



System 3 C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

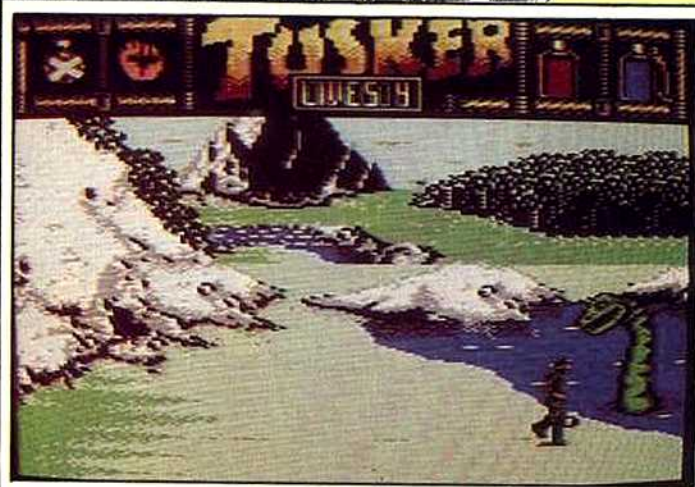
● Another mammoth game from System 3

**T**he Elephant's Graveyard, like the Holy Grail and the fabled Goolu Tribe, has been sought by explorers for centuries. Its true origins have long been lost in the mists of time but it still remains an elusive prize.

Many an adventurer has searched, and many have suffered a horrid fate on their quest, now it seems Tusker's father has gone the way of all who search. Following the discovery of notes in a chest belonging to his father, Tusker realises that

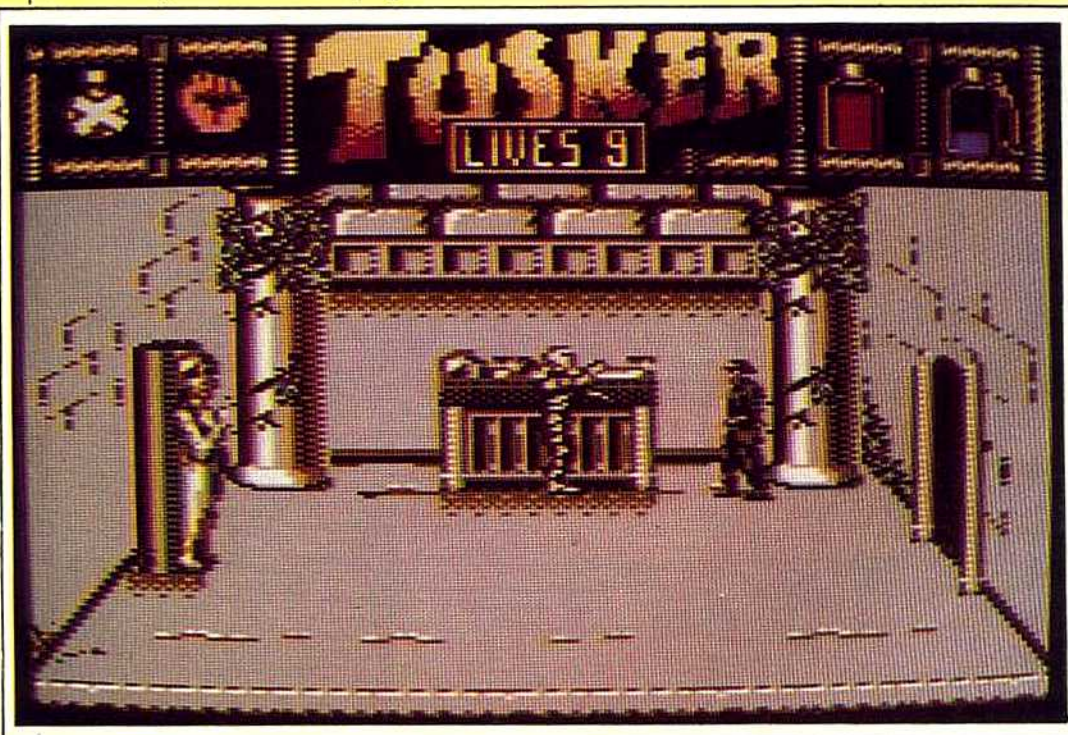
his father was on the trail of this semi-mythical place when he disappeared in Africa. Like father, like son, Tusker is no less intimidated by the deaths of previous explorers and promptly sets off for the Dark Continent.

Tusker's African adventure begins near the edges of a desert, deep in uncivilised territory where rattlesnakes, whirlwinds and dehydration are just some of the dangers. Sword-wielding Arabs guard their camps with a lethal zeal, but picking up the gun and



▲ Cor! A monster in a lake – this'll do the local tourist industry no end of good!

▼ Oh mummy, what's in that sarcophagus?



ammunition provides an effective solution to that problem. The main threat in this section however, is the lack of water.

It's almost a relief then, to get into the lush greenery of a nearby bushy jungle. As you'd expect there's lots of wildlife, including crocs, praying mantises, coconut-throwing monkeys, warthogs and giant creatures of a particularly slimy nature.

Breaking through the jungle takes the adventurer into the second load, starting off in a swamp where swamp-'things' await. Keep to the proper trail and you'll soon get firm ground under your feet at a native village. Search the huts for clues and objects to allow you to pass through those mysterious gates in the village square. But why is that Witch Doctor so unfriendly?

Once through the gate things start to get *really* weird. An icy plateau leads to a primitive jungle where dinosaurs still roam and pterodactyls swoop on intruders. The adventurer has to be getting close to the

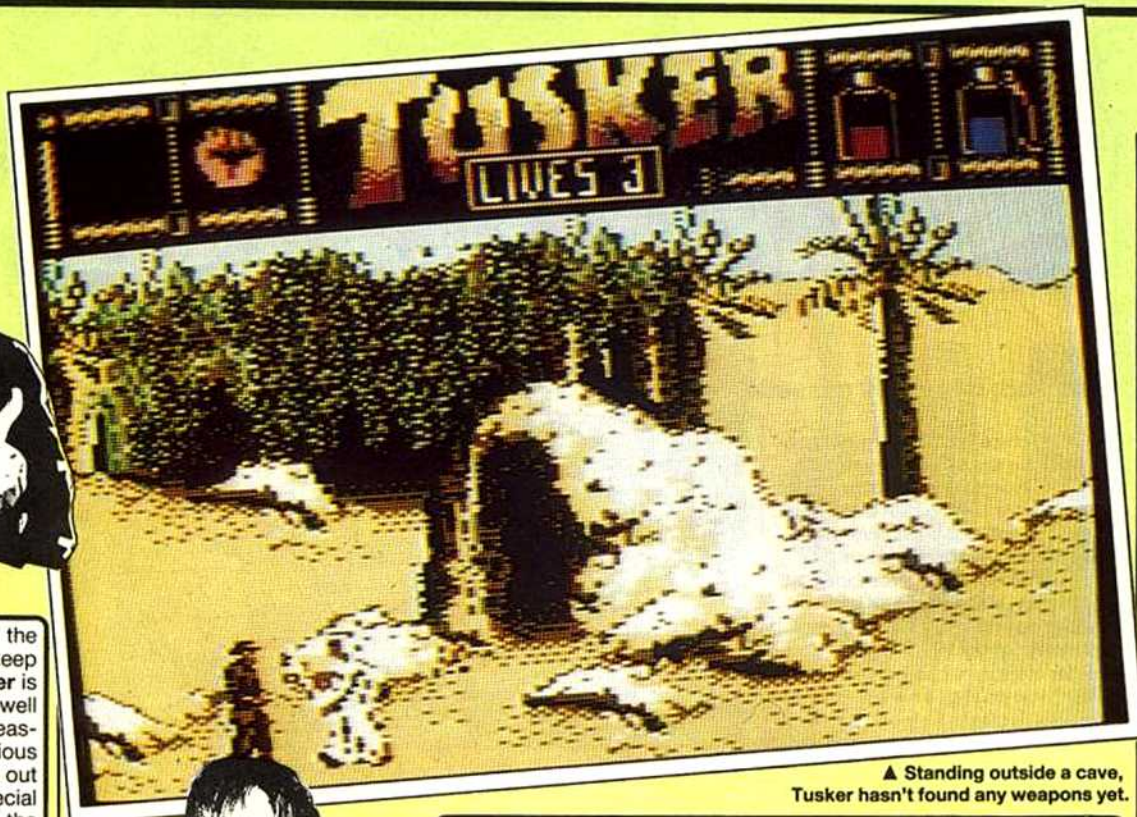




How much longer can the Indiana Jones influence keep creeping into games? **Tusker** is the latest and the best with a well crafted combination of increasingly difficult puzzles and vicious 'B' Movie-style action. Look out for some very neat special effects as well, including the zombies rising from the ground and subsequently falling to pieces when killed, the angry Arabs and the witchdoctor. What made the game for me was the superb shading of the backdrops mixing with equally authentic foreground graphics. The desert looks hot, the jungle has a dark oppressive atmosphere to it, and you can almost imagine the natives beating drums in the village. Indeed the 'drum beat' music gives the game that final polished touch.

Solid arcade adventuring with a wonderful atmosphere to it all, even if it's not totally original in execution.

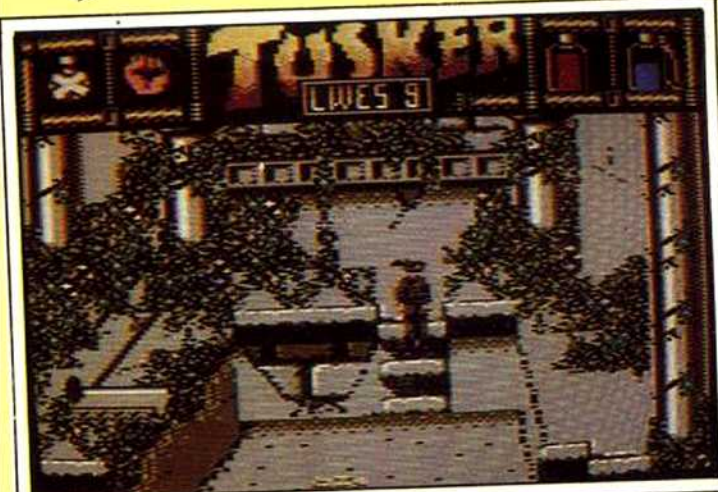
end. A lost temple sees an end to the Tusker's travels. Within the temple the puzzles begin to increase in lethality with gaping chasms, false walls and moving floors where past explorers are horribly preserved to terrify those who follow. Mummies rule the roost in the stone tombs with man-eating plants and creepers all around. Meet and defeat the final trap (which is astoundingly dangerous) and Tusker may just reach the Elephant's graveyard and his destiny.



▲ Standing outside a cave, Tusker hasn't found any weapons yet.



After the disappointment of **Dominator** System 3 return to the traditional arcade adventure and continue with what they do best. The way Tusker gets water in the desert is a lovely touch (find out how for yourself!). Tusker himself is a sprite with a real rugged look which wouldn't go amiss in an Indy game. The enemy sprites are equally detailed as well and there's some wonderfully black humour – pick up the gun and the Arabs start getting angry with their swords, start using the gun and they try to decapitate you! With this and **Thunderbirds** scoring so highly, arcade-adventures seem to be going through a real renaissance. After playing **Tusker** you wonder why they ever went out of fashion.



▲ Inside the ancient temple – watch out for traps.

I was a little disappointed to see that Tusker didn't have the isometric-style 3-D of **Last Ninja**, but you can still walk into the screen and the tough **Ninja** control system has been dropped, thankfully. **Tusker**'s main attraction however, is the depth of gameplay and the quality of presentation. The sound effects are suitably atmospheric with great 'ethnic' music to accompany the adventuring. The feel of true adventuring and exploring comes to life thanks to a very clever use of subtle backdrops with new regions slowly appearing as the player progresses. Enter a hut and you'll see shields on bamboo walls, while the underground caves have a wonderfully dark, deep atmosphere. The game holds together extremely well with gradually more devious traps – in themselves a reward for solving puzzles – some of which are very, very devious indeed.

## amiga

An adventurous Amiga version should be out by the time you read this, priced at £24.99

## update

### PRESENTATION 84%

Typically polished System 3 packaging.

### GRAPHICS 91%

Superbly crafted, varied, colourful and extremely atmospheric backdrops complemented by sprites with a surprising amount of detail to them.

### SOUND 87%

Authentic, primitive drum beat music changing with each level.

### HOOKABILITY 85%

A true arcade adventure just cannot be resisted with a temptation to explore proving very, very strong indeed.

### LASTABILITY 90%

60 screens spread over 33 loads with a great system of tricks and traps becoming ever harder with rewards for progression.

## OVERALL 90%

Not quite the norm for System 3 but the depth, challenge and atmosphere that makes for great games is all there.