

# ICE GUYS

Protovision, £10, joystick

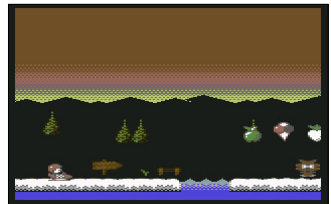
When most people think of snow, they tend to imagine long days spent outside, making snowballs, ice skating, and soaking up the

would-be invaders. You can grab a handful of the white stuff and transform it into a snowball by holding down the fire button. Throw it at a nearby enemy how-

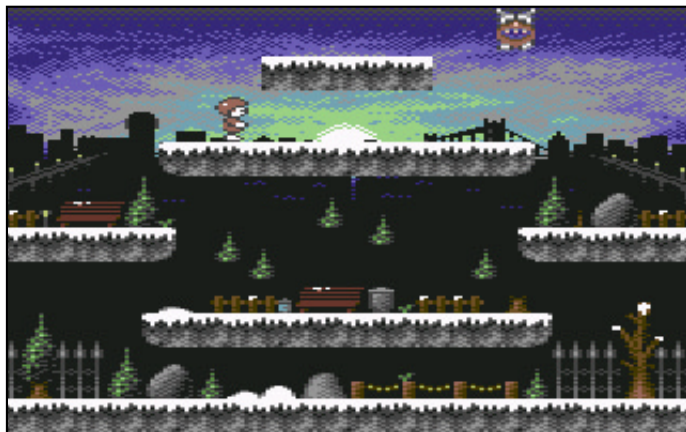
but-deadly aliens roam around these platforms randomly, usually appearing just where you don't want them to. If any of the little blighters come into contact with you, you lose a life. The more levels you complete, the tougher the aliens get—which basically means you have to chuck a whole bunch of snowballs at them before they fall.

For extra style points, you can create combo attacks by pushing snowball-covered enemies down the platforms into other enemies. If you perform this trick correctly, you're rewarded with stars, diamonds and various candy-themed treats.

Collect ten stars and you're whisked away to a bonus mini-game, featuring friendly snowmen who need to be rescued from certain peril. Diamonds, on the other hand, can be spent in conveniently-placed shops—you can buy special items such as snowmen heads, which instantly vaporise all on-screen aliens.



fighting to get all the bonuses. But whether you play solo or in a team, always remember—there's no business like snow business.



• You'll not laugh with a snowball in your mush



Ice Guys is immediately eye-catching, with its bold, colourful graphics and jaunty music. It's also fun to play initially—simple platform action, with lots going on. However, after extended play, it becomes apparent that it's the same throughout. It gets repetitive quickly, with each screen being merely a case of 'clear the rather unimaginative baddies'. The music, which is fun to begin with, also gets repetitive, as does the bonus game, which breaks up the platform action but soon becomes annoying. Having said all this, the game as a whole does play well. There are lots of levels and the two-player mode is often quite a laugh... It's just the lack of variety that kills it in the end.

atmosphere of frozen water particles. Unfortunately for the Ice Guys, the only thing they'll be doing all winter long is trying to overcome an alien invasion. And wouldn't you just know it? You're the one who's been summoned to help them out.

Ice Guys is a platform game which lets you use the snow lying on the ground to defeat Earth's



• "I'll have a 99, please."

ever, and your weedy weapon is turned into a giant snowball, capable of causing megadeath.

The game plays a lot like Bubble Bobble. Each level features a single screen filled with layered platforms. The cute-

Candy, of course, is yummy when you eat it, but terrible for your waistline.

Two people can play the game simultaneously, helping each other clear the screen as quickly as possible, and then



I really, really like Ice Guys. Right from the moment the ultra-slick title screen appears you know that a lot of care has been lavished on this game. The action itself does not let your first impressions down—you get tight controls, fun levels and great graphics. At first the high difficulty level is off-putting to all but the hardest ice-throwers, but once the subtle art of snowball building is mastered, the game becomes addictive. The international setting gives rise to a plethora of attractive backdrops that are matched by the cute and cuddly sprites, making this one of the best looking C64 titles of recent times. The two player mode, bonus games and saveable high score are just the icing on an already appetising cake.



This plays very much like Bubble Bobble, except this is set in snowier climes. The object is to defeat all the bad guys on the screen and progress to the next. Sounds easy, huh? It isn't. The programmers decided to make things hard from the start, and it doesn't get any simpler. The first few games might see you hit Continue before finishing three levels, but once you've learnt the enemy AI and figured out what each weapon does then things become easier. The graphics are bright and colourful too, despite being variations on a mainly white theme, whilst the sound is a suitably loud accompaniment. In short, fun to play—and it will definitely keep you coming back for more.

## PRESENTATION 89%

Single and team-play options, highscore table and useful in-game help screens. No pause mode, though.

## GRAPHICS 85%

Detailed hi-res backdrops, populated with innovative enemies and a cute main sprite.

## SOUND 77%

Powerful music in the presentation, appealingly subdued tunes during the game.

## HOOKABILITY 72%

Starts hard and gets harder.

## LASTABILITY 85%

Persevere and you get a lot of game to play with, including bonus stages, snowball fights, and a great two-player mode.

## OVERALL 83%

A platformer with plenty to offer—excellent stuff.

