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HYPER
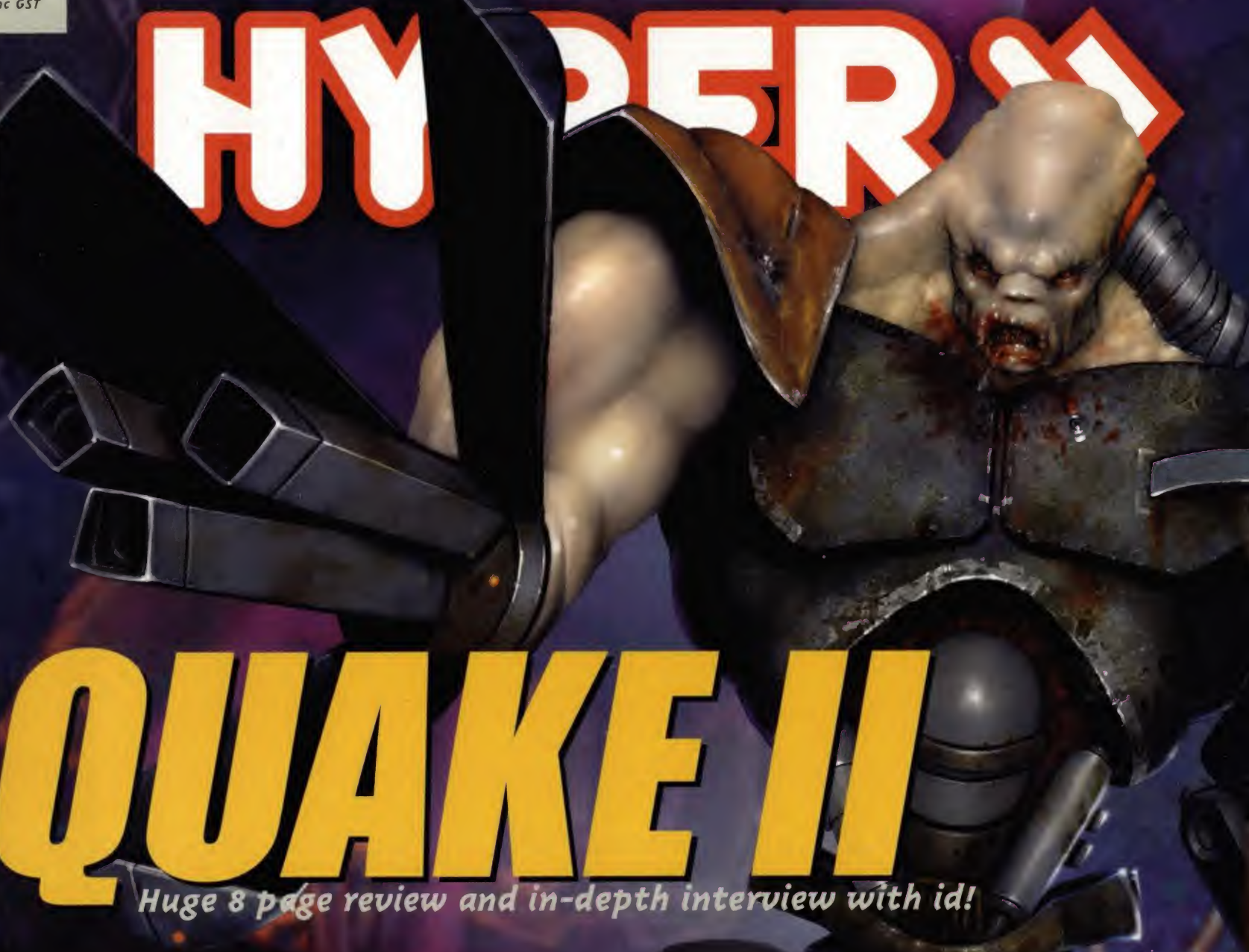
QUAKE II

Huge 8 page review and in-depth interview with id!

Bushido Blade

Sony's superb sword fighting sim

AUSTRALASIA'S BEST GAMES MAG

FIFTY TWO

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Enemy Zero
The Saturn's epic sci-fi horror adventure

FIFA 98 - Road to World Cup
EA's star striker is back with a vengeance

Bomberman 64
Explosive N64 action

POWERBLASTER

Powerblaster produces about 10 times the output of ordinary compact one-piece systems to give a bass signal you can feel and top notes that will blow you away. **Panasonic**

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ISSUE **52**

HYPER »

1998

Hype It Up

There were tense moments in the Hyper office this month, as for a moment it looked like Quake 2 would miss our deadline, and thus we wouldn't have a review in print till February, which just wouldn't be on. In any event, it turned out to be a game that was worth the headaches of squeezing it in past the deadline, and our interview with the boys from id put the icing on the cake... So this is a great issue for all you Quake freaks out there.

EA sports are in fine form right now with **FIFA 98** on PC turning heads left, right and centre here at the Hyper office. We'll be taking a squiz at the PlayStation and N64 versions next issue which arrived just too late for us to squeeze in (it's that time of year). **NBA LIVE 98** was also a very spiffy game indeed, so EA have got it together right now it would seem.

The Nintendo 64 racing games kept rolling in, with the Nintendo's first Wipeout style game, **EXTREME G**... And the ultra fast and funny **SAN FRANCISCO RUSH**. **BOMBERMAN** also made his debut on the N64, but it wasn't quite as big a bang as he's made in the past... but still good.

PlayStation owners craving for a fighting game should check out the review on **BUSHIDO BLADE**, a sword fighting game for the realism freaks. Should be a great game for those into playing these games multiplayer.

The Saturn had another good game surface in time for Christmas in the form of **ENEMY ZERO**. Kind of Alien, meets Predator, meets the femme from D. In any event, a 4 CD epic is what you want.

This issue generally marks the end of the Christmas rush for us at Hyper, but today (December 11th) I'm staring at a pile of games that have arrived since the cut off for this issue, and there's no shortage of stuff. It would seem the games industry is in a bit of a boom right now.

Anyway, I'm off for some X-Men vs Street Fighter and to cut some gibs in Quake 2... Hope Santa was kind to you this time round.

Dan

Tekken Us Higher

Well, finally there's proof, Tekken 3 is coming to the PlayStation this year! The deafening silence from Namco had some people thinking that the conversion simply wasn't going to happen, but over in Japan some pics have surfaced and it's looking damn good. The big surprise is that Namco are managing to port the game without need for an upgrade to the PlayStation (for instance Saturn owners have to use a 4MB cart to play X-Men Vs Streetfighter – which rocks), and though there are a few minor differences in the graphics, Tekken 3 is going to blow you away. The resolution and smooth animation in the visuals are a major improvement over Tekken 2, and it looks like this will easily be the best looking 3D fighting game on the PSX yet. Don't hold your breath though, as the game may look finished in these screen shots, but you can bet your grandmother that Namco are gonna tweak this baby until it's perfect. No release date has been set, but you can safely assume it will be in our hands sometime mid-year.
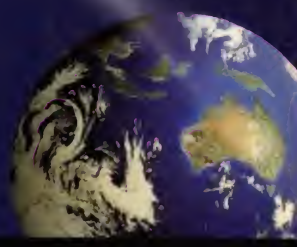
EF

BEAM 2451 0

Living Type

One of the greatest shoot 'em ups ever made, R-Type, is coming to the PlayStation! Whoo-hoo! Countless hours were spent sitting in front of an old SNES, Amiga or even Commodore-64, playing this frantic scrolling shooter... and we loved it. Irem, the game's developer, are putting together a collection of all the various R-Type games that we've seen in the past on one PlayStation disc. Called R-Types, it'll have all shoot 'em up fans and retro gamers jumping out of their skins in ecstasy. But they're not stopping there... Irem will be releasing a brand new R-Type game in true '90s style. Featuring brand new 3D enhanced graphics, it could well be the best in the series! It will be interesting to see if they stick to the classic formula, or introduce new gameplay elements... both will be out early this year so we'll do previews when they get a bit closer.   EF

None More Black

Sony have finally caught up with Nintendo's clever marketing ploy of releasing their peripherals in different colours. New on the scene this Christmas were the Black and White PlayStation control pads. Unfortunately, these are just the standard pads not the analogue ones, but if you're into your gaming hardware being more "personalised" then it's a start. Though the choice of a black or white pad isn't exactly the most imaginitive in the colour scheme, it's in keeping with the PlayStation's supposedly more discerning mature audience who are more concerned with looking "cool" as opposed to owning a "toy". The Memory Cards are a bit more sprightly though, now being available in red, green and white (and they're transparent too). You won't exactly be dazzled blind by these colours, but it at least means you've got a choice now, eh? Thankyou Mr Sony.   EF

Smell The Glove

Our gaming buddies across the pacific are throwing their cash around for some phunky peripherals, like The Glove for instance. This device is exactly what the name implies - it's a glove which plugs into the controller port of your PlayStation and it can be used to play any PSX game you own. You slip this thing on much like a Knight's gauntlet, not the most comfortable experience, but it allows you to control your character by simply rotating your wrist in the required direction. At the fingertips you'll find all the appropriate buttons, so you can sit back on the lounge and wiggle your arm in the air to navigate your way through Tomb Raider 2 or do a few laps in Toca Touring Car Championship! We're not sure if it will make it here, and it ain't cheap, but if you're crazy enough you may get it on import somewhere.   EF

Dural Update

As the Saturn starts it's downhill slide, everyone is beginning to speculate on which games we'll get to see on the "Dural" - or whatever it is Sega decide to call their next console. In fact, Sega and developers are now referring to the console as "Katana"... There's some pretty solid information out there that says that Sega are working on the arcade shooter House Of The Dead for the Saturn, but it seems more likely that this will in fact turn out to be for "Katana". We know that Super GT has been dropped from the list, because Sega now seemingly want to launch the new console with Daytona 2 (which sounds like a good idea to us). Of course, Virtua Fighter 3 is the game everyone wants, but as of yet, Sega haven't said anything. In fact, from all reports, Sega aren't planning to port any current Sega arcade titles to the next console, and that they want software which is totally cutting edge. If this is true, then we may still see some conversions of the current arcade faves for the Saturn (though how good they would be remains to be seen). As Dan reported last issue though, Saturn owners overseas are currently enjoying arcade perfect versions of X-Men Vs Streetfighter using the 4MB cartridge upgrade, so there still a chance that some hot games will surface with the aid of a funky cart before the Saturn totally goes under! **EF**

Vanilla Spice

Look! It's Parrappa's long-lost sister Vanilla, and she's starring in her very own Saturn game! Argh! Can you believe it? Someone's actually gone out of their way to bring Saturn owners their very own Parrappa the Rappa style "virtual rap" simulation. Ha ha! Not only does it look strikingly similar, but the gameplay seems to be incredibly close to the PSX's Parrappa. So let's recap... you play Vanilla, a home-gal who sings and raps her way through adversity in this new title from Altron, Jungle Rhythm. Of course, it currently looks like a Japanese-only release, but since Parrappa was a bit of a minor hit around the place, it may just inspire Sega to get this one out around the globe. Hey, I mean, the game lets you perform special combo dance moves and there's even going to be a Battle Mode where you get to face off against an opponent! Cool shit... I think. **EF**

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チェック

Zelda Overload

At a recent Nintendo 64 showcase, Shigeru Miyamoto (the creator of Mario) confirmed that there is already a second Zelda 64 game in development which should even be ready for release sometime this year! The plan it seems is to release Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time on cart, and then when the 64DD arrives later in the year, release another Zelda adventure on DD which would in fact turn out to be an add-on adventure! Wow! Not only is Zelda shaping up to be the best N64 game ever, but we're going to get two of them! Yeehaa! We've seen Zelda 64 running, and currently it's looking damn amazing, with huge bosses and gorgeous environments. We should see Ocarina Of Time mid to late this year.

Paparazzi Boy

I've heard some crazy things in my time, but this takes the cake! Nintendo Japan are planning to release a small digital camera and printer for the Game Boy! Yep! The camera plugs in to the Game Boy and allows you take and save 30 "pictures" to memory, which you can then print out and use for stickers or store on your Game Boy in digital form to be used in an actual game. The camera is about the size of a cassette and has a small lens which displays on the Game Boy screen until you're ready to take a grab. Could be a hit with those too poor to afford a real camera that already own a gameboy.

In other Peripheral news, the Nintendo 64 is receiving quite a few add-ons, most of which sound completely silly. A Bio Feedback device plugs into your N64 and then clips onto your earlobe and measures your heart rate. It's currently only supported in one game called Bio Tetris which adjusts the difficulty levels according to your pulse! Other funny hardware add-ons include the N64 Mouse (the analogue stick works just fine thanks) which will primarily be used for a Mario Paint cart, and a Capture Cart which will take a screen grab of whatever is on your TV, from videos to games, which you can then use as background patterns or even map the image onto a character's head in the Mario Paint game. To top things off, there's a Voice Recognition Headset which again plugs into the controller port, but is currently only good for one game, a Virtual Pet type thingy! Crazy stuff for rich people!

EF

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charts

PLAYSTATION

1. Tomb Raider 2
2. Time Crisis
3. Crash Bandicoot 2
4. Final Fantasy VII
5. TOCA Touring Car
6. FIFA RTWC '98
7. Moto Racer
8. Street Fighter EX + Alpha
9. Red Alert
10. Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee

N64

1. Goldeneye 007
2. Diddy Kong Racing
3. Top Gear Rally
4. Mario Kart 64
5. Lylat Wars
6. Bomberman 64
7. Lamborghini 64
8. Duke Nukem 64
9. Clay Fighter 63 1/3
10. MRC

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1. Dragon Force
2. Shining The Holy Ark
3. Sega Touring Car
4. Sonic Jam
5. Duke Nukem 3D
6. Last Bronx
7. Resident Evil
8. Warcraft 2
9. Doom
10. Virtua Fighter 2

PC

1. Blade Runner
2. AFL '98
3. Championship Manager 97/
4. Jedi Knight
5. Dark Reign
6. Need For Speed 2 SE
7. Total Annihilation
8. Longbow 2
9. Armored Fist 2
10. FIFA RTWC '98

BART'S ROOM

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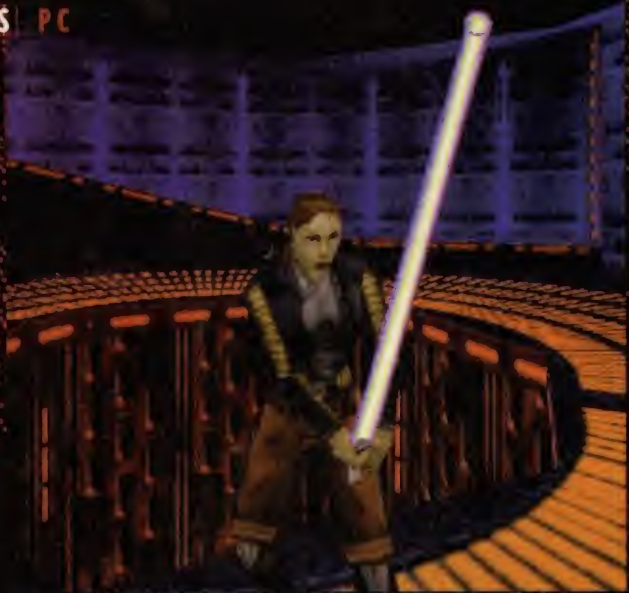
Return Of The Jedi

LucasArts have just about finished an official Jedi Knight add-on called Mysteries Of The Sith. The pack will include 14 new single-player missions, 15 new multiplayer maps and lots more funky stuff. They've tweaked the actual engine to provide faster play and coloured lighting amongst other things. Incredibly, there will be about 20 new enemies, including a Rancor - how's that for value?! You begin the missions as Dark Kyle and further into the game you get to play as Mara Jade, and head off to find the Sith Temple. Oh, did I mention that there will also be five new weapons including a carbonite gun and tripod laser, as well as five new force powers which including a Saber Throw? Cool! Those LucasArts boys have been working on this one for about 6 months already, so expect it around February/March this year.

EF

Virtual Springfield

Those funny lookin' yellow people have made it onto your PC in their very own virtual interactive thingy. It ain't no screensaver or desktop fancifier, it's sort of like a game - but then again it isn't. You following me? OK, Virtual Springfield is basically the world of the Simpsons on your computer, with you the player being able to just walk around and interact with the inhabitants almost like you're in the cartoon show. You can wander into Moe's tavern, check out the Kwik-E-Mart or even sneak into the Simpson household and go up into Bart's room to hang out. There are 50 locations which have some sort of interactive element, and you can collect items and play little sub-games along the way. This is definitely something for Simpsons fans, as all the voices are by the original cast and you'll get a kick out of being able to "be there". As long as you're not expecting it to be much of an adventure game, then you'll be right. If you happen to own a Mac, then you'll be pleased to know this is a hybrid CD for both PC and Mac, so everyone's happy eh?

EF

Jack On The Box

Most of you have probably heard about You Don't Know Jack, the trivia party game for PC and Mac... well every once and a while a new installment comes out with a whole bunch of new questions and features. Volume Three is now here, and it's as funny and entertaining as ever. Three people can play at the same time on the same keyboard by allocating a "buzzer" to a particular key. Everyone then huddles around the monitor and battles it out for virtual cash prizes and the glory of being the Jack Champion. Though you should be wary that a lot of the questions are specific to American culture, most of the game is playable - and bloody funny. The presentation is excellent, and this really is one of those ultimate party games.

EF

Competition Winners

It's not about who wins, it's how you play the game. Of course, you won't get to play the game if you don't win...

Goldeneye
Tom Downey, Tas
Izaak Jobling, Vic
Alex Truskin, Vic
Ryan Vincent, Qld
Conal Brett, WA
Glen Russ, SA
Glen Evans, Qld

Dov Moldovan, NSW
Edmund Carter, Vic
Io De Rosa, WA

Age Of Empires
L Mitchell, Qld
Peter Segar, Vic
Adam Rogers, Qld

Andrew Sherrah, NSW
Damien Alcock, Qld
Kieran Pankhurst, NSW
Bernard Lau, NSW
Terry Chace, WA
Andrew Heinley, Vic
Josh Hobbs, Qld

Colony Wars
Brook Leach, NSW
S. Farrawell, NSW
Steven Sims, Qld
Lee Stumer, Qld
Kipp Brady, Vic
John Grieve, NZ
Craig Minerds, SA

Edmund Carter, Vic
Julia Thackrah, WA
BJ Barton, WA

Winners of the Fatal Fury artwork comp will be notified.

Big Wars

It takes a lot of effort to terraform a planet. If the planet has no atmosphere, an attempt has to be made to locate enough water (Usually in the form of ice) and somehow send it hurtling into the planets skies in a blanket. If there is no water on the planet, it's somehow gotta be transported there. A friend of mine assures me that the best way to do this is to re-direct a comet and send it crashing into the target planet, which, I'm sure, would be very simple indeed.

So okay...BIG WARS. It's like the twenty fourth century, and Mars has not only been terraformed, but is teeming with human life. Mars has it's own separate government, and a way of life not unlike that of Earth. But uh-oh... wait a minute. When all seems a rock 'in rolling, aliens drop down from the skies in an all out bid to wipe human kind off the face of Mars.

It's real guerrilla warfare as the aliens, calling themselves Gods, use every trick in the book to try and subvert their enemy to get the hell off the face of Mars.

This story is about big guns, mass violence, bad eighties style sex and colonising the wrong planet. It's about subversives in government and electronic hypnosis... it's about God and his high tech army of mass destruction versus the puny might of humankind.

Sound enticing?

Big wars is the kinda b-grade Anime that we've all come to know and love. From the ultra cheesy dialogue to the end of the world, babylonian environment where even thugs and fascists can philosophise about the meaning of life. The name says it all.

If you liked Venus Wars, then you'll love this.

6.5/10

RATED R18+, DISTRIBUTED BY KISEKI

The Hakkenden

The legend of the Dog Warriors lid c

BY MAX AUTOHEAD

Every time I get a new anime, Malcy the PC PowerPlay art director is one of the first people to know. Our last conversation went a little like this...

Malcy - Hakkenden? What's this like?

Max - Man, this series is so good, the light from bad would take a million years to reach it.

Hakkenden is truly the best series to be released this year. The first volume that I reviewed left me stunned, and it's been a long wait in between for the second volume to be sent my way.

What is Hakkenden?

Set in ancient Japan, Hakkenden is the story of eight warriors who are born under the curse of a union between dog and princess. They are brought up in a world of greed and self interest, where a fat clown-like Shogun rules the empire under his fat unwholesome fist. It's feudal Japan, where being a samurai and to be able to serve one's lord is reward in itself. A world where demons roam disguised as humans in an everlasting bid to cause eternal pain and suffering. In this world the Dog Warriors live, and it is in this world that they must seek out the origins to their curse, and come to terms with the core of their being.

Based on the two-hundred-year novel "Nanso Satomi Hakkenden", this Anime has totally grabbed me by the nads. It truly is something to shout about, and if you've been waiting for something to cream your daks since Ninja Scroll and Macross Plus, then your time has arrived.

10/10.

RATED M15+. DISTRIBUTED BY KISEKI.

ALL ENTRIES CLOSE FEBRUARY 11TH 1998

Frag For Free!

Yes yes yes yes yes! Never has a games magazine been so proud! Hyper and the lovely folks at Activision would like to offer five copies of this masterpiece to some lucky Hyper readers. Yep, that's right, Quake 2 for free! Now, before you charge down to the post office, there's a catch... you have to correctly answer the following question to go in the draw...

Which cool-ass weapon from Doom has made a return in Quake 2?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it off to - **You Make Me Wanna Quake, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern 2016.**

Croc Almighty!

Before you can say "Merchandise Bonanza", Electronic Arts knocked on our office door and dumped a whole box of Croc goodies on our doorstep for us to give to some lucky Hyper readers! So thanks to EA, those of you who've been eager for a bit of Croc action can now pick up a Croc pack which includes: a leather backpack, a copy of Croc for PC or PSX, a t-shirt and a cool Croc cap. Whoo! To win one of these packs, just answer this question...

If Croc had an occupation, would it be A) Nuclear Scientist; B) Dentist; C) Plumber or D) Game's Reviewer?

Stick your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to - **Crocodile Rock, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern 2016.**

Mace in yer face!

Undeniably the best N64 fighting game at the moment, Mace is keeping violent kids everywhere in the home where they belong. This is a good thing. The other good thing, is that GT Interactive have opened their hearts to Hyper readers everywhere and said - "Beat up your friends!" So we're offering five copies of Mace to give to the N64 owners who can answer this question...

If you used mace on someone would they A) Stick it in their N64; B) Clutch at their eyes in pain; C) be hit with a large blunt weapon or D) all of the above?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to - **Free Mace, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern 2016. Good luck!**

LEVEL 10

Is that a Pole Arm in your pocket or...?

The latest greatest weapon-based fighting game, Bushido Blade for the PlayStation, is poised to slice and dice your butt. If you think you can handle the ultra-freaky combat, then you'll no doubt be keen to win one of six copies we have here at Hyper HQ. Sony have been super-kewl to let us give these games away for free, so don't waste the opportunity!! First, answer us this question...

When you buy Bushido Blade do you get A) one ass-kicking game; B) a big shiny sword; c) a set of steak knives or D) a cricket bat?

Scribe your response on the rear of some stationary and post it to - **Taste My Blade, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern 2016.**

DANGER.

DANGER

Like Tron, every month we shrink **Eliot Fish** *down to the size of an atom and inject him into the Internet...*

WC5
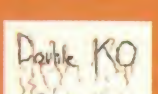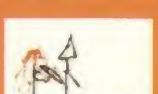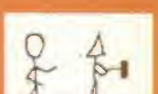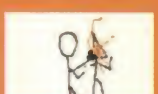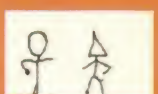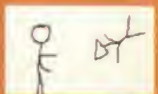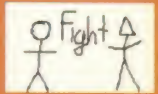
PlayStation

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe have finally got off their butts and put together a spanking new website for PlayStation owners. As opposed to Sony's American or Japanese sites, this one is primarily geared towards PAL users, so Aussies should bookmark this one. There's news on upcoming games, previews, info on peripherals and chat rooms etc. They also have cheats here for a variety of games...
You can visit the site via the URL
http://www.playstation.com.au/

Stick Figure Death Theatre

Strange but true. This website is host to a collection of hilarious little animations of stick figures dying in a variety of odd ways. The animation is simple, stupid and very funny. Fans of the site who have been inspired enough to come up with their own short stick figure films have links to their web pages so you can see what they came up with. You may even want to contribute one of your own! One of the best websites I've ever seen!
http://www.calvert.com/sfdt/sfdt.html

Wing Commander Prophecy

WC5 is finally upon us, and it's 3DFX accelerated to boot! To celebrate the new installment in the Wing Commander legacy, Origin have put up the official WC5 website. Visiting the site for the first time, you'll have to enter your callsign - you will then notice the odd message pop-up on the screen ordering you to head to briefing and other such orders! It's early stages yet, but eventually there will be all sorts of stuff here such as patches, strategies and stuff. Check it out at the insanely long-winded URL -
http://www.wingcommanderprophecy.com/

Colony Wars

Fans of this great Psygnosis game should make sure they take a visit to the official website. Incorporating lots of Java, there's lots of eye candy here for those of you who like fandangled websites. If you don't already have the game, then you can have a look at some videoclips and piccies of the space sim in action. There's also a link to the Psygnosis webspace if you so desire...
http://www.colonywars.com/

Bungie

No, it's nothing to do with bungie jumping! This is the homepage for Bungie the games developer who brought Marathon to the Mac and now the wonderful Myth: The Fallen Lords top both Mac and PC! The URL for the company is **http://www.bungie.com/** but if you're solely interested in Myth, then you may want to have a look at their Myth-dedicated server, Bungie.net. Located at **http://www.bungie. net/** of course, you can see who is the current Myth champion and if you'd like you can join an "order" (like clans in Quake) and start some team battles. There is also some excellent online tech support here too! Myth rocks!

Dark Earth

Microprose's Dark Earth is an excellent adventure to waste your summer holidays on when you should be out in the fresh air and hot sun. Stuck in your little room in front of your computer all day is an anti-social and unhealthy past-time and I'm telling all of you to stop it immediately! Stop it or you'll go blind!! Heh. Ah... stuff it, let's play!
http://www.darkearth.com/

Colon Wars

Dark Earth

Myth

San Francisco Rush II
Alcatraz Edition - Atari

Well, what does any self respecting arcade addict want from a car racing sim? Ahh, the sound of a well tuned powerful, pumping engine, a well designed interestingly challenging track and of course the most important addition - the feeling that are really moving at speeds well in excess of 250+ kph. Tick, tick and tick, its time to climb out of your cupboard and kick the cold turkey as a good racing sim has just become a whole lot better (yes, it IS better than the all time classic Daytona.)

Those familiar with this game's predecessor will be double happy to find a new additional track - Alcatraz, as well as the original three tracks that have been improved with new shortcuts and additional track. The other noticeable difference is that each track can be done in reverse as a mirror image to the original (press "view one" to select).

With the Alcatraz track, the designers at Atari have really decided to cut loose into their version of fantasy island with this ode to road engineering. Loop de loops, high speed cambered multi lane roadway and a few gut-wrenching ginormous jumps abound aplenty on this track and is definitely a slice of multiplayer heaven. There are several tight turns which cannot be taken at full speed into the numerous shortcuts. This is where it is best to give your opponents a gentle nudge into the guard rails and cliff faces. Battle ramming whilst up side down in one of the loops may see your own vehicle plunging to a fiery death, but is well worth the effort for joke value. For those truly skilled drivers, try ramming (detouring) opponents in mid air and send them for example into the side of a building.

The cars handle beautifully, with jump trajectories and dynamics being very realistic despite the fact that no vehicle could realistically survive a 4 storey jump. The three view points are as before, with viewpoint two really putting you behind the wheel of the vehicle, but viewpoint three giving you a better perspective of the racetrack.

As before, you are confronted by the decision of choosing either beginner, advanced, expert or extreme vehicles, which all vary accordingly in 'speed' and 'handling'. Several new vehicles have been added to the interesting array of vehicles. To access the different vehicles, press VIEW ONE prior to car selection. Again being 'true to life', that combi van did not handle the same way as that CRX with rear spoiler (even though both vehicles are both from the 'advanced' group of cars) Overall the handling seemed slightly kinder than Mk I even though it is possible to lose the tail end at high speed.

The sound effects are way wicked, totally absorbing and can I be daring enough to say a benchmark in video game exhaust sound realism. Some genius has located two speakers in the seats headrest only inches away from your ears and assuming that you don't drive whilst standing or are a dwarven midget or have no ears at all, you will find yourself totally immersed in this game. Yet another addition is the ability to choose the soundtrack whilst driving. There are 5 non tinny techno tunes to choose from and all help to set the pace for the race. A bonus for the strong silent types is that if the music starts to bug you, it can be turned to OFF.

Impeccable graphics, combined with imaginative racetracks, amazing sound effects, near perfect physics, as well as numerous options to increase the game's longevity, leads us to the conclusion that this racing sim well and truly RULES. Don't take my word for it (though I would appreciate it if you did)
GO AND PLAY THIS GAME.

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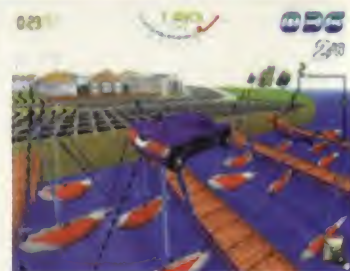
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» Incoming

PC

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: ACTION/FLIGHT SIM
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: TBA

Spooge! Rage Software are the folk behind this awesome looking action game for the PC, Incoming. Utilising 3DFX and the new AGP architecture, the visuals on show here are some of the best yet on the home PC. The minimum specs for the game are already a P166 with a 3DFX or AGP card, with the reccomended being up around the 200MHz area! Ouch! Still, if you can manage it, Incoming will blow your socks off. It's a shoot

'em up in which you must protect the Earth from invading aliens. To do this, you'll have to take control of a variety of craft from heavily equipped helicopters to tanks and jets. The action is set in a number of increasingly involving missions that Rage promise will be better than anything else you've played on your PC. They obviously think it's pretty shit-hot. The weapon effects in the game look especially nice, with big dynamic explosions and translucent effects like smoke and lasers catching your eye as you pilot your craft around the beautiful environments. There's a whisper going around that Rage are considering attempting a Nintendo 64 port of the game too, so console owners won't miss out on this one hopefully. Possibly it would use the upcoming 64DD, because god knows how they'd pack this game onto a cart. Incoming is really going to push your hardware, so currently only those of you who have the latest technology will get the most out of the game. This could very well be rather huge. **EF**

» Alundra

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS

Working Designs were the wonderful people behind Landstalker, the great Action/RPG for the Megadrive. In a surprise move, they have announced that the official sequel to Landstalker is going to be on the PlayStation. It's called Alundra, and it's sorta like Zelda's second cousin twice removed. Playing primarily from the classic overhead 3rd person perspective, Alundra is the tale of a little mysterious dude questing to destroy evil - original huh? Landstalker was a great game, so that immediately makes Alundra one to keep an eye on. Visually the game doesn't look remarkable, and in fact maybe a little 16-bit, but Working Designs have spiffed things up with

gorgeous cut-scenes and spunky PSX effects. If you love the Zelda games, then you'll feel right at home here, as Alundra takes all of Zelda's winning elements and combines them with a few original concepts to come up with what looks set to be a decent PlayStation RPG. After you've played Final Fantasy VII, you can set your sights on this one, although it doesn't look like it had quite the same budget somehow. There's nothing like a well made RPG, so we have our fingers crossed that Alundra has that certain something. **EF**

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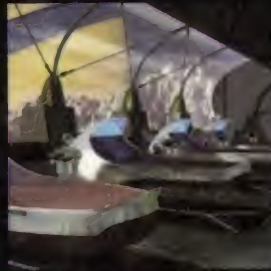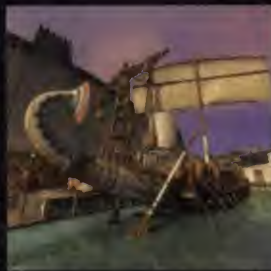
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» Messiah

PC/PlayStation

Getting somewhat ahead of ourselves here, we were looking to see Messiah early next year, but the last trailer we saw of it said 4th quarter '98. Oh well. Shiny Entertainment did some scouting around last year, and Dave Perry did a superb "dib dib dib" job to snatch up some talented programmers from Scavenger. Within months of this new team getting together with Shiny, we've seen what looks to be one of the most advanced games (visually anyway) to appear on the scene.

Messiah is about the seven seals of the Apocalypse, which once destroyed, bring about armageddon, the war between heaven and hell, etc. Satan has been rather naughty and has been preparing his forces early, and has plans to break the seals two years earlier than was planned, so he can gain the upper hand. This is where you come in. You are "Bob", a small, baby-like angel that is given the task of protecting the seals.

Rather than being forced to play through the game as an infant with wings, you progress through the levels by possessing people with better bodies, hardly the act of a benign spiritual entity, but hey, it's a game. You have to confront the being controlled by Satan's servant, so you need to possess the best bod you can to win.

The thing that makes Messiah stand out is the use of innovative techniques in rendering and animation. There's real time tessellation and deformation, which essentially means the textures can stretch, bend, and essentially go through any standard physical process that a surface like skin would go through. To the delight of many a hormonal young male, this means things like breasts and bottoms will move realistically like never before in a video game (in fact this is exactly how Shiny demonstrated the feature). Further ways this can be looked at is that limbs will no longer be made up of polygons that disappear into one another, as joins like elbows and armpits will have textures that stretch just like your skin. Shiny have also gone to the expense of getting some actors and dancers to prance around in black body condoms with ping pong balls stuck to them so they can do motion capture animation, which once combined with all the tessellation/texture mapping techniques, results in some of the best character visuals we've ever seen.

The game also features volumetric lighting so expect the entire package to come across as a highly polished visual extravaganza.

More news once the project nears completion. DT

≫ War Of The Worlds

wow-o-meter

PC

AVAILABLE: 2ND QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: REAL TIME STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE

Oooh! It had to happen, didn't it?! H.G. Wells' masterpiece is finally getting it's own game. Set in the lush green British countryside, War Of The Worlds is the classic tale of Alien Invasion and any of you old enough to remember the 70's soundtrack will be quivering in anticipation already! It makes complete sense that this would become a strategy game, and GT Interactive have put Rage Software hard at work on bringing us everything the classic story even hinted at. Mankind is faced with a truly terrifying army of machine-like crea-

tures which wield more firepower than the human race can even contemplate in the late 19th century! You'll be able to play as either the human race or the Martians, and though the invaders are technologically superior, the game is balanced out by giving the humans larger numbers. Currently the game only supports two players in multiplayer mode, but this is because the story kind of restricts this to man against martian. Amazingly, there will be no set missions, and the game will alter depending on how well you're playing. It's either conquer or be conquered! The map and units will all be in true 3D, and the game will pass between day and night which will no doubt affect the gameplay. Can't wait to see more on this one! **E F**

≫ Wild Arms

wow-o-meter

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: 3RD QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SONY

It may sound like something to do with military warfare, but Wild Arms is actually an RPG in the classic 16-bit mould. Much like Alundra has one foot in 16-bit land and the other in 32-bit land, Wild Arms takes the old top-down Zelda approach to the Action/RPG, but does it with enough style and polish to make it worthy of investigation. Certainly, the PlayStation has been lacking good RPGs and it's

only now that they're starting to pop up everywhere. In Wild Arms, you get to choose between three different characters - a young boy, a treasure hunter or a young girl. The twist though, is that you can switch between the characters during the game to make progress, which also adds incredible variety to the gameplay. Although most of the game is classic 2D RPG stuff - wandering around talking to people and solving puzzles - the combat is quite different. Entering a battle switches you to a 3D polgonal view, with the action taking place incredibly similarly to Final Fantasy VII. Nice! The playing area is quite huge, and you'll get to snoop around huge castles and ominous caverns. The menu system in the game has similarities to FFVII too, though it's seems a little more complex and yet more traditional in presentation. In fact, the game is beautifully presented, with lovely Anime-style cut-scenes and a deep, moving plot... so for those of you who just can't get enough RPG-ing in their lives, you've now got enough adventuring coming your way to keep you happy until the PlayStation 2 arrives!! Heh heh. **F F**

wow-o-meter

» *1080*

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: SNOWBOARDING
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

We briefly mentioned some coming N64 snowboarding games last issue, and we can now happily refer to one of them as 1080 Degree Snowboarding. This is the slick boarding game which is being developed by the team who brought us the remarkable Wave Race 64. Imagine those smooth responsive controls and excellent physics behind the engine of this boarding game... oh mama! We've seen the game in motion, and it's definitely the most realistic looking snowboarding game to date. The graphics are stunning, with the soft snow spraying into the air when your boarder leans into a corner. Coming up over a rise, the sun smacks you in the face and you can almost feel the wind in your face.

As you would expect, a lot of the game takes place in half-pipes, requiring you to deftly use the control pad to pull off sick manoeuvres in mid-air. The analogue control works a treat, with the Z button used for crouching which can give you that extra burst of speed on a clean straight. Some of the courses have multiple paths, and you can get your boarder to pull off some cool stunts, like sliding off logs and using rocks to get air. The N64's capabilities mean that all the environments in 1080 look beautifully smooth and solid, and hopefully there will be next to no pop-up or polygon glitching. Definitely one to look forward to. **E F**

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wow-o-meter

» *Robotron 64*

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: SHOOTER
PLAYERS: TBA
PUBLISHER: CRAVE

Robotron is a classic arcade game, and it became famous for it's dual joystick controls and relentless shoot 'em up action. You were this tiny guy on a grid who basically had to keep ever increasing hordes at bay whilst trying to rescue people around the screen. One joystick was used for movement and the other to determine which direction you fired your gun. Thus you could be running left and shooting right... get it? Things really could heat up to the point of incredible frustration, but it was one of those games where you just had to have one more go! PlayStation owners may be aware of Robotron X which came out earlier in the year and was a souped up version of Robotron which introduced polygons and very little else. The game was just a little too true to the original to provide gameplay with the required depth to make it a stayer. Well, the Nintendo 64 is now receiving Robotron 64, and even though it is yet again just the original concept in new clothing, it looks like maybe they made a better job of this version than the dull affair Robotron X turned out to be on the PSX. Again, everything has been transformed into 3D, and if you own 2 control pads you'll be lucky enough to utilise the funky option of using one analogue stick for movement and the other for your shooting - just like the old arcade game! If you don't have the extra controller though, don't worry, you can still play the game using the C buttons to fire with. For those of you who are into retro gaming, or those who just love frantic shooters, start saving your pennies. **E F**

Spawn

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: APRIL
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SONY

wow-o-meter

He's not a very happy guy. Spawn, the perpetually cranky hero, is coming to your PlayStation in full polygon glory. The 3D action game is on it's way to co-incide with the Spawn movie, so you can expect ridiculous amounts of advertising for both in the coming weeks. Half the game is played from a Tomb Raider-esque 3D perspective, in which you guide Spawn around corridors in search of items and people to biff. In this perspective, you can punch open doors, jump around ledges and explore the world before you, but as soon as you encounter any danger, the game switches to a side-on Tekken-esque fighting mode. There are some pretty standard moves available, like punching and kicking, and the fights are pretty much a case of button bashing. As soon as you knock out your opponent, the camera zooms back around behind Spawn, so you can continue your search of the surrounding area. The graphics were a bit murky and the polygons messy and jagged, but hopefully they'll fine tune things for the final release. Spawn fans will no doubt be excited about this one, but for the rest of us, this one is going to have to be improved greatly to be worth pursuing. When we get the final version, we'll let you know if it's any good. EF

Cardinal Syn

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: MAY
CATEGORY: FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: SONY

wow-o-meter

Oooh... another 3D fighting game! In the style of Soul Blade comes this new weapons-based fighting game from Sony Computer Entertainment America - Cardinal Syn. Everything starts off with a lengthy beautifully made intro which probably took longer to make than the actual game, and you're given the whole swords and sorcery type story. There is a nice array of different characters to choose from, from big knights in armour to female sorcerors and zombies, and they all look spankingly good. The controls in the version we had (very early) were unfortunately very stiff, and getting your character to do what you want seemed to be a bit of a struggle. The animation was quite poor too, and the smooth gameplay needed for a good intuitive fighting game was lacking. The basic moves are an overhead strike, side-swipe and low swipe. There are also two buttons for high and low blocking and a very cool Push move, which allows you to shove your opponent away when they're too much in yer face! We
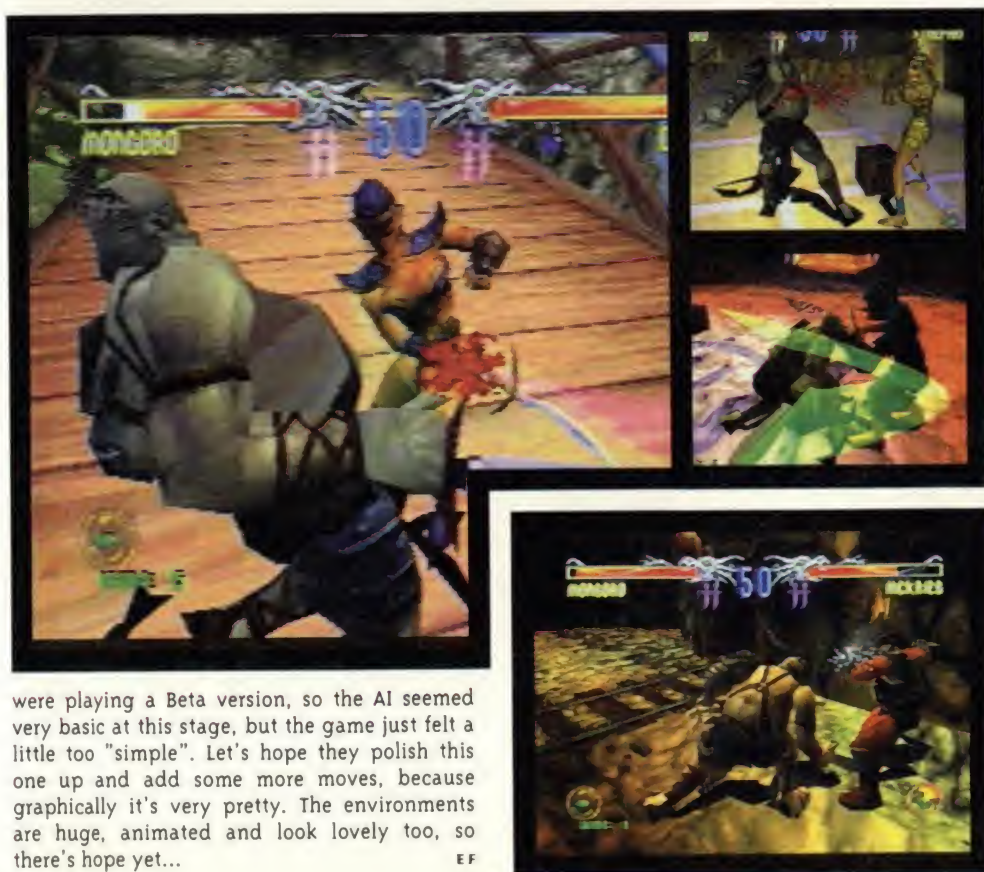
were playing a Beta version, so the AI seemed very basic at this stage, but the game just felt a little too "simple". Let's hope they polish this one up and add some more moves, because graphically it's very pretty. The environments are huge, animated and look lovely too, so there's hope yet... EF
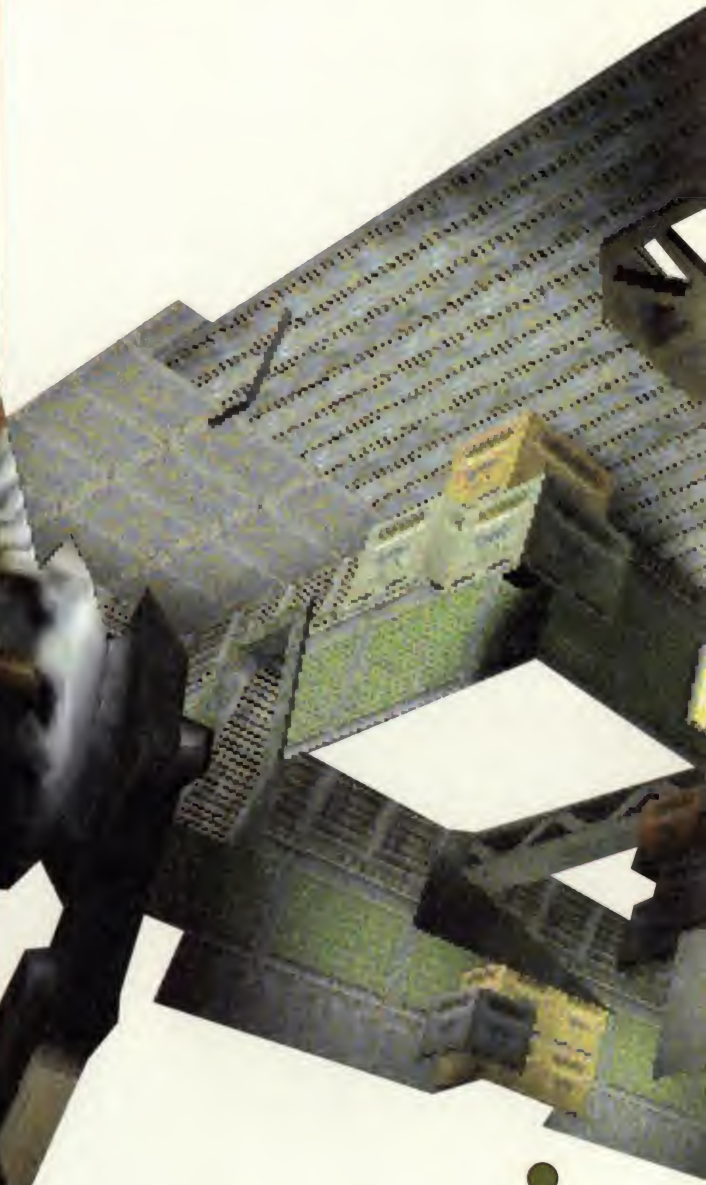
ID

INVASION

ID Software blitzed the PC gaming world with doom, and did it all over again with quake. With the arrival of Quake 2, id were sure to make sure they had a landing party in Australia, in the form of Paul Steed and Tim Willits, who were only to happy to tell some war stories...

PAUL STEED

TIM WILLITS

Activision are into releasing games at roughly the same time worldwide, and their latest monster was no exception. In the first week of December Activision held gamer nights for those dying to get a glimpse of both Heavy Gear, and the big 'un, Quake 2. Just like the Dark Reign launch, Activision ensured that the people who made the game were present, and representing id software were Lead Designer, Tim Willits, and Lead Artist, Paul Steed. The guys gave the crowd a demo of the game, showing off all their pride and joy, and answering any questions that the crowd might have for them about the game. Since y'all couldn't be there, Hyper lined up an interview with Paul Steed back in the Hyper office, and we also managed to get a brief word in with Tim Willits admist all the screams of pain and heavy gibbing that emitted from the VIP room at the gamer night where a bunch of lucky individuals were getting a chance to be the first people to play deathmatch Quake 2.

Paul Steed - Artist. Formerly with Origin, Iguana and Virgin prior to joining id.

Hyper: How'd you start working as a video game artist?
Ps: I was really depressed one day, and I was working for a couple of temp agencies, waiting by the phone for a call to get some work. I see this ad for "Fantasy artist wanted" and I've always liked drawing and doing sketches, and the only thing I thought I could like doing eight hours a day and not look at the clock was to draw. So I called them up and they say, "We make computer games", I'm like... "computer games?". "What we need you to do is like, do sketches, and basically get coffee... For the real artists and stuff". So I got on board and taught myself how to draw with a bar of soap, and I've just taken it from there.

Hyper: How much of the art did you do personally?
Ps: On quake 2 I did most of the character animation and modelling, and all the weapons and all the schematics.

Hyper: Finally an id game with cutscenes... Was there a conscious decision to include them from the start to help the plot or something? (Feel free to tell how you did them in your spare time, etc)
Ps: Well I originally tried to sell the idea to them when I got there, but the old school... I came from a cinematic background, so it seemed odd to me to not have them in the game, and they definitely wanted to avoid it since they didn't think it was necessary in the game. So eventually I did some things in my spare time and showed it to them, more than anything to show them I had the ability to do something that would be cool, as opposed to cheesy or useless. So then we kind of just went forth from there, and all the cut scenes that you see in between the units were done in a day. I basically sold it on them that it wouldn't take me months to do it.

Hyper: The actual look of Quake 2 is far more techy compared to previous id games, and the lack of demonic imagery is really apparent. Is this a case of following the plot or is there some pressure to get away from that sort of thing?
Ps: No, there's no pressure at all. I think we're fortunate in that we can do what we really want to do, and again we addressed the single player issues in Quake, which was the massive inconsistency in the game. It was just a loose collection of levels done by different designers, so in Quake 2 we wanted to make it a very fulfilling single player experience and part of that was the internal consistency of the game. So it didn't fit with the general plot, which is one paragraph... An alien race has been kicking our ass, we're gonna go back and kick their ass. We tried to keep it as such that we don't really know that much about them, other than that they're the enemy, so we don't know anything about their religious aspect or their demonic preferences.

Hyper: What would you say are the main differences between deathmatching in Quake and Quake 2?
Ps: Without a doubt the weapons balance. I've been getting my butt kicked up on the net by all the experts around here, which I'm glad I got a chance to get some id frags. But I was definitely frag bait, because I'm used to Quake 2 where there's about six different weapons you can get and still win. People of equal ability in Quake, if you don't have the rocket launcher... it doesn't matter, you lose. In Quake 2 you have the rocket launcher, the grenade launcher, the chaingun, the hyper blaster, the bfg, the railgun. Tim always says Quake 2 is a great equaliser in deathmatch, because you'll see a lot more diverse play. You don't have to rely on find that one weapon.

Hyper: What about the idea of players dropping whatever weapon they were carrying when they die in deathmatch, but no backpack. Was this some sort of attempt to even things out?
Ps: You get inventory things, like powerups, it was almost like a tradeoff

Hyper: The polygon count on some of the monsters is really high... Were you just going all out and doing whatever you wanted to. Or did you have a limit that you worked under?
Ps: From day one I got some bench marks I needed to work with, and normally when I model, I'll model something just like I want to do it, but I'm really conscious of superfluous polygons. So I'll do it how I want it, and then for the character I was told to keep them all under 600 polygons, and then for the grunt, the guy they wanted to have all over the place, I had to keep it under 450. I really couldn't go berserk, there were specific weapons I had like for the weapons the v model weapons were 400, the world model weapons were 200, all enemies were between 600 and 700. With the bosses being around 1500 to 2000 faces, because the geometry in the room was simple and there weren't many monsters there.

**Hyper: The multiplayer character animations look great too. Is modifying the character models and
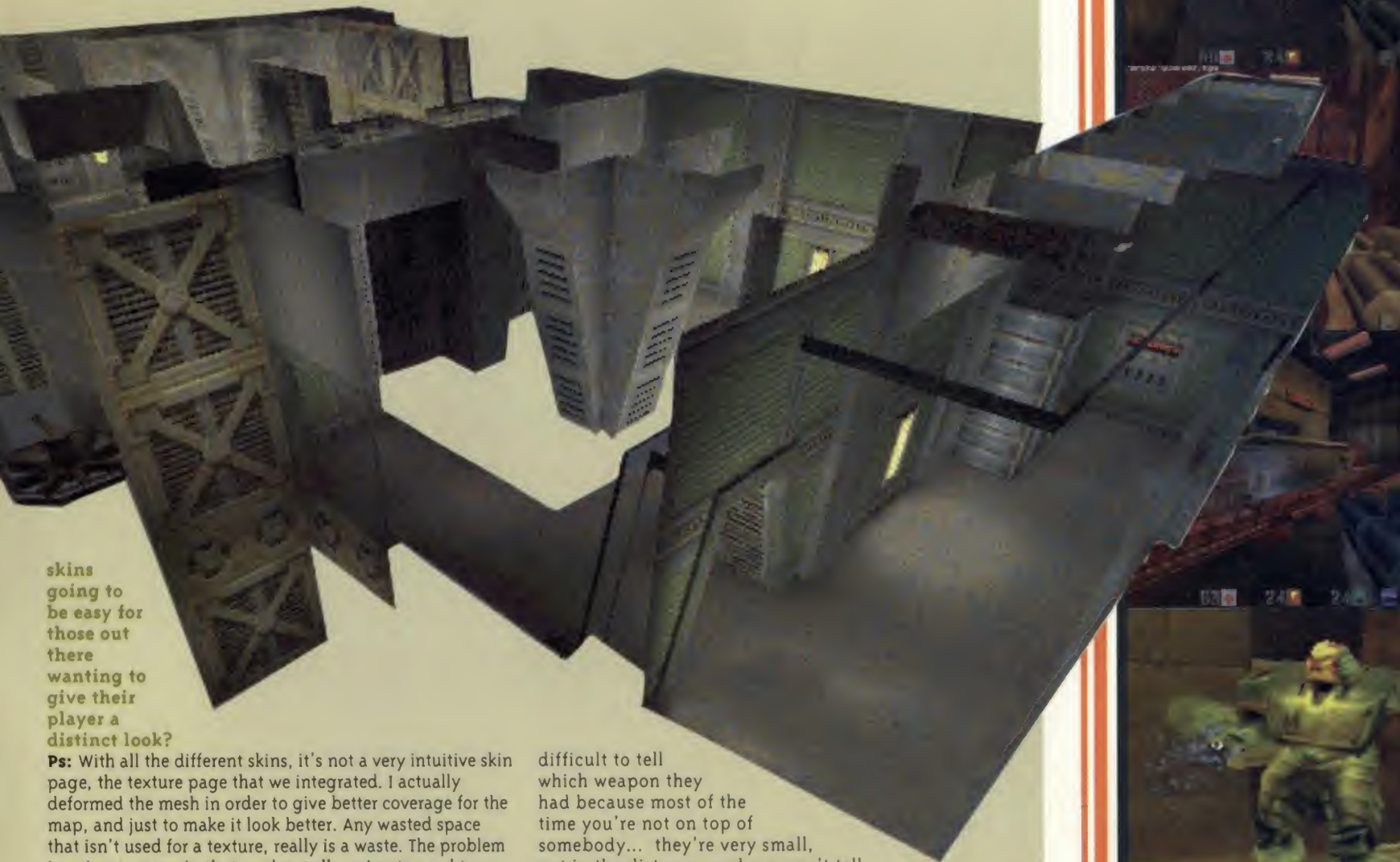
skins going to be easy for those out there wanting to give their player a distinct look?

Ps: With all the different skins, it's not a very intuitive skin page, the texture page that we integrated. I actually deformed the mesh in order to give better coverage for the map, and just to make it look better. Any wasted space that isn't used for a texture, really is a waste. The problem is going to come in that you're really going to need to tweak stuff quite a bit, because it looks bizarre looking at the base skin page because it's warped and stretched, but it looks right on the character. I paid a lot of attention to the face and the player characteristic, because I felt more people would be concerned with that aspect of the character than anything else so you can take a skin of yourself or someone you know, put it on the character and it will look good.

Hyper: Quake 2 features much larger levels than in Quake 1. What was the main thing done to the engine that made this possible?

Ps: John went back and redid all the code for the bsp and the way the engine actually calculates the visual space in the world and the cool thing about that is you definitely have more areas and larger areas. Also going back and forth between levels give you a really good sense of "place" as opposed to disjointed locations that you happen to go back and forth between.

Hyper: No animations for other players making weapon changes in deathmatch... How come?

Ps: That was a pretty hot topic of debate at id, and I wanted to do it, and the only thing that really prevented me from doing that was time, because it takes a LOT of time to do that. Also, John said that since Quake 2 is pretty demanding as it is on the CPU and hard drive, and adding more data would just slow it down that much more. That's a hell of a lot of data to be carrying around, because basically you'd have to have the same amount of data for all the character animations, of which there's about 550 to 600 frames for the male and the female characters, then you multiply that by 22, 11 weapons for each gender... And it adds up. To be honest, we did some tests on the idea, and it was very

difficult to tell which weapon they had because most of the time you're not on top of somebody... they're very small, out in the distance, and you can't tell what weapon they have anyway. John basically said the work it would take is just not worth the end result. You get a big data hit, and in deathmatch it's too hard to see the weapon clearly anyway, so the idea got dropped.

Hyper: What about the centred weapon setup. This takes the weapon off screen... So is it possible we may see a patch, or an update in the first mission pack?

Ps: One of the reasons the weapons look so good is the fact that we only show what needs to be shown in the geometry of the weapon. So that meant sacrificing the face you don't see... Essentially optimising stuff. The problem with having a weapon in the centre is that would just look really bad... It just wouldn't look right. Because looking at it top on you'd see the results of the optimisation and it just wouldn't be appealing at all. I dunno, maybe we could do that in the future, I don't think it'd take that much more work, but again, is it worth all the effort and is it so hard to live with the fact you don't have a weapon in the centre of your screen?

Hyper: How has the introduction of 3D accelerators affected the way an artist like yourself can work? And do you think we might be seeing updated models once Voodoo 2 chipsets become available?

Ps: John's already approached me about doing some of the models with double the polygon count and higher res textures, so that we can give it to the manufacturers of that kind of technology and let them show it off. It moves us to get our product out there, and that's nice, but it's also amazing to see that high quality getting out there... Unfortunately you have to have a monster system to run it, but we do support it fully.

Hyper: Do you think Quake 2 is going to set a new standard in 1st person shooters to the point where other companies may be heading back to the drawing board a bit?

Ps: Absolutely. The thing that you'll find with Quake 2 that other games don't have is the higher sense of production value. Everything about the game is solid, and what happens is an integrated piece, it's a rich experience, in a rich world. Up to this point, all these other companies have been competing with Quake. Quake and Quake 2 are different in the fact that the single player is much more rich. I think that even if it's just a couple of months I think it will push people back just because they're going to find it necessary to have some cinematics for one thing, and to have their levels much more broad and comprehensive.

Hyper: What was the general vibe in the production of Quake 2?

Ps: It was awesome. Towards the end, the last three weeks were pretty gruelling, but it was always upbeat and positive, and even when we worked for 30 hours at a time, it was exciting, because we know we have the most awesome game that id has ever done. It may take time, but eventually I think this game is going to be the biggest game in this genre. That kinda kept us going there was never ever point where it was like, "God this sucks", except the last, day maybe... heh, because I wanted to come down to Australia, I didn't want to have to be sitting there working on stuff.

Hyper: What was the thing about Quake 2 that you were most happy about in the end?

Ps: Personally I'm just happy with the way everything fits together. Everything compliments everything else. I mean the level design, the art, the programming, and sounds, are all of a very high standard. I've been making games now for six years, and of all the games I've worked on I've never seen the equity and quality across the board. The fact that we all gel together as a team kind of reflects in the game, that wasn't in Quake. I think we're really happy with the way the synergy of the team translated into the title.

Hyper: You guys obviously play your own game. Who's the killer player at id, and what control method do you guys use to play?

Ps: We all use mouse. I'd say Brandon James, American McGee, and Christian "Disruptor", I'd say those guys are usually the top three. Actually Adrian Carmack isn't that bad either, he kinda sneaks in there and kicks our butts once in a while.

Hyper: Do you think that the games industry is heading more towards getting it right nowadays as opposed to just getting it out?

Ps: No. Unfortunately through attrition you're going to see a lot of people die out, but there's still a lot of crap out there. I hate to say it, but with the impending success of Quake 2, you're going to see a lot of people trying to do that type of game. Fortunately we're not in the same boat of games like C&C and Dark Reign, because we don't have to compete with that many people because the engine that we use is not so readily obtainable, obviously because a lot

of the people that have been trying to compete with Quake have yet to release their product. It's not an easy thing to do to come up with a 3D first person shooter that's going to be commercially successful. I think we're pretty safe in terms of id being at the top of it's genre, but it's nice to see these other games coming out like Sin and Half Life, and stuff like that, because the things that they do that are successful just compel us to do some better things with the mission pack and with Trinity.

Hyper: Speaking of the mission pack... What else can they expect to see in the pack, and in patches in the future?

Ps: As soon as we get back we're going to start kicking around with ideas. We want to stick with the exciting, fast paced adventure that Quake 2 is, and do that with the Quake 2 Mission Pack, and of course do some more

cinematics, and extend Quake 2 into another adventure... add another chapter to it. That's why we ended it the way it is, there's still a lot of story to be told there. It's pretty wide open for a lot of things in the future.

Hyper: With the CD only needed for single player gaming, do you think it's possible you might end up losing a lot of sales to folks that will happily play deathmatch?

Ps: No. One thing that I've learned, especially being in the kind of high pirated market of Australia, is the fact that people respect id, because we take care of our fans. We're going to be giving away so much free things, just like we did with Quake, to support our game, that they respect that, and they know that whatever it takes to buy our product, it's going to be worth it in the end, because they're going to get so many things along with it in the end along with it. I don't think it's going to deter people, and I also don't believe it will take very long to have it cracked. It's just the nature of the beast, there are so many people out there that view piracy and cracking codes as a challenge, they'll always be there, but the integrity of our fan base will always remain there, even amongst those that are often pirating other stuff.

Hyper: Any advice for those readers out there that would like to get a break in working in video game development?

Ps: Sure. Obviously you have to have talent, but the most important thing is attitude. A lot of developers nowadays you'll get an average guy who can push the buttons and everything, but in the end you have to have attitude, and that's the thing great about being at id, is that everybody is so excited and so driven. Nobody sits on their ass and says, "Yeah, hey, we made it... Let's take it easy", it's always more like "Let's try and take it to the next level.". I fell that when I started out myself, that's what got me to where I'm at is the fact that almost everybody around me was kind of happy with where they were at, but I would always push myself. To develop a good resume, if you're an artist, do some art, and try to make it very realistic and look at what's popular out there. Try to hit the mark, target a developer. Id isn't going to be hiring unfortunately, but there's companies like Activision that have specific titles in the works, and if you come up with something along that line it's going to get their attention. Then once you've got your foot in the door, just go for it.

Hyper: You enjoy your stay out here?

Ps: Yeah, for sure. We'll be back, probably when we're ready to launch the first mission pack for Quake 2, so we'll see you all then!

TIM WILLITS: Lead Designer. His home grown Doom levels got him on the Doom Master levels, and he wound up at id.

Hyper: No specific deathmatch levels in the final release. Howcome?

TW: Well there's factors like time, as we had to get the game out. I think you'll find however that all of the single player maps deathmatch just fine, since deathmatching in Quake 2 has a far more level playing field with the weapon balance. It's not as critical like it was in Quake 1 to ensure that a level is deathmatch friendly, since the game by its nature now is more deathmatch friendly. We will be doing some specifically deathmatch levels soon, so we haven't abandoned the idea altogether.

Hyper: How has the new engine affected things like what you can do with your level design, and also things like R Speeds?

TW: In terms of what we can do for single player maps, it's great now that we can design with units in mind as opposed to an individual level, since you can go back and forth between different levels within the unit, and have actions in one level affect another level in the unit. As for the engine, the improvements are probably more noticable to me than the end user, since the way the vis is handled now is different to Quake was. A level will compile quicker when I make it now, but you won't see drastic changes in R speeds, but it is better. There are also things like the textures aren't stored in the bsp file now, so people can download maps they're joining into faster.

Hyper: Does using breakable walls slow a level down at all?

TW: No. The only person it slows down is the level designer if they want to go to the trouble of doing lots of fragmented sections of wall.

Hyper: What sort of machine do you use to make levels?

TW: I'm on a P2, with the main factor being I use video card that's got 16MB of RAM. So I'm usually not waiting for too long for something to happen.

Hyper: Are id planning on releasing the level editor to the public?

TW: No. Basically because to do so is just an involved process with licensing, and really, the people that made editors for Quake, like Worldcraft... they'll easily be able to make adjustments to their software so that it works for Quake 2. All we'd be doing is competing with the folks that made these editors for the public in the first place. Basically just the way some things are done with textures will need to be done a little differently, but otherwise it's really much the same for the most part.

Hyper: So do you think some of the new features are going to affect the way people construct deathmatch levels?

TW: Definitely. You can make any texture transparent, so people can see what's going on through glass and stuff like that. I'm sure people will be using the idea that you can see your opponent without being able to shoot them. There are parts in Quake 2 where this happens.

Hyper: What were you most happy about the way Quake 2 turned out?

TW: Definitely the way the whole product comes across as being far more consistant and solid than Quake was. This time around we've got a distinct plot that we could base the level design around, so you actually feel that you're progressing through a game as opposed to a bunch of mismatched levels. We were able to go all out and not make any comprimses on the levels.
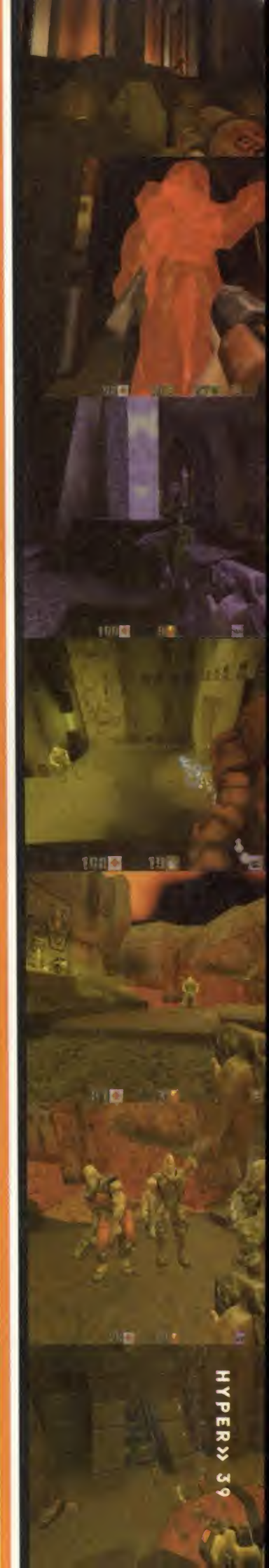
Enemy Zero

Strange name for a game... Ross Clarksmith *found a few more than zero enemies in this one.*

ONE OF THOSE DAYS YOU WISH YOU HADN'T GOT OUT OF BED

YOU MIND WAITING TILL I'M DRESSED?

NEVER LOOK INTO THE CAMERA

Babes 'n Babes 'n Babes. The market is being flooded with a new breed of good-looking babeliscious women who in various guises save the world from all sorts of evil. Enemy Zero enlists the help of a lovely young lady and press gangs her into saving her spaceship and the crew from a particularly nasty type of alien. The game starts when the heroine, Laura, is awoken from her stasis couch and told that she has to repair some of the ships functions that have mysteriously broken down. Laura then has the opportunity to walk around her cabin in search of items to help her solve the mysterious failure of the ship.

Laura continues to explore the ship to find light switches, computer consoles and most importantly a weapon. All of this movement on Laura's part takes place in TrueMotion full motion video. In fact a large part of the ship is dedicated to the adventure part of the game, all of which is viewed in FMV. Actually it is all the cabins that are stunningly created in detail during the video scenes. To get from room to room, Laura disappears, and the video becomes

rendered corridors and open areas under the control of a 3D engine. That's right just when you thought there was going to be a lot of wandering around trying to find cleverly hidden items, the designers pull out all the stops and whack the player smack bang in the middle of first person, Doom style bad guy hunt. The brainiacs at Warp have come up with a real winner in this idea. Having finally recognised that at some stage all adventure games can get tedious, the designers solved the boredom problem by whacking in a large serving of, gun toting alien butt kicking, gratuitously violent, gory bits. Woohaa!

Bring on the Bad Guys

The aliens that have infested the ship are a rather sneaky breed, but the humans have come up with a few little tools to help wipe them out. One tool that Laura just could not get by without is the VPS. The VPS is very similar to the motion detector in Aliens, except it reports on the whereabouts of the enemy with pings like sonar. The closer the alien, the louder the ping, and when Laura is facing the direction it is coming from the tone changes. So what is the big deal? Well, as it happens the aliens are virtually invisible until they are in Laura gobbling range, so to have a good chance of surviving Laura needs to have lined up the gun before she sees them. To hear the eyrie pings of the VPS as an alien bounds out of the darkness ready to much on poor Laura, adds bucket loads of atmosphere. With the curtains shut, the lights out, and the speakers cranked to eleven, Enemy Zero is guaranteed to make the hardiest player wish for a change of undies.

The game has three training levels, which from their barren look, seem like they were thrown in as an after thought. The background is only done with a green wire frame, and the targets are simply a red wire frame ball. Having said this, the VPS worked well, and it was a challenge to complete the levels and figure out the best use of the gun. The gun has some unique quirks that make it difficult to get used to. The trigger has to be pulled for the gun to charge, and when the trigger is released, the gun fires. The longer the trigger is pulled, the more charge and the better the damage, but if the gun becomes over charged it will not fire and you have to start again. This technique becomes all a matter of timing the steady rise in pings of the approaching alien, to the adequate charging of the gun.

Shoddy Equipment

There are three levels of difficulty, which are basically based around the gun. On the beginner level, the gun is found charged, and is more reliable. On the intermediate level, the

WARNING! AWFULLY SMALL PRINT BELOW!

gun is found uncharged and proves to be fairly unreliable, making it difficult to smear alien carcass over the walls. The difficulty also comes into play in the adventure side of things, with fewer clues being handed out on the higher settings.

The intro, a wildly wicked movie absolutely guaranteed to impress takes up most of the first disk. If you have a PC handy drop disk 0 into the CD-ROM for 83 bitmapped pictures of Laura getting up to all sorts of tricks.

On the whole Enemy Zero is a polished game that has something to offer to most players. The hard core first person shooters out there may find the adventure bits a pain, but the adventure gamers are sure to welcome a bit of quality gun fighting to blow off some of the frustration inherent in adventure titles.

GUESS WHICH MALEVOLENT ALIEN IS BEHIND DOOR NO.1

AND YOU WILL KNOW MY NAME IS THE LORD WHEN I LAY MY VENGENCE, UPON THEE

MY FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT . .
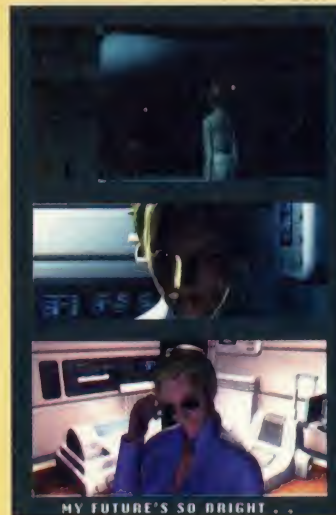
| AVAILABLE: **NOW** |
| CATEGORY: **ADVENTURE/1ST PERSON SHOOTER** |
| PLAYERS: **1** |
| PUBLISHER: **WARP** |
| PRICE: **$49.95** |
| RATING: **TBA** |

FREAKOMETER

Adventure game with loads of killing, that simple. Bring it on!

VISUALS
84

SOUND
79

GAMEPLAY
80

OVERALL
85

A great merger of two wicked game types. Better for the adventure gamer who wants a gun, than the action gamer who wants an adventure.

San Francisco Rush

David Wildgoose is always going on about his Bay Valley buddies, so we thought San Francisco Rush might be his cup of espresso.

I was hardly persuaded by this game when I first played it. The control seemed overly sluggish, cornering proved to be especially troublesome, and after testing a couple of tracks I found it tough to distinguish between them. Realising that I wasn't getting into the game at all, I set the cart aside for the day and went back to something less important, like studying for my exams.

Next day as I sat in front of the TV, already contemplating a 60-70% review for San Francisco Rush in my head, I experienced a revelation. Suddenly the controls began to make sense and I had settled on a favourite car. The tracks were slowly revealing their secrets to me, as I began experimenting with different routes and discovering numerous shortcuts. More than that, they were developing their own character and feel. Perhaps most significantly, however, was that after playing for at least ten hours (nonstop, other than the tiresome, but necessary, food and toilet breaks), I was convinced that I was playing one of the best racing games of the year. In fact, for me this is up there with Mario Kart 64 and TOCA (on PC/Playstation) as one of the best three.

HEY! WHO PUT SUPERGLUE ON THE WHEELS?

Long term addiction...

San Francisco Rush is not likely to grab you immediately, but give it time and, if you're anything like me, you'll be utterly addicted. Addicted to what? How about the most frighteningly fast racing I've yet seen. Honestly, there are some moments in this game that simply defy any sensible description. Once you pick up speed - and on some of the streets here that just PLUNGE straight down riotous hills, that's pretty close to breakneck speed - Rush becomes a searing, white knuckle ride. You'll practically hit escape velocity as your car is launched time and again over the most spectacular bumps and humps in any form of video gaming. Switch to the exhilarating front bumper view (a mere millimetre off the ground) and feel what it's like to pilot a bolt of lightning. There's never been anything like this.

Likewise, there's never been anything like these wickedly designed tracks either. Each of the six takes place in and around the streets of San Francisco (surprise!), even including a jaunt across the Golden Gate bridge. No doubt you've seen countless movies in which fat American cars scream down huge, long sweeps of road, swerving maniacally through corners, leaping over crests and slamming back onto the tarmac. Well, that's exactly what Rush is all about. Track 5 (yes, that is what it's called) features a hill and a straight so monstrous you may not touch the road for several blocks. The shortcuts are literally breathtaking. Slim tunnels rip right through the middle of skyscrapers and underneath apartment buildings. Conveniently placed ramps will hurl your car higher than many rooftops, even vaulting entire office blocks is not out of the question. One particular section requires you to drive along the sides of a gully - you have to get almost perpendicular to the ground to make it through! Another one sends you smashing into peoples' backyards and destroying at least one washing line. My favourite, however, involves squeezing between the wheels of a semitrailer, hitting the ramp on the other side, arcing through the air onto a rooftop, hitting another ramp on the roof itself and landing some twenty storeys below in a park, before crossing the start-finish line. You see more air in this game than you do in most flight-sims! Even the main route (you know, the one you're supposed to be using!) is incredibly exciting.

Quality not quantity?

Each track can boast plenty of beautiful, flowing corners and esses interspersed with fearsome ninety degree turns heading up forty-five degrees hills. You'll also find numerous forks in the road, and even the odd T-junction. Or worse, in some places the road disappears completely. In fact, the only disappointing aspect is that there are just a mere six tracks. That they can all be raced Backwards and/or Mirrored (making 24 in total) goes

some way to compensate - they are quite, sometimes radically, different this way - but I still believe a few more wouldn't have hurt. They all look very similar, too. Lots of familiar buildings with the odd green or foresty bit isn't really enough, no matter how lovely or how in keeping with the San Francisco atmosphere they are.

The sound effects are fairly average and the music (bar the highly amusing high score table tune) is only just bearable. The Circuit option (a championship, basically) could have been better structured. I think 24 tracks is too long, especially considering the length of some of the tracks themselves. The Practice option is excellent, though. Here, you are given 1000 seconds to learn the track, test shortcuts, and hunt for keys. Collecting the latter will enable access to some hidden cars (including an F1) and maybe - hopefully! - another track.

I don't want to finish on a negative, so I ought to mention that the AI is good and credible. The computer cars DO make errors, they DO try to take each other off, they DO have shocking accidents (just like me) and they still manage to beat me most of the time. Perfect.

I THINK WE HIT A BUMP

SELECT TRACK

TRACK 4 BACKWARD & MIRRORED
Lap Distance 4.3 KM
Elevation Change 103 M
Difficulty MEDIUM

FREAKOMETER

Doesn't have the instant hook of Mario Kart, but give it a chance and then - Wow!

MULTIPLAYER
Split-screen drops a couple of frames, but you'll be having too much fun to notice.

VISUALS
85

SOUND
63

GAMEPLAY
92

OVERALL
91

The N64 does have some very good racing games, but, even if you've got one or two of them already, this is too damn good to overlook. Absolutely brilliant stuff.

You Mean It's OK to Crash?!

Another cool, but somewhat unusual feature is the way you restart after totalling your car in a blazing fireball. Instead of being put back on the track where you crashed, you are returned to the race position you held before the crash. If it happened while you were leading by 2 secs, you restart roughly 2 secs in front again. The catch being that because you now have to pick up speed all over gain, by the time you regain it several cars will have passed you anyway. Speed is definitely what this game is all about.

So, you are penalised, but in a different manner than in every other racing game I've seen. Does it work? Yes, I think so. It certainly makes for closer racing and that's always a good thing as far as I'm concerned. There's also an option to have any major crash put you out of the race completely, if you want to make it ridiculously difficult for yourself.

Mace -The Dark Ages

The Nintendo 64 is still yet to prove itself in the 3D fighting arena. Dan Toose *checks to see if Mace is a hot new contender.*

HE REALLY SHOULD STOP USING THAT THIGHMASTER

3D fighting games now have a very big following. Just go into any video arcade and there'll always be someone playing either Tekken 3, Virtua Fighter 3, or Street Fighter EX. This genre is also very popular in the home console scene, with games like Tekken 2 and Soul Blade being huge sellers for the PlayStation, and Virtua Fighter, Fighting Vipers, and Fighters Megamix all being successful on the Saturn.

The Nintendo 64 needs a game in the same league as these greats, and basically due to a lack of competitors, Mace could prove to do quite well. Mace has a plot... A bunch of evil sods called "The Covenant of Seven" are under the thumb of Asmodeus, who wields the Mace of Tanis, a stupidly powerful weapon. Not only do the seven want the power for themselves, but a couple of do-gooders want to kill Asmodeus before things get out of hand, so the game focuses on the mindless slaughter that comes from this medieval fantasy soap opera.

The good, the bad and the ugly

Mace varies greatly in quality from one aspect to another. There are definite pros and cons in the visual side of things. The characters are very detailed, and the overall effect of the modelling and texture mapping looks great. Not only are the characters extremely detailed, but the backgrounds also look like a lot of work has gone into making them seem like unique and realistic environments. Perhaps all of this is at some sort of cost though, because the character animation is no where near as fluid as games such as Soul Blade and Virtua Fighter 2. It's actually choppy to the point where it can be difficult to tell exactly what's going on with the various attacks being thrown around. The general frame rate of the game isn't particularly flattering either, not being quite up to par with your average Nintendo 64 game coming out nowadays.

The music in Mace is pretty much as one has come to expect from a nasty medieval fighting game, with distorted guitars pumping out some pseudo-metal nonsense that some people love, and others hate. The voice effects have too much of a reverb effect put upon them to be able to make them easily discernable. All the effects could be described as average, neither being noticeably good or bad.

Oohh... It's so stiff...

Mace has one a major downfall in that the controls feel as stiff as a sailboard. For starters the Nintendo hand controller is just not good for fighting games that require use of half circle and quarter circle moves to be pulled off. The analogue controller has too much give, and the d-pad doesn't have enough. Trying to perform a move that involves doing a half circle plus any other direction is a complete pain in the arse. This also may be due in part to the game, as it seemed that pressing back, down, forward worked, where sweeping the pad around in a clean circle didn't... bizarre.

Besides the physical control being sluggish, the actual way attacks are linked together is generally kind of stiff too. Players who master stringing everything together will be able to get some big combos happening, but it just doesn't feel as good as a game like Tekken 2 or Virtua Fighter 2. There is an exception, Ragnar, who looks like he'd be one of the slowest characters, seems to be able to easily combo his opponent to death without stopping with ease.

There are some cool features about the gameplay which have to be noted. The arenas aren't of a standard shape, and for the first time in a console fighting game, aren't flat! It only really affects combat in very obvious ways, unlike a game like Virtua Fighter 3 which accounts for subtleties, but it's still a good thing to see. Also, instead of having ring outs, some of the arenas have areas that cause you damage, so being knocked out of the ring doesn't end the round... straight away at least.

The best way to sum up Mace is that it's not a great 3D fighter, but it's quite well suited to MK players, so it may be a winner at the cash register. Those that like their 3D fighting intricate, responsive, and realistic will probably prefer the VF, Tekken, and Soul Blade games over this. The best fighting game for the N64 so far... but we'd better see better sometime soon.

JUST HOPE HE HASN'T HAD A BAD DAY

ANTI-GRAVITY ARENA

KA-CHUNG

5 HIT COMBO!

Mace-alities

The Mortal Kombat series was made popular by the ability to do all sorts of insidious things to your opponent once you've knocked the stuffing out of them. Mace, being another Midway game, had the MK fans in mind, and to call the fatalities in this game anything short of funky would be a crime. Unfortunately performing most of the fatalities is extremely hard with a N64 controller, and it's not like you can just try them in practice mode. Here's the coolest of the fatalities... Al Rashid, slicin' and dicin'.

FREE START

TAKESHI

EXECUTION!

AVAILABLE:	**NOW**
CATEGORY:	**3D FIGHTING**
PLAYERS:	**1-2**
PUBLISHER:	**GTI**
PRICE:	**TBA**
RATING:	**MA15+**

FREAKOMETER

It's the kind of game that will amuse the not so hardcore, and the fatality freaks.

MULTIPLAYER
Okay. On the up side, your opponent will have to struggle with the controls just like you, so it's fair.

VISUALS
79

SOUND
67

GAMEPLAY
72

OVERALL
75

The best 3D fighter on the N64 so far, but that's not saying too much at this stage.

Extreme G

Bike things going along a track at a great rate of knots... Gee, that's Extreme. Ren Hoek *pulls on the leathers.*

THE LOCAL COUNCIL REALLY NEEDS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE COLOUR OF THESE ROADS

TRIPPY SHIT

CAREFUL OR YOU'LL WIPEOUT... HAHA

There's no doubt that Wipeout paved the way for much of the Playstation's early success as a video game machine. It had smooth, fast, and extremely detailed graphics with great original gameplay that captured the attention of many game players, and assured a long line of steady clones to follow on other consoles.

Considering this, it was a sure bet that a clone would appear on the N64, and it has in the form of Extreme G. So the question is, does Extreme G go one better that the Playstation's ultimate racer? Or will it quietly slip away as a typical Wipeout wanna-be.

Wipeout wanna-be.

Rather than just using identical craft to those hover-style vehicles seen in Wipeout, Extreme G allows the racer to get behind the wheel of a futuristic high powered racing cycle. Comparisons with the cycles seen in the Disney's classic movie 'Tron' are inevitable, but to be honest this is no bad thing. The fact that the cycles are stuck to the track allows them to reach insane speeds that far exceeds that seen on most racers today. In fact, the speed of the

1st   8:14:85   193

2nd   8:87:81   198

YOU COULD ALWAYS STOP FOR A GAME OF CHESS

game will often result in extremely tense gameplay, as the graphics move by at such a startling rate that you'll need lighting reflexes just to stay on the track at top speed. Roller coaster-like dips and loops, jumps, 90 degree inclines and full 360 degree rotating tracks are some of the tricks Extreme G will throw at you in an effort to dazzle and confuse you so your opponents slip over the finish line first. Like Wipeout, the game also allows use of various missiles and assorted weapons that you use to slow your opponents down, but they never quite seem as effective or visually impressive as those seen in Wipeout.

The cycles emit a great noise that sounds something like a nuclear reactor powering up, really giving them a sense of

4th   8:50:66   258

WHO'S DRIVING? STEVIE WONDER?

power as they hurtle around the track. Furthermore, this sound gets louder and louder as the cycles reach top speed (which rarely happens due to the difficulty of the game), eventually becoming a high-pitched screaming sound that perfectly complements the game's top speeds.

The tracks are an original bunch, consisting of mostly barren futuristic scenery that initially fails to impress. Starting in a desert landscape and later progressing to underground tunnels through volcanoes and large forests, the tracks thankfully get better the further you get into the game. The volcano track is particularly impressive, with huge bursts of flame leaping up on each side of the track, instant death is guaranteed if you manage to lose control and fly off into the lava below.

The need for speed

The graphics in Extreme G are somewhat disappointing when compared to other racers on the system. As mentioned, originally they are rather drab, with that ugly effect 'fog' always looming over the track ahead taking a great deal of visual appeal from the game. The lack of colours early in the game also don't help in making it look realistic or believable either, but the game's sensation of speed partly makes up for these graphical downfalls. Speed is obviously the game's greatest asset, and combining this with the loops, dips and jumps, Extreme G offers one hell of a visual speed-ride that is always thrilling and often sickening, especially when the screen fully rotates three or four times.

This speed, though, can be the game's downfall to a certain extent, as you'll often feel like you have too much speed at your disposal, causing you to smash into the walls and lose valuable places. Beginners will find themselves constantly banging into the walls, with the fog in the distance hiding the tracks upcoming corners and bends making driving at high speeds even more difficult. This fog effect and the games high speeds make learning the courses absolutely necessary in order to progress through the game. Given time and practice, though, the game can become quite rewarding, as it offers a huge learning curve that, like Wipeout, can see you flying through each course at obscene speeds.

Thankfully a multiplayer option has been included that will keep players happy long after they have beaten the single player game. Up to four players can battle it out, albeit with the usual loss of graphical detail and quality. New to this game is the three player option that allows player 1 to have half of the screen, while players 2 and 3 have quarters, and this feature will undoubtedly cause many fights over who has the player 1 pad.

Overall, as a Wipeout clone, Extreme G fails to hit the mark. There's no doubt that the game is very playable when given time to adjust to its controls and the courses, it's just that many newcomers will probably not be tempted by the game's graphics and initial gameplay. But for fans of the genre that are looking out for the N64 equivalent of Wipeout, it's well worth a look.

LITTLE BIKES ON LONG ROADS

AVAILABLE: **NOW**
CATEGORY: **RACING**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
PRICE: **TBA**
RATING: **G**

FREAKOMETER

Extremely hard and a real patience tester, but lacking depth.

MULTIPLAYER
You have to love this type of game.

VISUALS
78

SOUND
75

GAMEPLAY
75

OVERALL
75
Good, but could have been much better. Since it's essentially a clone, it needed to better its predecessor, but it doesn't quite get there.

Bomberman 64

Everyone knows that you can learn to make bombs on the internet...
so Eliot Fish got some practice in before playing this one...

Mission complete

HOT ENOUGH FOR YA? NERDS IN HELL.

Wha-hey! Bomberman finally makes it's way to the N64, and we haven't half been hanging out for this one. The Bomberman series is so well loved amongst gamers everywhere, that the thought of what the N64 version could hold in store has kept us all wobbly-kneed in anticipation. Ok, so here it is. In past Bomberman games, the focus has definitely been on the multiplayer side to the game, as opposed to the single player experience which was up until now only so-so. Well, much like Diddy Kong Racing is a stronger single-player game over Mario Kart 64, Bomberman 64 is the best single-player Bomberman game yet... though it's turned out that the multiplayer game is a bit lacking. Strange but true.

Bummer man!

Bomberman 64 now has an Adventure mode with each level in glorious 3D. No more of this top-down perspective, this game is played in a fully rotatable and explorable world. Much like Super Mario 64 uses those small yellow C buttons to rotate the camera angle and zoom in and out of the action, Bomberman 64 allows you to have a look at what's around you from any perspective. Whilst this is necessary due to the 3D nature of the game to see around the architecture, it does become a little frustrating having to continuously alter your playing angle. Every two seconds your character will be in a situation where you yet again have to rotate the camera. I found that you couldn't really play the game from one perspective for anything longer than 10-20 seconds - you can't help but wander behind columns, trees, blocks or stairs...

Your little Bomber dude is quite versatile though, and you can place, kick, pick up and throw bombs at whatever is pissing you off. When you pick up one of your bombs, you can pump it up by pressing the A button and it becomes somewhat larger and more deadly. It's required in the single player game simply to damage things which wouldn't normally be affected by a regular bomb, but in the multiplayer game it can be chaos! Heh heh! Inflated bombs are most useful against the bosses in the game, and before too long you'll be well rehearsed in pumping up and

SPRITES GOING OFF

BOMBERMAN LIGHTING HIS FARTS AGAIN

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL THIS IS EITHER

HYPER » *Quake 2*

Slugs
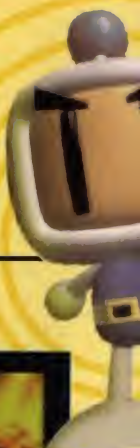
HE MUST HAVE HAD AN UNHAPPY CHILDHOOD

throwing your bombs. Without this skill your little Bomber guy will bite it. Each level contains a number of diamonds for you to uncover, and they're usually hidden in obscure, hard-to-uncover places. But this gives the game longevity, in terms of the more dedicated amongst you committing themselves to finding every single one in the game!

Boom boom shake the room

When you first enter a level, you'll be slowly coached into how the game operates in the new 3D environment. You'll learn all important new moves like bomb-jumping. Some walkways will be inaccessible unless you carefully lob a bomb into the gap and use to it launch yourself to safety on the other side. Kicking bombs into holes to trigger switches, or placing bombs under loose panels to give you a quick elevator ride are all tricks that you'll learn to use. You may also have to lower bridges by bombing them, or you can experiment by bombing all sorts of things to receive powerups. Unlike the earlier Bomberman games, this time around your character can kick and lift bombs from the word go, so finding powerups is less of an incentive. It must also be said that in battle mode, one of it's flaws is the fact that the battle starts with every player equipped with these abilities. Gone are the days of breaking through to the other players and finding powerups on the

way... now the playing areas are already open and as soon as the whistle is blown, it's very likely that you will be blown... to bits. The battle mode has gone from devious and hilarious (in the old SNES days) to fast and clumsy here in B64. Hey, it's still fun, but you'll grow tired of it quickly as it's design is no longer sympathetic to players with different tactics. It's now a case of stunning your opponent with a kicked bomb and running around like crazy. The thrill simply doesn't last.

In the Adventure Mode, your objective is to conquer four different worlds to unlock access to the final big bad boss level. Each of the first four worlds is based around the elements. The first world you get to explore is made up of waterfalls, dams and rivers and later in the game you'll find yourself struggling with ice and fire. Most of the levels in Bomberman 64 require you to be quite patient, as this is definitely still very much a puzzle game with action bits. Half you time is spent figuring out how to get from A to B, and most of the enemies are just there to get in your way. If you have the time to get fully involved in a game, then you can't go wrong with investing in Bomberman 64 - it'll take you ages to get through. But the game's pace is totally reliant on how clever you are, and some of you may wander around unable to figure out what to do next. The cool bosses make the effort worthwhile though, so if you stick with it you'll be rewarded.

EAT BOMB YOU LITTLE FREAK

| AVAILABLE: **NOW** |
| CATEGORY: **ACTION** |
| PLAYERS: **1-4** |
| PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** |
| PRICE: **$59.95** |
| RATING: **G** |

FREAKOMETER

Must love odd puzzle games and have good pad skills.

MULTIPLAYER
Less like classic Bomberman and more like Puyo Puyo. You may tire of it quickly.

VISUALS
83

SOUND
75

GAMEPLAY
83

OVERALL
83
Another good Bomberman game, but not the 64-bit masterpiece it had the potential to be.

Bushido Blade

Usually seen pacing the office with a long metallic ruler held menacingly in hand, Dan Toose always is the obvious choice for any game involving a flash of the blade.

Squaresoft have ventured into the arena of PlayStation fighting games before, with Tobal No.1 being their first effort, and what an effort it was. Square went about making a "non-extreme", realistic fighting game, and Tobal No.1 was in this regard a great success. Unfortunately Tobal wasn't a big hit outside of Japan, and as a result Tobal No.2 did not see a release anywhere else in the world. Now Squaresoft have decided to push the scope of realism to the limit by introducing the idea that if you get hit hard enough, you don't get up. Enter Bushido Blade, a sword-fighting extravaganza that attempts to deliver something more akin to a simulation than a fighting game.

What's generally the one thing that's the same in the way a 3D fighting game looks? The arenas. Sure, they all depict different places, but they're almost always just a square section of ground that you're encouraged not to leave. The exception is the Tekken games, where there's no boundary, but the arena is still just a large flat area. In real life, fighting can be largely affected by the environment, and Squaresoft have really played up on this in Bushido Blade. Instead of a duking it out in a square marked on the ground, you fight in very realistic environments, and can move about and interact with them just like you would in real life. The best example of this is the bamboo forest arena, which goes as far as having bamboo trees come crashing down when you swipe

MY HUNDREDTH KILL . . . SOME LIFE INSURANCE AGENCY IS GONNA BE PISSED

HAL, MERELY A FLESH WOUND

REXONA, IT WON'T LET YOU DOWN

BLADE-WEILDING PSYCHOPATH-CAM

your sword through them. This level also introduces the idea that the ledge in the background actually leads somewhere. If you want to climb up to higher ground, then you just do it!

The characters themselves are superbly animated, although the extra detail in the backgrounds and the amount of textures in memory affects the frame rate a bit, so it's not as smooth as a game like Tobal, but still looks great. Particular attention has been paid to making the characters react to being wounded in a very lifelike manner.

Ch-ching!!

The game even sounds realistic, with swords making that metal-to-stone chink noise when you miss your opponent and hit the neighbouring wall. The absence of music is far from being a problem, because this game is not about action. The general vibe of the game is very serious (except when someone dies in a rather silly fashion), and the lack of music just emphasises this further.

The gameplay in Bushido Blade has definite positives and negatives. First the positives. The game truly looks at sword fighting as an art. There are eight blades to choose from, ranging from the rapier, through to the naginata, each having their own set of moves. You also choose from one of six characters, whose moves don't vary, but their speed and strength do, which directly affects how they play. For example, you wouldn't want to use the broadsword If you were playing as the most light-weight character. Not only does each weapon have varying moves, but also has different stances to give you access to all those moves, which do make perfect sense. Performing an uppercut slash requires your sword to start from a lower point, so there's no immediate option to do one when you're holding your sword above your head. The next cool thing about Bushido

Blade is something that people have begged for in a fighting game for years... injury that affects gameplay. Try running around after someone swings a sledgehammer into your leg... not easy is it? Bushido Blade accounts for this, with limbs becoming useless once they've taken a sufficient blow from a weapon. This results in some very cool battles where the two opponents are both on one knee, practically crawling towards one another whilst desperately trying to land that last telling blow. You can even do things like flick sand in your opponent's face, and fight lying down.

I'm with stupid...

The downsides are there too unfortunately. For all the game's realism, the computer opponents are quite stupid. If you run past your opponent, there's a turning slash move you can perform which is very effective, and very easy to land a hit with. The other problem is that parrying is quite difficult, which is really quite annoying considering it's such an important element of real sword fighting. This encourages you to constantly be on the offensive, which is okay, but really should have allowed for those that want to block like mad. Parrying is not impossible, but it really requires a lot of guessing with the timing, as pressing parry is only effective if you do so instantly after the enemy attacks. It's not like you can prepare a parry.

For those that don't have friends, the single player mode may disappoint a little. There is a story mode, which quite frankly is over all too quick, and a challenge mode where you fight your way through 100 consecutive opponents, which isn't as hard as it sounds. One very cool thing though is POV mode, where you fight first person. Sure, it's awkward and confusing, but it's a novelty and a half. Where Bushido Blade really shines is as a multiplayer game for fighting game freaks who want a game with more depth and realism. It may be said that for long term appeal, you need to have this in mind.

As a prospective purchase, Bushido Blade is a dream come true for those that want a true to life fighting experience. However, keep in mind that you're going to need a like minded friend to ensure you get what you want from this game, as a little practise will have you finishing the game in no time. Not for those just after "a bit of fun". Expect this game to be the start of a different breed of 3D fighting games.

AVAILABLE:	February
CATEGORY:	3D Fighting
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	SQUARESOFT
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	MA15+

FREAKOMETER

Requires getting used to, and a desire to play a sim-like fighting game.

MULTIPLAYER

Great. Far more intense than watching your buddy's energy meter go down bit by bit. You've got to love this stuff though.

VISUALS
86

SOUND
82

GAMEPLAY
84

OVERALL
84

Not so much a fighting game as a fighting-sim. Very deep as a multiplayer game, but not quite enough there for the loners.

Shadow Master

Psygnosis have been on a bit of a roll lately, so Eliot Fish put this one under the microscope to find it looked kinda funny...

Psygnosis have earned quite a reputation amongst gamers as a developer of top notch quality PlayStation and PC games, from the awesome Wipeout to the quirky fun of Overboard. The past six months have brought us some fantastic shoot 'em up games from Psygnosis - G-Police and Colony Wars have both had us grinning from ear to ear. But all of a sudden Shadowmaster appears on the scene and it proves that everything they touch certainly isn't always gold. Both the visuals and the sound in Shadowmaster quite simply don't shape up to recent Psygnosis standards and the control system needs major tweaking too. The game is chock-full of great ideas, interesting levels and nicely designed creatures, but the overall look, sound and gameplay leaves a lot to be desired. Shadowmaster comes across more like an afterthought than a well planned and executed piece of software, and it leaves you with the feeling that they were unsure wether this was a vehicle shoot 'em up or a 1st person shooter.

Shit-Fight

The first thing that struck me about Shadowmaster was how poorly the game is presented. The cutscenes are token, the options are at a bare minimum and the sound effects are some of the lamest I've heard in quite a long time. Your craft's weapons are barely audible and the environments offer you nothing more than the odd belch of a monster. This made me feel so removed from what

HOLD ONTO YOUR POLYGONS
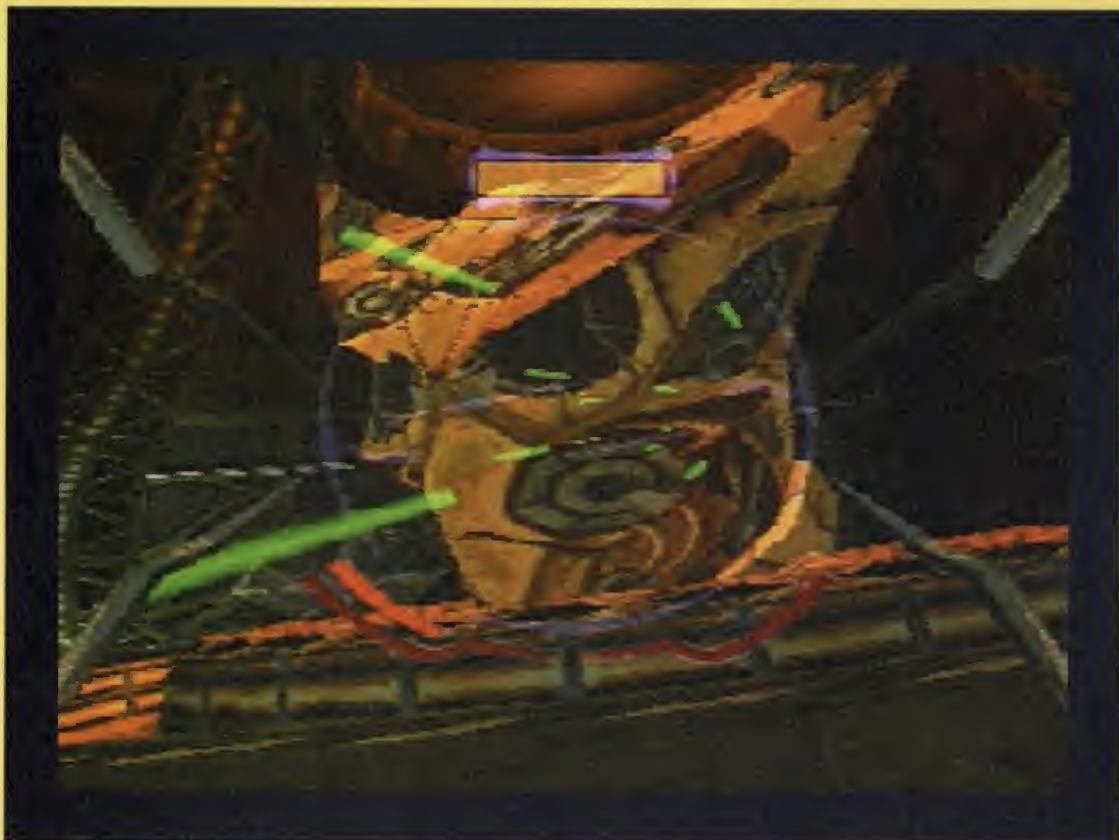
I was doing, I was never once absorbed in the game. The music is suitably "hard" though, but some more atmosphere would have been nice. The poor sound coupled with the messy graphics simply fail to suck you into the game's world, which is a god awful shame because it's really obvious how much effort went into the design. The overall effect is of an underlying blandness, and you can't help but be left unmotivated to play. There are some nice touches to the visuals, like the lighting effects, but we've seen this done better in other titles and your weapons never seem like they're actually causing any real damage. It just looks a little bit dated in comparison to the other shooters recently released (like Colony Wars and G-Police).

Shadowmaster has a bit of a Tunnel B1 feel to it, in terms of how your craft manoeuvres. You seem to glide along the floor, and unlike most first-person shooters, when you push forward your momentum carries you regardless of whether you stop pushing up on the control pad. Though you get used to it, you'll still find yourself flying into walls and constantly putting your craft in reverse just to stop yourself from flying into the legs of a monster. Strafing around corners is insanely difficult with this gliding craft, and strafing in a first-person shooter should not have to be difficult. Your craft just feels too unresponsive, and the low to the ground perspective can make it incredibly disorientating when you're in the middle of a shit-fight. A more intuitive control system would have improved things immeasurably, as some of the game's graphics are hard enough to comprehend as it is, let alone when you're struggling to point your craft in the right direction. It must be said however that the peripheral support from Shadowmaster is a welcome rarity to those owning twin analogue sticks or dual analogue pads.

It is also quite easy to get stuck on corners, and when backing away from monsters you find yourself suddenly catching on some glitchy wall. When you do finally kill them, the health crystals they leave behind only appear for a matter of seconds and by the time you get to them, they've vanished. Monsters also have a bad habit of "popping up" in long corridors, which is the sort of surprise you don't really appreciate.

open doors, kill monsters and get to the end. In some cases, you'll have to solve a minor puzzle of some sort which is usually made up of shooting a variety of switches to open a door somewhere or raise a bridge. As a PlayStation game, Shadowmaster is pretty average, but supposedly the PC version has a multiplayer option which could be good fun. All up, Shadowmaster is a bit of an anomaly from the usually consistent Psygnosis team, failing to be the cohesive game the excellent design here deserves. Like any first-person shooter, there's some fun to be had, but honestly there are much better examples of the genre around.

Dark and gloomy...

Visually the game swings from looking incredibly cool to looking downright horrible. Monsters explode in a mess of polygon shards (they all die the same way), which reminds you that this is just an outright shooter. Some of the bosses look awesome though, and you'll encounter all sorts of bizarre lizard-mech hybrids and more arachnoid enemies than you'll ever want to see in your entire life. If spiders give you the chills, then you'll die of a cardiac arrest three minutes into the game - and they only get bigger! The environments also swing between horrible messy polygon mazes to lovely techy-looking alien surroundings. Some of the worlds are unfortunately limited in their colour scheme and discerning between switches and wall textures, doorways and walls is sometimes beyond frustrating. It's one thing wanting to create a dark, gloomy world and another leaving the gamer lost amongst a samey, dull environment. The story behind the game is fairly irrelevant considering that most of levels simply require you to

HE'LL TURN HIMSELF INTO CALAMARI!

SURE HE'S UGLY, BUT LOOK AT THE SIZE OF HIS GUN

| AVAILABLE: **NOW** |
| CATEGORY: **FIRST PERSON SHOOTER** |
| PLAYERS: **1** |
| PUBLISHER: **PSYGNOSIS** |
| PRICE: **$89.95** |
| RATING: **G** |

FREAKOMETER

Pretty straightforward action. Confusing to play sometimes though.

VISUALS
75

SOUND
59

GAMEPLAY
70

OVERALL
74
Not quite the pearler that we've come to expect from Psygnosis lately, but if you're a die-harder shoot 'em up fan that likes them hard, maybe worth a look.

Total Drivin'

We thought we'd reviewed every single driving game in existence last issue,
but Eliot Fish found another new one on the shelf...

POS 3
ROBERTS +0.0km
LUMIERE -0.2km
LAP 2e
2:07:96

Total Drivin

ABOUT TO BE FLATTENED CAM

IVANOV +0.2km
MORGEN -0.5km
1: 1:22:00
2: 0:26:00
1:57:36
1:22:00

LONG EASY RIGHT . . . WHOOPS WRONG GAME . . .

TURN AROUND

UNLIKELY STUFF
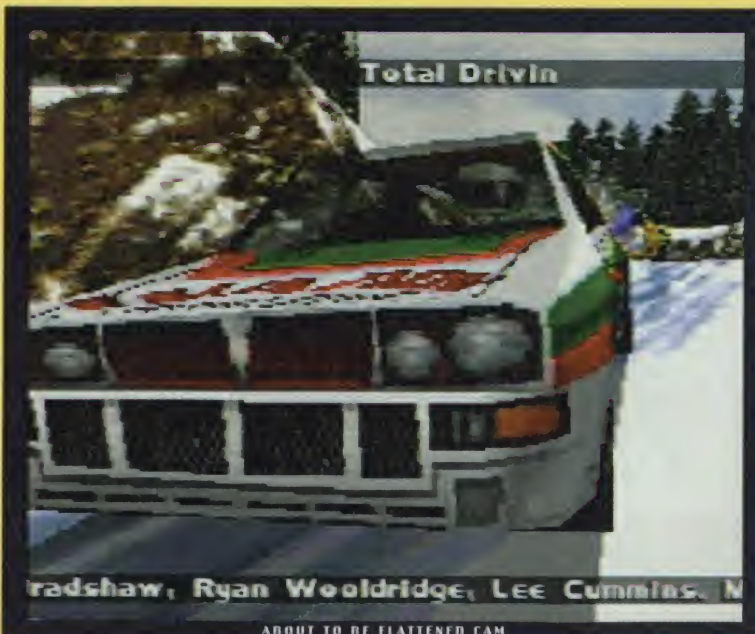
I HOPE YOU LIKE EXHAUST FUMES

DON'T CRASH YOUR PENIS SUBSTITUTE

DOING IT WITH FRIENDS

Well, you've certainly got your hands full if you're a driving game nut, because there's now more bloody car games available than ever before! Just about every racing style has been catered for, and now Total Drivin' hits the scene offering you a spin in a whole array of different cars. From rally cars to buggies, Total Drivin' (also known as Grand Tour Racing '98 overseas) takes you on a world-wide tournament to see if you're able to master your machine in a variety of different environments. There's a lot on offer here, and whilst this game will keep any petrol head happy for hours, the actual driving model isn't very pretty and if you're serious about how realistic your racing games are, then Total Drivin' may not be for you.

Suckin' back the fumes...
The racing kicks off in Scotland, and it's extremely reminiscent of Sega Rally's countryside courses, with wiggly turns and mud fields. Come first, and you then race Scotland 2 which is

rella: Mark McClumpha. Artwork by: Anthony Thorn

IF YOU CAN'T WIN . . . DON'T LET YOUR MATE!

the same course in reverse at sundown. Beat this and you progress to the initial course again, only this time you're racing through a storm... And so on. The game takes you all around the planet, and you'll get to try out a variety of different tracks in Hong Kong, Easter Island (cool!), Egypt and other places where people don't speak English and eat weird food. The different countries require different vehicles, so for instance in Scotland it's rally cars all the way, Moscow equips you with the sports cars and in Egypt you'll be off-roading in 4X4 buggies! Each country holds a total of six tracks (though most are mirror tracks and changes in the weather), giving you a grand total of something like 36 tracks to race on. All the circuits are nice and long, with a very nice change in scenery as you race. You'll be taken over bridges, through forests, across beaches and through villages and on the later levels there are more obstacles on the track and more open environments. Everything looks quite pretty, and there is the odd environmental effect like splashing water when you drive through puddles.

Handles like a canine
The car handling in Total Drivin' is it's biggest flaw. Basically, it feels quite horrible. You're given the usual car options, but the main difference is that you're equipped with two "hard turn" buttons. When you get to a sharp bend, you use these to powerslide your way around it which more often than not makes you oversteer. When you try to conquer the turns as you usually would in any other car game, the car tends to be rather unresponsive and the brakes hardly bite at all. It feels like you're driving with a flat tire, or your driver is so fat he can't turn the wheel 'cause his stomach is in the way. It's almost like Ocean couldn't decide whether to make this a purely arcade game or a more realistic sim and what we've ended up with is something which is not really very good at either. If you want a realistic driving game, then TOCA is the one and if you're after arcade action then the answer is Test Drive 4. Maybe Total Drivin' is for those of you who don't know what they want, and would like a little bit of everything. One bonus, is the inclusion of not only a split-screen two-player mode, but Total Drivin' allows you to link together two PlayStations and go at it in four-player mode! A very nice addition for those of you who can actually get the friends and the bucks together. As a single-player game, Total Drivin' falls short of being great and ends up being an OK racer.

AVAILABLE: **NOW**

CATEGORY: **RACING**

PLAYERS: **1-4**

PUBLISHER: **OCEAN**

PRICE: **$89.95**

RATING: **G**

FREAKOMETER
Straightforward stuff, the game feels a bit too easy in fact.

MULTIPLAYER
Always a welcome addition, and probably where the game's longevity lies.

VISUALS
83

SOUND
74

GAMEPLAY
72

OVERALL
74
A game with great potential which is ruined by the ugly driving model.

Steel Reign

Someone told us that David Wildgoose drives a Volvo, so we figured he'd be the most likely cantidate for reckless tank commando.

The camera swoops down between twin skyscrapers to survey the brutal carnage. Rumbling towards us along the rubble-strewn main street is a filthy grey tank. It does not stop at the malfunctioning traffic light as it passes beneath us and turns around the corner. Panning to the right we gain a glimpse down a dimly lit side alley and the unsettlingly quiet street it leads into. Moments later there's an almighty explosion, a flash of blinding white, buildings shake and the debris of shredded wheels, torn car doors, and lifeless bodies is hurled through the alley. When the thick black smoke clears, we see the grey tank again, murmuring relentlessly with the satisfaction of a job well done.

In the game, of course, the camera would be mounted atop the tank and, if you prised open the hatch, you would see me perched inside pressing buttons and fiddling with levers. And if you hung around for long enough you would also see me become cornered by a throng of filthy brown tanks, bombed by helicopters, sniped at by (um) snipers and eventually left for dead in burnt-out metal cage. Yes, I'm playing Steel Reign and I'm kind of having fun.

DAN ON HIS WAY TO WORK   TECHY SHIT

Wot Plot?

The plot is daft, but makes for a ludicrously good premise in a game. You've just parked your tank outside some top secret military bunker, while nipping inside to steal top secret data from its top secret computer systems, before blowing the place up.

LENS FLARE GUN

Unfortunately, you haven't been quite so top secret about your own presence there, for as soon as you leave you've got an entire army after you. Sure, it's ridiculous, and will scarcely challenge your disbelief, but it is a neat way to set up a you-against-the-world type situation. The subsequent game is structured as a series of missions. Briefing interludes will show you a map of the area and point out various objectives. Almost exclusively the aim of each is to make your way from A to B, while being directed along the way to visit C, D, or E and blast the crap out of anything there. All in all, besides the changes in terrain, the missions do tend to get quite samey after a while.

Right from the start of the game you're given a choice of three tanks. Later, too, there will be several other bigger, better, and more destructive tanks to pick from. Your initial selection is a varied trio. There's the great, hulking, slow one with excellent shields. There's the tiny, speedy one that offers almost no protection whatsoever. And there's the middling, predictable, safe one which compromises the features of the other two. Cleverly, which tank you do choose will have a large bearing upon how you should approach the game (oh, and it ought to be mentioned that, thankfully, you can switch tanks between each mission). Of course, no matter which you eventually pick, the temptation remains to simply play Steel Reign like it was another 1st-person shoot 'em up - that is, as if it were another Doom clone. Speaking from experience, since that this was how I first played it too, I can safely say that this is a big mistake. You may, as I did, breeze through the early stages in this way, but soon you'll be forced to learn the intricacies of tank control if you want to survive longer than a few minutes.

Tanks a lot...

The most important - and definitely trickiest - feature of the control concerns the turret. Basically, you have to get to grips with moving it independently of driving your tank. Which is not at all as easy as it sounds. Imagine driving along a bridge, fast enough to escape the attentions of a pursuing jeep, yet still able to spot enemies ahead and making sure you don't topple into

TANKS FOR NOTHIN'

TEKKEN OUT THE ENEMY

WHICH WAY TO MACCAS

the water (your tank will sink in deep water, unsurprisingly), and all the while you're madly spinning your turret (and consequently your view of the action) to shoot down a circling helicopter. And then you run into a heavily fortified blockade. Couple this with the frighteningly high difficulty of the game regardless and you have a title that will test (the patience of) even the most hardened gamer.

Having said that, some of the tanks don't actually have turrets. The tiny, speedy one, for instance, has a peculiar strafing ability. Oh, that sounds better, I thought. Except that it's exceedingly tough to control and its puny defence means you'll be dead before you work out how to use it properly.

You know those games which aren't great, but have just enough in their favour for you to keep playing? Steel Reign is another one. It is very difficult, but it's always in a challenging way as opposed to simply being unfair. The graphics are reasonable and typically Playstation-esque if you know what I mean (highly reminiscent of Twisted Metal 2 actually). The obvious visual highlights are the explosions - particularly those tasty phoenix missiles - and the excellent way targeted helicopters will be automatically tracked with your view quickly raising to follow them whenever they fly overhead. The latter is really a very useful gameplay point. It means you never need worry about looking up or down, since it's all done for you. Anyway, can you imagine how horrible it would make the controls if it wasn't? Doesn't bear thinking about.

AVAILABLE: **FEBRUARY**
CATEGORY: **ACTION**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**
PRICE: **$TBA**
RATING: **MA15+**

FREAKOMETER

Due to the tough controls, Steel Reign will take a lot of practice to get used to.

MULTIPLAYER

The half-hearted deathmatch option is rubbish, quite frankly. It's essentially just a race to the power-ups.

VISUALS
72

SOUND
64

GAMEPLAY
75

OVERALL
73

A well-designed and exceptionally challenging tank game, that lacks a little variety and excitement. Be prepared for lengthy bouts of frustration as you attempt to master the controls. Seasoned veterans only should apply.

NBA Live '98

He's been single long enough to be accused of having the
best ball handling skills in the office, so Dan Toose had to lock himself away with NBA Live '98.

SIT ON MY FACE... AND TELL ME THAT YOU LOVE ME...

BEHIND THE SCENES STUFF...

In recent years, several companies have been bringing out basketball games, but besides minor improvements like a couple of extra moves and the odd extra option, there's been little progression in this genre. EA Sports are one the groups that have been churning out basketball games, and this time around it looks like they've actually made a couple of little advancements that might just put this game above the rest... on the PC at least. NBA Live '98 takes advantage of the introduction of the 3DFX accelerators that are becoming a necessity nowadays, and also go about producing some very in depth stat features to help make this game more freak friendly.

It's a little bit hard to decide exactly how good NBA Live '98 looks, because it is very largely determined by what hardware you've got. NBA Live '98 gives you the option to turn practically every visual feature on or off, or in cases where a feature can have varying degrees of detail, you can set them at varying degrees to get the best compromise between frame rate and visual realism. On a P166 with a 3DFX card, and 32 MB of RAM the game ran smoothly with circles for shadows, and no court reflections or special lighting effects. This still looked really good, but when all the visual effects are cranked on, it looks so much better that you'll wish you had that P2-266 with 64MB of RAM that you're planning to take a loan out for.

The players themselves have been texture mapped with actual representations of the player's faces, and so you can tell who's who at a glance, EA have gone to a
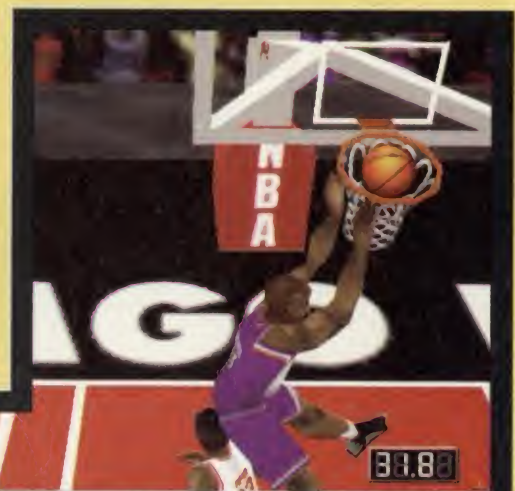
lot of trouble to ensure the height and weight of the player are clearly illustrated for you. NBA Live '98 also features motion capture to help ensure the players look like they're actually pulling off real moves, but some moves don't look quite as convincing as others. Perhaps a blend of the two may have worked better. The camera angles are all quite playable, as opposed to the "One decent view" games we're used to seeing.

Fair comment...

Like all EA Sports titles, NBA Live '98 features really good commentary, and this game gets our vote for funkiest menu music this year. There's no amazing ambience of the sound of expensive court shoes squeaking on the polished floorboards, but that would probably just prove annoying if it was in there anyway, so it's not a big deal.

The best thing about NBA Live '98 is that it handles really well from the minute you pick up the control pad (which I should add is a bit of a must have to enjoy the game fully). Naturally you can customise your control pad, but the controls are pretty simplistic as it is. One thing that many basketball games in the past have not managed to do is let you choose what sort of shot you're taking, which has sometimes led to you being almost forced into causing offensive fouls when you really just want to take a clean shot at goal. Even when you're bearing down on the ring with no one around, you can opt to simply do a lay-up. Most basketball games also offer only one or two means to get around your opponent, but NBA Live '98 gives you several options, giving a more realistic sense of making a break.

If there's any criticism to be made it's that the difficulty settings don't seem to make much difference. The game rates Chicago and Utah as the top two teams, and these are the default teams. I slaughtered the opposition on the easiest setting, then won comfortably on the next, then won narrowly on the next, and finally won narrowly on the highest setting... all in my first four games. Then changing teams did seem to make a huge difference, as playing as Orlando resulted on me being fairly comfortably beaten. So the difficulty is dependant on which team you choose as opposed to the settings.

The numbers game...

For those that give a damn about the stats, you've got to look forward to in NBA Live '98, with the game having a great variety of ways you can look at the stats, allowing you to compare players, and also check out the histories of the various teams.

NBA Live ends up being one of those games that is kind of hard to fault, but also doesn't have that instant hook that forces you to sit down and play the game till you drop. If you're a PC owning basketball fan, then this one won't disappoint, but those that aren't consciously after a sports title or haven't got a beefy PC may not quite be entirely sold. We'll look at the PlayStation version next issue.

FADING A LONG WAY AWAY...

GREAT HEIGHT... GREAT LIGHTS

I DON'T WANNA COME DOWN...

GET YOUR FACE OFF MY SCREEN!

HOW'D HE SQUEEZE THROUGH THE BASKET?

HE SHOOTS A PRAYER...

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	SPORTS
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	EA
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQ: P100, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCDROM	

FREAKOMETER

Whilst anyone can play it, you'd need to be a basketball fan to get really enthused.

MULTIPLAYER
Good. Like most sports games, multiplayer makes them better, although you can't just pick your favourite team

VISUALS
83

SOUND
80

GAMEPLAY
84

OVERALL
83
A top class basketball game as long as you have a PC with a little bit of grunt.

FIFA 98 - Road to the W

You offer Dan Toose a chance to head off to France for the World Cup and he'd leap at it.
Tough luck Dan, here's the game instead.

Ahhh France. There are actually a few things I'd rather do than play video games... like bump uglies with some Parisian dancing girl, or failing that, get a chance to see the World Cup up close and personal. Well, the chances of either of those happening for me are looking kind of remote right now, but I've fortunately stumbled across the next best thing for someone wanting to live a little of the French football fantasy. Fans of EA's FIFA fans were mostly disappointed with FIFA 97, except for a batch of PlayStation owners, as for some reason, the game just played much better on that console. Probably most disappointed were the PC gamers who weren't impressed at all with the uninspiring update which many believed was actually a step backwards. EA Sports has not taken this setback lightly, and have proven this with FIFA 98, which quite simply, rips the shit!

The most dramatic improvement to FIFA 98 on the PC is the visuals. This game joins the ranks of games like Quake 2, Jedi Knight and Moto Racer, that all scream "Get a 3DFX card!". The good news is, even those of you that don't own a 3D accelerator will get decent performance out of the game. PC versions of sports titles have traditionally look a little odd compared to console versions, but not this one. FIFA 98 features amazingly realistic motion capture, which combined with this silky smooth 3D engine, results in the best looking soccer game out on the market. The player models are highly detailed, with many variations for face shape, hair style, skin and hair colours, and even facial hair.

So the amazingly detailed player models and animation must mean the

UP AGAINST IT HERE . .

rld Cup

arena looks dodgy, right? Nope. All the stadiums look fantastic, and by some miracle of god, the Sydney football stadium actually looks like... the Sydney Football stadium. Whilst some camera angles are more useful than others, all of them are quite playable due to the intuitive controls, meaning you can get away with playing in a view that looks better, which most soccer games simply don't allow.

WooHoo!

John Motson, Andy Grey and Des Lynam are all back to state the bleedingly obvious for you, but this time around, we can safely say that John gets it right. If you're humiliating your opponent, he'll say so. Naturally, if you don't like Motty, you can shut him up. EA are showing they obviously care about the aural presentation of the game, as they've spent the dosh required to get Blur's Song No.2, and a variety of funky techno tracks by the Crystal Method, to serve as the menu music for the game. Nice eh?

The main complaint many had about FIFA 97 was the gameplay, with the general feel of the game being the major let down. EA have ensured this game is responsive, and feels more like a battle against the other team as opposed to a battle with the controls. I must point out that this is with the assumption you have a reasonably modern gamepad (like the Microsoft Sidewinder), which you really need to get the most out of any sports game on a PC. The main buttons are lob/slide tackle, pass/change player,

USING YOUR HEAD THERE 19

both the home and away kits for your team (every possible kit under the sun), even down to the pattern on the socks! Those that are heavily into the tactical movements of the game can adjust how all the players position themselves, and attack or defend. Besides genuine management decisions, this game pretty much has it all.

Even people who aren't big soccer fans will see the appeal to FIFA 98, as it is such a complete, polished product that even those that aren't enthralled will understand why other people are. With unparalleled visuals in a sports game, intuitive controls, and enough details and options to keep even the most

HERE WE GO

HERE WE GO

HERE WE GO

shoot/normal tackle, sprint, jump tackle. However double tapping or holding the main buttons can result in different moves that all feel intuitive. For example, double tapping shoot makes you attempt to chip over the goalie, or double tapping jump tackle makes you take a dive to try and milk a foul!

To perform a cross followed by a header at goal requires you to simply press two buttons, and your success is determined by how much space you've given your players, as opposed to dumb luck. If you make the big break, you don't need to perform a difficult move to finish. The only fault with FIFA 98 in this area is that essentially the only difficulty setting that will really put you to the test is the highest one.

Tailor made teams

In terms of game options, you can play through the World Cup, Any of the main Leagues from Europe, and a couple of other nations, practice, or just playa friendly match. There are two areas where you get an unusual amount of control are Player Edit, where you can alter the stats and appearance of the player to silly levels of detail. Team Edit, where you can change

avid soccer fan well chuffed. There's little else one can say other than this is a thoroughly worthy purchase for any PC owner with a 3DFX card or a high end PC, as it will provide killer audio visual entertainment. Next issue we'll check to make sure the PlayStation version is up to scratch too.

HOW TO SCORE

FREAKOMETER

Being so visually appealing, and with such intuitive controls, this one will appeal to both casual and hardcore gamers.

VISUALS
94

SOUND
91

GAMEPLAY
93

OVERALL
93

FIFA 98 proves that the PC is more than capable of being a great platform for sports games, as this is one of the best sports titles money can buy.

Heavy Gear

Being the heaviest person here Ross Clarksmith *was the obvious choice for this one.*

WAR MACHINE ROLLER DISCO

What sounds like a tank, is armoured like a tank, and has the firepower [of a] tank, but is not a tank? If your answer is huge killer robot, mech, or some other large metal monstrosity bristling with weapons the you are well on the way to figuring out the category Heavy Gear falls into. Originally developed as a role-playing game, then a strategic miniature war game, Heavy Gear [has] been successfully transformed into a top quality computer game. Back when the Beatles were still pop icons "gear" was a London slang word that described anything that was great, combined with that other sixties expression "heavy", the title pretty well sums up how good this game is.

The game features various missions that take place in a 3D-polygon landscape on a planet known as Terra Nova in the 62nd century. Finally a game that does not take place in twenty something. The planet is gripped by a brutal civil war between the Confederated Northern City-States and the Allied Southern Territories, of which both sides can be supported by the player's skill. A Gear is a large battle chassis that stands upright, is very agile, and can bring to bear a huge amount of firepower from a large range of weapons. Players start out the game as Duellist of the company, an honourary position held by the best Gear pilot. On one of the first missions, the colonel's son is your wingman, and through the actions of the snivelling gimboid, you get into the colonel's bad books. A prompt demotion follows, along with a long

Target: Locate Enemy Stronghold

41 Kp

125

144
HRP48

HG

600
HAC

54
MRP18

4800
LMG

YOU COVET MY PATCH OF BARREN LAND!

Serious support

Heavy Gear provides native support for 3Dfx Interactive's Voodoo and Rendition's Verite chip sets, as well as DirectX5 Direct3D support for a large range of third party developers. If you are lucky enough to have a force feedback joystick or 3D stereo sound, then Heavy Gear will utilise the full potential of your system. If you are not so lucky as to have all these new fangled bits, then the game still provides fantastic texture mapped rolling terrain, and kick butt sound effects. There is also multiplayer support via the Internet, modem, and LAN gaming. Activision also has a dedicated server, which allows players to go head to head in a continuously running war between the north and south, with each individual mission having an effect on the outcome of the war, which is a great step forward for the global gaming community concept.

With a rash of Mech games due to be released, including Battletech 3 and a title from Sierra, there may be some difficulty in choosing just one title to buy. Activision has done itself proud in Heavy Gear, which proves to be a well thought out game, with a no nonsense storyline, killer graphics and a high addiction factor. If mech games are your thing do yourself a favour and at least check this one out.

list of almost suicidal missions. That is probably the feature that will distinguish Heavy Gear from the other mech games due to be released really soon. Not the demotion or the suicide bit, but the finely wrought storyline that links the missions. Following the completion of a mission is usually a cut scene, which trundles along like the best soapie plot. As the missions progress, the player can earn promotions, win medals, and the Gear's AI can develop new abilities like pluses to speed or agility, or increased armour.

Visually the game looks great, and naturally those with 3D cards get a better deal than everyone else. The Gears are fantastically detailed, and each limb is actually tracked as a separate entity by the computer so the way you can move your Gear looks more realistic (from an external view of course). Activision have gone the whole hog with the visual effects, like light sourcing and stuff. Essentially the graphics engine is noticeably better than mech games of the past. Another cool addition to the game is the ability to see damage on enemy Gears at a glance, as damaged limbs become bordered by a coloured wireframe to show how badly damaged a component is.

Mix and match...

The player can fully configure the Gears, from power plants to arms and legs and most importantly to four weapon hard points and a range of rocket launchers, miniguns, grenades and rifles to fill them. The range at the beginning is not that huge, but as the missions progress, new frames, as well as components appear on the list. Gears can crouch, side step and skate pretty much the same way a human can, which makes the game a nightmare to learn to control. This goes doubly for movement as the gear can be travelling forward, while the torso rotates, leaving the poor bewildered player wondering if the infernal machine is broken or malfunctioning. The best way to get over this is to play through the training levels, which also provide bundles of comic relief from the drill sergeant and the other dufus cadet in training.

During missions there are often many objectives, some change, and new ones can be added, giving each mission a dynamic feeling. Not all objectives have to be completed, but each mission can be played time and again. Some missions follow on directly from the previous mission without any chance to reload ammunition or repair damage. If at the start of a mission, the player chooses their own Gear configuration, and does not take into account this factor, they could be left high and dry, finding they have to replay both missions. Some scenarios give you the luxury of wingmen, who can be given simple tasks such as, cover my flank or attack my target. Air strikes and additional support is also available in some cases.

BRIEFING

MECHIN' YOUR WAY ROUND A CLIFF

AVAILABLE:	**NOW**
CATEGORY:	**3D COMBAT**
PLAYERS:	**1-MULTI**
PUBLISHER:	**ACTIVISION**
PRICE:	**$89.95**
RATING:	**G8+**
REQ:	**P90, 16 MB RAM, 4X CD ROM**

FREAKOMETER

Who doesn't like blowing away entire towns?

MULTIPLAYER

Activision's dedicated server allows a Head-to-Head continuous war to be joined, with players making a difference to the outcome of battles.

VISUALS
87

SOUND
84

GAMEPLAY
91

OVERALL
89

Walking around in a deadly tin can is the ultimate power trip

The Curse of Mon

It seems the curse is that once you start playing this one... ye're hooked ya scurvy-ridden swab!
Arrrr! **Eliot Fish** *looks strangely comfortable in a pair of pantaloons...*

You are standing in a small dark room, junk litters the floor. There is a computer in the corner.

Examine Junk.

You scrounge around and find a box, it reads "The Curse Of Monkey Island".

Open box.

You tear away the useless, bloated packaging to find a pickle, a rubber donkey head and a CD.

Use pickle on computer.

You force the salty legume into the disk drive. Ewwwww!!

Wear donkey head.

It suits you. In an odd, rubber donkey-headed way.

Use CD on computer.

The screen flickers to life, and you see...

"I'm Guybrush Threepwood, a dangerous pirate!" Ha-har, arrrr! Here we are back in the world of zombie pirates, loogie-hurling competitions and weedy facial hair. The world of Monkey Island, what some would term the greatest adventure game series ever, teeming with bizarre puzzles, deranged inhabitants and... well... monkeys. It's five years since LeChuck's Revenge, and Guybrush Threepwood finds himself floating on the ocean in a broken bumper car in search of his fiancee Elaine Marley. Don't ask...
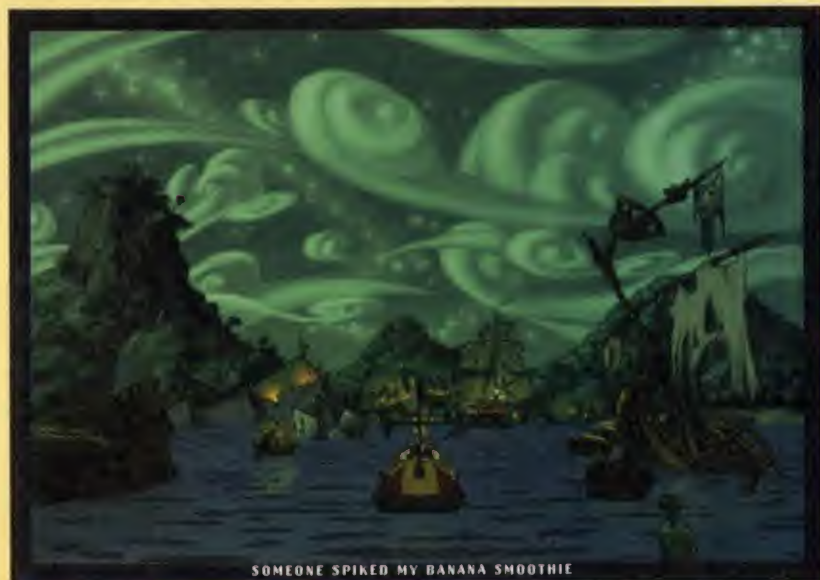
HYPER OFFICE COURTYARD

key Island

How appropriate. You fight like a cow.

The Curse Of Monkey Island begins from the moment you read the Read Me file which pops up after installing the game. It asks all gamers to please contact LucasArts if they can get the 3D acceleration to work... you'll find out! After the funny intro, you're back in a land so familiar and yet... so different. The Monkey engine has been given a major overhaul, as you can clearly see from the screen grabs on this page, and the game is bursting at the seams with colour and top-notch voice acting. There is also the funky new control system which does away with the overly large inventory system which took up half the screen in the other Monkey Island games. Now, you can just click on something, and the new interface appears allowing you to simply click on the eyes to examine, the hand to use and the parrot head to talk or taste. Right click your mouse button and the inventory screen pops up, displaying for you the ridiculous array of objects you've somehow stuffed down Guybrush Threepwood's pants! Though the voices and incredible animation may not match up with how you imagined characters in the previous two games (Guybrush seems to have grown all tall and lanky), you won't be complaining for long. The game is presented much like a good cartoon show, with the characters and

NO PIRATE PULLS HIS SOCKS THAT HIGH

environments all being animated with true style and craftsmanship, just like you were sitting in front of your TV. Anyone reading this review play Sam And Max? Well, it's another couple of steps up from that and yet the artwork in the game still has that wonderfully quirky style and there are some things here unrelated to the gameplay which will have you sniggering till your head hurts. I swear I can still see faces hidden everywhere in the backgrounds...

I want to learn all about TV and VCR repair!

There are three things you'll absolutely love about this game – the puzzles, the dialogue and the story. Firstly, the puzzles are as clever as ever, and things are still very much "Monkey Island". You'll be forced into using all sorts of seemingly unrelated objects together in situations you wouldn't have thought appropriate. In true Monkey Island style, there are clues hidden in songs, maps which are cleverly hidden as other objects and strange individuals to hinder your progress. You'll also be rewarded with some pretty hilarious responses when you attempt something which clearly isn't useful. In a interesting move, LucasArts have provided two versions of the game here for you to play. There's the regular game and then there's the Mega Monkey version which basically is the same game but with some harder puzzles for those of you who think they're up to the task. Adventure game lovers simply have to pick the harder version.

The dialogue in The Curse Of Monkey Island will have you pissing yourself! There are usually around five or six responses for you to use, and the conversation can change depending on what you ask. Trust me when I say, you shouldn't rest until you've asked

LE CHUCK AND HIS NEW COLLAGEN IMPLANTS

everything! Truly funny shit. Of course, all these wonderful things are wrapped up in one big story, and it gets more convoluted the further into the game you get. At the beginning of the game, you place a diamond ring on Elaine's finger, only to find out it's cursed and she turns into a solid gold statue. Then she gets stolen. And then... awwww no... I think I'll let you find out for yourself! If you love adventure games, then you must play Curse Of Monkey Island. But the game's appeal is so large, that just about anyone reading this review will get a kick out of this game. In fact, anyone with a sense of humour will have a ball. You want this game!

SOMEONE SPIKED MY BANANA SMOOTHIE

AVAILABLE:	**NOW**
CATEGORY:	**ADVENTURE**
PLAYERS:	**1**
PUBLISHER:	**LUCASARTS**
PRICE:	**$89.95**
RATING:	**G**
REQ:	**P 90, WIN 95, 16MB RAM, 4XCD ROM**

FREAKOMETER

Some of the puzzles will have you tearing your hair out.

VISUALS
90

SOUND
89

GAMEPLAY
92

OVERALL
90

Yet another classic LucasArts adventure which is right up there with Sam And Max! Beautiful!

Quake 2

Having been toting a rocket launcher since the early termors of the Quake pre-alpha, Dan Toose
has been gibbin' hard, and wasn't going to have a bar of anyone else reviewing Quake 2.

The Strogg

There's a coherent theme behind the monsters in Quake 2, and that is that the Strogg are not so much an individual race as opposed to an rather disturbing marriage of captured flesh and cyborg technology. They range from humanoid to truly bizarre, and from easy to deal with, through to tough as nails.

Guards: Light, Shotgun, and Machine Gun

Your basic altered humanoid who make up the majority of the Strogg hordes. They come in three varieties: Blaster, Shotgun, or Machine gun. They all die incredibly easily, but sometimes they take a last couple of shots at you during their death throws.

Enforcer

Tougher than the standard Guard, the enforcers come with a chaingun where their right arm used to be. If you're up too close, they'll club you with it. Notorious for keeping the trigger down after you've blown their head off.

Gunner

Capable at any range, the gunner has a machine gun in his right arm and an automatic grenade launcher in his left. A couple of these guys can pack an area full of grenades and give you a real headache. A bit more durable than an enforcer.

Berserker

This poor sod doesn't have a gun. Instead he has a spike and an oversized hammer, making him very nasty toe to toe. He runs fast and can take a bit of a wallop before going down.

Iron Maiden

Not an aging metal band, rather a cybered up femme who'll slap you around with her free hand if you manage to get close enough to her between shots from her rocket launcher arm. Makes funny moaning noises.

Gladiator

Very chunky opponent. Probably the most dangerous enemy in the game in that his right arm is a railgun, meaning he can take you down in one shot if you're standing still. His claw doesn't hurt as much, but it's still bad news.

The first person shooter... One of the most popular genres of PC gaming today, and in no small part due to the genius of the id software team. Rather than rant about the history of this genre (lets face it, who hasn't at least heard of Doom and Quake), how about we just at the situation at hand. Id Software have gone about taking their last game, Quake, and simply doing it better. Improved visuals, more monsters, more levels, better multiplayer options, and a truly cohesive theme and game design make Quake 2 a truly worthy sequel.

For starters, there's a plot! E-gad, who ever would have thought id would really bother with one considering their success with games without one thus far, but it's a welcome addition to the game. Basically, Earth has been getting hammered by an alien race known as the Strogg, a blend of flesh and cyborg technology which seem hell bent on capturing more folks to turn into more Strogg! Things are grim, so Earth sends a ship full of one man pods to Stroggos, the Strogg home planet. Each pod holds a marine, who has to work towards taking down the planet's anti-aircraft defence systems, and then move on to try and take out the Strogg leader to put their forces in disarray. Unfortunately the Strogg have some sort of EMP weapon that essentially screws

over all of the pods... except yours, which has already been screwed over by a buddy who clipped your wings upon launch. This ends up saving your butt, as you crash away from the others, and thus don't get mindlessly slaughtered... yet. The mission starts here.

Once the game starts up, the jaw drops. The improvements over Quake visually are fantastic, but I must point out from the start, if you don't own a 3D accelerator card, you're getting a much less impressive game (visually), since you won't be able to take advantage of the basic effect

NO, IT'S NOT A NIGHTCLUB WITH SLEAZEY LIGHTING...

that makes Quake 2 look so atmospheric, and that's coloured lighting. Those with Power VR cards should be warned that the machine we tested it on did not produce favourable results, with the light effects looking very "blocky", although we suspect this may be a temporary driver related problem, or that it will be fixed by a patch really soon. Quake 2 shines not only in that the environments look so rich and lifelike, but also in the monster model animation. Quake 2 makes previous first person shooters with polygon monsters look blocky and crude (with the possible exception of Turok). Monsters check their weapons, look around, and essentially move in a way that looks convincing. The sky does not move like in Quake, but this does not matter, as the sky is actually taken from the cut scene intro, and helps represent where you are in relation to everything. You can have a rotating sky (on whichever axis you like) when making levels.

Wrote quake02.tga

Deathmatch

I took aside my Quake clan for a deathmatch session as soon as I got the game, and no one had a single complaint to make about the game at all. id have essentially taken Quake I deathmatch and suped it up to create the best deathmatching experience yet. For starters, you're no longer restricted to playing as a man! The female character model rocks, and both the male and female model come with a variety of skins from the start, so there's no need to download anything to have a choice. Even the female's pony tail is animated, making her look spot on. The characters are far more animated, often looking around, playing with their weapon, etc. You can actually control some of the animations now too with the introduction of wave commands which include: flipoff (the finger), taunt (crotch grab for guys, "kiss my arse" gesture for girls), salute, point, and a plain old wave. These will be particularly handy when playing team games, especially in capture the flag (which will be out for Quake 2 very soon). You will also notice player don't look like they're sliding around everywhere anywhere near as much as they did in Quake and other first person shooters.

Speaking of team play, you can keep an inventory and drop items and weapons for your team mates, so they don't have to run into a dangerous area to get a good gun if you have one spare. You can select

Those that hated getting killed as soon as they appeared in Quake will be chuffed to know that the computer checks to see if the immediate area it is about to respawn you in has someone there... if it does, it'll try somewhere else.

Adjusting all the game parameters can be done in the menu, so setting up a game that turns various powerups off, makes the collectable or instant use (carrying quad and invulnerability around is just not fair), or instantly respawns weapons doesn't require you to know anything about running a Quake server. Since the weapons are so much more balanced, and since weapon respawn is slightly randomised, there's less need to have instant respawn, as the game plays so evenly as it is. Players now cough up the weapon they were holding as opposed to a pack, so you can see if it's what you want before you run for it.

Skins

In Quake the player skins were very easy to look at and modify, and if you thought you were a master at doing those, have a gawk at these! Because the character models are so much more detailed, the skins, once flattened out look completely bizarre. Now you can get a far more detailed skin for your character, but expect to have to spend a lot of time stuffing around to get it right.

Parasite

A twisted blend of a human head with a canine cyborg body. Fairly fast and erratic, with a back mounted probe weapon that is deadly accurate and will wear you down until you blast this bugger off of you. Easily stunned by being hit though.

Medic

Just when you think you've killed everything, this guy always shows up to bring back the Strogg from the dead and make you do it all over. He also comes with a weapon similar to the hyper blaster. More annoying as a healer than as an opponent.

Brains

FAB Virgil. These freaks are slow, but project a shield in front of themselves to prevent damage, but are vulnerable to rear attacks... like grenades lobbed over their head. They attack with their claws, or the mass of tentacles in their chest if you sit still for a sec.

Barracuda Shark

As nasty as they look. This little fishy and the momma fishy too, can corner you under water and keep you busy enough so you don't go up for air! Throwing grenades or even a BFG shot into a body or water with these guys is a good idea before taking a dip.

Technician

Some brain matter in a floating metal husk. Has two claw weapons which it rarely gets close enough to use due to its slow speed, but it's deadly accurate with its blaster weapon, and can take a real pounding before blowing up.

Mutant

The monster that survived Quake. Yep, essentially it's the fiend from QI, just a bit faster. Still a little stupid however, so positioning objects between you and one of these things may save the day.

Flyer

What seems like a small buzzing mosquito can turn out to be a real killer in packs. Very accurate with their blasters and fast enough to require you to concentrate while aiming. Weak armour though, so downing these guys shouldn't be hard.

Weapons

Quake suffered from one common complaint by those that played a lot of deathmatch. The weapons were completely unbalanced, and this led to players not only just hanging out to get the rocket launcher and thunderbolt, but also to simply learn how to use those weapons and ignore the others. Id realised this, and they've come through by delivering with a variety of weapons that all have their pros and cons, which encourages you to learn how to use them all to be effect, and also not rely on using one. Where in one situation a weapon may seem useless, but in another situation, it may be perfect.

Here's a breakdown of the guns, dealing with their use in single player, and deathmatch.

Blaster:

Fires a bolt of energy causing minimal damage. Unlimited ammo supply. The starting weapon of the game.

Single player: The blaster may suck as a weapon, but in situations where you want to see into a dark area, it works well as a torch, rather than wasting ammo from a better weapon. Since you find better weapons so early in the game, you won't use it much.

Deathmatch: Whilst being the worst weapon in the game, it certainly is far more useful than the axe was in Quake.

Shotgun:

A plain old single barrel shotgun. Instant shot delivery, with a fairly tight area of effect.

Single player: The perfect weapon for economically taking out the various guards, and also the weakly armoured fliers. More effective than the Super Shotgun at a distance, so it could be useful for a bit of rough sniping if low on ammo for the beefier weapons.

Deathmatch: Not a great weapon in deathmatch, but still potent enough in the hands of someone with decent aim to be able to take someone down in a few successful hits.

Super Shotgun:

A shotgun that delivers twice the damage, at twice the rate of shells.

Single player: Even after I had collected all the weapons, this was usually my weapon of choice when exploring corridors and small to medium sized rooms. Takes down multiple grunts if you line them up right, and will make even the toughest opponent pause for a sec if you nail them up fairly close with this one.

Deathmatch: Whilst it has a somewhat slow rate of fire, it makes a very reliable death-

match weapon... back to like it was in Doom. At mid range, you won't cause full damage, but the spray makes it easy to get a hit in. At close range, only the most heavily armoured opponent can survive a direct hit.

Machinegun:

A light machine gun. Instant delivery, steady rate of fire. On the down side, recoils even moving your aim around!

Single player: This weapon is only particularly handy against the guards and fliers, as it is really less effective than the shotgun if you're dealing with only one or two opponents at a time. Good for sweeping over weak grunts.

Deathmatch: Seeing as human opponents are far more manoeuvrable than the monsters, the recoil becomes a factor with that extra element of difficulty in dealing with a moving target when your own sights are moving. The only plus is, the instant deliver means if you do have steady aim, it's easy to get a few hits in, just not at a blistering rate.

Chaingun:

Ultra heavy machine gun. Warm up and cool down times are the only thing that interrupt its deadly barrage of bullets. Instant delivery, but chews ammo.

Single player: Personally, this gun felt more effective to me than the same weapon in Doom. It is quite easy to take down any type of monster in the game with this gun if you keep them in sight for a sec when your rate of fire hits top gear. Very handy against avian opponents.

Deathmatch: If you can get some ammo, this makes a fantastic weapon to go on a fully aggressive romp. If you keep fire held down and pursue a target it becomes amazingly effective, since the hit area is not so tight around your crosshair, so you can "miss" a little.

Grenade Launcher:

Grenade projector. Slow firing rate and shots are affected by gravity, but causes high damage, and is useful to aim at hard to reach places.

Single player: The only time this weapon is particularly handy in single player is when you're attacking opponents below you that are out of sight. Or to pop grenades onto a ledge to kill monsters that aren't coming near the edge. Becomes too dangerous up close, so it's really for specific applications as opposed to roaming with.

Deathmatch: Just like in Quake 1, the most accurate players will be able to use these to hit out in the open, but they're much more useful for peppering into small rooms and picking up some easy frags. Since Q2 grenades are bouncier, may create more havoc than in Quake 1.

Rocket Launcher:

Fires rockets at slow delivery pace, but with extra high damage results. Very dangerous up close (for both parties). Can be used to perform super jumps at the price of some health.

Single player: Very effective against either slow moving units, or those with hard surfaces nearby, so a miss will still mean a hit. Perfect against opponents like the tank who don't move enough to be able to avoid it.

Deathmatch: No longer do you need this weapon to dominate in deathmatch. The rockets travel slower than in Quake, and thus are far easier to avoid. Just like in Quake, aiming at the feet takes away the need to hit your opponent, as the explosion does the work for you. Still very powerful, but is best used in situations where you can corner your opponent.

Hyper Blaster:

A blend of the chaingun and a laser rifle. Fires laser bolts at fast delivery at a high rate. Individual shots don't cause much, but a few hits do.

Single player: This was my second most common go to weapon, since it is effective at all ranges, and leaving your finger on fire for a few seconds can tear down even the tank commanders. Not quite as good as a chaingun against avian opponents due to lead times and potential dodging.

Deathmatch: A great hassle weapon, since people can see the shots and will actively avoiding being in the way. Possible to spray an area to ensure a few hits, but hitting a moving target with a steady stream will require good skills at leading shots.

Railgun:

Uranium slug projector. Totally instant delivery, extremely high damage, travels through multiple opponents, and it looks cool. Slow rate of fire, and tiny hit area.

Single player: With the exception of tanks and bosses, you can take out any monster in the game with two well placed railgun shots. Great against the Icarus monsters, who generally fly at you whilst exposing the maximum surface area, making them easy to get a direct hit on.

Deathmatch: Best used at a distance against opponents who are running in a straight line, or in narrow corridors. Up close, the slow rate of fire and problems with trying to keep your crosshair on a fast moving target make it a bit of a pot luck weapon. Playing with lag would render this gun almost useless in deathmatch.

BFG10K:

Massive energy blaster. Huge area of effect, with devastating damage effects. Cons: requires a brief warm up prior to firing, chews huge amounts of cell power, and can hurt you if you're too close to the point of impact.

Single player: To be honest, I only ended up using the BFG out of boredom in single player. It's best when used against multiple powerful opponents that are fairly close to one another, which is almost never. The ammo required for one shot is better used in a hyper blaster.

Deathmatch: Far more useful than in single player, since it spells certain doom for an enemy player who can't move too far in their given situation. Even better, walk into a room with a battle in progress and get some easy frags.

Icarus

The more durable of your two avian opponents also moves around enough to be a frustrating target. He flies with his wings flat to you however, so at mid to close range, he's a decent sized target. He pounds away with laser blasters.

Tank

Armed to the teeth, and built like a steel outhouse, the tank is an opponent you can't ignore. With a triple rocket launcher on his shoulder, a machine gun in one arm, and a laser blaster in the other, he has enough variety to keep you busy. He is however very slow, and if he's on his own, you should be able to run around and take him down with ease.

Tank Commander

The only difference with the commanders is that they have much more armour to blast through, although with no apparent extra speed or firepower, it's just a tank that takes a little more ammo to kill.

Bosses

Not sure on the official names of the first two since they're not in the manual or on any official web page at the time when we got the game, but here's a rundown on them anyway.

Super Tank

This guy actually looks like a tank, and his rocket launcher assault requires you to constantly be on the move against this boss. Takes quite a munting, but has a tendency to blow up his own buddies... tsk tsk.

Ariel Tank

This hovering hulk attacks with either twin chainguns or its quad rocket launcher making it particularly nasty. He turns to face you before firing though, so keeping on the move (and in your sights) is the ticket to taking him down.

Makron

The supreme commander of the Strogg. Makron starts fighting you from inside a huge mech armour suit, firing BFG shots, rockets, and chainguns to wear you down. After his armour suit goes down, he keeps at you with his railgun head, BFG and rockets. Not a nice guy.

THE STROGGOS PALACE WELCOMING COMMITTEE...

In terms of an audio experience, Quake 2 takes advantage of high end PCs by allowing you to select low or high quality sound, with high quality needing a little more grunt, but sounding that much clearer and satisfying. Low quality sound is just like sound found in Quake, which ain't bad at all. The game also has music on the CD, performed by Rob Zombie, and Sonic Mayhem. If you're into metal with sampled effects, then great, but the ambient effects within the game itself are fantastic, and I found getting immersed in the game was so much easier without a bunch of guitars churning out some chromatically shifting riffs and artificial harmonics. Whichever you prefer, it's great either way.

Now the bulk of the game involves collecting weapons, ammo and items, and blowing up monsters with them, and since I've broken down weapons, items and monsters into their own special sections, we'll just look at the level design, AI, control features and difficulty in terms of gameplay.

The main difference between Quake 2 to Quake is that it is so much more of a complete game that actually follows a constant theme. The 41 levels of Quake 2 are broken down into smaller groups called units. Each unit is a key area in your mission on Strogg, and you can travel back and forth between the levels within each unit to complete your mission there. Actions in one level can affect another level in the same unit, like setting off a mechanism that activates machinery in a different level. The fact that there's a theme means the level design has come across with far more forethought and theme about them. What's very handy is that most of the levels also deathmatch very well, which I couldn't help but get the impression was just a convenient coincidence, since they do look like they were made with the single player game first and foremost in mind. The use of transparencies is great, and now that any texture can be made to appear transparent, this allows for stained glass effects which look really cool, and have been used to stunning affect by the designers. Something I found about the level design I had to applaud was that unlike Hexen, you don't end up going over your own tracks very much, even though you often have to revisit levels. When you return to a level, it's usually via an exit/entrance you couldn't reach before, rather than by just having to meander back past the corpses of your victims. The use of breakable walls and objects also plays a role, with the need to blow up various things like power cables and reactors to affect features of the level.

The AI is slightly improved over Quake, with most monsters now ducking under shots fired at chest height. It is however stupid in some ways as before, and in a new way as well. The problem with monsters ducking is that ducking one shot simply makes them prone to be hit by the next. Hitting a monster that is squatting down without moving anywhere is much harder than one that is running around, so perhaps making the act of ducking a fast dodge as opposed to a "sit down and rest" would have helped. The old AI problem still exists in that the monsters with no ranged weapons (guns), still try to stand as close as they can to you, even when they can't hit you. So a berserker on the other side of a gap will stand there and take hits rather than go for cover and wait till you come over so he can attack you. Obviously this will only be noticed by first person veteran who will probably find the game easy regardless, and are most likely to be deathmatching anyway, so it's not a major downfall, but is one of only two noticeable flaws in the whole game.

GEEZ... YOU'D THINK HE'D HOLD HIS FIRE WHILE I TOOK GRABS

EAT BFG STUFF!

The other flaw is the difficulty, which was more of an issue. Basically, anyone who has played these sort of games much, will play through the game on any difficulty setting in a couple of days tops (you won't want to leave once you start). The game really is quite generous with ammo and powerups, and an encounter with more than six to eight monsters at once is extremely rare. Since the weapons have been balanced for deathmatch, they end up being a bit ultra powerful for single player, so perhaps making the monsters physically tougher could have helped. Don't get me wrong here, the single player game was great, and if you're not a Quake veteran then you'll find plenty of challenge here. I'll admit I was unable to find a means to activate Nightmare difficulty, and seeing we had the game before the rest of the world pretty much, there was no one else out there to compare notes with. Adjusting the skill setting in the console didn't seem to work, and without any other visible means to go to Nightmare, hard was the top setting. This all results in seeing the end a little earlier than you might want to, and like most id games, the ending isn't on the same par with the rest of the game... oh well, there's always Trinity.

The game controls almost exactly like Quake, with the addition of crouching and managing an inventory of items. All the old stuff like console commands are all still there and any Quaker will feel right at home. Naturally you can configure Quake 2 to work with joysticks and the like, with more obscure controllers requiring more fiddling around to get working right.

To sum up these eight pages in one paragraph... Quake 2 is undoubtedly the best game in this genre ever, and possibly one of the best games ever made, period. The only people who will have a justified gripe are the Quake masters who will find single player too easy, but seeing as the multiplayer aspect of the game is so strong, and is what these people want the game for anyway, it does not tarnish the product as a whole. If you have a 3DFX card, buy this game now. If you don't, buy one, THEN buy Quake 2 as well.

Quake 2 for Quakers

This feels a little pointless since any serious Quake player out there will already have bought Quake 2 and know about what I'm about to say, but I'll say it anyway for those few individuals who loved the first game and unfortunately are too low on funds.

Things you'll like about Quake 2 after playing Quake for so long... For starters, the engine simply runs better. Animations are far more lifelike and in particular, multiplayer animations look so much better, which is how Quake enthusiasts will be playing the game for some time to come. The weapon balance really levels the multiplayer battlefield, and should result in really tight intense competition between Quakers everywhere... so if you thought you'd climbed as high up the ladder as you could with Quake, you may fare better in Quake 2.

As a single player game, you'll be both thrilled and disappointed. Thrilled that id have really focused on great level design and have stuck to a plot. Disappointed in that any decent Quake player will not be challenged by the game at all. The reason for this is simple, you're almost never attacked by more than a couple of decent monsters at once. Remember Doom? There were rooms where you walked in and practically shat yourself in surprise when you were confronted by a dozen monsters, one of which was capable of doing some damage alone if you weren't on your toes. It would seem likely that the high polygon counts in Quake 2 limit the number of creatures you will be presented with at once, but after finishing the game in 15 hours on hard, I tried to think back to what the nastiest fight I had was, and I couldn't really think of one. Many may, like myself, prefer to see a few less polygons, but a few more monsters. It must be pointed out now that I've played an obscene amount of Quake compared to your average Quaker, so I'm obviously going to find the game easier than most, but I'd say it's more a case of the game being easy to figure out than me performing unusually well for a Quake player or anything.

The bottom line is, serious Quake players are into deathmatch, and Quake 2 (at this admittedly early stage), seems to do it better in all aspects. This is the reason I can wholeheartedly recommend Quake 2 to anyone who's into their deathmatching as the best first person shooter ever.

FRAGGED YOUR ASS SOLDIER!

AVAILABLE: **NOW**
CATEGORY: **FIRST PERSON SHOOTER**
PLAYERS: **1-MULTI**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
PRICE: **$99.95**
RATING: **MA15+**
REQ: **P100, WIN 95, 16MB RAM, 4XCD ROM**

FREAKOMETER

The game looks so good that it'll draw crowds, but getting used to the controls will take newcomers a little while.

MULTIPLAYER
Unbelievable. Quake was the best action multiplayer game around... and this is better!

VISUALS
98

SOUND
92

GAMEPLAY
96

OVERALL
96
A more than worthy sequel to Quake, Quake 2 essentially sets unparalleled standards of quality in this genre, and in production quality in PC gaming in general.

Back Issues

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http://hyperactive.com.au
GAMES ONLINE

Judge Dredd
PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: LIGHT GUN SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1
PRICE: TBA
RATING: TBA
PUBLISHER: GREMLIN

Duke Nukem 64
Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: MA15+

Quake
Saturn

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SEGA
PRICE: $69.99
RATING: MA15+

Judge Dredd

2000AD was one of my favourite comics for a while there, and everyone knows how cool Judge Dredd is. The potential for a great game set in the 2000AD universe is huge, massive and quite big indeed - so the fact that Gremlin decided to make a Light Gun game is a bit odd. Sure, the comics are packed full of violence, but it seems obvious that an adventure game or tomb-raider style thingy would have been better for immersing the player in the gruesome Megacity environment. What they've done here is created pre-rendered environments with an original 2000AD artist and stuck you on rails so that the game will hopefully be as faithful to the comic as possible. What we've ended up with is a very average light-gun game. Sure, the backgrounds look cool and animate well, but the actual gameplay mechanics of shooting at a bunch of polygons has been constructed poorly in Judge Dredd. The action is strung together with some truly laughable FMV, and the guy playing Dredd can hardly talk he's trying to frown so much. Embarrassing. Now the actual game is ugly to play for these reasons - the targeting and response time between the gun and the game is appalling. You aim and pump the trigger and you'll be lucky if 2 of the 6 shots you just fired actually appear on screen. Whilst a game like Time Crisis has you on rails "in-between" the shooting, Judge Dredd has you constantly being swung through the rendered environment. This means that you're aiming at something which is constantly moving, and your gun is so sluggish that getting a clear shot at something is frustratingly difficult. Sometimes you can see the cross-hair sitting on top of a target, and goddamn you're pulling that trigger but that stupid polygon isn't going down! Judge Dredd fans may stick with it just to see the story play out to the end, but this game just isn't as good as it could have been. Disappointing.

VISUALS	78
SOUND	70
GAMEPLAY	57
FREAKYNESS	35
OVERALL	64

ELIOT FISH

Duke Nukem 64

I know it's a terribly unfashionable viewpoint to hold nowadays, but I still think Duke Nukem on the PC is the best first-person shoot 'em up ever written (unless you count Descent, although that is a little different). There are plenty of reasons for this, but, most of all, the reason I still love Duke is because of the weapons. Never before, nor since, has there been such a brilliant array of funking big guns. It worried me somewhat, then, when I realised that GT had messed about with them, dropping a couple of faves (the RPG, chaingun and freeze ray) and adding some of their own creations. Thankfully, these newies are more than a match for the ones they are replacing. The missile launcher is basically the RPG with the additional ability to fire heat-seekers (yay!). The shrink ray can also double as an expander ray which will blow enemies up like balloons. There's also a grenade launcher and, best of all, a pair of sub-machine guns can be found for some genuine two-handed John Woo-style action. Extra rooms and other sections that were absent from the PC version are a further addition. For example, you can now visit Duke Burger on level two!

Duke Nukem 64 remains a fantastic game despite being released on the PC nearly two years ago. Technically, it may not reach the standard of Goldeneye, but there's enough imagination, ingenuity and sheer verve on display throughout the gameplay for that not to matter for a second. Duke travels from the seedy streets of L.A., full of strip-shows, bars, dark alleys, drug deals and corrupt cops, to incredibly creepy space stations overrun by repulsive aliens, and then onto the moon itself for a showdown with the evil mastermind who has kidnapped all the Earth's women. The atmosphere never falls below gripping, the whole game. With this version there's also a great co-operative mode and an even better Dukematch (for up to four players), although both suffer from the small view you get with split-screen. Two player is okay, but when there's four it can feel pretty cramped.

VISUALS	83
SOUND	88
GAMEPLAY	90
FREAKYNESS	20
OVERALL	90

DAVID WILDGOOSE

Quake

The sequel to Doom has been the most played game in the Hyper office ever, and when we heard a port was in the works for the Sega Saturn, fears of a bodgie and retarded conversion appearing were sadly the only thoughts that sprang to mind.

Thankfully, someone intelligent gave the project to at Lobotomy, and the result is a game that stands head and shoulders above any other Doom style game (not that there are that many anyway!) yet seen on the Saturn.

Saturn Quake puts you in a combination medieval-sci-fi world where you battle through four worlds, with each world containing seven levels filled with all manner of monsters from knights to huge lighting-firing Shamblers. The game contains amazing light sourcing effects, a nice detail in the environments, and a reasonable frame-rate. The game may astound many Saturn owners, as it really shows what the machine can do when in the hands of skilled programmers.

Well, obviously there's some 'nips and tucks' made here and there to the Saturn version, the most notable being the reconstruction of certain levels seen in the PC original. Polygonal monsters have been used in the Saturn version, though sometimes they look really ugly and pixelated and in some ways are hardly an improvement over the sprite enemies seen in Saturn Duke Nukem. Biggest downer is the lack of multiplayer capabilities, which is kind of a fatal flaw, since Quake's big strength has always been in its multiplayer aspect, not single player.

Also worth a mention is the game's brilliant sound and its analogue control. Plug your Saturn into an amp and turn up the volume, and the sound in Quake will never fail to keep you in suspense. The analogue control through Sega's analogue pad is also excellent and allows easy movement around the game's levels.

If you have a Saturn there's really no reason not to get Quake, unless of course, you have a Pentium, in which case you can get a better version at a dirt cheap price nowadays.

VISUALS	81
SOUND	89
GAMEPLAY	82
FREAKYNESS	30
OVERALL	82

REN HOEK

CD »HYPER

Men In Black
PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PRICE: TBA
RATING: TBA
PUBLISHER: GREMLIN
REQ: P100, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM

Ahhh... the Men In Black... one of the favourite topics of conspiracy theorists everywhere! Strange pasty-faced men in dark suits turning up uninvited on your doorstep... well I guess it could be the drug squad or a couple of Mormons, but in this case it's MIBs out to silence those who would speak out about UFOs. Of course, Hollywood gets their hands on the concept and suddenly MIBs are these comedic do-gooders with big shiny guns. Ah well, it makes a good game... or does it? Men In Black is of course aflicted with the immediate disability of being a movie conversion - commonly known amongst gamers as the mark of a butt-ugly piece of entertainment. However, Men In Black actually has quite a few redeeming features and if it didn't suffer from a few minor flaws, it would be forging new ground for movie-based games.

MIB is played from an Alone In The Dark type perspective, with the camera being fixed from a different angle depending on the screen you're on. The characters in the game are all digitised versions of their on-screen counterparts and when I turned Wil Smith towards the camera I was astounded at how much he really, really looked like Wil Smith. Of course, Wil has a bit more personality than a texture-mapped polygon. During the game, you'll find yourself in fire-fights, fist-fights and stuck on puzzles. These all play well and the shooting bits are cool, as the environments and characters all look great. Unfortunately, the game is incredibly linear and you'll only be able to go "One Way" the whole time. The puzzles are interesting, but simple, and one mistake and the game ends. In Men In Black you'll be dying every five seconds as it really is one of those "Load & Learn" games which make you play something over until you do it the right way. Argh! You may get so fed up with doing the same sequences over and over that you'll just abandon it. Could have been better.

VISUALS	80
SOUND	79
GAMEPLAY	69
FREAKYNESS	45
OVERALL	70

ELIOT FISH

Virtual Pool 2
PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: POOL SIM
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: VR SPORTS
PRICE: $54.95
RATING: G
REQ: 486-DX-100, 16 MB RAM, 4X CD ROM, WIN 95

Now there's always been something that's really puzzled me... Why make a video game, of a game that requires next to no physical effort in real life? Take for example a pool game. Why not just walk down to the pub and have a game there? 1) It's real 2)You can't impress anyone playing on your computer at home, and 3) You can't blame a crappy table at home. Then I realised the reasons you may not want to play in a pub. 1) You may have to wait for ages to get a table. 2) When you finally do get one, you'll be played by the world champ who just happens to be there. 3) You stand a chance of being vomited upon by some drunk bastard. 4) If you suck, everyone will watch you. 5) If you win, your oversized opponent may attempt to stuff the cue up your rectum in frustration, and 6) Because Virtual Pool 2 from VR Sports is pretty damn cool.

Put simply, the game looks great. You don't need a 3DFX card or anything to get the top results either, which is a rarity nowadays. You use the mouse like a cue stick, as an analogue control, which feels fantastic when it comes to belting the balls around the table.

It doesn't matter if you don't have any friends to play, as there are 128 computer opponents to square off against and it keeps track of rankings. For those wanting to actually learn something there are FMV pool lessons from Mike Sigel (apparently he's really good).

The engine essentially allows you to play pretty much any shot you could in real life, and the manual comes with tips on how to perform such shots. In fact, the game actually comes with a guarantee to improve your actual pool game.

With nine different games to play, network options, the ability to adjust every anal detail about the table and so forth, this really has to be called the most complete pool sim yet, and is funky enough to even make someone like me who'd generally want to go play for real, have a go at home instead.

VISUALS	89
SOUND	70
GAMEPLAY	85
FREAKYNESS	10
OVERALL	84

DAN TOOSE

Dreams To Reality
PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: CRYO INTERACTIVE
PRICE: ???
RATING: M15+
REQ: P100, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM

Cryo have tried something original here, it's an attempt at providing a surreal non-linear gaming experience appropriately titled Dreams. The game plays primarily from a third-person Tomb Raider-esque perspective, but by holding the ALT key, you can launch into the air and fly around to get a better look at your surroundings. This works quite nicely, and you'll probably spend a bit of time farting about in the sky before you actually get down to cracking the puzzles. The environments are quite pretty, but nothing in the manual, booklet, read me files or technical help file even mentions the 3Dfx version once, even though it's there . Crazy. Playing the game is confusing and you won't really know what it is you're doing or where you're going. Though this may be an attempt at giving the game a non-linear feel, it just ends up feeling like bad design and when you do figure out what it is you need to do, you realise how linear the game actually is. There is only really one correct path the whole time.

Cryo did manage to capture the surreality of the environments and characters, but the game is let down by it's clumsy controls and dull puzzles. The worlds feel open and look colourful, but Dreams never really lets you feel like you're really taking part in something. As you complete the puzzles, it feels more like you're just opening up the next bit - not really making you feel like you've achieved anything as there's nothing much to do other than "find that next puzzle piece". Dreams to Reality is a good concept, but the level design lets the game down, as do the clumsy controls. Still, it's fun exploring the bizarre worlds and putting the story together as you go. Just don't expect Dreams to be anything amazing.

VISUALS	81
SOUND	80
GAMEPLAY	67
FREAKYNESS	35
OVERALL	70

ELIOT FISH

ODDWORLD:

We have been getting so many

requests for a solution to Abe's

Oddysee, that we felt it was our

duty to strap Eliot Fish into a chair

and lock the door until we heard

him sobbing with relief...

ABE'S ODDYSEE
PLAYGUIDE PART 1

There isn't one "correct" solution to Abe's Oddysee, as the game has multiple endings, secret areas and secret Mudokons for you to discover. Over the next two issues of Hyper, we're printing a walkthrough for those of you who are stuck on a puzzle somewhere, as we simply don't have the space to explain where every single Mudokon is hiding. The challenge is yours to go back and find all 99 workers. Good luck!

RUPTURE FARMS

From your starting point, run right to the next screen. There is a directory here which shows you the location of the Mudokons. Continue right and when you reach the ledge, pull yourself up onto to it avoiding the guard. On the next screen, go through the door and proceed through the next two. Continue on past the jumping tutorial, and you'll reach the screen with a guard below. Use your chant and possess him, then use him to push the lever on the left. Now run right until you reach another guard and gun him down. Now

chant again to make your guard explode. As Abe, drop down and get the two Mudokons to follow you to the screen where you shot the guard, and lower yourselves down the pulley lift. On this next screen you can chant and let the Mudokons escape. Now go through the door and walk right. You'll find another two Mudokons so lead them to the portal and chant them to safety. Pull yourself up onto the ledge and go right. Fart to attract the guard's attention and pull the lever when he walks over the trapdoor. Jump down and go right. Do the jumps, but time it right to not get hit by the rocks. In this next section, kneel down

next to the bomb and hit it when it turns green (observe the timing). Pull yourself up, walk right and on this next screen, pull the lever to send one guard down the hatch. Chant to possess and blow-up the other. Drop down, walk across and pull yourself up to the next platform to pull the lever. Drop back down and get the Mudokons to follow you back to the room with the bomb. Chant to set them free. Now continue back right and keep walking right. Before you roll under the gap, possess the guard and kill him. Then, get the Mudokon to follow you to the next room. Get there, then tell him to wait and climb up onto the

platform above the other Mudokon. Pull the lever and walk right. Go back left (the birds will have returned) and chant the Mudokons to freedom. Return to the right. Possess the guard and take him right until you reach another guard. Shoot him and keep going right. Run under the first mincer (timing is hard) and pull the lever in the middle. This slows the mincers down. Keep going right and walk up close to the next guard. Shoot him at point-blank so as to not hurt the Mudokons. Self-destruct and then continue with Abe. Walk into the first shadow and say "hello". Get the Mudokon to follow you back left. Chant him through the portal and return to the two mincers. You now have to get the Mudokons to follow you to the right. If you pull the lever, you can slow the mincer enough to run both of you through. You'll reach a bird portal, so use it. Go back and you'll find another Mudokon in the shadows. Now run back left to the doorway in the centre of the screen. Go through and run left until you reach the grenade dispenser. Get a grenade and go up the lift. At the top, walk left to the edge of the platform and drop the grenade onto the mines. Lower yourself down and down again (don't jump off!) and when you land, quickly crouch and roll left to avoid the bullets!

THE STOCKYARD

Jump over the mines and go to the next screen where you should stop and stand still. Wait for the red beams to pass over you and only move when you're not being scanned. On the next screen, wait for the Scrab to run towards you then run off the ledge and leap onto the opposite platform. Go left and time your jumps so as to not get scanned. Jump the gap and chant to get a message from the fireflies. Go left and chant to the flies again, then jump over the mines. Quickly jump the mine and run off the ledge. The guard will wake up, so wait for him to walk off to the left then climb up and hide in the shadow. When he returns, sneak off to the left (holding R2) behind his back. Hide in the next shadow immediately and wait for both guards to walk off, then run down and crouch in the small shadow. When the guard returns, again sneak left. Jump over the mine and quickly climb down the ledge before the guard returns. Keep going left and you'll walk onto a screen with two guards. Fart in the dark to line up both guards so they walk back the other way in unison, then tip-toe behind them and before they turn around, quickly throw yourself up onto the platform on the left.

Chant and read the fireflies then walk left. Keep going left and jumping gaps till you reach another guard. Walk left and you'll be standing above a bomb. Walk off, crouch and set the bomb then quickly climb back up before the guard returns. He'll walk back on and get blown to bits. Drop down and walk right to get to the sack and the rocks. Go left and stop at the cliff edge. Scare off the bat with your angry speak, then climb down. At the bottom, walk right and you'll find yourself above a sleeping guard. Throw a rock so it hits the floating red orb and detonates the mine, killing the guard. Walk to the next screen and hide in the shadows. When the guard turns his back on you, creep along behind him to the third shadow. When he turns his back again, creep off to the right. Chant and read the fireflies. On the next screen, chant again then jump across the gap towards the mine. Collect a rock from the basket and jump over the mine to the next screen. Throw the rock at the Slig and when he awakes, turn and run back to the mine - jump it and drop down. The Slig will come running after you into the mine. Kabloom!

Keep going right and drop down the ledge. Wake up the Slig then quickly run off the screen, when you reach the middle of the next screen hit jump and catch the ledge, pulling yourself up quickly. Then run back off the ledge back the way you came and jump the mine then get clear before he runs into it. On the next screen, stand within grabbing distance of the ledge and chant to wake the Slog. When he jumps

over your head, pull yourself up. Now use the rocks you collected to destroy the mines. If you throw them directly down, they'll bounce into the mines. Destroy at least two mines to be able to jump over the others. Once past them, chant to read the fireflies and then lower yourself down the cliff.

MONSAIC AWAKENED

Go left and use the palm stone for a message. Go left and carefully jump past the falling rocks. At the Mudokon with the catapult, copy the sounds he makes exactly or he'll thwap you. Drop down the cliff edge and use the second stone. After reading the message, chant to possess the guard and walk him left. Shoot the Sligs and self-destruct. Back at Abe, walk through the right-hand door and keep walking right. There is some good advice here.

With the Sligs now dead, walk left and climb onto the ledge. Walk off to the left until you get to the rope lift. Read the stone tablet and go up the lift. Walk left and copy the Mudokon guard's noises to pass. Jump the gap and head left. Pull the lever and go down the well. Again, copy the Mudokon's sounds to pass. Go through the big door and watch the FMV!

Walk right and use the stone tablet to go down the well. Read the next stone tablet to get a map. Walk left and chant, then jump through the portal. Go down the lift and walk left. Walk past the meditating Mudokon onto the next screen. Climb up onto the ledge and run under the beehive. Run past the Mod and stop at the cliff edge. Take a running jump off the ledge, and climb up. Use the stone tablet to get the bell song and go back the way you came. Go up the lift and walk left to the chant sign. Chant and the bell song will play, opening the door.

Enter and walk right. Again, copy the Mudokon's voices. When he vanishes, pull the lever to light the fire and keep walking right. At the ledge, chant to read the fireflies and then do a standing jump off the edge. Go left through the door and Keep going until you get to a lever, pull it and return to the previous screen. You can now choose between two wells - let's do Paramonia first.

PARAMONIA

Walk right and use the stone tablet. Tiptoe onto the next screen and climb up the tree. Chant and self-destruct the guard, then collect some stones from the bag. Walk off to the right and destroy the mine on the other side of the gap. Pull the lever. Go back to the tree and jump into the hole, when you land, grab the rope noose to summon the Elum. Go back down and climb onto it's back. Now you can jump the gap where you destroyed the mine. Keep walking till you come to a ledge under a Mudokon. Copy his chant and he'll lower the lift. Get off the Elum and winch yourself up.

Collect a rock from the bag and tiptoe right. Crouch when you reach the wooden platform, throw the rock whilst still crouched to hit the mine and kill the Slig. Go to the lift and winch yourself and the Elum up. At the

top, the Elum will begin
eating the honey, keep
your distance and throw
a rock at the hive. The bees
will scare him off and back to you. Go to
the next screen and disarm the bomb (the
timing is quite erratic), now run and jump
the gap, but keep running onto the next
screen to avoid the slig's gun. Keep going
right and you'll see some FMV.

Get off the Elum and climb up to the next
screen. Keep going and drop down the first hole.
When you land, chant to possess the guard below you. Walk
him left and kill the other guard patrolling there. Walk off the
left side of the platform and and head for the mined lever. Use
the Slig to detonate the mine, and then bring Abe down to pull
the switch. Jump over the remaining mine and onto the lift.
Winch yourself down, get the Elum and winch yourself back up.
Get on the Elum and get ready to run through the next few
screens. Remember to jump the gaps! Pass the bees and you'll
get more FMV.

Get off the Elum and use the noose rope to open the trapdoor
beneath you. Drop into it, when you land, lower yourself down
the ledges until you reach the bottom. Pull the switch, then
leap over the mine and use the stone tablet. The password is:
Hold L2 & press X, Triangle, Triangle, X, Circle. Jump back into
the hole and jump the gap to reach the noose rope. Fall through
the trap door and climb back down to the hole. Jump into the
hole and you'll be sent back to the beginning. Get on the Elum
and walk left. Go down the lift and give the password to the
Mudokon. He'll bring down another lift. Take yourself and the
Elum up in this left and walk left.

Use the next lift to take both of you down to the bottom.
Possess the Slig and walk him right. Shoot the guard on the top
section, then walk off the ledge to the left and shoot the guard
below. Return to Abe and roll through the tunnel, climb the
ledges you passed in the lift. When you get to the top, use the
stone tablet. Go back to the Elum and leap across the gap. In
the next section, possess the guard in the background and use
him to kill the other guard on the right platform. Continue on
and use the chant to open the portal.

PARAMONIAN TEMPLE

Run right past the hole until you reach a guard. Quickly turn
around and run back the way you came and jump through the
hole. If timed right, the guard will wander to the foreground
where you can possess him and use him to shoot the guard dog.
Return to Abe and go back through the hole. Walk right and
lower yourself down the lift. Walk right and quickly drop down
the ledge before the bat gets you. Pull the lever to do away with
the Slig and walk on through the doorway. Read the tablet and
then choose the doorway on the right.

Trial 1 - Climb up the platforms and get some meat from the
hanging bag. Drop back down and walk left, run past the bees
and lure the paramite on the next screen towards the bees nest.
The bees will sting him allowing you to read the tablet. Once
you have the chant, walk left and drop down. Head left and
collect some more meat from the bag. Eventually you'll come
across a ledge above a lever. Throw the meat across the screen
at the hive, this should knock it onto the Paramite below. Drop
down and pull the lever, the Paramite is too busy with the meat.
Return to the beginning and climb up the platform to the meat
bag and get some more. Keep going up and jump left across
the gap when you reach the top. Walk left onto the next screen
and stand next to the lever. Tap up and throw the meat so it
lands near the paramite. When it starts eating, pull the lever
and it will be crushed. Walk left and lure the Paramite onto the
previous screen. It'll go to eat the meat you dropped before and
you can repeat the same trick to kill it. Walk back onto the
screen it was guarding and chant to open the doors.

Trial 2 - Chase the Paramite you encounter left until you get

to a screen with a meat bag. Climb up the platform to the left of the screen and go up. You'll get to a ledge adjacent to a paramite. Continue to climb and walk right to come to a lever. Sneak towards it and the boulder will start to roll at you, run from it off the ledge. The boulder will kill the Paramite. Go back and pull the lever then jump into the hole. You'll eventually come to another lever. Pull it and return to the meat bag. Throw some meat to attract the Paramite and quickly drop down and run left. Climb up the ledge near the door and chant to open the exit.
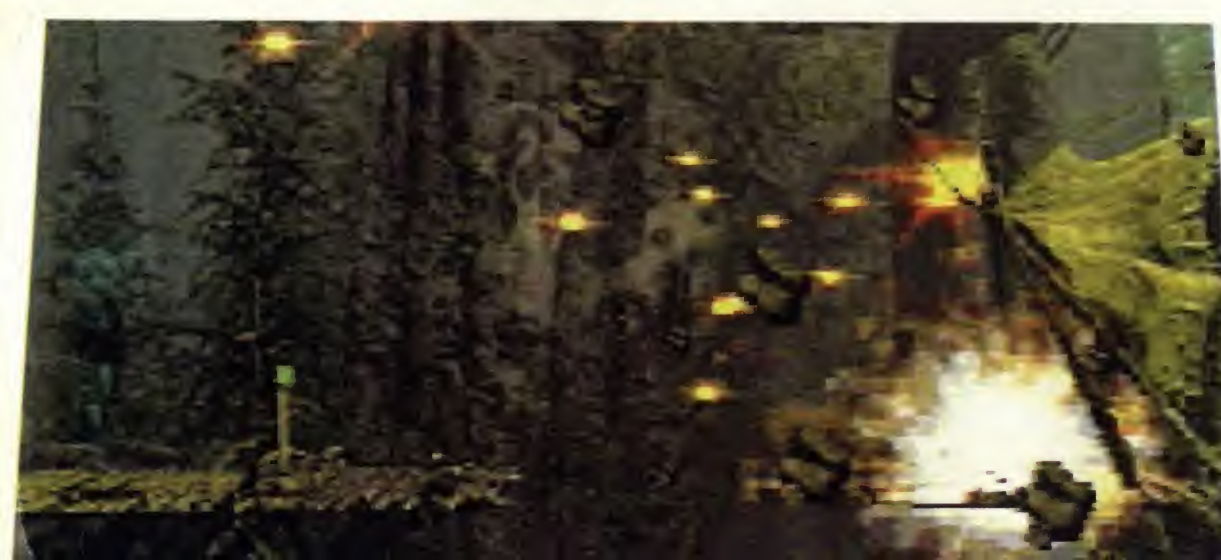
Trial 3 - Climb up the first platform you see and go left. Jump over the gap and jump back right to reach the lever. Pull it to bring down a lift, so take it back up to the top. Stand under the debris and jump up to get onto a platform. Get some meat from the bag and go back down to the stone tablet. Throw the meat to the right of the screen to distract the Paramite. Get the password from the tablet (hold R1, Triangle, X, Triangle, X, Triangle, Circle). Give this to the Mudokon and he'll give you the power of the rings. Lower yourself back down to the mine and lever and chant. The mines will blow, pull the lever and return to the Mudokon. Repeat the password to get another ring and return to the meat bag. Activate the ring power to destroy the mines and pull the lever. Go back to the hole which is now open. Jump through and quickly run left. Grab onto the ledge near the door and exit.

Trial 4 - Run left to attract the guard and then turn back and climb back up to where you started. Chant to possess him, then shoot the other guard. Walk left until you reach the swinging boulders. Use three standing jumps to get across before the bat finds you. Tiptoe onto the next screen and activate the time bomb, the run right. The stone tablet has another chant and pull the lever the activate the torch. Go back to the swinging rocks. Jump from the middle of each rock so that you hang from the edge on the other side to avoid the bat. Roll through the tunnel on your right and stop dead on the next screen. Throw the rock you picked up earlier to clear the way.

Trial 5 - Drop down and go left. The dark patches trigger the falling rocks, so lure the first paramite here and squish him. Activate the tablet to get the chant for the bells and return right. Roll under the tunnel and tiptoe onto the next screen. Get close and when the others drop down, run left and they'll get crushed. Go back and activate the torch. Go back to the bells and chant to exit.

Trial 6 - Walk right to a set of swinging rocks. When you jump, crouch as soon as you land. On the next screen, avoid the bat and disarm the bomb. Climb up and disarm the next bombs near the lever. Jump over the gap to the left and sneak to the noose on the next screen. Face right before you jump and grab it, then run as soon as you land. Run off the ledge and grab it to avoid the Slig. Return to the exit!

Crash Bandicoot

PSX

Ultimate Password:
For access to all 32 levels, both keys and all gems, enter the following password:
Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, X, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, X, X, X, X

Dynasty Warriors

PSX

Play as Sun Shang Xiang:
To play as Sun, go to the Title Screen. Highlight "1P battle" and the press: left, left, up, down, Triangle, Sqaure, L1, R1. Now go to the character select screen to select the new character.

Edge of Skyhigh

PSX

Level Select:
Pause the game, press and hold L1+L2+R1+R2 and press Triangle, Square, Right, Down, Left, Up

Fighting Force

PSX

Invincibility and Level Select:
At the main screen (1 PLAYER, 2 PLAYER, and OPTIONS) hold Left + Square + L1 + R2 until "Cheat Mode" appears at the bottom of your screen. Quickly choose OPTIONS and you can enable Invincibility or start on any level.

Moto racer

PSX

Enter any of these on the title screen.
CPU bikes limited to 50 Km/h:
Down, Down, Down, Circle, L1, Square, L2, Down, Down, X
Enable All Normal Tracks:
Up, Up, Left, Right, Down, Down, Square, R2, Triangle, X
Enable All Reversed Tracks:
Down, Down, Right, Left, Up, Up, Circle, L2, Triangle, X
Pocket Bikes:
Up, Down, R2, L2, Down, Up, L1, X
Race at Night:
Up, Circle, L1, Down, Triangle, L2, Square, Left, R1, X
Reverse Mode:
Left, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, R1, L1, Triangle, X
Turbo Boost:
Up, Up, Up, Triangle, R1, Triangle, R2, Up, Up, X
View Credits:
Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square, Up, Right, Left, X
View Ending:
Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Triangle, L1, Up, R2, X

NHL Breakaway 98

PSX

Alternate Uniforms:
After hitting Start Game on the setup screen, **Right + Square** until the rink comes up. This only works for visiting teams with third jerseys (Anaheim, Boston, Chicago, Tampa Bay, Rangers.)
Cheat Menus:
While playing, pause the game and press R1, R2, Right, Left, R1 to access two cheat menus.

Tigershark

PSX

Enter these codes at the password prompt.
BUGGY: Bug riders preview movie
BURAN: No collisions
DNEPR: Collision boxes
KAMOV: Sound test menu
KIEV: Movie menu
KIROVI: Infinite ammunition
KURSK: Invulnerability
LENIN: Don't get shot at
MINSK: Reset all cheats
ROGOV: Random-colored terrain polygons
RUBLE: Improved weapons
SNEEG: Bonus Sea Hunter game
SOYUZ: Minimal gravity

VOLGA: Random-colored terrain boxes

Destruction Derby

SATURN

Invulnerability:
Enter your name as **"!DAMAGE!"**.
Choose the number of opponents:
Enter your name as **"NPLAYERS"**

Madden 98

SATURN

Bonus Teams:
Enter these names in the create player menu, it doesn't matter what kind of player you create, it's the name that counts.
ORRS HEROES: EA Sports Team
LOIN CLOTHT: iburon Team
LEADERS: All Time Leaders
COACH: All Time All Madden
PAC ATTACK: All 60's Team
STEELCURTAIN: All 70's Team
GOLD RUSH: All 80's Team
ALOHA: NFC
LUAU: AFC
Secret Stadiums:
Enter these names in the create player menu. As with the teams, it doesn't matter what kind of player you create, it's the name that counts.
JETSONS: Astrodome (Old Oilers)
DAWGPOUND: Cleveland Browns Stadium
SNAKE: Old Oakland Stadium
BIG SOMBRERO: Old Tampa Bay Stadium
DANDAMAN: Old Miami Dolphins Stadium
OLDDC: RFK Stadium (Old Redskins)
SHARKSFIN: Tiburon Sports Complex
GHOST TOWN: Wild West (late 1800's Texas)

Need for Speed

SATURN

Cheat Mode:
To enable cheat mode and add a new track, select Tournament Mode and enter the password **"TSYBNS"**. Lost Vegas will appear in the list of tracks.
This code must be entered before any other code will work.
Desert Springs track:
Hold **L + R** while selecting the Rusty Springs track.
Rally Mode:
For an offroad race, hold **L + R** while selecting any track except Rusty Springs.
Hidden Jump in Lost Vegas:
Start a rally race on the Lost Vegas track, then look for the section of the track that is under construction. Go to the end of that sections, turn

around, and keep going until you hit a hidden jump. Airborne!!
Warrior Car:
To race in the Warrior Car, enter the Cheat Mode code, then exit tournament mode and hold **L + R** when selecting a car.

Pandemonium

SATURN

Enter one of these on the password screen:
BORNFREE: Level Select
ALMABHOL: Open all levels
HARDBODY: Invincibility
VITAMINS: Gain 31 lives
CORONARY: Plenty of hearts to keep you healthy
EVILDEAD: Immortal enemies
INANDOUT: Quitting returns you to the map
BODYSWAP: Press Z to swap characters in mid-game
OTTOFIRE: Special weapons never run out of power
TOMMYBOY: Takes you to a pinball screen when you finish a level
CASHDASH: Takes you to a "speed greed" screen when you finish a level

Saturn Bomberman

SATURN

Bonus Battle Game Characters:
For two new battle game characters, hold **L + R** on the first screen that appears when you

enter Battle Mode. The characters are Yuna, a very fast girl with Bomb Boot and Manto, a bear with Power Glove.
Easy Win in the Soccer Stadium:
Kick a bomb into the goal and get out of the way fast cause it cause explosions clear across the field if all the blocks are blown up.
Extra Lives:
For 3 extra lives in the Normal Game, try playing between 10:00am and 11:00am or set your Saturn's clock to that time.

Soviet Strike

SATURN

Cheat Codes:
Enter these codes at the password screen.
ALBATROSS: 1/2 fuel consumption
FREEBIE: 1 extra life
VOODOO: 4 extra lives
GABRIEL: More powerful weapons
COLDPIZZA: Unlimited fuel
Level Passwords:
KRAZHA: Black Sea
VERBLUD: Caspian
YADRO: Dracula
PERIWOROT: Kremlin
Unlimited Ammo and Fuel:
Enter the password ADRENALINE for unlimited ammunition. To replenish your fuel, hold button B when your fuel gauge drops to 10. Continue to hold B until your fuel drops all the way to 0 and resets itself to 100.

Extreme-G

N64

To change your name, press the Right shoulder button on the bike selection screen. Try some of these
Boulder Dash:
Start a new Contest. When the name prompt appears, press R again and enter your name as "roller".
Extreme Speed:
For the ultimate challenge, try the **"Extreme Mode."** Simply enter **"xtreme"** as your name at the name selection screen (Contest Mode) and XG cranks up the speed even more. Combine with Fisheye for some insane action.
Extremely Ghostly:
Enter the word **"ghostly"** at the name entry screen (Contest Mode) and all the track polygons will be transparent. You can now see right through walls and even the very ground you race on.
Fisheye Lens:
Go to CONTEST mode and enter your name as **"fisheye"** (all lower case.) If you did it right you'll hear a tone and the screen will be distorted when you start racing.
Magnify Mode:
Enter the word **"magnify"** (all lower keys) at the name entry screen and your view will be strangely distorted (magnified). Your bike is now at the very bottom and everything will seem huge.

confirmation sound. Now start a race and all drivers should be invisible, but you can still see their shadows and weapons.

Ugly Mode:
Enter **"uglymode"** at the name selection screen (Contest) and you can see what Extreme-G would look like without mip-mapping and texture transparencies.

Unlimited Turbo Boosts:
So Extreme-G is still not fast enough for you? Enter the word **"nitroid"** at the name selection screen and you get unlimited turbo boosts. Try this code with the fisheye code for some of the fastest racing ever seen!

Win by Quitting:
Enter your name as **"RA50"** at the name selection screen. If you now quit during a race at any point, the game will still pretend that you finished it in whatever position you were when you selected the quit option.

Wireframe Mode:
Want to know what a Color Virtual Boy version of Extreme-G would look like? Start a new Contest and enter your name as **"wired"** (all lower keys). This will eliminate all textures and only give you wireframes.

Try out this fun Easter Egg: Enter your name as **"XGTEAM"** at the name entry screen (you should hear a confirmation noise), then go back and change it to the first name of one of the game's programmers, such as Ash, Greg, John, Shawn, Justin (you can find more names in the credits). The faces of the Extreme team will now appear on top of the bikes.

Race Upside Down:
Enter the word **"antigrav"** at the name entry screen (Contest Mode) and you will finally be able to race upside down without standing on your head.

Random Weapons:
For a touch of chaos, enter your name as **"arsenal"**. You'll receive a different type of missile every few seconds.

Shoot Fergus:
The programmers of Extreme-G have hidden the face of Probe's director in the game. Enter your name as **"FERGUS,"** then go into the Shoot 'em Up Mode. The drones will now have turned into Fergus's face.

Slippery Track:
Enter **"banana"** at the name entry screen (Contest Mode). The tracks now super slippery and the racings even tougher!

Stealth Mode:
Enter **"stealth"** (all lower keys) at the name select screen (Contest Mode) and you will hear a

Men in Black

PC

During the game, press esc. to get the main menu.
Type **DOUGMATIC** several times until it drops you back into the game.
The cheats are now activated.
Press esc. Again and try these:
GIVEME: this will give you all the weapons.
AGENTJ, AGENTK, AGENTL will swap between agents.

NBA Live 98

PC

Secret Teams:
In the Main Screen, click on Rosters, then click on Create Custom Team. Enter one of the following names as the name of the Custom Team to access the Secret Teams which are made up of the entire NBA Live 98 Production Crew.
EA Europals
Hitmen AllSorts
Hitmen Coders
Hitmen Earplugs
Hitmen Idlers
Hitmen Pixels
QA Campers
QA DBuggers
QA Testtubes
TNT Blasters

Tomb Raider 2

PC

Level Skip:
While playing press the Forward Slash key (/) so that Lara will draw a flare. Now, walk one step forward (hold down the walk key and press the up arrow), take one step backward (hold down the walk key and press the down arrow), turn around 3 full times (doesn't matter which direction), and then do a Forward jump.

All Weapons Code: While playing press the Forward Slash key (/) so that Lara will draw a flare. Now, walk one step forward (hold down the walk key and press the up arrow), take one step backward (hold down the walk key and press the down arrow), turn around 3 full times (doesn't matter which direction), and then do a Backward jump.

Pandemonium

PC

Level codes:
1. OMAAEBIA
2. NAABEBAI
3. ENAIAKBI
4. PEIAIBBA
5. KFCACICE
6. AFICBAIM
7. NGIAIBJJ
8. EHIIAKAC
9. NIIAIBKB
10. AHICBAJE
11. LOCACMGI
12. KACACIIM
13. OAIAIDLB
14. ELIIAODC
15. OEIAIELJ
16. OGIAJEEB
17. AHMCBCMD
18. AJECBDEF

The following three codes will give you 14 ankhs, 8 hearts (that's one more than they said was possible), and give you access to all the levels. Try the different weapons out!
AOIMFPIJ: fire
AOEMDPIJ: ice
AOMMHPIJ: shrink
OTTOFIRE: permanent weapon.
VITAMINS: gives 31 Ankhs (lives).

Test Drive 4

PC

To enter a cheat code, first go to the Save Game screen. Select Slot 10, type in the cheat code and press [ENTER]. You can use multiple cheat codes together.
Cheat codes:
NOAICARS: No AI racers in the LAN game
STICKIER: No 3D collisions (you can still spin each other but your cars will not leave the ground)
AARDVARK: All collisions turned off
ITSLATE: No special effects (3Dfx version only)
CREDITZ: Show Credits with cool pics
SRACLLA: Unlock All Cars
LEVELLA: Unlock All Tracks
SPAZZY: Test Drive on Acid
BANDW: Black & White Mode
MIKTROUT: BIG Cars
MPALMER: Mini Cars
GONZON: Fast Forward Mode
GONZOFF: FF Mode Off
BIRDVIEW: View From Above

Test Drive 4

PSX

Bonus Cars and Mirror Tracks:
To unlock reversed tracks enter your name as KNACKED
To unlock 4 bonus cars (Viper GTS-R, '69 Dodge Daytona, TVR 12/7 Project and Pitbull Special) enter your name as SAUSAGE.
UNFORTUNATELY: To use these codes you must be fast enough to have your time entered on the high score screen (make sure to turn checkpoints on from OPTION screen). The easiest way to do this is to go to the drag race and pick the Jaguar as your car. Run the race and then quit. If you are fast enough, it will ask for your name.

Enter one of the codes. If you have the music turned off, you will hear the announcer shout "GO!".
After entering the codes make sure you save your game to the memory card. Otherwise, you will have to run this each time you play.

Toca Touring Cars

PSX

Cheat Codes:
Type in the following as the driver's name. If you did it right you'll hear Tiff Needell say "Cheat mode enabled."
CMGARAGE: extra cars
CMNOHITS: collision detection off
CMCOPTER: view of helicopter
CMCHUN: go-kart view
CMSTARS: stary sky backdrop
CMTOON: cartoon horizon
CMMICRO: overhead viewpoint
CMDISCO: disco fog
CMLOGRAV: low gravity (affects cones)
CMRAINUP: rain falls upwards
XBOOSTME: all car speeds doubled

Tomb Raider 2

PSX

All Weapons:
1) Get on a flat surface where you can jump
2) Sidestep left, sidestep right, sidestep left
3) Hold the WALK button and move backwards then forwards. Release the WALK button.
4) Turn around three times
5) Jump backward and press Circle (the ROLL button) in the air
Exploding Lara
While playing, hold the WALK button and sidestep Left, then Right, then Left, then step Forward, then step Backwards. Then turn Lara around three times in any direction, then jump forward and while in the air press the ROLL button.
Goodbye Butler
Tired of the butler following you around everywhere jingling his teacups in Lara's home? Walk into the kitchen and open the freezer, go inside and wait for the butler to arrive. Once he comes in jump over him and close the door behind you.
Level Skip
1) Get on a flat surface where you can jump
2) Sidestep left, sidestep right, sidestep left
3) Hold R1 and move backwards then forwards release R1
4) Turn around three times
5) Then Jump forward and press Circle in the air

There are some games too good to miss out on...
We wouldn't miss

x-men vs street fighter

on console for the world, so we'll be doing an
import review next issue...

Hado-ken!

A quick guide on what NOT to put in a letter if you want it published. Any letters with the following text in them are likely candidate to be thrown in the bin. This is not an attempt to stifle what you write, it is just to let you know the deal and thus save you some time, angst and forty-five cents.

• *"I'm sick of you not printing my letters" or "this is the Nth time I've sent you a letter and you haven't printed any yet". We get so much mail that we could fill a whole issue with letters alone each month, so don't get offended if we don't pick yours.*

• *"If you don't print this, I'll stop buying your mag." Idle threats are very tedious. We don't care how good the rest of your letter is... write this, and your letter gets binned.*

• *Tons of swearing. The odd expletive here or there doesn't bother us, but there's been an alarming increase in the amount of swearing in letters sent in over the last three months or so. Give it a rest.*

• *Questions about which console to buy. We're an independent magazine, so telling you which console to buy is a no-no, as that would be taking sides.*

• *Letters asking for phone numbers and addresses. Use 013 just like everyone else.*

• *Letters that ask about cheats. We don't do the cheats in Hyper, they're done for us by UGH. Call the numbers provided on the cheats pages if you need help.*

• *Questions about things that aren't legally sound. Asking us questions about pirate related activities may be interesting, but unfortunately we can get in trouble if we give you the answers.*

• *Letters bitching about the allocation of editorial content for various systems. Despite some accusations, there is no bias for or against giving coverage to any particular system. At times it may not seem that way, but that's only because you don't get to see the attempts we make to get various software that doesn't come in, or see what goes on in*

general at the Hyper office and in the games industry. We don't mind you asking why something is done the way it is, but don't bitch about it when you don't know the details.

• *Letters that focus on asking questions about a game we've recently reviewed. Because we work around a month in advance, you may be sending us mail asking why we haven't reviewed a game yet, when we actually have... it just simply hasn't come out. There's no point in printing these letters, as the reviews answer the questions.*

• *Also, try and keep your letters as short as you can. When we have to cut letters to fit in the mag, big letters go first. Hope that'll result in a little less frustration for you all,*

DAN

ABOUT THE WALLPAPER
Dear Hyper,
My sister and I are devoted fans of yours; well my sister is really a suck up who likes reading the captions of your mag and absolutely loves the Sega stuff. My name is Matt and I love collecting your posters inside each Hyper magazine and I couldn't wait for issue #50 to come out but some of the posters you put out are SH##!. Usually you send out the best posters possible, but some posters like crappy little "cartoons" of Mario flying around happy as Larry when some mean dude is trying to obliterate him is freakin' me out; I mean, what do you think we are...? KIDS?! (pardon the expression)!

In this paragraph I'm going to tell you why I'm really writing to the best gaming mag in Australia (NOT).

It's really going to be in this paragraph. I'm writing in because in Hyper mag #50 it said to write in and tell you what we (us readers) thought of your very first poster issue; well I'm going to tell you it was the best magazine I bought in my entire life. I'm sure all my friends who purchased this issue would've written in to tell you how great it was, but they elected me to on their behalf. Well what are friends for?....Please tell me I really want to know.

Well, apart from the

"cartoons" of Mario 64, Doom 64 and that real crap one of Interstate 76 with the chick, hippy and the other aphronautical hair do all look like they were made in a warehouse that made wooden dolls from the 70's and 80's and cars from the year ten thousand and one; or to put in simpler terms the McDonalds. But apart from these minor set backs the posters were good, and were everything I wanted (and didn't want) to see in the first poster issue of HYPER!!

(I'll take everything back if I get issue #52 for free!)

MATT (AND SISTER),
Thanks for your response. As for what we think you are, we think you're a diverse bunch of people, and some of you are kids, which is fine. With something like a poster mag, it's impossible to make everyone happy, but we tried to ensure there was enough stuff in there for young and old. Friends are for borrowing games off... surely?

As for things like the I76 poster. It's a bit of a case of different strokes for different folks. Some folks love it, others, like yourself, don't like it at all.

JUST SO YOU KNOW

Dear Hyper

I really need you to publish this, so I'll keep it brief. I have been having an argument with a friend about the software company Id. Is their name pronounced as a one-syllable word as in the "ego", the "alter-ego" and the "id", or is it "I-D", as in initials for something or identification. I would appreciate if you cleared this up for us.

FISH NERD
It's id, as in the "Wizard of id".

A VERY SAD TALE

Dear Hyper,

"Sometimes in a man's life he has to break away from computer games and start spending more time with real people". Those were the exact words of my girlfriend shortly before she died in a car accident. But as I had just discovered deathmatching on Quake I ignored her request and spent bare minimum with her in between Work and Computer games. I was 26 at the time and have just turned 27. 3 months ago, and now I have realised how boring I must have been to be around. I even remember once

when my girlfriend and I were having some friends over for a barbeque I got up while waiting for dinner to be ready and played Need for speed for half an hour. So since Melissa has died I haven't even picked up a hand control or linked up with anybody. So a word of advice to anyone in a serious relationship, don't neglect your partner by putting computer games as the first priority in your life.

Chris Helmsley

CHRIS,
We're really sorry to hear about the loss of your girlfriend, and especially sorry that you feel computer games took up too much of your time that you had with her. This situation really applies to any hobby anyone has, and it's often the case that the urge to play computer games is not understood by those that don't have the hobby. We would however encourage you not to give up games altogether, as they weren't responsible for Melissa's passing, and by the sounds of things, you're not likely to neglect a partner again for games. For the rest of you out there that are in a relationship who spend a lot of your time playing games, find out if it bothers your partner, because going through what Chris did is the least pleasant way of discovering you're overdoing it.

QUESTION CITY

Dear Purveyors of senseless filth,

Just kidding. I'm not writing to express my contempt for the vulgar language that is becoming more frequent in your letter section. Though I do find it odd that people use so many profanities when writing letters (a lesson in how not to write to a potential employer kids). I am in fact writing with a few queries about the gaming industry.

1. Is there any chance of seeing Scud Racers on Saturn?

2. Assuming Sega's new console won't be along for a year or two, isn't it a bit early to close up shop for the Saturn?

3. Is a 3D sonic game ever coming to Saturn?

4. Are Doom 64's levels as good as id's original levels?

5. Zelda 64 appears to be a completely different game to Final Fantasy 7. Is it?

Thanking you in advance for sharing your wisdom with me. I appreciate it, and hope it helps me make a wise decision in choosing a console.

KUESTION KONG

KK,
We find the urge to swear endlessly a bit strange too. C'est la vie.

1. It's not on any of the release schedules we receive from Sega Europe, so at this stage, the answer would be no.

2. Definitely. There's been some good Saturn games out lately, and with a couple more to come (like Burning Rangers and Panzer Dragoon Saga), the system may be going slowly... but it's still going. Those of you who own Japanese Saturns are probably at this stage enjoying X-Men vs Street Fighter like we are... as it's the most fun 2D fighter we've ever seen, and a perfect arcade conversion.

3. Well, Sonic R was 3D, and it had Sonic, but it wasn't quite what you were after was it? Considering that the next Sega console is supposedly going to be released in Japan around the end of '98, we may see the first 3D Sonic platformer as one of the opening titles for that machine, to help bolster its early sales.

4. Pretty much, yes.

5. Yes. Zelda 64 is an action based RPG, whereas Final Fantasy 7 is not. FF7 uses a turn based combat system, which is more based upon equipment allocation, and numerical tactics. Zelda 64 looks like it will be more free flowing, but wether or not Nintendo can match the epic storyline of FF7 on a cartridge will be interesting.

STICKS AND STONES

To Hyper,

Yes I was the guy a couple of issues ago that wrote in calling you guys assholes and you didn't seem too happy about it, but I was just trying to start my letter a bit different than everyone else O.K. And in the issue after that someone wrote in and asked how you could stand all the letters starting with the same thing and you said that you sort of just ship past the starts of each letter, so I thought I was doing you a favour by starting my letter a bit different. Anyway answer my questions now or I'll write to you everyday (NOOO!!)

1. Will Tomb Raider 2 on PlayStation use the double analog controller.

2. Do the reviewers pick the screenshots out in the reviews.

3. How many Memory card blocks does Final fantasy VII use

YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

To the men who claim they own us,

I am a representative of the Mafia, and we would appreciate it very much if ya didn't make jokes of us. The Mafia, believe it or not, is the driving force behind the gaming industry. How? How can a bunch of Italian, stereotyped, sore throated blokes rule a multi-billion dollar industry? You want proof? I'll give it. You may ask, where our holy influence takes shape. Ya see, we put a bit a pressure on a couple of guys, but it never works out. Ya think ya gettin' a non-mafia game, but the name is different. You doubt. You doubt me. I own McDonalds and the Australian Liberal Party (baldy, bushy eyebrowed man is a nottin') and you doubt. I tell you, 98% of all games are done by the Mafia. Here's a list of our most notable efforts.

Air Combat = F-10 Mafia men
Ultima series = Little Italy of the 1800's
Doom = The lives of the first three Dons.
Quake = The lives of the last three Dons.
Phantasmagoria = The ten easy steps to Mafia body removal.
Blade Runner the game = Donnie Brassco on the run.
...just to mention a few.

And the greatest atrocity, the single event responsible for all Mafiahappenings of the last year:
Mario Kart = Mafia Kart.

I am bringing my point to you, and if you no print, I send in my boys and don't be surprised if you find Ray Martin's head by your side and Pauline Hanson's testies in ya hands.

Now I spoke my mind, two questions.

Will there be a N64 game for Bond - Tomorrow Never Dies?

Please have a competition with the prize of ten trucks of Soothers.

Yours in blood,

THE GODMOTHER.
Dear Godmother,
Come around on Saturday then and cook me some pasta. Hmmm... now I know why the most famous game characters in the world are called... Mario & Luigi...

In answer to your question, Rare are working on another Bond game - that has been confirmed - but another developer, Black Ops, actually have the rights to the new 007 film. This means that Rare will probably make up a new Bond mission or do one of the old films, and Black Ops will bring us Tomorrow Never Dies.
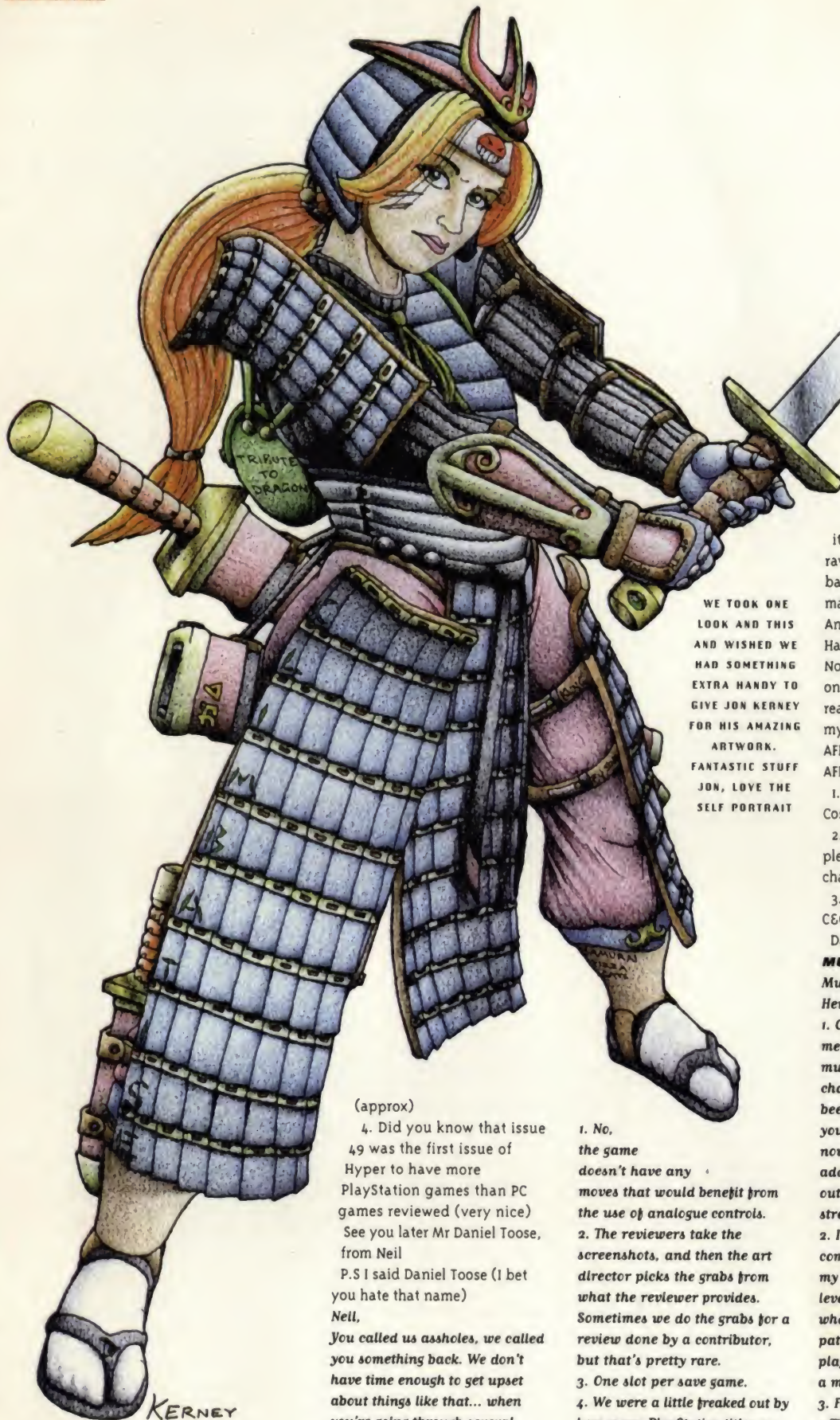
WE TOOK ONE
LOOK AT THIS
AND WISHED WE
HAD SOMETHING
EXTRA HANDY TO
GIVE JON KERNEY
FOR HIS AMAZING
ARTWORK.
FANTASTIC STUFF
JON, LOVE THE
SELF PORTRAIT

KERNEY

(approx)
4. Did you know that issue 49 was the first issue of Hyper to have more PlayStation games than PC games reviewed (very nice)
See you later Mr Daniel Toose, from Neil
P.S I said Daniel Toose (I bet you hate that name)

Neil,
You called us assholes, we called you something back. We don't have time enough to get upset about things like that... when you're going through several hundred letters, you end up being called all sorts of things. And yes, I edited your letter, because the intro where you attempted to call us names again and upset us wasn't really amusing enough to stay there.

1. No, the game doesn't have any moves that would benefit from the use of analogue controls.
2. The reviewers take the screenshots, and then the art director picks the grabs from what the reviewer provides. Sometimes we do the grabs for a review done by a contributor, but that's pretty rare.
3. One slot per save game.
4. We were a little freaked out by how many PlayStation titles we received that month, but that's what came in, so that's what we did. Generally there are more PC games released each month than on any other platform, so if you've been wondering why we've had more PC games in than PSX...

that's why.
P.S. I'd rather be called Daniel than Neil... go figure.

HAPPY TO SUCK
Hiya Hyper,
Kool mag, hope ya don't mind me sucking up but its dumb how all these people rave on and on about how its so bad to give you a bit a thanx for make'n the mag each month. Anyway I totally agree with Ben Hartney who wrote in the November mag about the story on Carmageddon and when I read "chucksters" letter I pooped my pants I was so excited!! I love AFL and would kill to get a GOOD AFL game on PSX and PC. O.K. Q's
1. Any news at all on Diablo 2? Cos I love Diablo!
2. Do you play Battle.net if so please tell us about your best character.
3. Has C&C gifted us with a C&C4?
Dats all from a satisfied reader,
MUZZA

Muzza,
Here's a few answers for you.
1. Other than what we've mentioned previously (Late '98, multiple towns, several new character classes, etc), there's been no more word. The thing you can look forward to right now is Hellfire, which is a Diablo add-on, which should have come out before this mag hits the streets.
2. I used to, as did George, but a combination of cheaters, and my three characters (all 30+ level) mysteriously being deleted when I downloaded an upgrade patch kind of put me off playing. My best character was a mage.
3. Four? We're still waiting for 2. Tiberium Sun is supposedly going to be C&C2, as Red Alert was not considered C&C2 by Westwood.

RETRO TRIP
To all the hypos at Hyper""
After reading the "3 go mad at Redfern" article in issue 48 and finding out that people are more likely to get their letters printed if they bring up a new issue (topic for all the dumb readers out there). I bashed my head with a blade of grass until I found a new issue no-one has mentioned (to my knowledge yet). The game that started the whole genre not Quake (Great Game) not Doom (Greater game). I am of course referring to drum roll please...... Wolfenstein 3D. The thing I cannot understand is Why oh Why it was said to take the 3D shooters to new heights and said to be the first game to use the genre??? Don't get me wrong I LllIOOOOOOVVVvvvveee Doom and all its clones (all 567 of them) but why is Wolfenstein 3D not the king of the Doom genre???. It was the first good 'ol 286 game (remember those days?) and the first game to use the Doom genre. Uhhh if you're not angry with me yet these questions are bound to:
1. Will e3 ever be held in Australia?
2. Could "Random Access" please take up a few pages instead of half of one it is sssoooo cool.
3. Now a question that will give you a headache (I know you love questions like the one I am going to ask). Could I get the exact release date and technical info on these games:
* Curse of Monkey Island
* Blade Runner
* C&C 2: Tiberium Sun
And that's it from me, bye!
GRANT MORRISSEY
Carlingford
NSW

Grant,
Wolfenstein 3D was the starting block, this is not deniable. The reason why it never gets hailed as the king of the Doom genre is obvious... it gets called the "Doom genre". Doom is the game that got everyone hooked, not Wolfenstein 3D. This may mostly be due to PC gamers being much more scarce in those days. To be honest, I'd only wanted a PC for games for the old Ultima games that weren't coming out on Amiga back then, until I saw Doom on PC, at which point I desperately wanted to own a PC. I was keen enough to play through both Doom 1 & 2, on a 386 with no sound card.
Answers:

SICK EM
REX

BLAKE MITCHELL SCORED A FATAL FURY FOR
MAKING US LAUGH WITH THIS ONE.
SORRY BLAKE... IT'S FUNNY.

NIK SADLER SENT IN REX, AND GLEN EVENS SENT
IN THE SUPER-SUMO. BOTH ARE VERY FUNKY...
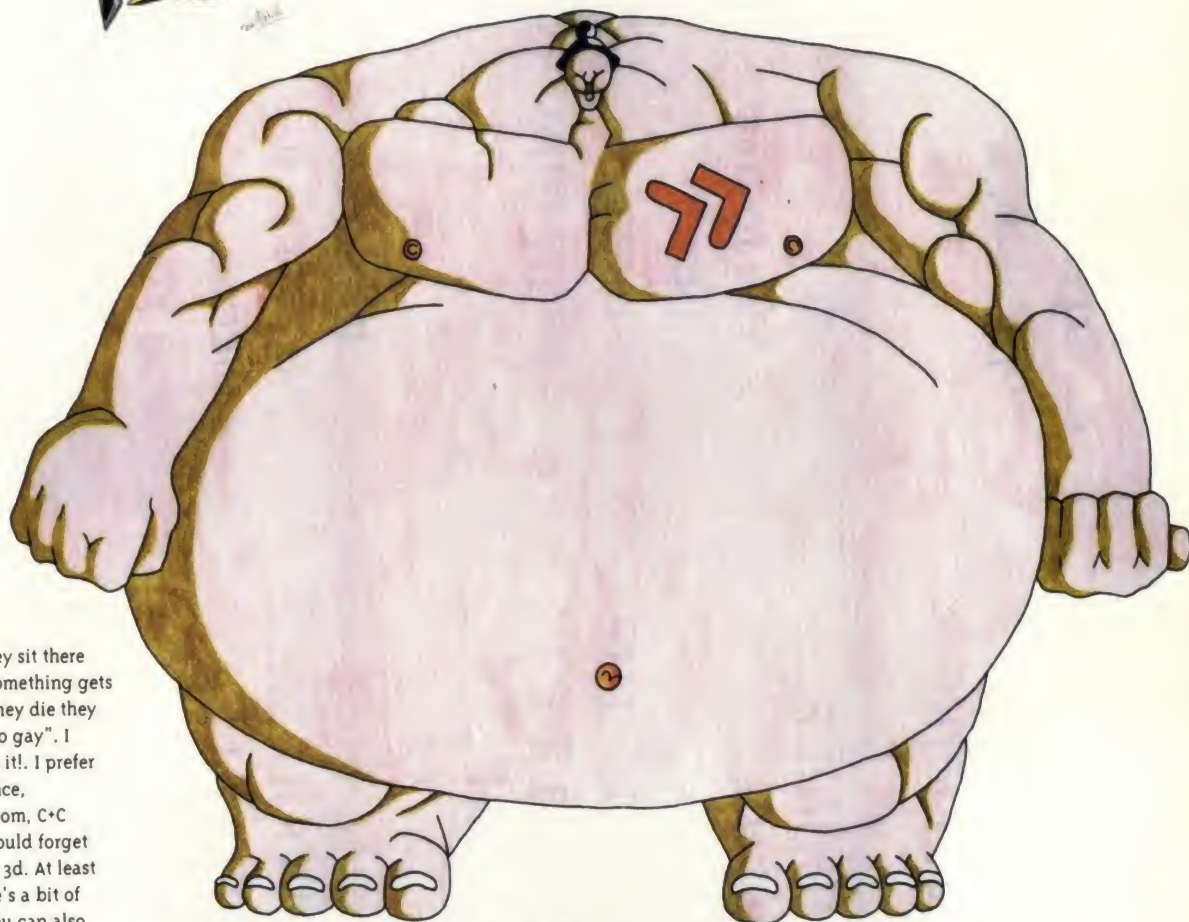
1. No. Basically because the electronic entertainment industry is based mostly in America, the UK, and Japan. It is simply not practical for these companies to bring over all their stuff to show the Australian industry, which is basically too small to warrant such an expenditure. Even if E3 did make it here... it's not open to the general public.

2. Unfortunately, Ollie has left the building, and as a result, so has Random Access. Ollie just had too much else going on to be able to ensure he could keep contributing, so he's now stopped. He wanted to, but that's how things go sometimes.

3. Basically, there's no such thing as the "exact release date". If there's a problem with anything to do with the title, then the date can slip, and this can happen at almost any time leading up to the release date. If we haven't done a review yet, and thus no tech specs, just ask your retailer before you buy it.

FUZZY WUZZY MY ASS!!!

Dear Hyper,
Recently I have been disgusted with the amount of F#$%ing "cute" games around such as Croc and Mario 64. Yeah, you heard me! Why so cute? Tell me? They sit there and smile when something gets killed and when they die they say "Oh, no, I'm so gay". I don't f#$%ing like it!. I prefer games with violence, such as Quake, Doom, C+C games and who could forget the good ol' Duke 3d. At least in Oddworld there's a bit of violence. There you can also have an intellectually stimulating conversation with a half squid-half-slug creature with the brain matter of a treestump.

Well. I have to go disembowel some turkeys now,
Yours resentfully
EUGENE SHEV
Eugene,
The bottom line is, cute games sell. Now some development teams will make a game look cute because they feel that this is the best way to make the game feel the way they wanted, but generally, it's what a lot of the public wants. The only thing you can do about it is, don't buy cute games. It sounds like that's what you're doing already, so maybe you just shouldn't let the cute games get to you, in the same manner non-gamers in positions of power shouldn't be passing judgement on "violent" games.

HYPER INTERIOR DECORATING SERVICES

Dear Hyper crew,
Congrats on the SUPERB!! First poster issue. It was FANTASTIC. Usually my walls are bare with all the white paint flaking off and making a big mess on the floor. It was a horrible sight. Now thanks to you people at Hyper, I now have none of that disgusting wall showing through. One thing I was disappointed in was that many of the good posters were on the back of other good posters, which made my life very difficult trying to decide which one to put up. There was only one way I could over come this dilemma and that was to go down and buy another copy. But what's this, NOT ENOUGH MONEY LEFT!!!. Oh well I guess I'll just have to wait for your next edition. Now for some questions.

1. All my friends are about ready to smash me in the face because I keep going on and on and on about Goldeneye 007, ya see I'm getting it for XMAS. Is it really good or should I have my face smashed in?

2. Apart from Diddy Kong Racing, what other racing game is worth buying for N64?

3. Can you get steering wheels for the N64?

4. Will you be able to tell me if Robotech for N64 will be any good?

5. Finally, I think that this new Sega thingo (you know the 128 bit machine) will go out of date quite quickly, like all of the other Sega consoles. What do you think?
Thanks
NUTMEG
I think it was sick as when in your Goldeneye 007 review you had a picture of a multiplayer screen showing all four players in the same room! AWESOME!!. Can't wait till Christmas so I can slaughter all my friends.
Nutmeg,
We're glad you liked the poster issue. Sorry that you had to choose between two posters, but to print them one sided would make the whole thing cost twice as much to make, and thus a lot more expensive for you to buy, and we wanted to keep the price reasonable.
1. It's really good, but we can't guarantee that you're going to avoid having the stuffing beat out of you if you keep yakking at people about the game.
2. Top Gear Rally and Lamborghini 64 seem to be the best car racing games for the system.
3. Yes. Last issue we had a look at the Top Gear steeing wheel,

AMY PATTERSON'S OUTSTANDING DRAWING ROCKED DA HOUSE!

TOM WOOLEAN SENT IN THIS BIG MECH THINGY... AND WE LIKE IT!

that works for all the current consoles.

4. Not until we actually get a copy of the game to check out.

5. We think it's too early to speculate. However, we are pretty sure that a major key to success in launching a new system is to make sure you launch with some killer games, just like the N64 did. Many people became interested in the N64 because of Super Mario 64 alone, and if Sega do a killer 3D Sonic game, we bet it'll sell by the truckload.

TREETOP GAMER

Dear Mr Dan and Co,

U Blokes are the closest thing to adults that I know of to have such cool jobs. Maybe you guys think it sucks and I can see your point of view. But don't forget you're probably the most coolest games reviewers in the magazine industry.

Anyway, a more personal note why do you think computer games were invented? And don't say because people were bored or any such other shit (can't believe you actually print shit) Will they bring out another Warcraft. If not, why? If so, when? and whoppee!

I ask you advice. I live in Fiji and we are moving far behind the rest of the world. I have been without a computer for two years. I hope to go to Englandy soony toony and would like to know what is the Best PC to purchase.

Have they invented a game on the internet yet that you can go around killing each other- or joining forces or talking or f#$%ing or just basically no boundrys-

rules your basic RPG. A bit like a Dungeon and the flying thingys. Because if not I have had jobs and drawn up maps, designed city created characters and beasties. Where would I go in England to get it into action. Please help

PALM TREE SLEEPER

PTS,

The first computer games were invented not because it was foreseen that there was a market that wanted them, but actually so the first programmers could create some simple programs that they could 1) use to test their skills as programmers, and 2) So they could show things to people that they could interact with a bit. Fortunately, games ended up being created purely for our enjoyment, as opposed to just being mental gymnastics for some dorks in laboratories. There's a Warcraft adventure game coming out, but as for another strategy game, Blizzard has been concentrating on Starcraft, so no news on a WC3. The closest thing to the RPG you want is Ultima Online. As for where to go in England, you could try giving any one of the many game development companies over there a call. Take your pick from the developers you like the best.

MAGNIFYING GLASS MAN

Dear Hyper,

Great mag, it shits all over the others, can you please answer my questions.

1. Do you think that Square will do a compilation of the Final Fantasy series (apart from seven) so that us Australian gamers could play it on Playstation and see why the series caused such a fuss?

2. On your review of Colony wars, look closely on the bottom right screen shot it says "all enemy craft must be destor.." Did they mix up the "O" and the "R" or is this a totally different word from destroyed?

3. Is Duke or Quake being released on PSX?

JOEL MCGARRY

NSW

Joel,

1. It may happen, although I have a sneaking suspicion that even if it did, it may not get a PAL/European release.

2. You really do read everything thoroughly don't you? We can

only assume they made a spelling boo-boo.

3. Both. Although don't expect Quake for a while.

ROCK ON

Dear Hyper,

I have been reading your mag since the Jan '95 issue and I think that you guys are doing a great job, keep it up. I have a couple of queries that I would really appreciate if you could answer

1. In one of the mail-order advertisements (issue 50) for Ultra Popcorn company, they had a game for the Playstation called Rock n' Roll Racing 2. I loved the original RRR on the SNES and have been desperately seeking a sequel since. As I have not heard anything about this PSX sequel in your brilliant mag, can you please tell me if it really does exist and when it's to be released.

2. If I bought a game from those overseas mail-order companies (in America, England, etc) would it work on my Australian PSX or N64 or would I need a convertor.

Thank you immensely for your help

TONY "THE BONY" RUGARI

Adelaide

Tony,

1. Perhaps they were talking about Red Asphalt, which we previewed last issue.

2. Games from England would work. Games from the US would need a converter for your N64, and modifications that void your warranty on your PSX.

WHAT'S GOOD?

Dear Hyper,

I think your mag is the best yada, yada, yada

The reason I wrote in is that I own a Saturn and am very pleased with it's performance so far but I am concerned over the number of third party games as the Playstation gets over 5 top games a month. (A bit too many if you ask me). And the Saturn hasn't had a decent game that rates over 90% in many months so I am considering buying a N64. Please steer me in the right direction. Now for the questions

1. Will there be any Saturn RPG's that match the brilliance of Zelda 64?

2. Can you name some decent Saturn games that are being released shortly?

3. Name some decent N64

games being released shortly?

4. What is your personal favourite multiplayer game on N64, and Saturn?

P.S Where can I get tickets for hyper on ice (as mentioned in your mario kart 64 playguide)

Thanks, **K.STEWART**

KS,

Well, if you're getting the urge to have a large number of new releases to choose from, the Saturn isn't going to deliver. Although if you only want one or two titles, there's life in the old girl yet. As we've said before, buy the system that has the games you want.

1. Visually, no. Grandia looks pretty awesome, but from screenshots alone, Zelda 64 looks better.

2. Burning Rangers, Panzer Dragoon Saga, Grandia.

3. Banjo Kazooie, Yoshi's Story, Silicon Valley.

4. Diddy Kong Racing, Fighters Megamix (X-men vs Street Fighter if you include imports) P.S. Send a $50 cheque written out to Dan Toose, at... never mind.

SHOW US YOUR ID

Dear Hyper,

Great mag and all that kind of stuff. I have been dying to play Mortal Kombat 4 and when I found out that it was out the next Sunday I went straight down to (I better not say) to play it. But it had a f#$%ing curtain round it. I walked in and a Bitch told me to get lost because I was too young. I'm bloody 14. Sure it had blood and stuff but who cares, maybe some overprotective parents. But the shitty thing is they let me play MK1, 2,3 and ultimate and they didn't give a stuff.

Q's

1. Will MK4 come out on N64 or PSX?

2. Will you make an Ultimate Fighting play guide?

3. What the hell is an RPG? Zelda 64 will rule.

Thanks from some **IDIOT** who loves women.

Idiot,

That does seem very stupid... particularly since Mortal Kombat is more popular with teenagers than anyone else. They're cutting off the majority of their market.

1. Yes. N64 version is in development. No confirmation of a PSX version, but we think it will happen.

2. No.

3. Role Playing Game. Stuff like Dungeons and Dragons. Yeah it will, won't it?

HIP TO BE SQUARE

Dear Hyper,

I was at my cousin's house not long ago and I played a game that I consider to be one of the greatest games of all time. I am talking about Tobal 2. It was the Jap NTSC version. This game has everything, millions of characters, moves, analog control, FMV endings, the lot. SquareSoft have excelled themselves. We played for what seemed like only minutes, but hours passed by. My cousin then said the game would only be released in Jap territories. Are Squresoft out of their minds? Don't they realise that this game could be one of the biggest selling games on PSX?

STEVEN D

QLD

Steven,

It's awesome isn't it? It's not coming out anywhere other than Japan because Tobal No.1 did so poorly outside of Japan that they abandoned the idea of releasing the sequel elsewhere. This happens far more often than you may notice, as the release lists in Japan are many times longer than those seen here in the Western territories.

GURU?

Dear Hyper mag,

I would like to extol the virtues of my new idea on how to make the console market better for consumers. Here is my idea. I should like your attention now thankyou. How to make the console market better for consumers? Get Sony, Sega and Nintendo to band together to make a single console platform on which they could publish their games. This would allow the consumer to buy one machine and yet still have the choice of buying into a number of different gaming philosophies without having to shell out for a number of different consoles. This would mean that any new console games reviewed in Hyper would be accessible to every gamer. The competition between companies would be lifted exclusively to the software market allowing everybody to buy a single console without feeling as if they have been given no choice in the spread of

what they can buy. So, what do you think of my idea? Does it not have bucket loads of merit?. Will the companies in question not make bucket loads of cash from happy customers? I think they will. Not only that but the consumer will have much more cash to happily spend on games.

Yours sincerely,

HUGO RUNE

P.S Hyper mag is wonderfully well written. Keep up the good work and you may someday have the honour of calling me Guru.

Hugo,

It's a bit like world peace... it can never happen. These companies compete with each other, just like companies compete with one another in EVERY type of industry. They're there to make money, not to ensure you're happy. Think about it... one company is making a product that makes lots of money. Another company thinks, "What a great way to make money, let's get into that line of business". The company that originally came up with the idea is not going to want to share their profits with someone else, so they won't be taking partners like that unless they feel it will financially

benefit the company. There are also merits for the consumer to have multiple systems to choose from. If there was only one system, it would cost a FORTUNE, due to a lack of competition. For example, Nintendo, Sega and Sony didn't drop their prices because they're nice... they did it to compete with one another. It's a noble idea... but it won't happen here, or anywhere else.

P.S. Um... gee. What an honour...

DOCTOR, DOCTOR, GIMME THE NEWS...

Dear Hyper,

I was at a doctors surgery about a month ago and I picked up a copy of Hyper and found it was an unbiased gamers magazine.

I was at my chemist 2 weeks ago and bought issue November 97, read it through, entered the G police competition and sent in my subscription form. The main reason I am writing to you is about Mrs Price's letter. I am a 37 year old male that sustained several back injuries. For the last 3 years I have been in and out of hospital for treatment. I spend 90% of my time in bed due to the severe chronic back

pain I suffer.

I don't want to start preaching who is right, who is wrong about Mrs Price and Hyper mag.

I have to take morphine valium, Digesic and other pain killers- 21 tabs a day.

There is no thrill for me playing under such heavy medication, there would be nothing better for me to play my PlayStation in the lounge. When I take all this medication it even gets to the point where I can't play my hockey or baseball game because I can't see the puck or the ball. I don't want pity but all I can say is fellow gamers I don't think playing games under drugs is cool but you have a choice, I don't.

Anyway Hyper, I'm really enjoying your mag and look forward to the next issue, or hopefully I'll win a copy of G Police. Many

RICHARD DIDCOCK

Kelmscott

WA

Well what can one say to that? We're real sorry to hear about your physical woes Richard, and even sorrier to hear that gaming under the influence of drugs is a downer for you. Or should I say that gaming on downers is a downer.

HK-12 VS FIREBALL

NOW HERE'S SOME ARTWORK THAT DRIPS STYLE ALL OVER THE JOINT, CARE OF DAVE SULLIVAN

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WANTED

Snes games; secret of Mana, Terranigma or any good SNES RPG's. Ring Tony on 08 8269 7780.

Sega 32x Game; Virtua Fighter, Megadrive games-: Rob to the rescue, Rainbow Islands and King Salmon Fishing. Ph Andrew (07) 5485 4418

SNES games. I want to purchase Shadowrun for SNES. Will pay up to $30-40. Call Aaron on 02 9797 9852

I have a Japanese 64 which works fine but I dont have colour. I am told I need an NTSC TV with a scart lead. I have American Games (which are cheaper/ more variety than Aust). Games include Mario 64, Mario Kart, Doom, Hexen and Cruisin VSA. Four controllers and converter, will take American, Japanese and British games. Can anyone offer advice or will consider swap. PH Barry (03) 6287 1411 nights. (Also want DK for SNES)

Phantasy star 2 (Sega). Desperately want to buy. If you have the game but don't want to sell it, could I hire it from you for a short time. Please, please, please. Call Lyn on 02 9520 6139

Battle beast add- the one with the create a character on PC Pentium 133 Windows 95. Call Colin Mon-Fri after 4pm on 07 3203 3937

Command and Conquer. Preferably boxed with instructions. Will pay up to $35. Ph 08 9293 2279

FOR SALE

Sega Saturn games- Nights $40, Daytona USA $30, Virtua Fighter $30, High Octane $30, Sega Rally $50, Virtua Cop + Gun $50. Ph (079) 466 934 after 5pm.

SNES killer instinct Action Pack- Killer Instinct Game and Limited Cd, Mortal Kombat 3, Zero the Kamikaze Squirrel, Unirally and 2 controlers. Everything in Mint condition with Boxes and Instructions $250 ono. Ph Darren on (03) 5523 3788 area code 3305

Saturn games: Doom, Tomb Raider, Virtua Fighter 2, Sega rally. All boxed and instructions, everything good condition. $35 each. PH (043) 692 786. Can deliver to some parts of Sydney and Newcastle.

Gameboy with Night Sight Boxed with instructions $70, UMK3 SNES (Jap) boxed without instructions $30. SNES Converter boxed with instructions $20. Prices negotiable. Phone Ryan on (07) 3800 6574

Sony playstation (PAL), with memory card, two extra controllers, one standard, the other is the analogue controller, also V-Rally, Rage racer and Darklight conflict. All are only two months old and are in immaculate condition for $400 ono. Call george on PH (02) 9597 3425

Playstation Games Resident Evil and Street Fighter Alpha. Both are in good condition and work fine. $50 each o.n.o. PH Mark (02) 6258 4975

Game Boy, Booster Boy, NBA Jam T.E and FiFa. All in excellent condition. $100. Brisbane and Caboolture area only. PH Curtis (07) 3408 9862

Super Nintendo + 2 controllers for $65. I also have 3 games, NBA all star challenge, Stunt Racer FX, Super Mario Kart and an adaptor, Super Gameboy (which lets you play Gameboy games on your Super Nintendo) all these games are $20 each o.n.o. Or the lot, which is the Super Nintendo and all games, for $120 a saving of $25, Please call Karl on 02 9958 7584

PC-CDRom games. Microsoft "GEX" and "Harvey Norman, the CD-Rom" demo CD. $26 for the two of them. Call 07 3397 5811 (Brisbane area only)

Super Nintendo with SN Pro pad, Super Nintendo and vintage pad and 3 games still in boxes. Dk 2, NBA Jam Killer instinct for $110. Plus free control pad which doesn;t work well. Call Rory on 08 9337 8674

Super Nintendo-$70, Mario-$15, Mario2-$15, Mario Paint +Mouse- $50, Mortal Kombat-$15, Mortal Kombat 3 -$20, Michael Jordan: Lost in the Windy City American- $15, Super Bommer Man American -$15, Sim City-$20, Primal Rage- $20, Earth Worm Jim-$15, Super Metroid-$15, Honey Bee Control Pad-$20, Converter $25. TOTAL $330. Call Kyle on 02 6241 3790

Mega CD Games: Prince of Persia and INXS forr $40 each. Top condition in the case software. Call Anthony on 02 4631 1819

Mortal Kombat with manual, cheats and box plus poster for $70 or will swap for N64, or Quake 2 or Jedi Night or Tomb Raider 1 or 2. Call Ryan on 9629 1595 between 3-6

SNES: 2 control pads, 11 games, 2 adaptor (one Universal Adaptor, 3 month old.) Games : Fatal fury 2, Ranma 1/2, MK3, Yoshi's Island, Killer instinct, Ultraman, SF2, SF Zero 2 (needs Super Famicom), Super mario World, NBA JAM ets. In good condition. Will sell all for $600. Call Justin 07 3216 9098. 5-5-7Pm weekdays and 6-7 on weekends (Qld only)

Cheap PC CD-Rom!!. Dark Forces $25, Rebel Assault $20, Rebel Assault 2 $30, Wing Commander 3 $30, Comanche CD $15, Overload CD $25, Privater and righteous Fire $20, Terra Nova $30, Strike Commander and Tacticle Operations $20, Assassin 2015 $20, Syndicate plus $15, UFO and Master of Orien $30, fantasy general $30, Chaos Overloads $20, Beneath a Steel Sky CD $30, Actua soccer $30. Or the lot for $350. Call Ben on 07 3824 3218. Brisbane area only!

1 Sega saturn system, 5 game, 2 control pads and 2 guns. All boxed and complete with instructions. Games are Tomb raider, Daytona USA, Virtua cop 1, Virtua Cop 2 and Virtua fighter. Sorry no separate sale. Excellent condition- all for $350. PH Glenn on 03 95708796

N64 with 3 controllers including Super Mario 64, Wave Racer 64, Doom 64, Mario Kart 64, Goldeneye 007, Cruisin' USA, Star Wing 64 and Killer Instinct Gold for just $99.95. Call Daniella any time after school on 02 9685 3362

N64 games- mario kart- $60, Turok- $60. All boxed with instructions. Call Chris on 03 9560 2469

Playstation with 1 controller, memory card, Four games- Twisted metal, Ridge Racer Rev, Theme Park and Tekken 2. In good condition with new mother board. All this for an incredible $399.98 and receive seven demos plus two Playstation mags for free. Call Sam on 02 6230 2319. NSW prefered, must be able to pick up.

Sony Playstation, 1 controller, 1 memory card, mouse & pad and the following games- Formula 1 '97, Destruction Derby 2, Soviet Strike, Alien Trilogy, Warhammer-Shadow of the Horned Rat, Simcity 2000 and Panzer general, the lot $350, will not separate. Call Robert bus hours on 03 9627 6777. Melb only

WOW! Do you want an Atari 2600 with 14 games ? Yes 14 games? Well you can. I'm selling my original Itari with 14 games for only $34.95 and if you pick up the phone now, then I'll throw in 2 joy sticks which are compatible with Sega mega drive! It's an ideal gift for anyone. Call John on 02 9520 9841 between 7-8 pm ,7 days a week.

Diablo, Warcraft 2 expansion set, Warcraft 1, Dungeon Keeper or Police Quest Swat which are all in there boxes with instructions. If you want any give Alec a call on 03 9787 8574 after 5pm

PC "Fade to Black" CD-Rom with manuals . All excellent condition. Played twice. Box in OK condition. Will sell for $40 or swap for Crash Bandicoot or Wipeout 2097 in excellent condition with manuals. Desperate for sale/swap. Ph 08 8339 5389 after 5pm (SA only)

SNES: Good condition, 2 controls, MK3 $85 or will swap for Lylat wars with Rumble Pack. Ph 08 9293 2279

SWAP

I will swap Rebel Assault 2, Gameboy and two games for either "Age of Empires, Warcraft 2 or Lords of the Realm 2". Ph 03 6426 2865 and ask for Richard

Mario 64 in good condition and will swap for any good Nintendo 64 game except (Doom 64 and Hexen 64) and will swap mario 64 plus a gameboy with Killer Instinct and Wario land for lylat wars or goldeneye 007. Phillip lees- 26 Knight Cres, Roxborough park VIC 3064

I will swap my Playstation (pal) with 2 controls, 1 game reloaded, 5 demo discs, one with ten games on it, and about 6 magazines including some cheat ones. I will swap all that for some Nintendo 64 things. Maybe games, Memory packs, Rumble packs or a control. Just ring 03 9707 5071 ask for Peter. Vic around Dandenong area only.

PENPALS

Hi! My name is Ash. I'm 17, male and interested in having a chat with anybody interesting. I love alternative music (although I hate using that term) and video games , so get some pen to paper and write to: Ash, 10 Myrtle St, Prospect, Adelaide SA 5082

Are you bored out of your brains? Are you stuck at home with nothing to do? Do you go to your mail box every day hoping that there's something addressed to you, but you never find anything ? If so listen up! I'm looking for a male or female penpal between the ages of 11-14. I own a playstation, gameboy and PC-CD Rom. I am interested in the Tekken series. I like anything that has to do with Star Wars. I am also interested in shoot 'em ups like Point Blank, Time Crisis and House of the Dead. (Which has to be the goriest game I've ever played). I love anything that has to do with Namco. But I think I should mention that I H-A-T-E Mortal Kombat, but I love Street Fighter. If your interested in writing to me, please include a photo and write to Aaron Hobbs, 5 Hillview Circuit, Kiama, N.S.W 2533

Hi, Our names are Gertrid, Ujene and Steggles. We are interested in Pennywise, Red Hot Chilli Peppers and Seggresion. We enjoy playing spin the bottle with other boys, picking our wax out of each others ears and drinking gravy. If you're interested, please don't write or we will impale you on bread and butter knifes. If you want to get impaled write to 18 Jacana Grove, Heathcote NSW 2233