

OVER 15 NEW NINTENDO⁶⁴ GAMES INSIDE

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



TEKKEN 3



New Update!

STREET FIGHTER III

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NEW CHARACTERS, NEW MOVES, NEW INFORMATION

NUMBER **91**

FEBRUARY, 1997
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THE MINDS BEHIND TEKKEN 2 ARE ABOUT TO
SHOW YOU HOW SHARP THEY REALLY ARE.



COMING SOON.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

By Ed Semrad

We're back from Nintendo of Japan's major game event: the annual Shoshinkai show. As I look back on it, in many ways this show was a lot like last year's event. Both started with a lot of preshow rumors and ended with the disappointing reality of Nintendo doing things in their usual slow, careful way.

Disappointing? Yes and no. As a journalist, I always want to see what is new and unannounced and being able to play only three games was quite a letdown. But knowing how Nintendo works, I never really expected them to open up their R&D labs to the press. Still, Zelda and the disk drive were supposed to be the key items at the show and that was the disappointing part. Other than 10 seconds of quick shots of Zelda on a prepared Nintendo demo tape, that was it. And the disk drive? All we were allowed to see was a very strange demo of a rotating cube with the audience's faces digitized on it (which supposedly was running through the disk drive). As for other Nintendo N64 games, about the only peek into the future was again, just

what was on the tape. Yoshi, Kirby and 007 were all there, but, unfortunately, if you blinked, you would have missed the major portion of the game that was being shown. A couple of the U.S.-developed games like Cruis'n and Kl Gold (which were finished and on their way to the stores) were nowhere to be seen. Other rumored games like F-Zero 2 and Donkey Kong 64 didn't even make it on the tape.

But that's Nintendo. As Mr. Yamouchi said last year, Nintendo will do things their way, and they will not be influenced by anything or anyone. As we saw again, that certainly is true.

The three games that we did get to play were exceptional.



Ed tests Nintendo's Mario Kart 64 at the Shoshinkai Show.

Mario Kart 64 (of which we were able to get a production copy by deadline time and still get it in this issue) brings back all the fun of the original Super NES cart and adds the special features that only the N64 can deliver.

BlastDozer is a strange type of game where you can have lots of fun just destroying things. It's hard to describe but once you start playing you are hooked.

StarFox 64, like Mario Kart, will be one hot product. With extremely intense ground and air battles, this game will sell systems!

The rest of the show was devoted to Nintendo's licenses. Neither Square nor Namco were there and Capcom had nothing to say regarding the N64. Seto, Konami, Hudson and 20 more third-party software companies had a total of 40 new Japanese N64 games to show or talk about. All of which were in our exclusive Shoshinkai coverage last month.

Speaking of exclusives, this issue we were able to get a lot of quality footage on Namco's top-secret Tekken 3 quarter-muncher (it isn't expected to officially debut until the Japan show later this spring). Don't expect this type of coverage anywhere else in the world!

Talking about world exclusives, we did get direct footage of Capcom's Street Fighter III from another arcade show we attended. In this issue you'll find four pages of pictures and info in our exclusive update.

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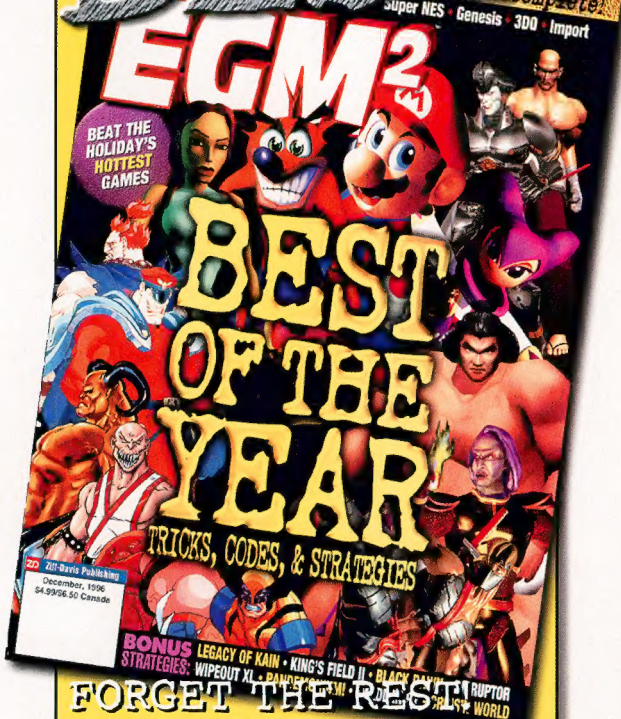
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GameFan

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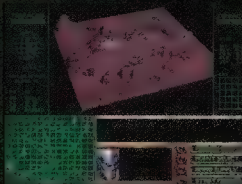
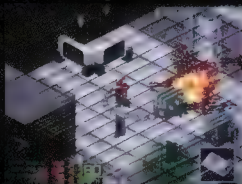
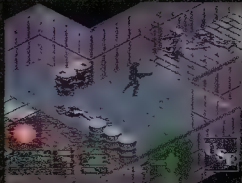
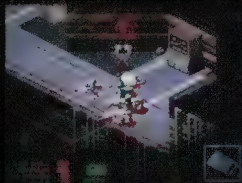
EGM

"Hot rendered graphics, crazy transparencies, burnin' music. Another fine Konami effort."

GameFan

"Overkill offers hours of blood-drenched fun, and there's plenty of replayability...hundreds of hidden areas."

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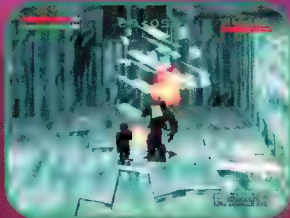
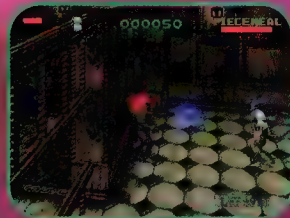
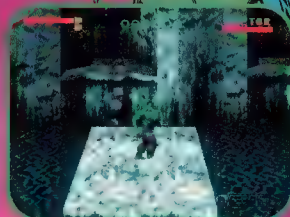
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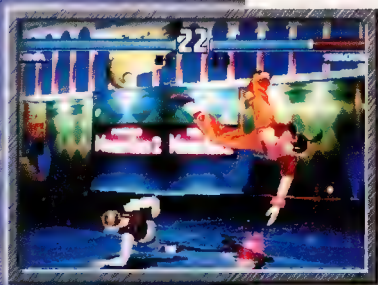


Smash the juicy brass pistons. It's pulverize or be pulverized when you become this mean green fighting machine. Go flat to the wall, the walls breathe, bang from eyes, flames, smoke and Malacca to your tin torso. Perfect self, the center. It's all part of smothering the puzzle. Not to mention the five pillars of smashing, crushing and pain really happen. **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** that gets in your face. It's all about the Hulk smash. **THE PANTHEON SAGA** ahead, burst a tear out your eye.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK **THE PANTHEON SAGA**



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TEKKEN 3

THE GUYS AND GALS FROM TEKKEN ARE BACK AND DEADLIER THAN EVER! THE STORY STARTS ON PAGE 78!

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GAME directory

3Dnares	71	Word For Goope's	56
Amale Classics	106-122-51	WZ GamesDay	188
Arms 91	98	NHL Open Ice	181
Battle Sensitive	62	Highnamite Demolition	91
Beyond the Beyond	76	Penetrationist	86
Blaze	62	Peak Performance	149
Blitzkrieg Force	133-33	Pegazus Prime	184-55
City of Lost Children	48	Power Move PTV	72
Command & Conquer	14,113-11	Psychic Force	98
Cool Boundary	151	Rally Cross	86
Crossword	97	Raid Assault	62
Crash: C&A	136-35	Re-Loaded	98
Crash's 64K	84,109	Rivets & Riv. 2	108-11
Crypt Killer	58	Rush Hour	148
Dark Forces	84	Saintest	118,120
Dark Will	82	Shoobie Warrior	88
Dark Will	88	Soul Blade	116-17
Demons USA! (DS)	68	Soviet Strike	68
DMZ	64	Space Jam	82,78
Doors 64	48	Spider	122-28
DRB 67	150	Star Gladiator	72
Dragon's Blood	86	Star Wars:64	57
IDA	128-28	Street Racer	71
IG Gold	86,79	Super Puzzle Fighter	87
Last World: 3P	38	Ten Pin Alley	187
Lenny	142	Test Drive Off-Road	148
Mario Kart 64	106-108	Tomb Raider	88
Mega Man 64	112-16	Total Drilling	86
MAX	68,72	Virtual Pool	138
NBA Hang Time	73	War Gods	146-41
NBA Jam Extreme	72,74	Wing Commander IV	97
NBA Shoot Out '97	146		



NUMBER

91

DEPARTMENTS

6 INSERT COIN

Our editor talks about Shoshinkai—all hype and no show.

20-26 PRESS START

The news that's making headlines in the world of video games.

30-31 TOP 10

See which video game won the number-one spot

34 GAMING GOSSIP

THE inside story on the gaming industry from Q-Mann.

38-52 NEXT WAVE PROTO

Exclusive first-looks at games on the horizon.

56-64 REVIEW CREW

A no-hold's-barred critique of gaming's latest releases

68-74 TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Want a power trip? Check out the hottest cheats here.

78-105 SPECIAL FEATURES

An in-depth look at the newest of the new.

106-142 NEXT WAVE

Get a sneak peek at upcoming titles for all systems!

144-151 TEAM EGM

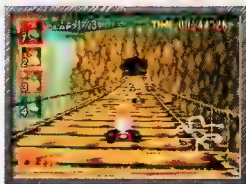
Previews and reviews for sports gamers

152-155 INTERFACE

An open forum for readers' questions and concerns.

EXCLUSIVE!

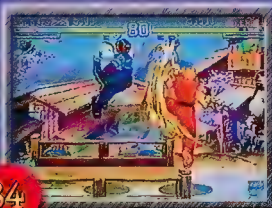
MARIO KART 64



You've heard the hype, now see why Mario Kart 64 looks to be an awesome racing game on the Nintendo 64. All your favorites plus some new racers are packed into this fantastic cart! EGM got a copy straight from Japan and it's hot! Also, don't forget to check out part two of our Shoshinkai coverage. The story begins on page 104!

"...now the tracks aren't flat; they cruise over hills and around banked corners."

FEATURES



84

REINVENTING THE KING: STREET FIGHTER III!

In a previous issue, we gave you a small taste of Capcom's next installment of the Street Fighter series: Street Fighter III. In this issue, you will devour over four pages of SF3 facts, characters (new and old), moves and a whole lot more. The story begins on page 84!

"Ryu and Ken plainly have an older, wiser air about them..."

SUSHI-X TELLS IT LIKE IT IS ABOUT TODAY'S FIGHTERS!

The master of fighting games has spoken! The honorable Sushi-X voices his opinions on such fighting games as Virtua Fighter 2, Mortal Kombat Trilogy, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Samurai Shodown IV, Toshiinden and more. The story begins on page 90!

"Even if you're not a big MK fan, you have to be impressed by the sheer size of the game..."



90



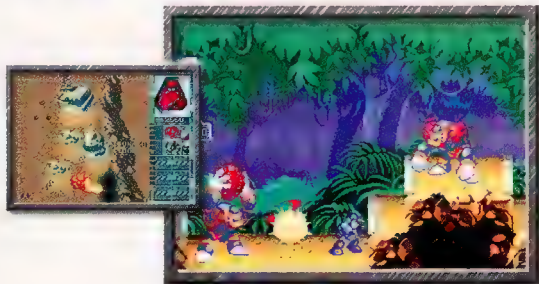
116

EVERYBODY NEEDS A LITTLE SOUL IN HIS OR HER LIFE!

Tekken series, watch out. Soul Blade for the PlayStation looks like a contender for 3-D fighting game champ. Both the character graphics and the backgrounds will knock your socks off when you plug it into your PS. There are also numerous modes to try, adding to the game's complexity. The story begins on page 116!

"...has the potential to be a worthy successor to the Tekken series."

NEXT WAVE



106 NINTENDO 64

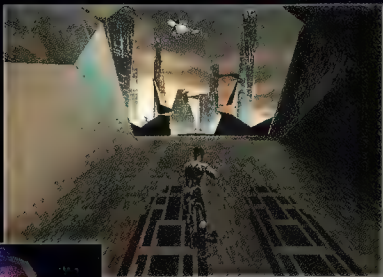
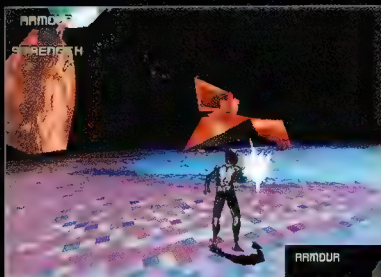
Race your favorite "Mario" character against other opponents in Mario Kart 64.

110 SATURN

Command & Conquer your enemies with different types of weapons.

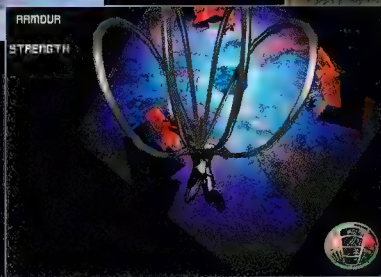
112 PLAYSTATION

Strive for your Independence Day while destroying aliens in ID4!



"MDK promises 3-D technology so cool and action so...realistic that it will send everything else running for cover."

- PC GAMER



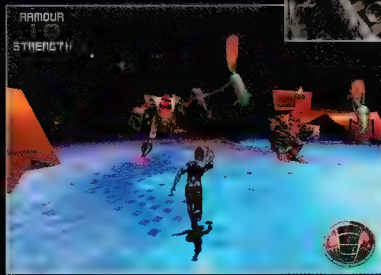
"One of the most innovative games ever created."

- GAMEFAN

ON A GOOD DAY, ONLY 2.5

"There are too many innovations...to list here."

- COMPUTER PLAYER

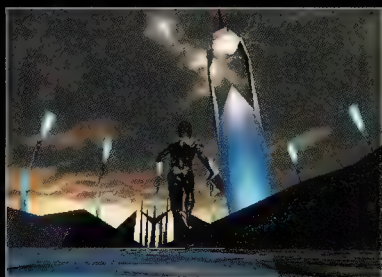
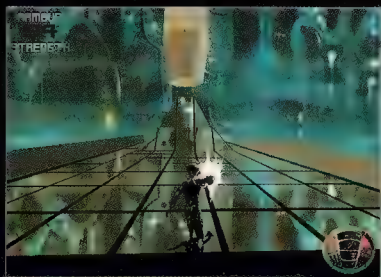


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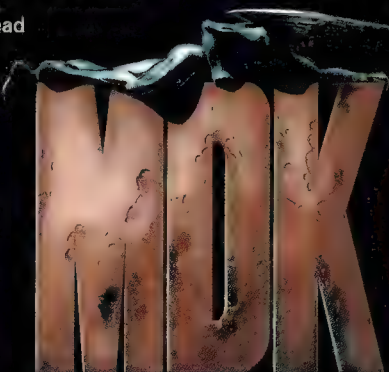
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IT THINKS, THEREFORE IT KILLS.

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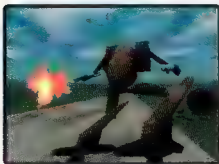
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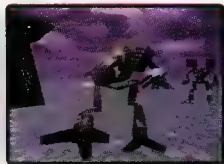
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THE BEST VIDEO GAME NEWS

PRESS START

PREVIEW

N64 ITEMS TO ARRIVE

Slowly but surely, additional Nintendo 64 add-ons are seeing the light of day. In last month's *EGM*, Nintendo's disk drive and new controllers were featured.

This month, info on some small-yet-vital accessories has been made public, such as the Memory Card Plus (pictured). Developed by Datel, the card offers 1 MB of game save storage space—four times as much as the standard card. InterAct Accessories is bringing this product into the U.S. under its own brand, and should sell for \$29.99 U.S. InterAct has also made good progress on developing an N64 Game Shark, a players' cheating/help tool that's expected sometime this year. ■



DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK

Nintendo, Sega and Sony Battle; Market Shows '96 Rebound

The end of 1996 proved the first real chance for next-generation systems to fight for market share. But between Sega, Sony and Nintendo, who came out on top? Well, you can't tell by what the companies stated:

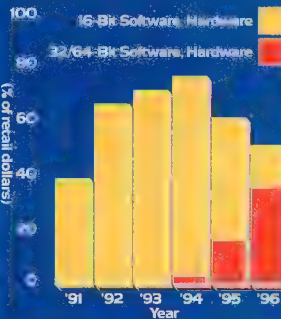
- "Sega Saturn sales equaled or beat the competition nationwide at most of our top retail accounts." —Sega of America's Ted Hoff, Dec. 4, 1996

- "...[E]mergency shipments of PlayStation game consoles are being shipped into North America at an

How 1996 Shapes Up:

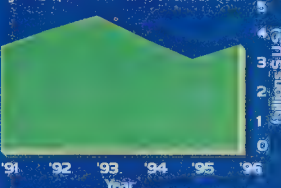
What Rules the Market?

16-Bit system sales slide, but still make up more than half the market. Next-gen system sales jump to 40 percent, but don't eclipse Super NES and Genesis. Next year, expect those tables to finally turn.



How Big Is the Market?

The market had been in decline after 16-bit system sales peaked. Thanks to next-gen systems, the market has rebounded.



Source: NPD's *VideoScan*

unprecedented rate." —Sony PR, Dec. 3, 1996

- "For Nintendo 64, the reception has been incredible, turning into a runaway train, a 1996 version of the 'Cabbage Patch' phenomenon."

- Nintendo of America's Peter Main, Dec. 10, 1996

With statements like these, it's hard to think any system will die soon—at least for the short term. Now that all the players are on the field, 1996 has shaped up to be a rebound year for the market and all three systems will prosper (see graph). So, it's three months after the holiday rush that will better indicate the ultimate future of these systems.

Nintendo has made no secret of its incredible N64 sales rate: more than 10 per minute since its September launch, according to Nintendo figures. Sony has countered by touting strength in numbers: the highest software-to-hardware ratio in the industry (6-1).

Increased production to 1 million systems a month to meet demand; almost 200 software titles available. Plus, reports of PS prices of \$125 or \$150—still rumors as of press time—have cropped up. Meanwhile, Sega has the unenviable task of keeping up with the pack. To its credit, it undercut all foes with a "Three Pack" promotion (three games free with system), which upped hardware sales by 500 percent. Now that the promo has ended, it's questionable whether the Saturn can continue that blistering sales pace. ■

So Who's On First?



N64

1.5 mil. U.S. units by 1/97 (Estimate)

- Strength: Mario
- Achilles' heel: M.L.A. sports titles?



Sony PS

2.8 mil. U.S. units by 1/97 (Estimate)

- Strength: Plenty of games; rumors of \$150 price tag
- Achilles' heel: No Mario killer?



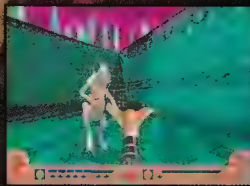
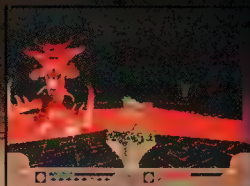
Sega 55

1.5 mil. U.S. units by 1/97 (Estimate)

- Strength: Internet access; deal for free games and cash off
- Achilles' heel: Too late to catch up?



This space
available
for immediate
occupancy.



The darkness of ancient Egypt and evil alien forces, possessing horrifying powers, have taken possession of the ancient city of Karnak. And these landlords are exacting extremely high rents. Like an arm and a leg...or worse.

Airdropped into first person landscapes, you must swim, crawl and otherwise run like hell through **20-plus levels** of gameplay. **Real time**, fully **3-D rendered environments** allow you complete **360° freedom of gameplay**. With just a machete to begin with, search for **7 other**

weapons like hand grenades, a flame thrower, an M60 machine gun and a magical cobra staff. **Dynamic lighting** allows for stunning visual effects. Cross bridges, crawl through tunnels and swim through underwater grottos. Your only salvation is the guiding Spirit of the Great Pharaoh Ramses. He's the only one in this god-forsaken neighborhood who wants to help you get a forwarding address.

So welcome to the nightmare of Ramses' tomb. And enjoy your stay. It may last forever.

POWER SLAVE

<http://www.playmatestoy.com>



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611 Anton Blvd
Suite 500
Corte Mesa, CA 92620
(714) 428 2100

Video game systems at school? Yup, it sounds too good to be true, but **Sega** has teamed up with a nonprofit group called Projectneat that aims to link every school in the United States up to the Internet. Using 1,100 Saturn Net Links donated from **Sega**, the project will give students a chance to tap the Internet's vast educational resources. The group chose Net Links over PCs because they're less costly, easier to set up and operate, and able to run with a TV—so groups of kids can watch the screen at once. Projectneat hopes to connect every K-12 school in America to the Internet by the summer of 1998.

It's official, but not surprising: **Sony** has inked a deal with **Square** to publish its upcoming PlayStation games, notably Final Fantasy VII (on three CDs, in case you haven't already heard). The deal effectively ends **Nintendo's** former monopoly on Square titles. FYI: Final Fantasy VII is due out this summer.

Ex-execs Jim Whims of **Sony** and Gregory Ballard of **Capcom**:

Where are they now? Well, the two are back in the gaming biz by joining the board of 3Dfx Interactive, a maker of PC accelerator cards and 3-D arcade boards.

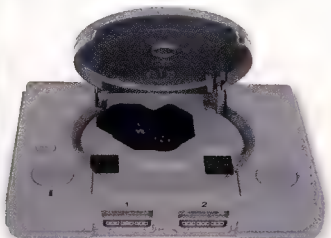
THE BIG STORY

The Original PlayStation

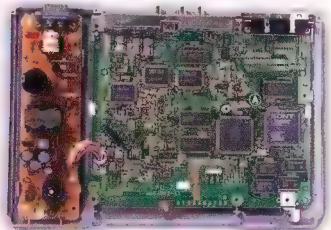
Model Number: SCPH-1000 (Japanese version)



In the beginning, the PlayStation had all these ports: (from left to right) the parallel I/O port, the serial port (for the link cable), the A/V output, the S-Video output, the multi A/V out, and power...



Given the PlayStation's strong branding, Sony didn't dare tamper with the machine's look...



Even with the original model, the PlayStation's interior design (power supply board on the left, motherboard on the right) has been regarded as compact, clean and efficient...

The Heir to the Throne

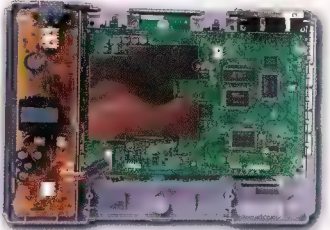
Model Number: SCPH-5500 (Japanese version)



...but to make the PlayStation cheaper and faster to produce, Sony eliminated the A/V and S-Video ports. The multi A/V port connects the PS to TV; different cables are needed for S-Video, RF, etc.



...however, the PlayStation's redesigners did move the location of the CD lens and motor.



...but even Sony found ways to shrink the main board's size by 20 percent. Note the soldered-in metal plate, which serves a dual purpose: protect the main chips from heat and human tampering.

OUT WITH THE OLD & IN WITH THE NEW

What's So Different About the New PlayStation?

How can Sony supply the world with the 1 million or so PlayStation's churned out each month in Japan?

Simple: design a system that's cheaper and easier to build. Last month, *EGM* reported the arrival

of a new PS model (SCPH-5500) that will increase manufacturing output by 30 percent.

It should be stressed that the PlayStation's compatibility or functionality remains unaffected with this new model—meaning

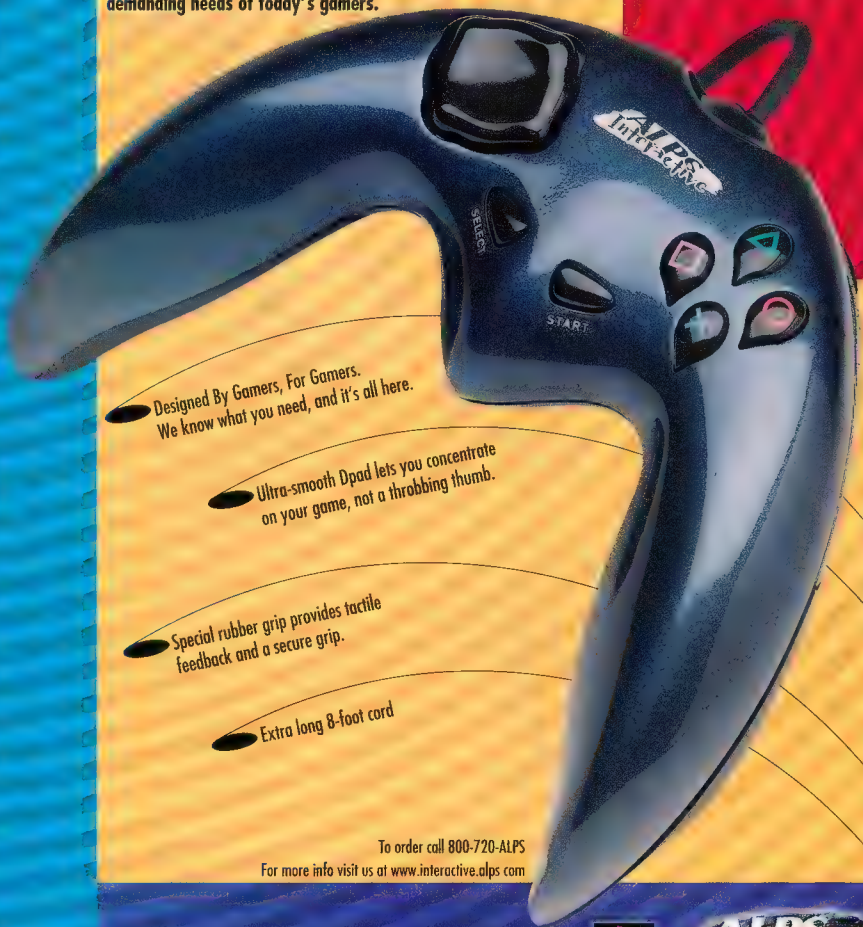
that Japanese systems can't play U.S. games and vice versa.

Still, *EGM* remained curious to see how Sony improved on the PS design—some major changes are described above.

(Continued on Page 26)

DESTROY them with **STYLE**

Do you live for the thrill of **CRUSHING** an adversary? Do you savor the success of **SLAMMING** the competition? Are you tired of having a fried thumb? We're here to help. The Alps Gamepad for the PlayStation™ game console offers you the controls you've been waiting for in a fine-tuned, easy-to-hold unit designed by professional game players to meet the demanding needs of today's gamers.



Designed By Gamers, For Gamers.
We know what you need, and it's all here.

Ultra-smooth Dpad lets you concentrate
on your game, not a throbbing thumb.

Special rubber grip provides tactile
feedback and a secure grip.

Extra long 8-foot cord

To order call 800-720-ALPS
For more info visit us at www.interactive.alps.com

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Galaxian

Ms. PAC-MAN

POWERED BY
namco



PlayStation

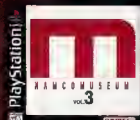




REMEMBER WHY YOU STARTED PLAYING VIDEO GAMES IN THE FIRST PLACE?

SO DID WE.

The fun of yesterday's arcade is now more than a fond memory. Presenting Namco Museum Vol. 3™ for the PlayStation™. Six authentic arcade classics that bring back the buzz of a bygone era. Galaxian™, Ms. Pac-Man™, Pole Position 2™, Dig-Dug™, Phozon™ and The Tower of Druaga™. Each great game an exact translation of the coin-op upright, all the way down to the arcade options and dip switches. Namco Museum Vol. 3. Because fun never gets old.



ANIME SHEDS LIGHT ON SF STORY

What were Ken, Guile, Chun-Li and other familiar faces up to before they became Street Fighter legends?

The answer to that question is revealed in a series of 10 videos from Manga Entertainment called *Street Fighter II V*.

The episodes first aired in Japan as a weekly TV series, and were produced by the same makers of *Street Fighter: The Animated Movie*.

With brilliant, detailed artwork and a deep, emotional story line with multiple plots, this series looks nothing like the ordinary Saturday-morning cartoon fare.

The actual plot apparently predates all the events in the Street Fighter games (including Alpha). The series will show how Ken and Ryu travel the globe to



Each video will contain three episodes of the Japanese series.

meet the Street Fighter protagonists—such as Chun-Li, Fei Long, Sagat, Dhalsim and M. Bison, just to name a few—in a quest to hone their combat skills.

The fairly violent fighting scenes in the series hold true to the games, as characters pull off their now-famous special attacks, such as Ken and Ryu's Hadoken, and employ their familiar fighting styles.

Each video sells for \$19.95 (dubbed version) and \$24.95 (subtitled). A new video will come out each month. ■



Plenty of games can claim they're good, but how many can say they're good enough to get into a hall of fame? Well,

Midway's NHL Open Ice earned the honor when the NHL put the arcade hit into the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. The game, on display for visitors to use, is currently available for the PlayStation.

From big game to the big screen:

Capcom of Japan will team up with a German film team to make a flick based on the game *BioHazard* (known as *Resident Evil* in the United States), overseas sources report. Expected to cost more than \$20 million U.S., the movie will feature monsters and new characters developed by **Capcom** via computer graphics, the sources stated.

Fans of the arcade 3-D robot fighter *Virtual On* for the Saturn, take note: **Sega** has stated that it'll sell a *Virtual On* Twin Stick peripheral, available through direct sales, 888/SEGA-SALES. This dual joystick will give Saturn players the same gameplay experience as in the arcades. A Japanese version of this dual joystick was unveiled last year.

BREAKING NEWS

SONY FORMS PS CLUB

PlayStation owners of the world, unite! That's what Sony hopes to do with the introduction of "PlayStation Underground."

This first-of-its-kind fan club will give system owners easy access to "news, game demos, tips, interviews, behind-the-scenes information and valuable promotions" via a CD-ROM that will be sent out to members, according to Sony.

As of press time, Sony had not yet revealed details on how to join the club or any possible fees. However, at Sony Computer Entertainment's Internet site (www.sepc.sony.com/SCEA), the company had been promoting "PlayStation Underground" with a special promotion. Those who gave the names of opponents they've beaten in PS combat received free minutes on Sony's game hint line. ■

OLD/NEW

(Continued from Page 22)

Most of the changes are internal, except for the output ports that have been consolidated. Also, Sony placed a metal shield over the main chips, probably to keep 'em cooler.

The significance of Sony's new PlayStation model is more important than it seems at the surface. First off, the design changes make the North American and Japanese systems more similar than before.

Obviously, that makes it easier for Sony to adjust PS production to account for fluctuations in demand in Japan and here.

More importantly, with a cheaper-to-make PS, Sony can swallow the brunt of a system retail price cut, which has been heavily rumored—and will loom even larger come this spring. ■

So What Else Is Changed?



■ **New Cables:** The system comes supplied with a new A/V cable that plugs into the multi A/V port. You'll have to buy different cables for RF and S-Video. (These cables also work with the older PS systems.)

■ **Larger Joysticks:** You may know that the PS pads in Japan were just slightly smaller than the U.S. ones. With the new system, Sony is sticking to the larger size.

■ **English Text:** The original PS in Japan labeled all the ports in kanji. Presumably to make the system more "global," all the labeling is now done in English.

PREVIEW

MEMORY CARDS GET FAT

New PS Model Offers 360 Slots



The latest 360-slot Memory Card is now available in Europe. It features a new design and is currently available.

Thanks to a line of fast RAM access, PlayStation 2 memory cards are capable of handling up to 33 times as much data as a standard PlayStation Memory Card. PlayStation 2 will be a part of the memory card.

The PS 2 memory card is the most powerful memory card in the world. It is the only memory card that can handle 360 slots. It is the only memory card that can handle 360 slots. It is the only memory card that can handle 360 slots. ■



DINOSAUR HUNTING SEASON OPENS MARCH '97



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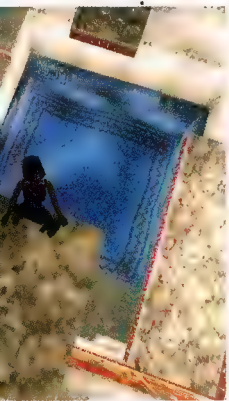
Acclaim
entertainment, inc.
www.acclaimregion.com



GO WHERE NO MAN
HAS EVER COME
DJT ALIVE NOTICE
WE SAID "MAN"



IF THE GAME GRAPHICS
DON'T BLOW YOU AWAY,
ONE OF THESE WILL



TREASURE SEEKING,
PUZZLE SOLVING ALLIGATOR
WRESTLING, AND STILL TIME
FOR A FIGHT



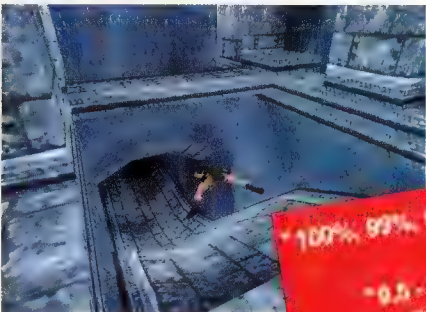
SOMETIMES, HAVING A



Sometimes, you also need guts. Or a brain. Or quick feet. Other times, you need all of the above plus grenades, a shotgun and a matching pair of nine millimeters. Such is your fate when you control Lara Croft, heroine heartthrob of Tomb Raider.



EIDOS INTERACTIVE, CORE, TOMB RAIDER, LARA CROFT AND HER LIKENESS ARE TRADEMARKS OF EIDOS, PLC ©1996 EIDOS
EIDOS HINT LINE 1 900-288-4263 COST OF CALL \$0 95/MINUTE MUST BE 18 YEARS OR HAVE PARENT'S PERMISSION/TOUCH-TONE PHONE REQUIRED



NOTHING LIKE A
LITTLE SWIM BEFORE
TENDING OFF A PACK
OF WOLVES



100% - Playstation game of the year!
Game Fan
97% - Playstation game of the year!
Adventure game of the year!
Ultra Game Players
99% - Game of the year!
PS Extreme

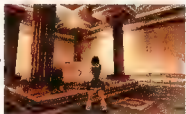
KILLER BODY JUST ISN'T ENOUGH.

NOT EVERYONE SEES
A BRIGHT LIGHT
JUST BEFORE DYING
(JACKY STAFF)

Lara has her sights on a few ancient artifacts, and she's not going to let anything or anybody get in her way. Alligators. Wolves. Thugs. They're all tempting fate once in Lara's path. But hey, what's a little temptation? Especially when everything looks this good. In the game, we mean. Check out Tomb Raider at www.tombraider.com.



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE



TOMB RAIDER

EGM Review Crew PICK OF THE TOP 10 MONTH

January 1997

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

2 / 1 / **Name of Game** 9.3
Publisher's Name

Average Review Crew Score ↑
 # Consecutive Months On The Chart
 Last Month's Rank ↑ Game System ↓
 Rank Number

2 / 20 / **Name of Game** 9.1
Publisher's Name

OVERALL

1	1	SF Alpha 2	9.1	
<small>By Capcom of America</small>				
2	1	Tomb Raider	9.1	
<small>By Eidos</small>				
3	1	Super Mario⁶⁴	9.5	
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>				
4	1	Tetris Attack	8.3	
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>				
5	1	Dragon Force	8.3	
<small>By Working Designs</small>				
6	1	WaveRace⁶⁴	9	
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>				
7	1	Suikoden	8.7	
<small>By Konami of America</small>				
8	1	Tekken 2	8.5	
<small>By Namco of America</small>				
9	1	Command & Conquer	8.9	
<small>By Westwood Studios</small>				
10	1	Shadows O.T.E.	8.3	
<small>By LucasArts</small>				
11	1	Legacy of Kain	8.6	
<small>By Activision</small>				
12	1	Virtua Cop 2	8.1	
<small>By Sega of America</small>				
13	1	Die Hard Trilogy	8.8	
<small>By Fox Interactive</small>				
14	1	NIGHTS	8	
<small>By Sega of America</small>				
15	1	John Madden '97	9.1	
<small>By Electronic Arts</small>				
16	1	Twisted Metal 2	8.3	
<small>By Sony Computer Entertainment</small>				
17	1	mr. Bones	8.6	
<small>By Sega of America</small>				
18	1	PilotWings⁶⁴	8.4	
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>				
19	1	World Series 2	9.3	
<small>By Sega of America</small>				
20	1	DK Country 3	8.1	
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>				

PLAYSTATION

1	1	Tomb Raider	9.1
<small>By Eidos</small>			
2	1	Suikoden	8.8
<small>By Konami of America</small>			
3	1	Tekken 2	8.5
<small>By Namco of America</small>			
4	1	Legacy of Kain	8.6
<small>By Activision</small>			
5	1	Die Hard Trilogy	8.8
<small>By Fox Interactive</small>			
6	1	John Madden '97	9.1
<small>By Electronic Arts</small>			
7	1	Twisted Metal 2	8.3
<small>By Sony Computer Entertainment</small>			
8	1	Jet Moto	9.3
<small>By Sony Computer Entertainment</small>			
9	1	Soviet Strike	8.1
<small>By Electronic Arts</small>			
10	1	Crash Bandicoot	8.4
<small>By Sony Computer Entertainment</small>			

SATURN

1	1	SF Alpha 2	9.1
<small>By Capcom of America</small>			
2	1	Dragon Force	9
<small>By Working Designs</small>			
3	1	Command & Conquer	8.9
<small>By Westwood Studios</small>			
4	1	Virtua Cop 2	8.1
<small>By Sega of America</small>			
5	1	NIGHTS	8
<small>By Sega of America</small>			
6	1	mr. Bones	8.6
<small>By Sega of America</small>			
7	1	World Series 2	9.3
<small>By Sega of America</small>			
8	1	DecAthlete	8.3
<small>By Sega of America</small>			
9	1	Iron Storm	8
<small>By Working Designs</small>			
10	1	Dark Savior	8.4
<small>By Sega of America</small>			

For the first time anywhere, the editors of EGM have put together a listing of the best games for the most popular systems. Our Review Crew has done the ratings, and they have been averaged into one easy-to-read score. It is also important to note that sometimes a game will get ranked higher than others with larger Review Crew scores. This is because the game is "hot," and it is one which our Review Crew is constantly playing. These lists will change every month as additional games are reviewed.

The games are ranked by individual system, and there is an overall top 20 list for all the systems. This last list will pick up any the 16-Bit or portable game that may come out.

On the right-hand page, we have put together a list of all the games that will be coming out in the next three months for the three major game systems. This list should be helpful for players, so that they can plan out their future game purchases. The game name and the month the title will be released was obtained from each of the game companies and is correct as of the middle of the month listed on the previous page. Please note that the release date could change due to reasons beyond our control. Watch each month's list to get the latest update.

NINTENDO⁶⁴

1	1	Super Mario⁶⁴	9.5
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>			
2	1	WaveRace⁶⁴	9.3
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>			
3	1	Shadows O.T. Empire	7.9
<small>By LucasArts</small>			
4	1	PilotWings⁶⁴	8.4
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>			
5	1	Gretzky Hockey	8.3
<small>By Williams</small>			
6	1	MK Trilogy	8.1
<small>By Williams</small>			
7	1	Killer Instinct Gold	6.9
<small>By Nintendo of America</small>			

FUTURE SHOCK

NINTENDO 64

Mario Kart™	Nintendo	Feb.	Act/Driving
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter	Acclaim	Mar.	First-Person
Doom 64	Midway	Mar.	First-Person
War Gods	Midway	Mar.	Fighting
Blast Corps	Nintendo	Mar.	Action
GoldenEye	Nintendo	Mar.	Action
Tetrisphere	Nintendo	Mar.	Puzzle
Mission: Impossible	Ocean	Mar.	Act/Strat
Dark Rift	Vic Tokai	Apr.	Fighting

PLAYSTATION

Battlesport	Acclaim	Feb.	Act/Shooter
Killing Time	Acclaim	Feb.	First-Person
Psychic Force	Acclaim	Feb.	Fighting
Test Drive: Off-Road	Accolade	Feb.	Racing
MechWarrior II	Activision	Feb.	Sim
Spider	BMG Interactive	Feb.	Action
Mega Man 8	Capcom	Feb.	Action
ID4	Fox Interactive	Feb.	Action
Hexen	GT Interactive	Feb.	First-Person
Locus	GT Interactive	Feb.	Action
Broken Helix	Konami	Feb.	First-Person
Crypt Killer	Konami	Feb.	Shooter
Road Rage	Konami	Feb.	Sports
Ball Blazer Championship	LucasArts	Feb.	Act/Sports
Hero's Adventures	LucasArts	Feb.	Act/Adv
Necrodone	Mindscape	Feb.	First-Person
MDK	Playmates	Feb.	Action
City of Lost Children	Psygnosis	Feb.	Adventure
League of Pain	Psygnosis	Feb.	Act/Sports
Rush Hour	Psygnosis	Feb.	Sports
Rally Cross	Sony Interactive	Feb.	Sports
Command & Conquer	Westwood Studios	Feb.	Strategy
Project X 2	Acclaim	Mar.	Shooter
Buster Bros	Capcom	Mar.	Puzzle
D&D Collection	Capcom	Mar.	Act/RPG
Mega Man Battle & Chase	Capcom	Mar.	Act/Racing
Battle Stations	EA	Mar.	Action
Need for Speed 2	EA	Mar.	Racing
Swagman	Eidos	Mar.	Act/Adv
Tigershark	GT Interactive	Mar.	Shooter
Sign of the Sun	Koel	Mar.	Act/Adv
Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	Konami	Mar.	Shooter
Vandal-Hearts	Konami	Mar.	RPG
War Gods	Midway	Mar.	Fighting
NCAA Basketball	Mindscape	Mar.	Sports
Soul Blade	Namco	Mar.	Fighting
Wing Commander IV	Origin	Mar.	FMV/Shooter
VMX Racing	Playmates	Mar.	Sports
Codename Tenka	Psygnosis	Mar.	First-Person
Summer	Psygnosis	Mar.	RPG
Thunder Truck Rally	Psygnosis	Mar.	Sports
Shadoan	ReadySoft	Mar.	FMV Adv
Bushido Blade	SCE	Mar.	Fighting
Real Bout Fatal Fury	SCE	Mar.	Fighting
Wild Arms	SCE	Mar.	RPG
NBA Shoot Out '97	Sony Interactive	Mar.	Sports
WCW vs. the World	TTHQ	Mar.	Sports
Grand Slam	Virgin	Mar.	Sports
NanoTex Warrior	Virgin	Mar.	Shooter
Lands of Lore	Westwood Studios	Mar.	RPG
Ballistic Pnball	Acclaim	Apr.	Sim
Last Rites	Acclaim	Apr.	First-Person
Cyberbots	Capcom	Apr.	Fighting
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	Apr.	Fighting
Darkest Conflict	EA	Apr.	Act/Combat
Syndicate Wars	EA	Apr.	Act/Shooter
Bedlam	GT Interactive	Apr.	Act/Adv

SATURN

Mass Destruction	BMG Interactive	Apr.	Action
Cyberbots	Capcom	Apr.	Fighting
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	Apr.	Fighting
Syndicate Wars	EA	Apr.	Act/Shooter
Armed	Interplay	Apr.	Action
VR Baseball	Interplay	Apr.	Sports
Pinky and The Brain	Konami	Apr.	Action
Sacred Pools	Sega Soft	Apr.	FMV Adv
Albert Odyssey	Working Designs	Apr.	RPG
Battlesport	Acclaim	Feb.	Act/Shooter
Killing Time	Acclaim	Feb.	First-Person
Tunnel B1	Acclaim	Feb.	Driving/Shoot
MechWarrior II	Activision	Apr.	Sim
Lunacy	Atlas	Feb.	RPG
Mega Man 8	Capcom	Feb.	Action
NBA Live '97	EA	Feb.	Sports
Soviet Strike	EA	Feb.	Act/Strategy
ID4	Fox Interactive	Feb.	Action
Lost Vikings	Interplay	Feb.	Adventure
Hero's Adventures	LucasArts	Feb.	Act/Adv
Dragon's Lair	ReadySoft	Feb.	FMV Adv
Scorchers	Sega	Feb.	Action
Last Rites	Acclaim	Mar.	First-Person
Battle Stations	EA	Mar.	Action
Swagman	Eidos	Mar.	Act/Adv
Virtual Pool	Interplay	Mar.	Sim
Shadoan	Readysoft	Mar.	FMV Adv
Fighters Mega Mix	Sega	Mar.	Fighting
SCUD	Sega Soft	Mar.	Shooter
Grand Slam	Virgin	Mar.	Sports



SCUD—Sega of America



Spider—BMG

Rebel Moon Rising	GT Interactive	Apr.	First-Person
Armed	Interplay	Apr.	Action
Caesar's World of Gambling	Interplay	Apr.	Sim
Descent Max	Interplay	Apr.	Act/Shooter
Red Asphalt	Interplay	Apr.	Act/Driving
VR Baseball	Interplay	Apr.	Sports
Brahma Forces	Jaleco	Apr.	First-Person/Adv
Pinky and The Brain	Konami	Apr.	Action
H O S.T.	MGM Interactive	Apr.	Shooter
QAD	Philips	Apr.	Act/Shooter
Tale of the Sun	SCE	Apr.	Sim

This calendar details for the next three month games. These games are subject to change without notice.

He spent years scrapping,
clawing and grinding for the
right to play in the NHL.[®] All
you did was buy your way in.
Don't think he won't be looking
for you along the boards.





You're a marked man. But try not to let that intimidate you. Because you have all the teams with all the starting lineups. You have advanced gameplay and artificial intelligence, with players cycling and executing powerplays just like they do in the pros. You can create your own strategy for breakouts, forechecking and offensive and defensive attacks. You'll be able to swarm the net or focus your offense around your right winger, left winger or center. You've got Icon Passing™, which lets you execute give-and-goes as well as any assist leader. Of course, when you go skate to skate with the likes of Jagr, Lemieux, Hatcher, Coffey and Brodeur, there's one thing you haven't got. A prayer.



- Game consoles stronger than ever
- PlayStation upgrade in '97
- New Nintendo game system by 2000
- Ghouls & Ghosts for the N64!
- Zelda on the PC
- Sega to launch record label

Microsoft, Q-Link, to this episode of Gossiping Gamers. After a couple of years in the pit and E rapidly approaching, the Q-Linkers and his team of spies have combed over, well, proof texts and performed a system high dive into the vast cavity of game info that would make Greg Louganis green with envy. Betwixt and between, the info we extracted this month is cooler than a polar bear's towelie. Don't believe me? Read on... Many of you may recall last year when "Expert Analysts" predicted the decline of the video game console business, while PCs were supposed to take over the market...well guess what? It ain't happenin'! Record-breaking sales of the N64 prove once and for all that the console is king, and it's not just Nintendo that's celebrating. Sony shipped around 2.5 million PlayStation 1's; November and December combined, and even Sega has seen a considerable resurgence of the Saturn with their new rippin'-jacks software bundle. Although all this is not exactly "breaking news" to Q-followers, it just proves again what we already knew: The console biz is bare to stay and has a bright future indeed. Sega, Sony and, of course, Nintendo are all feeling warm and fuzzy because of their console's sales numbers and they want you to know that. What they don't want you to know is that their next, next-generation games systems will be closer than you might think.

The biggest news here are obviously the upcoming consoles. After a couple of years in the pit and E rapidly approaching, the Q-Linkers and his team of spies have combed over, well, proof texts and performed a system high dive into the vast cavity of game info that would make Greg Louganis green with envy. Betwixt and between, the info we extracted this month is cooler than a polar bear's towelie. Don't believe me? Read on... Many of you may recall last year when "Expert Analysts" predicted the decline of the video game console business, while PCs were supposed to take over the market...well guess what? It ain't happenin'! Record-breaking sales of the N64 prove once and for all that the console is king, and it's not just Nintendo that's celebrating. Sony shipped around 2.5 million PlayStation 1's; November and December combined, and even Sega has seen a considerable resurgence of the Saturn with their new rippin'-jacks software bundle. Although all this is not exactly "breaking news" to Q-followers, it just proves again what we already knew: The console biz is bare to stay and has a bright future indeed. Sega, Sony and, of course, Nintendo are all feeling warm and fuzzy because of their console's sales numbers and they want you to know that. What they don't want you to know is that their next, next-generation games systems will be closer than you might think.

In other hardware news, MIPS technology (the company that designs the chipsets for Silicon Graphics' high-end workstation computers) is currently working hard on the successor to the M64. Supposedly, this is some hardware crew who designed the M64, and who hearing news of them starting work on a new console is no surprise, it's the target street date of the box: early 1998...well that's not too far off. In any case, MIPS is looking for a partner to develop a Super NES emulator for the PC...but imagine, you'll never be able to lose the Super NES DNC in the same time it takes you to find the Super NES emulator for the PC...and it's the PC game, Gossiping Gamers!

The new hardware news isn't all bad news either. Sega, of Nintendo, has made some interesting news. Some of the hardware guys and the man responsible for designing the PlayStation and the sound chip in the Super NES was quoted as saying, "The true potential of the PlayStation will be shown at next year's E3." At that we assumed he was referring to some secret game Sony was working on, but we later found out that he was hearing about the new PlayStation. Dubbed the "Type C" this new PS is not the 32-bit PlayStation 1 that's been grabbing the headlines (secretly that console is still on schedule for a 1998 release date) but rather, it's similar to the current PlayStation except with a quad-speed CD drive and an additional 1.5-megabyte of VRAM...not a PlayStation 1 1/2. From what we understand, Sony's original game plan for the PlayStation was to launch the console with the aforementioned faster drive and additional RAM. Only one problem stood in the way: price. A year and a half ago, a PS such equipped would've had a retail price somewhere in the neighborhood of \$350 US, which Sony thought (rightly so) was a little too pricey. So Sony went back and out corners to help drop the price, hence, the PlayStation as we know it today. That being said and this being true, the price of RAM and quad-speed drive is currently low enough for the console to be priced the same as today's PS if not lower. PS Type C will play older PlayStation games along with new dedicated Type C games, the first of which is "Tokkan." The Japanese Type C will ship around June of 1997 and a U.S. release should be sometime before Christmas. Japanese versions that plug into the back of regular PlayStation 1's will ship simultaneously with Type C and should be around 60 bucks.

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Capcom of Japan is currently working on a new adventure game for the Nintendo 64. The first title in question is Ghouls & Ghosts 64. The word on the street says that this new installment is one of the best action game franchises around, it's shaping up to be quite the exceptional title. The game is completely 3-D and utilizes a free-flowing, chess-view camera. Our Japanese copy-mister, Terry-Ad, reports that the game evokes the cutsey look of Mario and his ischy-N64 clones (Doromon 64 and Gosmon 5 are just two examples of the countless Mario 64 look-alikes on the way) and instead sports an older, better look (a.k.a. Ninja Raider and Zelda 64). G&G 64 is already up and running and plays similar to Mario 64. Capcom is working on a 3-D Mega Man title (Rock Man in Japan) for the N64. From what we hear, MM 3D will not only play similar to Mario 64, but will also feature the bright, colorful look of Nintendo's arena-fair title. Look for the game sometime in 1996. The third mystery game has been identified as a hand-drawn, 3-D one-on-one fighter, thought to be based around Capcom's licensed D&D universes. This game is still on the drawing boards. In other news, a certain Washington-based game developer is working with Atlus on bringing Japanese NBA RPGs over to the States. Speaking of Atlus, Nintendo of Japan is talking to the Persons people about jointly developing a 3-D Megami Tensei adventure game for the N64 based on the popular Japanese Manga of the same name. The big "M" has also just signed a multi-year deal with Konami. Under the agreement, Konami will develop at least 15 Nintendo 64 games over the next five years at a minimum budget of 2-million bucks each. Well G-fers, that's all the gaming gossip for this month. Stop by here next month where we'll spill the beans on the gaming fallacies of other mega, sensible behind enemy lines game more and (hopefully) throw a little more info on who have the Q-crew in their crosshairs. TFN...

-THE Q

SOUL BLADE

Soul Blade is the home version of Soul Edge, Namco's 3-D fighter that's reminiscent of the 16-Bit, 2-D fighter WeaponLord. There are 11 combatants in all (but two of them—Cervantes and Soul Edge—are Bosses). The game's moves and combos, although different from those in Tekken 2, are pretty easy to master.

KEY TO MOVES:

F	Forward	<u>A</u>	Weak Slash
B	Back	<u>B</u>	Strong Slash
U	Up	<u>K</u>	Kick
D	Down	<u>G</u>	Guard

SIEGFRIED

Spiral Attack	<u>A, A, B</u>
Triple Head-butt	B, <u>B, A, B</u>
Shoulder Charge	F, <u>B+K</u>
Sledge Hammer	F, F, <u>A+B</u>
Drop Kick	Dash <u>B+K</u>
Double Lancers	DF, <u>K, K</u>
Unicorn's Charge	DF, <u>K, K, B</u>
Spin Kick	<u>A+K</u>
Brainstormer	<u>B+K</u>
Earth Divide	D, DF, F, <u>B</u>
Flapjack	D, <u>A+G</u>
Eagle's Flap	<u>A, D, A</u>
Crosscutter	B, D, <u>A</u>
Mortal Slaughter	DB, <u>B, B, B</u>
Command of the Blade	F, D, DF, <u>B+K</u>

TAKI

Purple Wind	<u>A, A, D, K</u>
Lightning Spark	F, <u>A, B, B, B</u>
Silent Storm	<u>B, B, A, K</u>
Middle Crisscross	<u>B, A, F, K</u>
Low Crisscross	<u>B, A, D, K</u>
Hunting Shadow	<u>K, K, D, K</u>
Assassin's Kick (Triple)	DF, <u>K, K, K</u>
Death Spin	D, DF, F, <u>B</u>
Moon Orbiter	D, DF, F, <u>B, K</u>
Rolling Kick	D, DF, F, <u>K</u>
Stalker	F, F, <u>A+B</u>
Haley's Comet	F, DF, D, DB, <u>B, B</u>
Wind of Death	D, U, <u>B+K</u>
Assassin's Revenge	<u>B, A+G</u>
Mad Circus	D, DB, <u>B, B+G</u>

MITSURUGI

Slice & Dice	<u>A, A, D, A</u>
Tiger Sweep	B, <u>A</u>
Sudden Wind	<u>B, B, A, D, A</u>
Wipe Out	<u>B, B, A, B</u>
Thunder Strike	F, F, <u>B</u>
Leg Sweeper	D, <u>K, B</u>
Wood Chopper	B, <u>K, B</u>
Phoenix Tail	F, F, <u>A+B</u>
Silent Step	D, DF, F
Silent Stab	D, DF, F, <u>B</u>
Final Strike	DF, <u>B</u>
Dirty Stab	B, <u>A+G</u> (with weapon)
Life After Death	B, <u>A+G</u> (with kick)
Cross the Styx	B, DB, D, DF, F, <u>B+K</u>
Sea of Madness	<u>A+G</u>

SOPHITIA

Silent Shadow	<u>A, A, D, A</u>
Silent Rage	<u>A, A, D, K</u>
Holy Slash	<u>B, B, D, A</u>
Holy Comet	<u>B, B, D, K</u>
Holy Step	F, D, DF
Athens Upper	F, D, DF, <u>B</u>
Moon Flip	DB, <u>K</u>
Angel's Spiral	UF, <u>K, A</u>
Angel's Dive	UF, <u>K, B</u>
Angel's Flip	UF, <u>K, K</u>
Kalendroscope Kick	<u>K, K, D, K</u>
Paradise Kick	<u>K, K, D, K, F, K</u>
Heaven to Hell	<u>B+G, D, A+B+K</u>
Returning Madness	B, <u>A+G</u>
Soul Asylum	D, DF, F, <u>A+G</u>

SEUNG MINA

Bad Attitude
Dancing Souls
Sleeping Souls
Triple Wave
Skyscraper
Rocket Launcher
Moon Crusher
Earth Crusher
Baton Twirler
Orion Express
Star Destroyer
Killing Vault
Crystal Cyclone
Rail Crusher
Seek and Destroy

A, F, A, A
A, F, A, A, K
A, F, A, A, D, K
B, B, D, A
B, B, D, A+B
F, F, K
F, F, K, K
F, F, K, K, K
A+B, F, DF, D, DB, B
A+B, F, A
A+B, F, A, B
UF, A+B
B, B, A+B
A+G
B+G

HWANG SUNG KYUNG

Spiral Flame
Nail Driver
Sidewinder
Edge of the Hurricane
Trip to Death
Trip to Heaven
Heaven's Strike
Cut Grass
Single Jump Kick
Double Jump Kick
Triple Jump Kick
Split-U-In-2
Run & Hit
Foot Stamp
Steel Explosion

A, A, D, A
A, A, B
DF, A, A
DF, A, A, B
B, B, A, D, A
B, B, A, B
F, F, B
D, K, B
F, F, K
F, F, K, K
F, F, K, K, K
F, F, A+B
Dash+K
DF, K
B, DB, D, DF, F, B+K

VOLDO

Dark Shredder
Donkey Kick
Praying Mantis
Evil Bow
Leg Trap
Kaleidoscope of Pain
Deadly Rose
Monkey Flip
Psycho Spin

A, B, A
DF, K
A+B
D, A+B
F, F, A+B
F, F, A+B, K
A+K
F, F, A+B+G
F, F, A+B+G, K

Heaven's Swing
Power Slave
Demon Elbow
Black Masquerade
Meat Driller & Kick
Rat Chase & Kick
Blind Spin
Grave Digger
Stomach Slicer

D, B
D, B, B
F, F, B
A, D, B
D, A, K
D, A, A, A, K
B, A, A
DF, A, A, A
DF, B

U LONG

Whipping
Whiplash Low Kick
Whiplash Pain
Rope Skipper
Double Stab
Drum Fire
Air Splitter
Snake Venom
Punisher Whip
Monkey Magic
Turn Around
Dragon's Elbow
Dragon's Knuckle
Harpoon Driller
Rising Dragon

A, A, D, A
A, A, D, K
A, A, D, K, B
DB, A
D, A, U, B,
DF, B, B, B
DB, B, A
F, B, B
F, F, B
D, DF, F, B
D, DB, B
D, DB, B, B
D, DB, B, B, B, B
K, D, K
K, D, A

ROCK

Wild Slash
Horizontal Sweep Kick
Buffalo's Charge
Axe Swings Down
Demolition Strike
Tidalwave
Discus Thrower
Elephant Trunk
The Annihilator
Lumberjack
Tornado
Battle Axe
Pouncer
Falling Rock
Devastator

DF, K, A
DB, K
F, F, K
F, A, A
F, A, A, B
F, A, A, A
DB, A
DF, B
DF, A+G
F, F, A
F, F, A, B
F, F, B
B, A+B
D, DB, B, B+G
F, DF, D, DB, B, A+G

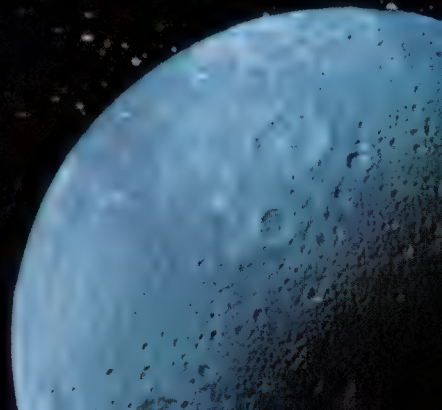
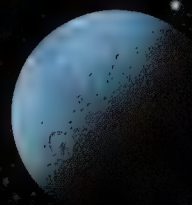


T H E N E W E S T

STAR WARS™

ADVENTURES ARE COMING TO

TELEVISION.



AND YOU CAN
FIND THEM ON
THIS STATION.



<http://www.lucasarts.com>



Drop that remote. Two action-packed *Star Wars* games have arrived - specially enhanced for the PlayStation™ game console. *Dark Forces™* surrounds you with its visceral brand of first-person fire-power, while *Rebel Assault II: The Hidden Empire™* launches its perfect combination of live-action video and intense space combat. Two thrilling *Star Wars* experiences - both designed to take maximum advantage of the power found in Sony's stellar game system. Who said there's nothing good on TV?

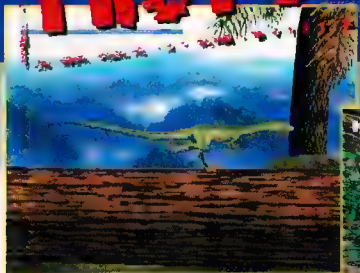


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PROTOS

Here's proof that EGM brings you the first look at the newest of the new games. The following section contains everything from cut scenes to screen shots for titles in early development. Watch for updates in future Protos and more extensive coverage in upcoming Next Waves.

EGM EXCLUSIVE



This spring, prepare to be amazed again as the sequel to one of the biggest action movies of all time, *Jurassic Park*, hits the big screen. Around the same time, gamers will also have to prepare themselves for what will surely be one of the best-looking games of the year. Both the movie and the video game will be called *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*. This PlayStation title by DreamWorks Interactive (Sega will be releasing the

Saturn version) will showcase some amazing 3-D effects and speed. Each dinosaur was modeled with such care and precision, you'd swear that the artists were somehow able to motion-capture live ones.

You will play as a heavily armed human, or as one of the dinosaurs from the new movie (either a T-Rex, raptor or compsognathus—a small, but violent carnivore). You'll have to run through several large 3-D worlds fighting, clawing and biting your way to survival. Each character you can play as will showcase over 80 different moves and actions, making this game one of the most realistic-looking games around. Stay tuned to future

EGMs for a more in-depth look at this hot action title.



PUBLISHER

Dreamworks Int

SYSTEM

PlayStation

THEME

Action

RELEASE DATE

2nd Qtr '97

PLAYERS

1

SIZE

CD-ROM

% COMPLETE

N/A

The Lost World: JURASSIC PARK

"Carnage runs rampant."

★★★★

—Next Generation

"[Kain's] plot is complex — and gory — enough to satisfy even the most die-hard RPG player."

— Electronic Gaming Monthly

"Kain is a powerful, persuasive and exciting new character..."

— Game Informer

"the gaming equivalent of Braveheart."

—Next Generation

KEEP THIS GAME OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN

—P.S.X.

GORY COMBAT ACTION

Brimming with 170 horrifying enemies and 21 demented spells — each with a unique bloody graphic.

VAMPIRE BLOODFEST

Drink the blood of your victims, then morph into one of four sinister forms to escape — vampire, wolf, bat or mist.

EPIC PRODUCTION

A staggering 100,000 plus screens and 120 hours of blood-spraying adventure enhanced with 25 grisly minutes of full-motion, 3-D animation.



ACTIVISION

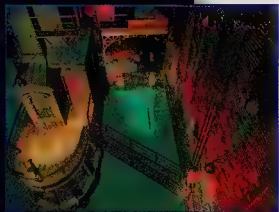
Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain is distributed by Activision. Crystal Dynamics and Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain are trademarks of Crystal Dynamics. ©1996 Crystal Dynamics. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.

Explore the carnage at www.activision.com or www.crystald.com

CITY OF LOST CHILDREN

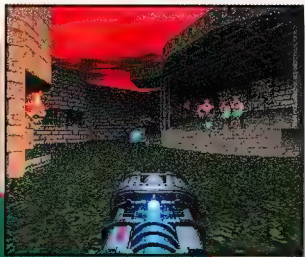
Inspired by the interesting but strange French film, *City of Lost Children* is coming to the PlayStation. When an evil scientist loses the ability to dream, he builds a tool that steals the dreams from children. Since he needs children for their dreams, he starts kidnapping them. Players control Miette, the main star of the movie, as she makes her way through the city, trying to avoid trouble. She also plans to

save all of the children captured for their dreams. The camera view is similar to *Alone in the Dark*, but it can be changed by the player as well. All of the character animation has been motion captured, and everything in the game is original renders—from the buildings to every single character in the title. Keep an eye out for this one as it nears completion.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Psygnosis		 PlayStation	Adventure	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
February	1	CD-ROM	85%	

Doom 64



Astonishing is the best way to describe the graphics and the action in *Doom 64*. Even from these preliminary screens we received from Midway, gamers are in store for a release that is destined to set the

standard for first-person shooters on any home system. This title received its more than just a cross-system port, it

was ripped apart and put back together again using the hottest development tools yet to surface in any programmer's arsenal. With all of the graphical improvements on this N64 version, it is bound to revitalize what was thought to be a dying genre in video gaming. Too bad this one didn't make the pre-Christmas release date. Sales would have been through the roof. Until March, however, we all just have to wait patiently.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Midway		 NINTENDO ⁶⁴	First-Person Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
March	1	64-Meg	90%	

PROTOS

Battle Stations



With the incredible success of Electronic Arts' popular, military-themed Strike series that began on the 16-Bit systems and moved into the 32-Bit age, it should come as no surprise that they would make another game in which you take control of some aspect of the armed forces. Their latest game, which will be made available on the PlayStation and

Saturn, is called Battle Stations. In it, you will be able to command fleets of naval ships ranging from destroyers to aircraft carriers. From the early screens EGM has seen so far, Battle Stations appears to have strong strategic elements. There are also action sequences in which you control a ship as you go up against an enemy vessel. The ships are made with excellent polygon graphics that show a great amount of detail. With EA's reputation of making quality games, this looks like one to watch out for.

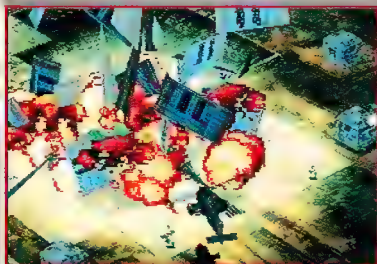


NEED FOR SPEED 2

Electronic Arts' racing title based on the knowledge of the experts from *Road & Track* returns for a second course in Need for Speed 2 for the Sony PlayStation. In this second version, players are given more courses in which to use their driving talents. It is also expected to contain updated versions of the exotic cars seeing that many from the first release

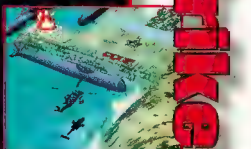


are no longer even in production. With the fandom that Need for Speed created for itself with its realistic control and car movements, it's no wonder this one has had a light lid on its production. We'll have more information for you as it becomes available to EGM.



Saturn owners who are jealous of Electronic Arts' game, Soviet Strike—coming to the PlayStation—can rest easy. The latest chapter in the Strike series is coming to Sega's machine. In the game, you pilot a helicopter in an isometric view, carrying out missions and destroying the enemy. The game features excellent graphics and photorealistic terrain to fly over and destroy.

SOVIET STRIKE



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Electronic Arts		PlayStation	War Sim	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
March	1 or 2	CD-ROM	N/A	

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
PlayStation	March
PUBLISHER <th>THEME</th>	THEME
Electronic Arts	Racing
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DONE
1 or 2	N/A

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Electronic Arts		PlayStation	Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
February	1	CD-ROM	100%	

TNN
MOTOR
SPORTS

HARDCORE 4X4

YOU'LL NEED TOUGH STUDS AND BIG BOLTS...

Get bent over six
radical terrains.

Get wrenching multiple
blobs with hard-rocking
adrenaline-pumping music.

Write knuckle
driving and extreme
weather conditions.

Rampage your rig
with actual four wheel
independent suspension
and real
vehicle motion.

Maxx out your truck,
crunch the fenders,
and kiss your competition,
but don't drive it
into the ground.

head games



<http://www.ascgames.com>



...CAUSE THIS AIN'T NO SUNDAY DRIVE



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An alien conspiracy

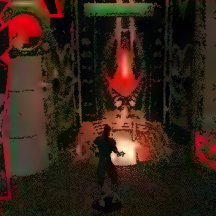
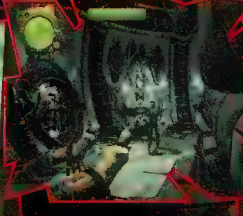
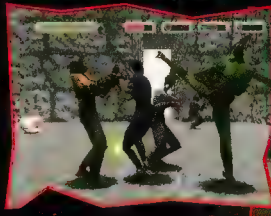
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Next Generation

"If you're in the mood for a combination of
fighting and action, this is for you"
PSX 1996 Holiday Buyer's Guide

PERFECT WEAPON



"Perfect Weapon may very well end up as one of the most
unique and exciting products to hit the PlayStation this year"
Doug Off, Editor in Chief, PS Extreme

"Whoa, a new approach to a fighting game. I found the
3D realism and the moves really appealing"
Electronic Gaming Monthly

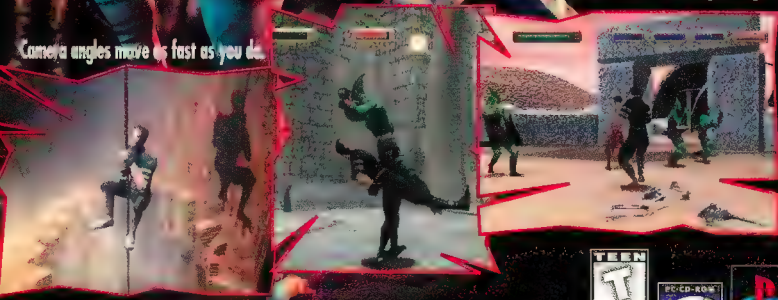
"Years from now when action/fighting games
advance to a higher level, I feel gamers will look
back to find this game at their roots"
Electronic Gaming Monthly

"A nice, long, difficult quest (for a change !) ."
Intelligent Gamer

"I have reviewed over 1,000 games and have
never seen anything like Perfect Weapon"
Lawrence Neves, Senior Editor, Game Pro

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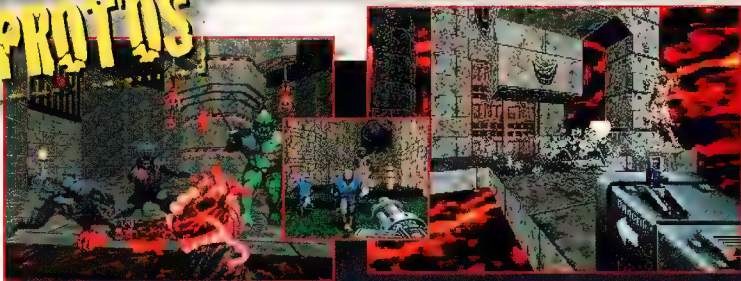


head games



<http://www.ascgames.com>

PROTOS



The latest 3-D shooter is coming to the PlayStation courtesy of GT Interactive. In it, you play an ex-Navy Seal who has been thrown in jail after a bit of a "misunderstanding." You have been offered a chance to clear your name, if you can destroy a stolen laser satellite and rescue a space shuttle full of astronauts who have been high-jacked by an evil terrorist. The game plays like an

advanced version of the computer hit, Duke Nukem 3D. In Shadow Warrior, you can occasionally take

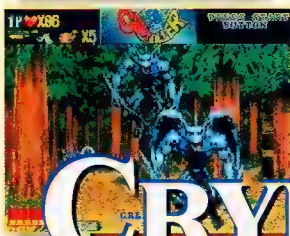
control of vehicles including tanks and boats.

There are even such unique vehicles as bulldozers and forklifts. Your character will be able to perform a variety of actions like jumping, flying and crawling. You will also have to fight in such conditions as earthquakes and tornadoes. Perhaps the strangest feature is the ability to use your fallen foe's body parts as weapons. (That explains the heart our hero is carrying in the pictures.) While there is certainly no shortage of Doom-style games, Shadow Warrior looks like it will be able to offer a lot that is new.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
GT Interactive		PlayStation	Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr. '97	1 or 2	CD-ROM	N/A	

Shadow Warrior



CRYPT KILLER

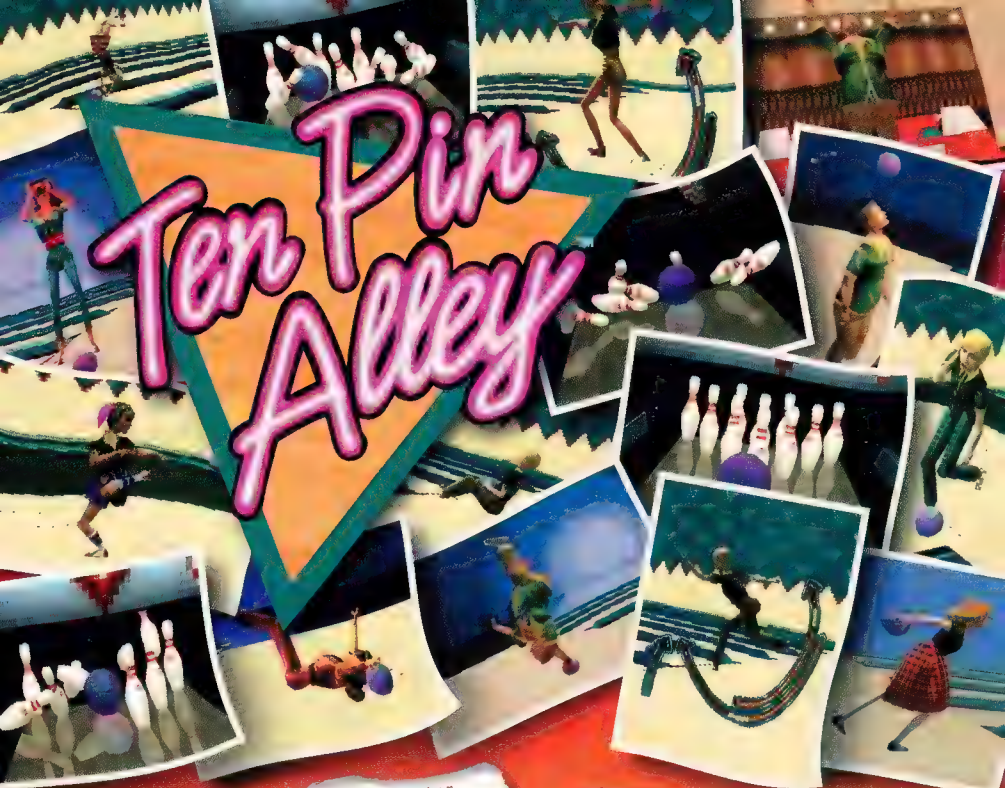
First-person perspective shooting games have been a popular genre in the arcades and home with such hits as Virtua Cop and Time Crisis. Now Konami makes their mark on the genre with a campy romp through a Transylvania-esque landscape. At certain points in your journey, you'll have the choice of taking two different paths. Along the way, your guide from the spirit world will steer you in the right direction.

The game is reminiscent of another Konami gun hit, Lethal Enforcers.

The game's locales are made of 3-D polygons, but enemies and their fire are all 2-D. You'll run into some of the strangest Boss characters ever to wake from eternal slumber. With light gun(s) in hand, take on the undead John Woo style or with a friend!

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Konami		PlayStation	First-Person Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
February	1 or 2	CD-ROM	N/A	

Ten Pin Alley



The precise physics of your ball hitting the pins is so technically advanced and graphically dazzling, you'll be bowled over!

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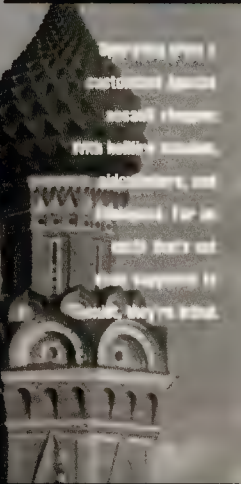
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SOME WARS AREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE FOUGHT THAT'S WHEN AMERICA USES INVISIBLE SOLDIERS

They can get the order to strike anywhere. Anytime. Against absolutely anyone. They don't have names or faces but are the most fearless, covert, and lethal military task force ever assembled. Or should we say, never assembled. Because according to all official channels, they don't even exist. But for a myth, they do an important job. Things the regular military could never handle. Like going into Russia to make sure the Cold War doesn't heat up again.



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PROTOS


Heaven's Gate

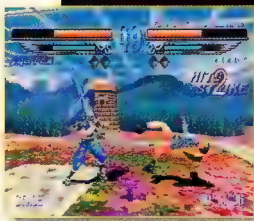
Imaginative characters in a cross between Toshinden and Tekken, this spells only good things for Atlus' newest 3-D fighter called Heaven's Gate. The title features a number of new and mostly original fighters who battle in a platformed arena (Toshinden-style). The backgrounds in their 3-D splendor are enjoyable and colorful to say the least. They are clear and brightly designed even if to the point of nausea.

Control seems to be a little slow, forcing players to telegraph moves long before they actually launch from the players sides and strike the opponent. However, considering the percent complete of this title, there still

is some time for tweaking before release.

Heaven's Gate also features a Training Mode as well as the typical Arcade Mode for one or two players. There are power-ups and special moves for the players out there who won't accept it as a fighting game without the included genre traits. Does Atlus have what it takes to make Heaven's Gate a hit? Only time will tell.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	2nd Qtr. '97
THEME	
Fighting	
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Atlus	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DONE
1 or 2	80%

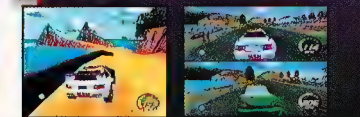


TOTAL DRIVING



Total Driving features a good-sized handful of cars that can be used to race in One-player Mode as well as head-to-head Two-player Mode. The title's courses are situated in many different settings that include dirt race tracks with multiple winding and curved-banked turns as well as city-based courses where avoidance of multistoried buildings is a must.

Graphically, the title looks to be fairly detailed with accurate controls and close-to-realistic car movements for players to enjoy, as they rocket under bridges and through mountainous settings with challenges rooted in the type of setting the course is located. The only area of concern is the lack of competing cars in this demo. Besides the Two-player Mode, only one car is ever seen on the road at a time. SCE hasn't officially announced this European title, but we believe they will in the upcoming months.




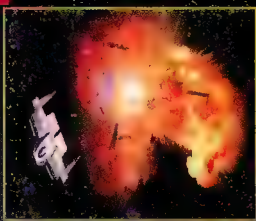
PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
SCE-England	 PlayStation	Racing
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE % COMPLETE
2nd Qtr. '97	1 or 2	CD-ROM N/A

WING COMMANDER IV PROLOGUE

PREVIEWS



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	March
PUBLISHER	THEME
Origin	Simulation
PLAYERS	SIZE
1	CD-ROM
	% DONE
	N/A




After the successful translation of the PC hit, Wing Commander III to the Sony PlayStation, Origin will be bringing the latest chapter in the Wing Commander saga to the 32-Bit powerhouse. Wing Commander IV, like the previous title, originated on the computers. If you have played WC3, you should be familiar with the play mechanics of part four. The game features the same fast-paced space combat of the original games, but with many enhancements to the game engine to make it

better. In order to continue the Wing Commander story, the game features extensive use of full-motion video between missions to keep the story moving along. The FMV features big-name actors to give the game a more "Hollywood" feel. Among the stars returning from WC3 are Mark Hamill (*Star Wars*) and Malcolm McDowell (*A Clockwork Orange*). Their acting talents lend a lot to the game and make you want to continue playing so that you can see more of the epic story. Fans of flight sims

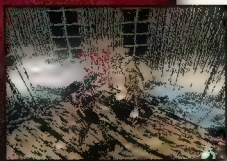
or space shooting games should be looking forward to Wing Commander IV, which should definitely be one of the best of the genre to be made available on the PlayStation.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Kalisto Entertainment	 PlayStation	Action
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
May	1	CD-ROM
		% COMPLETE
		60%



Nightmare Creatures gives the player a chance to play as one of the two heroes in a plot that takes them into the darkest parts of 15 different districts of London. These areas are filled with monsters and littered with more than 21 separate characters all with different types of behavior and levels of intelligence. The visuals are filled with textured 3-D landscapes that convey a frightening atmosphere through the streets of London. Note: A U.S. publisher hasn't picked up this title yet. Keep watching *EGM* for an official update.

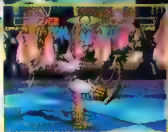
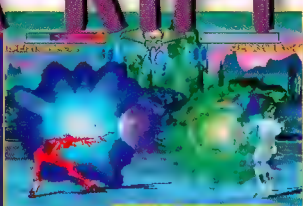


NIGHTMARE CREATURES

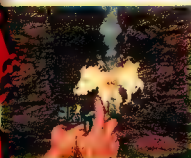
PROTOS

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
NINTENDO 64	April
	THEME
PUBLISHER	Fighting
Vic Tokai	SIZE
PLAYERS	64-Meg
1 or 2	% DONE
	N/A

DARK RIFT



If there's one genre that has run rampant, it's 3-D fighting games. This, however, is not stopping Vic Tokai from releasing another contender in the fight to win gamers over. Dark Rift is the latest brawler to hit home. It takes place in a future world where you take control of one of 10 different characters in an attempt to prove yourself the top fighter. The game features full motion-capture animation that is shown at a high frame rate, resulting in incredibly realistic movement. To make the game engine as realistic as possible, you can look forward to such features as side-stepping block moves, a counter attack system that targets both the upper and lower body and a variety of grab moves. For you combo freaks, there are chain combos and combo breakers to escape from a barrage of hits. Adding a new element of strategy is the variable gravity on different planets. This will make jumping and attacking more tricky. At the end of the game, you will encounter two Bosses, who will hopefully be hidden playable characters. Dark Rift looks to be a unique fighter.



The latest in first-person shooters from GT Interactive is also possibly one of the most gruesome titles yet to hit the PlayStation market. You start your adventure armed only with a pitchfork which is perfect for tenderizing your enemies. Later, you can trade up for more devastating weaponry that include aerosol cans with a handy lighter for a flame attack, flare dolls, wooded dolls and more.

The levels are filled with plenty of interactive devices like overhead bridges and windows that can be fired out of and into other rooms. The enemies sport their own highly developed AI that allows them to use objects for cover and duck behind them when the carnage gets to be too much to handle. Or they can opt to chase you down and hunt you unmercifully until you no longer can fight them off and die a simulated painful death. Obviously Blood is a different approach to the first-person shooter title.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
GT Interactive		First-Person Shooter
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
4th Qtr. '97	1	CD-ROM
		% COMPLETE
		60%



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REVIEW CREW

The Review Crew rates each game in several categories: visuals, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of the four members' scores are listed at the bottom of the reviews. These averages are independent of the overall scores, which are displayed behind each review and based on how the games compare to other titles on the same system.

THE RATING SCALE:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 10-Perfection | 5-Average |
| 9-Virtually flawless | 4-Rent first |
| 8-Splendid | 3-Time-waster |
| 7-Worthy | 2-Don't even rent |
| 6-Good, not great | 1-Flush it |



SHAWN SMITH

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Mario Kart 64
Dragon Force
Command & Conquer

Shawn has been getting a hankering for some strategy games as of late, and his appetite has been taken care of. Besides this, he's been taking some classes to become a weather person



DAN HSU

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Dragon Force
Mario Kart 64
Guardian Heroes

This past X-mas, Shoe was so excited about the Sega special (VZ, VC, Daytona free), he got a second Saturn he already has all the systems at work. Now he can play Dragon 24.7.



CRISPIN BOYER

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Command & Conquer
Shadows of the Empire
Dark Savior

Cris was a little overwhelmed by all the Star Wars games he's played this month. Sure, he's a big-time Star Wars fan, but sheesh! Enough's enough. Still, he's jazzed up to see the rereleased films



SUSHI-X

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Big O! Donuts
Tomb Raider
Command & Conquer

Sushi's been in high gear since hearing tidbits on Street Fighter titles for N64, so he's off to Japan again. Now that he's gone, the rest of us can enjoy the vending machines again

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Silver Awards are granted to games with a total average score of eight, while games that average nine or above receive Gold Awards

SATURN

COMMAND & CONQUER

WESTWOOD STUDIOS



GAME OF THE MONTH

CATEGORY: STRATEGY

BACK-UP: SYSTEM/CARTRIDGE

BEST FEATURE: SIMPLE INTERFACE

WORST FEATURE: TINY SPRITES

ALSO TRY: DRAGON FORCE

I remember this one from the PC a while back. I'm glad to say that I like this one just as much if not more. The soldier graphics are small but extremely detailed, and the buildings are fine. The music gets a little repetitious, but the sound effects are perfect (those enemy screams get better with each kill). Plus, there are many different options within the game like all the different types of buildings and soldiers you can construct. I also like the option of sending engineers inside the enemy compounds and taking them over. And this is only the tip of the iceberg—this has the qualities of a classic. Tight from start to finish.

On the PC side, C&C would've been a big hit with me had it not been for the superior Warcraft II. But looking at C&C by itself, it is an excellent example of how to create a fun, non-threatening realtime strategy game. The Saturn port is dead-on. I could find very little wrong in the translation. As for the game itself, I wished that the units could've been made a bit larger (Westwood should've made a special enhanced Saturn version). That aside, C&C offers gamers the technique of an excellent strategy game, combined with the excitement of an action hit. This is no boring tum-bad-to-many-details strategy game!

No other strategy game on the Saturn is easier to get into than C&C. You can learn its interface in under five minutes, and from that moment on, the game is every bit as fun and addictive as the Saturn's reigning strategy-game king, Dragon Force. Mission variety is C&C's best feature. There are more than 30 missions altogether, and they vary from simple search-and-destroy outings to rescue and assassination attempts. You can even choose whether you want to be the good guys or the bad. The game's graphics, although adequate, are its only downside. The soldiers are so tiny that it's hard to differentiate the troop types.

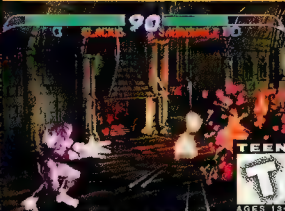
Command & Conquer is a wonderfully done strategy game! Its simple interface really allowed me to get involved with the action far more than I had expected. While not as complex as Dragon Force, it has enough variety to keep you coming back for more. I would have liked to have seen a few more features or modes of play for my little people, like calling for a napalm strike, nuclear weapons or a Kamikaze Mode (Cowabunga!), but after some improvising, I had tons of fun anyway. The nicest thing about a solid title like this is its dreaming of the things that'll be in the sequel. Don't forget to send in the citizens...

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
7	8	9	7

N64

KILLER INSTINCT GOLD

NINTENDO



CATEGORY: FIGHTING

BACK-UP: NONE

BEST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

WORST FEATURE: SILLY COMBO SYSTEM

ALSO TRY: MK TRILOGY

Wow! I've been waiting to play a fighter that really comes close to the arcade version. Sure, Street Fighter and MK have been on the other systems, but the graphics in Killer Instinct are rendered (even though it's a 2-D fighter, so to speak), I've never been a big fan of the Killer series, and this version hasn't converted me, but K! Gold is impressive. The sound is flawless and, as said, the graphics are near-flawless. For a guy like me who enjoys getting raw on a fighter (instead of the memorization-type moves), the Training Mode in this one gives me a chance to practice and learn the special combos.

The first Killer Instinct was fun. It was a fresh, good-looking game, but that novelty wore off when K12 (which is what K! Gold basically is) debuted. Now, I will admit that I like K! Gold's graphics (the backgrounds are sharp!) and its unique use of the power meter, but I just can't get into this game. It doesn't take genuine skill to play (like SF games), and you spend too much time blocking in order to set up attacks. It also didn't help that Chief Thunder was left out (he's my favorite K! character). K! Gold is a commendable effort, but it's a style of game that could turn you off just as easily as it turns you on.

If you're a fan of K12, you'll be real excited about this ultra-deluxe N64 version. The hi-res graphics—particularly the 3-D backgrounds—are incredibly sharp and much improved over K12's visuals. Combat itself is also true to the arcade game, with all the massive combos intact. Trouble is, I'm not a huge fan of K12. I just don't think the game is as fun—or demands as much skill—as SF2 or even the MK games. It just has you memorizing pattern after pattern, and you can do pretty well if you go crazy on the buttons. Still, K! Gold does pack a comprehensive Training Mode for K! neophytes. It controls just fine with the N64 pad, too.

All K12 fans will flock to the stores for this title, but some can have my reserved copy. I won't be picking it up. I absolutely loved the Practice Mode, and how it walks you through the various fighting engine techniques, but the game itself is sub-standard. You spend all your time blocking your opponent's wild attacks. To make matters worse, the techniques are not intuitive. The graphics are good for some characters, but laughable for others. The K! Gold music is not even comparable to the K1's music. Unfortunately, this is an excellent translation of the K12 arcade game. Still, any K! regular should check this title out.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
8	8	4	8

N64

STAR WARS:
SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

NINTENDO



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: BATTERY

BEST FEATURE: FIRST LEVEL

WORST FEATURE: LOTS O' DOOM LEVELS

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

I know what some of you are thinking: I gave this one a 9.0 just because it deals with Star Wars. Actually, if anything, that would make me review it more closely. *Shadows* is the coolest Star Wars game I've ever played. It's better than anything on the consoles or on the PC. The graphics are incredible with few noticeable flaws. The music is the best I've heard on the N64 thus far. It's great that there are different types of levels. It's not just all one genre. There's Doom-ish levels, flying levels and racing levels—it's like several games in one. Plus, each of the different level's control is as great as the other. A deal even for \$70 or \$80.

Strange. I find myself applauding the variety put into *SoE*, but at the same time, the only level in the game that I truly enjoyed was the Snow Speeder Stage (the gem of this cart). All of the—*you will—Doom* levels really bored me. They didn't offer anything that I haven't experienced before, and the fog shading was poured on a tad thick. I was mildly entertained in the Asteroid and Skyhook areas, but I found myself only wanting to skip through the snowy Battle of Hoth. Fans of the movies should check this game out; the prevalent *Star Wars* theme masks much of the game's shortcomings. Non-*Star Wars* fans need not apply.

Shadows tries to be several games in one—a first-person shooter, a flight-combat game, a driving game—and it does a pretty good job at pulling off each style of play. Of course, some levels are better than others. The first stage, which has you piloting a snowspeeder over Hoth, is outstanding and looks like it's straight from the movie. The first-person stages, however, are less impressive. They're plenty long (one takes more than an hour to complete), but they hold few puzzles and can get a little lean on action sometimes. The hovertrain level, on the other hand, is revolutionary. *Shadows'* music and sound effects are also superb.

After all the hoopla surrounding *Shadows*, I was expecting a lot more than what was presented here. Essentially what you get is a poor first-person shooter on top of an awesome Hoth battle sequence. Let's just say the first four stages (very short) are to die for. After that, you get a mish-mosh of first-person, racing and skeet shooting. Probably the most irritating thing about the first-person portion is the horrid control. Dash Rendar is a dumby beast, for sure. He doesn't side-step, his boots need traction and other than the Doom-style view, the views are blocked by Dash's body. Too bad this happens in over half the game.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY VALUE

8

9

6

7

SATURN

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER

CAPCOM



CATEGORY: PUZZLE

BACK-UP: SYSTEM CARTRIDGE

BEST FEATURE: CUTE CHARACTERS

WORST FEATURE: TOO MUCH LUCK

ALSO TRY: BAKU BAKU

Again a puzzle comes along and makes it hard for me to get my work done in a timely fashion. Puzzle

Fighter is the perfect game for the fighter fans who also enjoy a good puzzle game. Besides the gameplay being a whole lot of fun in both One- and Two-player Modes, the little kid versions of the various Capcom fighters is hilarious. Whoever thought kids knew how to throw fireballs? This game is one of those that makes it hard for a beginner to play against a pro, since the combo system can be pretty deadly, but setting the difficulty helps with that. This one, like most puzzle games, is a great game for all.

I'm as big a puzzle game freak as one gets. *Super Puzzle Fighter* is one of the better ones on the market, but it's not super star by any means. The biggest fault this game has is its unbalanced gameplay. I don't enjoy puzzle games that allow you to dump a million garbage blocks on your opponent as easily as SPF lets you do. My next complaint is the all-powerful diamond piece that gives you (albeit weak) automatic combos. Now, on to the good stuff. The different SF characters are fun to watch, and their different puzzle attacks offer a hint of technique. The game is colorful and offers a light, fun time. I recommend it.

Although this sucker isn't as addictive as *Baku Baku*, it's still plenty of fun. It's also not as complicated as most modern puzzle games. You can pretty much get away with not setting up massive chain combos—as long as you concentrate on matching colors and building big crystals. I like this action-oriented approach, and it fits the fighting-game theme (although gamers who prefer more strategy in their puzzle games may not be too crazy about it). Still, the game demands some brainpower. You'll have to memorize the pattern of the crystal counters dropped by each character if you're going to gain an edge over opponents.

Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo just screams for attention whether it's cute character animations or vibrant, colored gems. This is to distract you from the fact that this is an average puzzle game. I'm going to get some flak for this, but I found nothing interesting about this game, other than the excellent graphics and sounds. The whole game is a race to build the biggest gem, then break it and drop a screen full of counter gems on your opponent. This death blow is nearly impossible to counter (you need to break a similar-sized gem to do so). Yeah. So, the characters are horribly unbalanced for some strange reason. Built-in handicaps?

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY VALUE

7

7

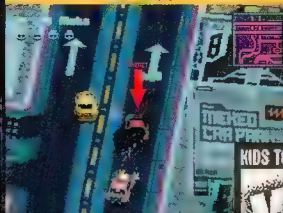
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9

SATURN

CRIME WAVE

EIDOS



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: SYSTEM CARTRIDGE

BEST FEATURE: LEVEL DESIGN

WORST FEATURE: VERTIGO

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

At first this one reminded me of *R.C. Pro-Am* on steroids, but then I played for a little while and decided that it didn't have the same gameplay that *Pro-Am* had. I found the control slightly annoying, and finding your way around was confusing even with the map. The level design was very interesting—it was in the same style throughout, but there was some cool variations (like the highway system in the "business" level). The graphics were sharp and detailed, not horrible. But very nice-looking. It's a good rental and possibly even a solid buy for some. For me, *Crime Wave* is a good game but it's nothing incredible.

It's been quite a while since I've thrown down a controller in frustration. Thank you *Crime Wave* for reminding me how. The idea of the game is simple; as my friend Scott Turtle calls it, "It's the A.P.B. of the '90s." The game looks like it'd be a blast to play, but several things hold it back. The vehicles are harder than heck to control, and the level designs provide poor driving conditions. These levels are multilayered and full of buildings and other cars, making a fast drive a real hassle and hunting a real pain. Had these problems been taken care of, *Crime Wave* could've scored much, much higher.

Crime Wave doesn't offer revolutionary graphics or especially innovative gameplay. It's just a fun title that delivers plenty of arcade action. It is, however, a flawed game. Gameplay gets choppy sometimes (the screen even freezes for a split second once in a while). Control is awkward, as well. I wish your car had a brake to make power slides and high-speed turns easier. Instead, you often end up sliding into buildings and other cars. Since the game was made in Japan, cars drive on the "wrong" side of the road, which takes some getting used to. I do like *Crime Wave's* large arsenal of weapons. The cities are detailed, too.

I have one REALLY big tip for anyone who's set to play this game. Don't play or watch *Crime Wave* while standing up! This is the first game I've experienced where I felt that Dramamine should be a power-up. The control of your armored police vehicle is very touchy, and takes much getting used to, especially if you need to make sharp turns. Once you realize you need to use reverse gears often, you'll be collecting baddies in no time. I think the perspective, directly overhead, actually hurts this little dramatically, whereas a slightly 3-D perspective would have afforded the player a larger view of the actual playfield. Rent it.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY VALUE

6

6

7

5

SATURN

AREA 51

MIDWAY



CATEGORY: SHOOTING

BACK-UP: SYSTEM/CARTRIDGE

BEST FEATURE: BONUS LEVELS

WORST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

ALSO TRY: VIRTUA COP 2

Games like these are a dime a dozen. It's a below-average shooting game that did well in the arcade and will do decent on the home systems. The first thing that was obvious as soon as the game started were the graphics. They are all too often blocky and unclear. Second, the game was the same old thing time and time again. I was bored after the third or fourth play even with the bonus levels (which were a great touch, by the way). I did like the progression of levels in the game—going deeper and deeper into the base, but this didn't save the title. More than likely this is one to rent several times—or buy for \$20.

I feel light-gun games are like bubblegum. It may be fun for a short while, but it's strictly a temporary thing. Are there any light-gun games that have offered more than a week's worth of entertainment? They all become boring after beating them, and you can usually do so in a couple of hours, at most. But dollar-for-fun value aside, Area 51 is an OK game. I can't help but have fun shooting at targets on TV, regardless of game design. Area 51 is awfully short though (I beat it in a half an hour). I also didn't like that if you miss enemies, the game will just scroll you past them, as if they were never there.

The Virtua Cop games have nothing to fear from Area 51. Despite the occasional ride in a jeep or a helicopter, the shooting action never got me all that excited. There's not enough variety in the enemies or weapons power-ups, either. If you were really into the arcade game, however, Area 51 won't disappoint you. Although the pre-rendered graphics—which are mostly FMV sequences—are a little grainy, they're still pretty good. And the levels pack all the secret rooms of the arcade version, too (but the game's still too short). I only wish those STAAR Team members would help me out instead of getting in the way all the time!

This Virtua Cop clone is certainly one for the light-gun fan, but no one else. Control Pad play is haphazard at best, so the light gun is required to play efficiently. I felt slighted by this, since special controllers shouldn't be a necessity, just an enhancement. The transitions between areas is pretty smooth, with quick load times, so the game moves quickly. The average player should find a little challenge, but the title is very easy for veteran light-gun gamers—crank the difficulty! Overall, Area 51 could have benefited from additional attention to graphics and background interactivity, which keeps it only slightly above average.

VISUALS

SOUND

INGENUITY

REPLAY VALUE

4

5

5

4

SATURN

DARK SAVIOR

SEGA OF AMERICA



CATEGORY: RPG

BACK-UP: SYSTEM/CARTRIDGE

BEST FEATURE: PERSPECTIVE

WORST FEATURE: DIALOGUE

ALSO TRY: LEGEND OF OASIS

I'm a big fan of Landstalker that was on the Genesis way back when, so Dark Savior is a title that brings back a whole lot of memories since they're very similar. What makes Dark Savior even better is that it's a gigantic step up from any three-quarter perspective adventure I've seen. DS is huge (level-wise), and it has a giant cast of characters. The inventory system is easy to use and most of the special attacks are awesome. The fighting system is very unique for an adventure/RPG, but it works surprisingly well—the graphics could have been a bit crisper in these sequences though. This is a sure buy for those who want a solid title.

At the risk of sounding like a pop (or soda) for you non-Midwesterners) commercial, Dark Savior offers a refreshing alternative to the mainstream RPGs. It's a playing experience that has to be...well, experienced. It has a three-fourth perspective, the characters are very large and the levels are huge and varied (exploring them is half the fun, although sometimes you'll go through periods of inactivity because of the large level size). I did not enjoy the combat sequences at all. I felt that they were the biggest black mark on this otherwise great title. If you are an RPG/adventure game fanatic, put Dark Savior on your wish list.

This action-packed title (from the developers who created Landstalker for the Genesis) is as much a platform game as it is an RPG. It certainly has you leaping onto enough platforms and over enough obstacles. The 3-D, isometric graphics are detailed, and you can pan the view around your character to determine the best route through an area. Yet you can't move the camera completely around the hero, so some leaps are hard to aim. I'm also not too keen on the battle system—which uses a stripped-down fighting-game engine. Fortunately, combat is infrequent; most of the game is spent exploring and solving puzzles.

Boy, Dark Savior takes me back! It's been a long time since anyone has attempted and succeeded with the 3-D action/puzzle game like this. The only improvements I would have made is to the lackluster fighting sequences, which seem out of place here. The puzzles are nicely done, and the levels are very large—a big plus for games of this type. Many people will automatically categorize this game as a straight RPG, but it isn't. The problem-solving aspect is the majority feature here. To top it all off, the story is intriguing, with a mysterious enemy, and multiple plots that all converge slowly without giving away anything.

VISUALS

SOUND

INGENUITY

REPLAY VALUE

7

7

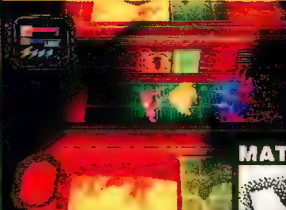
8

6

PLAYSTATION

RE-LOADED

INTERPLAY



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: CHARACTERS

WORST FEATURE: DULL GAMEPLAY

ALSO TRY: LOADED

Re-Loaded is the perfect example of why sequels shouldn't be made. The first one wasn't perfect, but it was fun to play, if only for a short amount of time. Re-Loaded has the same type of graphics, though more blocky (which is probably attributed to the brighter landscapes opposed to the dark tunnels from before). The lighting effects are cool, but the character animation isn't all that great. So what we have is a good-looking game without much playability. The characters are cool but the little rendered enemies are a little too weird (except for the cannibal guy). There are some cool features in this one but I'm disappointed overall.

Here's a simple way to explain how this sequel to Loaded is: Some aspects of the game have been marginally improved, however most have worsened. I wasn't a fan of the original and was hoping that Re-Loaded would offer more. It did offer more—more pool design, that is. Re-Loaded is much slower than its predecessor, and since it's a strict action game, that's a major bad move on the programmers' part. The movement drags along like an ant in tar, the shooting gets really monotonous, the graphics are drab. So what was the marginal improvement? Better level designs (with multitiered stages). Key in a sarcastic "wow."

I was hoping this game would be worlds better than last year's dull, repetitive Loaded. Instead, Re-Loaded is just another mindless action game that hurts your hands and has you yonessing to play good of Gauntlet. Re-Loaded is very similar to its sequel. You just wander around various maze-like environments and blast hundreds of bad guys and their very big guns. The only real improvement is in the scenery, which is now much more varied. You battle through brightly colored caves, cannon-laden fortresses and other areas that are more open than the original's locales. Control is sluggish, too—especially when you're shooting.

Playing Re-Loaded is very much like playing the original Loaded. If you liked that game, you'll love this one. The character selection isn't very big, but you should be able to find a favorite one quickly. The powers of each character varies widely, and the cut scenes are nicely done. When it comes to gameplay however, Re-Loaded suffers from the same repetitiveness that Loaded has. Not enough different enemies, not enough power-ups and not enough variety within levels really takes a toll on a game that should have had much more. Still, if you're looking for utter carnage, give Re-Loaded a try.

VISUALS

SOUND

INGENUITY

REPLAY VALUE

6

5

4

4

Shawn

Dain

Crispin

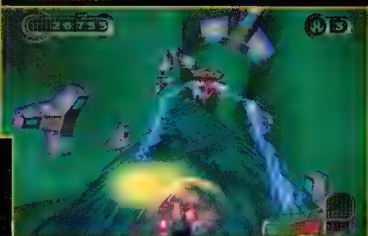
Sushi-X

Yesterday, you were a cocky 2-D arcade shooter. Today, you totally suck.



We hate to break the rude news, but you're about to be humbled. It's the 23rd century. Nano-robots are on the rampage. And you've gotta deep-six hundreds of vicious killing machines and eight virtually indestructible nano-bosses. The good news is you can run. The bad news is, in this 3-D world, you can forget about hiding in corners. At 30 FPS, it's a 32-bit firestorm of nonstop death and

destruction. Where the fighting is fast and furious enough to turn you into a certified junkie. With progressively difficult levels and an intense play environment, NanoTek Warrior offers awesome replay value. Which means just maybe, by the turn of the century, you'll be back to your same old cocky self.

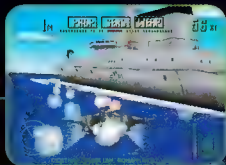


NanoTek Warrior™



HYDROFOIL MODE:

Approx. height above ocean surface: 5'



SURFACE WEAPONS:

- 2.75' Shrike homing missiles
- 2.75' blowpipe heavy rocket
- 2.75' F-90 cluster munitions
- 25mm GAU-36 4 barrels rotary cannon
- 1' Stiletto salvo rockets

**A killer submarine.
A deadly hydrofoil.**

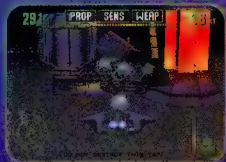
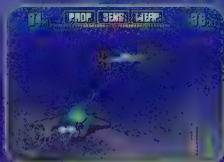
SEA SURFACE WEAPONS:

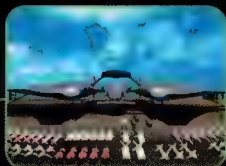
- 2cm multiteroodyne pulse cannon
- 3" EXT Disruptor sonic torpe
- 1" Stiletto salvo rockets
- 1" Stiletto salvo rockets
- Mark-65 Moray torpedo
- 1" Stiletto salvo rockets



SUB-SURFACE MODE:

Hull pressure resistant to 1100 meters





2060 A.D. The Red menace has resurfaced.

The sea boils with submarines and battlecruisers, blood and oil.

The stakes are high. The stakes are high.

Tigershark. The ultimate war machine.

A strategy game for the PlayStation 2.

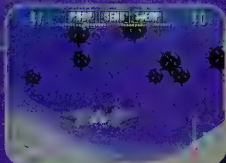
Available in the UK only.

PlayStation 2

The ultimate war machine...

COME HELL AND HIGH WATER

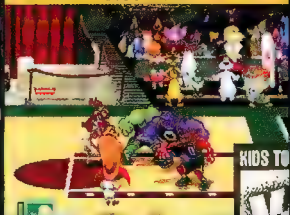
TIGERSHARK



PLAYSTATION

SPACE JAM

ACCLAIM



CATEGORY: SPORTS

BACK-UP: NONE

BEST FEATURE: WACKY CHARACTERS

WORST FEATURE: 16-BIT GRAPHICS

ALSO TRY: NBA JAM EXTREME

Let's start by saying that this one is meant to be more for kids than anything else. With that in mind, Space Jam is a decent basketball title. I haven't seen the movie, and I'm not sure if I'll catch it before it leaves the theatre. But since the Warner Bros. characters have such a special place in many of our hearts, playing basketball as Bugs or Elmer Fudd is something very cool to do. The game plays like NBA Jam, which is a compliment. I like the end of quarter and halftime mini-games—these add quite a bit to Space Jam overall. I'd say that if you want a simple sporty game and know that it's geared toward kids, it's a good one.

Playing Space Jam made me tired and grumpy. It's horrible! It could've used a few things for a higher score: a better game engine, larger graphics, better play control, more intuitive mini-games, etc. Too bad, since I love the Looney Tunes. I can't believe that this game could be even considered for release. If the game designers would've made the basketball engine run at least as well as NBA Jam's, then it would've been a blast to play. As it stamers, Space Jam was very boring and could've passed for an 8-Bit hoops game. Plus, the players were wildly unbalanced. You'd be a fool to not pick the perfect-in-every-category Jordan

Little kids might like this cartoony knockoff of the NBA Jam games, but I sure don't. The game's graphics are so-so—especially for a 32-Bit system. The numerous Warner Bros. characters in the game—from Bugs Bunny to Yosemite Sam—do perform some funny animations, such as when they sink the ball with Jam-style dunks. And the weird bonus games you play between quarters are a nice touch. But the basketball game itself just isn't all that fun. It's a little on the easy side, too. If you really, really liked the film—or are looking for a way to keep two hyperactive kids busy—you might want to check out Space Jam.

Space Jam does exactly what it sets out to do: provide a simple basketball game for young gamers. Older gamers will become quickly bored with the overly simple interface and controls. The power-up levels are not very interesting, and are certainly not required to slaughter the Monstar team. Strategy is pretty easy: Pick Mike, Bugs and Tar, and you'll win every time. Like the typical Chicagoan chant, "Give it to Mike!" if you want to win. Younger gamers will enjoy this game and that rates highly with me, as lately most games have been geared only toward teens. Don't waste your time if Looney Tunes aren't your fancy.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
4	6	5	7

PLAYSTATION

PSYCHIC FORCE

ACCLAIM



CATEGORY: FIGHTING

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: ANIME INTRO

WORST FEATURE: LAME MOVES

ALSO TRY: TOSHINDEN 2

Psychic Forces was pretty...interesting. I know that's a little vague, but let me explain. The graphics weren't great, but they weren't all that bad either. The control was decent, but not real hard. It's a good two-player game and an "okay" one-player game. It's definitely worth playing, but buying it may not be for everybody. I'd say a rental is a safe bet for this one since it's kind of "iffy." It has some good points like its neat special moves and cool anime cinemas, but then you realize that it's kind of sloppy overall and a little annoying to play in the One-player Mode. It is a truly 3-D fighter but it's not perfect by any means.

Psychic Forces redefines the 3-D fighter genre with its use of true and open three-dimensional arenas. The game looks great—smooth animations, great special attacks, etc. Unfortunately, looks are the only upsides to this game. The downsides are plentiful. First off, every character the few that are available has the same basic moves, attacks and combos, throwing variety right out the window. Second, every fighter has a one-button projectile attack. These are extremely cheap, especially when you consider one of the characters can shoot five bullets at the press of one button. This game takes no skill to play whatsoever.

I thought this game was innovative—at least for the first few minutes I played it. The polygon combatants in this vaguely Toshinden-like fighter battle in midair, in a hovering cube arena. But that's the game's only novel feature. The rest of PF, except for some nifty anime sequences, is fairly standard. Since the fighters are nearly always battling from opposite sides of the cube, they rely on fireballs and other ranged attacks rather than close combat. I've never been a fan of fireballs in regular fighting games (they're so cheap), so I'm definitely not too hip on a game that relies on them. PF needs more hand-to-hand moves.

This title could go down as one of the most disappointing of the year. The anime intro is awesome and really draws you into the characters. Then it ends, and the game starts. The gameplay suffers from Repetitive Technique Syndrome (RTS), where every character does virtually the same thing, with the exception of a couple of special attacks. While presented in 3-D, the game is still essentially a 2-D fighter. Close combat is the best way to win quickly, but most battles end up being fireball fights from the far sides; hardly awe-inspiring. I'd rather watch the anime. Rent the anime, then this game.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
5	7	6	6

PLAYSTATION

REBEL ASSAULT 2

LUCASARTS



CATEGORY: ACTION/SHOOTING

BACK-UP: MEM CARD/PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: MOVIE SEQUENCES

WORST FEATURE: GAME ITSELF

ALSO TRY: DARK FORCES

Another *Star Wars* game? Usually I'd say this and be pleased, but I'm afraid to say that Rebel Assault 2 still suffers heavily from the control. The graphics are great and, although the acting can be really cheesy, the cinemas are cool. What's also cool about Rebel Assault 2 are the different types of gameplay it offers. So that brings us to the control. What's bad about it? Where should I begin? On many of the flying levels, it's important to avoid walls or obstacles. Since the control is too loose, avoiding them is next to impossible. Rebel 2 is an average game that is worth playing even if you're not a *Star Wars* fan, but it's not great.

OK, being a big *Star Wars* fan, I must admit that the *Star Wars* theme (the music, the ships, the characters, etc.) is what saved this game from an even lower score. But at its heart, the game is complete nonsense. You run or fly through full-motion video sequences, or pre-rendered backgrounds, shooting at objects that are not part of the scenery. Yawn. The other areas involve you maneuvering your craft around various obstacles. Snore. To make matters worse, the control of these crafts is worthless: Rebel Assault 2 is a very glamorous, very pretty game that drops way short of delivering any true gaming satisfaction.

RA2, like its prequel, packs one heck of a cool movie. Unfortunately, as a game, it ain't all that great. The game sequences that are plunked between the super-sharp FMV cinemas all involve either shooting or flying, but none control very well. In the flying levels, your ship slides around a lot, and you have to constantly tinker with the joystick to fly in a straight line. The shooting levels aren't so bad, and you can even use a light-gun to make aiming a little easier. The entire game is a bit easy, too. Although it has 16 levels, you can play through it in no time. The incredible music and cinemas are the only reason to buy RA2.

This game gets my rental award of the month, and allow me to explain: I would like to know how unskilled LucasArts thinks we gamers are. The first time I sat down to play RA2, I beat it. This is a problem I loved the cut scenes, and it's a must-play for anyone who loves the movies, but you'll only need to play it once or twice. This seems to be the way FMV games are going, which isn't bad, but we need more advances in interactivity before we see a great game. The control of the ships is pretty awful, and they shake and shimmy like a car with bad alignment and no shock absorbers. Only *Star Wars* fans need apply.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
9	9	5	4

Shawn

Dah

Crispin

Sushi-X

Proof That Demons Do Exist

In the near future, mankind has conquered dimensional travel by the door we have opened swings both ways. The peaceful city you have grown up in has become a haven for dark creatures from another world— Demons! Now it's up to you and your friends to harness the hidden power within you by entering the fantasy game known as Persona.

You awaken with incredible abilities that you will need to defeat the scores of Demon invaders and cleanse the land of their forces. Converse with them before doing battle to determine your best course of action. Fight them or enlist their aid in your mission. Either way, you are set for the fantasy adventure of a lifetime!

Special Features

Based on the ultra-popular, mega-hit, Megami Tensei series, first time to hit US shores

100+ hours of pulse pounding gameplay

Over 300 different monsters to do battle with

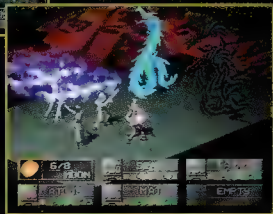
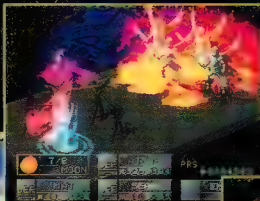
Morph any member of your party into a more powerful source known as "Persona"

Fight your way to one of many endings

Persona



Use your "Persona"



<http://www.atlus.com>
ATLUS



Persona™ is the first chapter of the
REVELATIONS



PLAYSTATION

ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS 2

MIDWAY

1.62666 1.6543

KIDS TO



CATEGORY: CLASSIC ARCADE

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: VECTOR GAMES

WORST FEATURE: CONTROL

ALSO TRY: ARCADE HITS VOL. 1

Since I wrote the retro article last month and this month, I'm a little partial to retro titles. My main gripe with this collection is the control. Luckily gamers can use the mouse. The graphics, outside of gameplay, are well done—much cooler than the previous Williams collection. The Atari games that Williams has "covered" are perfect choices. I especially like the Interfaced Option for the vector games, this makes it really look like the arcade versions. If you don't have a mouse and don't plan on getting one, I'd say rent this one first to see if you can get used to the control, especially on Centipede and Super Breakout.

Perhaps it's my old age (at 24). Perhaps I used to be a better gamer. These games seem a bit more difficult than they used to be when I was a child! Part of that is due to the controls (no roller balls for Centipede and Missile Command, no paddles for Tempest and Breakout). That aside, this compilation is a required addition to any retro-gaming fanatic's library. After all, these are the classics of the classics. I would find it hard, however, to recommend this disc to anyone else. None of these games really excite me, and I doubt they are going to excite you. But it wouldn't hurt to pick this little up, as these games are hard to find.

What we have here are six great arcade games and four bad control schemes. Only Asteroids and Battlezone control okay with a joystick, since the others—back in their arcade days—relied on trackballs or paddle controllers as their input devices. Consequently, it's frustratingly hard to play Super Breakout, Tempest and—to a lesser extent—Missile Command and Centipede with the joystick. Fortunately, you can use the mouse or analog stick to improve control (although I don't recommend buying the pricey peripherals just to play these games). I especially like the fascinating, interactive-packed documentary.

Ouch! I must admit that these are perfect translations of classic games, so if that's all you're after, add a couple of points to this score. Unfortunately, without a trackball or paddle controller to rent Centipede, Super Breakout, Tempest and Missile Command, prepare to die quickly. Battlezone can be adapted to with a pad, and there exists a special dual-stick controller that works perfectly with it. Asteroids works well as is, and needs no special enhancements, so maybe that will rate highly in your book. Also, the multimedia showcase is very well done. Take great care when looking at AGH2, and try before you buy

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
7	6	7	7

PLAYSTATION

DARK FORCES

LUCASARTS



CATEGORY: SHOOTER

BACK-UP: MEM CARD/PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: STAR WARS THEME

WORST FEATURE: SLOW AND UGLY

ALSO TRY: REBEL ASSAULT 2

Pardon me for saying this, but I was very disappointed with Dark Forces. I know, I know—it's a *Star Wars* game, but I couldn't help but remember Dark Forces on the PC. Of course, let's look at a game that's a better comparison: Final Doom on the PS. This one is smoother than Dark Forces. The game concept is incredible and the missions are great. The game really made me feel like I was a rebel shooting my way through various Imperial bases. The graphics could've been a bit sharper, but then the frame rate would've been even worse. If you're a diehard *Star Wars* fan then consider buying DF. If not, you may want to rent

Sorry LucasArts, your valuable *Star Wars* license isn't going to save this game. First off, Doom games disgust me, as I've seen way too many of them. Dark Forces should've been one of the better ones, but it isn't. It's very choppy, and that's one thing that will kill a game in this genre (and the choppiest gets 10 times worse in firefights). It's almost as though the designers were in a hurry to port DF over to the PlayStation, which can definitely do 3-D better than this. Oh well, I wouldn't be crazy about this game even if it were done well. It is simply an unoriginal, uninspiring attempt to milk Doom's popularity.

DF is loaded with well-designed levels and clever puzzles. Unfortunately, the graphics are so pixelated and choppy that they seriously hamper the gameplay. Just about everything in DF—from the loading screen to the often bland textures—looks bad. And the MIDI-based music sounds puny when compared to John Williams' soaring film scores (which grace Rebel Assault 2). Control isn't so hot, either. You can't make your character walk in small steps, so toddling along a narrow edge or near a cliff edge can be dangerous. On the bright side, the game is set in the *Star Wars* universe, and you'll battle familiar enemies (Boba Fett! Where?)

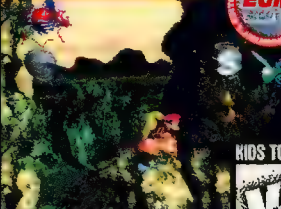
Uh oh, this is going to hurt. As a fan of the PC title, I had great expectations of the PS version. What I got was a choppy, slow, graphically challenged game with a high score on the frustration meter. I loved the problem-solving and intricate field designs, but the texture mapping was substandard. Maybe it's the PlayStation's fault? Maybe it can't handle the detail required to really render this game in its full glory? Maybe this was hastily done...especially when you take a look at other accomplishments in the 3-D genre for PlayStation? At any rate, this is a sad addition to the *Star Wars* saga. Give me a clean sequel!!!

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
4	4	4	4

PLAYSTATION

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 3

NINTENDO



KIDS TO



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: BATTERY

BEST FEATURE: CONTROL

WORST FEATURE: MORE OF THE SAME

ALSO TRY: ANY DKC GAME

I think I may have mentioned this before, but there are 16-bit titles that come out and make me really chuckle since they rival the 32- and 64-bit games. Donkey Kong Country 3 is one of those games. Besides the graphics being incredible, the gameplay is some of the best seen in awhile. Even after multiple playings, I liked going through and seeing some of the cool things in the level like playing as the elephant or avoiding the saw in the tree level. The interaction with characters was another cool feature. Owners of the Super NES should be pleased with this third installment—it's another great one to put in your library.

Before everyone starts complaining that I gave DKC3 a higher score than Shadowox, remember that we review these games based on the system they're on! DKC3 is a great 16-bit title. When playing through the game, you can tell that some thought has been put into the level designs. Some sections take more technique to cross than the average side-scroller, yet other levels are too straightforward and linear. A little freedom and openness would've been nice. The graphics are, of course, crisp and sharp. Unfortunately, the DKC series is getting old. It doesn't offer enough new (like the old Super Mario saga did) to hold my interest.

DKC3 will neither surprise nor disappoint fans of the series. It features the ultra-sharp graphics, excellent level design, loads of secret areas and a zodiac of animal friends that made the previous DKC games so popular. But now the graphics are even sharper (albeit not by much). Better still, control in DKC3 is perfect, with none of the minor drifting and sliding problems of parts one and two. Of course, the flipside of all these DKC hand-me-downs is that DKC3 is just more of the same, making it less a sequel and more an extension of the previous titles. But then, platform-game aficionados wouldn't have it any other way.

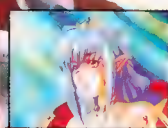
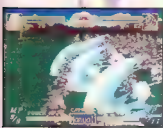
Well, what can I say? This is Donkey Kong Country, and it's clean as a whistle. Nintendo has this SGI technology down pat, and it shows in the vibrant levels and well-animated characters. DK3 isn't as innovative as I'd like, but it does entertain, and that's what counts anyway. This should be a great way to end the series, and will be a must-have for your collection if you've enjoyed the predecessors. Clean graphics, solid gameplay and hip sounds make DK3 an all-around great title for all ages. Another great aspect, as present in the other games, is the high replay value. Get this while you can.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
9	8	4	6

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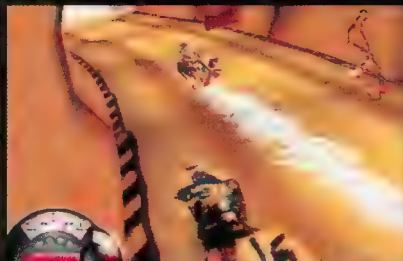
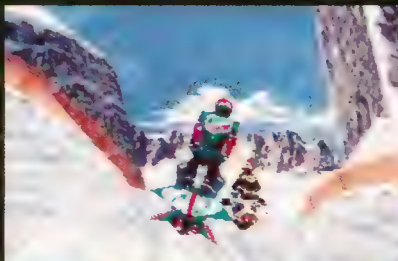
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TOMB RAIDER

SYSTEM: Saturn

PUBLISHER: Eidos



Any time during play, press Start to pause the game. Go to the last page of your passport book, "Exit to title," and press Z, Y, Z, Y, X, X, X then Start. Lara will make a groaning sound. After you hear this, press the A button. This will exit to a Statistics Screen of that level. Then you will warp to the next level!



On this screen press Z, Y, Z, Y, X, X, X. Start for the next level.

DAYTONA USA: CCE

SYSTEM: Saturn

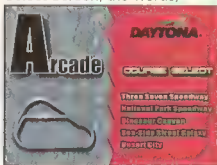
PUBLISHER: Sega



At the Course Select Screen, press and hold the X, Y and Z buttons. Then select your track with A or C. At the Course Select Screen, the words,

"Mirror Mode" will appear on the left side. You will now have backward tracks!

Eddie Vetayses
Torrance, CA



On the Course Select Screen, hold X, Y, Z and press A or C.



Mirror Mode will appear on the left side of the Car Select Screen.

CRUIS'N USA

SYSTEM: Nintendo 64

PUBLISHER: Nintendo



is highlighted (it will spin around), press and hold the Top, Left and Bottom C buttons simultaneously. The vehicle you highlighted will change into a different one! You can now play the game as a police car, a jeep or even a school bus! Keep holding these and press Start to choose it.

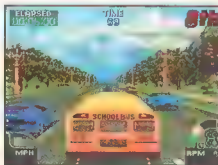
At the Choose Car Screen, highlight any of the cars except for the red Ferrari. The trick will not work on this car. Once any of the others



When you do this, the car will change into a different vehicle!



On this screen, highlight a car and press the correct C buttons



You can race across the U.S. in vehicles such as this school bus!

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

KILLER CODES

PANDEMORNIUM

by Crystal Dynamics
for PlayStation

Enter these codes on the Password Screen for the various results as shown:

EVILDEAD=Immortal enemies. They keep coming back.
TWISTEYE=Rock 'N Roll. Hold L1 and L2. Move the directional pad left or right to rotate the screen. Pull it down to center it again.
INANDOUT=Just Visiting.

It allows you to quit in mid-game as normal, but rather than go back to the Main Screen, you can carry on, or restart another, or do the same level (you must have reached more than one level). If you want to go back in the Main Screen, repeat the quit procedure on the Level Select Screen.

THETHING=Mutant Mania. Hold L2 and press the Circle button to cycle through odd shapes of your body. L2+X swaps your body back to normal.

HARDBODY=Can't Touch This. You will be invincible!

BODYSWAP=Gender Bender. Press the Triangle button to swap characters in mid-game.
OTTOFIRE=Permanent weapon. Basically, you won't lose your weapon once you get it unless you switch weapons.

VITAMINS=Life of the party. 31 lives are at your disposal.

CORONARY=Hearts aplenty. You get loads of extra hearts.

TOMMYBOY=Full tilt. Finish a level and you'll get to play this!

DASHDASH=Speed greed. This is the bonus level after a normal level is finished.

BORNFREE=The world's your oyster. Go to any world you want.

Brett Schultz
Elm Grove, WI

STREET RACER

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft



Access the Options Screen and then move down and highlight the Cup Password Option. Enter the following passwords to get the various results:

TRAFIK: Silver Cup
NEJATI: Gold Cup
DOUGAL: Platinum Cup
TURGAY: Advanced



In the Options Screen, highlight the cup password and enter the code.



You can access higher cup levels with the other passwords.

Options/Secret Level and Character.



You'll be able to mess with the cars' sizes and shapes!



Even a new character will be at your disposal with a code!

Patrick Licklider
Fayetteville, NC

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

KILLER CODES

2XTREME

—by Sony Computer Entertainment for PlayStation

These codes will give you more tricks to do in the air, for each of the events.

Skateboarding: Triangle, X, Square, Circle.

Snowboarding: Triangle, Square, X, Circle.

Rollerblading: Circle, Square, X, Triangle.

Mountain Biking: X, Square, Triangle, Circle.

Eric Cheung
Henderson, NV

D-pad and gun, snoot with gun in each hand. What you don't get to do: Recite poetry, pick daisies, hug .ovable stuffed animals.

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Scud
THE DISPOSABLE ASSASSIN

KILLER CODES

NBA JAM EXTREME

—by Acclaim for PlayStation

Choose "Start Game" from the Main Menu Screen. When asked to keep a record, choose "Yes." Then enter any of the initials and dates for the teams as shown below to play these new characters (cycle through them with RT)

Misfit Team

1. Daren Smith: MSS 10/26
2. Jane Bradley: JHG 8/26
3. Scott Ferras: DJP 6/29
4. Mike Spendlowe: JCS 12/8
5. Cowboy: TVC 10/3
6. Richito: RTS 2/25

Smiley Team

1. Pirate Bill: SAL 2/2
2. Mr. Happy: MJT 3/22
3. Dufus the Clown: GRR 6/19
4. Three Feet Under: JOD 4/17
5. Mr. Unhappy: GEM 11/3
6. Ooohh: JLH 1/26

Invisible Team

1. Gary Rowberry: WHO 1/1
2. The Brain: BCS 1/7
3. Monkey Boy: PJP 11/2
4. Howie: BCE 7/10
5. Jim Jung: JJK 12/18
6. Huh?: CBR 6/25

Celebrity Team

1. Junior Seau: JR 6/1
2. John Elway: WAY 9/30
3. Frank Thomas: BIG 12/6
4. Marv Albert: MRV 12/31
5. Newt Gingrich: NEW 8/12
6. Samoa: TVH 6/6

Special Sports Team

1. Cheryl Swoopes: SWO 1/1
2. Rebecca Lobo: LOB 7/4
3. Carol Blazejowski: BLZ 3/1
4. Bob Lanier: LAN 9/10
5. Air Nick: ARN 5/18
6. George Gerwin: ICE 4/27

STAR GLADIATOR

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PUBLISHER: Capcom



This code will allow you character to have a big head and big feet! After choosing your character, press and hold Right, Start, Circle and Square simultaneously. Hold them until the round begins and you'll get a strange character! Doing the same code, but holding Left instead will give you a shrunken head.



Hold the specific buttons before each round for a strange player!

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

SYSTEM: Nintendo 64

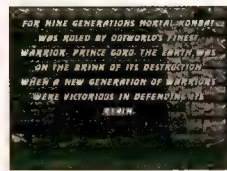
PUBLISHER: Williams Ent.



To access the Free Play Mode, go to the Story Screen and quickly enter Up, Up, Right, Right, Left, Left, Down,

Down. You'll hear a sound. If you lose, your credits will now be on Free Play!

—via the Internet



On the Story Screen, enter the code with the directional pad.



After losing a match, your credits will be on Free Play Model

POWER MOVE PRO WRESTLING

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PUBLISHER: Activision



Circle, Right, Triangle, Up, Square, Left, X, Down, X, Down, Square, Left, Triangle, Up, Circle, Right, Select. Then press Select again on Commandant on the Player Select Screen. For **Gorgon** (the Ring Announcer), enter L1, L1, L2, R2, R1, Triangle, Down, X, Up, Select. Then press Select again on Orange from the Player Select Screen. To play as **Sallie** (the Referee), enter Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square, Circle, L1, R1, L2, R2, Select. Then press Select again on El Tumbor from the Player Select Screen.



At the Title Screen, enter any of the codes and press Select.



After hearing a bell, go to this screen to choose the new guys.

Chris A. English
White Plains, NY

WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY

SYSTEM: Nintendo 64 PUBLISHER: Williams Ent.

Here are the many tricks for this game:

Logo View: Press any button (except Start) on the Attract Screens to view logos, records and credits.

Instant Start as

Gretzky: Press any button at the same time you press Start on the Title Screen.

After pausing the game, go into the Options Screen and press the following combinations for various results:

Head Scale: Bottom C button + R button.

Body Scale: Left C button + R button.

Y Scale: Top C button + R button.

By combining these with multiple button presses, you can create wacky players! The announcer will sound funny too.



You can change the "Specials" that appear at the bottom.

KILLER CODES

SPACE JAM

—by Acclaim
for PlayStation

Cheat Menu

On the Options Menu, hold all four triggers and press X over Game Options. Full Cheat Menu will appear.

Additional Cheats

Win the Intergalactic Tournament on Hard, then go to Speedy's Space Race in any Game Mode. Ships will be chosen at random (secret and normal). This feature will continue to function until the PS is reset.

If you get a flawless score in Speedy's Space Race, you get Infinite Turbo the next quarter.

If you "flawless" your opponent in the Shoot Out (his score = 0), you make every basket you shoot the next quarter.

NBA MAMBO TIME

—by Williams Entertainment
for Nintendo 64

V.S. Numeric Codes

- 025 - Baby Mode
- 048 - No Music
- 111 - Tournament Mode
- 120 - Fast Passing
- 273 - Stealth Turbo
- 284 - Max Speed
- 390 - No Pushing
- 461 - Max Turbo
- 562 - Hyper Speed
- 616 - Max Blocking
- 709 - Quick Hands
- 802 - Max Power
- 937 - Goal Tending

V.S. Joypad Codes

- No Drift - Hold Down when entering a matchup, then when in the matchup, Shoot, then Turbo.
- ABA - Hold Right when entering matchup. Still holding it, hit Shoot, Turbo, Pass.



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TRICKMAN TERRY'S REFERENCE GUIDE



Issue #85		PO'ed PS	
Agile Warrior F-111X PS	Resident Evil PS	Battle Arena Toshinden Remix SAT	Return Fire PS
Bust-A-Move 2 PS	Slam 'N Jam '96 PS	Guardian Heroes SAT	Solar Eclipse SAT
King of Fighters '95 SAT	Street Fighter Alpha 2 ARC	Night Warriors SAT	Super Mario RPG SNES
Pocahontas GEM	VectorMan GEN		

Issue #86		Need For Speed PS	
Battle Arena Toshinden 2 PS	NFL Quarterback Club '86 SAT	Bust-A-Move 2 PS	Shellshock PS
College Slam SNES	Slam 'N Jam '96 PS	Cyberseped PS	Street Fighter Alpha PS
Donkey Kong Country 2 SNES	Triple Play '97 PS	GEX PS	Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 PS
Iron Storm SAT	V-Tennis PS	Jumping Flash! PS	

Issue #87		PilotWings 64 N64	
Bladeforce 3DO	Resident Evil PS	Clockwork Knight 2 SAT	Skeleton Warriors PS
Golden Axe: The Duel SAT	Super Mario 64 N64	Gun Griffon SAT	Tetris Attack SNES
Gunship PS	Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 SAT	International Track and Field PS	Worms PS
Need For Speed PS			

This guide is a reference to all of the game codes printed within the last six months of EGM. Note: This does not include Game Shark codes or any other codes that use a peripheral attachment. (Look for the update in next month's Tricks of the Trade!)

Issue #88		Namco Museum Vol. 2 PS	
Bogey: Dead 6 PS	Need For Speed SAT	DecAthlete SAT	PilotWings 64 N64
Descent PS	Robo Pit PS	Die Hard Trilogy PS	SimCity 2000 PS
Earthworm Jim 2 SAT	Skeleton Warriors PS	Game Guru 3DO	Skeleton Warriors SAT
Gun Griffon SAT	Starblade Alpha PS	The Hive PS	Super Mario 64 N64
Lenmings 3-D PS	Tetris Attack SNES	Namco Museum Vol. 1 PS	Virtua Fighter Kids SAT

Issue #89		Mortal Kombat Trilogy N64	
Battle Arena Toshinden URA PS	Mortal Kombat Trilogy PS	Blast Chamber PS	NFL Quarterback Club '97 PS
Bogey: Dead 6 PS	Project Overkill PS	DecAthlete SAT	Street Fighter Alpha 2 PS
Final Doom SAT	Street Fighter Alpha 2 SAT	Guardian Heroes SAT	Time Commando PS
King of Fighters PS	Tokyo Highway Battle PS	Madden NFL '97 PS	Virtua Fighter Kids SAT

Issue #90		PilotWings 64 N64	
Battle Arena Toshinden URA SAT	Project Overkill PS	DecAthlete SAT	Star Gladiator PS
Die Hard Trilogy PS	Street Fighter Alpha 2 SAT	Gun Griffon SAT	Super Mario 64 N64
Gunship PS	Time Commando PS	Loaded SAT	Tobal No. 1 PS
Machine Head PS	Tomb Raider PS	Motor Toon Grand Prix PS	Triple Play '97 PS
Namco Museum Vol. 2 PS	Twisted Metal 2 PS	NFL Quarterback Club '97 SAT	Wave Race 64 N64
NHL Powerplay '99 SAT	WipeOut XL PS		

NBA JAM EXTREME

SYSTEM: **PlayStation**

PUBLISHER: **Acclaim**

CHEAT SHEET
RANDOM SELECTS, BIG FEET

POWER TRIP
These tricks will give you awesome codes such as Random Selects for both teams and players, and also let you play with hilarious, huge feet for your chosen player!

For a Random Team Select, go to the Character Selection Screen and press Up and the Turbo button at the same time. To get a Random Player, press Up and Turbo again after the Random Team Select is done. To give your player very big feet, choose "Yes" when



On the Team Selection Screen, hold Up and Turbo for a random select.



Do the code on the Big Head Option to also get huge feet!

asked to keep a record. After entering any initials and dates, you will be asked if you want to turn on the Big Head Mode. Hold Right on the pad when choosing your answer to get big feet!

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TEKKEN 3 SPECIAL FEATURE



Namco's Flagship Fighter Gets New Moves, New Fighters And A Facelift

Three is seemingly the magic number for fighting games in 1997. Virtua Fighter 3 is making its way into arcades; gamers are gearing up to play a bona-fide third installment in the Street Fighter franchise; and now Namco is readying its big weapon in the war against archrival Sega, Tekken 3, which looks likely to follow Namco's sequel-design philosophy of giving gamers more of the same, only better.

Although Tekken 3 is reportedly only 30 percent complete, EGM recently saw a top-secret playable version of the game. Tekken 3 already looks like it'll be to Tekken 2 what that sequel was to the first Tekken. It features many of the same fighters and moves (as well as several new combatants), but the graphics and animation have been supercharged with a

higher polygon count and pseudo 3-D backgrounds.

The game's four-button control scheme remains unchanged, with no new Dash buttons or other added-on clutter. Tekken 3 was running on Namco's new System 12 arcade board, and not on the System 33 gear—which Namco is still tweaking—that many had expected. Specs on the board remain unknown, owing to Namco's reluctance



Some characters have been given radical facelifts while others remain unchanged.



to release such info.

Namco instead likes to let its games speak louder than tech specs. Judging by what we saw of Tekken 3, System 12 is powerful indeed (although the game doesn't look as good as Sega's VF3).

Returning fighters include Lei, Paul, Nina, Yoshimitsu, Law and King, as well as four new non-Boss brawlers, all of whom are examined later. Although we saw no sign of Jun or any of Tekken 2's Bosses, they may be Boss characters in Tekken 3. The game's story is reportedly set 20 years after events depicted in the cinemas of Tekken 2. Yet only Lei and the now-bearded Paul look any older.





ENHANCED GRAPHICS

Tekken 3's higher polygon count is readily apparent. You can actually see the individual fingers of some fighters, and all wear more detailed clothing. The combat arenas (which now have pseudo-3-D backgrounds laid over flat backdrops) have been dressed up, too. New locales include a mountain dojo, a carnival and an alley.



CAPTURE THE MOMENT



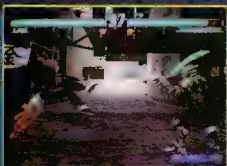
In its uphill battle to beat VF3's visuals, Namco turned to motion-capture technology to improve the animation of Tekken 3's combatants. And the results are obvious. The fighters move with a lifelike fluidity unmatched by the previous games (although VF3 still looks superior). And new animations abound, as well. Each fighter now performs a "get ready" animation before combat begins (for example, Paul cracks his gloved knuckles before a fight). The characters also strut around in new victory animations after each successful round.

NEW MOVES AND TECHNIQUES

Returning fighters in Tekken 3 still rely on many of the moves and combos they could perform in the previous installments, but now they have several new moves and throws. King and Lei, in particular, look like they've been given more throws (even their simple two-button grapples have been replaced). The fighters themselves move faster, especially when they stand up from a fall. And taunts, activated by pressing the Start button, have been added. We also saw what looked like side-step moves and possible low grabs (in addition to the regular ones). As well, 10+ hits remain.



Taunt thins enemy: A step of the Start button puts a teasing Nina's buns in motion.



NEXT STOP—NINTENDO 64?

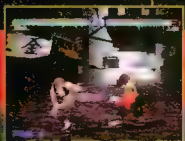


Although the arcade version of Tekken 3 isn't even half complete, rumors are already flying about which console system will get the much-anticipated title. After all, just because the first two games appeared on the PlayStation doesn't mean Sony's system has a lock on Tekken 3. Rumor has it that the Nintendo 64 may be the lucky console, since Namco has always maintained that it will develop for the system most able to duplicate its arcade games. And Namco has already officially announced that it will be creating an RPG and a sports game for Nintendo's 64-Bit system, thus opening the door for Tekken 3 to come later. Of course, even if the N64 does get Tekken 3, that doesn't mean PlayStation gamers will miss out. Namco could always develop it for both platforms.

Will Tekken 3 once again be a PlayStation-exclusive title?



We think Xiaoyu looks better than her motion-capture model.





XIAOYU



The first of the four new fighters revealed so far, Xiaoyu boasts the most distinctive fighting style. She often adopts a low-to-the-ground stance and pummels enemies with her windmilling arms.



JIN



Our theory is that Jin is the son of Kazuya, because he both fights and looks almost exactly like Tekken 2's deceased bad boy. I guess we'll have to wait until we see Tekken 3's cinemas before we know for sure.



HWOARANG



This dude's a red-headed clone of Tekken 2's kick-happy sub-Boss Baek. Volleys of varied kicks are Hwoarang's specialty; he uses them to juggle enemies in the air or flatten them on the ground.



PAUL PHOENIX



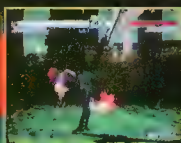
The strongest, cheapest character in Tekken 2 returns with few changes in appearance or fighting style. He does sport a beard that makes him look older and angrier than he did in the last Iron Fist tournament.



NINA WILLIAMS



Nina's aged well—and she's learned a few new tricks. For instance, a Spinning Leg Sweep has been added to her arsenal of low attacks. Nina's long legs—and variety of attacks—remain her best weapons.



Move over, Arnold. SPOT's Got More Moves and Better Reviews.

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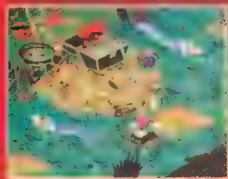
"I think it's safe to say that this could easily be the best isometric action game ever." —Die Hard Gamefan



"SPOT has found a new home on the PlayStation... fun and imaginative levels... this game looks outstanding." —EGM



"A heapin' helpin' of retro-flavored platform game goodness, and that's a pleasant rarity in the 3-D obsessed PlayStation world...There seems to be addiction written all over this thing." —PSXtreme



"Editor's top five picks. SPOT Goes to Hollywood contains tons of gameplay. The graphics are excellent along with fantastic sound effects." —EAG



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YOSHIMITSU



Yoshimitsu's redesign is the most dramatic among Tekken 3's old-school fighters. The cyborg's features have taken on an organic, alien look. Even his sword—now a lightsaber—is new. His fighting style isn't.



MARSHALL LAW



The flipping Tekken-fan favorite returns with a couple of new outfits and many of the same moves. Even his Bruce Lee-ish appearance has remained unchanged—right down to the haircut.



LEI WULONG



Lei remains the only fighter who can kick butt while taking frequent naps. Besides his lie-down moves, he can now pull off a new, drunken throw that shakes enemies before dropping them to the ground.



KING



King finally looks like the buff, costumed professional wrestler he was supposed to be all along. Not surprisingly, he has several new throws, including one that hurls enemies against imaginary ring ropes.

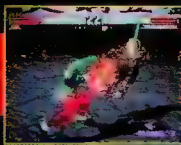


THE MYSTERY MAN & THE BOSSES



As of this writing, the game is still only 30 percent complete. There is still a 10th character (mug shot on the left) to be added to the regular roster of fighters. Little is known about this strange guy with the dreadlock hair and the pierced eyebrow, but we'll keep you

posted. We still haven't learned who the normal mid-Bosses will be (or even if there will be any mid-Bosses.) However, it is known that Heihachi Mishima returns as the main bad boy in this game. He'll now be sporting grey spots and an even more menacing stature.



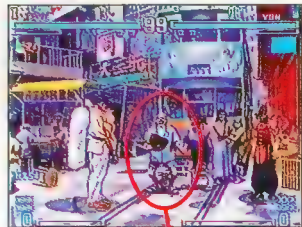
THE EVOLUTION OF

STREET FIGHTER III

NEW MOVES • NEW CHARACTERS
NEW FEATURES • NEW BACKGROUNDS

NEW GENERATION

Much like we'd expect, Capcom has taken its own sweet time preparing the third true installment of the Street Fighter series. Still, as time grows closer to the long-awaited release of Street Fighter III, we can't help but give away a few tidbits to pacify your hunger for knowledge. Who are the new characters? What can they do? How do they relate to the other World Warriors? How



Diehard SF fans will remember this mysterious old man in the street.



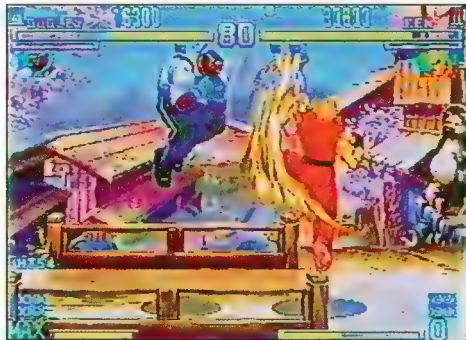
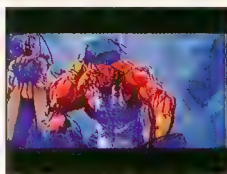
can the returning characters hope to compete? Who is returning? These are but a few of the questions that have been pouring in from around the world. Now it's finally time for some answers, don't you think?

First on our agenda today is to introduce you to the new challengers (oops! New Generation) in the Street Fighter universe. After some brief introductions, let's see what Street Fighter III is capable of by examining the latest game screens. You'd be surprised at what you can learn from a simple screen! Then we'll head over to the fortune-telling area where we'll look at what Capcom has been doing for the past few years. This is a great insight to what will be in Street Fighter III. If something worked in one game, it's bound to resurface in another.

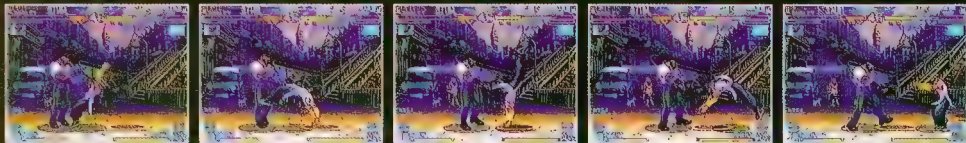
For example, remember the old man who appears in Chun-Li's original

stage background? Well, he's back, and maybe he does more than watch people get clobbered this time. Anything goes, and if this upgrade is anywhere near as impressive as these very early shots suggest, 1997 will be a great year for SF fans. Last time we spoke a little about the wonderful animation, so we won't dally with that trivial bit of info. Instead, as the clock ticks faster and play-testing time approaches, we'll be right there, delivering the news as it happens. Look for our hands-on preview in an upcoming issue!

Editors Note: In some pictures you will see six X's and directional text (Up, Down, Left, Right). This is debug text only, and not a feature of the game.



All the new changes will leave you burning with excitement! Take a look at this detailed background. It animates as well.



The Faces of Street Fighter III

A new game means new fighters to challenge our wits and patience. Capcom has really delivered this time by reducing the returning fighters to only Ryu and Ken (Bosses are unknown as of yet). This means you'll have to face all-new blood if you want to make it to the top, hence the sub-title, "Next Generation." Note the addition of two new female fighters as well as a new robotic one!

Judging by these early looks (subject to change), poor Ryu and Ken will have their hands full this time. These new fighters are younger and more ferocious than our peaceful heroes. Whether they will be up to the task is up to you. Start practicing now on Street Fighter Alpha 2!



RYU

Ryu has gotten older and wiser in his quest to be the best fighter in the world. He has added some new punches to his arsenal of firepower. His Super Fireball causes a massive wind blast which causes his gi to ripple Cool!



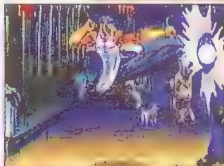
KEN

Ken's rivalry with Ryu has grown, but he has a new maturity in his methods. His stylish fighting can take off energy quick, but still leaves him open for a counter. Elizabeth is no where to be seen, but that could change.



IBUKI

This female ninja may have ties to the original SF ninja, Geki. Perhaps she is a daughter or relative? Her graceful attacks are quick and deadly.



YUN

The young skateboarding kung-fu king is as much a mystery now as before. His twin is never far behind him, lurking close in the background.



DUDLEY

This suave boxer packs a mean punch, including a Dragon Punch-style uppercut borrowed from the Shotokan masters Ryu and Ken.



ALEX

This decidedly military-looking muscle man has several grappling techniques to put you on the ground fast. It is as effective in the air as on the ground.



ELENA

Little is known about the jungle queen Elena, but we do know that she will become a quick favorite among gamers who crave Chun-Li-style action.



SEAN

Looks like another Shotokan character is entering the ring. Perhaps he is of some relation to Capcom's favorite wuss-boy, the ever-lame Dan.



UNKNOWN #1

This robotic character is unnamed as of press time, but he appears to carry a large arsenal of technological weapons.



UNKNOWN #2

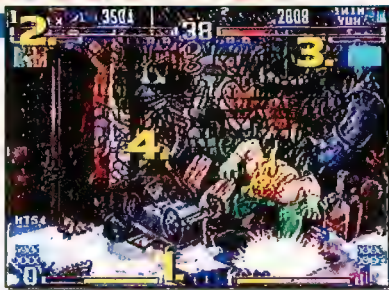
The unnamed fighter bears a striking resemblance to Dhalsim, albeit without the stretching limbs and fireballs. His attacks are limited so far.



SF III ANATOMY 101

Let's take a quick look at what we've seen so far, class! There are four important (or just cool) new changes in Street Fighter III: new Super Meter, new Super Mode Select, the Mysterious Chi Meter and the Incredible Scrolling Playfield.

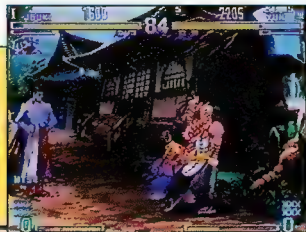
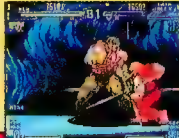
These four gems will take us into the next level of Street Fighter gaming, so listen up! There will be a test coming soon (playtesting, that is), so take notes and be prepared for anything! I'll be keeping an eye on you.



1. SUPER METER

The Super Meter has been overhauled again, and now looks to use a number to indicate the level of Super Power available.

Also, there is evidence of variable length Super Meters, (see picture at right) meaning some characters charge faster than others.



2. SUPER MODES

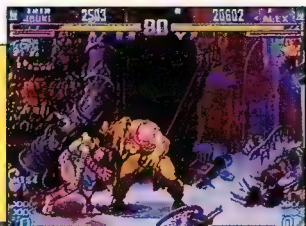
One major revision to the game engine is an all-new Super Select Mode, where you choose your Supers. Reports are sketchy at the moment,

so expect more news on this as it breaks. The only indicators of this are the Roman numerals above the life bars.



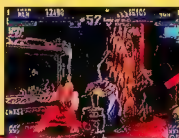
3. CHI METER

Another totally mysterious bar, dubbed here as the "Chi" bar, rises and falls depending on how you attack your opponent or your defensive efficiency. When stunned, the word STUN appears in place of this bar, and it is also of varied length, so it may be tied to the other bars.



4. SCROLLING PLAYFIELD

In a surprising move, Capcom has taken to copying SNK's fighters for something new and added a changing camera view that zooms in and pans out to show more playfield as necessary. The vertical scroll is demonstrated by Yun's flip over Ken in the picture to the far right.



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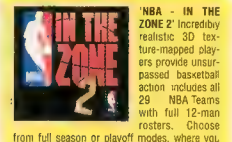
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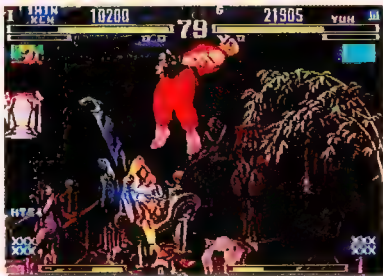
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SF III POSSIBILITIES

Now that we've gleaned all we can from the latest update, let's spend a moment thinking about what Capcom has put the World Warriors through over the past few years. Maybe by doing this, we will get a rare glimpse into the future of Street Fighter III. Since the real Street Fighter III rumors began flying around the time of Street Fighter Alpha's release, let's start there, and work our way to the latest and greatest SF upgrade. The following list keys on the techniques added in the creation of the legend of Street Fighter.



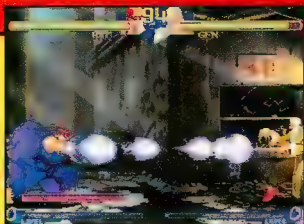
STREET FIGHTER

ALPHA Street Fighter Alpha, or Street Fighter Zero, added two new features to the series: Chain Combos and Alpha Counters. Alpha Counters are by far the most important upgrade. They allow you to escape potential harm with a well-placed block-counter. Chain combos didn't add anything to the engine, so it's best to forget them.



STREET FIGHTER

ALPHA 2 With gamers clamoring for more insane combos, Capcom stepped up and added the Custom Combo system, where you can create your own Super Combo. When used effectively, Custom Combos can be deadly, doing more damage than a Super Combo. An "Evil" Ryu made his debut here.



X-MEN VS.

STREET FIGHTER Though based more on the X-Men game engine than Street Fighter's, XMSF gave us an exaggerated look at the Street Fighter universe. The most interesting additions were Super Jumps and midair special attacks. Please note that Ken has Akuma's air fireball here!



STREET FIGHTER

EX This sleeper title promises to break new ground in the Street Fighter Legacy: 3-D! This shifting camera angles alone make this a hot title to watch for as well as play. The most significant additions are Guard Breakers, Super Cancel (Chains) and more Air Juggles. Guard Breakers will stun your opponent, right through his or her block! No more turtles!



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SUSHI-X's GUIDE TO: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

IN OTHER WORDS:

THE BEST HOME SYSTEM FIGHTING GAMES OF 1996

Hey there, fighting fanatics, this is your old pal Sushi-X coming at you with my killer guide to domestic violence. Now before you start sending me nasty letters, I want you to know that when I say domestic violence, I'm not talking about abusing your family members. Heavens no! I'm talking about the only type of domestic violence that there should be—console fighting games. In my guide, you'll see some of the best fighting games to come home recently, and what I think of them. On this page, there are four fighters that may be a little old but are still worth checking out. Finally, at the end of the article, there is a handy chart that lists some of the more important features of many of the newer games, as well as my score for them (of course, my score is the only one that matters). So after you finish reading which fighting games are hot and which ones are not, get out there and start playing.

MUST-HAVE FIGHTER VIRTUA FIGHTER 2

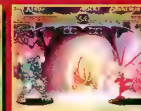
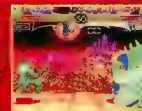
The original Virtua Fighter for the Saturn was a bit of a disappointment. It seemed very rushed and couldn't compete with the PlayStation's Toshinden. Sega then released Virtua



Fighter 2, and it showed that the Saturn can do arcade conversions as well as the next system. The graphics and animation are practically the same as the arcade version, and the gameplay is dead-on. Now we'll just have to see if Sega can do as good a job as a port with Virtua Fighter 3.

MUST-HAVE FIGHTER NIGHT WARRIORS

When it comes to 2-D fighters, Capcom is the king of the hill. One of their best fighters is Night Warriors for the Saturn. Night Warriors is the sequel to DarkStalkers (available on



the PlayStation), but it has more moves and playable Bosses which pushes it ahead of the original. The incredibly smooth (and often hilarious) animation and bizarre cast of characters make this game a blast to play. Next to Street Fighter Alpha 2, this is the best 2-D fighter on the Saturn.

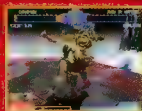
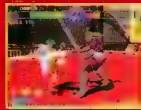
MUST-HAVE FIGHTER TEKKEN

Back in the early days of 32-Bit, the reigning 3-D fighters were Virtua Fighter and Toshinden. Namco announced that they were going to be bringing their arcade hit, Tekken, to the PlayStation. Everyone wondered if it would be able to measure up to the arcade version. It did. In fact, in some ways it was better. Tekken 2 may be out now, but the first one is still worth looking at, especially now that you can get it at a lower price.



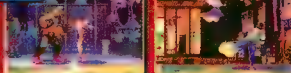
MUST-HAVE FIGHTER TOSHINDEN 2

The original Battle Arena Toshinden was the fighting game that sold many a PlayStation on Sept. 9, 1995. Not surprisingly, the sequel was quick in coming. While the two games are not that much different in gameplay, there are improved backgrounds, cool lighting effects and a few new characters who make the sequel stand out. Plus it has Vermilion, one of the coolest Bosses in fighting history.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2

When you want the absolute best in 2-D fighting, pick up Street Fighter Alpha 2. This game is about as close to fighting game perfection as you can get (at least until Street Fighter III comes along). Both the Saturn and PlayStation versions are great, but the Saturn version has a few advantages.



over the one for Sony's machine. The Saturn version has a few animations that are missing from the PlayStation as well as a very cool Illustrations Mode that lets you check out 100 different



Street Fighter images. Unfortunately, the Super NES version of SF Alpha 2 doesn't quite measure up, but it's okay if it's all you have.

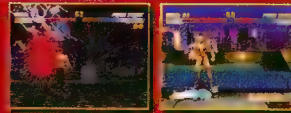


MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

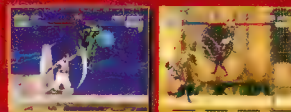
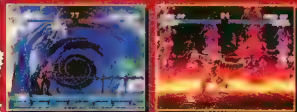
Mortal Kombat junkies now have their ultimate fix. Mortal Kombat Trilogy combines all three of the MK games into one gigantic light-fest. Even if you're not a big Mortal Kombat fan, you have to be impressed just by the sheer size of the game. Finally, all the characters, all the backgrounds, all the moves,



and all the allies are together at last. Both the PlayStation and Nintendo 64 versions are great, but as you may have read in last month's MK Trio



feature, the PlayStation version has a slight advantage. For instance, there are more frames of animation and the bosses are immediately playable.



SAMURAI SHODOWN IV

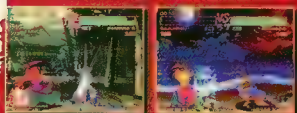
The Samurai Shodown series has been around for a long time. It originated on the Neo-Geo, and has since made appearances on the Super NES,



Well, the series continues on the Neo-Geo with its fourth installment. This new game features a ton of characters from the other three games as well as



a few new ones. Like Samurai Shodown III, you can choose from the Slash or Bust technique. This is a pretty cool feature that basically lets you play as a good or evil version of each of the characters. Of course, since Shodown IV is only on the Neo-Geo right now, the only place you're likely to see it is in your local arcade. Hopefully, it will come to other systems soon, so all can enjoy it.



Genesis and PlayStation. Heck, even the 3DO and Game Boy have had their own versions of the Shodown games.

STAR GLADIATOR

Since I don't need to say it, I bet Capcom has always been the best makers of 2-D games. Everyone was a bit shocked when they announced that they would be making their first 3-D fighter, Star Gladiator. There was no need for alarm, really. After all, it is

Capcom, how can they go wrong? As expected, Star Gladiator turned out to be a great game. The PlayStation translation of the arcade game is exact



to the original. Now that we know that Capcom can make a great 3-D fighter, we should all be getting ready for their next one, Street Fighter EX.



KING OF FIGHTERS '96

In the same fashion that Mortal Kombat Trilogy is the ultimate MK game, The King of Fighters '96 is the ultimate game for fans of SNK's fighters. In it, you choose a team of three fighters to go up against another team. Fight your opponents until all three members of a team have been



defeated. You can create a team made up of fighters from the SNK universe. This includes characters from the Fatal Fury and Art of Fighting games among others. While the King of Fighters has



been going on for a few years now, the '96 edition is the best yet. Like Samurai Shodown IV, this is only on the Neo-Geo for now. Perhaps we'll be seeing it on more systems in the future.

TOBAL NO. 1

One of the strangest of the fighting games is also one of the best. Tobal No. 1 for the PlayStation is strange mainly because of who makes it—Square. As you probably know, Square has been making some of the best RPGs in recent years. This, however, doesn't mean that they can't make a

good fighting game. It's also a rather innovative game. It is the first fighting game to feature complete freedom to move around the screen in whatever



direction you want. The graphics are hi-res and move at an ultra-smooth 60 frames per second. Although it might seem strange, it's an excellent game.

ULTIMATE MORTAL KOMBAT 3

While the legions of Mortal Kombat fans are playing Mortal Kombat Trilogy on their 32-Bit systems, those who have only 16-Bit systems might feel a bit

Ultimate MK3 includes all the features of the arcade version (with the exception of Sheeva), and it plays great. The Super NES

version has a slight advantage over the Genesis version due to the extra colors and better music. Still, if you only have a 16-Bit system, this is the best way to go.



left out. There's no need to get too upset, because while you can't play MK Trilogy, you can have the next best thing.

TEKKEN 2

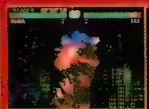
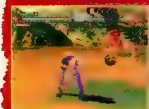
Tekken 2 may be getting old now, but it is still the fighting game of choice around the EGM office. What makes this game so good? Well, there are tons of characters with tons of special moves. Each character has his or her own sub-Boss that you can eventually



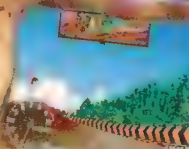
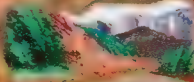
play as. Each of the characters even has his/her own rendered ending. Even the arcade didn't have that! For the true masters, there are ultra-powerful



combos that, when learned, can cause incredible amounts of damage (or tighten up a few wallets, eh, Crispin?). With this game in our PlayStations, it's a wonder we get any work done at all.



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FIGHTING VIPERS

Sega has been riding high on the success of Virtua Fighter 2 for quite some time. Meanwhile, everyone has been waiting for Virtua Fighter 3. In order to tide us over, Sega released Fighting Vipers, which is a sort of strange variation of the VF series. As expected, the Saturn version is very close to the



arcade. The graphics aren't quite as smooth, but there are tons of other special effects. The characters are very bizarre, ranging from a skater kid to a

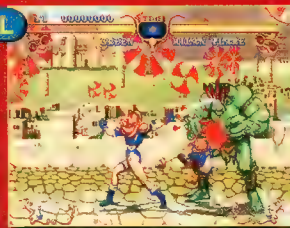


girl on in-line skates. You fight within a fenced-in area that you can interact with. If you were a fan of the VF games, give Fighting Vipers a go.

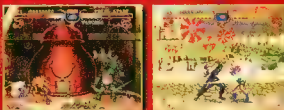


GOLDEN AXE: THE DUEL

One of the greatest series of games on the Genesis was the Golden Axe series. When the Saturn came out, everyone was hoping that the Golden Axe crew would make a 32-Bit appearance. Eventually they did, but not in the form of a side-scrolling hack-and-slash game. Instead, the characters from the



Golden Axe games now star in a fighting game. All the main characters as well as some new ones compete one on one. You can even fight as the evil



Death Adder. One of the coolest features of the game is the magic and health power-ups you can get from elves, just like in the original game!



SUSHI'S QUICK REFERENCE FIGHTING CHART

GAME	1-UP PLAYERS	2-UP PLAYERS	3-UP PLAYERS	4-UP PLAYERS	5-UP PLAYERS	6-UP PLAYERS	8-UP PLAYERS
SF ALPHA 2 (SAT)	8	5	1	7			30
SF ALPHA 2 (PS)	8	5	1	7		8	8.5
MK TRILOGY (PS)	37	1	2	4		8	8.5
MK TRILOGY (N64)	30	4	2	4		8	8.5
SAMURAI SHODOWN IV	11	2	2	13		1	9.0
STAR GLADIATOR	9	3	1	6		8	9.0
TEKKEN 2	10	15	3	25		3	9.0
TOBAL NO. 1	8	3	2	7		3	9.0
KOF '96	22	2	2	3		1	9.5
SF ALPHA 2 (SNES)	18	0	1	7		8	9.5
ULTIMATE MK3 (SNES)	23	1	2	4		5	9.5
FIGHTING VIPERS	11	2	1	77		5	9.5
GOLDEN AXE: THE DUEL	10	0	1	6		4	9.5
IRON & BLOOD (PS)	6	4	4	11		5	9.5
TOSHINDEN URA	11	2	2	7		8	9.5
VF KIDS	10	3	1	24		4	9.5
NINJA MASTERS	10	2	2	3		1	9.5
RAGNAGARD	8	3	4	7		1	9.5
BATTLE MONSTERS	12	0	4	15		5	9.5



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Q U A K E



Retro

ACTIVE



Here it is—retroactive number two. What's different about this second installment? It's simple. Last month we covered retro titles that have come back from the dead—those rereleased in compilations or enhanced forms as well as originals released in new systems. This month we covered those games last month and things we would be interested to cover the roots of gaming. This time, though, we're

looking at the original systems and the hardware that made them possible. We'll take a look at the Atari 2600, the system that was the most successful of the early home console systems (and we'll see why).

We got everything from the Atan 2600 to the Atari 5200, and most of everything in between. There are some constraints, some systems had to be left out. There's always the possibility of more retro gaming in future issues, so keep an eye out.

As mentioned in last month's *EGM* the history of gaming is a quick but technology-filled adventure. It didn't start all that long ago, and it has made incredible progress in that short time. You must keep in mind that the first computer systems were no more than two blocks on the screen with a block that moved back and forth in between them (also known as Space Invaders). The hardware were mounted to the system before there were joysticks with X, Y, Z, A, B, C, L and R buttons not to mention the D-pad.

Now we have advanced technology that makes polygons look better than when they first appeared and controllers that are programmable—the whole thing is kind of mind-boggling.

Many of us can't help but stand in awe and wonder how something that looks so quickly and simply as how simple blocks that represented a dragon

turned into hundreds of texture-mapped polygons that represent the same thing. But which one is better? Most of the time, the answer is in the Odyssey and Atari 2600. The irony is that back when those systems appeared those who were fortunate to have them had a hard time getting them to work. They were like a broken record, and they were a pain in the neck. But when you saw Star Wars for the first time, the screen opened, drooping the screen back and forth, and you had a chuckle. It was a little wacky, but it was something that ideally should be obtained on any system regardless of graphics. This is gameplay. The one thing that stands out about most of the old-time games is that they were fun to play (and a little wacky at the same time).

If gamers agree, and they don't happen to still have these oldies, there are a few ways to find them. This is kind of tough but hardly impossible. Keep an eye out for garage sales around town, or even better, look in local thrift shops. They have more than funky clothes and dishes. The best way is to find them on the web. Look for a sidebar on one of the following pages that gives some info and web addresses on sites that deal with retro gaming.

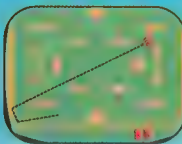




ATARI 2600

Remember this system? How could anyone forget it. This was the big one—everybody and their brother had a 2600. If you didn't have it, chances are a friend did.

There were several different types of Atari 2600s available. Some were the standard plastic casing, others featured a simulated wood cabinet. Another version came out for a



low, low price of under \$50. \$50!?

Well, isn't that nice? If gamers want a huge library of games, this is where to go. With some

good investigative

skills, most of the titles that came out can be found. Like the systems, these can be found on the Web as well as from thrift shops, garage sales and maybe even from aunts and uncles that have them collecting dust in the crawl-space (and those will be free...unless they don't love you).

There were quite a few cool controllers and add-ons out for the system once more games started coming out. Some of these include a Track & Field controller along with the very handy trackball. Check the accompanying sidebar on controllers for more info.



ATARI 5200

The first thing that comes to mind about the 5200 is its enormous size—it was close to the size of the Yugo when it was in its Yugoslavian glory. The cartridges were also fairly large.

However, there were different models of the 5200 available—not all were gigantic. The sleek silver and black casing really made the 5200 look like something from the future...like 1997! Like all

of the other systems, this one also hooked up through the RF port of a TV.

Many of the games that were on the old 2600 came out for the 5200 and as gamers may already know, the graphics were a step up. That's right, there were 10 blocks instead of three. Actually, some of the titles on this one were literally arcade-perfect, rivaling some of the retro titles that have come out for newer systems.

The controller for the 5200 was like the Coleco, the Intellivision and the Atari Jaguar in that it had a numerical pad. Imagine a standard Atari 2600 controller somehow combined with the Coleco controller.



ATARI 7200

Ah yes, the most advanced of the Atari systems (more powerful than the Jaguar?) was released and gamers were pleased...or at least mildly pleased.

The funny thing about all of these Atari systems is that they came out pretty close to one another. It's like they were pulling a Sega or something (or should I say Sega has been pulling an Atari). This may account for the huge lull in video game sales back in the mid-'80s until the original Nintendo came out.

An interesting story is that Nintendo came to Atari with their 8-Bit Famicom system and the deal was botched at the last minute by Atari. So instead of the Nintendo 8-Bit from Atari, gamers were able to play games on the good, old 7800.

The 7800 was compatible with the 2600 (but not the 5200) which was the main reason why the 5200 didn't succeed.

Most of the games were similar to the NES but they didn't have as many colors and nothing really came close to Super Mario Bros.

After the video game crash at the end of 1983 (beginning of '84) Atari was left to single-handedly compete with the NES in 1985. Guess what happened...I think history speaks for itself.



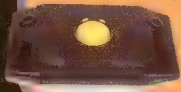
Atari controllers

Of course the Atari systems weren't the only ones with various peripherals, but they did have quite a few.

Pictured here are the Trackball and the Track & Field controller. The Trackball is pretty straightforward and so is the T&F controller—not like the controllers of today with 16 buttons and an analog stick.



Finding these might be a little tricky, but it shouldn't be impossible.



PROFESSIONAL ANALYSIS OF:



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Universal Interactive Studios



DINA

The picture shown here is actually the DINA system. This one was completely compatible with the Colecovision system.

Owners of this beast may have remembered all of the strange controllers and gadgets that were available. Some included the sports trackball controller (which is more complicated than the controls on a nuclear submarine) among others.

The controller for the Colecovision was a chore to use. Not only were there two buttons and a little joystick, there was a complete numerical pad, much like the one on a touch-tone telephone.



What's even better (and we say this sarcastically) is that certain games had a little number pad overlay for special control options. For instance, a flying game might have had a landing gear button or a flare button. Needless to say these often got lost, bent and who knows what else happened to them in the process of playing.

The games featured a decent amount of colors and cool graphics (relatively speaking).

There were plenty of games out for the Coleco. One that stands out in *EGM* editor Shawn Smith's head is *Loopz*. This one was a bit of an arcade. Players controlled a plane that, you guessed it, did *Loopz*.

DONKEY KONG JR.

Way back when the day the idea was to convert the arcade systems so they could be played at home. As mentioned, the 5200 and 7800 Atari systems came pretty close but they were on that nice, big TV screen instead of the big cabinet like at the arcade.

Somewhere in between lies the little jobbies known as tabletops. These were scaled-down versions (way scaled-down) inspired by

arcade greats. Some include *Donkey Kong Jr.*, *Q-Bert* and *Zaxxon*. Even the little, yellow man himself made an appearance in a tabletop version of *Pac-Man*. Some more obscure tabletops were a version of *Popeye*

(which wasn't based on the arcade game) and *Snoopy*.

Instead of using actual sprites, the graphics were made with LCD (liquid crystal display). Often, there would also be a clock built into the game that you could use as an alarm. Yes, these games were both fun and functional; essentially doubling their worth.

Sure, the games may not have been exact to the arcade. In some cases, they weren't even close. They were, however, fun. The thrill of being able to take a miniature arcade cabinet over to a friend's house where you could compete to see who would get the highest score in *Frogger* was something that couldn't be duplicated in a home system. Heck, you could even take it to school to play during recess (they were far too big to sneak in a game during class).

Is this where the handhelds started?



INTELLIVISION

The Intellivision was a personal favorite of many *EGM* editors. This little machine sported two built-in controllers that were as comfortable as they were practical. The unique disk-shaped directional pad provided unprecedented control for the time, and the numeric keypad opened up new options previously unavailable in console gaming. The Intellivision not only had plenty of action titles, but simple role-playing games (like the *D D* games?), casino games (who can forget playing 7-card stud with the shifty dealer?), and many more. Even though there were a good amount of games for the Intellivision, there wasn't anything that really stood out.

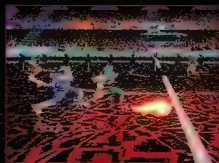
The Intellivision became popular enough to where a second, equally powerful version had to be released. The Intellivision II was more compact, had longer controller cords and looked much more sophisticated and modern. Although it was the same machine at heart, it sold well.

The Intellivision ("The Intelligent Television") had its namesake to live up to. So out came the Intellivoice module. Any Intellivision game would plug into this gadget, which in turn, would plug into the main cartridge slot of the system. Any Intellivoice-compatible game would then give you speech in the game! It was an important innovation back then, as game systems did not have the capability to talk. This added a new dimension in gaming, as the CPU could tell you some of the things that were going on in the game. Important warnings in *B-17 Bomber* (the Intellivoice game that was included with the module) included, "Watch out for flak!" or "Bandit, 3 o'clock!"



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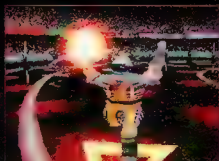
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HIS TITANIUM SWORD IS A LETHAL WEAPON.

(GO AHEAD. YOU TELL HIM HE'S WEARING A GIRLIE HAT.)





He's got unblockable moves. He's got a huge arsenal of 10-string combos and air juggles. What's that mean? That means Mr. Yoshimitsu can wear any damn hat he wants. With a new-found ability to disappear and reappear, the stealthy Samurai can carve you a new orifice in seconds flat.



No wonder he's one of the most feared fighters in Tekken 2™. With three new fighting modes, 23 new stages, plus brand new 3D animations, and more moves and combos than any game on Earth, Yoshimitsu believes he can defeat all 23 challengers before him. Do you have the guts to throw your hat in the ring?



鉄拳 TEKKEN 2



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THE GREATEST FIGHTERS ON EARTH.

SHOSHINKAI

PART II SPECIAL FEATURE

N

intendo puts on one trade show a year for the Japanese gaming industry: Shoshinkai. Last year, Nintendo unveiled Mario 64, the game that single-handedly launched the Nintendo 64 in both Japan and the U.S. This year's exposition marked the unveiling of the 64 Disk Drive system, even though no games were playable on the peripheral.

Nintendo had only a handful of playable games at the show. Mario Kart 64, StarFox 64 and Blast Corps. were the three games that Nintendo was showing off in playable form. Yoshi's Island 2, the sequel to the popular Super NES action platform game,



It's been in development for a long time now, but finally the 64DD is revealed

was shown on tape. Y12 features rendered graphics and 2-D gameplay, a major difference from the hand-drawn graphics of the first game. Kirby's Air Ride is a little further along than it was at last year's Shoshinkai, but was also unplayable. This version had Kirby sporting a baseball cap and traveling over hills to collect star icons. Only a few seconds of footage were shown of Mother 3, the third game in the hugely popular Mother series. U.S. gamers



Rare and Nintendo team up for major blasting action in Blast Corps. A nuclear convoy is barreling its way across the country. Clear the way or the world goes KABOOM!

will remember Mother 2, which was retitled and released on the Super NES as Earthbound.

The big story of the show was definitely the 64DD and Zelda 64. It is still unclear as to whether Link will save Zelda on 64DD or on cartridge, although the storage space on the DD would certainly help to make the game bigger. The DD runs at approximately the speed of a 5.4x CD-ROM, and can hold up to 64 Megabytes of game data—eight times that of an N64 cartridge.

Making up for the lack of playable games on the 64DD were the number of titles shown by Nintendo's third-party developers for the cartridge system. Wonder Project J2 was released shortly after Shoshinkai, packed in with its

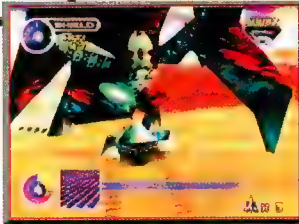


very own memory cartridge (how's that for value?). Wonder Project J2 is the sequel to one of Enix's more popular Super Famicom games. Enix also had Go! Go! Troublemakers, a platform adventure game in 2-D that uses 3-D graphics.

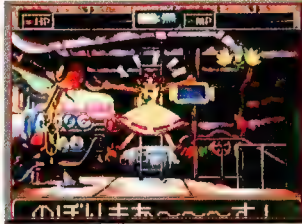
Seta has quite a few Nintendo 64



Seta's Ridge-Racer-esque Rev Limit brings adrenaline-pumping racing to the N64.



Fox McCloud and friends hop back into their fighters for 3-D action in StarFox 64.



Wonder Project J2 by Enix is the follow-up to one of their Super Famicom games.





GoldenEye
By Nintendo



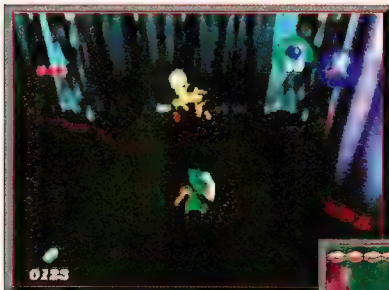
Super 64
By Nintendo



Yoshi's Island 2
By Nintendo



Blade & Barrel
By Kemco



The G4DD system gives gamers the chance to Link up with Zelda in an all-new game

projects in the works that look very promising. Rev Limit is much like Ridge Racer in presentation, and is sure to satisfy N64 racing fans. Seta's lineup included Wild Choppers, St. Andrews Golf, Marita's Shogi 64, Like Thunder "Go" and Super Real Island. Seta was one of the first Nintendo 64 licensees, releasing Shogi at the Japanese launch of the system.

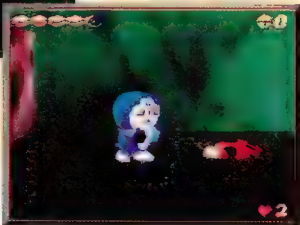
Doraemon, the automatically powered chubby and earless kitty cat, is making his N64 debut courtesy of Epoch. For those unfamiliar with Doraemon, his antics have been chronicled for years in children's manga and anime, and he has starred in numerous games on other platforms.

Acclaim showed the latest rev of Turok: Dinosaur Hunter at the show. The game is slated to be released in March and features eight levels of 3-D shooting action. The graphics look great with 3-D rendered landscapes, filled with human and dino enemies. Weaponry ranges from simple pistols and rifles to energy pulse rifles and a

gamers might remember Konami's first Super Famicom Goemon game, which was released here as Legend of the Mystical Ninja on the Super NES. Add to that J-League Perfect Striker, Mahjong Master and Powerful Pro Baseball.

Kemco is hard at work on their helicopter shooting game Blade & Barrel. Up to four players can duke it out or work cooperatively on a campaign.

King of Pro Baseball is the newest game in Imagineer's super-deformed baseball



Doraemon, a roly-poly automatically powered kitty cat makes his 64-Bit debut in Japan.

gun that nukes all of the enemies around you. The areas that Turok has include monkey-infested jungles, dark caves, jungle rivers and underwater caverns.

Konami is hard at work on their N64 projects. Goemon 5 is a 3-D action platform game in the style of Mario 64. U.S.



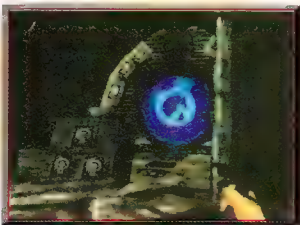
Seta's slate of N64 games is rounded out by the hell-battle game Wild Choppers.

series, the racing title Multi Racing Championship, and the RPG Magic Tale.

Some of these games will make it to the U.S. When they do, you can bet that EGM will have hard-hitting previews and reviews of all the new N64 games. Look in this issue for our blowout of Mario Kart!



GOLF: Trouble Makers
By Enix



Goemon 5
By Konami



Yoshi's Island 64
By Nintendo



Mother 3
By Nintendo



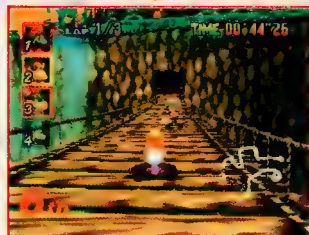
Kirby's Air Ride
By Nintendo

NINTENDO 64

Battle
MODE

MK64's Battle Mode is half the reason to buy the game. Although you still only get four battle arenas to choose from, they're much larger than those in the original. And they're multi-leveled, too, so cunning racers can hide from opponents. But perhaps the mode's greatest

innovation is what happens when you lose your last balloon in a three- or four-player battle. Instead of being sidelined while the others finish their game, you become a rolling bomb. Now you can cruise around and try to ram the remaining players to blow them up for revenge!



MARIO KART 64

Classic Kart Action Is Back On Track

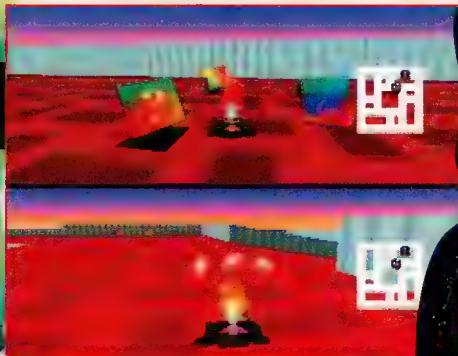
It had it all—stylized graphics, brilliant control, a huge cast of Nintendo's superstars and Shigeru Miyamoto's creative genius to bring everything together. Yes, the Super NES' classic Super Mario Kart is one of the finest games ever made.

But will the much-anticipated 64-Bit update, Mario Kart 64, shine as brightly as its predecessor? Will it offer the same power-sliding, banana-launching thrills; the same well-balanced characters; the same



excellence in multiplayer gaming? Don't worry—it does.

EGM recently nabbed a Japanese copy of MK64, and our staff descended on the game, often four at a time, to put it through its paces. We're happy to say

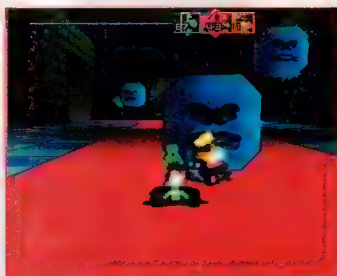
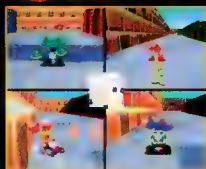


Can you find the decoy power-up in this picture (top half)? Its inverted question mark gives it away. Avoid these fiendish additions to MK64.



Pricy PACK-IN

The Japanese version of MK64 is being packed with a special (sort of) controller. This joypad is identical in almost every way to the standard N64 controllers—except for one thing: It's black on top and gray on the bottom. Nintendo is offering these dual-colored controllers for a couple of reasons. First, most gamers will need an extra controller for MK64's multiplayer modes. And second, a Nintendo executive, who wished to remain anonymous, told us that Japanese N64 owners have been creating their own dual-colored controllers for a while (by taking apart different colored controllers and swapping the halves of the outer casing). Being the shrewd business people that they are, Nintendo created their own pad to appeal to fans of funny-colored sticks. It's highly probable that the U.S. Mario Kart 64 will sell with this joypad, as well—a pack-in that will add about \$30 to the game's price.



it packs all the glorious playability—and all of the little Miyamoto touches—of the 16-bit classic, as well as the fancy new, antialiased visuals gamers have come to expect from the Nintendo 64.

But before we get to what's new in the Mario Kart gang, let's look at what has

stayed the same. Nearly all of the original's racers have returned, including Mario, Luigi, Princess Toadstool (now better known by her Japanese moniker, Peach), Toad, Yoshi, Donkey Kong and Bowser. The only MIA is Koopa, who has been replaced by Nintendo's more noteworthy villain, Wario.

As before, all the racers possess different driving characteristics. The lightest three—Yoshi, Peach and Toad—boast the best turning and acceleration capabilities, but their top speeds aren't too speedy. Mario and Luigi are the middle-of-the-road guys and give a solid—if not



"...the courses are longer, and many extend through buildings and tunnels."



Although not as important as in the original SMK, power slides are still a crucial skill to master, if you're going to lead the pack.

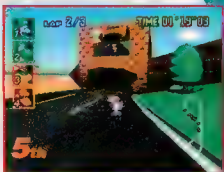
stunning—all-around performance. The heavyweights—Wario, Bowser and Donkey Kong—are the speed demons of the group, at least once you get them moving. Their turning skills and acceleration leave a lot to be desired.

MK64 gives its drivers 20



Watch out! The original's moles return, now meaner than ever.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
1st Qtr. '97	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Nintendo	80%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Racing	1-4	64-Meg



Most of the game's tracks are based on those from the original.

Gamer's EDGE

The Essentials of Offensive Driving

Whether you nab them alone or in packs, MK64's power-ups are essential to successful racing.



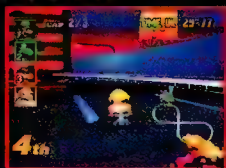
Star: Nothing can touch you when you start up the star. Besides granting invincibility, it improves speed and handling.



Ghost: Activate this guy to swipe the goodies of other racers. It will also turn you invisible for a little while.



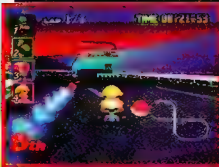
Lightning Bolt: The ultimate insurance policy. It'll shrink all the other racers and let you roll right over their tiny, helpless karts.



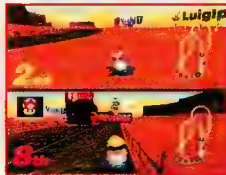
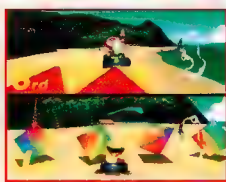
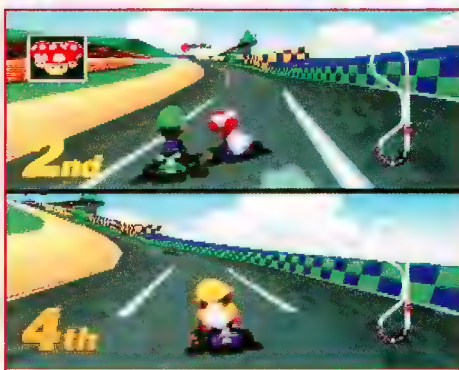
Green Shell: These are unguided, so you'll need dead-on aim to whack opponents. Let a pack circle you for protection.



Red Shell: Launch one and watch it home in on enemies. Watch out, though—sometimes they'll turn and come after you!



Super Shell: This spiky wonder will seek out and nail anyone in first place, occasionally hitting others on the way.



courses to race and battle on. Sixteen courses are designed for the Grand Prix and multi-player race modes, in which players race against the entire Mario pack or just each other. These courses are divided into four classes—or "cups"—of increasing difficulty, the Mushroom, Flower, Star and Special cups. Funny thing: You don't have to proceed through the cups to race on later courses; all 16 can be played right away (which leads us to wonder if there might be more, hidden courses that open when you earn gold trophies in the four cups). The final four courses are reserved for everybody's favorite Mario Kart feature, the Battle Mode.

MK64's race courses pack most of what you'd expect

from a typical Mario Kart track—hidden shortcuts, plenty of power-ups, turbo arrows and the occasional critter hazards (such as the first game's moles and SM64's penguins). Of course, much is new and improved now, too. For starters, the courses are longer, and many extend through buildings and tunnels. They're not flat, often stark raceways of the original's Mode 7 courses, either. MK64's tracks undulate with hills, banks and ramps, and track portions often wind around and above other portions. The only things missing are gold coins, which could be collected in the first game to build speed.

No Mario Kart track would be complete without

power-ups, and MK64 features most of the items of the 16-Bit game, as well as a few ingenious new ones. You get the Bananas, unguided Green Shells, homing Red Shells, Mushroom turbos, item-stealing Ghosts and Lightning Bolt shrink rays, all of which are hidden in the rainbow-colored power-up blocks that you'll find grouped in patches along each track. New power-ups include the Decoy Block and the blue Super Shell (see the sidebar to find out what they do). Only the first game's Feather power-up, which boosted your jumping abilities, is missing.

Most of MK64's items come in two varieties, the standard, one-shot type and the enhanced, multiple-attack

As many as four players can now speed down the game's tracks or battle it out in its courses, thanks to the various split-screen modes. Lone racers drive in full-screen glory, without having the bottom half of the screen wasted on a map or rear view. Two-player games

split the screen in half, while three- and four-player games split it into fourths. The level of detail remains nearly the same for all multiplayer modes, but the game does slow down a bit when three or four people play. It's a small price to pay for the best multiplayer game ever.

Not all game modes are available to multiple players. The X's show which modes are playable.

	1P	2P	3P	4P
Grand Prix	X	X		
Multiplayer Racing		X	X	X
Battle Mode		X	X	X
Time Trial	X			

Gamer's EDGE

Four Ways to Play



Mushroom: Activate these in the straightaways for a boost of super speed. They'll extend your jumps, too.



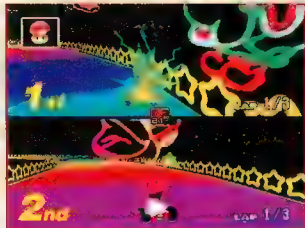
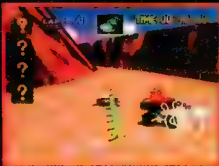
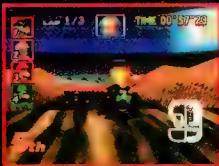
Super Mushroom: Acts like a regular mushroom, except it gives you continuous turbo boosts for a short amount of time.



Banana: The least useful of the weapons, bananas will still save your butt if you drop them in the path of enemies.



Decoy Power-up: Drop this among regular power-ups and watch unsuspecting racers crash into it. Hilarity ensues.



power-up. For instance, shells can come singly, and be launched once, or in groups of three. If you nab a three-pack of red shells and tap the trigger button, they'll begin circling you, acting as a sort of force field. You can then launch the shells once a cluster of enemies gets in range, or just ram other racers and let your orbiting shells take them out. The type of power-up you get is determined both by random chance and by what position you hold in the race. A kart driver in last place is more likely to get a choice power-up than the racer at the head of the pack.

Control in MK64 is what really sets it apart from its predecessor. Thanks to the analog stick, power slides are no longer crucial to a successful race. The stick gives you nearly all the control you need to slide around tight corners or keep from flying off elevated tracks that lack guardrails. In fact, once you get used to the analog stick, you'll wonder how you ever played Mario Kart without it. A few new control tricks have been added to MK64, too. Your Kart can now go in reverse, an ability you'll especially appreciate when you get stuck in a corner in Battle

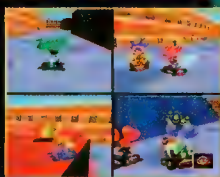
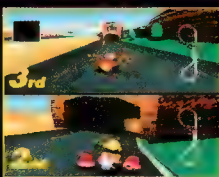
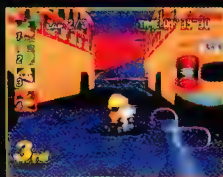
Mode. You can also hold down the gas and break buttons to execute U-turns and donuts. Finally, the four camera buttons adjust your view and switch between the various onscreen displays, such as the map and speedometer. MK64 is the third N64 game whose premise was borrowed from Nintendo's

16-Bit glory days (the other two being Super Mario 64 and PilotWings 64). With Zelda 64 and a Kirby game on the way, it looks as if Nintendo's 64-Bit library won't stray from tried-and-true-and-money-making titles. But then, with games as good as MK64, who's complaining? ■



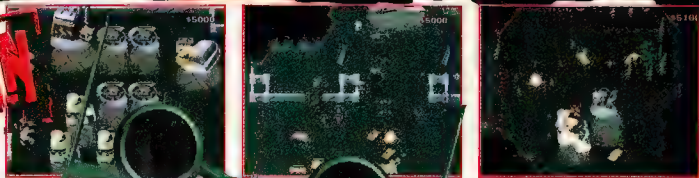
Super Mario 64's friendly penguins are now a road hazard

Isn't that Peach's castle up ahead? Could there be a way in?



NEXT WAVE

SATURN



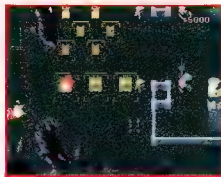
Command & CONQUER

It's About (Real) Time

What would you do with a PC game that sold over 1 million units worldwide?

Besides the obvious answer (release a sequel), you'd probably want to bring it out on other platforms. And that's exactly what Westwood Studios did. Saturn (and PlayStation) owners are going to be treated to one of the most popular PC strategy games of 1996. Now, console owners will be treated to some of the PC's best.

Command & Conquer is a present-day strategy war game whose engine is



based on the classic game Dune II. Since most console owners are accustomed to action-oriented games, a real-time strategy game lends itself well to the market. Everything in C&C is moving and acting, without regards to what you



are doing. Forget about taking your time during your "turn." This is action-strategy at its finest.

The setting for C&C takes place in a world where the key to power is control of crystals called Tiberium. A terrorist group called the Brotherhood of Nod controls about half of the world's supply of Tiberium and is quickly taking over the reigns of control of the world. To combat Nod, the United Nations formed a special operations group called the Global Defense Initiative (GDI).



In C&C, you can choose to play either as the "good guys"—the GDI or as the "bad guys"—the Brotherhood of Nod. Each group has its own completely separate set of missions, as each has its own goals in the world. The game will ship with two discs—one for each side.

After choosing the team you wish to play as, you will be briefed as to what your individual missions will be. These missions will all be different from one another. For example, the first GDI mission has you establishing a foothold on



The first GDI level—a gunboat patrols the shores while reinforcements arrive by the shipload. This one's the easiest of all the different stages.



The Brotherhood of Nod is so evil, they'll kill civies if they have to.



Here, Nod attacks a GDI base with a variety of offensive units.



the enemy's beachfront. Kill all of the opposition, and you shall move on. Next, you are sent to help GDI forces who were ambushed in a Nod attack. When playing the Brotherhood, you may find yourself executing key political figures or running rescue missions to save your captured brothers-in-arms.



power plants, SAM sites and more. These buildings can help you defend your base, produce offensive soldiers and craft (see sidebars), provide power, etc. You'll be allowed to build a Tiberium refinery, which will let you collect and process Tiberium crystals (which in turn brings you our only source of income).



"Forget about taking your time..."

The parameters of every level is what truly sets each mission apart. In some stages, you will start with only a few soldiers. It is your responsibility to establish and defend a base from which you will build your army. In other missions, you will only have a set amount of troops, with no chance of creating more (although reinforcements may be sent your way). You will have to complete your objective(s) with only the units and supplies given to you.

In those missions where you are allowed to build a base, you'll usually start with a Mobile Construction Yard. This vehicle transforms into your starting base, from which other structures and units can be formed. Eventually, you'll be able to create barracks, guard towers, weapons factories,

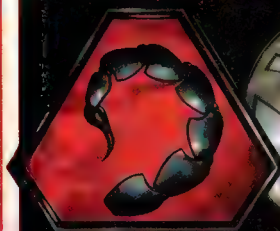
The game becomes fast and furious as you are forced to make quick decisions during the heat of battle. Will you pour out offensive unit after unit for a quick and decisive victory? Will you spend valuable resources to defend your base? Will you rush out to gather the remaining supply of Tiberium, before your foe does? Will you take your time and build a powerful base? Don't ponder too long, for the enemy will always be preparing for your defeat, whether you're ready or not. ■

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
Now	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	DONE	
Westwood Studios	100%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Strategy	1	CD-ROM

Gamer's EDGE

The Brotherhood of Nod Forces

GDI Forces



Cargo Plane

Weapon: None

Commando Infantry

Weapon: Sniper Rifle

Engineer

Weapon: None (he takes over GDI facilities)

Flame Tank

Weapon: Dual Flame Cannons

Flame thrower Infantry

Weapon: Flame thrower

Harvester

Weapon: None (but it can run over enemy troops)

Light Tank

Weapon: 70mm Cannon (armor piercing)

Minigun Infantry

Weapon: M16 Assault Rifle

Mobile Artillery

Weapon: 155mm Cannon (high explosive)

Mobile Construction Yard

Weapon: None (it can, however, run over enemy troops)

Nod Buggy

Weapon: M60 Machine Gun

Recon Bike

Weapon: Dragon TOW Missiles

Rocket Infantry

Weapon: Dragon TOW Rockets

Stealth Tank

Weapon: Dragon TOW Missiles

Transport Helicopter

Weapon: None

Armored Personnel Carrier

Weapon: M60 Machine Gun

Blazooka Infantry

Weapon: Light TOW Rockets

Commando Infantry

Weapon: Sniper Rifle

Engineer

Weapon: None (he takes over Nod facilities)

Grenade Infantry

Weapon: Grenades

Ground Support Aircraft

Weapon: Napalm Bombs

Gunboat

Weapon: Tomahawk Missiles

Harvester

Weapon: None (but it can run over enemy troops)

Humm Vee

Weapon: M60 Machine Gun

Mammoth Tank

Weapon: 1 Dual 120mm Cannons (armor piercing), Weapon 2: Mammoth Tusk Missiles

Medium Tank

Weapon: 105mm Cannon (armor piercing)

Minigun Infantry

Weapon: M16 Minigun

Mobile Construction Yard

Weapon: None (it can run over enemy troops as well)

Mobile Rocket Launcher

Weapon: Surface to Surface Rocket Launcher

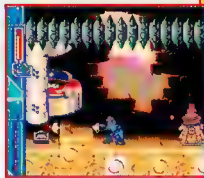
Orca VTOL Aircraft

Weapon: Dragon TOW Missiles

Transport Helicopter

Weapon: None

PLAYSTATION

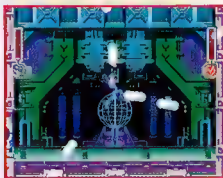


MEGA MAN 8

The Original Blue Dude With An Attitude

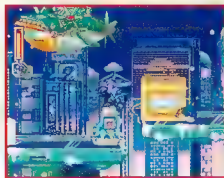
Video game characters come and go, but few have lasted longer than Mega Man. Capcom's video game hero from the early days of the NES has survived six NES games, five Game Boy games, five Super NES games and even a Game Gear game. Now, Mega Man is coming back stronger than ever in his first appearance on the U.S. 32-Bit systems in Mega Man 8.

There was a bit of controversy over this game early on. Sony wasn't too keen on Capcom's decision to keep Mega Man in his traditional 2-D form. Luckily for Mega Man fanatics, Capcom stuck to their guns and made sure that the latest chapter in the Mega Man saga remained true to



its original form.

Those of you who have played the Mega Man games in the past should feel immediately at home with number eight. Like all of the Mega Man games, you can choose the order in which you challenge the eight Bosses, and you acquire their weapon after you defeat them. The only change to the stage select system is that now you can



only choose from a set of four Bosses who you must defeat in order to fight the remaining four. This setup is the same as the Game Boy Mega Man games, but it is a first for the regular Mega Man series.

One thing that the Mega Man games have been criticized for is the lack of original plots. In MM8, the basic premise is the same, but with some extra twists. The evil Dr.

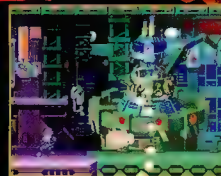
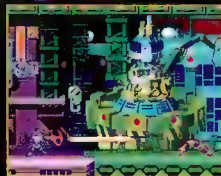
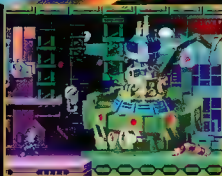


Wily has gained control of a giant, mysterious robot. Mega Man, as always, has to stop him. Along the way, Mega Man comes in contact with a new robot who may or may not be an ally. In addition to having the new robot at his disposal, Wily also has a new group of robot masters.

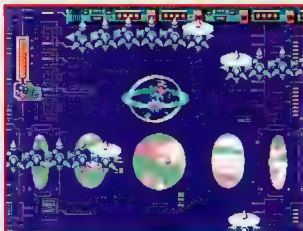
Like all the other Mega Man games, one of the major strengths lies in the unique robot masters that you have to contend with. Mega Man 8



Gamer's EDGE



When you head on over to Dr. Light's shop to pick up some items, there are many things you can buy. Two of the most important items there are the weapon upgrades you can get for your gun. The first picture is of your normal powered-up Mega Buster. The second one is a powerful laser beam upgrade you can buy. The final picture is of a beam that will split into a spread shot when it hits an enemy, taking out a wide range of baddies. Each weapon is beneficial in different areas, so try to get them all.



"...one of the best playing Mega Man games to date."

marks the debut of some of the strangest Bosses yet.

Sword Man is the most basic Boss of the group. The characteristic that sticks out on him is the giant sword that he has for a hand. In one part of his stage, you fight inside a volcano, where a wrong move could mean instant death.

Like every good platformer, there is the ever-present "water stage" which is guarded by Aqua Man. He's a roly-poly sort who has a water

nozzle for an arm. One nice touch from this stage is that Mega Man can now actually swim through the water—a new ability for this game.

The most unique-looking Boss of the group has to be Astro Man, due to his lack of legs. Instead, the lower half of his body is spherical, and he hovers above the ground. He also has two smaller spheres that orbit around him. While it would seem that his stage would be set in outer space,

you actually fight through a mechanical garden and a couple of tricky mazes.

Grenade Man is basically a giant grenade with arms and legs. His stage is somewhat reminiscent of Metal Man's stage. It is an industrial area that also houses a scrap yard.

The largest of the robot masters is Frost Man. This hulking creation looks like a giant, humanoid igloo. As to be expected, the ground here is slippery, and there is a couple fast-paced snowboarding scenes to liven up the action.

Tengu Man is the most Japanese of the Bosses. In Japan, a Tengu is a type of crow demon. Therefore, Tengu Man looks somewhat like a crow. He has a beak and a tail, plus one of his hands is made of three

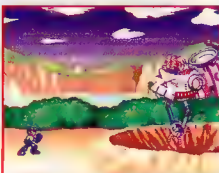


giant, metal "feather" blades. The standout feature of this stage is that it is very windy and hard to maneuver in.

The best way to describe Clown Man is an evil robotic version of Sega's NIGHTS character. After fighting through his crazed circus (which is full of toy versions of classic



Remember the Mets? Those little hard-hat guys from all the other Mega Man games? Well, they're back, and they are not happy.



Mega Man didn't stop Wily from stealing the alien technology.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY
February	Moderate
PUBLISHER	% DONE
Capcom	95%
THEME	PLAYERS
Action	1
SIZE	CD-ROM

Gamer's EDGE

When things get too tough for Mega Man himself, he calls on his faithful pal, Rush. The robot pooch can help out Mega Man in a variety of ways. Just check out these options!

Random Power-up



Rush Cycle



Rush Bomber



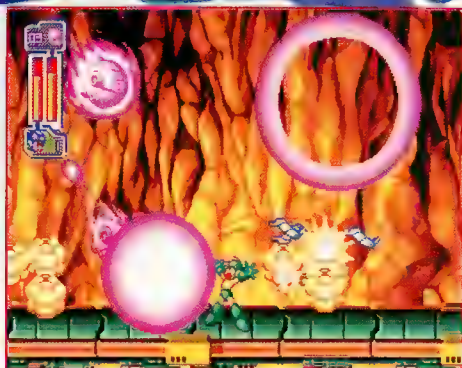
Power-up Barrage



Mega Man enemies), you must take on the clown prince of robots himself and his electricity attacks.

Search Man is possibly the coolest-looking Boss of the bunch. This guy's armor is painted in camouflage, and he has a rocket launcher for an arm. Not only that, but he has two heads, each one with its own voice. He lives deep within a jungle hideout that is fortified to make sure Mega Man never gets there.

With so many powerful



Astro Crush! Don't get on Mega Man's bad side after he gets this weapon. When he unleashes it, there's nowhere to run or hide.

enemies to contend with, even Mega Man needs some help. Joining him once again on his mission is his faithful robot-dog, Rush, complete with a whole new set of transformations. Gone are the days of Rush-Coil and Rush-Sub. Now, Rush is able to help out in even better ways. You can now call on Rush to deliver a random power-up to you. If you get in a real pinch, he can soar overhead in his Rush-Jet form, delivering a barrage of missiles on the enemy or a ton of weapon and health power-ups for you. Rush can even change into a stylin', missile-launching motorcycle for Mega Man to ride.

Rush also shows up in his Rush-Jet Mode in certain stages to give Mega Man a lift in levels that play like a

traditional shooter. During these levels, Mega Man can collect special icons that call on even more of his friends to give him a hand.

Beat, the robotic bird, will act as an option (remember them from *Gradius*?). Auto, Dr. Light's robo-mechanic from *Mega Man 7*, will fly with you and launch a powerful bazooka. The final pal to help you out is the little robotic storage unit, Flip-Top. He'll

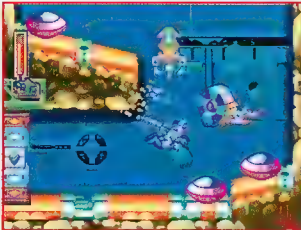
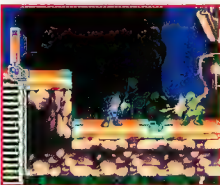


Dr. Wily has once again rebuilt his fortress. Can you get into it?



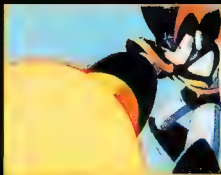
assist you by dropping bombs on the ground below. In addition to your robot pals, you can also collect a power-up for Rush that allows him to shoot missiles.

Throughout the levels, there are several bolts scattered about. Be sure to collect them and stop by Dr. Light's shop between levels. There, you can buy items and weapon upgrades with the bolts you have collected.

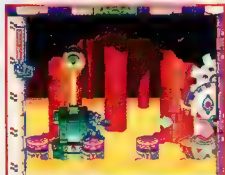
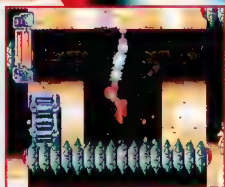


Gamer's EDGE

One of the coolest scenes in *Mega Man 8* are the excellent cinema scenes that play during the game's intro and at certain key points in the game. The flawless Japanese animation and excellent voice acting will have you begging for a Mega Man anime. Don't just take our word for it, check out these scenes from the game. Don't you wish the US Mega Man cartoon looked this good?

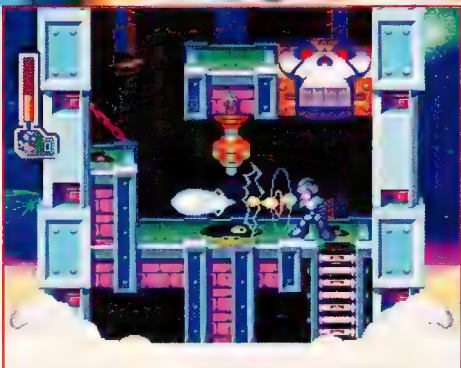


Like all the other Mega Man games, when you take out one of the big Bosses, you can use their weapon. Here's a peek at all the robot masters and the weapons that you gain from them.



Don't slip, Mega Man! One wrong step, and you're toast.

The graphics in Mega Man 8 are excellent. They may not be an extravagant leap over the Super NES games, but the vast color palate of the PlayStation leads to some stunning visuals. The animation is also a sight to behold. The near-cartoon smoothness and little details give it a



No sooner do you get into this tower when it starts to collapse. You must blast all the bad guys and keep climbing, or you'll be buried alive.

character all its own.

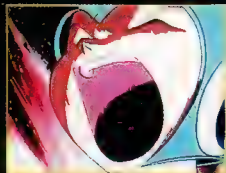
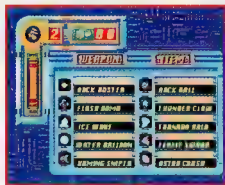
Mega Man fanatics (and I know you're out there) will surely agree that this is one of the best playing Mega Man games to date. Even if you've not played a Mega Man game before (which isn't likely), you'll certainly want to give Mega Man 8 a look.

Right now in Japan, Capcom is developing a 3-D polygon Mario Kart-style racing game starring the Mega Man characters for the PlayStation. Perhaps if Mega Man 8 is a success here, they will consider bringing it out. After all, we can always use another Mega Man game. ■

"The graphics in Mega Man 8 are excellent."



Mega Man is joined by his buddies—Rush, Auto and Flip-Top—to take out the giant robotic whale. It may be strange, but it's tons of fun.



Aqua Man
Water Balloon
Astro Crash
Astro Man
Astro Claw
Frost Man
Ice Wave
Ice Bomb
Flash Bomb
Sawson Man
Hornino Spinner
Swoyo Man
Fire Sword
Baigu Man
Tornado Field



PLAYSTATION



SOUL BLADE

A Little Bit Of Soul Will Do You Right

It's no secret that fighting games are one of the favorite types of games here at the EGM offices.

It's also common knowledge that one of the most popular fighting games around here is Namco's PlayStation hit, Tekken 2. Recently, we received a copy of Namco's newest 3-D fighting game for the PlayStation, Soul Blade. Everyone was wondering if it would be able to compare to Tekken 2.

After a few extensive game playing sessions with it, it looks as if Soul Blade has the potential to be a worthy successor to



the Tekken series. In fact, there are some areas where it is even better than the mighty Tekken 2.

On a purely cosmetic level, the graphics are excellent. The characters are much more smoother and detailed looking than 3-D fighters of the past. Even with the incredible amount of detail (especially in

the face), the characters animate smoothly.

Each of the 10 characters has a different weapon at his/her disposal, ranging from a typical sword to a spear to a pair of nunchakus. In addition to the typical health meter, you also have a separate energy meter for your weapon. When you block attacks with your

weapon, its energy level gets lower and lower. When the meter drains completely, you lose it. Now you are much weaker than before and at quite a disadvantage.

In addition to the character graphics looking fantastic, the backgrounds themselves are also beautiful. They are completely 3-D and feature a

"...Soul Blade has the potential to be a worthy successor to the Tekken series."

Gamer's EDGE

Perhaps the coolest feature in Soul Blade is the Edge Master Mode. While it is mainly another variation on the fighting theme, there are a few different features that make it more fun to play. Among them is the ability to earn and use different weapons. After most battles, you will gain another weapon from your fallen foe. Each weapon has its own statistics that will help you in different battles. There are even hidden weapons that are especially tricky to find. While the advantage of using a powerful weapon is obvious, it's also great fun to be able to have your favorite character use a different weapon.





When weapons collide, you must fight to win the duel.



The PlayStation's power is shown off by the lighting effects.

surprising amount of finely detailed animation happening during the fight. Another nice little touch is the trails of light that your weapons leave after you pull off a powerful attack. This adds nothing to the gameplay, but it makes the proceedings much prettier.

A big plus for all fighting games is that they can have an extremely long life span. After all, you can play against a friend again and again, or you can attempt to master every character. In order to keep Soul Blade fresh for a long time, Namco has packed it with seven different modes.



There are the typical Arcade and Vs. Modes that every fighter features. There's a Team Battle Mode where you can create a team of up to five players to compete against another team. A Time Attack

after beating an enemy. Plus, there are various types of matches. For instance, some opponents can only be defeated with throws or by throwing them out of the ring. Some even gain their health back



Personally, I think the fight would be over when Taki spins you around and shoves a knife in your throat, but you bravely fight on.

Mode tests how quickly you can waste your opponents, and the Survival Mode sees how long you can fight with one energy bar. There is even the popular Practice Mode to perfect your fighting style and special moves.

The most unique mode, however, is the Edge Master Mode. This is basically the equivalent of a Story Mode, where you choose a fighter to control, move around on a map and fight various opponents. What makes this different than the normal one-player game is the fact that you will earn a new weapon



Here, Voldo shows off his plate-spinning abilities. Unfortunately, you play the role of the plate spinning atop his deadly claws.

as quickly as you can take it away!

With such incredible graphics and unique modes of play, it is little wonder that Soul Edge is quickly gaining such popularity here at the office. The more we play it, the more impressive little



features we find. This just makes us want to keep coming back for more. As long as Namco continues to make such fun fighting games, we will be getting less and less actual work done. ■

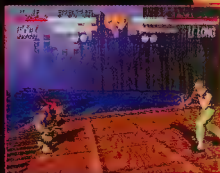
Gamer's EDGE

One of the more unique features of Soul Blade is the shifting battlefields. A couple of the matches are fought on platforms floating in water. As the rings sit in the water, the motion of the waves causes the entire ring to rock back and forth. At first, the effect may be a bit disorienting, especially when the whole platform is moving downstream at the same time. Luckily, there's really nothing to worry about. The Soul Blade fighters apparently have very well-developed inner ears that help them maintain their balance on the shifting ground. All you need to do is try not to let the movement distract you from the fight, and you should be fine.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Adjustable	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Namco	95%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Fighting 1 or 2	CD-ROM	



You can see the detail of the characters in the Victory Screen.





SENTIENT

Take Me On A Sentient-al Journey

Gamers who have been starving for a realtime adventure full of intrigue and scandal—with a sci-fi feel—should look no further than Sentient by Psygnosis for the PlayStation.

The story begins right when a shuttle is making its approach into a space station that is slowly being pulled into a sun. Now

gamers may wonder why a shuttle would dock on a ship that is going to be incinerated. The reason is that there are people aboard this shuttle who are going to help the ship in one way or another.

As the shuttle approaches, a problem arises and the ship crashes into the landing bay. This means death for all on the approaching shuttle—or so gamers may think.

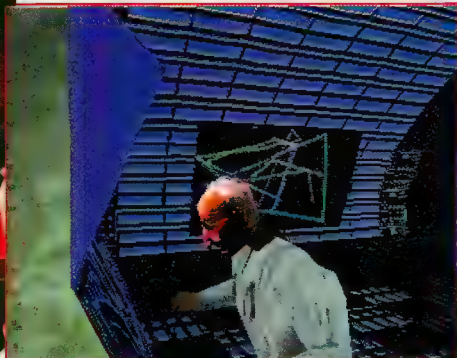
Players control a medic who was aboard the crashed shuttle. He was the only survivor. (The reason why the main character survived is a mystery which will be revealed later in the game.) The reason he was sent to the space station is to care for those suffering from radiation sickness (from the approaching sun).

The graphics in Sentient are completely 3-D polygonal,

that's okay since Sentient isn't an action game—it's a sci-fi adventure. Don't worry, though, there is some death and destruction in the game.

The interface in Sentient is one of the most interesting ones *EGM* has seen in awhile. When talking to a person or computer, the main character, Garritt Sherova, is able to choose what he is about to talk about.

"As the shuttle approaches...This means death for all--or so gamers may think."



The programmers paid special attention to every possible detail. Here, behind the scientist, is a computer with a screen saver on.

similar to King's Field. There is a huge cast of characters, each with his/her own unique features—even his/her facial expressions change depending upon what you say to them or how they're feeling.

Unlike King's Field, there isn't a whole lot of action. But

For instance, in some situations Garritt may want to talk to someone about an object he needs to find. In this case, a gamer can pick to ask "what about" and then fill in the blank with the particular object he/she is trying to get info on. This can also be done with person and places as well.

There are various levels in



Your first obstacle: Get out of this docking bay before time runs out.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Psygnosis	85%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Adventure	1	CD-ROM

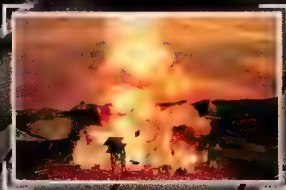
WORLD DOMINATION IN A BOX

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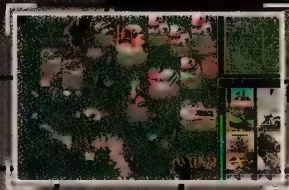
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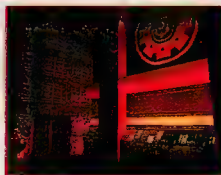
 PlayStation

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Gamer's EDGE

Different Endings

There are nine different personalities that Garritt can be during the game. The key to these different personalities is when to use them and who to use them on. Certain characters that gamers will come across are scared and are easily manipulated. Be aggressive with these people and getting information will be a breeze. Trying to be in control with a controlling person, though, doesn't work at all. With these people a more submissive personality works better. Be aware of the different types of people Garritt will meet and try different personalities when talking to them to see what happens.



Jurrell Ramin, is suspected of a conspiracy. One of the plots that Garritt can venture upon is to find out what Jurrell is hiding.

Another plot that can be interacted with is one that involves a space fungus that is quickly taking over one of the levels and eventually the entire ship. Garritt can choose whether or not to stop the fungus. By choosing to stop it will yield a different ending than if he failed.

The shortest possible game that can occur is

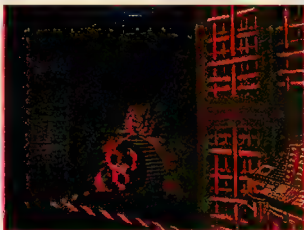


up a bit. Some include a Big-head Mode and Wide-screen (or letter-boxed) Mode and a nonsense code where all of the characters talk like they're crazy (i.e., they talk about pink butterflies and bread that talks to them).

During the game Garritt

someone who is confident, using a commanding tone will do more harm than good.

Sentient may prove to be one of the more interesting titles to come out. As more info comes to us on this title, *EGM* will gladly pass it along. ■



the Space Station to which Garritt can adventure. These levels are split up between different branches like engineering, science and medical. There are also plenty of security guards walking around giving Garritt a hard time.

The head of security,

probably close to 20 minutes according to Psygnosis. The longest game is much longer than that, but since Sentient has 10 endings, who knows how long it'll take to get to the end of all of these?

Sentient also features some hidden goodies to spice things

will fall in and out of consciousness. During these trippy dream sequences, there is a maze that gamers can find their way through. If they do, a special FMV clip plays that gives them a hint or two. There are several opportunities to find these clues.

Players can choose to have a certain personality when talking to various characters. There are nine personalities altogether that include angry, sarcastic, normal and happy, among others. Some characters are submissive, so talking to them with an authoritative tone will yield answers, while talking to



Gamer's EDGE

Personalities

As mentioned in the Next Wave text, gamers can eventually get to one of 10 different endings that Sentient has. Of course, multiple plays will yield different endings. Although 10 seems like a pretty decent number of endings, this is nothing compared to the number of pathways there are to actually get to one of the endings. There are a bunch of sub-plots that'll take Garritt for a loop as he tries to focus on his main goal, whatever that may be. Chances are gamers will have a whole lot of fun getting to these different endings. Keep an eye out for a secret ending that can only be obtained by being at the right place at the right time.

PLAYSTATION



SPIDER

This Itsy-Bitsy Hero Ain't Cute

Boss Game Studios, a two-year-old newcomer to the video game industry, definitely didn't go for the cutesy look when it designed the eight-legged hero of its first video game, *Spider*. The arachnid protagonist doesn't wear a little top hat or a four-legged pair of pants. It doesn't shout cute catch phrases, unleash magical attacks or even frolic with its insect friends.

Spider's spider is a hairy, crawling tarantula—an arachnophobe's worst nightmare—and it has all the creepy creature features that make real spiders so frightening.

But Boss Game Studio's bold choice for a hero isn't the only thing that makes *Spider* leap out from the standard side-scroller fare. For starters, your spider isn't limited to walking and hopping across the tops of the platforms scattered throughout the game's



massive environment. He is, after all, an arachnid, and as such he can walk up walls, crawl around to the platforms' undersides—even hang upside down and swing from his webline.

The spider's abilities go beyond the standard jump-on-

enemies-to-kill-'em attacks of traditional platform games, as well. Your spider's offense—and defense—lies in its eight hairy legs. As the spider wanders through the game, he'll stumble upon different leg gadgets, which he can attach

"Your spider's offense lies in its eight hairy legs."

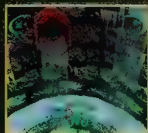
Mr. Spider's Neighborhood



For such a little guy, *Spider*'s spider sure gets around. He starts in a lab, where he skitters over broken computer equipment. In world two, he treads through a factory.



After he defeats the factory's mechanical arm Boss, the spider wanders into the city, where he climbs up buildings and crawls through the park. Next up is the museum.

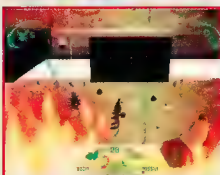
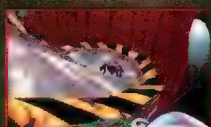


Spider's next stop is the dank, dark sewers, where one badly aimed leap lands the critter in the slime. Finally, spider will reach the evil lab, where he faces the game's final Boss.



THE CRAWLING CAMERA

One thing players won't have to worry about as they wander through Spider's enemy-infested world is adjusting the game camera—the perspective is adjusted automatically. Much of the game is viewed from the side, owing to Boss Game Studios' desire to create a more traditional platform-tile experience. But often your spider will head toward the background, and the camera will swing behind the critter to follow his progress. Other levels have the camera sitting above the spider, providing a top-down view of the action.



Just hangin' around. The spider's web is a handy tool.

to his body to gain special attacks and abilities. You'll find 10 different legs in all, seven of which grant offensive powers, while three boost the arachnid's defenses (see sidebar for more info on leg power-ups).

So how does the spider get away with swapping its

limbs? Well, the game's story has it that the hairy-legged hero is not a real spider. Instead, he's the cybernetic result of an experiment in artificial life. It turns out that the scientist who created him also produced hundreds of other robo-bugs, many of which the spider will battle in the game. A rival corporation broke into the scientist's lab and blasted him when he was tinkering with the spider. In a last-ditch effort to save his life, the scientist transferred his essence into the spider. Now, as the spider, the scientist must wander through level after level, in hot pursuit of his stolen body.

Spider contains 32 levels, which are divided among six worlds. The critter starts in the

"Each level is huge and sprawls in every direction."



The funky, psychedelic '70s room is only one of Spider's seven bonus levels, which open up when you collect enough CD pieces.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
BMG Interactive	75%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Action	1	CD-ROM



Atoms are strewn everywhere. Collect 100 for an extra life.

Behind The SCREENS

EGM chatted recently with Seth Mendelsohn, Boss Game Studios' creative director, to get the lowdown on the sophomore development house's first product, Spider.

EGM: Games are hangin' for 3-D games—or so Sony would have us believe. Why the 2-D, Crash Bandicoot approach with Spider, instead of going with a true 3-D game engine?

SM: We wanted to do a game that plays more like the traditional platform game, because they're fun to play. In full-form 3-D, you can't make a game that plays like a traditional platform game. There are issues about jumping and judging distance.

EGM: Spider looks similar to several 3-D side-scrollers, such as Pandemonium and Crash Bandicoot. How is Spider better than those titles?

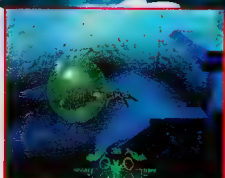
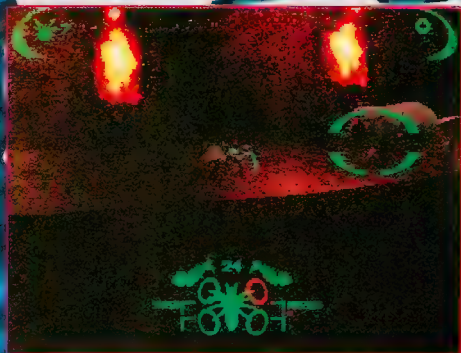
SM: For one thing, the spider does more stuff. The most unique thing is your ability to walk up on walls or the ceiling. Also, all of our levels are in real places, as opposed to fantasy places, like in Crash Bandicoot, and there's a huge variety in the graphics style. We didn't want what I call the "Sonic syndrome," where you have three levels that use the same graphics set.

EGM: Most developers make their platform-game stars cutey. Why didn't you follow suit?

SM: From the very beginning, we wanted to do something different, and every single game with a mascot is cutey. We wanted to do something that had a darker tone to it.

EGM: The game packs more than 30 levels, but your spider only battles three Bosses? Why so few?

SM: We had a lot of ideas for interesting Bosses, but as we started making them, a lot of them became very similar to each other. So we said, "What if we spent more time on each Boss and gave them more animations, more AI and made them do more things?" We could have three unique Bosses instead of six or seven okay Bosses.



"Control is fantastic, although it takes some getting used to."

scientist's lab, where he'll have to skitter over and under countertops and computer equipment while avoiding sinks, burning debris and falling beakers. The spider's quest will take him out into the city streets, along the side of a building, inside a computer and through other oversized locales (see sidebar for a closer look at the levels).

Like in the pseudo 3-D titles *Crash Bandicoot* and *Pandemonium!*, Spider's level's and enemies are comprised of polygons and look 3-D, but they grant only two dimensions of freedom. Your spider can move forward and backward along each level's multiple paths, but he can't crawl wherever he wishes, thus giving the game a very side-scroller, platform-title feel. Spider's developers make no apologies for the game's 2-D gameplay. After all, they planned all along to create a more traditional platform game rather than a

Super Mario 64-like 3-D beast.

But just because Spider adheres to 2-D gameplay doesn't mean there's little for players to explore. Each level is huge and sprawls in every direction. Since the spider can walk up and down vertical surfaces, he can trek to out-of-the-way areas high above or use his web to descend to hidden platforms below. The game camera adjusts automatically as the spider wanders through his environment. Most times the arachnid is viewed from the side, but occasionally his path will steer him toward the background, and the camera will switch to a behind-the-spider perspective.

Control in Spider is fantastic, although it takes some getting used to. Unlike in *Pandemonium!*, Spider's spider must always be guided in the direction you want him to travel. For instance, if the spider is walking right and comes to an incline, he'll stop if

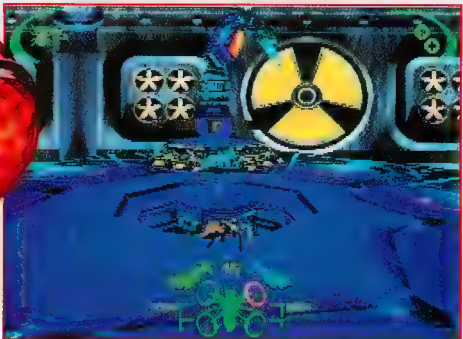
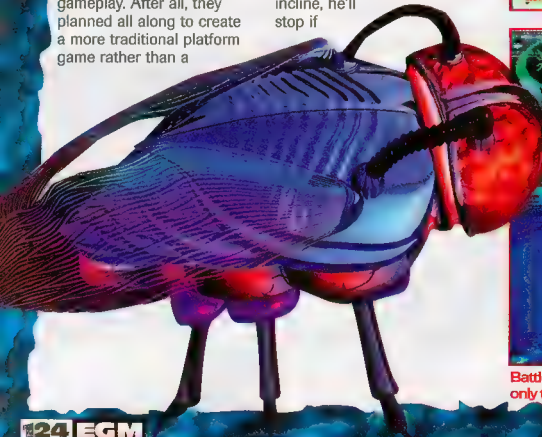
you simply keep pressing right on the control pad.

You have to press Up and Right if you want him to continue. You always have to press the pad in the direction the spider's facing if you want him to go in that direction, even if he's only skittering over a slight rise in his path. This control method is a little awkward at first, but soon it feels like the most natural thing in the world.

Each of Spider's levels has between one and four exits, which are marked by computer chips that the spider must collect. Although players don't have to nab all the chips to finish a world, they do have to

collect a certain amount to proceed to the next world, kind of like Super Mario's find-enough-stars-to-proceed approach. Finding all the computer chips will let players see the game's best ending, and the developers are tinkering with the idea of sticking in an extra level that will open for players who collect every chip.

The levels also hold hidden CD pieces. If players find the three pieces scattered throughout each world, they'll gain access to that world's secret level. Spider packs seven secret levels in all (the last world contains two secret stages), and these hidden areas—unlike in most games—



Battles with Bosses are infrequent in Spider, since the game contains only three Boss levels. Each of the three is memorable, though.



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Besides scorpions, you'll also battle rats, mantises and slugs.



Spider's tunes—especially in the sewer world—are outstanding.

are every bit as large as the regular stages. Some are kinda strange, too, like the psychedelic '70s room, where the spider will crawl over eight-track tapes while lava lamps glow nearby.

Spider is Boss Game Studios' first title, and it looks to be an impressive debut (and one we've been waiting for ever since the game caught our attention at E³). Boss' creative director, Seth Mendelsohn, said that when the Spider team began development on

the game more than two years ago, they set out to create a game that they would want to play. Judging by *EGM's* preview copy of Spider, they've created something all other gamers will want to play, as well. ■

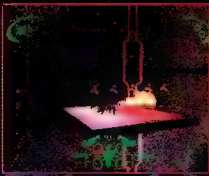


Arm your Legs

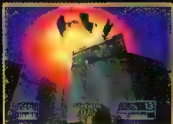
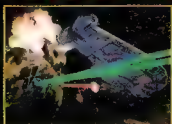
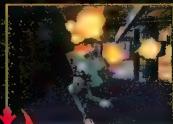
Unlike in most platform games, Spider's hero can attack his enemies 10 different ways—thanks to the cybernetic spider arms he finds scattered throughout the levels. The simplest weapon leg—and the one that players start out with—is the metal-tipped slasher, which tears into insectile enemies. But players will also find six other offensive legs, including a guided miniature ball-thrower, flame-thrower and poison sprayer. In addition, the spider will find three defensive legs, such as a smart bomb and mine layer.



The spider can only carry two offensive legs and two defensive legs with him at any given time, and you can switch between the appendages with the shoulder buttons to unleash different attacks. The legs also alter the spider's appearance, turning his head and thorax into metal after he collects four of them. Unfortunately, the spider loses his legs whenever he dies, and he must start his next life with nothing more than the wimpy slasher leg.



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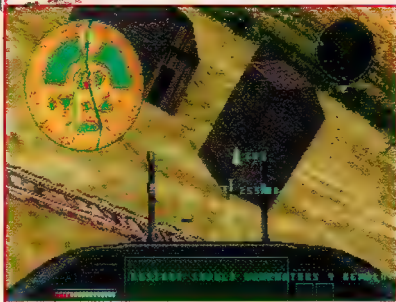


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PLAYSTATION



INDEPENDENCE DAY

Whup E.T.'s Butt At Home

One of the most original and popular video games from the early days of the industry was Space Invaders. Now, FOX Interactive is releasing Independence Day for the PlayStation, and in concept, it is almost an upgrade of sorts to Space Invaders.

When you think about it, the concept is the same. You pilot a ship in an effort to fight off

an invading alien force. Only with Independence Day (ID4), the gameplay experience is completely different.

Obviously, ID4 is based on this summer's blockbuster movie of the same name. It should come as no surprise that such a popular, action-packed movie would make the transition to the video screen.

While there are many elements in ID4 (the movie) that would translate well into a

video game—it mainly focuses on the dogfights between the human's jets and the alien's fighters. Just like the movie, the massive alien destroyers loom above the battlefield, serving as a constant reminder as to the fate that awaits mankind if you fail.

In the game, you control a character very similar to the movie's Captain Hiller (played by Will Smith). While you never see your character,

"...launch a missile right up the ship's main gun port."



When you hit an alien fighter with one of your missiles, you can see their shield light up as they go down. It's a nice little touch to see.

you do hear him a lot as he chats over the radio with the other fighters.

Your main goal is to bring down the destroyers. As in the movie, the only way to do this is to launch a missile right up the ship's main gun port. Unfortunately for Earth, the aliens aren't dummies, and

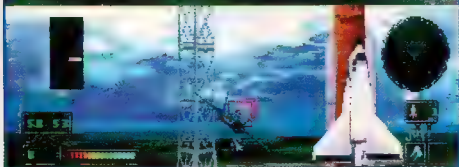


Nothing is going to penetrate the destroyer's force fields.

Gamer's EDGE

When you're out blasting the alien forces, you have to make sure that you get them before they get you. In order to get the drop on the invaders, you have to know where they are at all times. To do this, you need to keep a watchful eye on your radar screens at all times. You can turn the screen on the left on and off at will. This one shows the area inside the force field that you have to fly in and their position within it. There are also little details (such as the terrain). The screen on the right shows the locations of the enemy fighters and when they appear in your range. In addition, this radar will point you in the direction of the major targets you need to take out to win the mission. Careful pilots who pay attention to their radars cannot fail.





The Two-player Mode pits you and a friend against each other instead of aliens. Why can't man unite? Why can't we all just get along?!

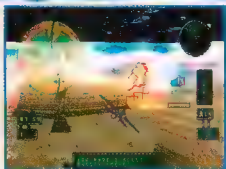
they aren't going to make things easy for you. They have ample defenses to insure that their conquest of Earth goes smoothly.

Surrounding the destroyers is a powerful force field that cannot be penetrated by any of your available weapons. This same force field extends down around the circumference of the ship, essentially trapping

essential missile into the gun.

While you're trying to destroy the generators, you will have to fight off an army of alien fighters who will lock onto you with their lasers. You can blast them with your machine guns or launch a missile at them for a quick and easy kill.

Adding a sense of urgency to the matter is the countdown clock on the screen. When the



When you tire of blasting aliens, you and a friend can play a split-screen or linked-up deathmatch where you fly the plane of your choice in an attempt to kill each other.

While the control needs a little fine tuning, ID4 looks as though it has the potential to live up to the high expectation set by the hit summer movie. When this game is finally released, we can all relive the thrill of fighting off evil invaders from space. ■

"ID4...has the potential to live up to...high expectations."

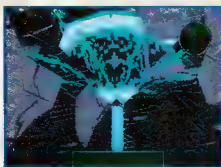
you underneath it.

So if you're trapped under the ship and are unable to damage it, how do you destroy it? Well, even the aliens are going to overlook a few details (after all, in the movie, they didn't even have an anti-virus program in their computers). On the underside of the ship are some shield generators that are unprotected by the very shield they generate. If you can take all of these out, the shield goes down.

At this point, the main gun in the center of the ship opens up. This is your chance to get in there and launch that

time runs out, the destroyer will fire its primary weapon and, well, kill everyone.

The early alpha version of ID4 we received only had one level playable. While the canyon stage looks great, there will also be levels in various locations, including such cities as Washington, D.C.



The Enemy Camera gives you a different view of the action.

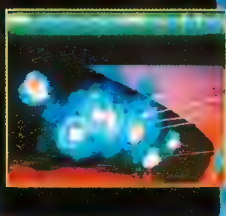
If you fail on your mission, this is the fate everyone must suffer.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
February Adjustable		
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Fox Interactive	60%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Flying 1 or 2	CD-ROM	



These generators are your key to victory. You'll have to take them all out quickly if you want to destroy the aliens and save mankind.

It is expected nowadays that when you have a game based on a movie, there will be some movie footage featured in the game. ID4 is no exception. During the Demo Mode of the game, it shows highlight scenes from the film. The first batch of clips shows the aliens coming to Earth and destroying everything. Later, we are treated to footage of us fighting back. The movie scenes look nice and are presented in a letterboxed format, which should please movie purists. While these movie clips add nothing to the game, they do effectively set the mood for what you are about to play.



PLAYSTATION



RESIDENT EVIL 2

The Terror That Lives Next Door

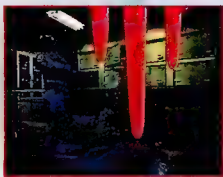
When Resident Evil was first released on the PlayStation, it quickly became one of the system's top titles.

To date, Resident Evil is the best-selling PlayStation title in the U.S., so it's no surprise that Capcom is following up the game with a sequel. Riding on the heels of the first game, Resident Evil 2 looks like it just might eclipse the macabre look and feel of the original.

The sequel begins where the first one left off. After discovering the biogenetic experiments going on in

Raccoon City, the team of S.T.A.R.S. have left. The town's citizens are slowly recovering from the disastrous experiments conducted there. Little do they know that they are slowly being zombified by a skin rash that is spreading like wildfire across the town.

Resident Evil 2 (called



"When you have bloodsucking zombies on your trail, no place is completely safe..."

BioHazard 2 in Japan), introduces us to two new characters. Leon Scott Kennedy is a rookie cop who is just beginning his beat in Raccoon City, and Elza Walker, daredevil motorcycle stunt racer and college student extraordinaire. When the terror of the skin rash first reveals itself, the two

find themselves in the police station, which you'd think would be the safest place in the city. When you have bloodsucking zombies on your trail, no place is completely safe from the threat of attack. Drones upon droves of living undead make their way to the hub, hoping to turn the rookie



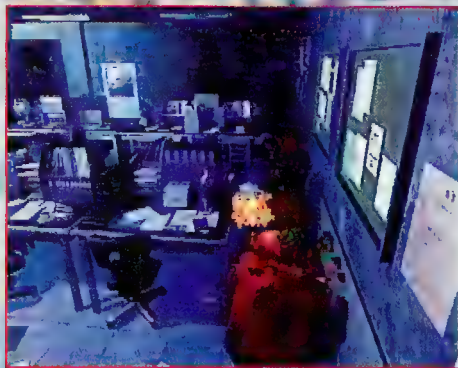
With an army of the undead after your hide, escaping their clutches won't be easy. Maybe there's a stockpile of weapons somewhere...?



Getting inside is easy for a zombie—just make an entrance!



The firing range is a good spot to practice your aim—at mad dogs!



Zombies pop up all over the place in this game. Trapped inside the police station, you have to make sure no more get inside.

cop and college student into a late-night snack.

Add to the already menacing zombies a few of the experiments Umbrella had been working on (that have freed themselves in the chaos that has fallen upon the city), and you have one major

won't be a game to be taken lightly. Shinji Mikami, the designer of the original game, has been working to make this game a whole lot more than just your average sequel. During the development of the first game, there were game-play features that were left out



It is unclear yet as to whether the game will let you explore areas other than just the police station, but you can bet since Capcom has said that the game will be bigger than the original, the possibility of travelling through adjacent buildings will be part of the adventure.

Capcom is looking to

Gamer's EDGE

Bosses

In Resident Evil 2, not only do you have bloodthirsty zombies after you, but also the creations of Umbrella that are running free around Raccoon City. Many of these will be placed as "Boss" characters around the areas of the game.



This super-zombie knows how to make a dramatic entrance.



problem on your hands.

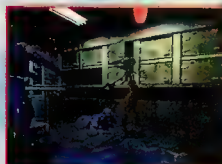
What you see on the following two pages are screens from a videotape of the game, so we can't yet comment on the gameplay or plot line just yet. But just looking at these screens tells you that this

of the final game because of time constraints. Now that Mikami-san has the time needed to develop the game in the way that he originally wanted, the game will have a lot more depth (not that the first one didn't).

accurately translate the game from Japanese to English this time around. Simone Seydoux, Capcom's product marketing manager says, "I think we're all going to miss the "master of unlocking," a translation error from the first RE.

"We at Capcom have a deep affection for Resident Evil," Seydoux said, "...we're also waiting with the legion of fans who've played the first game to play and be frightened by the new Resident Evil 2."

We can't wait to play it either. Look for more details on this game soon. ■



Gamer's EDGE

Resident Warriors



Leon Scott Kennedy: Rookie cop whose first assignment in Raccoon City is going to turn out just a bit longer than first expected.



Elza Walker: Who would have thought that a daredevil motorcycle racer and college student would be placed in such a nightmarish predicament?



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY
2nd Qtr. '97	Moderate
PUBLISHER	DONE
Capcom	N/A
THEME	PLAYERS
Action	1 CD-ROM

PLAYSTATION



Behind The Screens

Many times gamers will do nothing but sit at home and think about the history of games. Sometimes the oldies are definitely the goodies (especially compared to some of the sorry games being released these days). But where can gamers go to find info on those old games back in the day? Well, for info on Missile Command, Centipede, Super Breakout, Tempest, Battlezone and Asteroids, go no further than Arcade's Greatest Hits Atari Collection I. Within this compilation lies a history database with general info about the arcade versions of these classics. Other insider info that is hilarious as well as disturbing (like the nightmares of a nuclear war one of the programmers had after working on Missile Command for six months). From what EGM has seen so far, these video sequences are a lot better looking and have been produced incredibly well. This history segment of the disc really adds to the title.



ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS

The Greatest Hits Of The '80s On WEGM

Where can someone go to not only wheel around in a futuristic tank but also defend a city from alien invaders—not to mention destroy a giant centipede? The answer is simple: Williams' Arcade's Greatest Hits Atari Collection I. But those are not the only things gamers can do in the title.

All of the games in this collection are classic arcade games compiled onto one CD for the PlayStation. This volume of AGHACI includes the following titles: Asteroids, Super Breakout, Tempest,

Battlezone, Centipede and Missile Command.

The first volume of AGHACI included some classic titles including Joust, Robotron and others.

This time around the interface is changed, among other things. The first volume featured "virtual dip switches" which allowed gamers to change options in the game (like difficulty, number of lives, etc.). AGHACI allows gamers to change these same options—along with a few new ones—in a standard options menu environment.

On top of this, the game features a full-fledged,



rendered intro sequence (which is quite impressive) and a huge amount of background info on each of the games. The first one had interviews and some info,



but not as much as the second installment.

For instance, gamers can see some of the old-school Halloween costumes based on these arcade classics along

with some of the print ads and packaging from the '80s.

There are also interviews with some of the original programmers for some of the games in the history portion of this disc. These interviews



Besides AGHACI having a load of games, it also features behind-the-scenes info on all the games—everything from Halloween costumes based on arcade classics to actual packaging.



FOR REEF & GIFT



give gamers some interesting and sometimes funny stories about the making of the games (like the Tempest free 43 credits bug).

The graphics in the games are identical to their arcade cousins. Little blocks thrown together represent a mushroom in Centipede or a city in Missile Command. The vector classic, Battlezone is arcade perfect, except for the control. The digital sounds are identical to the arcade versions, too.

There are probably gamers out there wondering how the control is overall (as mentioned in the last paragraph). Since the arcade originals used a whole slew of different types of control (like rollerballs and double joysticks), it may be strange to use the PS pad for some of the games. With the use of the mouse, the control is much better.

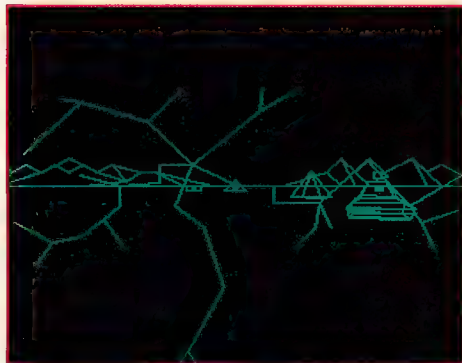
Since this version is early, the control may be tweaked to make it feel more natural (with



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
Now	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Midway	100%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Classics 1 or 2 CD-ROM		

Missile Command and Super Breakout).

Last month gamers so some of the retro titles that have come out or that are coming out. Now that we have a playable version of the second volume of AGHACI, more retro should be a good thing—for fans of these classics that is. ■



Gamer's EDGE

The Games

MISSILE COMMAND

BATTLEZONE



Defend your cities from nuclear destruction. Are those rockets from the Soviet States? Maybe back in the '80s, but these days they're probably from aliens.



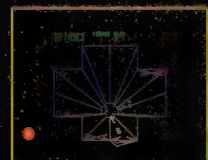
For some reason vector graphics don't remind the EGM editors of war but when there are tanks involved, who can say?

ASTEROIDS

TEMPEST



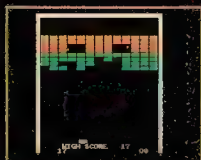
Destroy any and all asteroids. Use the thrusters and hyper-thrusters for boosts around space. Watch out for UFOs flying around.



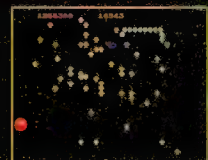
This one supposedly takes place in space but the lead programmer says that the original idea was that it took place in a tunnel in the ground.

SUPER BREAKOUT

CENTIPEDE



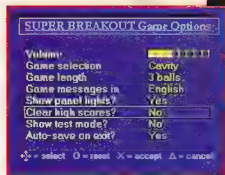
This one is simple enough—a bar that acts as a barrier so a ball can bounce back and destroy blocks at the top of the screen. There are several modes of play in this one.



What does Atari have against centipedes anyway? Mushrooms were never so fun to blow away as you try to take out the multilegged insect. Watch for the spiders.

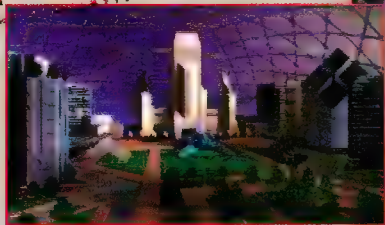


An arcade-perfect version of Tempest awaits. Are you game?



The options in AGHACI make changing things around easier.

PLAYSTATION



THE JOURNEYMAN PROJECT PEGASUS PRIME

Which Way To The DeLorean, Doc?

There's a fine distinction between what differentiates a PC game and a good console game. The Journeyman Project did well on the PC, spawning itself a sequel. The game has now been ported to the PlayStation as an original game under the name Pegasus Prime.

Pegasus Prime uses a point-and-click interface. You can move in three directions: forward, left and right. The absence of backward movement hinders the realism of the game. If you move too far forward and



want to go back, you have to turn around and backtrack to where you were. The menus and movement are reminiscent of another console point-and-click, Sega's Jurassic Park on the Sega CD.

The game controls very

loosely. Movement is slow, and in long hallways, you have to keep pressing forward to move. Your character stops every few feet, which can get frustrating at times. Playing this game on the PlayStation is no different than if it were running on a PC.

Pegasus Prime has good rendered graphics, and the movement through hallways, while slow, is quite smooth. The cinemas and effects are futuristic, and add to the feel that this is a true sci-fi adventure. The human characters of the game have been captured



Once inside the Pegasus, you'll travel back in time to repair the time continuum. Time travel can be an electrifying experience.



Your computer gives some helpful advice during the game.

Gamer's EDGE

Back to the Future

After travelling back to 200 million B.C. to retrieve the Historical Log, you'll return to an altered future to view the contents. The computer analyzes the data from the Historical Log placed in the past to the altered future that is occurring now. Pay attention to the differences, as you'll soon have to go back to the future to correct those. When you arrive at the altered future, your boss Jack Baldwin will attempt to stop you from erasing the altered past. That's all right though, because under TSA regulations, you have control of the computer.



Behind The SCREENS



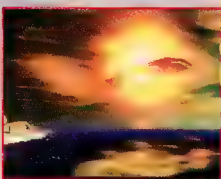
In the past, to get to the Historical Log, you'll travel over this handy little bridge. Who knew the past could be so cool?

on green screens and overlaid into the environments. The FMV is smooth, with no trace of the graininess that plagues other such games.

During the game, your personal agent comes on screen to remind you of

game, it would have been nice to see a few more intelligent computer comments.

The environments you travel through are super-detailed; the designers took a lot of time to make them look good. While on your journey, you



Something wicked this way comes, to destroy the future.

You can (and do) meet up with robotic life, and they're not always friendly.

Your goal in the game is to repair the timeline that has been disrupted. To achieve your goal, you'll travel through time to make sure certain events happen the way they are supposed to. By preventing the launch of a nuclear missile, you'll save the world from turmoil and insure that Earth can form a peaceful international organization. Stopping a renown scientist from being assassinated will help that cause even further and make

Pegasus Prime was made by the team who created the original Journeyman Project on the PC. To do the PlayStation version, the team created amazing rendered graphics and video-captured human actors to place in the game environments. The end result is a game that looks futuristic with its landscapes. It's good to know that human life hasn't changed much in the 25th century.



Green screen video capture puts the actors in futuristic scenes.

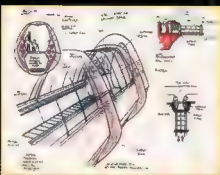
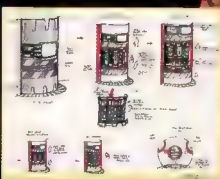
"...has good rendered graphics, and the movement through hallways, while slow, is quite smooth."

important facts, your mission or to tell you where you are. Some of the hints are helpful, while others aren't. Some of the painfully obvious info given out by your personal agent during an Environment Analysis is what location you're in. In a three-CD

cannot make contact with people living in that time period, or you will disrupt the temporal wave. If, by chance, you do run into people of the past, you will disappear from time forever. Your personal agent will warn you if you are in close proximity to human life.

peace with alien life forms.

Console gamers have "different tastes than those who do their playing on the PC. The version EGM received was still a work in progress, but consoles are not suited as well to the type of game that Pegasus Prime is. ■



The designers sketched out the game's environments first.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
2nd Qtr. '97	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Acclaim	30%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
RPG	1	CD-ROM

PLAYSTATION



CROW CITY OF ANGELS

This Crow Has All The Funky Moves

The gothic experience can be obtained not only through the movies nowadays.

Now gamers who fancy themselves "goth" can play *Crow: City of Angels* based on the big-screen version and enjoy every dark minute of it.

Players control Ashe, a supernatural hero, who's unjustly killed. He returns from the land of the dead to avenge his and his son's death.

Gamers shouldn't take this lightly, since there are a whole city full of bad guys waiting for them.

The graphics are similar to *Perfect Weapon* but have a style all their own. A dark atmosphere, much like the movie, makes this title a little eerie. For example, in one level Ashe starts on the mast of a ship. The fog is in the background and the only illumination is from small hanging lamps above. Enemies come from several sides, firing rifles.



Besides rifles, players can pick up a whole array of different items. Some include pistols, bottles, pipes and rocket launchers, among others. These can help since some enemies can be pretty

tough. (Check the sidebar on weapons for more info.)

All of the enemies in the game have been animated with Acclaim's own motion-capture technology. Some of the enemies feature over 15

WEAPONS

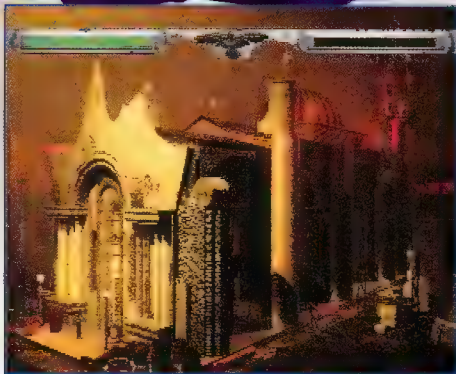


Like the moves in the game, *Crow* features a whole bunch of different weapons to find. What's nice about the weapons is that when gamers are done using them, they can throw them at the enemy. Even the guns can be thrown which explode on contact. Does this happen in real life? Be careful of the more explosive weapons like the rocket and flaming cocktails. These will knock off quite a bit of Ashe's power, besides killing the enemies who are close enough. Remember to use hand-to-hand combat when the weapons fail. Otherwise Ashe will sleep with the fishes once and for all.



Some of the cinemas are a little strange. Watching them really makes you hate the bad guys. Besides this, they are done well.

Gamer's EDGE



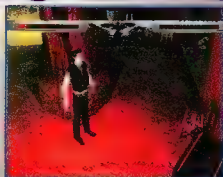
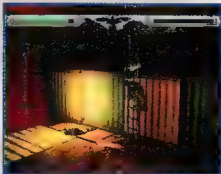
The levels range from a pier to a church and pretty much everything else dark in between. Gamers will play through all of these.

moves. The main character that gamers control, Ashe, features close to 50 moves.

The game itself is a 3-D fighter, in the sense that it's like Final Fight or Streets of Rage. Couple one of these classic side-scrollers with

While gamers make their way through each level, small crow icons will appear to guide Ashe through the level. These only appear after the proper amount of enemies have been killed.

Players start at the pier As

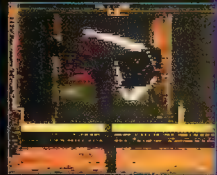


The lighting in the game makes for an eerie, gothic mood.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
January	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Acclaim	90%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Action	1	CD-ROM

gamers advance to the tomb. As the name might suggest, this one is a little scary. From there the level gets more intricate and difficult.

In one level, gamers are warped back to the land of the dead where they must fight their way through and make it back to the land of



The roundhouse is an all-around effective move, but be careful when using it against enemies with weapons.



Ashe has a load of moves—close to 50 as the Next Wave text mentions. Some of these include punches, kicks, head-butts and flips. The different moves have a greater or lesser effect depending on what enemy they're used on. The roundhouse works best all around. Gamers who are lucky enough to find weapons may find that these work better than the hand-to-hand moves (or foot-to-head for that matter). The motion-capture animation of all the characters helps to make all of the moves look realistic. Here's a look at some of the moves from the game. Note: There are many more where these came from.

"Cinemas provide...some disturbing imagery..."

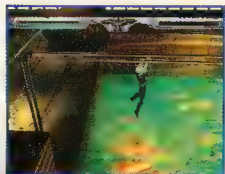
Alone in the Dark and you have Crow: City of Angels.

Cinemas provide background info and some disturbing imagery at the beginning of the game which continue throughout. In the intro Ashe and his son are shot in the head at close range. Of course, no one was hurt in the making of this intro since it was rendered. Unless the motion capture was *that* real

they make their way inside, some fairly easy enemies think they can get a piece of Ashe—they couldn't be more wrong. After playing through this one,

the living to take out an extremely powerful henchmen.

EGM doesn't want to give away the ending, but if gamers were able to see the movie, chances are they know what will happen—that is, if they have enough skill. ■



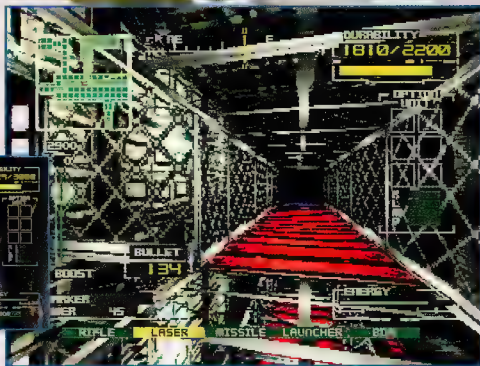
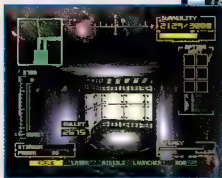
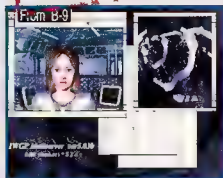
Some of the background elements allow interaction.



When an enemy comes from behind, give him a quick boot to the stomach with a backwards kick. It's a painful one.



PLAYSTATION



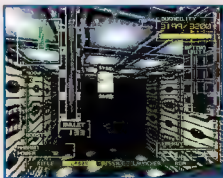
Brahma FORCE

Jump And It's A Whole New Game

PlayStation gamers have been given more than a few first-person perspective action games in the past year or so.

Starting with *Kileak: The DNA Imperative*, gamers witnessed a futuristic journey into the halls of action using a mechanized attack vehicle. That legacy continued with its sequel, *Epidemic*. Now, the team at Genki in Japan have stepped up the genre and created *Brahma Force*.

The key in *Brahma Force* is exploration. The game's levels expand around you as you traverse the landscape, enemies and power-ups scattered all over the place. Working your way into the heart of the enemy ship is



your goal, and each floor presents a new problem.

Instead of being a blast-'em-up carnage fest, *Brahma Force* is heavy on puzzle solving. Before each mission, you are briefed on the objective and given pointers on where to find the goal. Your dexterity is put to the test, and you'll find yourself looking up, down and jumping to higher levels with ease.

The game controls very naturally, and every button is placed for ease of use. Probably the biggest diversion from the formula of first-person perspective robotic hunt- and-search games is that you can jump. While on its face, that doesn't seem like that big of an upgrade, but once you start playing, you quickly realize what kind of dimension it adds to game-

play. Hidden passageways are sometimes not so obvious from sight, and only by jumping can they be reached. Jumping over obstacles instead of having to go around them makes travel a lot easier.

The first couple of levels don't pose any major challenge to the experienced gamer. As you get deeper into the ship, levels get bigger and more complex, with elevators,

Gamer's EDGE

Here are just a few of the items that you'll find along the way during your descent.

Stockpiling energy and weapons in the first few levels is helpful for the later floors. Energy that is plentiful in the first few stages is scarce as you get farther along.

AP-200 Armor

Collecting the AP-200 will increase your armor so that you won't be as damaged by enemy fire.



EC-200

Also an armor upgrade, it boosts your power by a few levels and prepares you for the damage yet to come.



Banger

A weapon of mass destruction, the Banger can be used to destroy lots of enemies within a small space.



Energy Module

Collecting these replenishes your stash of energy so that you can use your shield longer.



Cartridge

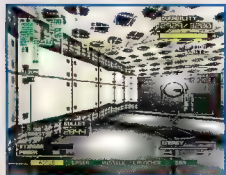
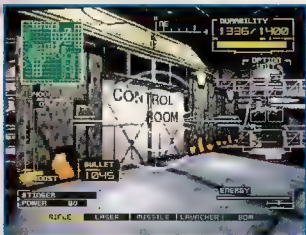
Boosts your ammo stock with the weapon you're using. Defeated enemies drop these frequently.



Key Module

Gain entrance to locked areas by picking up Key Modules. When in your inventory, use the action button to open the door.





If you take too long in a level, a timer appears.

Enemies can be anywhere, even on the ceiling.

catapults and secret doors. Positioned around each level are computer terminals, which when activated put you in contact with your team for more info about the level. If you miss an important detail from their transmission, you can call it up on your recorder.

around each floor. Weapons consist of a standard rifle, laser, missile launcher and bomb. Within these categories, there can be more than one weapon. There are two stages of health: durability and energy. Durability counts as health.



Keep an eye on your durability level. When it gets low, the screen begins to flash red, so be careful or you're dead.

"Instead of being a carnage fest, Brahma Force is heavy on puzzle solving."

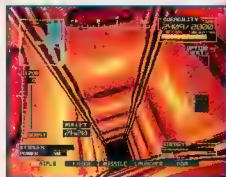
The graphics in each level change as you get deeper into Beltogger 9. The game isn't made up of flat floors and platforms, but inclines and ramps to travel down. Gather a new weapon and collect WPAs to super-charge your ammunition. Extra health, energy and the like are scattered evenly

when it reaches zero, you are dead. The energy bar represents your shield energy. Your mech has a shield which can be used as long as you have energy. Press and hold the button to activate it, and watch the green glow surround the ship. The only drawback is that you get

knocked backward when hit, shield or not.

The Bosses are big and detailed, with rendered cinemas that play while you fight them. Finding their weak points can be difficult.

If you prefer puzzle solving to fast action and blasting, Brahma Force is for you. ■



You can look down over the edge to see what's below.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
April	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Jaleco	80%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Action	1	CD-ROM

Missile

Harder to kill enemies can be damaged more using the Missile instead of the normal rifle or laser.



Repair Module

Replenishes your durability. Stockpiling these will help out when matched with a hard level or Boss.



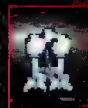
SAPU

Powers up your shield. Before passing into a new level you should use these to power your shield.



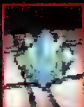
Shell

Your launcher could use some of these shells. Bosses beware, this can inflict some major damage!



Shield Bit

Gives your shield a burst of protection for a limited amount of time. Use while fighting a Boss to survive longer.



Star Shell

Helps you to get past tougher areas by powering up your shield.



Storage Containers

These hold valuable power-ups, when they're not just on the ground.



WPA

Takes an ordinary weapon, and adds power to it in the Options Screen. Use these wisely to power up each weapon.



PLAYSTATION



WAR GODS

Oh Gods, You Devils

In the realm of 3-D fighting, there are standards. Gamers have been enjoying Tekken, Toshinden and Virtua Fighter for years. Only recently have U.S. developers turned their attention toward this genre. War Gods is the first 3-D fighter by a major U.S. arcade vendor. Midway's fighting game reputation was made by Mortal Kombat, and War Gods was their first venture outside of that universe.

Comparing War Gods to other 3-D fighting games is

pointless—it's not like other 3-D fighters. It's the "MK" of 3-D fighting. The only thing missing is the style that Ed Boon and John Tobias brought to fighting games. It's not an easy task to duplicate the kind of style that they set forth, and many have tried. (BloodStorm and Time Killers being the two best examples of games that tried to copy MK, but failed miserably.) War Gods feels a lot like MK, but the feeling of a Mortal Kombat game is gone. Since both games are made by Midway, it's natural to compare the

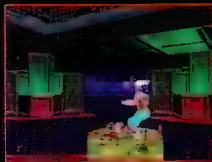
two. Even if they were by different companies, comparisons would be made.

The graphics, while decent, seem flat and two-dimensional. The colors are dull and washed out, except for the green glow that is present throughout. Blood spatters away in globs with each hit, but the comical feeling is gone. The characters look like they're made up of stick figures instead of being motion-captured models. The kicks and punches look awkward to perform, and all projectiles are two-dimensional.

The backgrounds and fighting arenas are big, and very detailed—up to the standards of other 3-D fighters. If the amount of attention was given to the fighters' animation that was given to the backgrounds, War Gods would be a better game.

At this stage in its development, there is still time to fix a

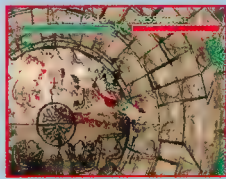
Fatal INSTINCT



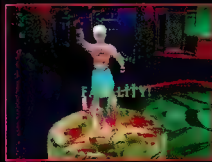
What would a game be without MK-style fatalities? War Gods has a slew of them for each character, some dependent on the character's background to how they play out.



Though the characters are in 3-D, the projectiles and effects are 2-D. Here Ahua Kin traps Kabuki Jo in a fireball.

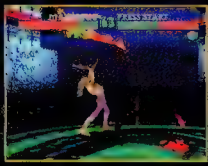


An uppercut as a finish launches your enemy into the air.



Bloody EUPHORIA

Having been popularized by *Mortal Kombat*, War Gods spills even more hemoglobin. What's better, is that the blood stays on the arena floor, much like Kasumi Ninja for the now-dead Atari Jaguar system. Surely the congressmen who have been looking at violence in video games will find War Gods as fodder for their crusade, but at least the game has a warning before the Title Screen.



few things. The gameplay hasn't yet been sufficiently tweaked, and control is a bit on the loose side. The game controls in 2-D during each fight. If you want to dodge attacks, you have to hold the 3-D button and tap up or down. Instead of this route, it would be beneficial to be able to assign commands to the top L and R buttons, like dodging or other specials. Let's hope that Midway adds this to the home version before its release.



War Gods would also benefit from the addition of a Training Mode. Since the game may not be familiar to gamers (the arcade game never got sufficient distribution), a mode to learn some of the controls would only help, especially with fatalities.

Let's look at War Gods from a purely fighting game aspect. It isn't on the same level as *Virtua Fighter* or *Tekken*. As a 3-D *Mortal Kombat*, the game does pretty well. However, when new MK games are released, they have something new, something that sets the game apart from all the others in the genre. War Gods is lacking a new feature to grab players and make its mark in the ranks.



Anubis' Pyramid Hold reels the opponent in for the kill.

Something as simple as a power-up meter or weapons would have made an excellent addition.

Fighting game fans who enjoyed War Gods in the arcade will want to try the home version. Look for WG to be reviewed in a future issue of *EGM* ■

"...a mode to learn some of the controls would only help, especially with fatalities."



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Hard	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Midway	40%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Fighting	1 or 2	CD-ROM

Cast of CARNAGE

War Gods has a cast of 10 characters, each with his/her own special moves and fatalities. Some of the characters are a bit on the weird side. All have been chosen to fight, and fight they shall!

Ahau Kin: Alohah Ahau is one tough opponent. Don't get caught in a fireball.



Anubis: An Egyptian god, Anubis sports the mask of a dog, and fights with strength.

Cy-5: Cy is a superhuman cyberman who is bent on becoming a god.



Kabuki Jo: This Kabuki fighter has a smorgasbord of projectiles.



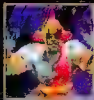
Maximus: Strongman Maximus can knock your block off, so watch out.



Pagan: Leather-totin' Pagan looks more like a superhuman dominatrix.



Tak: What's a rock man to do? Big and bulky, he's also a bit on the slow side.



Vallah: A goddess who looks like she just might be from the Viking age.

Voodoo: Who do Voodoo? Voodoo! Sharp claws and a tendency to spit fire.



Warhead: Johnny Cage in fatigue gear. Has a nasty martial-arts style.

SATURN



LUNACY

A Tale Of Two Cities

RELEASE DATE DIFFICULTY

February Moderate

PUBLISHER % DONE

Atlus 75%

THEME PLAYERS SIZE

Adventure 1 CD-ROM

Full-motion video has earned a bad reputation among game players, and developers rarely use it outside of game intros anymore. But not all FMV games are total stinkers. Titles such as *D* proved that video-rich games can still immerse players in an intriguing story.

And full-motion video's reputation may get another boost from Atlus' soon-to-be-published *Lunacy*, which will hit the Saturn in February. *Lunacy* plays much like *D*, with players wandering through a vast, prerendered environment that spoofs off the CD in hundreds of FMV sequences. Fortunately, movement through *Lunacy*'s dark world isn't nearly as slow-going as movement in *D*, whose main character plodded along at a snail's pace. *Lunacy*'s hero scoots about at a brisk pace.



But quick feet are a necessity in *Lunacy*, since the game packs two enormous cities, each on its own compact disc. Players start in the City of Mists, in which lies a hidden door to another, ancient city—one that grants the wishes of its residents. Little is known about this legendary city, and the only proof of its existence are the few enigmatic folks who have emigrated from this wish-granting world. These immigrants bear a bizarre mark on their foreheads, so they're easy enough to spot. Unfortunately,



they lose all memory of their previous life once they enter the City of Mists.

Players guide Fred, a young man who carries the mark on his forehead. The ruler of Mists forces Fred into finding the entrance to the legendary city. So players spend the first half of the game wandering through Mist's dark alleyways, graveyards and shops, talking to people and digging up clues about the legendary city.

The second half of the game begins when players find the city, this portion of the adventure is contained on the second disc.



"The game packs two enormous cities, each on its own compact disc."



Lunacy's huge cast means you'll do as much talkin' as walkin'.

As soon as Fred enters the Legendary City, he causes problems that could throw both worlds into chaos. Players spend the rest of the game trying to restore balance to both cities.

Although Atlus is publishing *Lunacy*, the game was developed by Sega, which is also translating it for U.S. players. While it might seem strange for a third-party company to publish a game created by Sega, this practice is nothing new. As it has done with games such as *Virtual Hydlide* and others in the past, Sega often lets third-party developers publish its low-profile titles. This way, Sega can pump all of its marketing muscle into its big games. When Atlus saw that Sega was looking for a third-party to publish *Lunacy*, it jumped at the chance. Judging by our early look at this adventure, Atlus made a wise decision. ■



Lunacy's gloomy locales make for a less than cheery story.

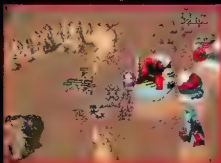
Next Month

EGM²

Tips, Tricks and Strategies for Home and Arcade

February 1997

We are continuing to support games on all platforms as *EGM* delves into several titles that are released not only in the console world but as computer titles as well. Check out the multispanning coverage of games like *Re-Loaded*, *Tunnel B1* and the classic



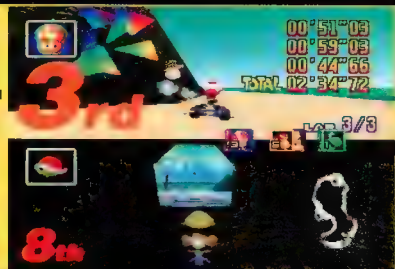
The classic PC game of the year brings all its strategy and tactics to the console in this great crossover.

Command & Conquer

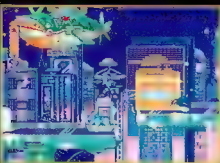
Also in this issue are a couple of classic games remade. *Mega Man 8* and *DKC3* make a big comeback on the PS and Super NES respectively.

Then, to really start your engines, we have some great N64 coverage. Check out the first blowout of the anticipated remake of *Mario Kart*. This racing title is sure to be a huge hit. Also, learn the way of the Force in *Shadows of the Empire*, the awesome 64-Bit Star Wars title that fans have been waiting for. Learn all the secrets to become a Jedi.

Year-End Special



One of the most successful multiplayer games comes out in style for the mega-bit N64. You'll get all the tips and techniques on how to play better as well as how to crash your opponents in the initial blowout.



Classics from the days of 16-Bit make a comeback as some famous titles like *Donkey Kong Country 3* and *Mega Man 8* resurface in great style. Check out all the tips and secrets to get you totally immersed.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

March 1997

The *EGM* editors are in the air flying to Japan once again to get more exclusive photos and information on the two hottest arcade games of 1997: *Street Fighter III* and *Tekken 3*. As usual, you'll find this exclusive information and pictures only in *EGM* and months before everybody else.

As for previews, our editors have been working hard on getting the first information on *Swagman*, *Crypt Killers*, *Clay Fighter 3* and more. If the game is being made, you'll see it in *EGM* first.

Our Review Crew is already tearing into *Mario Kart 64*,



Don't buy a game until you see the ONLY unbiased reviews in the industry.

Hexen, *MechWarrior 2*, *Tenka* and *Mega Man 8*. As you know, our crew is brutally honest and you won't see all high scores from them as you see in other mags.

Plus look for a special feature on a game with a "4" in it!



EGM broke the first news and pictures on the long-awaited *Tekken 3*. We're not done yet! Watch for part two of our world-exclusive coverage of this hot coin-op.



The *EGM* correspondents have located a lost version of *Street Fighter III*. Watch for part three of our coverage!

FEATURE STORY

SPORTS

**NEXT-GENERATION SPORTS FINALLY
COME OF AGE...**

It's been about three years since the 3DO popped the cork from the

32-Bit bottle, ushering most of us into the new era of gaming. Ironically, one of the best-selling mainstays of the video game industry—sports games—has strangely either been subpar or neglected for the most part until now.

Let's be realistic. There have been some pretty decent sports games for the next-generation systems, but they have all lacked something that kept them from being excellent. It seemed like gamers were being served a never-ending parade of rehased 16-Bit games. I can't think of one that didn't have a glaring fault or weakness. It started with Madden, which was a nice entry for the 3DO because it whet our appetite for games to come. NBA Shoot Out impressed, but was too slow and robotic. NBA Live '96 played great, but looked like... well, let's not say. Next, Sony's admirable first effort, NFL GameDay '96 had its strong points, but it had a lot of weak ones that you might expect from a rookie trying to break into sports gaming. The bad news is that we had to sit through all of those growing pains. The good news is that they may be ending.

In retrospect, it appears that the fall of 1996 marked the maturing of the sports game industry. Kicking off with excellent titles such as Madden NFL '97, NCAA GameBreaker, Worldwide Soccer '97 and Mario Andretti Racing,



the quality and variety of titles available has greatly increased. For example, NFL GameDay '97 erases almost every problem that hurt the original, making it the best football game ever. EA's NBA Live '97 is substantially improved over its uglier predecessor. Games like VR Golf, NHL FaceOff '97 and NHL '97 round off the rest of the more popular sports. What further demonstrates that 32-Bit sports are alive and well is that the "second tier," or less popular sports are finding their way onto the platforms. Titles such as ASC's surprisingly addictive bowling simulation, Ten Pin Alley and Interplay's realistic Virtual Pool are helping to cover every sports genre.

So what does the future hold? It looks like, for the most part, that the improvements are continuing. There's always going to be rotten eggs here and there, but it seems certain that the ratio of quality to junk will substantially improve. Our look at Shoot Out '97 impressed us, and there is a wide field of exciting racing games on the way for '97 such as Sony's Rally Cross, and two N64 racers: Kemco's Top Gear Rally and Seta's Rev Limit.

With this new era of games, comes a new Team EGM comprised of two avid sports gamers, Dean and I. We hope you'll come along for the ride.

THE LINEUP

PREVIEWS

- NBA SHOOT OUT '97
- PEAK PERFORMANCE
- RALLY CROSS
- RUSH HOUR
- TEST DRIVE: OFF ROAD

BOX SCORES

- COOL BOARDERS
- CRUISE IN USA
- FIFA SOCCER '97
- NFL GAMEDAY '97
- NFL '97
- NHL OPEN ICE
- TEN PIN ALLEY
- VIRTUAL POOL

QUICK SHOTS



Grand Slam Baseball hopes to score with PlayStation sports fans.



St. Andrew's Golf by Seta of Japan could be the golf game that the N64 needs.



Total Drive in is an SCE Europe realistic racing simulation which could be brought to the U.S. in early 1997.

RALLY CROSS



PLAYSTATION

Sony's off-road racing game looks to rally with the best of them



Rally Cross looks like Sony's answer to Sega's Rally, which hasn't been topped since its release on the Saturn a year ago. Sony's Rally Cross appears to have the graphic quality and gameplay firepower to give the long-standing king of off-road racers a run for its money.

Immediately apparent is the level of depth and attention to detail Sony has gone to to make things as realistic as possible. This shows most noticeably in the vehicle physics and the way in which it affects gameplay. Four-wheel independent suspension along with true acceleration and breaking characteristics takes this off-road racer to the next level of realism. Hitting a dip in the road or a banked curve at the wrong angle and speed will result in your vehicle flipping or rocking back and forth, making it hard to regain control.

Other more entertaining driving maneuvers include power-sliding, jumping and



Sand, ice, water, mud... Rally will make you wish for pavement.

impressive roll-over crashes. Be warned, as the vehicles take visible damage as the race continues on.

A hefty 20 different cars are offered, all with their own distinctive speed, acceleration, traction and handling characteristics. Unfortunately, the

vehicles in Rally Cross are not name-brand cars. Nonetheless, the cars hold their own with their sporty styling, functioning brake lights, rotating wheels and a good "throaty" engine growl that will make you forget that you aren't racing brand-name cars.

The racing environments are large, impressive and detailed. There are six courses in all, each with three separate tracks. You also have the option to race them backward in order to prolong gameplay.

The tracks range from a stadium-cross to an island course. This diversity allows for a variety of racing surfaces. Your vehicle will have to traverse dirt, snow, ice, gravel, pavement, grass and sand as you make your way through all of the tracks. Many of them have secret roadways and other bonuses hidden amongst



The split-screen two-player version of Rally Cross is similar to Sega Rally. The finished product will allow up to four racers simultaneously.



There's always one thing for certain: Pretty snowflakes make for good racing.

the trees and bushes that make things a little more interesting.

Other elements within the tracks include streams, leaf piles and mud-pits for cars to plow through, thus spitting up debris behind the rear wheels. There are several camera angles from which to view the action. Rally's optional cameras consist of bumper, hood, first-person and chase cam.

The most notable option is an ambitious four-player Split-screen Mode. If the final version of the game can run this smoothly, it might be the best feature of the game. With any luck, Rally Cross could be the quality off-road simulation the PS has been lacking.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
February	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	SIZE	
SCPA	1-CD-ROM	
PLAYERS	THEME	% DONE
1-4	Racing	50%

PLAYSTATION



SHOOT OUT '97

Sony's new basketball game looks great and plays even faster

The new editions of Sony's sports games such as NFL GameDay '97 and NHL FaceOff '97 were major improvements over the originals. Judging from everything that we've seen in this early look at Sony's new roundball title, Shoot Out '97 doesn't look like it will buck that trend.

For starters, Shoot Out '97 looks and moves absolutely wonderfully. Imagine detailed 3-D graphics that easily outperform last year's version with some additional, motion-captured basketball movements. That means there will be no more silly, unrealistic annoyances such as jumping straight in the air regardless of momentum, or bouncing between defenders like they are padded concrete walls. Also, as a result of this increased animation, the players will move much more fluidly, making the game feel more realistic.

In addition to adding more regular player movements such as different types of jumping and dribbling, a slew of exciting

dunks were added to spice up play. There are seven types of left- and right-handed dunks that include all sorts of opponent-embarrassing slams. Alley-oops, tomahawks and two-handed slams make up part of the available repertoire. Oh yeah, and you can replay those dunks at a variety of camera angles for full effect.

One of the more interesting features new to Shoot Out is the innovative "Icon Passing." I find this feature welcome because it allows you to choose exactly who you want to pass the ball to. How many times have you tried passing the ball to a particular teammate in any basketball game only for it to be passed to someone next to your intended target? Of course, by the time you finally get it to that player through a variety of unnecessary passes, the intended player isn't open any longer or you turn the ball over.

Well, Shoot Out's "Icon Passing" is geared to



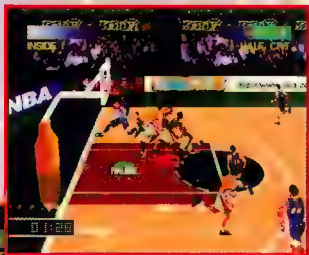
It appears that this version of Shoot Out will play great in addition to just looking the part. If so, Sony will slam home another winner.

remedy all of those problems. To visualize how this interface works, think of the passing icons that represent the receivers in NFL GameDay or Madden and you'll basically understand the concept.



will also add a variety of new strategic defensive features. These options will consist of user-selected double teams, in addition to different amounts of defensive pressure. Season play will also enjoy some enhancement as an NBA All-Star game based on your season can be played. Additionally, you can create players (useful for creating unlicensed players like Jordan and Barkley) and sign free agents. Avid fans will be happy to know that Season Play will also keep track of more statistics, which was something that the original lacked.

Like GameDay '97, Shoot Out '97 looks like it will correct most of the problems that plagued its older counterpart. The question is, will these changes propel Shoot Out to the elite rank presently held by games like GameDay '97?



Rest assured, there will be plenty of different high-flying dunks to keep this game sizzling on the offensive side of the ball.

During play you can bring up the icons under your teammates and pick which one to pass the ball to. You don't need to use this for every pass, however. Maybe you'll only want to use it to "thread the needle," so to speak.

To improve the realism in the game, Sony says that they have substantially beefed up the computer intelligence, and



The new Shoot Out will include free throws, unlike the original. Just kidding. This is a good shot to show the level of player detail.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY
March	Moderate
PUBLISHER	SIZE
SC EA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DONE
N/A	basketball... 30%

There can
only be ONE

#1

NCAA
BASKETBALL

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PLAYSTATION

Peak Performance

Atlus drives their quirky racer from Japan to the U.S.

Peak Performance is a unique breed of racing sim that brings together a large amount of depth and realism while holding true to what makes arcade driving games fun. What is most prominent in this game is the ability to "power-slide" the cars around every corner without losing any speed.

Peak Performance could best be described as a mixture of Ridge Racer-like graphics with Daytona driving characteristics. The name of the game is "power-sliding" and this game has plenty of it.

There is an overwhelming selection of 28 different



vehicles broken up into five different categories. As a unique bonus, vehicles not known for their racing prowess such as a Semi Truck, a Greyhound Bus and a Scooter are also available in the "Special Class" category. A Time Trial Mode is offered in addition to its One- and Two-player Modes (which allows you to choose vertical



or horizontal split-screen).

In addition, there are plenty of prerace options. Players can select the vehicle's color along with the ability to adjust its gear ratios, handling and even the shock-absorbers through the "Tune Option" offered before each race.

Three long courses are available that can be driven forward or backward. The tracks are based in and around rural settings with many winding corners, cliffs and intersections to maneuver. Selectable driving conditions include

Sunset, Midnight, Mist and Sunny. Rounding out the list of variables is the skill option which offers five levels of play.

With unique driving techniques and a ton of options, Atlus' new racer might give racing fans' interest.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
Now	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	SIZE	
Atlus	CD-ROM	
PLAYERS	THEME	% DONE
1 or 2	Racing	80%

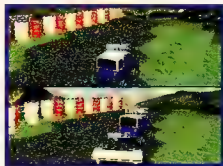
PLAYSTATION

Test Drive: Off-Road

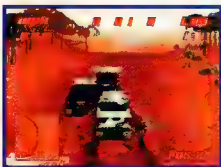
Accolade takes their popular series to rougher territory

Racing simulation fans have had a lot to be thankful for over the last year. With groundbreakers like EA's Andreotti Racing and Psygnosis' Formula One, players have had their hands full mastering the art of Indy car and Formula One road racing. Now it's time for the next wave of 32-Bit racers to hit the shelves and there's not a sign of asphalt in these puppies...just dirt, sand snow and mud!

Accolade's Test Drive: Off-Road puts players in control of four different heavy-duty 4X4s that must tackle several obstacle-laden tracks. Each vehicle, whether it be the Jeep Wrangler, the Land Rover



Defender 90, the Chevy Z-71 or even the famed Hummer, will have its own handling characteristics, as well as several other features unique to that vehicle. Each vehicle's dashboards and instrumentation are digitized right from the real thing. In addition, six other vehicles will be available by code including a monster truck and a baja bug. Cars will display damage when colliding



with other vehicles and various objects on the road.

Players can choose from two different modes: Class Racing, which puts all the same type of vehicles in a race together, or "Unlimited," which mixes up the classes for an all-out contest to determine which type of vehicle is king of the off-road mountain. Two-player split screen or link-up play is also available.

The 12 courses feature sand, snow, mud and dirt as the primary racing surface with plenty of hills and ditches to maneuver. Large amounts of road debris including logs, rocks and even the wreckage of a downed airplane make things even more challenging.



The carnage is accentuated by the music, which is provided by the group Gravity Kills.

Controls are pretty straightforward, except for one nice twist which allows players to power-slide around corners by using a handbrake control.

The genre of off-road racing continues to heat up, and Test Drive looks to be one of the early front-runners in that growing category.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
February	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	SIZE	
Accolade	CD-ROM	
PLAYERS	THEME	% DONE
1-4	Racing	60%

RUSH HOUR



Psygnosis has always been one of the most active makers of great-looking racing games for the PlayStation, and it appears that they don't have any plans of letting up now that Rush Hour is nearing completion.

Rush Hour is a racing game that utilizes the same three-fourth perspective that made classic games such as R.C. Pro-Am and Rock 'N Roll Racing so popular. At this point, it doesn't look like Rush Hour will be nearly as wild. There are no weapons or other gadgets



that will help you win the race, or make others lose it.

What Rush Hour does have is some outstanding 3-D racing environments. The tracks are very complex, with multiple layers of roads criss-crossing over each other. On the Coastal track, the road may wind along a mountain, while on a city, the track crazily sprawls in many directions in an unorganized fashion. It's not unlike many of our city's horrible highway sprawls. The track's graphics are very impressive, and it's clear that from what we've seen

As you can see from these different pictures, Rush Hour provides a variety of ways to view the action.



Could Psygnosis' offbeat racer become the RC Pro-Am of the '90s?



The tracks can get narrow and cluttered. When they get narrow and cluttered near a turn, that's when the fun begins.

in Rush Hour thus far (and other Psygnosis racing games), they will be one of the strong points in this racer.

Rush Hour offers 18 different vehicles to race with, and they are divided into two groups: Performance Cars and Off-Road Vehicles. There are eight



Great track design: Overpasses, crisscrosses—you name it.

There are three single-player modes of play available: A Single Race to quickly let you jump into the game, a Time Trial which allows you to race against the clock and a Championship Mode which takes you through all of the circuits while saving wins. There is also a two-player, Split-screen Mode that should keep the gameplay fresh for a while.

Psygnosis' new racer looks great, but whether or not the gameplay matches will determine if gamers rush to buy it.

of each kind. The Off-Road vehicles consist of choices like a Hummer or a Semi Truck while the performance vehicles let you rip loose with nimble Ferrari or Porsche-like cars. The divisions are designed to keep you from racing mismatches, which inevitably would make the game boring. Although it would be interesting to pit that sleek sports car up against a slow, trudging Hummer just once, it's not going to make for very competitive racing.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	SIZE	
Psygnosis	CD-ROM	
PLAYERS	THEME	% DONE
1 or 2	Racing	60%

Sporting Game Reviews

Current Favorites:

Kraig Kujawa NFL GameDay '97 • NBA Hang Time
Dean Hager NFL GameDay '97 • NCAA GameBreaker

NFL GAMEDAY '97 • PLAYSTATION • SONY

Kraig Kujawa

Sony has really surprised me with one of the best sports game sequels in a long time. After the first GameDay, I had a mental laundry list of everything I wanted Sony to correct. Not only did they fix just about every flaw that marred the original without breaking anything, but they also added some innovative features such as the "Total Control Passing" and some nifty advanced jukes. Sharp graphics, brisk gameplay and a healthy dose of realism and fun make this title the best football game ever.



With the addition of "Total Control Passing," accurate difficulty settings, enhanced power moves and greatly improved game speed, GameDay '97 is as solid as a 32-bit football game can get. The "money plays" that plagued the original GameDay have been fixed in an effort to make the game as realistic as possible. Beginners as well as football simulation junkies will be satisfied with the game's ability to entertain and challenge players of all skill levels. This one's a keeper.

Dean Hager

FIFA '97 • PLAYSTATION • ELECTRONIC ARTS

Kraig Kujawa

FIFA has always been one of the leaders when it comes to graphics on soccer games, and FIFA '97 is no different. The players are huge, but are meticulously detailed right down to their jersey numbers. The fields, both outdoor and indoor look fabulous, and the atmosphere is true to the sport. Unfortunately, the control is clumsy, and essential elements in soccer such as passing efficiently are a chore to do. The gameplay just doesn't feel as polished as the graphics.



With 42,000 real players and 250 international teams, FIFA Soccer '97 is abundantly long on stats and realism but short in the more important area of gameplay. Control is a little loose and overall game speed is not quite fast enough. Playing in Arcade Mode helps the speed problem a little, but doesn't redeem the game. FIFA is a competent game, but with so many great soccer games out there it's better to be a little better than competent to compete effectively.

Dean Hager

CRUIS'N USA • NINTENDO 64 • NINTENDO

Kraig Kujawa

We've been a little spoiled by all the excellent software that has hit the N64 in the early months, and now it's time to suffer through the flip side of the coin. Cruis'n USA was a decent arcade game, but the home version isn't a perfect conversion. The 3-D graphics have been translated pretty well, but the repetitive music is absolutely horrendous. The two-player Split-screen Mode is somewhat entertaining, but gets too choppy when many cars are on screen. I only recommend this if you are a fan of the arcade.



As a straight port-over from the arcade, Cruis'n USA for the N64 leaves a bit to be desired. Gameplay is erratic using either analog or digital controls. Both cause the car to turn too sharply at the higher speeds, especially when using Two-player Mode. Animation is adequate but seems dated by today's game standards. It certainly fails to show off the processing power of the N64. In addition, the two-player Split-screen Mode suffers from slowdown when things get congested. If all that weren't enough, the music is quite lame.

Dean Hager

VIRTUAL POOL • PLAYSTATION • INTERPLAY

Kraig Kujawa

It's about time someone made a serious pool game for a console system. Virtual Pool delivers, but it could be better. Everything you could want in a pool sim is here, including instructional videos and tips on how to make trick shots. The problem lies in control and game speed. For such simple 3-D graphics, VR Pool has a hard time moving them, especially when a lot is on screen. The control is very clumsy and imprecise as a result of the gamepad. If you really like pool, pick this up, along with a PS mouse.



A port-over from the PC, Virtual Pool still holds up on the PlayStation, except for a few rough spots. As with many ports, it looks dated. The graphics are mediocre at best, if not a little stale. In-game jukebox music is the worst of the '80s power ballads—turn it off immediately. At times the game moves slow because waiting for the computer to make a shot can be a long, tedious process. Get by that stuff and the game is the only challenging and realistic pool game console players will need.

Dean Hager

TEAM EGM BOX SCORES

Sporting Game Reviews

COOL BOARDERS • PLAYSTATION • SONY

Kraig Kujawa

Cool Boarders is a pretty hard game to get a handle on because racing on snowboards offers interesting racing physics. The graphics are decent, and the CD soundtrack adds a lot to the attitude of the game. Being able to pick from several characters and boards is a nice feature, but an important Two-player Mode is missing. All in all, once you get the hang of it, Cool Boarders is reasonably fun, but since there are so many great racing games, only pick this up if you are a fan of snowboarding or "Extreme" sports.



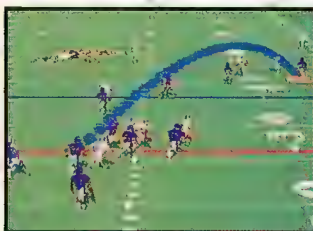
Overlook the blocky graphics and line pop-up problems and you will find that Cool Boarders is not too bad. Three mountains provide varying degrees of difficulty, translating into how fast players can speed down them. Perform tricks for points or just go for time. There's no two-player option offered, but a "ghosting" option lets players race against their best time in the form of another snowboarder. The game could use more options and variables, but for those who liked Extreme Games this one is similar.

Dean Hager

NFL '97 • SATURN • SEGA

Kraig Kujawa

After playing great football games like GameDay and Madden, it hurts to play NFL '97. The graphics look atrocious, and they animate just as badly. The gameplay is about average, with some interesting, optional visual aids such as a line that shows the arc of a pass. If it weren't for the nifty Playbook Editor that I wish every football game would contain, this game would have been a total waste. NFL '97 has nice features, but they fall way short in adding up to a good game worth playing.



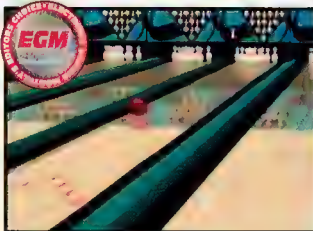
Sega's NFL '97 is up against some harsh competition in 1997. Because of this, elements like blocky players, bad camera angles, hard-to-read play diagrams and confusing gameplay make this game the runt of the litter in the 1997 batch of football games. On the upside, it is different and semi-innovative with its unique passing graphics and playbook, but not enough to save the game. If you have to have every football game—go get it, if not, check out some others first like Madden NFL '97

Dean Hager

TEN PIN ALLEY • PLAYSTATION • ASC

Kraig Kujawa

This is the perfect example of a bowling game done right. Ten Pin is an accurate bowling simulation which doesn't take itself seriously. You can choose from several different characters to use, each of which reacts differently according to how you score on the bowling lanes. The 3-D, rendered graphics are superb, and the game's humorous atmosphere is wonderful. With six players being able to play at once competitively or on teams, Ten Pin is both an excellent party game and a fun bowling simulation.



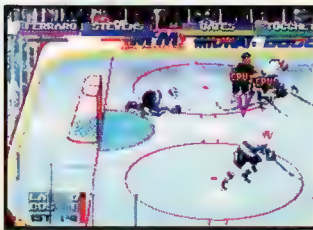
Despite its cheesy atmosphere and goof-ball characters, this sleeper-hit delivers an accurate and entertaining bowling game to the 32-Bit platform. Players need only master aiming, power stroke and release point to become proficient. The game's physics are very good, emulating the spin and power of a bowling ball rumbling down the alley to a tee. The real fun begins when playing multiplayer. Replayability is high due to the challenge of the game and with up to six-player capability, this one is a natural party game.

Dean Hager

NHL OPEN ICE • PLAYSTATION • MIDWAY

Kraig Kujawa

Making a hockey takeoff of NBA Jam's gameplay was a good idea, but here it doesn't seem to capture the magic that made that arcade basketball series so popular. This wild, fast-paced, two-on-two (plus the useless goalie) puckfest is fun to play for a short period of time, but becomes pretty boring after a few games or so. If you like this sort of no-holds-barred sports action game, you can do better elsewhere. In particular, Wayne Gretzky Hockey for the N64, made by the same company.



NHL Open Ice is perfect for those who live for fast arcade action and not stat-heavy realism. Players who don't normally get into sports games will easily adapt to the intense speed, exaggerated moves and humorous special features like "Big-Head" play, "On-Fire" and Super Goalie Mode. More importantly, the gameplay is solid and responsive. Although hockey purists may not like this game too much due to its arcade appeal, fans of the arcade version and gamers in general should check it out.

Dean Hager

Interface gives you the chance to praise, gripe, ask, speculate or simply reflect. Letters editor Dan Hsu will discuss some of today's top issues in the video game industry. You can reach him by writing to:

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1920 Highland Avenue, #222
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Letter of the MONTH

IS THE VIDEO GAME MARKET "DOOMED?"

Dear *EGM*,

As a 27-year-old gamer, I have seen games and systems come and go. I can remember when Pong was an arcade machine. I have watched both arcade games and home games evolve and have taken notice what types are popular at the current time. We have had the single-screen shooters (Space Invaders), the single-screen platform game (Donkey Kong), side-scrolling shooters and platform games, and most recently, 2-D and 3-D fighters. Of course, there have been various types of driving games. Remember how realistic *Hard Drivin'* was when it first hit the arcades? Now, the current rage appears to be the first-person corridor shooter. The game companies are really milking this craze. After all, corridor shooters are a dime-a-dozen these days. There are, of course, a few standout corridor shooters such as *Doom* and *Quake* (ever notice how all the great ones come from *Id Software*?). In with *Super Mario 64*, look for the 3-D platform game to take off. My question to the game developers is this: When the current popular genre of games becomes "old news," what will you come up with to recapture gamers' interests? Now that the third dimension has been truly captured on video games, it's only a matter of time before developers run out of new, groundbreaking ideas. When the 128-Bit systems come out, you will have better graphics performances, but you will be approaching the point of diminishing returns. The "next level" will be when virtual reality becomes affordable for the home gamer. But that seems to be about 10 years or so away. In conclusion, there could be a near-collapse of the video game industry in about seven to 10 years like what occurred in the early 1980s, unless developers can create something fresh and new, not rehashes of

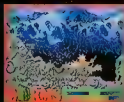
the tried-and-true. After all, gamers are becoming more sophisticated and more demanding with each passing day.

Donald Davis
djrdonald@concentric.net

Good insight, Mr. Davis. It's scary when you notice all the mediocre games that are out on store shelves these days. Looking at them all, one might fear history repeating itself. The great video game crash of the '80s happened because game companies put out more less-than-stellar products than consumers were willing to shell out money for. The market became saturated with standard video games, no one bought them, companies lost money, they stopped making games, everyone (including gamers) lost out. Is the future bright? You might not think so when most of the games coming out are either: a) yearly updates of past sports titles, b) side-scrolling games, or c) driving games, not to mention the *Doom*/*Street Fighter II*/*Virtua Fighter 2* wanna-bees like you talked about in your letter. Our only hope is that developers keep coming up with original ideas, and we keep supporting them by buying their products. This month's Top 5 list is for you, Mr. Davis. It's there to recognize *EGM*'s favorite feature in video games: originality.

TOP 5 Most Original Games of 1996

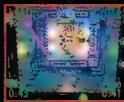
5
Worms
Multiplatform



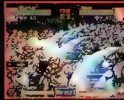
4
Psychic Detective
Multiplatform



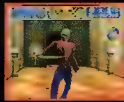
3
Blast Chamber
Multiplatform



2
Dragon Force
 Saturn



1
Tecmo's Deception
 PlayStation



Honorable Mentions: NIGHTS, Tetris Attack, Persona, Grid Runner, Mr. Bones, Dark Savior



Congratulations Mr. Davis. You win an Acclaim Dual Turbo Joystick.

FRUSTRATED

Dear *EGM*,

I'm writing to vent my frustration. I purchased an N64 a few months ago. Mario 64 was great, though it got real old real quick. When I decided to get a second controller, I went to over 20 different stores and could not find one. Every store was sold out. So I figured I'd just get the games and worry about two-player action later. Yup, you guessed it—no games either! I went back to the Toys 'R' Us where I got my system, and they had the nerve to tell me that I was lucky enough to even get a system, like it is some sort of privilege to own an N64. After several days of frustration, I just packed the system back up and fought tooth and nail with the manager until I got a full refund. I've had it!!! I hope the next person in line is happy with my system. With a little luck, games may be available for him/her by the time they get through Mario 64. Yeah right.

JD Beales
jdb1012@rit.edu

Well, as we finish off 1996, a few more N64 games are trickling in, but not as many as N64 owners would like. Perhaps Nintendo is purposely releasing only a few games at a time? Think about it. By spacing out these releases, Nintendo can keep demand up for each and every title. You can bet WaveRace sales would have been lower if it were released with 20 other N64 games at the same time instead of by itself. We tried to ask Nintendo what explanation they had for the lack of new titles, but they were unavailable for comment.

FIGHTING VIPERS: EGM TAKES A STAND

Dear *EGM*,

I've been glancing at the Newsgroups, and it's been apparent that many people (myself included) think that *EGM*'s reviews have been very harsh on Sega. Of course, you can't please everybody, but it seems that *EGM* gets the lion's share of the accusations of bias. Fighting Vipers is one recent and glaring example of a review that seriously breaks from the scores given by other magazines. I don't understand why your magazine's reviews would be so at odds with the majority of other similar publications.

Kevin Ip
kevin.ip@utoronto.ca

Every game publication that takes a stand or forms an opinion will inevitably be accused of being biased by the readers who feel differently (and who are defensive of their respective game systems). We don't have a single reason to be biased against Sega, or anyone else for that matter. Why would we alienate our Saturn-owning readers? We just tell it like it is. On Fighting Vipers: We think it's pretty amusing that the arcade game was not very popular with critics and gamers alike. All of a sudden, everyone (except *EGM*) is raving about the home version. Sure it's a great translation, but it's a translation of a game that not a whole lot of people really liked. Perhaps these other mags are inflating their scores to "prove" that they are not biased against Sega. Or perhaps they liked Fighting Vipers all along. Either way, our Review Crew rated the game fair and square. So we weren't crazy about Fighting Vipers, but then again, judging by how popular the arcade game was, most of you weren't either.



Are there any Sega fans out there who thought that our Review Crew scores for Fighting Vipers (5.5,5.7,5.6,6.0) were fair? Write in and speak your mind!

THE AGE-OLD DEBATE

Dear *EGM*,

Just a while back, I was in Electronics Boutique. The guys there were claiming that certain games were much better on the Saturn than they were on the PlayStation. They said that these games move faster and the graphics are smoother on the Saturn. They also said that the PS really stinks when it comes to 2-D games. My question is: Should I trade in my PlayStation for a Saturn? If the Saturn is the more powerful system, why not? I want to own the stronger system. As I was told, the Saturn seems to be the better 2-D and 3-D console.

vidgamer@usa.pipeline.com

Who cares which system is more powerful? Get the system whose games you prefer. What's the point of owning a powerful system if you don't like the games on it? But to answer your question: It's impossible to say which console is more powerful. A set standard or benchmark does not exist to accurately compare the PS to the Saturn. Both Sony and Sega would probably beg to differ and would be happy to throw some tech specs at you to prove that they're better, but the problem is, comparing these numbers is like comparing apples to oranges. We'll tell you this, however: The Saturn has dedicated background and sprite processors making it easier to make 2-D games on the machine. The graphics processor in the PS has a geometry engine that makes it easier to create 3-D games on the system. Notice we said that these things make it easier, not necessarily better. It's all up to the programmers to utilize these features. If they wanted to (and were able to), they can do great 2-D and 3-D games on either machine. Perfect examples: Powerslave and Virtua Fighter 2 are great 3-D Saturn games, while Mega Man 8 and Adventures of Lomax are great 2-D PlayStation games. So which console is more powerful? Don't worry about it and just look at the systems' library of games.

ANGRY "KID"

Dear *EGM*,

I am a 12-year-old girl, and I'm writing to complain about the things I've heard so many people say and write about kids and video games. First of all, from what you read, you'd think adults are the only ones spending money on video games. My brother (10) and I have bought over \$250 worth of video games with money we've saved. Second, a woman wrote in to another magazine and said, "Why make games \$50+ to target an audience 12 and under, who would be just as happy running under a sprinkler?" In the same magazine, an article said children 11 and under wouldn't be able to tell the difference between a 64-bit game and an 8-bit game. Anyone with eyes and a brain can tell the difference! As for sprinklers, I stopped playing with them to play video games when I was seven. Third, in your June issue, Charles Shy made it sound like kids only like "cute"

games and adults demand "high-level realism." Well, my 45-year-old dad plays Tetris Attack and Super Mario World, and I usually play Mortal Kombat 3 and role-playing games. I do have something to say that's not a complaint: I think *EGM* and *EGM* are great magazines!

Stacy Kamberis
Buffalo Grove, IL

Well, we're glad we're on your good side! Unfortunately for you and your brother, many members of the older, "more mature" generations tend to underestimate young adults and children. But we do agree that you are way too young to be playing fancy role-playing games. Wouldn't you and your brother have more fun playing the likes of Candyland or Hide-and-Seek? (Just kidding!)

IS THE SATURN'S FUTURE DIM?

Dear *EGM*,

I was in Hill's Department Store, and they had a sign which said that the Sega Saturn has been discontinued, and they would no longer be stocking the machine.

Jerry Suggs, Jr.
jsuggs@mr.infl.net

The Saturn has not been discontinued. It's just Hill's Department Stores (which Mr. Suggs Jr. told us was comparable to Wal-Mart) that stopped selling them. With over 161 stores throughout the Midwest and East Coast, this could be a big setback for Sega. Both Sega and the corporate offices of Hill's would not confirm or deny whether the decision to stop selling the Saturn was made because of poor sales. But Sega did tell us that their sales department is currently talking to Hill's to rectify the situation. If they succeed, then Saturns should go back on sale there soon. Hmm...if sales are bad, then maybe Sega should go after the untouched left-handed market...

SATURN SOUTHPAW CONTROLLER?

Dear *EGM*,

Please take a quick glance at the enclosed picture. Notice anything unusual? Yes, the Sega controller has the buttons on the left-hand side! Could Sega actually have made

controllers for left-handed people after all these years?

Larry Mah
Eston, Saskatchewan

Sorry, this controller does not exist (we double checked with Sega to make sure). Sega said the picture is a layout error of some sort.



The strange thing about this picture is, it's not inverted. It's hard to see, but the Sega logo on the controllers read correctly (left to right).

Someone had to go through a lot of trouble to make the Saturn controller look this way.

POWER TO THE GAMERS

Dear *EGM*,

Thank you Leon Wilborn [Interface, *EGM* #89] for pointing out the negative representations of African-Americans in video games. Don't just blame Capcom for this though. Thank Sony for excluding blacks completely from King of Fighters '95. Perhaps we don't deserve a spot on such a highly acclaimed game. Then we have Twisted Metal 2, with three negative black representatives. If that's what you think of us SCEA, then you may go to [Satan's realm] in a handbasket. But now let me recognize those who do represent us fairly. Thanks Acclaim for making the black character Jax an all-American hero. Also, Sega used Adam and Skate in the Streets of Rage series to positively represent our inner-city youth. Please *EGM*, encourage these companies to keep it up. I know they don't want what happened to Texaco to happen to them.

C.D. Wasp
Richmond, VA

Great letter, Mr. Wasp (is that your real last name or are we missing the symbolism here?), though you are criticizing/praising the wrong parties. The programmers at SNK are the ones responsible for designing (and not putting blacks in) King of Fighters '95. Midway is the one you want to thank for creating Mortal Kombat's Jax.

128-BIT SYSTEMS?

Dear *EGM*,

Nintendo began work on their Nintendo 64 about four years ago, right? Well, does that mean that Nintendo, Sega, etc. are working on 128-Bit systems as we speak?

Dave Reid
wt299@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

We asked the companies what their plans were for the future. They were all very tight-lipped, which is to be expected. After all, any news released to the public of future systems would only take momentum (and sales) away from their current systems. But Sony and Sega wanted to make sure that everyone knew that they were technology-oriented companies, and research and development are always on the forefront of their game plans. *EGM's* translation: Yes, they are probably already working on their next generation of systems, but we won't hear anything about them until they have milked the current market dry.

WHAT THE?????

Dear *EGM*,

Hi, I'm one of *EGM's* and *GamePro's* biggest fans. My grandpa ordered me a year's worth of *GamePro* books, but I only got five. I was wondering if you could send me the rest?

Justin Booth
San Antonio, TX

We're not even going to comment on this one.

CLARIFICATIONS

In the November issue (pg. 66), we inadvertently ran pictures of Virgin of Japan's "The Deep" for Virgin of U.S.' "Treasures from the Deep." Also, in the December issue, we stated that the PlayStation will be getting a Bomberman game. Interplay has not yet confirmed whether a PS Bomberman will be coming out.

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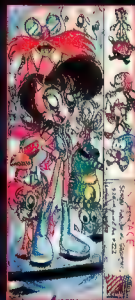


Naomi Chiba
Cincinnati, OH

WINNER!



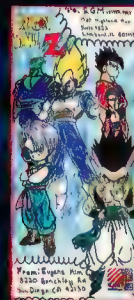
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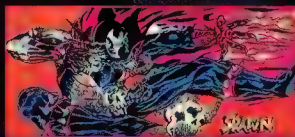
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Acclaim	7, 27	Game Express	156	Psygnosis	101
Accolade	76-77	Game Spot	125	Sega Soft	70-71
Activision	18-19, 39	GT Interactive	60-61, 95	Sierra On-Line	89
Alps Electric	23	Interact Accessories	162-63	Sony Computer Entertainment	32-33, 66-67
ASC Games	43-45, 47	Japan Video Games	161	Tecmo, Inc.	54-55
ASCII Entertainment	8-9	KOEI Corporation	83	Universal Interactive Studios	99
Atlas	63, 93	Konami	11, 53, 73	Video Game	158
BRE Software	157	LucasArts	35-37	Discounters	
Capcom	164	Mindscape	147	Virgin Interactive Entertainment	41, 59, 75, 81, 119
Chips & Bits	87	Namco	4-5, 24-25, 102-03	Working Designs	65
Eidos	12-13	Nintendo	2-3		
Electronic Arts	28-29	Pandemonium, Inc.	121		
Funco	159	Playmates	16-17, 21		
Game Cave	160				

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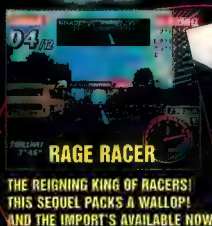
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