



### FIREBALL (1972)

"A lightning storm of scoring action and profit power in a four-player flipper" was the Fireball catchery and few fans would disagree. The machine was a dynamic player with an addictive fantasy theme, which made it a cracking success for Bally. Its design was handled by an industry great, Ted Zale. Described as "one part General Patton and one part Walt Disney", Ted was the no-bullshit genius who created piles of innovative machines with unique features that mean a lot to pin nerds. Fireball's spinning disc (also called a 'whirlwind spinner'), its captive messenger ball (a ball permanently trapped on the playfield) and zipper flippers were groundbreaking. During his 10 years at Bally, Ted produced over 70 machines (that's more than one design every two months) and his were the pins that you wanted to play. Fireball's monster backglass was the creative work of Dave Christensen – and a call to action that not many players could refuse. All 3500 plus units are still highly collectable. **Playability:** Those who knew their pinball in the early '70s were playing Fireball. The spinning discs on the playfield ensured randomness, but nifty features such as a 'kicker' (which booted the ball back into play) made it a good flowing game with good ball time and more chance to score. **Machine value:** \$2500. **Trivia:** A true icon – Fireball received its share of silver-screen moments and celebrity fans. It had a close-up cameo in Richard Linklater's 1993 film *Dazed and Confused* and a bit part in the Charlie Sheen flick *Navy Seals* (1990). Hugh Hefner also kept a Fireball in *Playboy's* editorial offices throughout the '70s and in 1972 the magazine dubbed it "possibly the finest pinball machine ever produced".