Police Force Engineering Test Game - serial number 573 X270006.

This is a Q&A with designer Mark Ritchie concerning the game pictures contained in these four zipfiles which are indexed by the image numbers that are used in the discussion.

Police Force Engineering Test Game DSC07899-DSC07920
Police Force Engineering Test Game DSC07922-DSC07939
Police Force Engineering Test Game DSC07940-DSC07996
Police Force Engineering Test Game DSC07997-DSC08013 and IMG6119

Below are Mark Ritchie's responses (blue font) to questions and comments placed by the game owner (red font).

09/27/2017

Hi Jay,

Definitely an engineering sample TEST game. I strongly suspect that this was one of the first 12 MEL games we built for field test, FFC, UL and various other tests and sampling needs-but certainly cannot be sure. Many of these were sold to employees or purchased by test Operators. Anyway here goes,

1) My BIG question for Mark Ritchie is could this machine have possibly been his at one point?
   MR: It is possible but I would need to look at my records and check the SN

2) What is his best story that he can recall about this game?
   MR: No stories come to mind.
3) How many of these prototypes were made?
MR: To the best of my recollection, there were 12 samples made like this.

4) What is the "SP-LS" on the play field about (see pic DSC07950)?
MR: I recognize that by the SP / LS (Sun Process) (Lenc-Smith) playfield double print that this an early version. - I don't recall why this occurred. The only thing I can think of is that somehow the playfield was cut and screened at Lenc-Smith and the hardcoat was applied at Sun Process. There was much testing of hard coating compounds back then from the two vendors.
Another indicator was the toe-tagged cable looms. I don't recall those getting attached to production game cables. That was done on the first 12 engineering samples as a means of identifying cables for new games by part number and intended use. Also this made for quick identification from production cables used on whatever current game being built on the line preventing them from ending up on the wrong product.
There is also this hand cut hole here on the underside of the playfield where some things were once mounted by the jail cell and police car. Any idea what that is about? Or what was once there? Or if it was related to the Batman concept somehow?
(see attached IMG_6119)
MR:-No recollection- sorry- Maybe Barry Oursler

Now that I look at closer, there are about 16 holes on the underside of the playfield towards the back half of the playfield that look like pilot holes for screws, some look used at one point, most don't. Any idea of what that was for
MR:-No recollection - sorry
The machine has stickers all in it from World Wide Distributors with dates of 1991 and 1992 stamped on it, shipping company I guess? (see pic DSC07910).

MR: No- definitely not. World Wide Distributors was a large company that distributed coin operated amusement games and parts for games in the Chicago area. They were located maybe 10 city blocks from the Williams plant. I was there often and knew them personally. The stickers: Often Distribs would ID their saleable electronics this way. My guess is that these were replacement parts purchased from WWD by whomever owned the game prior.  
Side note: WWD was owned by Fred Skor whose son, Doug Skor, now heads sales at Chicago Gaming - makers of the Attack From Mars Remake and The Medieval Madness remake.

On the left side one there is misprint in it where it looks like it says "SP-LS" in white underneath the black print (see pic DSC07950). What is that about?

MR: I don't recall why this occurred. The only thing I can think of is that somehow the playfield was cut and screened at Lenc-Smith and the hardcoat was applied at Sun Process. There was much testing of hard coating compounds back then from the two vendors.

Mark Ritchie stated that he once owned every prototype of every game he designed per his contract but sold them all off but two (Indiana Jones and Fish Tales).

MR:  
This is not 100% true. Certain games were not acquired by me until we were at least into the 200 sample run.
I did have a few samples. Again, I would need to check the serial number.

Hope this helps,

MR
On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 6:56 PM, Jay St@fford wrote:

Hi Mark,

Thanks for the replies. I see his serial number is **573  X270006**.

I noticed I failed to highlight in red font the one question of my own that I had for you, so let me pose it to you here:

The only question I have for you at this time is about DSC07940: what is, and why is, that circuit board exposed on the playfield, and would it have been on location that way as a sample game?

Thanks again,

Jay

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 10:20 PM, Mark Ritchie wrote:

Jay,

My Serial # X270126- In fact I see that it was also one of the games we had at Pinball Expo that year. I probably grabbed that one because I knew it was adjusted perfectly- by me!

That board is an Opto board for the Shooting Range spinner. We, pardon the expression, apparently opted not to use standard spinner switch there to insure improved reliability. The Opto switch also meant we had no friction associated with it - therefore the spinner would spin better. I believe it would spin long after the ball had passed under it- for
too long. This looks to be something we tried then later dumped and unfortunately, I don't recall the exact circumstances. But as I look at this, I can only assume we took that out due to having too long spins and probably increased costs as well.

It certainly could have been on location-but maybe not. -At least when Williams parted with it. It could have been an employee purchased game -then sold as is.

-Also noticed in one of my assembly line photos that the cabinet art was the version with the guns on the back box and the added art on the cabinet front.

On 9/27/2017 8:42 PM, Mark Ritchie wrote:

On second thought - I think the spinner Opto switch was used on production games. Maybe we covered it somehow- I don't recall.

On 9/27/2017 9:40 PM, Jay St@fford wrote:

Hi Mark,

Ha, production games did not cover it up. You can see the little green circuit board. Look here:

http://www.ipdb.org/showpic.pl?id=1841&picno=26501

http://www.ipdb.org/showpic.pl?id=1841&picno=61805

His game X270006 does not have the backbox gun art nor the cabinet front art.
Does your X270126 have the backbox gun art and the cabinet front art? Both? Neither?

Last question: to be clear, you never owned his game X270006?

Thank you,

Jay

On 9/28/2017 5:01 AM, Mark wrote:

Yes- the game I owned had the added art- No -I never owned # X270006.

-end-