Overview

It is easy to have fun while playing this game. It is a good Family Game Room addition. Comet is the hit of every party I have. It has a fun and fairly easy Rule Set and can be enjoyed by just about everyone, although drinking moderately seems to help one’s gratification with playing the game and it’s associated frustrations.

NOTE: These rules are compiled from hours of playing of "Comet" and are as accurate as possible to the author's best knowledge.

New to this version

• Fixed some typos and added more info.

Special Thanks

• To Williams Electronics for giving us so many Great Pinball Machines!

Comet General Description

The Comet was manufactured by Williams Electronics, starting in 1985 with a model designation of 540.

Comet is a 4 Player, Solid-State (SS) Electronic pinball machine of which 8,100 units were produced. Its theme is Happiness/Circus/Carnival. It has 2 flippers, 3 Pop Bumpers, 1-drop target, 3 Ramps, 2 Eject Holes, a 4 Duck target bank and a 4 Rabbit target bank.

According to the book Arcade Treasures, 'Comet' was named after a popular ride at Chicago's now-closed Riverview Amusement Park. It was the first solid-state machine to feature a one million point shot.

The voice announcing "One Million!" is said to belong to Steve Kordek. Kordek became something of a figurehead for pinball having designed almost 100 games at Genco and then at Williams where he literally headed-up the pinball design section. Since the closure of the pinball division, he has been working on archiving the large number of historic documents and designs.

STARTING THE GAME

One to four players can play. New players can enter the game by pressing START until the end of the ball of the last player. After that, pressing START aborts the current game for all players and begins a new one.
OBJECT OF THE GAME, SCORE 1,000,000

One object is to light the 1-9-8-6 rollover targets on the 5th ball (if set up for 5 balls) and shoot the ball up the Cycle Jump, while it’s lit, and land in the Upper Ring scoring 1,000,000.

THE BALL DIDN’T REACH THE TOP DURING LAUNCH

A launched ball that scores no points before draining will be re-served. This can only happen when the ball doesn’t reach the top when launched and drains back onto the playfield.

Starting from the lower playfield and working up here is a description of the Playfield and Game:

Flippers: There are 2 of them, located just above the Outhole. There is a small post with a rubber O-Ring in between the flippers. There is a “Ride Again” light at the Outhole.

Left Hand Return lane: It is normal size, for games of that time. The left return lane lights the Cycle Jump Ramp. There is no right hand Return Lane.

Outlanes: Both of the Outlanes have "SPECIAL" lights on them. The Left Outlane advances the Duck bonus by 3 and the Right Outlane advances the Rabbit bonus by 3. The left Outlane can also return the ball to the playfield if the ball hits the Outlane bumper in the right place, English helps here. Both Outlanes activate the Train Whistle when the ball drains...you’ll learn to hate that sound.

Duck targets: Just above the left outlane are 4 Duck targets and hitting all four, lights the Corkscrew.

Rabbit targets: Just above the right outlane are 4 Rabbit targets and hitting all four, lights the Funhouse.

Comet ramp: Right in the middle of the playfield is a ramp. This is the Comet ramp, and it returns the ball to the lower right playfield. You can re-light it, activating larger scoring potential, by hitting all of both the Duck & Rabbit targets to the left and right of the playfield. If you do not hit the ball hard enough to make it all the way around, it will fall back down onto the center of the playfield and sometimes even SDTM (Straight Down the Middle).

Funhouse: Just to the right of the Comet ramp, there is an Eject hole, called the Funhouse.

Cycle Jump Ramp: In the upper right corner of the playfield, above the Funhouse, is the Cycle ramp.

Pop Bumpers: 3 of them, just below the top rollover lanes and behind the Comet ramp.

Corkscrew Ramp: In the upper left corner of the playfield is the Corkscrew ramp.

TOP LANES 1-9-8-6: At the top center are the 1-9-8-6 rollover lanes.

Backglass: Comet has nice artwork. There is a roller coaster (The Comet) with John Belushi in the back seat and Jane Curtin in the second row on the left, well it sure looks like them!

Sound: This game has good, cool sound effects, for it's time. The game has some fun speech too. The attract mode is very well synchronized, in terms of sound, and lights.
Displays: Comet was back in the time of alphanumeric displays. The highest score that the high score table will hold is 9,999,999.

Miscellaneous: Comet has many options that can be adjusted by the operator, including the length of certain timers. With that in mind, the settings on the machine you choose to play may vary and for that reason, I did not put many of the timer values in here. Most of the features time-out in 15 to 20 seconds.

GAME PLAY

One should start out with the skill shot, shooting the ball into the area above the rollover lane and allowing it to pass thru one of the lanes. From there, the ball goes into the Pop Bumpers, and can come out either side of the Comet ramp. If you shoot the ball too hard, the ball will just exit the rollover lanes area, via the Corkscrew, and heads towards the flippers.

TOP LANES 1-9-8-6: Making (lighting) the 1-9-8-6 at the rollover lanes...scores 50,000 and lights the playfield multiplier for a 20-second interval (Red x2, x3 x5). Rolling over the lanes to light them scores 1000.

The following Playfield Multiplier scoring can occur, if you light all of the Rollover lanes on that ball (5-ball setting):

1st Ball: Red 2x; 2nd Ball: Red 3x; 3rd Ball: Red 2x; 4th Ball: Red 2x; 5th Ball: Red 5x

The right flipper button changes which of the 1-9-8-6 are lit (Lane Change) and its use is key to lighting all of 1-9-8-6.

DUNK THE DUMMY: Hitting the “DUMMY” drop target exposes the bull’s-eye for a timed interval. Hitting bull’s-eye, before the drop target resets, advances bonus multiplier (Green): 1st time: 2x; 2nd time: 3x, 3rd time: 4x; 4th time: 5x...thereafter, hits score 20,000 for each additional time. Hitting the “DUMMY” activates a game voice.

Duck Target Bank: Making the 4 Duck Bank...lights CORKSCREW.

CORKSCREW: Ride the Corkscrew to collect the DUCK Bonus, an EXTRA BALL or SPECIAL, when lit.

Rabbit Target Bank: Making the 4 Rabbit Bank...lights FUNHOUSE.

FUNHOUSE: Drop into the Funhouse (Eject hole) to collect the RABBIT Bonus, when lit.

COMET RIDE: Completing BOTH the Duck & Rabbit Banks...activates (lights) the COMET ramp for higher scores, EXTRA BALLS and SPECIALS. “Riding” the COMET scores 10,000 when not lit. When lit, it scores 30,000 and then advances scoring to 50,000. The 2nd COMET ride scores 50,000, then advances scoring to 100,000. The 3rd COMET ride scores 100,000 and some playfield EXTRA BALL. The 4th COMET ride also scores 100,000 and some playfield SPECIAL. Each scoring advance must be achieved within its time limit, or the scoring advance resets either back to 30,000 or if the 1st 100,000 has been scored, the lights go out. Also, completing all 4 “Rides” resets it, and turns off the lights. BOTH the Duck & Rabbit Banks must be re-completed to re-light the Comet Ride.
**CYCLE JUMP & Playfield Multiplier:** Landing in the Lower Ring scores 10,000 (or 20,000 when lit). Landing in the Center Ring scores 20,000 (or 50,000 when lit). Landing in the Upper Ring scores 30,000 (or 200,000 when lit). Passage thru the LEFT Flipper return lights all three rings. On the last ball, if the 5x Playfield Multiplier is lit, landing in the Upper Ring scores 1,000,000. On the last ball with the Ramp lit and the 1-9-8-6 rollover lanes activated, until the 5x bonus times out the machine shouts “A Million”. Once the ball goes up the Ramp into the eject hole, or goes into it’s eject hole from a Pop Bumper (it’s just to the right of the lower right Pop Bumper), the Jump is reset and the ball must go thru the left return lane to re-light the Cycle Jump Ramp.

**CYCLE JUMP & Extra Ball:** Completing BOTH the Duck & Rabbit Banks a 2nd time...lights more playfield EXTRA Ball’s & SPECIAL’s and also activates the Cycle Jump for EXTRA BALL action: (A) Lights Lower Cycle Jump Ring for 5 seconds; (B) Then, lights Center Ring for 10 seconds; (C) Finally, The Upper Ring lights for 15 seconds. If the EXTRA BALL is not made within the specified time(s), the sequence starts over until an EXTRA BALL is made. Then BOTH the Duck & Rabbit Banks must be re-completed to re-light the EXTRA BALL.

**CORKSCREW & Special:** Completing BOTH the Duck & Rabbit Banks a 3rd time...lights more playfield EXTRA Ball’s & SPECIAL’s. “Ride” the Corkscrew to score the SPECIAL or the EXTRA BALL, when lit.

**General Playfield Points:** The following is in addition to the scoring shown above. The Left Return Lane scores 5,000. The left and right Outlanes score 10,000. The left Outlane scores the Duck Bonus and the right Outlane scores the Rabbit Bonus. Hitting the Ducks and Rabbits scores 2,000 the first time and 1,000 after that. The Funhouse scores 10,000, the COMET ramp (unlit) 10,000. The Corkscrew scores 20,000. The 3 Pop Bumpers score 1000 per activation.

**Game Quotes**
- Turkey, c’mom get me.
- Turkey
- Hey Turkey
- Hit me
- Hey (train whistle) Ah-h-h (laugh)
- (Roller coaster Sound) Splash (laugh)
- A Million
- Hey Turkey, Hit me
- Ha ha ha ha

**Other Sounds**

The game plays this addictive music that gets stuck in your head! The train whistle (left & right Outlanes) and the Cycle Jump Ramp drum roll are equally annoyingly cool! Players also have different music for their 1st ball. Comet also makes noise in Attract Mode…and it can be annoying in a quiet house, when the machine yells ”Hey Turkey”.