SmartBASIC and Apple BASIC means that users have a large number of books and other material to refer to.

At first sight the Adam system appears to offer excellent value for money. The built-in software is ideal for writing letters, reports or short articles, and the tape system is simplicity itself. An added bonus is the large amount of available high-quality games software — not only may ColecoVision cartridges be used on the Adam, but the purchase of an adaptor will make a huge range of games from Activision and Atari available. More serious software is being sold on tape, although the number of packages is rather limited. They

**Detached Keyboard**

Only two home micros are sold with detached keyboards even though these are considered essential for business computers. The Adam keyboard includes function keys and keys dedicated to the word processing software that comes with the micro

**Joystick Handle**

Although the arm of the joystick handle is much shorter than most joysticks, it still gives re

**Joystick Storage**

Two joysticks can be stored here when they are not being used. The joysticks plug into sockets at the side of this area

**ColecoVision Video Games System**

This unit is sold by itself as a dedicated games computer, but can be expanded into a home computer by adding the other units

**Equipment Tray**

This fits onto the bottom of the two units to hold them firmly together

**Printer Connector**

The printer included with the Adam plugs into this socket. Power is supplied to the Adam through this, so the printer must always be connected, even if it is not being used

**Digital Tape Drive**

This may look like an ordinary cassette player, but it is a high-speed tape unit under full computer control

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