

Tomart's

No. 52 May \$5.95

# **ACTION FIGURE**

**DIGEST**

**Greatest Figures  
Never Made  
New Star Wars**



**Stargods Ra from  
Conquest Studios**



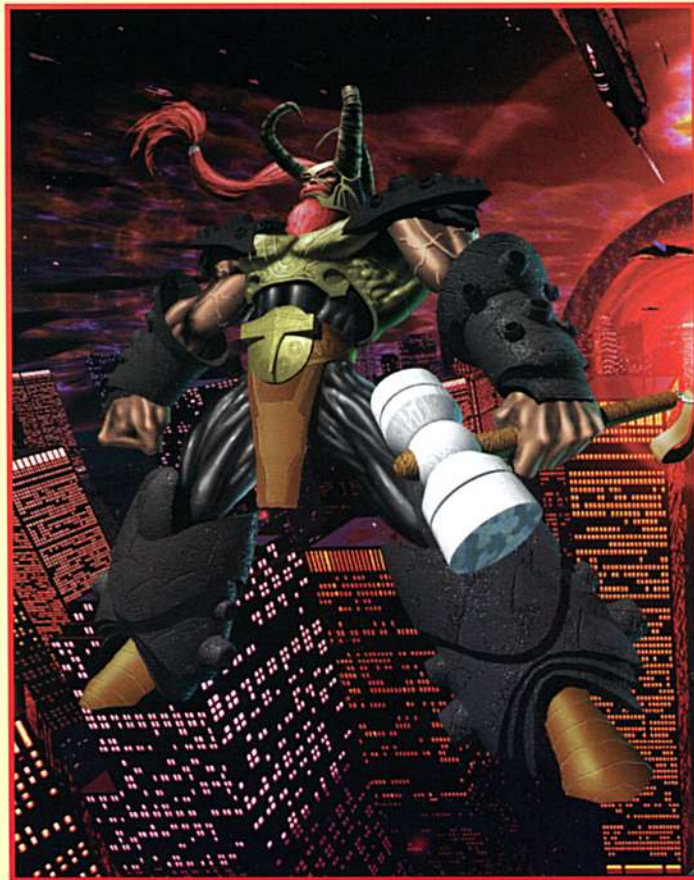


# This Issue...

...Tomart announces a unique arrangement with Conquest Studios, creators of the *Stargods* action figures and comic books. Beginning in the July issue, Conquest will provide *AFD* with exclusive artwork to preview future directions for the toy series and new characters being introduced in the comic run. At right, for example, is the Conquest interpretation of Thor. The series mixes mythological gods (good and evil) from many cultures, bringing them to an Earth of the '90s to compete for a weapon which could change the course of the universe.

Conquest's computer graphics technology employs many of the same techniques used to make films such as *Toy Story* and the upcoming *A Bug's Life*. In this case, the result will be action figures and comic books with a new look. "Since *AFD* is a completely digitized magazine, it's a nice fit" reported Tomart publisher Tom Tumbusch.

See for yourself. This month's cover and center spread are both composites of Conquest-created backgrounds tailored to prototype photos shot in Tomart's studios, with additional computer work by the *AFD* staff. Watch for more starting in July.



Thor from *Stargods*. See story on page 34.

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2nd and 3rd cover	915	Quarter page	170
Back cover	950	Business Card	110

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# ACTION NEWS BRIEFS

**South Park rights go to Playmates.** They were previously reported to rest with Street Players, but the license was not shown by them at Toy Fair. Details on plans for the line could not be confirmed.

**Dark Horse Enters the Action Figure Arena.** Dark Horse Comics, Inc. has announced its first in a series of action figure characters to be sold only at first through the direct comic market. See story on page 43.

**Justice League of America Figures will be made,** including blue and red Supermen. Details next issue.

**Top-Selling Action Figure Lines for January & February.** Because of a delay in reporting by one major mass marketer, Tomart's special action figure sales ranking was not available in time last month. This issue we have two months to report.

## Top Twenty Action Figure Lines for January and February 1998

Unit Figure Sales Only – Sales of Accessories, Playsets, etc. not included

Rank	Brands	JANUARY	Average	FEBRUARY	Average
			Retail Price	Brands	Retail Price
1	Star Wars		\$6.88	Star Wars	\$8.16
2	WWF		5.51	Power Rangers	8.92
3	Batman		6.97	Transformers/Beast Wars	10.04
4	Power Rangers		7.75	Batman	6.87
5	Transformers/Beast Wars		10.10	WWF	5.81
6	Jurassic Park		9.44	Marvel Super Heroes/X-Men	5.58
7	Marvel Super Heroes/X-Men		6.18	Jurassic Park	9.05
8	Spider-Man		5.64	Spider-Man	5.79
9	Beetleborgs		6.84	Beetleborgs	7.38
10	G.I. Joe		14.13	Spawn	8.55
11	Spawn		7.26	G.I. Joe	14.06
12	Toy Story		10.61	Hercules	5.39
13	KISS		7.99	Toy Story	13.19
14	Ninja Turtles		6.24	Ninja Turtles	5.96
15	Dragon Flyz		4.30	Star Trek	8.46
16	Star Trek		6.76	KISS	8.00
17	WCW		5.27	Lost in Space	11.02
18	Extreme Dinosaurs		8.74	WCW	5.66
19	Real Ghostbusters		3.43	Dragon Flyz	4.44
20	Mighty Ducks		6.82	Extreme Dinosaurs	9.03

Source: The NPD Group • TRSTS Report 516-625-2345 Note: Starting Line-Up ranked 2nd in Jan. and 8th in Feb. with Headliners in the 11th spot in Jan. and 15th in Feb. These are non-articulated and were removed.

These two comparison months offer AFD the opportunity to explain the relevance of the "Average Retail Price" data. Two major factors go into this number. First, all major retailers do not charge the same price; and second, regular, deluxe, and 12" figures are priced differently because of extra value and higher manufacturing costs. The higher the "average retail price," the more deluxe and other premium price figures are being sold. The *G.I. Joe* numbers, for example, indicate that 12" figures are holding firm despite the return of the 3¾" figures. The *WWF* numbers, on the other hand, indicate that \$4.99 figures are moving faster than the those sold for \$9.99. The *Toy Story* numbers indicate that larger sizes of Buzz Lightyear are still out-selling the regular line. Low averages like those seen on *Dragon Flyz* and *Ghostbusters* reveal closeout situations.

*Action News Briefs continues on next page...*



# The Greatest Action Figures Never Made

## Part III

"ThunderWings" were designed for a deluxe Lion-O, and would also have been sold as an accessory pack for other figures.

This is the third in a series of articles chronicling the fate of some really neat action figures, vehicles, and playsets from past Toy Fairs which never made it into full production. There may have been a variety of reasons. Even the greatest action figure toy lines fall eventually. A few are revived at a later date, but most just go away. The supporting TV show might get cancelled. A strong new competitor enters the market. Toy buyers or the public just tire of the line.

Three years is a good life for most brands, but no one knows exactly when support will evaporate. The advance time needed to get toys into production means there are usually a lot of cool toys in development when the ax falls.

This chapter of "The Greatest Action Figures Never Made" focuses on extensions of very successful lines which didn't quite make the cut. *ThunderCats*, *Star Trek*, *The Real Ghostbusters*, *Battlestar Galactica*, and *Visionaires* were all successful brands; several were megahits. Still there were fantastic toys in each line which were never produced.

Less popular lines such as *Adventures of the Galaxy Rangers*, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, *The Black Hole*, *Photon*, *Tiger Sharks*, and *LJN Stretch WWF Wrestlers* are also featured this issue. Thanks to Mark Lungo and Jim Klein for their help with this third feature on unproduced items.





# The Greatest Action Figures Never Made

The *Real Ghostbusters* was Kenner's biggest line between *Star Wars* and *Batman*. It took the action figure aisle by storm in 1986 and sold well going into 1990 before yielding the top turf completely to the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*...which had started to take over back in the fall of 1988. Very few of the new items for the 1991 line were produced. The Ecto-Glow Heroes saw very limited release, but the Backpack Heroes, Glow Copter, Egon's Lab, and the Fire Fighter vehicle didn't make production.

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Backpack Heroes



Glow Copter



Egon's Lab Playset



Fire Fighter