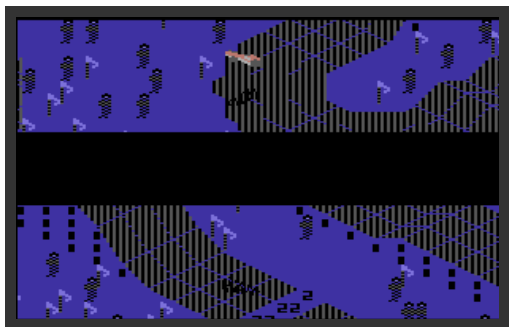




Left: Advertisement with 'Sizzler' stamped: Gamers knew this meant the most important magazine of the time gave it a high score: 95% in fact. Above: red car is stuck on ice and will need to do some serious car rocking to get out of that mess.

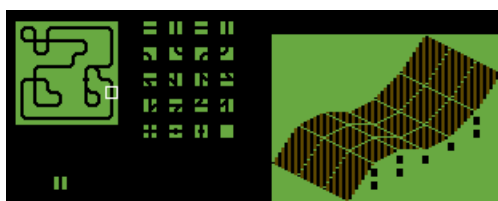
It was a rare game in 1985 that would hold the attention of a gamer for more than thirty minutes at a time. Games like Elite, Ghostbusters and Boulderdash were some of the very few titles which could manage this feat. There was one other game that myself and my brother played incessantly for very long periods. Sadly part of the reason for this is because it came on two tapes (rare for it's day) and spent a lot of time loading (or failing to load) various parts of the game. So it wasn't perfect, but Racing Destruction Set was so much fun we did put up with the load times* and we had a real riot when we were playing it.



Above: bottom screen player has jumped so high you can only see his shadow. Top screen player is about to hit the barrier.

RDS was released October 1985 and was an isometric, split screen slot car racing game. The player's vehicle can glide under your command between the three slots and so both cornering and keeping it in a straight line was very easy. The ease of control and the considered pace of the game left you free to spend your time thinking about strategy and making sure you lept over a jump at the right speed. Gravity was brilliantly implemented. If you jumped too high for the vehicle you were controlling, it would crash on impact. You wouldn't want to be left stationary on an icy patch with a low-traction vehicle because you would be stuck for ages. Nor would you want to be in a dip at slow speed, as you would have to spend a while rocking the car forward and backward to gain sufficient momentum to escape.

A few weapons were available and the car could have various engine size and tyre type options...and this is what set RDS apart. Variables. Lots of components of the track and the vehicles could be changed. Ten cars, fifty tracks, two player and lots of variables to play with meant only one thing: hours and hours of fun for anyone who invested in what was one of the earliest American games for the C64 to come into the UK



Above: The immense number of tracks and some with very inviting names.

Left: Whichway and Headon—both mad tracks. But Killer, Jumps and Spiral are all worth a look.

The C2N transferred data at a rate which today is hardly believable – 800 bits per second. If you were to fill a BD-ROM with cassette data, you would need 250,000 cassettes (and a lot of spare time).