



KISS (1978)

Kiss was another successful Bally machine. Designer Jim Patla worked with artist Kevin O'Connor (the company's graphics manager and a successful artist in his own right) to create 7841 units of the rock 'n' roll pin. Kiss featured a strobing backglass and backlit band image to attract players in the arcade and its prototype was reportedly one of the first to use speech. It said things like "Shoot the K" and "KISS!" when players completed a row. It also groaned, "Too much rock 'n' roll!" on tilt. Unfortunately the sound didn't make the final cut, but parts of Gene Simmons certainly did. The top two spinners feature his face, while the back spinner shows his famous tongue. The band required that every aspect of the artwork (face, hair, clothes and tongue) be approved by each member. After a long-winded process the final backglass was eventually presented to the group at LA's Magic Mountain Amusement Park in 1978, where Mr Simmons signed it off himself. **Playability:** Kiss is also considered more of an art piece than a players' game by serious pinball folk and its reputation has stuck. The band's appeal and artwork have kept it immensely popular despite its reputation as a drain monster. **Machine value:** \$4000. **Trivia:** The angular 'SS' letters on the Kiss backglass presented a problem for the manufacturer when it was likened to the Nazi 'SS' (Schutzstaffel) symbol. It was subsequently redesigned for the German market.