

FLOO



No wonder Quiffy looks a bit upset...



...his underground home has been invaded and is slowly flooding...



...so he's got to escape before it's too late.

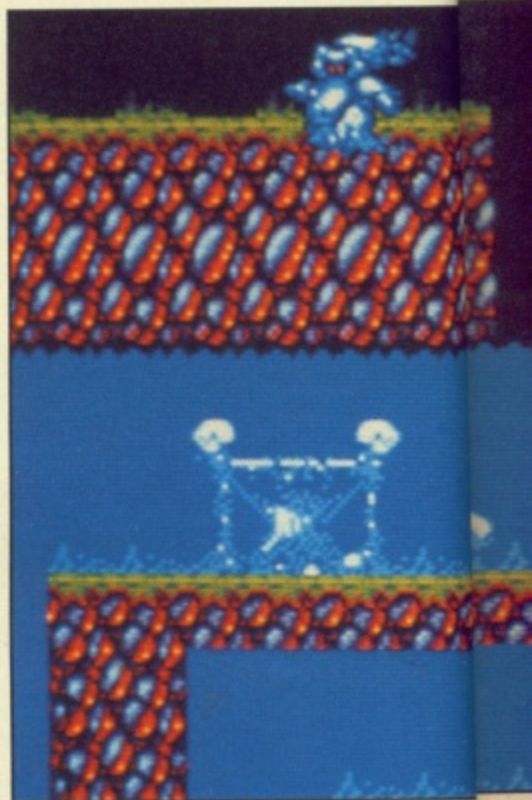
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £24.99

The Bullfrog programming team, famous for last year's smash-hit *Populous*, are back in the swim of things with *Flood*, a 42 level (count 'em!) platform game from EA.

Flood casts the player as Quiffy, a fat green slimy blob who waddles along collecting trash in an underground system of maze-like caves. Unfortunately, his refuse collecting days are numbered as his homeland has been overrun with killer teddies and dynamite-throwing nutters. As if this wasn't bad enough, the caverns are slowly flooding with water, so it's a race against time as Quiffy attempts to escape and reach the surface of his world.

Within each level Quiffy must collect all the trash that's scattered around. However, he must be quick as the water level is constantly rising, making it tricky to retrieve rubbish that's at the bottom of the water. Quiffy isn't a good swimmer and he can only hold his breath for a certain length of time.

Bouncing balls, floating mines, razor blade platforms and gaping lava pits are just some of the obstacles in your way. There are also various nasties lurking about who like nothing better than to beat the living life-force out of you. The marvellously-named Bulbous Headed Vong look like something out of the *Aliens* movie, create stacks more litter for Quiffy to collect and can kill instantly. There's also the Psycho Teddies, who have gnashing jaws inset into their stomachs and leap around eating trash and anything else that gets in their way.



There are various artifacts to help you on your way. Run over a bottle of Guinness and get an extra life; collect the floating hearts of your victims and add points to your score as well as your life-force. To help combat the hordes of blob eaters, a whole host of life-threatening hardware is scattered throughout the game, including grenades, ninja stars, and a burn-in-hell flamethrower that even works underwater!

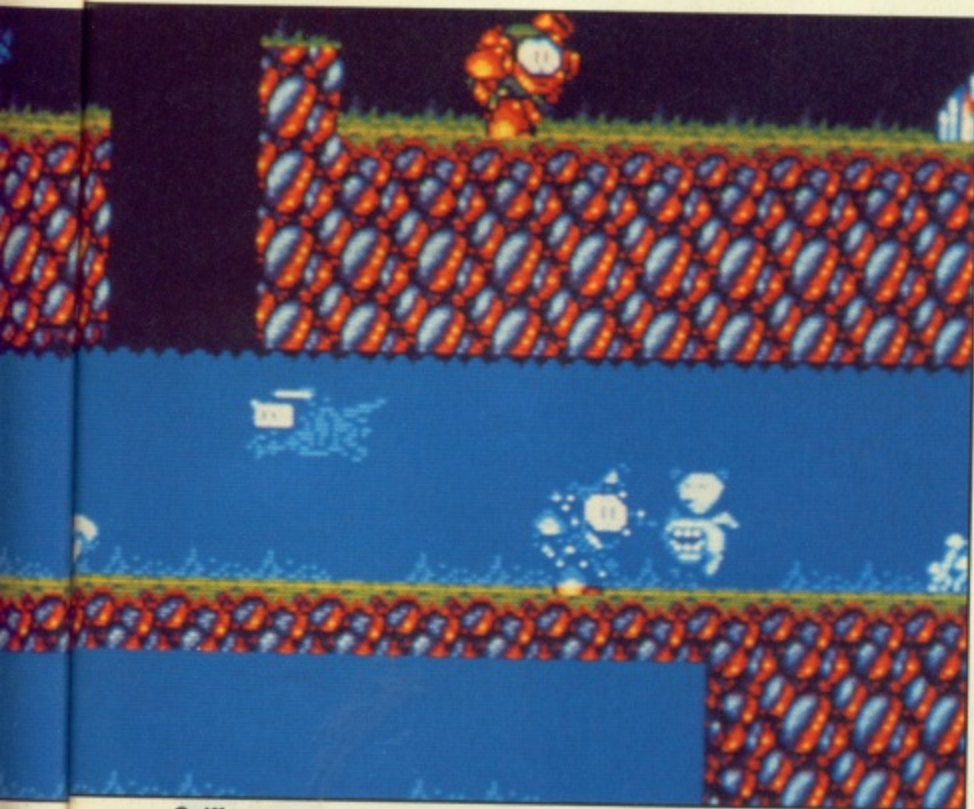
Once you've collected all the rubbish you can nip through a teleporter to the next level and so on. There are also In-Level teleporters that move you to different parts of the current level where more trash is stashed. Just to make matters even more complicated, there are invisible teleports dotted around which lead to even more tunnels and caves.

Shaun Cooper was in charge of the programming and design of *Flood*. At only nineteen years of age, he's already an

FLOOD



SCREEN SCENE



Quiffy uses up valuable oxygen as he searches for underwater trash.



The special level-editor used to create each level.

experienced game designer having provided some of the graphics for *Populous* as well as working on other Bullfrog games.

Flood has a bizarre plot, a wide-eyed and sickeningly-cute hero and some of the silliest looking characters you've ever seen. It's also very addictive and smashing fun. I'm not a fan of

platform games, I find most of them immensely annoying, require minimal skill and are poor value for money. *Flood*, on the other hand, is extremely playable and has a certain charm that's irresistible. Shaun has introduced a number of slick touches throughout the game. Examples of these

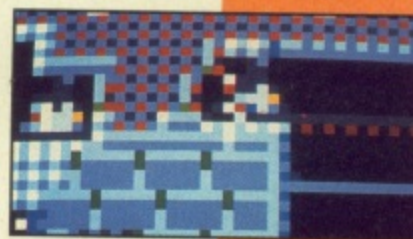
Quiffy gets ready to teleport.



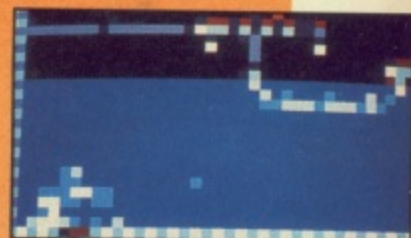
The screen distorts and pixels enlarge...



...and Quiffy appears to vanish in a pyrotechnic light show.



The pixels are then reduced in size...

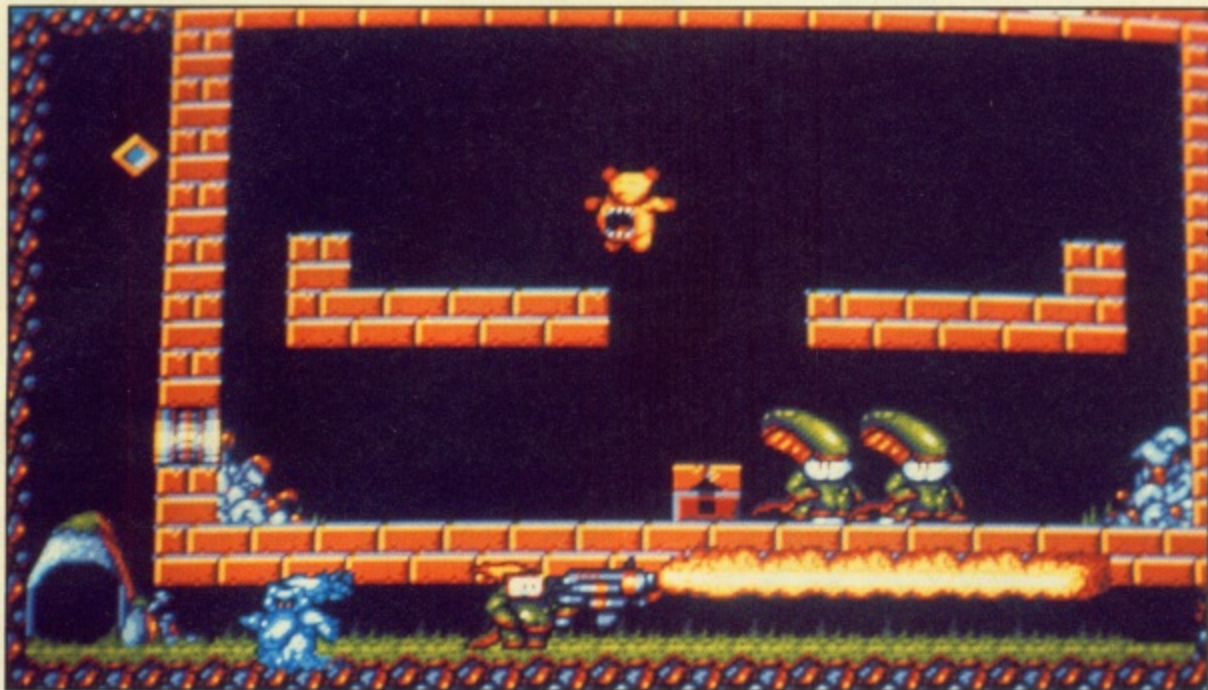


...and Quiffy reappears...



...but in a different part of the game.





The ghost closes in to rob Quiffy of his lifeforce.

SCREEN SCENE



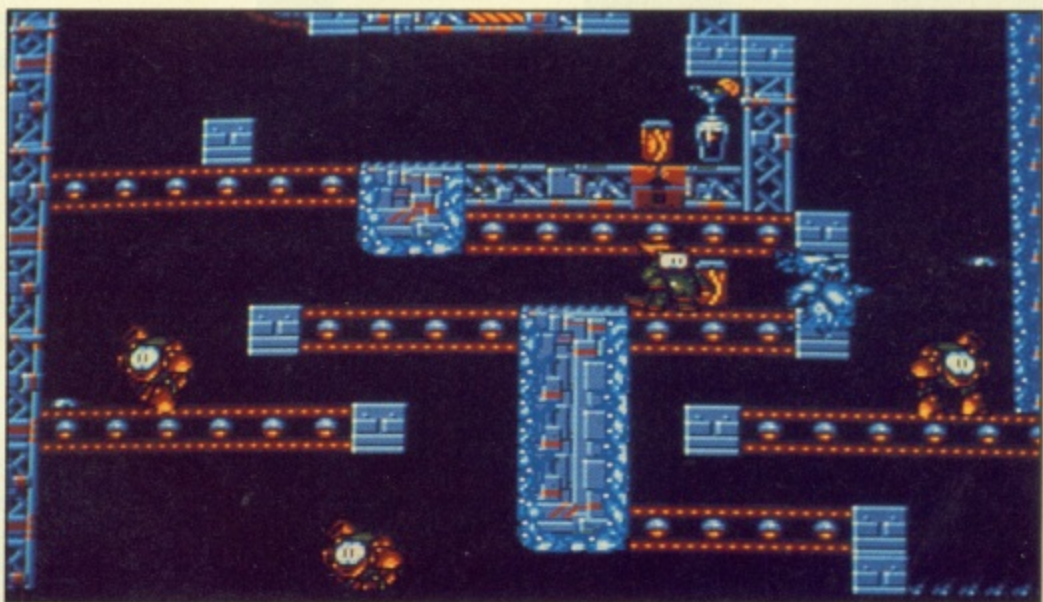
abound; particular favourites include the flamethrower that sometimes misfires and ejects a chicken, the space hopper which when punctured spins poor ol' Quiffy in circles, and the kaleidoscope effect of stepping through the teleporters.

The scrolling on the disk, dropped off by armoured guard at the CU offices, was slightly jerky. Except for this one fault, the version we tested was the one which will be winging its way to your softshop. EA assures us that they will iron out the problem, and the scrolling will be as smooth as our editor's chat up lines. My only real criticism is that many of the levels are too similar, but this is a fault with most platform games. For *Flood* a special level-editor program was written to save time in creating subsequent levels. Although this allowed freelance designers with little programming knowledge to create their own levels easily, it has meant that a number look very similar. That's a pity, but it's also probably too harsh a judgment on a game that's got 42 levels in all.



Explosive action!

Have spacehopper, will travel.



The intro music and in-game sound effects were composed by French musician Charles Callet. The intro tune is jolly enough, but the incidental sound effects are excellent and lend real atmosphere to the game. Gurgling and splashing sounds are everywhere. And when you

finally crack the game (after a long time, I can tell you!) there's a truly bizarre end-of-game sequence.

Flood is a superior platform game that should provide hours of fun and frustration. It's awash with bright ideas.

Dan Slingsby

SOUND:	86%
GRAPHICS:	85%
PLAYABILITY:	90%
LASTABILITY:	89%
OVERALL:	89%