The First Book Of Ohio Scientific Vol I

By J. Clothier and W. Adams
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Review by Charles L. Stanford

Considering the very serious lack of documentation available for the OSI line of microcomputers, it's almost impossible for me to conceive of writing a negative review of any book with the title "The First Book of Ohio Scientific". But that's what you're going to get! This is an attractive soft cover manual, and on the surface appears to be well laid-out and chock full of goodies. Until you realize that several of the topics mentioned in the credits (such as Aardvark's Joystick Instructions) aren't included in the text, and that what *is* there is a hodgepodge of old magazine articles, sales brochures from various software and hardware houses, and a bunch of poorly organized ROM listings.

To put my viewpoint into context, I am running a very bare-bones C1P with 8K of RAM. Nothing fancy. But I'm into hardware, and have delved pretty thoroughly into the physical innards of the machine, as well as into the BASIC and Monitor ROMs. Maybe the more sophisticated owners, with C4P's, disks, printers, and A/D ports will gain more from this book. I sincerely doubt it.

Several sections may be of use to disk users, including the one on copying diskettes on single drive systems (curiously not listed in the index - it's on page 133). There are also well-written instructions on adding the RS-232C components to the C1P, and on converting to the 600 Baud cassette and printer capability. But I've seen these elsewhere in much the same form.

I think the crowning blow to me was finding that the article entitled "High Resolution Display Conversion for Challenger 1P" is merely a sales pitch for the instructions, at $12.00, from an outfit named Silver Spur. Their address, by some remarkable coincidence, is the same as the publisher's. You can also get a crystal from them for $6.95 more.

There are a number of so-called memory maps included. But they are seemingly scattered at random, and are annotated in an almost incomprehensible style. The various Monitor ROM listings are not annotated at all, which seriously compromises their usefulness.

And finally - why on earth would the "authors" include almost fifty pages of material directly copied from OSI sales brochures and owners manuals? And many more pages from previously published articles and from Aardvark's catalog? And why is there absolutely no organization by subject, computer model, etc.? Quite frankly, I can't conceive of any OSI owner getting his monies' worth from this book. I hardly await Volumes II and III with anticipation.

Editor's Note: This book should not be confused with the book sold by Aardvark Technical Services of similar name: "The (Real) First Book of OSI". RCL

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