The old double-tunnel trick! By burrowing through the earth, you can unite the lemmings on the left hand section and then bridge your way to freedom. The angle of the bridge is vital. An error in your positioning will result in a toasting from the jets in the left hand wall.

LEMMINGS

With only 18 seconds left on the clock, success is unlikely. At least you've avoided the fiendish trap. (Top). The easy levels offer plenty of all the icons, so you have a choice of escape routes. (Above).

Originality, playability and excellent graphics? Too good to be true? Not in *Lemmings'* case. Psygnosis' latest is a complete departure from their usual straight-laced hard-nosed style. Although an entire disk has been expended on the opening sequence (some things never change), the rest of this incredibly playable and ultra-cute romp remains decidedly focused by Psygnosis standards. The aim of the game is simple, there is only one view of the levels, and the whole feel of the program benefits as a result.

Your aim is to guide a varying number of these obedient creatures through around 120 different levels of increasing difficulty. Depending on the nature of the level, you will start with an appropriate time limit and target percentage of lemmings to escort through the exit at the end of the level. Fail to save enough lemmings in the permitted time will result in an "encouraging" try-again message.

Control of lemmings is limited but varied. They will automatically carry on doing whatever they're doing unless they're told otherwise. At the start, as they pour (again, at a definable rate) through the trapdoor at the top of the screen, they will walk right once they hit the ground. And they'll

After months of hype and more demos than you can shake a stick at, is the *Lemmings* experience worth jumping at?

keep walking right until something stops them. If they just walk into a wall, they'll turn around and start walking left. However, lemmings are just as happy to walk off cliffs, into traps and through fires if they happen to come across them. And this is where the game comes into its own.

By clicking on an icon and then a lemming, you can endow him with a particular ability. You can make them dig, climb up, parachute down, build bridges, block other lemmings and explode.

Each level forces you to prioritise constantly. Some put the lemmings in danger from the very start but give you more time to plan your escape. Others offer little danger to begin with but have strict time limits. The levels are broken down into difficulty levels, ranging from Fun through Tricky, Taxing and up to Mayhem. A level with lots of pillars in the way set at Fun will probably be set with plenty of horizontal diggers. However, on Taxing setting, a similar stage will demand more thought, climbing over obstacles and digging backwards in order to make the most of each icon.
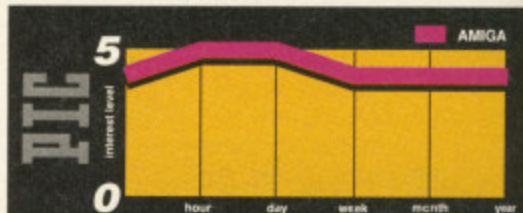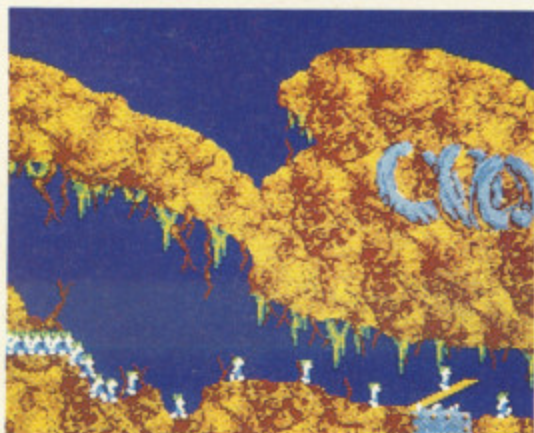
The charm of *Lemmings* is two-fold. The animation of the little characters and their behavior are both appealing and challenging, and the puzzles presented in the game will keep you thinking for a good long while. Unlike lots of puzzle games, the nature of the landscapes offers the chance to have a go at digging, climbing and bridging in most situations, rather than totally boxing you in.

Lemmings is a fine game. Although its appeal will inevitably wain once all the levels have been completed, the precision and control facilitated over each lemming is enough to make it worth playing anyway.

● Jim Douglas

PIE

Immediate cute-factor scores extremely high. Once you've taught the little blighters who's boss and you've learnt some basic tactics to deal with big bunches of lemmings, slowing them down and speeding them up, etc, the fun escalates to the top!

ACE RATING	AMIGA
910	Despite the fact that *Lemmings* appears to be a simple-enough game, its playability is largely down to the ease of icon-controlled play. The control method is virtually flawless, allowing rapid changes of control over a fast-moving lemming. The music, too adds a lot to the atmosphere with lots of 'Off to Work We Go' style tunes helping the little creatures on their way.

8	6	7	8
G	IQ	A	FF

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	Late Febuary
AMIGA	£24.99	Out Now
IBM PC	£24.99	Late Febuary

No other versions planned