

## Mightier than the Sword

Damian Walker continues to programming tutorial on pen-based input.

Last month you started to enter the code for the game. This month I'll give you the procedures for drawing the background graphics of the game, and the final score.

```
PROC DrawGraphics:
  gPATT -1,gWIDTH,gHEIGHT,3
  windowx%=(gWIDTH-320)/2
  windowy%=(gHEIGHT-160)/2
  window%=gCREATE
  ↵(windowx%,windowy%,320,160,1,1)
  SETPATH CMD$(1)
  mole%=gLOADBIT("mole.mbm")
  mask%=gLOADBIT("mask.mbm")
  gUSE window%
  gCLS
  gAT 0,79
  gCOLOR $AA,$AA,$AA
  gFILL 320,81,0
  gCOLOR 0,0,0
  gLINEBY 320,0
ENDP

PROC MoleUp%:(time%)
  PAUSE 150
ENDP

PROC DrawScore:(hits%)
  LOCAL text$(20),ev&(16)
  text$="Score: "+NUM$(hits%,5)
  gAT 160-gTWIDTH(text$)/2,80
  gPRINTB text$,gTWIDTH(text$)
  PAUSE 100
ENDP
```

The *DrawGraphics* routine pulls together some concepts discussed in the earlier tutorials *Animating OPL* and *The Small Screen*. As I said in the first article to this tutorial, I've adopted a simple approach to fitting the game on any EPOC32 screen: the same 320×160 window will be centred on the screen no matter what machine you have. This is done as follows.

The first line of *DrawGraphics* fills the whole screen with a cross-hatch pattern. The next two calculate where a centred window should appear, and the third line puts it there. The *window%*, *windowx%* and *windowy%* variables were declared as *GLOBAL* in the main *MoleHunt* procedure last month and will be used elsewhere in the program.

The next three lines load the mole and mask graphics. The path for loaded files is set to the same directory as the program by the *SETPATH* statement. The following two statements simply load the MBM files you created in the first issue of the tutorial. This game uses ordinary bitmaps rather than sprites, because the mole isn't animated and doesn't move. For this kind of static object a bitmap is much simpler to use than a sprite.

The rest of the *DrawGraphics* procedure uses lines and filled rectangles to create a simple lawn with horizon. Graphics primitives like lines and rectangles haven't been covered in *EPOC Entertainer* before, but are fully explained in the *Graphics* chapter of the OPL manual.

The *MoleUp%* procedure is here just a stub, which pauses for one and a half seconds. This is called three times, automatically returning zero each time (i.e. a miss). This gives you 4½ seconds to admire your lovely clean lawn. In future issues this peace will be shattered, as we'll be replacing this procedure with a longer one that brings on the moles.

The *DrawScore%* procedure is run at the end of the game. It displays a box containing your score, which remains on the screen for five seconds. This is the last procedure called by *MoleHunt*, so the game will exit after this.

You can translate and run this program as it stands. In the next issue it'll be time to make the moles appear on the lawn.

EPOC

# ENTERTAINER

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In this issue: *Bataille Navale*

This is the first issue in some time to contain three reviews. *Egg Hunt* game is a very simple guessing game which is well served with a short review. *Encore* is a very good looking game which well deserves a review, trying as it does to bring the famous *DOOM* experience to EPOC32. And *Bataille Navale* is one of my favourite games on the platform, mixing strategy with a bit of simple fun. No spectacular ratings this month but interesting all the same.

The *Mole Hunt* project moves on a little further. Now the graphics are drawn, giving you a perfect lawn before the moles are let loose upon it.

If you have any comments on this issue then please let me know. I am hoping that August's issue will be out at the start of the month, putting us back on our proper timetable again. But we'll see!

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## Rotten Eggs

Damian Walker looks briefly at Michael Sheldon's simple Egg Hunt game for colour EPOC machines.

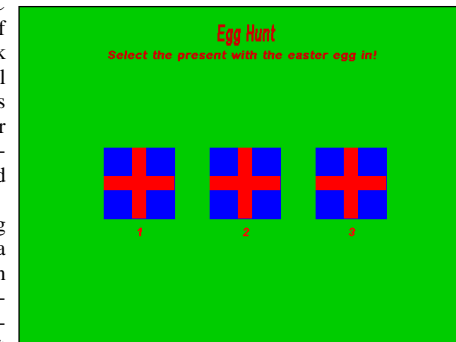
For this edition of *EPOC Entertainer* the laws of chance bade me take a look at *Egg Hunt*, by Michael Sheldon. Michael has moved on to projects for other platforms, but still offers his games for download from his web site.

Michael describes *Egg Hunt* as a "256-colour pea and cup style game with an Easter theme", which certainly sums it up. The object is to guess which gift

box contains the easter egg, with the boxes being shuffled each time you get it wrong. It's written for the Series 7 and netBook's large colour screen.

The program is a bit fiddly to install. It's not supplied as a SIS installation file but needs to be installed into a specific folder. You need to unpack the game into a folder called "egg" in the root of any drive.

*Egg Hunt* is certainly colourful, though it looks more like a 16-colour game than a 256-colour game. It makes use of the Easter egg graphic from the Series 7's ROM, though an enlarged copy of this is included



in the game files, so a netBook user without Sketch installed will not have a problem.

Unfortunately the game appears to have a killer bug, at least on my Series 7. The egg was hidden in box 1 every single time I played! I gave the game about a dozen attempts, just to make sure this wasn't the effect of coincidence on random chance. Knowing where

the egg is going to be certainly defeats the object of the game.

For that reason I really can't recommend you download the game, even though it is free.

Author	Michael Sheldon
URL	<a href="http://www.mikeasoft.com">www.mikeasoft.com</a>
Licence	Freeware
Systems	Series 7, netBook
Rating	★

## We're All Doomed!

Palmtop's attempt at a Doom clone, *Encore*, is reviewed by Damian Walker

Few computer gamers are unacquainted with one of the most famous game releases of the early 1990s: *Doom*. While not quite the first of the genre of first-person shooters, *Doom* was probably the game that made the genre as popular as it has been in the past decade and a half.

Its predecessor *Wolfenstein* wowed PC-using audiences with its texture-mapped walls, though the game felt a little flat with its levels being, well, level. *Doom* went a bit further into the world of 3D by adding steps and lifts creating, with some restrictions, the illusion of a fully 3-dimensional world. It also added a lot of atmosphere with its improved sound and its futuristic theme.

In the heyday of EPOC32, Palmtop BV made a valiant effort to bring this game to the platform. They came close to succeeding, as we shall see. Their effort, *Encore*, runs on everything from the Osaris to the netBook, and is free to download. *Encore* has, however, some limitations, the main one being that items cannot be collected. It was reported at the time that Palmtop had to give up on putting this functionality into the game, but the project was still so impressive that they added some workarounds and released *Encore* for free in that state. Another port, *EDoom*, is a fuller implementation but it works only on colour machines.

*Encore*, like *Egghunt* reviewed this month, is not straightforward to install as it does not come as a SIS file. The distribution ZIP contains three other ZIP files: *Encore* the game, a demonstration WAD file, and a utility to create WADs. WADs are the game files that contain the map, monsters and textures for a particular adventure.

The demonstration WAD is a single level from the original *Doom* adventure. *Encore* and the demonstration WAD need extracting to the `\System\Apps\Encore` folder on a drive of your choice. *Encore* can then be run from the Extras bar.

What Palmtop have achieved on EPOC32 is little short of amazing. Though aspects of the game are missing, the stunning graphics of *Doom* are reproduced in 16 stunning grey scales. The resolution of the Osaris is no impediment, as the original *Doom* ran at same resolution.

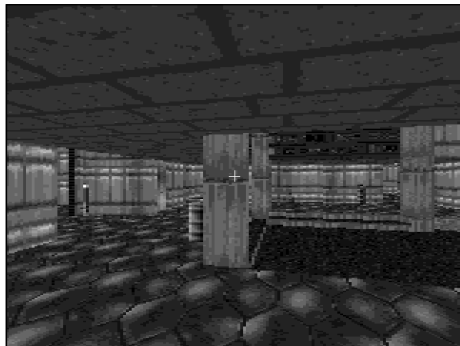
Speed is, however, a problem. Options are provided to alter the graphics settings to help. Graphic quality can be set to low, and drawing of floors, ceilings and the sky can be switched on and off. The size of the graphics window can be altered. This is a necessary step on smaller screens like that of the Osaris, as the window starts of bigger than the screen and therefore flickers badly.

Yet even with these options I was unable to get the game to run at a playable speed on the Osaris. The game froze shortly after enemies appeared on the screen, and could only be unfrozen by bringing up the menu and dismissing it again. Only switching off all objects

(including monsters) allowed me to wander aimlessly around an empty map at reasonable speed.

*Encore* shows that all EPOC32 machines are almost capable of running a first person shooter. I often wonder if this genre would have been more successful had Palmtop chosen to implement an original game, rather than being stuck with the difficulties of copying an existing one.

Author	Palmtop BV
URL	<a href="http://psion.cyningstan.org.uk">psion.cyningstan.org.uk</a>
Licence	Freeware
Systems	All EPOC32 machines
Rating	☆☆☆



## Naval Gazing

*Bataille Navale*, Gérard Millet's sea battle game, is reviewed by Damian Walker.

Have you ever wondered what it's like to command a navy of eighteenth century battleships, your ships pulling alongside the enemy and both firing broadsides into each others hulls, masts and rigging? Perhaps you want to emulate (or avenge) the victory at Trafalgar, to take the part of the 17th century Dutch attacking British ships in the Thames, or to refight the battle of Lepanto?

While EPOC32 doesn't have a detailed naval battle simulator, something of the tactics of naval warfare is reproduced in *Bataille Navale*, by Gérard Millet. *Bataille Navale* looks more like a traditional board game than a modern simulation, but it still reproduces some of the tactics particular to ships with side-mounted guns as used in arfare for about three and a half centuries. It is not,

as you might think from the title, a mere version of the Battleships pen and paper game.

*Bataille Navale* is a game for one or two players, and it runs on the Psion Series 5 and the 5mx. The sea is a grid of eight rows of twelve squares, and each player starts the game with ten ships in formation. Each turn a player may move a ship in a straight line, like a rook in chess. That ship, if its guns are trained on an enemy, will then fire. The enemy, if it survives the assault and its guns are pointing right back at its assailant, will return fire. Each ship has a number of "lives", possibly representing masts, and one is lost each time the ship is fired upon. Fire on a ship enough times and it will sink. Sink all the enemy ships and you have won the game.

When you start a game, you are asked for the players' names, the sound settings and a starting formation. Entering "Psion" as a player name causes the computer to take that side. Sadly you cannot enter "Psion" on both sides to

watch a demonstration game. As the computer keeps beating me, I would have found that a useful way to learn some tactics! The six formations are shown on the screen prior to your making a choice, and vary from simple line-ahead to more complex formations. Both players have identical starting positions, but the number of "masts" on each ship is randomised—though ensuring that each player still has an equal strength in his fleet.

Playing this game I found it a bit of simple fun, though I've yet to find a strategy for beating the computer. The basic idea is to arrange your ships in such a way that they can react to attack, but try not to place them where an enemy can pull up alongside. Given the lack of wind and rocks in the game, this can only be done by using ships in concert with one another. I am having quite a bit of fun finding out exactly how to do this to best effect.

Presentation is simple but effective. Ships are dark or light, and the masts or "lives" are represented as little circles on the ship. Ships are moved with the stylus, so some Geofox owners might find things a little

awkward. Sound is limited to little "tick" noises as the guns fire at each other, and a klaxon horn which sounds when the game is over.

The game is all in French, but as most of the interface is self-explanatory it shouldn't hinder those who don't speak the language. It is designed for the Series 5, but will run on machines with similar sized screens. On larger screens it runs in monochrome, letterbox mode.

If you like strategy games, or board games, then I'd consider this one well worth downloading.

Author	Gerard Millet
URL	<a href="http://pagesperso-orange.fr/psions5-3495/">pagesperso-orange.fr/psions5-3495/</a>
Licence	Freeware
Systems	Series 5
Rating	☆☆☆

