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Orchid Righteous 3D II reviewed
Why is it the best Voodoo2 card?

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FIFTY SEVEN

A MASSIVE 48 GAMES REVIEWED!

There's a crime wave in the city of Freeport and it's linked to the unholy drug U-4. people are disappearing, and mutants are taking over the streets. sources say that sintek industries and it's lethally gorgeous ceo, Elexis sinclaire, are connected to the madness.
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The History of 1st person shooters. With the arrival of Unreal, the most impressive title any of us can recall here at Hyper, we thought it was time to take a look back at this most popular genre, to see where it all came from, not only on PC, but also for the console gamers too.

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Printed by: **Wilke Colour**
Separations by: **Prestige Colour**
Distribution by: **NDD** Ph. 9353 9911

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ACN 002 647 645
ISSN 1320-7458

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HYPE IT UP

Welcome to a somewhat different Hyper magazine. The main differences you'll notice this issue are some upgrades to our review and preview section, and a brand new section, with our Hyper Hardware Buyers Guide.

The Buyers guide is a real no-nonsense list telling you which are the best buys in each category. In some categories we'll mention two titles, as there may be very little between them in the end. The section will also have a more detailed look at a couple of items of hardware, so you can better understand why a particular item is considered good value.

We're now also including lists of the upcoming releases in our preview section, so you'll know what to look for on the shelves, even if we didn't get a chance to do a preview (some stuff just comes out and that's it).

It'll also be hard for you to fail to notice that we've covered a few more games than usual. In fact there are 48 games reviewed this month, which is due to us adopting a new attitude on coverage, but also because all the distributors just went totally berko this month! The scary thing is, 13 games slipped, so at one stage we were looking at reviewing 61 titles (help)! This change has also brought on board a few new faces, so the Hyper crew is now a bigger happier family.

Another thing that long time readers of Hyper will be stunned by is that a game has finally broken that magical "96" barrier. Unreal scored 97, and has wowed us like no game before it. In fact I've actually gone and bought a new high end computer just so I can play it! Considering how good Quake 2 was (and still is), and how Unreal takes a few steps forward from there, what can we expect from titles like Quake 3 or Trinity?? I shudder happily in anticipation.

Console owners also have top titles out this month, so it's really a big month in gaming. We even had some Saturn games lined up, but they slipped to August, so we'll have some more titles to look at next issue.

Anyhow, we hope you enjoy the new look Hyper...

Cheers,

Dan

New Console This Christmas

The mysterious Project X console, developed by VM Labs under the watchful eye of ex-Atari programmer Jeff Minter, will be available for sale in the USA this Christmas! It's quite bizarre to think that by this time next year, the world will already have two new super generation consoles - the Katana and Project X.

The Project X console will come equipped with a modem and Ethernet support for full internet access from the comfort of your living room couch. Other - as yet unannounced - features will place the Project X console firmly in a league above the current consoles on the market.

As of yet, no developers have announced any titles for the upcoming console, though Jeff Minter himself has been working on a version of Tempest, Tempest 3000, which he hopes to pack in with the unit. I dare say this sounds eerily like the Atari Jaguar launch, so we hope Project X receives better third-party development support than the Jaguar ever did. To get a better idea of what the Project X console aims to achieve, here's a quote direct from Jeff Minter - "The rumors are too wild to be believed. There are tales of 'graphics that would scorch the eyes of God, Himself,' of MIPS beyond number, of parallelism nonpareil, of morphing shapeshifters, breathing teapots, whole orchestras of sound, and talking pictures of rotating cubes... and Llamas." Sounds good to us!! What will this baby look like? We may have to see if the E3 spies managed to get anything on film... EF

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I Can Smell Monkey

By the end of this year, don't be surprised if the land of Nintendo is invaded by Donkey Kong once more. A little bird has been letting people know that Rare have been secretly working on a new Donkey Kong title for the Nintendo 64. Some call it Donkey Kong 64 others call it Donkey Kong World, but it seems to be a reality. Don't expect to hear news of this from E3 though, as Rare will be pushing Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest and wouldn't want their limelight stolen by the Kong. However, there's a good chance Rare will want this out by Christmas, so keep your fingers crossed and we'll all be kickin' it with the Kong once again. EF

News from Japan

The games industry is buzzing with rumours over Nintendo's situation with the Nintendo 64 in Japan and the possibility that they've already been looking into a new console. Though the N64 has sold well in the USA and Europe, Nintendo is very aware that the machine has sold poorly in Japan (being outsold by the humble Game Boy in many cases), and seeing as Japan is the biggest videogame market in the world, it's worrying Nintendo immensely.

The word is that Nintendo had already begun looking for a new chip to base their next console on in hopes of having a new machine to release in the year 2000 - dubbed the Nintendo 2000 - fearing that the N64 simply did not have the life-expectency which huge sales would have guaranteed. The latest status of this new console development is like so...

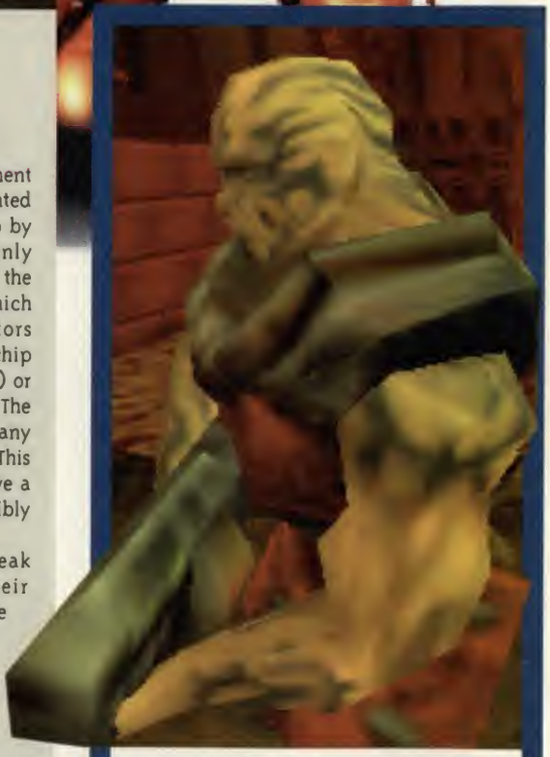
The relationship between Nintendo and their N64 parter Silicon Graphics became more than strained during the console's launch and since then key personnel from Silicon Graphics left to form a new company - ArtX. When Nintendo came around to deciding the N64 may not go the distance and development of a new console was wise, all of the talented development teams had been snapped up by their rivals (Sega, Sony etc) and the only choice they are left with is to either go on the lookout for new existing technology which hasn't been bought by their competitors (which would not be the cutting edge chip design they desperately need to dominate) or sign on ArtX to develop their new chipset. The problem with ArtX, is that it is a new company and have no console designs yet to offer. This would mean that Nintendo would not have a new console ready by the year 2000 - possibly when the new PlayStation 2 will debut.

Clearly, this leaves Nintendo in a weak position within the industry. Their competitors have deals with some of the top development talent and have consoles in production and on schedule, whilst Nintendo themselves only have the N64 to last them until they can get another console on the market, which at the moment is looking as long as four years off. EF

Charts

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

PLAYSTATION	NINTENDO 64	PC
1. Gran Turismo	1. Goldeneye 007	1. Starcraft
2. Resident Evil 2	2. Yoshi's Story	2. Die By The Sword
3. Need For Speed 3	3. Super Mario 64	3. Rebellion
4. Diablo	4. Lylat Wars	4. Quake 2
5. Crash Bandicoot 2	5. Snowboard Kids	5. TR: Unfinished Business
6. Tekken 2	6. Mario Kart 64	6. JK: Mysteries of the Sith
7. Oddworld	7. Quake 64	7. Jedi Knight
8. Tomb Raider 2	8. WCW Vs NWO	8. I-War
9. Micro Machines 3	9. World Cup 98	9. X-Files
10. Bushido Blade	10. Bomberman 64	10. F1 Racing Simulation



Quake 2 64

Yes! Drop to your knees and cry "oh mama!", Activision have announced Quake 2 for the Nintendo 64! Woohoo! The best part of the news is that the game will have a multiplayer mode, though whether it will be 2 or 4 player has not been determined. Still, most reckon that Quake 2 was a better single player game than Quake anyway. The N64 version will be captained by the lead programmer behind Doom 64 and Quake 64, Aaron Seeler, so the game is in good hands. When will we be gibbing each other in glee on our Nintendo 64s? "When it's done"...! EF

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EA Get Square

In a move sure to excite every PlayStation owner on the planet, Electronic Arts US have signed a deal with SquareSoft Japan to distribute Square titles previously unavailable to American gamers. Square games which westerners never thought they'd have a chance to play, will now be available in their local games shop thanks to EA's distribution. Parasite Eve, Bushido Blade 2, Xenogears and Brave Fencer Musashiden are the first titles to be announced by EA which they will distribute for Square. This is great news for RPG fans, as we all know Square make some of the best around, and in the past publishers have deemed them suitable only for Japanese gamers. With the huge success of Final Fantasy VII, it's little surprise that Electronic Arts would see Square's games as an opportunity to add credibility to their name whilst making some dosh in the process (or maybe that's the other way around...).

So what about Australian gamers? Well, considering EA will be having the games "westernised" for the American marketplace, there's a damn good chance that PAL versions will also be made for EA to eventually distribute worldwide. We'll have to wait on confirmation of this, but we're one step closer to playing tons more RPGs that's for sure! EF

Licence to Thrill

MGM Interactive have been working on a videogame based around the James Bond movie Tomorrow Never Dies. Looking extremely Goldeneye-ish, this could be to the PlayStation what the Rare game was to the N64. The game picks up where the movie left off, and as Bond you'll find yourself doing all the things a 00 agent does best. There will be everything from skiing, scuba-diving, car chases and more pistol in yer face action Bond has ever seen from a first-person perspective. The fact that MGM Interactive have the movie-licence to this film, means that Rare's next Bond game for the Nintendo 64 will have to be either based on an older Bond film, or unrelated to any of the current films at all. One look at the PlayStation screen shots, and you'd swear it was a Rare game anyhow. We're hoping to be shaken not stirred. EF

Pac is Back!

It's been a long, long time since the little yellow round dude made his way onto a game console, but Namco are keen to change all that. As you might have guessed, Pac will be returning in a full 3D platforming adventure on the PlayStation, continuing the current trend towards Super Mario 64-inspired games. From what we can tell, the game sticks to the formula and you can expect a fun world to explore with classic pac-man elements, and some big nasty end-of-level bosses. Currently

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Competition Winners

Free games have been won! Are you amongst the lucky ones?

ALUNDRA
Darren Currie, Vic
Diana Conte, WA
Steven Christian, NZ
Elias Holmes, NSW
D. Matthews, Qld

MYSTERIES OF THE SITH
Nathan Kable, NSW
Luke Walsh, Vic
Adam Stafford, NSW
Aaron Roberts, NSW
Jason Boggs, NSW

ONE
Anthony Moore, Vic
Brad Shiach, NSW
Anthony Robinson, WA
Brent Thompson, Vic
Jacob Fox, NSW

RESIDENT EVIL 2
Justin Papangelis, NSW
Anthony Brown, NZ
Jamie Evans, Qld
James Hamilton, NSW
Luke Matviko, Qld

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Seduced by the Dark Side

Activision have been sitting on a very nice bit of game code - the Dark Side 3D engine. Developed exclusively for two of their upcoming games - Heavy Gear 2 and Interstate '82 - the Dark Side engine features open-ended architecture which supports Direct 3D, 3D sound and is optimised for some of the new beefy processers coming from Intel such as the Deschutes and Katmai. The exciting news about this engine, is that it enables developers to design the game to fully load all the textures and environments directly onto the user's PC, cutting loading times in half (most games access the CD for textures etc during play) and speeding up the actual gameplay as the CD would only need to be accessed for minor details like the odd sound file. This means bigger environments, more textures and faster polyons on screen.

The Dark Side engine will also directly support 3D chipsets such as 3Dfx's Glide, PowerVR's SGL and Rendition's Redline. We'll get to see the Dark Side engine in full flight this year when we finally get our hands on Intersate '82 and if we're lucky - Heavy Gear 2 which has been designed as a hardware-only game! EF

Middle Earth Online

Hobbits ahoy! It seems like Online RPGing is becoming a popular project amongst the game companies out there... Ultima Online from Origin, Everquest from Sony, Meridian 59 from 3DO and now Sierra are nutting out the logistics behind Middle Earth Online! Based on the J.R.R Tolkien fantasy books, Middle Earth Online has the potential to attract legions of geeks everywhere, playing out the characters and creatures from the novels RPGers have worshipped for years. The game will be set during the Third Age which is quite a number of years after the War of the Rings. Gamers will be able to play as Humans, Elves, Dwarves and of course Hobbits and play out the game in all the famous Middle Earth locations such as Rivendell. Sierra have only just announced these plans, so don't start re-reading those books just yet. It looks like we won't see Middle Earth Online surface until sometime late in 1999. EF

Blizzard Spies On Gamers!

Gamers who played Starcraft on Blizzard's Battle.net back when the game was initially released, had their personal details and information about their computers recorded by the Blizzard server, directly from the gamers' Windows 95 Registery! In this blatant act of invasion of privacy, Blizzard state that it was only over a seven day period, and was an attempt to diagnose problems gamers had been having with bad CD keys and troubles on the Battlenet server. Obviously, it was also a way in which Blizzard could spot pirated copies of the game being used. A lawsuit has actually been filed against the publisher, to force them into releasing a patch for the game to remove their ability to "see" into Battlenet gamers' computers and to compensate those gamers who had their privacy breached. Whilst Blizzard's intentions may have been innocent, the act was clearly illegal and leaves a lingering aroma of Big Brother on Battle.Net. EF

overflow

Squaresoft have announced Final Fantasy VIII (count 'em, that's eight) should hopefully be released in Japan at Christmas time. Can a PlayStation-owning gamer get any news more exciting than that? I don't think so. The main character in the game is going to be called Squall Leonhart, and it seems that FFVIII will have no connections to FFVII at all...

The long-awaited Star Trek: First Contact first-person shooter from Microprose which was going to be based on the Unreal engine, has been officially canned! Besides the fact that the movie was out eons ago, Microprose are more interested in concentrating on Klingon Honor Guard, so Trek fans shouldn't be too disappointed...

The Electronic Expo in Atlanta has revealed that Sega are bringing Sega Rally 2 to the PC, so warm up your Voodoo 2 card and get ready for one helluva ride...

Word is going around that Nintendo are going to dramatically drop their cart production costs which will eventually mean cheaper Nintendo 64 games! There's no price drop imminent, but chances are it could be sometime this year...

After announcing in this very column that a South Park game was being developed by Acclaim, we can now let you know that South Park 64 for the N64 is actually being made by Iguana. Iguana have brought us some of the best N64 games, so this is excellent news for a top quality game based on a TV show. Is it possible??

Bob White one of the lead programmers on Ultima IX: Ascension, has left Origin to join the team at ION Storm. This is after three other Ultima IX: Ascension programmers also left to join the ION Storm team. What's going on over there? This shouldn't affect the release of Ultima IX though, as there are still about 16 people working on the game...

In more N64 news, it looks like Nintendo have finally nailed down a release date for Zelda 64. American gamers should have it by October, us Aussies will have to keep our fingers crossed for a Christmas release. It's still looking like the N64 game to beat all N64 games...

For the strategy loving N64 gamers amongst you, Blizzard have exceeded expectations and announced that Starcraft is coming to the N64!! You heard it here first! To be honest, the N64 needs all the A grade titles it can get...

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...AND WIN ...OUS 3D II!

The first killer piece of gaming hardware that we have given our stamp of approval to, was the Orchid Righteous 3D II. This card will turn your PC into a 3D gaming beast with its top of the range performance. Besides increasing your frame rates for 3D games, the card also offers such special effects as transparency features for fog and smoke, mip mapping, and anti-aliasing, to provide extra smooth, extra sharp images.

The difference is staggering, the visuals look so much more real, and once you play a 3D game on a Righteous 3D II, you'd never be able to go back. We were so impressed, we bought them ourselves! We basically won't bother to play a 3D game if we can't use 3DFX... so get with the program and subscribe to Hyper, to see if you can get this superb hardware FREE!

Not only does the Righteous 3D II give you fantastic 3D performance in games... it also comes with some games to help you show your new card off to your jealous mates. You'd probably expect them to be the titles that time forgot, but instead the R3DII comes with:

Battlezone - Activision
Jedi Knight - Ambush at Altyr 5 - LucasArts
Incoming - Rage Software
G-Police - Psygnosis

Runner up - Righteous 3D I.

So what if you don't win the Righteous 3D II? Well, a lucky runner up gets a Righteous 3D I. This card is still an excellent addition to anyone's PC, and also comes with a bumble of trial software to some 3DFX games to play straight away. The Righteous 3D is valued at $249.95.

MAY ISSUE WINNERS

Terry Mastrantonio
Hilton, WA

Alexander Coup (Resubscriber)
Macquarie Fields, NSW

Hart McPhee (Resubscriber)
Forrest, ACT

Jonathon Pettitt
Seven Hills, NSW

Martin Cole
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Prize: Quake 64 and a Quake T-Shirt.

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POY-POY PRIZES!

Be Popular!

The Hyper crew officially agree that POY POY is one the PlayStation's ultimate party games, so we want to share the fun around! GT Interactive have come to the party with five brand-spanking new copies of Poy-Poy to brighten some lucky readers' households. Get in now and win a copy of this great game before some other nob gets in first and steals the goodness away from you!

To win, answer this quickie...

What makes a great party?

A) Corn-chips and Cola; B) Loud music; C) Attractive members of the opposite sex; D) Poy-Poy; or E) All of the above?

Write your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to: **Oh Boy Poy Poy, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2106. Good luck!**

GET HYPER ACTIVE!

Memory and Rumble in one!

The new **HYPERPAK** from Nyko, is a rumble pak and memory pak in "one" for your Nintendo 64. Not only does the rumble have two different settings, but the memory pak provides you with four times the normal amount of memory on regular memory paks! Thanks to Bayform Pty Ltd, we have five cool Hyperpaks to give away to the first five correct entries!

Name two games which support the Rumble Pak.

Stick your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to: **Rockin' Rumble, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern,** NSW 2016. For more info on Nyko products, phone Bayform on (02) 9380-7055.

DUAL-SHOCK GIVEAWAY!

Two sticks are better than one!

Sony Computer Entertainment are so proud of their latest creation, that they grabbed a bunch from their secret laboratory and covertly air-dropped them onto the Hyper office roof. Then we jumped in the Helicopter and flew to Japan where they let us play Final Fantasy VIII all day! Okay that last bit was a lie, but the part about free analogue dual-shock controllers was true! Yes, answer us one simple question and you will be able to plug one of these beauties into your PSX for some serious fun! We have five to give away!

How many analogue sticks does the Dual-Shock have?

Bah! That's so easy! Put your answer on the rear of an envelope and send it in to: **Shock Me, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

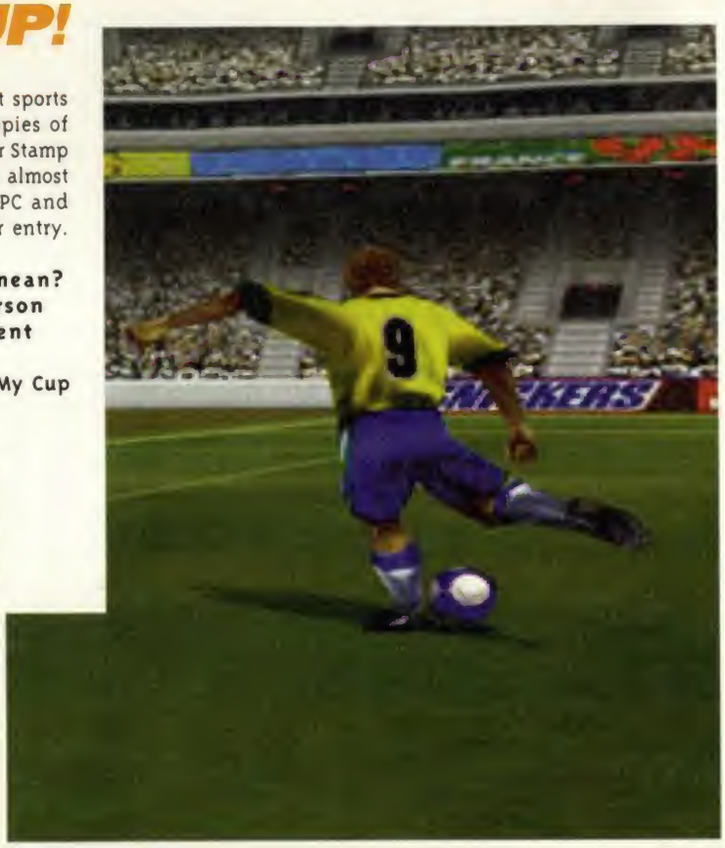
SEE THE WORLD CUP!

From your armchair that is...

Electronic Arts always come up with some of the world's greatest sports games, and now they've been kind enough to cough up five copies of WORLD CUP 98 for you lot to fight over. It received a Hyper Big Rubber Stamp for a reason... this is one fantastic soccer sim, and it's available on almost every platform. We have copies for all three platforms - N64, PC and PlayStation - so remember to write which one you'd like on your entry. Okay? Good luck!

If a Soccer player is given a red card, what does it mean? A) He's being invited to a birthday party; B) The person who gave it to him is bleeding; or C) He's just been sent off the field.

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to: **My Cup Runneth Over, HYPER, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



» Hexplore

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: OCEAN

wow-o-meter

That old arcade classic Gauntlet has finally received the sort of modern update you'd expect of this fun action RPG. Up to four players can take control of an adventurer (warrior, archer, wizard, knight) and adventure forth together through forests, castles and villages, vanquishing creatures and developing their characters. The game feels a bit like a more arcade-like Diablo, as talking to villagers gives you missions to solve and the inventory system feels a tad similar. However, there seems to be more scope in Hexplore for actual role-playing, due to the variety and function of items which your characters can carry. The level of interaction seems a tad higher, though graphically the game is nowhere near Diablo's gorgeousness. In fact, visually, Hexplore looks a little dated. Though there is heaps of colour and detail, the game is sprite based has big chunky pixels even in high resolution mode. There is no 3Dfx or direct 3D support, and though it's not essential in a game of this type, it would have made the environment clearer and the engine a bit faster - however the simpler graphics do keep the minimum requirements down to a P90 which is noble. As you play the game from an isometric view, you can click the right mouse button to rotate the map and see what lies behind rocks, houses, trees etc. Whilst the left mouse button acheives everything from attacking to interacting. There's real promise here, and I get the feeling that the online or LAN potential for rockin' multiplayer adventures is huge. EF

» Lands Of Lore 3

PC

AVAILABLE: SEPTEMBER
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: WESTWOOD

wow-o-meter

It feels like we've only just finished playing Lands Of Lore 2, and Lands of Lore 3 is beating the door down! When we reviewed LOL2 back in the October 97 issue of Hyper, we gave it a big 90% and it seems like gamers the world over heartily agreed with our verdict, which kinda makes LOL3 a pretty spiffy arrival this year. Coming to a store near you on four CDs, with full 3Dfx and Direct 3D support, LOL3 continues on where LOL2 left off. The tag line goes "You saved the kingdom, you saved the world, now save your soul!" and we'll add the advice that you should save your pocket money too, because it looks like this will be a must-have.

The story behind LOL3 goes something like this... Someone has destroyed your family, claimed your soul and you're left as the only rightful heir to the throne at the age of sixteen. Magical rifts are allowing evil creatures to roam the land, time and space are unravelling and to top it off - no-one trusts you!

Playing in the first-person perspective, there will be six new worlds to discover in your search to recapture your soul and bring peace back to the land. Everything will be in scrumptious 3D, with coloured lighting, rendered characters and tons of fancy lighting effects enhancing the already brilliant visuals behind the Lands Of Lore series. The gaming interface has changed and been simplified, but the spell and inventory system has been expanded, so LOL3 should be the most user-friendly title in the series thus far. There's nothing quite like a satisfying RPG, so we'll be giving this a big workout when we get a final version. EF

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JULY

Anno 1602
Colin McRae Rally
Commandos
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F1
Final Fantasy VII
Half Life
House of the Dead
Sentinel Returns
Sin
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WCP: Secret Ops

Half-Life

PC

AVAILABLE: JULY
CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: SIERRA

wow-o-meter

Though we've previewed Half-Life before, the game has spent so long in development we thought we'd bring you an ultra-spiffy update now that the game is actually scheduled for release in July. Sierra have been tweaking, optimising, adding new stuff and generally making sure that this one is going to stand a chance against the mighty Unreal. From what we've seen so far on Half-Life, they're doing a good job and it's looking bloody nice.

Some of the cool features to look forward to include commanding an air-strike from a helicopter! Not only can you pilot the thing, but it can also be shot down from the ground... the developers reckons it works as well as any helicopter sim. There's also a new battle suit which talks to you as you play, letting you know about dangerous radiation levels or information on the level. It will also inject you with morphine when you get wounded and warn you when you're close to dying. There is also the weird new feature which allows you to pursue monsters across levels in the game, and even kill a monster with a shot which was fired from another level. Funky stuff. Generally, we can expect Half-Life to have some killer AI, awesome 3D effects and an intruiging story which involves you, the military and a bunch of mutated experiments! Sierra promise a game which will look just as pretty in Software mode as it does in 3Dfx or Direct 3D modes, including transparencies, coloured lighting, blurring and all in 16-bit colour. So yay for them, and hopefully we'll have the game for review next issue.

EF

Grim Fandango

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS

wow-o-meter

You know you're going to lose another substantial chunk out of your life when a new LucasArts adventure is announced! Following on after the successful Monkey Island 3, LucasArts are moving into the 3D graphics territory for their next adventure title. Tim Schafer, the genius behind Day Of The Tentacle and Full Throttle, is the man with the plan behind this one, so you can almost start saving your money now. Called Grim Fandango, the game has an odd "cartoony Mexican festival of the dead" feel about it, and in fact, the game is set in the Land of the Dead. Manny Calavera, a travel agent in the Land of the Dead, is the character you play and Manny is having problems in his job. Here your adventure starts, and the quality LucasArts adventure game kicks in!

Unlike any of their previous adventure games, Grim Fandango is not going to have the standard adventure game interface. As the game is beautifully rendered in 3D, the designers have decided to keep a cluttered menu-system out of the game. How you actually control what happens remains to be seen, but cut-scenes and gameplay will seamlessly blend together (as they did in Full Throttle) and chances are you'll be entertained till your eyes pop out. Thankfully, the game will support 3D accelerators, but if you don't have one I doubt there will be so much action on screen that it affects gameplay too much - just hope Grim Fandango doesn't end up requiring one like Shadows of the Empire. Anyway... we all look forward to playing this, so there'll be a big Hyper review down the track.

EF

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» WarTorn

wow-o-meter

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: 3D REAL TIME STRATEGY
PLAYERS: TBA
PUBLISHER: IMPACT

Brought to you by the Aussie games publisher Impact and developed by Woy Woy outift Eyst (who made the adventure game Dog Day), comes WarTorn - a full 3D Real-Time Strategy title. Impact are the same blokes who brought the world Myth, which was so tasty, PC gamers devoured it gleefully worldwide. Whilst Myth was awesome and hugely popular, WarTorn looks set to blow it out of the water - this game looks truly fantastic. Set in the year 2999AD, you are taking part in officially organised war games which have become a new spectator sport! The missions are played out in a tournament style and incorporate a whole variety of different weaponry and tactics. Some of the amazing features include true 3D units and landscape, unlimited camera angles, 3D acceleration, tradeable units and resources and literally thousands of unique units which cover air, land and sea.

Are you imagining those air units in full 3D, being able to go from observing your tanks on the ground to zooming up and following your bombers do their run? Think of being able to zoom around the landscape, observing your units from any angle! It rocks! This game achieves what others have only hinted at. Coming soon. **EF**

» Swords & Sorcery: Come Devils, Come Darkness

wow-o-meter

PC

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1-6
PUBLISHER: VIRGIN INTERACTIVE

The line between Quake-style games and classic RPG-style games are slowly being blurred. Requiem: Wrath of the Fallen from 3Do studios is one, and Swords & Sorcery from Virgin Interactive is another which use a full 3D real-time engine mixed with the stats and skills of RPGs. Swords & Sorcery looks remarkable, with a 3Dfx card this game is going to rock very hard. The 3D engine on offer here, makes S&S the most visually impressive RPG yet. All the characters and monsters are exceptionally detailed and animated fluidly. In single-player mode, you can control a party of six characters in the time mode of your choice - either real-time and Quake-ish, or turn-based and RPGish. You can also play from the eyes from one of your characters, or in a funky third-person perspective giving you a better view of the action surrounding you. As opposed to other RPGs where your party exists in the menus only, in S&S you can actually see all your party members on screen standing around you. In battles, you can observe what your characters are actually doing - wonderful for the six-player multiplayer adventure! Virgin Interactive have got something special here, and we can't wait to see how it turns out. **EF**

Abe's Exodus

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: OCTOBER
CATEGORY: PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE

wow-o-meter

We all loved Abe's Oddysee, so it's no surprise that everyone's got their knickers in a knot over the fact that a PlayStation sequel is on it's way. We've mentioned before that an Oddworld game is in the works for Sega's Katana... well... while that is still true (it's called Munch's Oddysee), it's a bit way off to really worry about for now. In fact, Munch's Oddysee is said to be the first official Abe's Oddysee sequel, and the forthcoming Abe's Exodus is simply something to tide us over until Munch arrives.

This more immediate sequel, Exodus, is looking pretty faithful to the first Oddworld - maybe even a little "more of the same" - but there's nothing wrong with that seeing as the first game rocked so hard. Look at it kind of like an Abe's Oddysee mission pack... there's a whole new adventure, new creatures and new emotions for Abe to use on his journey. Of course, this means hours and hours of new interesting puzzles and levels full of tricks and traps - so I guess it means we'll be locking ourselves in a dark room with this one and doing the playguide thing again. Cripes. Abe is a bit of a meaner dude this time around, and he's up against some even tougher opponents, but he has some new abilities (like the face slap, and the ability to possess one of his own farts) to help him stay on top, so look forward to more Abe coolness. Yet another great-looking game on the way. **EF**

Upcoming PSX

JUNE

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- Baby Universe
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JULY

- Azure Dreams
- Blast Radius
- Blasto
- Bomberman World
- Colin McRae Rally
- Ghost in the Shell
- Kula World
- Mortal Kombat 4
- Pet In TV
- Point Blank
- Sentinel Returns
- Tombi
- Viper
- Wreckin Crew

Colin McRae Rally

PlayStation/PC

AVAILABLE: JULY
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS

wow-o-meter

Fresh from their TOCA triumph, Codemasters are back with a spunky looking Rally game - Colin McRae Rally! Using the same awesome driving model which they stunned everyone with in TOCA, CMRally feels wonderful to play from the word go. Choose from 12 of the world famous rally cars and tackle the 48 different stages over eight different world locations. Though the game offers the standard Championship, Rally and Time-Trial modes, there's also the quirky addition of the Rally School mode where Colin McRae leads you through different driving routines and manouevres and then grades your performance. During the actual championship mode, Colin's co-driver Nicky Grist is there to guide you through the twists and turns of each track - warning you of any dangers up ahead. You can also twiddle with all the different aspects of your car to squeeze out optimum performance. There are no other cars on the track (just like real-life Rally car racing) because you're racing against the clock for your placing - but the tracks are looong and you'll be eager to go back and improve your times.

There will be five different camera views to choose from, and a two-player split-screen mode (both vertical or horizontal). Not only does the game look nice (the bonnet cam rocks), the most important thing is that the handling of the cars is so creamy you'll love it. Powersliding in a videogame has never been such a treat. The PlayStation version will be out first, but you can expect a 3Dfx-enhanced PC version soon after... mmmmmmmm... yummy! Though we only played the Beta, already Colin McRae Rally is looking like the best rally game EVER for serious driving game fans.

EF

War Games

PlayStation/PC

AVAILABLE: JULY
CATEGORY: ACTION/STRATEGY
PLAYERS: TBA
PUBLISHER: MGM INTERACTIVE

wow-o-meter

War Games was a fun movie in the mid-Eighties starring Matthew Broderick about a computer hacker who accidently hacks into the US Military and begins playing "war games" with their computer, unwittingly almost causing a real-life nuclear war. Finally, someone has decided to develop a real game based on the movie using the same concept. True to the film, your role in the game is that of a computer hacker taking part in a complex set of war games, but is the game you're playing just a game or is it real? You have control over a heap of cool units from mech-style thingies to your everyday planes, tanks and other forms of mechanised terror and destruction.

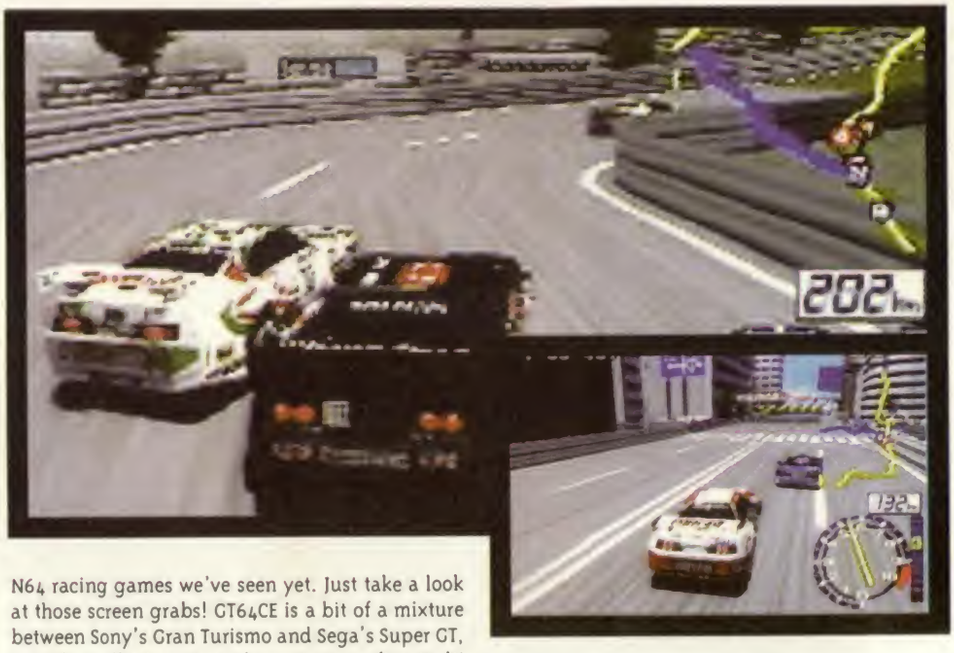
There will be 30 single player campaigns over six different lands, incorporating real-time weather effects and over 100 different land, sea and air units. An interesting twist on the standard RTS gameplay, is the inclusion of "hackers" who can be deployed to infect the enemies command system with viruses, or to hack other computers for funds, information or even actual control of your enemies defenses. You are able to take control of a unit yourself and play from the third-person perspective and switch between units on the fly. The gameplay seems to be something of a mix between Nuclear Strike and Command & Conquer, but we'll give you a final verdict on how things turn out when we get a reviewable copy.

GT 64 Championship Edition

Nintendo 64

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: JULY
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-TBA
PUBLISHER: OCEAN



Before you start spooging in excitement... this is not Gran Turismo 64! The chances of that my friend are near impossible. What we have here, is GT 64 Championship Edition, another game entirely. So what is it then? Well, it's one of the best looking N64 racing games we've seen yet. Just take a look at those screen grabs! GT64CE is a bit of a mixture between Sony's Gran Turismo and Sega's Super GT, yet it's really just Ocean's next step after Multi Racing Championship. This isn't a sequel though. It's obvious that GT64CE not only looks visually superior, but the car handling is way better and there is more variety to the gameplay. The game is packed with 16 tracks and 14 official Grand Tour racing teams, offering more than any other N64 racing game to date. At the moment, there ain't no two-player mode (argh! agrh!), but it's a possibility there will be a multiplayer mode in the final. The replay mode in GT64CE sounds pretty awesome too, with 14 different camera angles showing off your sick driving to the full extent. Even though we're pretty excited about this one, we'll reserve the expletives until we get our grubby hands on a finished version and see if it's really as fantastic at it looks set to be. EF

Tonic Trouble

Nintendo 64/PC/DVD

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: SEPTEMBER
CATEGORY: 3D PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: UBISOFT

The first videogame to pit you against a bunch of angry carrots. Woohoo! Yes, that's Tonic Trouble from UbiSoft, one of the more bizarrely humourous games to cross our path in a long time. The basic story of the game goes like this... an alien passing Earth (who's name happens to be Ed), whilst imbibing on a certain liquid beverage (or tonic as the game's title suggests) accidentally drops the can of said strange substance onto the Earth and it winds up mutating the surface of the planet and turning the vegies and stuff into warped creatures. To repair the damage he has accidently inflicted upon the Earth, Ed (that's you) must venture forth and return the land to it's former beautiful self. The 3D platformer plays out a little like Super Mario 64, where the gamer can go exploring the lush 3D landscape and face off against a host of colourful and trippy creatures.

Tonic Trouble has been designed by the same development team which brought us the awesome racing game Pod, and a few of their talents worked on Rayman too - so there's a wealth of experience and creative brainwaves behind this one. It certainly has all the markings of an excellent platformer... EF

Upcoming N64

JUNE

- Aero Gauge
- Bust A Move 2
- Mike Piazza Strike Zone
- Space Circus
- Tonic Trouble
- Wayne Gretsky Soccer 98
- Wetrix

JULY

- GT 64 Championship Edition

Upcoming Saturn

JUNE

- Burning Rangers
- House of the Dead
- Panzer Dragoon Saga
- Riven
- Shining Force 3

JULY

- Deep Fear

Hardware Guide

Welcome to the new Hyper Hardware Guide. Here we'll take a look at various products across PC, PlayStation and Nintendo 64, and also keep a running record of what we believe are the best value products on the market. This way, if a product is the best in its class, then we'll keep saying so until something better comes along, so you'll always be able to keep track of what hardware is hot! We thought it was better just to tell you what's good, rather than devote space to stuff that's second best (or worse), or huge graphs of specs that all vary by 0.2%.

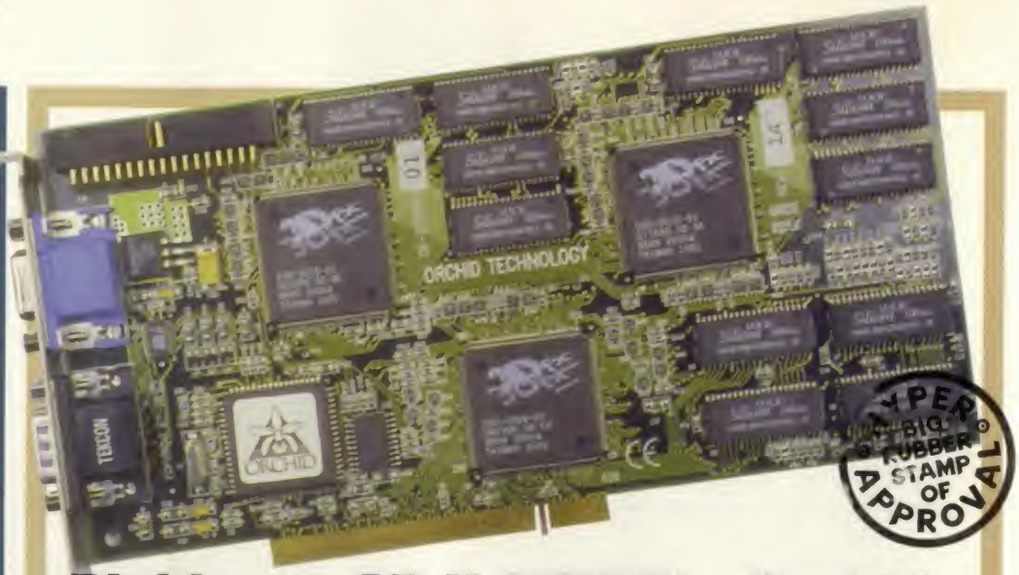
Next month our main feature will be how to go about buying yourself a good gaming PC. What you need, and what not to get sucked into buying, only to realise later on that you'll never use it.

Nyko Hyper Pak

NINTENDO 64 MEMORY PAK AND RUMBLE PAK
R.R.P: $59.95

Something that Nintendo seemed to overlook when they were inventing the N64 controller was that you could only stick one sort of "Pak" into the slot at any given time. Well Nyko have come up with a real problem solver here with the Nyko Hyper Pak. Basically, it's a Rumble Pak, with three settings (off, light, and heavy), and is also a Memory Pak with four times the standard storage capacity. Whilst the Pak isn't cheap, it does work out to be a better buy when you weigh everything up. You can buy a Rumble Pak and Memory Pak for an overall lower price, but you can't swap them halfway through a game, so this makes the Hyper Pak, the best value buy for those who can afford the $59.95.

If your local store doesn't sell Nyko products, call Bayform on (02) 9380 7055, and let them hassle them for you.



Righteous 3D II (12MB) - Orchid

TYPE: 3D ACCELERATOR (VOODOO 2)
R.R.P: $585.00 (VARIES GREATLY FROM STORE TO STORE)
RECOMMENDED MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: PENTIUM 200 MMX

To clear things up on the current situation with 3D accelerators, as a lot of people are confused... Not all cards with 3D acceleration are DEDICATED 3D accelerators, and thus don't offer the same sort performance in the end (although sometimes the difference isn't that big).

Our standing advice at this point is that 3DFX are the most widely supported cards by all game developers. As for the difference between a Voodoo and Voodoo2 card... V2 are simply newer, better, and faster. Most people understand that a Voodoo2 card makes your 3D games go faster, but the thing that most people aren't aware of is that your CPU type has a major affect on what sort of performance you can get out of your card. Basically, if you have a P166 and you pop a Voodoo2 in, it won't perform much better than a Voodoo1 will, except that the higher resolutions will run much better than they did with a Voodoo1. If however you have a Pentium 2-300 for example, you will get a much better performance all round. As for the Voodoo 2 8MB or Voodoo2 12MB issue, it comes down to making a decision about cash vs longevity. Basically, no games now will see much difference in performance from using an 8 or a 12. However, having that extra RAM for more textures etc, WILL be an issue in the future as developers get more and more memory hungry, so we'd advise forking out that extra money.

If you're truly freaky (or just loaded), you can run two Voodoo2 cards in tandem, which is really just for those dying to run a game like Quake 2 or Unreal in 1024 x 768 resolution. It must be pointed out at this stage that unless you have a monitor with good refresh rates, that it won't look as good as it could.

So why go with the Righteous 3D II over the over Voodoo2 cards available? For starters, the R3D2 comes with a good software bundle. You not only get the card, but also get Battlezone, G-Police, Jedi Knight: Ambush at Altyr 5, and Incoming. The Diamond Monster 2 cards also offer a good bundle, but we then come to the next strong point for the R3D2. The Righteous 3D 2 (12 MB version) has a recommended retail price of $585. This is easily the cheapest of the 12 MB cards (The Diamond 12MB card has a RRP of $749).

Now to the more humane issues, like ease of installation and drivers. The R3D2 has proven to be the easiest to install, with a comprehensive manual that tells you everything you need to know, and also drivers that are done by Orchid themselves. By the time you're reading this, companies such as Diamond and Creative Labs may have sorted this out, but the safe bet for the nervous hardware installer would be the Righteous.

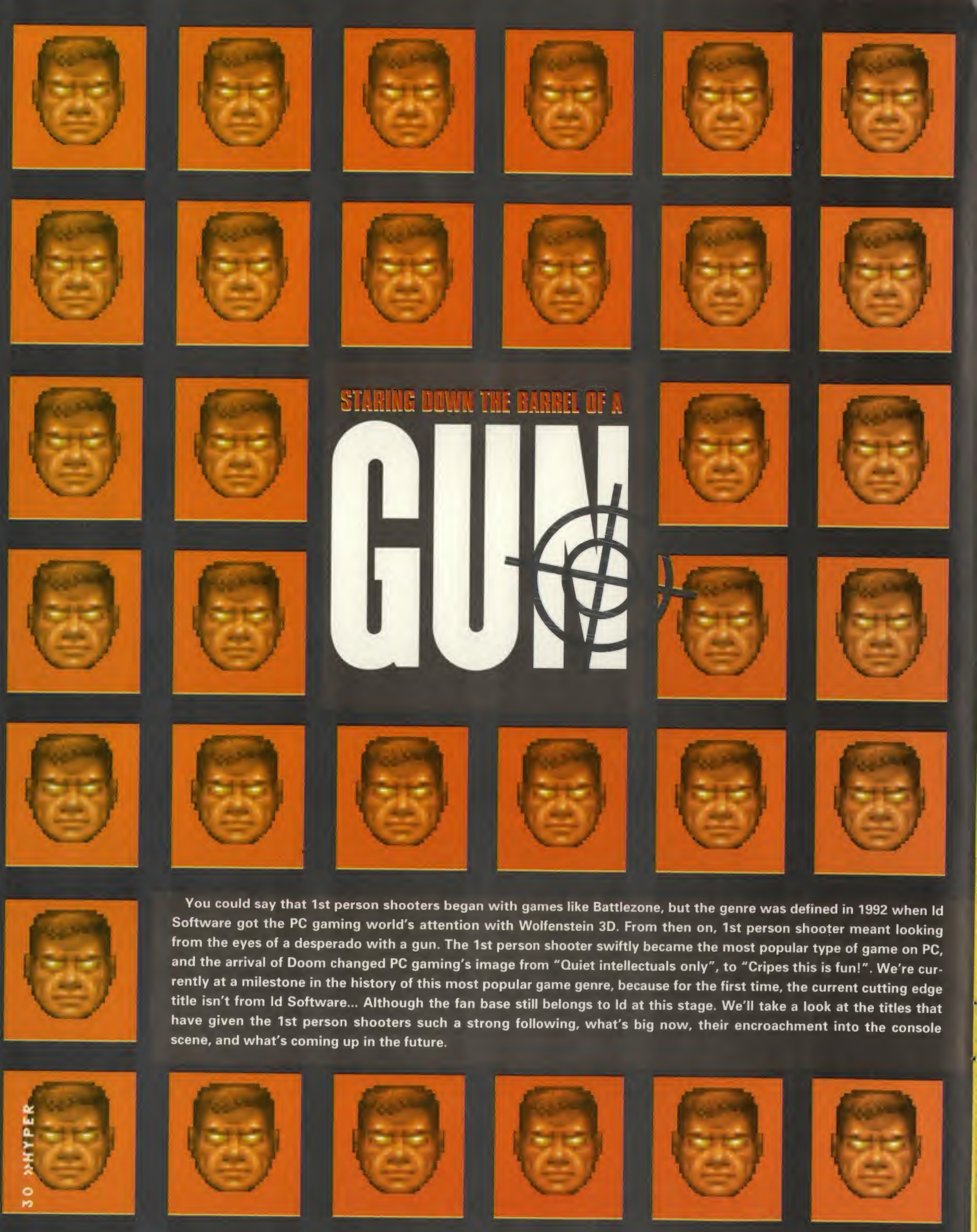
As far as benchtests for speed go, all Voodoo2 cards seem to perform pretty much the same, and buying any of the cards will be a good thing for your system, note that owners of high end PCs with high end monitors should check the refresh rates of the card they're buying - especially if they're considering the Canopus Pure 3D II, which has lower refresh rates than the others at the higher resolutions (although if you MUST have TV out this is the only card to have it thus far).

In the end though, the Righteous 3D II just turned out to be easier to install, cheaper, and had a great software bundle, so it won this category hands down

Hardware Guide

Hypers guide to the best games hardware around!

	Item	RRP	Notes
PSX			
Memory Card	Nyko Memory Card x72	$129.95	It's a lot to fork out, but it is the equivalent of buying 72 memory cards, so you'll never need to buy one again.
	Nyko Memory Card x 8	$49.95	A better buy for those that don't think they'll need more than 120 save game slots at any one time.
Digital Controller	Std Sony Controller	$39.95	It's certainly not the cheapest, but it has the best feel and reliability.
Analogue Controller	Sony Dual Shock	$59.95	It has the best rumble efect in any console controller and is comfortable to use.
Arcade Stick	Namco Arcade Stick	$99.95	Solid as all hell, really authentic sensitive arcade button, and a stick that's perfect for whipping out fireballs. Hado-Ken!
Steering Wheel	V3 Racing Wheel	$149.95	Not as cheap as the Mad Catz, but at least it's solid, and will work with GT.
Pc			
3D Accelerator	Canopus Pure 3D	$249.95	Cheap VooDoo 1 (3DFX) card, handles textures better due to more RAM, and has TV out.
	Orchid Righteous 3D II	$585	The top end of the "affordable" 3D accelerators. Best results require a Pentium2, but P1 users will still benefit.
Sound Card	Orchid Nu-Sound	$144.95	It's PCI does SB support, 3D Direct sound, and comes with 2 games. Top value.
Video Card	ET6100	$99.95	The best value buy for those who own, or who plan to own a dedicated 3D accelerator
	Diamond Viper 330 RIVA 128	$349.95	A 2D/3D card in one. The best value card for those who want some 3D acceleration, without buying a dedicated 3D card. Shop around or ask for OEM to save money!
Flightstick	Thrustmaster X-Fighter	$150	Sure, there's no throttle, but this stick feels great, and will last you for yonks.
	Microsoft Force Feedback-Pro	$269.95	Not the best in terms of ease of control, but the force feedback adds a whole new dimension.
Gamepad	Microsoft Sidewinder Gamepad	$79.95	Love em or hate em, Microsoft make great peripherals, and this is no exception
Mouse	Microsoft Wheel Mouse	$59.95	Works as a three button mouse, and the middle button allows window scrolling.
N64			
Memory Pak	Nyko Hyper Pak	$59.95	Four times the normal memory storage AND variable Rumble settings. The all in one "Pak"
	Memory 64 DLX	$29.95	Not only does it have four times the standard memory, but it's only $5 more expensive than the standard Pak!
Rumble Pak	Nyko Hyper Pak	$59.95	Four times the normal memory storage AND variable Rumble settings. The all in one "Pak"
	Tremor Pack Performance	$19.95	Two rumble modes, with the strongest being REAL strong. Great for those wanting to put it into a wheel.
Gampad	Mako Pad 64	$59.95	Expensive, but its design allows you to hold the controller and press every button without moving your hands.
	Docs Controller	$39.95	$10 cheaper than the Nintendo standard. Feels better, and comes with auto-fire and slow as well.
Racing Wheel	V3 Racing Wheel 64	$149.95	Gears on the wheel, really sturdy, great feel, and configurable buttons. Also all allows for Rumble Pak.
	Mad Catz	$129.95	Cheapest of the actual wheel controllers, includes a gear stick, and built in Rumble Pak. Not amazingly sturdy though.



STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF A

GUN

You could say that 1st person shooters began with games like Battlezone, but the genre was defined in 1992 when Id Software got the PC gaming world's attention with Wolfenstein 3D. From then on, 1st person shooter meant looking from the eyes of a desperado with a gun. The 1st person shooter swiftly became the most popular type of game on PC, and the arrival of Doom changed PC gaming's image from "Quiet intellectuals only", to "Cripes this is fun!". We're currently at a milestone in the history of this most popular game genre, because for the first time, the current cutting edge title isn't from Id Software... Although the fan base still belongs to Id at this stage. We'll take a look at the titles that have given the 1st person shooters such a strong following, what's big now, their encroachment into the console scene, and what's coming up in the future.

PC 1ST PERSON SHOOTERS, IN THE BEGINNING - ID

Id Software actually made a 1st person shooter before they made Wolfenstein. Catacombs 3D and Catacombs Abyss were actually the first steps that John Carmack, John Romero and the others took to start this craze off. Id had been making a name for themselves as shareware game programmers under Softdisk Publishing, with the Commander Keen titles, which were basically 2D side scrolling ventures, which were largely limited by the level of visuals that PCs could obtain at this time. Catacombs 3D was an EGA title, where you simply wandered through some very repetitive halls and zapped orcs, trolls, and other fantasy nasties with fireballs from your finger. John Carmack knew he could do more with this...

Once VGA arrived, so too did Wolfenstein 3D. On May 5th, 1992 the first Episode was released. Prior to this a publisher had offered to buy Id Software for two and a half million dollars US, which was a tasty offer at the time for a group of programmers who had never even a fraction of this figure anywhere near their grasp. Fortunately they rejected the offer and as a result, became very rich boys over the years to come. Escaping from a Nazi stronghold using as much force as possible, this one probably wasn't so popular in Germany, but the rest of the world loved it. The engine was limited in that all rooms were the same height, and the levels were in a real "block" format. The game did however off a great sense of being in a 3D world, and the controls felt good. Questions of whether or not this sort of game was morally acceptable or not were raised by some narrow minded prudes who took gaming too seriously, but the gamers were having way too much fun to care. Regardless, whilst this title was readily available as shareware, and thus not everyone that played it, bought it... it did what was necessary to ensure the boys at Id would become very rich men.

Doom

Before it's release a beta version leaked out onto the Internet, but this only served to increase the hype over what was certainly the best PC game to date. Doom was released on the 10th of December, 1993. If suggestions that Wolfenstein 3D was a bit questionable in nature, then Doom was pure evil. The plot didn't matter, the gameplay was that groundbreaking that no one really cared. Most of all the engine was far and away the best 3D engine any game had ever seen. Now with the ability to give walls varying heights, far more diverse and realistic environments were possible. A great selection of weapons, all of which felt just right, left you grinning ear to ear every time you hit that CNTRL key to let fly. The monsters were sprites, and this meant it was possible to squeeze lots of them into each level, which really helped add that feeling that you were taking on the hordes of hell. The game also broke ground by being networkable, and four players could get together and fight it out to the death. So amazingly addictive this was, but so very few people did it, as figuring out how to use software packages like DWANGO was a bit too scary for the majority of PC gamers who just thought the game was pretty cool.

Doom 2, Ultimate Doom, Doom Master Levels, and Final Doom all did huge business (although none of them really expanded much on the original at all). The ability for enthusiasts to make their own levels helped folks like Tim Willits get a break into Id... Not a bad way to make your millions. In any event, whilst Doom is now an old game, many still deem it to be the best 1st person shooter ever, with the belief that the weapons, monsters, and general feel have yet to have been surpassed.

RAVEN SOFTWARE - FRIENDS OF ID

Heretic

Using the Doom engine, Raven decided to make a medieval 1st person shooter to satisfy all those fantasy nuts that would rather play as an elf than a marine. In addition to creating an inventory system which allowed the player to collect and use magical items, Raven also expanded the game engine to allow the user to look up and down as well. This time the plot did matter a bit, because it led to a sequel that followed on from where Heretic left off...

Hexen

Raven really outdid themselves with Hexen. Not only did they produce a game with better visuals, they took major steps forward by offering different characters to play as, and also inventing a level system which allowed for puzzles on a much grander scale than ever before, with players travelling back and forth between levels. Many believed Hexen to be superior to Doom, and to this day, there are those that wait on the next Raven title, as apposed to the next Id title (although Id are always involved).

Hexen 2

Continuing their tradition of using the best engine that Id could offer at the time, the Raven team took the Quake engine and produced the stunningly beautiful Hexen 2. Now with four character classes, large scale deathmatch facilities and destroyable environments, the game was better than ever. Hexen 2 certainly offered a superior single player experience to Quake, although the deathmatching element never took off in quite the same way. A lot of folks must have bought it though, because the add on pack looks like it took a lot of effort to put together. The saga will continue with Heretic 2, using the Quake 2 engine...

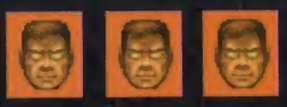
To check out what's go on at Raven HQ (http://www.ravensoft.com/)

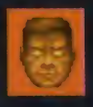
DUKE AND FRIENDS - HUMOUROUS CARNAGE

Duke Nukem 3D

Something that 1st person shooters had lacked was a sense of humour. Sure, everybody chuckled a little when they saw the bunny-rabbit's head on a spike when they finished Doom, but as a general rule, these games weren't funny. Like Id, Apogee had done some side scrolling adventures, with their Duke Nukem character: A large beefy, macho, womanising, schlock hero in the 1980's style of gun toting wanker. Not everyone flocked to Quake when it came out, and the reason was Duke Nukem 3D. Duke 3D was very close to being that "true 3D" game everyone was after, with monsters being sprites being the only visible difference between it and Quake in terms of engine. With amazingly well designed levels that gave the single player game a really great feel, monsters that couldn't be ignored, no matter how good you got at the game, and Duke's hilarious comments throughout the game, everyone who played the game had fun. Duke also had things that the soon to be released Quake didn't, like a map feature, an inventory system, and crouching. Duke has held a loyal following, and with Duke Nukem Forever coming up, it will retain it... Ironic though that the game will use an Id developed engine, as Duke vs Quake arguments were very passionate for a long time.

Best starting point on the Internet for Duke 3D stuff (http://www.3drealms. com/catalog/duke3d/index.html)





Redneck Rampage
Interplay

Playing as a shotgun toting, tabacco-chewin', beer-guzzlin', pork-rinds chompin' redneck is probably the only major difference between this 3D shooter and it's Duke Nukem 3D cousin. Lots of extra funky ideas were included, such as pick-up trucks tearing down the road, and ultra-detailed environments - but the redneck humour was primarily what was the driving force behind this one. The idea of keeping your character going by eating and drinking whatever you could get your hands on was pretty funny,. The level design was poor in places, but the sound effects and graphics were right up there. The only major gripe gamers had with this one, was the fact that you had to boot to DOS to play the game, as it had no Win 95 support (causing headaches for those not used to getting DOS drivers, etc to work).

Shadow Warrior
GT Interactive

REDNECK RAMPAGE

Yet another game based on the Duke Nukem engine, Shadow Warrior was probably the best of the post-Duke shooters with it's crazy array of weapons and wise-crackin' warrior, Lo Wang. You want an endless stream of Wang jokes? You got em. The mega-dose of politically-incorrect jokes was probably a good distraction from the game which ultimately was a tad hit and miss. Some levels were awesome in design, and others downright dull. Just about all the environments looked great though, from oriental gardens with ponds full of carp to an apocalyptic city full of ghouls and beasties. Though the game was only using a 2D engine, a belated 3DFX patch was released to give the graphics a smoother, more 3D look - a nice improvement over the over-pixelated original which it is out of the box.

Blood
GT Interactive

The name says it all. Probably the goriest of the Build engine-based 3D shooters, Blood was successful enough for there to be a Blood 2 currently in development. Unlike the full 3D game that Blood 2 will be, the original Blood was still played out with 2D sprites, though detailed and colourful it was. If you're after satanic imagery in your shooters, then Blood is it. Demons, voodoo dolls, lots of fire and buckets of blood - this is one evil, gory game. Most of the Multiplayer levels were packed with devious traps and grizzly ways for you to dispose of your opponents, and the single-player game was like a walk through a bad nightmare. The Plasma Pak upgraded the engine to support 3Dfx support, which of course improved the frame-rate for owners of a tasty 3D accelerator and included new monsters, weapons and levels.

Dark Forces
LucasArts

Not long after Doom captured every PC gamer's heart, mind and soul, LucasArts dropped a bomb and that bomb was Dark Forces. Starting one of the biggest game debates ever (Which is better - Doom or Dark Forces?), Dark Forces won over legions of fans not only for it's Star Wars setting, but for it's superb single-player game. The Dark Forces engine was in fact superior to Doom in terms of a few gameplay mechanics - the player could crouch, jump and look up and down - making this a far more immersive 3D experience. Well it wasn't true 3D, but it was so cleverly designed in 2D that you never would have known. Being the first movie-licensed first-person shooter, Dark Forces capitalised on gorgeous sound effects, speech and the awesome Star Wars soundtrack. Though the single-player game had some incredible puzzle-elements (who could forget the prison level with the functioning lift shaft?!) and some beautifully designed levels, LucasArts did not include a multiplayer function which robbed Dark Forces of a longer shelf-life and wider online fanbase. Of course, LucasArts would address that in the sequel.

Dark Forces 2: Jedi Knight
LucasArts

It was a brave move on LucasArts behalf rushing Jedi Knight onto the shelves just before Quake 2 arrived on the scene, but it was a wise move. Jedi Knight (the sequel to Dark Forces) addressed all the complaints people had with Dark Forces. Multiplayer support was added, the lightsaber was included and Force powers pushed the game into new territory. Now in true 3D, the Star Wars universe has never looked better - X-Wings and TIE flying over head, lightsaber duels on floating platforms in Cloud City, the full CD musical score and a single player game which had gamers addicted to the very end. The Jedi Knight engine could also handle massively large open areas without chugging - something Quake could not - again providing a far more realistic experience. Jedi Knight has struggled to keep the same sort of hardcore audience which Quake 2 has developed, but anyone who has played it through (including the recently released, Mysteries of the Sith add-on pack) will tell you it's an experience not to be missed.

The best source on the net for Lucasarts 1st person shooters remains to be (http://www.jediknight.net/)

DARK FORCES

Outlaws
LucasArts

Some of the Dark Forces team went on to make this Western-based 3D shooter for LucasArts. Using an updated version of the Dark Forces engine, Outlaws was a shining example of excellent level design and atmosphere. The weapons were all fairly traditional, starting you with a pistol and then progressing to a variety of shotguns, a gattling gun, dynamite and knives. Outlaws introduced some nice ideas such as the rifle scope, so you could zoom in on enemies and pick them off as they hid behind rocks, maybe making the game a bit easier - but it was fun to use. The music was awesome, sound effects brilliant and the story line really drove the game - the levels being interspersed with cartoon-style animations. Levels such as the travelling train, and the huge open architecture of the canyon levels made Outlaws an immersive and extremely underrated first-person shooter.

SHADOW WARRIORS

CONSOLE SHOOTERS

Since the consoles moved into the 32 & 64-bit era with the PlayStation, Saturn and Nintendo 64 (we'll conveniently forget the Atari Jaguar or 3DO ever existed okay?), first-person shooters have popped up with varying degrees of success. Even back on the 16-bit Super Nintendo system and Megadrive 32X, a mutated version of Doom was available, along with the all-time classic Wolfenstein 3D, but it hasn't been until now that the genre has settled in comfortably on the family TV. Here we'll take a look at all the first-person shooters which have made an appearance on each of the consoles, and see how well they fared.

THE PLAYSTATION

The Sony PlayStation has had the strongest line-up of 3D shooters for any console, due in part to the healthy third-party developer support and the machine's tasty polygon-crunching power. Most of the classic PC shooters have been honoured with PSX conversions - Doom, Final Doom, Dark Forces, Descent 1 & 2, Duke Nukem 3D, Mechwarrior 2 and Hexen have all been given the Sony stamp of approval. Whilst they're all playable and fun for non-PC owning gamers, none of them are a patch on the PC originals (with the exception of maybe Mechwarrior 2) in both the single player and multi-player stakes. With the advent of the Dual-Shock controller, we should expect to see some games that will take advantage of the control methods this controller allows. Rumour has it that versions of Quake, Quake 2 and Hexen 2 are all in development for the grey box, though at this stage nothing has been confirmed by the games' publishers.

Besides these big titles which originated on the PC, the PlayStation has had a few great shooters which were made especially for it. Some of these were so good, they received PC ports! So which first-person shooters have been unique to the PlayStation?

Lifeforce: Tenka
Psygnosis

Coming from the ever-trusty Psygnosis stable, Lifeforce: Tenka was the first PlayStation 3D shooter to consist entirely of polygons as well as to include funky lighting effects. The in-game design of Tenka was what really separated it from it's PC cousins. The weapon system was based around a morphing gun and there was tons of coloured lighting before it became all the rage. Tenka had the ability to crouch and crawl, which was unseen in any previous PSX game and the game simply looked better than any of the other 3D shooters for the console. The gameplay may not be so wonderful in retrospect, but it was certainly one of the most striking PSX-only shooters to emerge.

Alien trilogy
Acclaim

Here's another shooter which scored highly in Hyper - 92% to be exact! Also appearing on the PC and Saturn, Alien Trilogy was packed full of tense moody music and dark, gloomy corridors, bringing the gruesome sci-fi world of the Alien movies into our homes. Not only did the game look fantastic, but it performed really well too, with smooth frame-rates inducing some great first-person action. Some of the highlights were transparent glass which could be shattered and jets of steam bursting from pipes. The Xenomorphs themselves came across a little poor (they were simply 2D sprites), but the action was enough to keep thousands of PlayStation gamers boasting about what a cool game it was on the PlayStation.

Po'ed
Accolade

Sure it was a bit of a Doom clone, but PO'ed was colourful, fun and full of good humour. Whilst the game was primarily created in 2D, it was successful in giving the illusion of a true 3D world - sloped surfaces, elevators and ladders - giving the gamer the sense of a true environment to explore. The visuals weren't remarkable, but the fun gameplay is what made PO'ed a notch above the dull PC ports. For those who are curious, Doom for the 3DO was reviewed in the same issue of Hyper scoring 70%, testament to the fact that the platform can really make a difference to the "success" of a good first-person shooter.

Disruptor
Universal

Then there were some attempts which didn't quite make the grade. This was a case of a Doom clone failing to rise above the fact that it was essentially just a clone of another better game. Scoring an average 62% back in March '97, Disruptor had some nice elements (even a few Turok-looking bits) but the gameplay lacked tension, excitement and the general adrenalin-pumping vibe found in other shooters on the console. This is one maybe the PlayStation would rather forget.

Besides the classic First-Person Shooter genre, there were also a number of other 3D perspective action games on the PlayStation which weren't quite true to the genre to really be included - Shadowmaster, Brahma Force and Tunnel B1 for instance. All games were first-person and shooters, but the player was the pilot in vehicles giving both the games a different "feel" and crossing them into other genres.

THE NINTENDO 64

The Nintendo 64 is probably the only console to offer some truly original and brilliant first-person shooters. Before we showcase these great games, we will acknowledge that the system has received ports of Doom, Hexen, Duke Nukem 3D and the almighty Quake. Activision have also just announced that Quake 2 will come out for the N64, hopefully by year's end. All of these versions are top notch, but they don't come close to the N64's own line-up of 3D shooters.

Turok
Acclaim

What can you say about Turok which hasn't already been said?! This game alone probably helped Nintendo sell thousands of N64s, as it was not only visually stunning and the story original, but the gameplay was rock solid.

The Nintendo 64's gamepad provided console gamers with the first chance to play a first-person shooter with an analogue control device - perfect for looking around the environment with speed and accuracy. The animation and 3D modelling in this game were superb, and it wasn't long before PC gamers got their very own 3Dfx enhanced version. It scored 90%, being the first killer 3rd party title for the N64. We all know that Turok 2: Seeds of Evil is on it's way, so the Nintendo 64 community is holding it's breath in anticipation.

Goldeneye
Rare

One of the highest scoring titles in Hyper history, Goldeneye deserved its 95%. Goldeneye has proved to be a big hit with gamers everywhere. The excellent detail in the game helped create an absorbing atmosphere, with all the player models in the game mapped with photo-realistic textures and big wide-open areas. Not only was the array of guns impressive, and the action great fun, but the variety of missions and the level of challenge in the game kept things entertaining for even hardcore gamers. The multiplayer mode was also a success, even though it was played out through a four-player split-screen. Though Goldeneye remains at the top of the N64 "Must-have" list, Rare are developing a new 3D shooter using an upgraded version of the game engine.

THE SATURN

In this genre, the Saturn is probably most famous for receiving a port of the mighty Quake before any other console! Unlike the PlayStation, the Saturn wasn't lucky enough to receive ports of all the PC greats. What it did get though was decent enough for non PC owning Saturn gamers: Doom, Hexen, Duke Nukem 3D, Alien Trilogy and of course Quake. Only one Saturn first-person shooter really springs to mind which hadn't appeared anywhere else previously...

Exhumed
BMG Interactive

Set in a bizarre Egyptian tomb, Exhumed was a bit sci-fi and a bit classic adventure. We awarded this game a huge 89% and it was the first 3D shooter to appear on the console. Very Doom-inspired, Exhumed gave the gamer the ability to look up and down, waste countless demons with big beefy weapons and solve some intriguing puzzles. The Saturn owners received this fine game before both the PlayStation AND the PC - a true achievement!

The future of console 1st Person shooters

With Sega's Katana on the way, using a Microsoft operating system called Dragon, console first-person shooters will no doubt be ported from the PC with greater ease than in the past. We can expect Quake 2, Unreal, Half-Life, Sin and all the other big PC titles to eventually find their way to the Katana and if Sega fans are lucky there will be some great shooters designed specifically for the system. The way the current rumoured specs of this machine sit, we're looking at a beast with the same graphics grunt as a Pentium 2 with two Voodoo2 cards, which is more than enough to run any cutting edge 1st person shooter developed for the PC. With the advent of Web-TV, you can also expect the multiplayer side of things to improve immeasurably too, with the eventual introduction of online console gaming. Something to look forward to.

KING OF DA CONSOLES...

Okay... award time. Since not everyone can afford a high end PC, and thus can't get their hands on the best platform for 1st person shooters, we thought it was important to point you in the right direction as to which console offers the best alternative.

3. The Saturn didn't do as badly as many would have expected, and was the first console to deliver Quake, which, for the system, wasn't too bad an effort. In terms of A-grade 1st person shooters, however, Exhumed was the Saturn's only real choice, and as a result, the Saturn is probably the least desirable console for 1st person shooters. Sega's next console however should be perfect for this style of game.

2. The PlayStation is geared to handle 3D graphics, and this has made it a very viable platform for 1st person shooters. The Doom games were very successful on the PSX, and many found the controls to be spot on. The only original 1st person shooter for the PSX was Lifeforce Tenka. The PSX got a much wider variety than the Saturn in terms of conversions (story of the whole Saturn vs PSX saga really). RAM limitations hold the PSX from being a killer 1st person machine.

1. The Nintendo 64's mip mapping effect give it that same "smoothed over" effect that 3DFX users became used to with GL Quake on the PC. The Nintendo 64 has great versions of Doom and Quake, the two all time classics, plus the two most impressive console 1st person shooters, Turok and Goldeneye. The default controller also includes an analogue controller, which is perfect for aiming in this genre.

Best 1st person shooter on a console

1. Goldeneye - Nintendo 64
2. Turok Dinosaur Hunter - Nintendo 64
3. Doom 64 - Nintendo 64
4. Final Doom - PlayStation
5. Quake 64 - Nintendo 64

1ST PERSON SHOOTERS... NOW

Quake

The first true 3D shooter

Quake was the first true 3D 1st person shooter, with true 3D environments and true 3D polygon inhabitants. The pace was fast and furious, and although the single player experience was no where near as gripping as Doom was when it hit, the multiplayer game offered unparalleled diversity due to Id's offering the source code so the public could add to the whole Quake experience. The game grew as the fans put back into the game.

Capture the flag was the first major offshoot, with players meeting online and joining teams on the spot, working together to defeat others. This, and plain old deathmatching in general has brought about a great sense of comraderie that has not only created a cool gaming experience, but also allowed for a new sort of social aspect to online gaming. Some other additions to Quake included player skins, allowing the players to appear as they chose. Team Fortress, an Australian made modification focusing on getting players to play roles and work together. Those that liked it one on one were treated to Rocket Arena, a "spectator sport", where two would fight to the death, and those waiting to prove their worth would watch the bout.

Quake has created a phenomenon that most gamers have always dreamed of, but considered a hopeless fantasy... The professional gamer. Experts like Thresh, Killcreek, and Reptile make money playing the game, and have essentially become gaming celebrities. At this stage, corporate sponsorship is in its infancy, but Telstra is already sponsoring a Quake 2 clan, so here's hoping...

Quake 2

Today's measuring stick.

With Quake's only major criticism being the rather shallow disjointed single player game, Id were determined to make Quake 2 a much more coherent and polished product. Success. John Carmack's superb new engine, which allowed for more detailed environments, and much more detailed creature and player models, set new standards in PC gaming visuals. Those with 3D accelerators were treated with coloured lighting, which has proven to be a deciding factor in how realistic a 3D environment appears now. Tim Willits and the other level designers strung together a whole mess of levels that followed a storyline, and actually made you feel you were doing something other than just "getting to the end".

Quake 2 has "Gone off" so to speak, but most interesting is that the hordes of Quake 1 players did not all just latch onto the sequel and abandon the old game. Whether this is due to the Quake 1 players being comfy with the game mechanics they were used to, or not liking the new weapons balance in Quake 2, most of them seem happy to stay put.

The Quake scene today

Since Quake 2 has been released, there have been a whole mess of mods and user definable goodies to play with. The Id strategy of letting the gaming community make the game bigger than when it was first launched has worked yet again. The new mods have mostly been copied off old Quake mods, but thanks to the new engine, it all just looks so much better.

For Quake or Quake 2 news (or any new first person shooter news for that matter), head to **(http://www.bluesnews.com/)**.

CTF

Capture the Flag is just as popular in the Quake 2 scene as it was with Quake 1. Love it or hate it, the return of the BFG has created a whole new strategy when it comes to assaulting and defending bases. It's the perfect way to play a team game without going through the process of getting a clan together. There are many variations of CTF, but you can go get the latest version of the official CTF at **(http://www.idsoftware.com/)**

Rocket Arena 2

The total deathmatch duelling experience. Players join the server, and can either enter team games, or prove themselves in individual competition. Spectators can fly around the arena freely as "ghosts", so they can get front row seat action while they wait for their next bout. A great feature is the in game voting system, which allows players to alter the rules to suit those playing, rather than being dictated by the server.

Q2 Skins and models

Quake allowed players to make their own skins, but custom player models never took off. In Quake 2 it's dead easy to download a special player model, and everybody else who has downloaded the model will see you as it. Some of the coolest models around include Astroboy, Battroid (Robotech mechs), Boba Fett, Winter's Faerie, and a variety of Transformers. There are over a hundred new models readily available, plus links on how to make your own models and skins at **(http://bodyshop.logicquest.com/)**

Visual Weapons

Both Quake and Quake 2 had one shortcoming in terms of realism, with players appearing to hold a simple shotgun, even when they were toting a large rocket launcher. Well, some clever folks added this feature for Quake 2, and shortly afterwards, the same mod was done for Quake 1. Basically, it just makes deathmatching even more realistic.

For Quake 2 Vwep **(http://www.telefragged.com/vwep/)**

Australian Quake sites

AusQuakeII (http://www.OntheNet.com.au/murfet/)

A site devoted to providing the basic Q2 info in Australia. Registration of Q2 clans, server list, and more.

Quake.au **(http://www.quake-au.net/)**

An all round Quake 1 & 2 site that has news on local events like LAN Quake gatherings. There's also a busy message board, to help you get up to speed on what's going on.

A WORD FROM THE MASTERS

Tim Willits and Brandon James were out to check out the proceedings at the Wireplay Frag U tournament, which decided the current Quake 2 champion clan, and individual player in this country (as far as most were concerned). We asked Tim and Brandon a few questions on how Quake 2 has panned out, and what we may expect from them in the future.

Hyper: How has Quake 2 turned out for you guys in terms of sales, and the reaction from the public?

TW: Well people really like it. It's worlds different than Quake 1. It's selling really well, people are making mods...

BJ: And there are huge online and LAN tournaments taking place all around the world, like the Wireplay one here in Australia.

Hyper: Are you finding that a lot of the people playing Quake 2, aren't the same people who were playing Quake 1?

TW: Yes. That's the great thing about Quake 2. It's a different game, and there are people that will still only play Quake 1, because it's different, and they prefer it that way.

BJ: There are still some people who just play Doom 2, and nothing else... even after Quake came out.

TW: Remember when Doom 2 came out and nobody kept playing Doom 1? With Quake and Quake 2, the games are that different that people many will like one or the other, rather than just see Quake 2 as an extension of Quake 1.

Hyper: Do you guys like the mods that have been coming out for Quake 2?

TW: Yeah... But right now, people are still just converting their stuff from Quake 1 to Quake 2. There hasn't been enough time for the really big new mods to hit. Jailbreak's new though. Everyone has been able to get their stuff over, and the transition has been good for most people. There isn't going to be a Quake-2-world. So there won't be any splintering of the Quake 2 community like there was with Quake 1.

Hyper: Can we expect any more updates from Id on Quake 2?

TW: 3.15 because of the Xatrix mission pack. We're not fixing things, the updates have really been modifications. When the original game came out, there weren't really any bugs we hadn't planned. John basically just had to make it more secure so people couldn't hack into it. The stuff that Zoid has done now is put things in like client side downloads from the server... reduced the packet size a little

Hyper: With Quake 2 a lot of folks feel they don't have the high end machine they need to get the most out of the game. What's the feeling then with Quake 3, with the sort of machine that you'll need to play that?

TW: We like to build a game that we WANT to build. And John likes to push the technology, and for that you need a faster machine. Intel loves us... we sell new machines "laughs". It's that age old debate, "I've got a Pentium 60 and nothing works on it anymore". It's an expensive hobby. You really got to buy about a $3000 machine.

Hyper: What can you tell us about Quake 3?

TW: Not much at this stage. Deathmatch is the same sort of game really. It's a continuation of where the story left off in Quake 2... so in single player you're up against the Strogoss again.

BJ: Other things like maybe having teleporters so when you look into it, you're actually looking into another area, and when you walk around it, you alter your view into the destination area.

TW: Quake 3 for us is really a game where we can take our time and relax. Because Quake 2 was pretty stressful, with personnel changes, and having to throw a lot of work away and start again. Quake 3 is just going to be kicking back and having fun... and we know that we're going to eliminate a lot of people because of no software support, but this is a game we want to make.

Hyper: What are some of the things you guys either hope to see or do in the coming years?

BJ: The talk around the office is to have huge multiplayer games, like with two armies going up against each other. The major hurdle would be that it would be hard to organise.

TW: Also, the level of detail. John (Carmack) wants to make it so that you really have an infinite level of detail where you can zoom into a pixel, and zoom out to a whole world.

Hyper: Do you think this sort of thinking and ambition will get to a point where the art department in a game becomes too huge, and you have to weigh up where you draw the line so you can actually get the thing done?

TW: That's stuff that we wrestle with all the time.

BJ: There's also the thought of going into more of the "arena" based games like Mario 64, where you have the different missions to go through. So we'd have maps like four or five times as big as in Quake 2, and just crammed with passageways you can go through that you couldn't take before... after you get your "star" at the end.

THE FUTURE?

Well, as you'll find out once you read our Unreal review, there's a new king of the hill in 1st person shooter land. The thing that will be really interesting to see is how the system specs of the gaming populace affect Unreal's popularity. We were amazed by Quake 2's visuals back in December, and would never have expected such a leap so soon. With games like Sin, Heretic 2, Daikatana, Duke Nukem Forever and Half Life all running on the Quake 2 engine, and Blood 2 on the LithTech engine... Will these titles all fall short because of Unreal's cutting edge presentation? Ion Storm have just signed a deal to use the Unreal engine in their next title rather than the Quake 2 engine, so should this tell us something? (although there is speculation of Id withdrawing their offer of the engine to Ion Storm).

If you wanna know more about 1st person shooters, check out (http://www.3dgamers.com/)

UNREAL

SIN

HALFLIFE

DUKE NUKEM FOREVER

REVIEWS

We'll never give a game a 100% rating in Hyper, basically because there's no such thing as a game that couldn't be improved. A magazine is no different, so our review section has undergone a bit of a facelift. The major change is one you may not actually notice without either knowing the games industry inside out, or running around to a whole lot of retail outlets with a pen and paper... but this change is about saving you these hassles. Basically, we're dropping the notion that we should only show you the stuff we assume you'd want to see, and adopting the notion that you should get to see it all. There'll still be cases where we miss a game, but we will announce it, and it will only happen when we're not sent the title to review, which is usually an indication that the companies behind the game feel they have reason to hide it.

This does mean that there won't be as many double page reviews, but we felt it was more important that we give you the bottom line on everything, as opposed to the 3rd degree on a portion of the games that come out.

The other change is going to be immediately obvious, and that's our scoring system. We've dumped the Freakometer and the Multiplayer boxes. The thinking behind this was simple. The Freakometer was there for situations where a game was really genre specific to a point where it may be unsuitable for those not into the genre. The multiplayer was there to let you know when multiplayer was better or worse than the single player experience. The thing is, these only really need to be mentioned when they're a real plus or minus to the game, so we created "Pluses" and "Minuses" to cover these, and pretty much every other case where something in a game stands out (for better or worse).

We also realise that newcomers to the magazine may not have understood our scoring system, so from now on, we're leaving an explanation to the scoring in this intro page. The score box also includes what peripherals the game supports, and for PC games, we not only give the minimum requirements, but also the requirements you'll need to get a decent performance out of the game.

Welcome to the only complete guide to all the video games released this month in Australia.

Dan

GAME OF THE MONTH UNREAL

Score: 97 reviewed on page 58

PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE MONTH DEAD OR ALIVE

Reviewed on page 44

NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE MONTH 1080 SNOWBOARDING

Reviewed on page 40

PC

79 Addiction Pinball
63 Alien Earth
67 Castrol Superbikes
73 Egypt 1156BC
75 Extreme Tactics
74 Fighting Force
68 Hexen 2 Mission Pack
78 Jazz Jackrabbit 2
62 Prophecy: Of Light and Darkness
77 Microsoft Golf '98
64 Might & Magic 6
57 Monster Truck Madness 2
56 Motorhead
69 Outwars
71 Pilgrim
72 Plane Crazy
74 Redline Racer
78 Redneck Rampage 2
78 Sign of the Sun
74 Street Fighter Alpha 2
77 The Golf Pro
76 Three Lions Soccer
75 Tomb Raider: Unfinished Business
75 Triple Play '99
58 Unreal
72 Warbreeds
43 World Cup '98
66 X-Files

PlayStation

70 Adidas Power Soccer '98
47 Azure Dreams
72 Bio Freaks
73 Chill
46 Dead Ball Zone
44 Dead Or Alive
76 Deathtrap Dungeon
73 Everybody's Golf
48 Klonoa
71 Lucky Luke
56 Motorhead
54 Poy Poy
76 Snow Racer 98
76 Three Lions Soccer
79 Wayne Gretsky '98
43 World Cup '98

N64

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42 All Star Baseball '99
71 Bust a Move 2
70 Dual Heroes
77 Rampage World Tour
79 Robotron x
43 World Cup '98

Macintosh

70 Diablo
58 Unreal

56

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54

THE HYPER REVIEW SYSTEM

Available:	When the game is expected to be on sale. Release dates are subject to change without notice for a variety of rea sons, so this may not always be correct. Ask your retailer if things don't show up.
Category:	What type of game it is
Players:	The number of players a game allows to play it at once.
Publisher:	Simply the company that publishes the game.
Price:	The reccomended retail price. This is subject to change without notice.
Rating:	The OFLC's verdict on the suitable ages for the game.
Required:	The hardware required to play the game on your PC.
Desired:	The hardware we think you need to get decent perfor mance out of the game.

Supports:	Which peripherals and hardware you can use with the game.
Plus:	Notable good points about the game.
Minus:	Notable problems with the game.
Visuals:	An indication as to the overall quality and impact of the graphics in the game.
Sound:	A rating that includes not only sound effects, but music as well.
Gameplay:	A measure of the depth, features and fun that you come across when playing the game.
Overall:	The verdict, in a number.

1080 Snowboarding

Kevin Cheung *trades in his $350 rollerblades for a snowboard. All he needs now is a ski slope in the city.*

I HOPE THE GIRLS ARE WATCHING!

The fact that 1080 Snowboarding is made by the same team behind Waverace is reason enough to look at this game. Boasting a size of 16 MB, the largest of any N64 game yet released, 1080 combines speed, physics, class, and a pinch of Pepsi Max hoopla to create one of the best snowboarding games yet seen on any system.

Slap on your boots, Junior, we're going for a ride

The focus of this game is purely on snowboarding. You can race, compete with friends, take part in a slalom, go nuts on a half-pipe - the gist is that you ride the seam of a slope, gain as much speed as you can, and show off a few of your tricks. With five unique characters and several types of snowboards with all sorts of different attributes, you are ensured to have some measure of variety in tackling the different tracks.

When you jump into a race, all directional controls are designated to the analogue thumb pad. If you press up, you'll lean forward; and if you pull down, you'll will lean back. There isn't any acceleration button as such since you have to ride down a slope and let gravity do its work, but pressing the Z button does allow you to become a little more aerodynamic (except less manoeuvrable). When you are airborne, you can perform a variety mid-air trickery through button combinations and thumb pad movements. These moves range from nose grabs and stiffies to the ultimate test of control-pad mastery, the 1080. That's three full spins for those who can't do the math.

AW MAN! THE SKI LODGE JUST GOT NUKED!

HANG ON WHILE I TIE MY LACES!

I SHOULDN'T HAVE WORN THE RED BOOB TUBE. I KNEW IT!

SICK AIR

Fly down the mountainside, whip out your camera, and... BAM - hit a tree

The graphics of 1080 are drop-dead gorgeous. Aside from the usual ambient snow effects, 1080's beauty comes from the combination of excellent track design and photographic backgrounds. The end result is a game that looks seriously cool, complete with multiple camera views, lens flare, and snow flying right in your face. Also, as distinct from every other snowboarding game, the entire screen will tilt from side to side, making you feel completely a part of the action. Combined with some of the funky background music and sound effects, 1080 is a complete entertainment package in itself.

A very well controlled fall down a hill

The beauty of the controls are that they are so damned common sense. It's helped further by the variety of the terrain in each track. For one thing, there is no such thing as a flat surface. You won't get away with applying the rule of shortest distance and simply travel in a straight line. Every bump and groove will affect your speed and direction, which creates immense variety for each and every race. Now, bearing all of that in mind, if a slight bump sends you up in the air and you lean too far forward, you could lose your balance and possibly get thrown to the ground. Lean a too far back and you'll obviously fall over. When taking a turn, you can use the skidding to control your relative speed. Take the turn a little too hard, and you could skid to a complete stop. Really, there's too much to describe. The physics are just excellent. 1080 is truly a testament to the strength of the original Waverace design.

The control faults of 1080 pretty much go with the territory. In some instances, it's impossible to judge if your board is properly levelled off. When you are about to land, if you are tilted by just a few degrees too much, you'll fall over. The game feels a little unforgiving at first, but after some practice, it's really okay. The other thing is that you're perpetually going down, so there's little 'real' freedom of movement.

Weeee! Look Ma! I'm flying!

One thing should be said, though, about the approach that 1080 takes to the snowboarding genre. Many, including this reviewer, have wondered what is so interesting about a racing game where you principally rely on gravity without any assisted acceleration. The best alternative games like Coolboarders 2 on the PlayStation come across as contrived and comical, relying on so-called complex button combinations to produce different manoeuvres, which supposedly spruces up the gameplay. But that's not what snowboarding is about. You could play through 1080 without learning a single trick and still come back for more. Its magic comes from the sheer sense of depth you experience as you fly down the mountain slopes. You can see the wind rippling through the fabric of your clothes as you take a dive off an almighty cliff, and when you see the flare of the sun, combined with the photorealistic backgrounds and foregrounds, you'd swear you were watching the real thing. The thrill is not in the moves, my friends: it's in watching and feeling the experience itself. You could be ripping through the foliage and suddenly see your opponent, who decided to take an alternate route, fly right overhead off a cliff to overtake you. Truly awesome stuff.

There is little else more to say save that 1080 captures the true essence of the thrill of snowboarding. The physics, in particular, are incredible; and the graphics make the game an awe-inspiring experience. Just as Waverace brought a new dimension to water-based racing, 1080 brings N64 owners an equally innovative game.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	SNOWBOARDING
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	NINTENDO
PRICE:	$79.95
RATING:	G

PLUS

The alternate paths on every track are very, very cool.

MINUS

The 1080 move guarantees thumb cramps to anyone crazy enough to attempt it for a prolonged period of time.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
89	81	93

OVERALL

90

The best snowboarding game to have appeared anywhere thus far. 1080 gives the genre a much needed injection of the thrill factor

All Star Baseball '99

Another irrelevant American sports game, or a work of art? **Dan Toose** *scouts All-Star Baseball '99 for talent.*

HAVE AT YOU... BALL!

UNLUCKY! SUCKED UP INTO A UFO MID-GAME

Something should probably be explained right here. We get a whole mess of letters asking why there's no AFL or cricket games for the N64 or PlayStation. The answer is simple. Besides soccer games, which almost exclusively come from the UK, the majority of the sports titles that come out are American sports. The American console market actually has a far greater interest in sports titles than any other territory, and as a result NFL Quarterback Club did very well on the N64. Acclaim move to the next American sport, and get it right first time with All-Star Baseball '99.

We're starting to wonder just how many more times that "next year's" batch of sports games can upstage the current batch, because All-Star Baseball '99 is really quite stunning to look at. There are motion captured animation for just about everything you could possibly imagine that a baseball player would do. These also translate to smoother gameplay than any baseball title ever released. There are supposedly over 500 motions, but we too busy being stunned to count. Like NFL QC, ASB '99 runs in 640 by 480 resolution, and at a high frame rate, and basically looks sharper and more realistic than any other game on the N64.

Not only does it look good, but the sound is great too. Commentary by John Sterling and Michael Kaye (I dunno either, but they sound like the guys on TV) give it that "just like the real thing" feel. There's that god awful cheesy organ music that makes you think "Baseball!". Of course all this would mean nothing if the crack of the bat on ball sounded iffy... but it's great.

Authentic

For the fans, all 30 Major League Baseball teams are there, with more than 700 MLB players. For those of you that would prefer a custom team rather than an authentic one, you can create your own players, and even adjust their height, weight, skin, facial hair, the works. Players who weight a lot, actually look chunkier than the light players, just like in Quarterback Club (funny that). You can do all the stuff managers have to as well, like trading, signing and releasing players.

Most Baseball games are a little tricky to get used to, especially in the batting department. I'm happy to report that ASB '99 is very playable and intuitive. Hitting the ball is not impossible, but just like real baseball, you can't just blast it around the park either. The controls are just plain old sensible, like using the four C buttons as "Throw to base" when you're fielding.

With every conceivable play option, including playing whole seasons, or just trying a home run derby, this has pretty much everything you could want in a baseball game. Totally adjustable camera angles, replays... everything.

There's even rumble pak support and options for 4 player games. If you like Baseball at all, or would even just like to have a sports game for your N64 buy All-Star baseball '98 now.

AVAILABLE:	JUNE/JULY
CATEGORY:	SPORTS
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	ACCLAIM
PRICE:	$99.99
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	RUMBLE PAK

PLUS
Stunning visuals
Great controls
Tons of options and features

MINUS
Requires some knowledge of the game to get maximum appreciation.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93	87	91

OVERALL
91
A pretty much faultless baseball game for the N64

World Cup '98

Cam Shea *pulls on the boxers and heads out into the paddock for EA's latest soccer offering.*

HYPER BIG RUBBER STAMP OF APPROVAL

SERVES YOU RIGHT FOR WEARING UGLY JERSEYS!

Hang on a sec..... Didn't EA just release "Road To The World Cup"? The answer is yes and ch-ching!! What with the "cash in on the World Cup" floodgates being open and all, EA didn't want to be caught out. I mean, RTWC is a whole 6 months old, and it's only the best soccer sim there is - geez, EA are slipping. So the question is, why release another World Cup game when RTWC already has the options to do the whole World Cup thang? The answer is that WC 98 is the DEFINITIVE World Cup experience .... oh yeah, and ch-ching!

Seamless

So what are the differences I hear you cry? Well, the incredible number of teams and leagues of previous FIFA's are gone, leaving the 32 qualifying teams, plus 8 more that EA wish had qualified!! Onya EA - Australia's World Cup dream lives!! EA have used this greater specialisation to focus on even greater realism and attention to detail. This means that absolutely everything is as it will be in the World Cup - player rosters and skill levels, team jerseys, the game calendar, all 8 stadiums modelled accurately, national anthems for all the countries, and even authentic crowd chants for each nation. Pity there's no chants like "Baggio's a wanker"... A fantastic option that has been included is the ability to replay 8 of the all-time greatest World Cup finals. As you'd expect, EA have attained the same level of authenticity for these classic games as for everything else - including the option to play in black and white.

As for gameplay, take everything that Dan said in his RTWC review -ie. amazingly lifelike with accessible and intuitive controls, and then tweak it all and add real-time in-game management. This new feature seems so natural that you wonder why it's never been implemented before. It allows you to change formations and strategies on the fly. The way this works is that you can set up several team formations and strategies, and then at anytime in the game at the press of a button you can switch between them. You can also introduce other realistic tactics, like calling for an offside trap, or a through ball run, or a wing back run - all at the press of a button. It introduces a whole new level of depth to the game, and works seamlessly with the game dynamics.

Tweakage!

Graphically each platform has been slightly tweaked, and they all perform very nicely indeed. The motion capture in particular, has been totally redone, using a different player for every position, and absolutely shines. Overall, a superb game, but think twice if you already own FIFA 98.

RISKING LIFE AND LIMB FOR... A BALL

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	SPORT
PLAYERS:	1-2 PSX, 1-22 PC, 1-4 N64
PUBLISHER:	EA SPORTS
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P100, 16 MB RAM, WIN95, 4XCD ROM
DESIRED:	P166, 32 MBRAM, 3D CARD 8XCD ROM
SUPPORTS:	3DFX, POWER VR2, GAMEPADS

PLUS
Replay all-time great games
Gameplay, gameplay, gameplay

MINUS
Hard to recommend if you already own FIFA 98: Road to World Cup

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	90	94

OVERALL

90

An outstanding soccer game, but maybe not worth it for owners of FIFA: Road to World Cup due to the minor changes.

Dead or Alive

Eyebrows weren't the only things that were raised when the Hyper crew saw this bouncy game. **Kevin Cheung** *investigates.*

Fancy Costumes

Finish the game with every character on every skill level, and you will be rewarded with a mountain of alternate costumes. Here are a few of Kasumi's costumes for your viewing pleasure.

PlayStation owners have long lamented the fact that they don't have anything that remotely looks or plays like Sega's Virtua Fighter 2. Well, lament no further my friends, as Tecmo brings you their dark horse of an arcade hit, Dead or Alive. Having already appeared on the Sega Saturn as a near perfect arcade translation of the Model 2 original, Tecmo have used the benefit of hindsight and a little programming trickery to make the PlayStation version a more enjoyable experience.

Meet the cast

All you have to care about in Dead or Alive is that you get to choose from 10 characters, two of whom are PlayStation-exclusive, and fight your way to the very end. The characters have a decent variety in speed and strength to keep everyone happy, ranging from the quick and elegant Kasumi to the raw-knuckle power of Bayman. And to ensure that this game won't be accused of playing on stereotypical male and female roles, Ryu fights with a deftly elegant style, while Tina's punishing wrestling moves could instill fear into the heart of the average bull elephant.

Something old, Something new...

When it comes to fighting, Dead or Alive mimics the elements of other great fighting games while at the same time introducing some unique elements of its own. The first notable gameplay element is the simple three-button interface that allow you to punch, kick, and counter-attack in a similar fashion to Virtua Fighter 2. However, this isn't another case of "dial-a-combo" gameplay, as the majority of combos are produced by logically stringing together a series of moves. In other words, they are customable.

The other notable gameplay element is the counter-attack, which is a simplified version of the grapple attacks of Square's Tobal series. Simply press the button at the right time, and you will intercept your opponent's attack with a counter attack of your own. Press the counter-attack button in concert with a few directional keypad movements, and you'll chalk up a throw or two, and maybe even an extended super throw combo.

The final gameplay element to consider would be the Danger Zone, which occupies the area surrounding the immediate fighting arena. Should you fall on the Danger Zone, you'll be sent hurtling metres into the air, leaving you vulnerable to cheap extended long-string combos from your opponent. It's a little annoying at times, but it adds to the variety in the way fights can be carried out.

THE SMELLY SANDSHOE ATTACK. NASTY.

Beat your friends up black and blue.

Once you play the game, you'll realise that the game has truly dynamic gameplay variety. Operating on a system similar to the old Stone Paper Scissors game where attacks are defeated by counters, counters by throws, and throws by attacks, Dead or Alive's fight sequences can literally turn into a wild frenzy of multiple counters, throws, attacks plus throws, which makes the game look more like a Jackie Chan film than any other game. The counters, which are capable of turning the tables on the most offensively oriented of button mashers, adds a deliciously unpredictable element to every fight. Even hardened experts can be floored by a novice, given a little practice of course.

The only serious gameplay flaws stem back to the simple nature of the controls themselves. With only three buttons to toy with, and a lack of any side-stepping moves, Dead or Alive is somewhat lacking in depth. In the end, most people will learn only two or three cool combos for each character and use them over and over again to finish the game. The other problem is the frequent situation where both characters have tried to counter each other, resulting in a very awkward stutter to the action.

The poetic art of fighting

Running in the PlayStation's hi-res mode, Dead or Alive uses large 3D gouraud shaded characters that move with a wonderful lifelike fluidity. The backgrounds are two dimensional, but they serve very little purpose aside from looking beautiful (which they do), so it's pointless to complain. With practically no noticeable clipping or slowdown, it is easily one of the most visually impressive fighting games on the PlayStation. The sound effects are, of course, the usual ensemble of punching, kicking, and screaming sounds which do the job fairly well. The music is a remix of the original arcade tunes, which are designed to sound a more charismatic than the usual Japanese beat-em up fanfare.

At the end of the day, Dead or Alive is a game with fantastic potential. Its dynamic and unpredictable gameplay ensures that it is a wild romp every time you play it, but its comparatively shallow gameplay limits the long life that this game would otherwise enjoy. Otherwise, it's a thoroughly entertaining game.

GO ON HONEY, SQUEEZE THAT BICEP

REALLY GETTING JIGGY WITH IT!

THE ALTERNATIVES:

It's funny that the only real alternatives to Dead or Alive either aren't available yet, or won't be coming to the PlayStation. The alternatives are Virtua Fighter 2, Tobal 2, and Tekken 3. But even then, Tekken 3's play mechanics are completely different owing to the control and combo system. Dead or Alive is quite unique.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS:	1 - 2
PUBLISHER:	TECMO
PRICE:	$69.95
RATING:	TBA

PLUS

The frantic, unpredictable gameplay makes this a fantastic head-to-head game.

MINUS

The lack of depth can make this a bland single-player experience for seasoned gamers.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	84	91

OVERALL

87

One of the most under-rated games in recent times. Its serious potential deserves attention.

Dead Ball Zone

Kevin Cheung *has always dreamt of playing gridiron without pads. We hand him the next best thing.*

RUN FOR IT! HE'S WEARING SPANDEX!

LIE BACK AND THINK OF ENGLAND

If anyone can remember back to the days when it was cool to have an Amiga, you'll remember there was a fantastic old gem called Speedball 2. Rage Software have decided to bring a game with a similar theme to the present era of gaming, entitled Dead Ball Zone. The question, though, is whether the gameplay of old has survived the test of time.

Now THIS is what football is meant to be

Set in the not too distant future, DBZ is a sport pitting two teams of brawny muscle-bound oafs against each other. With the controls of one team in your hands, your secondary aim is to protect the goal on their side of the field from a metal ball that appears in the centre of the field. Your primary aim is to bash the living crap out of the other side, get the ball, and throw it into their goal.

Aside from the usual team management functions like substitutions, team formations, and player enhancements, DBZ is pure uninhibited fun. The action is fast, the motion is slick, and when you've got your strategies worked out, it is furiously addictive to play. Factor in the blood, puking, fatalities, and multiple slow-motion replays, and you've got a game that rocks seriously hard. It's no joke when we say that you go around beating seven shades out of each other, because the game is basically that. There are no rules whatsoever, and you can employ whatever cunning or violent tactics you want. You even get congratulated when you kill one of the opposing team members!

Assault and battery by coloured lighting

As though a page were taken from the Designer's Republic experience of Wipeout 2097, DBZ is awesome to watch for the originality in the visual designs and presentation. Very stylish stuff, to say the least. The in-game graphics are equally stunning with its overall crisp and clean appearance. There are heaps of on-screen polygon-based characters running around at a good framerate without any slowdown and practically no clipping. This is further augmented by reflective surfaces, smoke trails, and real time coloured lighting effects which give it a really funky futuristic look. The cherry on top is the blood splatters and puke stains that litter the field as the match progresses on.

Is everyone wondering how good the controls are? The game would be worthless if it had piss-weak controls. Thankfully, DBZ's controls are simple and tight, and playing this game couldn't get more compliated than shooting in the right direction. You can beat everyone up once possession of the ball has left you. It's a shame, then, that the only let-down is the average music and sound effects. Nevertheless, they are quite adequate in conveying the general violence and mayhem.

Take heed, though, that this game is tough and very hard-core, so it won't suit some people. It is otherwise a damned fine game.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	FUTURE SPORTS
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	M

PLUS
Great design and clean graphics.
Furious frantic violence.

MINUS
The music lets the rest of the game down a bit.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
83	76	88

OVERALL

87

The best future sports title since Speedball 2, which is quite a while really.

Azure Dreams

Dr. Harry Cooper can roll over. **Kevin Cheung's** *got his own little stash of animals.*

YOU"RE TOO CUTE TO LIVE!

What do you get when you cross several of the latest crazes in Japan and turn it into a videogame? Well, if you include RPGs, Tamagotchis, and fantasy-based anime, you've pretty much got Azure Dreams, the latest offering from Konami.

Land of Feared Egg Hunters

Set in a world far removed from our own, Azure Dreams takes place in a society where the local economy thrives on the trade of monster eggs and tame monsters. Tame monsters are supposedly hard to come by, since it takes a special skill to tame them from birth. That's where you come in. You've just reached your 15th birthday, supposedly the legal age of majority, which means you can now enter the forbidden tower on yonder hill just beyond the city limits. The tower is a treasure trove of monster eggs, guarded closely by the monster parents. Many an Egg Hunter, as they are illustriously known, who dared venture into the tower in search of a fabled magic egg at the top came off second best. As the story would have it, your father was one of those ill-fated Egg Hunters. Armed with the trusty monster-taming abilities inherited from your father, you go out to accomplish what no other has done before: to get to the top of the tower.

2D anime fantasy stuff

Graphically, the game combines lush 2D anime-style artwork with sprite-based characters and polygonal environments, presented in a rotatable isometric form. The overall look is quite exquisite, crisp, and detailed, despite its heavy Japanese fantasy flavour. This is all complimented by decent ambient effects such as magic attacks.

Aurally, Azure Dreams is a fairly standard collection of sound effects and PCM music. It's not anything ground-breaking, but it's adequate in adding to the character of the game.

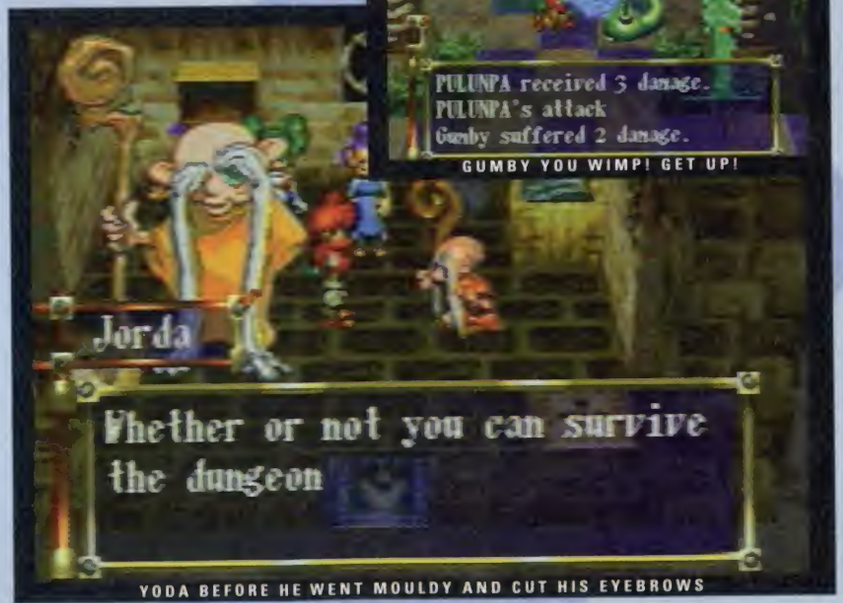
Not your standard RPG

In terms of gameplay, Azure Dreams has got some really unique concepts. Firstly, there isn't a giant world to labour over - the game takes place between the town and the giant tower, with most of the exploration taking place in the tower. You progress through the game by making your way up the tower, finding eggs, and bringing them back to town to exchange for cash, with which you can purchase new weapons, armour and so on. The more interesting alternative, however, is to hatch the eggs yourself and train the monster to do your bidding. You can teach them how to fight, use different magic, and you can even adjust their AI and fighting techniques. If even then you're not happy with your monster, you can sell it. Otherwise, you can add it to your growing personal army of helpful critters.

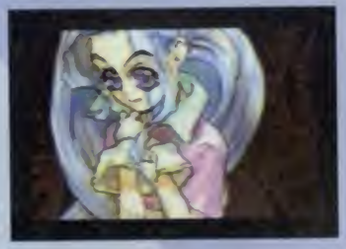
Generally, Azure Dreams' controls are very similar to Suikoden and Zelda in terms of navigation. The only thing that's really wrong with them are the combat controls, which comes off as an odd combination of real-time action with turn-based decision functions. The prevalent lack of response time diring the action can be quite off-putting.

In the grand scheme of things, Azure Dreams is quite an original RPG. It combines elements of other great RPGs like Secret of Mana and Alundra; and people who are sick of standard-fare RPGs will like the added element of training your monsters. It's a pity that the combat controls are dodgy, as it's otherwise a fab game.

GUMBY YOU WIMP! GET UP!



YODA BEFORE HE WENT MOULDY AND CUT HIS EYEBROWS



AVAILABLE:	JULY
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	KONAMI
PRICE:	$79.95
RATING:	G

PLUS

Unique gameplay elements and beautiful anime artwork ensure that the game is always interesting.

MINUS

Controls are a little dodgy, but they can be persevered through.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86	77	85

OVERALL

83

Another cool Japanese RPG, but this one may be for the old school enthusiasts only.

Klonoa - Door to Phantomile

Kevin Cheung *told us he used to have a mutant cat that ran away. We think we've found it.*

WEETBIX-ENHANCED KLONOA!

There's something really fishy about a cat that runs around wearing a hat bearing the Pac-man symbol. But given that Pac-man is the brainchild of Namco, and this cat is the protagonist in Namco's latest offering, it's not such a crazy idea. Klonoa - Door to Phantomile represents a fresh attempt at dethroning the 2D platform crown that everyone practically gave up on: the crown of the original Super Mario. Sporting smart gameplay and revoltingly cute character designs, it's clear that Namco have stepped in the right direction..

GIDDYUP FISH-DUDE. AND I'LL CONSIDER NOT EATING YOU.

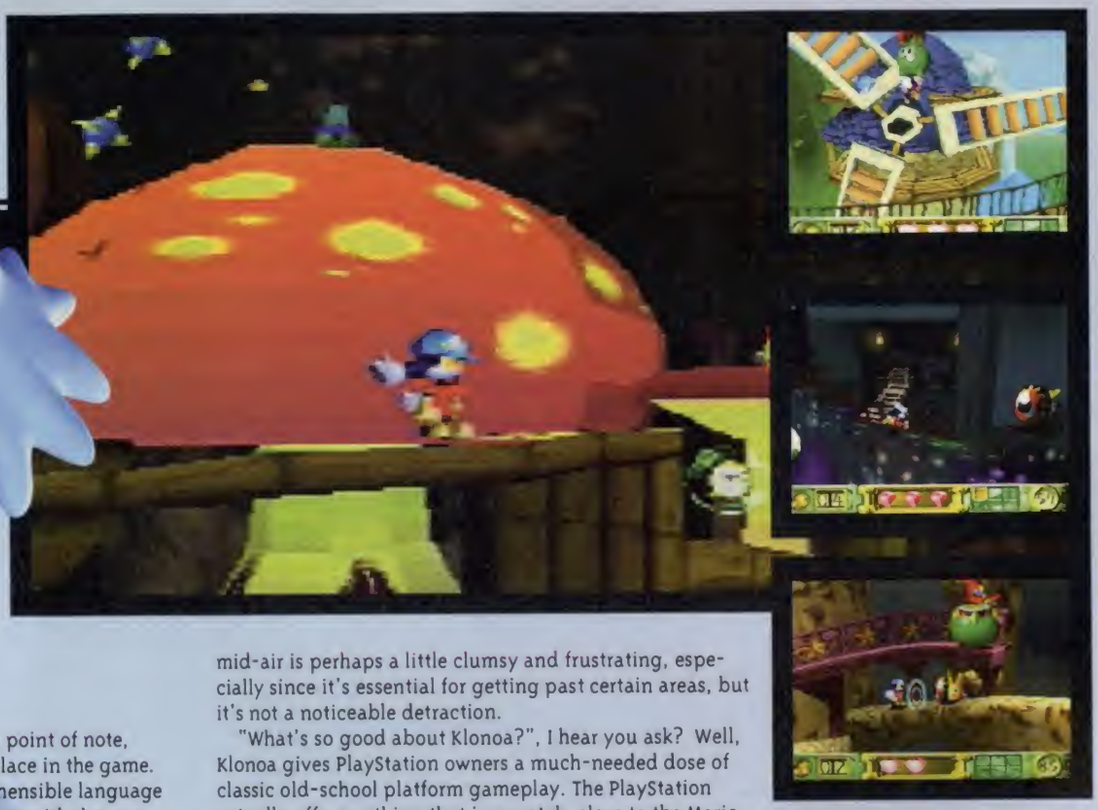
A cute platform romp with a difference

As the opening FMV sequence plays out, you'll learn that Klonoa is a cat who, as fate would have it, stumbles upon a giant magical ring. Upon taking this ring, Klonoa is compelled to embark upon a quest to find his Phantomile. If you can swallow all of that, then you'll understand that it is you who will be controlling Klonoa, where you must traverse several levels of platform-related fun, kill evil hordes of fluffy animals and other such related rodents, absorb the melodramatic storyline, and get to the end of the game.

Graphically, Klonoa is presented in a pseudo 3D form, similar to the Pandemonium games where everything looks 3D, but the action is inherently 2D. The sprite-based characters have cute, original designs, brought to life by plenty of animation that add to the character of the game. The backgrounds and most of the foreground are composed of polygon-based objects with crisp and smooth textures, all of which conveys a wonderful sense of visual depth to the lush scenery.

This is complemented by a chirpy little musical score which is at times cheesy, but you won't be able to stop yourself from humming the tune

SAM TOUCAN'S EVIL TWIN



after you switch it off. An interesting point of note, however, is the dialogue that takes place in the game. Klonoa doesn't speak in any comprehensible language that you'd recognise audibly, of course with the very distinct possibility that he talks in a language of Namco's creation. Nevertheless, the dialogue is translated into English text at the bottom of the screen. What's interesting is the fact that subtitling, speech, and mouth-movements are all synchronised, which makes you feel more involved in the action as it transpires.

Classic hard core platform action of old

The magic of Klonoa is in the gameplay and control. Firstly, aside from the usual jumping moves, Klonoa has the ability to use the ring to capture various baddies. They can then be used for different purposes such as projectile weapons, shields, or make-shift platforms from which Klonoa can jump off. Klonoa can even throw these little dudes into the foreground and background to get bonus items. Structurally, there are multiple paths littered throughout the game with secrets waiting to be discovered. Combined with puzzles and spot-variations like wind tunnels and waterfalls, Klonoa is guaranteed not to become a monotonous affair.

The gameplay is executed with water-tight controls that are quick and responsive. Unlike other platform games, Klonoa isn't hampered by any strange momentum problems. He'll jump at the precise moment that you want, and fall off a cliff like he is meant to if he gets too close to the edge. Klonoa's 'floating' ability in mid-air is perhaps a little clumsy and frustrating, especially since it's essential for getting past certain areas, but it's not a noticeable detraction.

"What's so good about Klonoa?", I hear you ask? Well, Klonoa gives PlayStation owners a much-needed dose of classic old-school platform gameplay. The PlayStation actually offers nothing that is remotely close to the Mario quality of platform gaming. Klonoa is about as close as anyone has ever come. This game might look 3D - and it looks pretty darned good too - but the gameplay is almost entirely 2D. Many might get turned off by the cute character designs, but that's just something they'll have to get over. The hard-core platform action is the stuff of other greats like Metroid and Castlevania X, and it's been quite a long time since anyone has produced a game with as much charm as Super Mario World or Mickey's Castle of Illusion from the 16-bit era.

The only thing that's stopping this game from being an real Mario killer is that the game is a little too short in length for experienced players. People who are obsessed with 3D games might also be turned off by the "flat" gameplay. Klonoa is otherwise recommended as an excellent platform romp. Let's hope that they make a sequel!

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PLATFORMS
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: NAMCO
PRICE: $69.95
RATING: G

PLUS
The gameplay is very deep and thoughtful, which is hard to find in games of this type.

MINUS
The game is a little too short.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	84	92

OVERALL

91

One of the most under-rated games in recent times. Its serious potential deserves attention.

THE ALTERNATIVES

The only two games on the PlayStation that are analogous to Klonoa are the two Pandemonium games. Whilst the Pandemonium games look similar in terms of being forced-3D, the gameplay focusses on entirely different things. Pandemonium is an obstacle-based game where you're constantly jumping, climbing, and avoiding things. Klonoa, on the other hand, focusses both on character interactions to get through the game. For instance, the only way to get through an obstacle is to capture a bad-guy and do something with it. Pandemonium doesn't have that kind of interaction, which is what makes Klonoa that much of a deeper and intuitive game. For other alternatives, 3D fans might want to try Gex 3D or Crash 2, while 2D fans should go for Castlevania X: Symphony of the Night.

Poy Poy

Before PlayStation owners can get enough of Bomberman, along comes Poy Poy. **Dan Toose** *enters the arena.*

Being one who really hated cute games, Bomberman managed to shock me, by the fact that I could enjoy a game where I played as some cutesy little guy dropping little bombs to try and kill cutesy little monsters. Why a Bomberman reference? Well that's because Poy Poy works in very much the same way, adopting that frantic "to the death!" action, with a rather cute interface.

Poy Poy is a TV game show, where four contestants battle it out in an arena environment. They do so by picking up objects, and throwing them at their opponents' heads. The alternative to throwing the objects is actually grabbing your opponents and throwing them instead. That may sound kind of stupid, but it's amazingly funny to watch, as the character animations are quite funny.

Clean and simple

Visually, the game isn't amazing to look at, but like Bomberman, the game is very stylised, and the rather simple graphics suit the gameplay. Some of the customary PlayStation graphic effects are put to use though, like transparent explosions, and very clean polygon characters. Like Bomberman, this actually helps, since you really need to be able to see clearly at all times.

Poy Poy should be used as a benchmark for good, simple gameplay. Anyone can pick up a controller and play the game straight away, because of things like the X button being used to pick up and throw items, which is basically all you need to do to play. However, those that want to get fancy, can, by using the other buttons to do varied throws, or to jump or dive out of the way of incoming projectiles. The projectiles range from simple rocks and logs, through to explosives, and even Easter Island heads (a true retro gamer's icon). Players can throw items a varying distance by holding the throw button for varying lengths of time. The satisfaction of hearing your opponent squeal as you chok them in the head with a rock from the other side of the arena is quite

unparalleled. A special feature to the game is the use of gloves. Each player can choose a glove that they wear whilst in the arena, which enables them to perform special throws for extra devastating effect. In tournament mode, you performance earns you money, which allows you to buy better gloves and thus be a more powerful contender. Some of the glove effects include things like skeeker shots, which home in on their target.

Plan your mindless violence

Strategies can also be developed on the fly, since the placement of objects within the arena is random. For example, you may see two other contestants near a small group of rockets, and someone close by. Hurt them all by grabbing the one closest, throw them at the rockets, then BOOM! Everyone cops it!

Another difference between contestants is that everyone has their own stats, which affect how they perform. For example, the big guy picks objects up faster than the others do, but he's not quite as zippy as everyone else.

The only area where Poy Poy leaves you wanting is the lack of arenas. There are only seven, which is quite low, considering how simple the level design is. The arenas are pretty cool though, each having their own special feature. For example, the Maoi land arena has Easter Island heads that get grumpy if you hit them, and then spit out time bombs. The Desert arena has severe winds, which get more ferocious as the battle goes on, resulting in players sliding about, and projectiles curving off course. As the wind picks up even more, a twister appears, and becomes a major factor in the remainder of the battle. There are also boxes which break open to reveal powerups like health, glove rechargers, time bombs, etc.

Do it with friends...

Basically, if you have a multitap, or you've really enjoyed the Bomberman games through the years, go out and get yourself Poy Poy. Actually, when it boils down to it, I'd probably say that Poy Poy is a better multiplayer game than Bomberman, purely because it's easier to get a grip of. Also, there seems to be more of a luck element in Bomberman, blasting the blocks and hoping you get something good. In Poy Poy, it's all open from the word go. And if you're the kind to say this game looks too childish... it's time to lose your attitude and learn how to have some fun.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	ACTION/PUZZLE
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	KONAMI
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G

PLUS
Frantic multiplayer action
High replay value
immediately playable

MINUS
Not enough arenas.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70	86	91

OVERALL

89

This is one of the best multiplayer games on the PlayStation to date.

Motorhead

Cameron Shea *test drives Motorhead, another cross platform winner...*

PEAK HOUR? BAH! POWERSLIDE HOME!

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	RACING
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	INTERPLAY
PRICE:	$TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	PENTIUM 90, 16MB RAM, WIN 95
DESIRED:	PENTIUM 133, 32MB RAM 3D CARD
SUPPORTS:	3DFX, POWER VR

PLUS

Blistering speed.
Great techy design.

MINUS

Some unnecessarily fustrating sections of track.
More tracks would be nice.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	86	90

OVERALL

91

SLICK, TECHY RACING EXPERIENCE, AWESOME WITH A 3D CARD!

Arcade-style PC racing games have finally arrived in a big way. In the last few months weíve enjoyed the sublime Speed Rally, the demonic Ultimate Race Pro and now prepare to drool over the gorgeous and insanely fast Motorhead. The graphics are stunning and fully exploit current 3D acceleration technology, with effects that include coloured lighting, reflective car surfaces, tyre smoke, and a realistic red tail light glow that flares up when braking. Itís surprisingly playable in software mode as well. Playstation owners, on the other hand, have been privy to great arcade racers since day one, but Motorhead still stands out. Obviously itís not as impressive as its 3D accelerated cousin, but itís still a great showcase for what the playstation can do.

Motorhead absolutely flies along conveying an amazing sense of speed in the 6 luscious environments. In fact, the only graphical downsides are the all pervasive fog up ahead, and a chronic overuse of lens-flares. Some tracks are distracting because of the sheer quantity of lensflares in your face - fortunately they can be turned off.

Techy Feel

The cars on offer showcase a realistic metallic gleam in appearance and a variety of semi-futuristic designs. There are 9 cars to choose from, but youíll only ever pick from the 3 division one cars, and thatís ample. The driving model is arcadey, but suits the game, and most importantly you always feel in complete control. High speed powerslides have never felt so good! Opponent AI is impressive - racing fast and furious, but occasionally screwing up on the trickier sections of track. There are also regular pileups caused by computer controlled cars muscling each other.

Motorhead has a techy Psygnosis-like futuristic flair, and thankfully has similarly high production values. All 6 tracks have a distinctive feel due to stylish design in the various bridges, underpasses and buildings, as well as the implementation of incidental objects such as hovercrafts, birds circling a rocky outcrop, a huge blimp that moves above the track, a monorail and an elevator on the side of a building. These details help give the impression of a reality outside the race. Track design is excellent bar a few niggling problems such as seemingly illogical corners and poorly placed objects such as lightposts that you regularly get stuck on. However, these are minor concerns, as once you know the tracks well and perfect the racing line it becomes very satisfying to boldly hoon through whilst battling the competition.

Sound is of a high quality - the music is suitably pumping, and effects such as echoes through tunnels have been included, as well as incidental sounds that really add to the ambience - whether it be the jets on a hovercraft, birds chirping or bells ringing. Motorhead is a gripping race experience, and Homer once summed it up when he cried: "Yes, yes, yes, this rocks!"

Monster Truck Madness 2

David Wildgoose *spends this weekend working on his car and playing in mud.*

FIRST ONE TO THE TOBACCO STORE GETS MA PIG!

Something strange happened to me over the weekend, something bizarre, unexpected and truly disturbing. I've started fantasising about - gulp - big tattooed men with excess facial hair driving comically illustrated cars with stupidly oversized wheels. Not a pleasant thought, I'm sure you'd agree. It's all Microsoft's fault, too, for bringing out a sequel to last year's least likely PC racing success.

Grab yer shottie and some beef jerky

Monster Truck Madness 2 is the game in question, and it has provided me with some "danged fine" entertainment over the past 48 hours. Fans of the original game will feel right at home immediately. Essentially, this sequel is the same game, but with several worthwhile additions that make it vastly superior.

For a start, there's now 3D accelerator support to get excited about (including native support for 3Dfx owners). The difference this feature makes cannot possibly be emphasised highly enough. Lens flare, translucent dust clouds, real-time water reflections and realistic rain and snow effects are just some of the delightful visual frills enhancing the atmosphere. Graphically, MTM2 is an impressive title. Achieving a decent and smooth speed is helped by the fact that monster trucks just aren't that fast in the first place - this is no Need For Speed, that's for sure. You'll still need a mighty PC, though - my new P200 with 3Dfx still experienced the occasional moment of distress - so I wouldn't even think of getting this unless you do have some sort of 3D card.

There are fourteen tracks to race on. Some are circuits (upon which you have to complete three laps), others are rally tracks (much longer than circuits), while there are three arenas designed solely for multi-player "rumble" challenges. As a bonus, if you own the original MTM, you can also race on any of its tracks as well.

Driving a monster truck is an interesting and very different experience compared to most other racing games. So bumpy and ragged are the roads (if you're lucky enough to have a road), that it's often a stern test to keep motoring in a straight line. You're constantly twitching and lunging from side to side, dipping and bouncing over hills and rocks. By the end of every race, there will always be fences, witches hats, boulders, Incan statues, coffins and several trampled cows littering the track as a result of your impetuous driving style. Well, that's how it was for me, anyway.

Really the only fault I can find - and it is a fairly important one - is that there's no structure to the game. Every race is just a one-off with no season or championship to strive for. But - hey - the ludicrous commentator nearly makes up for it. "Hollywood Hogan's got four big wheels, but he ain't using any of 'em!!"

AFTER ONE TOO MANY BUDWEISERS

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	REDNECK RACING
PLAYERS:	1-MULTI
PUBLISHER:	MICROSOFT
PRICE:	$TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD
SUPPORTS:	DIRECT3D, 3DFX, FORCE FEEDBACK DEVICES

PLUS

Hilarious commentary
Looks and plays really well.

MINUS

Requires a 3D card to get the desired results.
Lacks any real game structure.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	87	80

OVERALL

82

A good-time racing game that only lacks a little in the way of depth.

Unreal

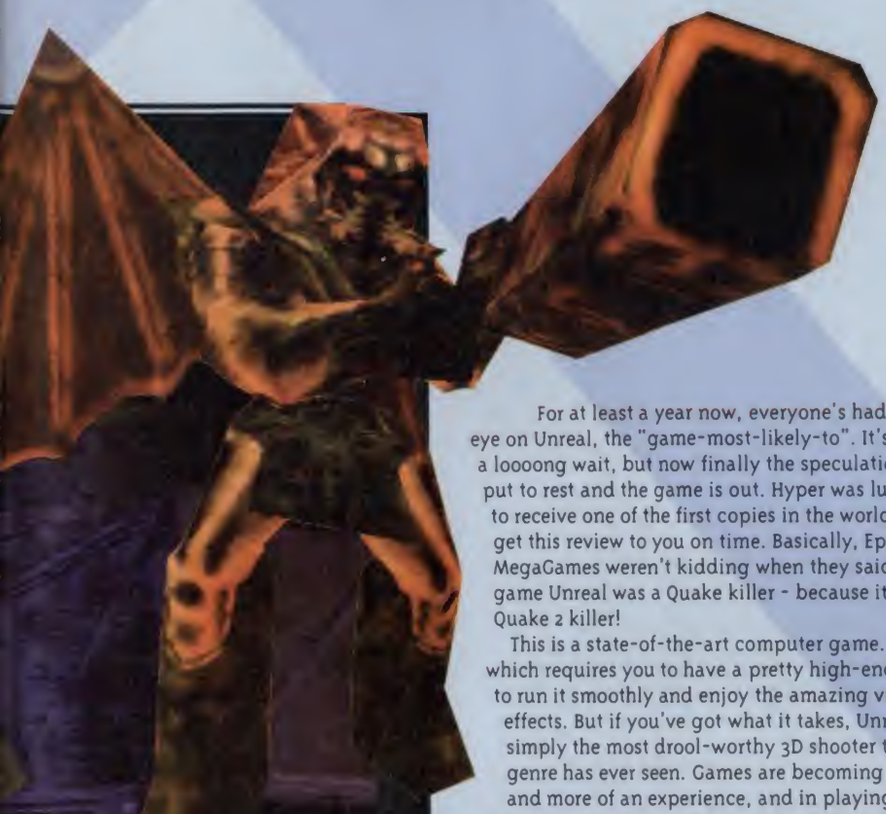
Eliot Fish *had to beat the rest of the office to death with his chair to take this game home to review. Here's why...*

HYPER GAME OF THE MONTH

HEY... WHERE'D YOU GET THE COOL ARMOUR?

LOOK OUT FOR THE CAR BEHIND YOU

YOU TALKIN' TO ME PUNK?



AN SOMEONE SCRATCH MY NOSE?

For at least a year now, everyone's had their eye on Unreal, the "game-most-likely-to". It's been a loooong wait, but now finally the speculation is put to rest and the game is out. Hyper was lucky to receive one of the first copies in the world to get this review to you on time. Basically, Epic MegaGames weren't kidding when they said their game Unreal was a Quake killer - because it's a Quake 2 killer!

This is a state-of-the-art computer game. One which requires you to have a pretty high-end PC to run it smoothly and enjoy the amazing visual effects. But if you've got what it takes, Unreal is simply the most drool-worthy 3D shooter the genre has ever seen. Games are becoming more and more of an experience, and in playing Unreal, you really want to turn the lights off, turn the volume up, lock the door, and settle in for the ride of your life...

Spooge-Worthy

You're walking down a dimly-lit corridor, the strange buzzing and whirring of an alien technology echoes from the other end of the hall beyond your vision. Just when you think you're going to make it to safety, steel bars slide shut in front of you blocking your way. Thinking quickly, you dash back the way you came, only to have another grill of steel bars shoot out of the wall and block your escape. You're trapped. Suddenly, everything goes quiet and the small lights along the ceiling of the corridor start going out one by one. Before you know it, you're standing there in complete darkness, and the sound of a door sliding open is heard from one end of the corridor. Then it's chaos! Harsh blazing balls of plasma come rocketing at your face, and as they race towards you, they light up the face of your attacker - evil and reptilian with blood-red eyes. You fight in complete darkness, only the flare from your mag pistol and the creatures plasma attacks briefly alerting you of their whereabouts. Then it's upon you, and you can feel the cold hard steel of it's claw gutting you from neck to waist. It's game over, man! Game over!

Atmosphere. Unreal is simply oozing with it. The description above is virtually identical to a situation early on in the game, and it's a blast. Whilst playing Unreal, the game constantly surprises you... on one level, I climbed out of some water and noticed that I'd knocked a tiny fish out onto land and it lay there gasping flipping over occasionally. The detail is astounding. In the outdoor areas, birds circle overhead, insects and frogs chirp and gurgle amongst the plants, and one look at the sky effects will leave you dazzled. You could literally just stand there and stare up at the moon for hours.

WEAPONS

The weapons in Unreal are quite unique. Some of them may seem unspectacular at first, but once you start using them you realise how practical and cool they really are...

1 - DISPERSION PISTOL

Fires balls of energy, or can be charged for a larger blast. By finding the correct artifacts, this gun can be enhanced and made quite deadly.

2 - AUTOMAG

Fires piercing accurate bullets, and in secondary mode fires them in rapid succession tilted on the side - John Woo style!

3 - STINGER

An alien mining tool which fires sharp shards of crystal. Secondary fire shoots a spread of crystals.

4 - EIGHTBALL

A rocket launcher and grenade launcher in one. Hold down the fire button to load up six rockets at once! Also locks on to your target, for heat-seeking rockets.

5 - RAZORJACK

Fires super fast bladed stars, like shuriken, which bounce off walls. The secondary button angles the weapon to fire them at different angles.

6 - FLAK GUN

Strange one. Fires a spray of rock-like shrapnel, whilst in secondary mode shoots one large ball which breaks up on impact.

7 - ASSAULT RIFLE

Fires super-powerful single shots! Secondary mode lets you zoom in, ala a hunting scope. Handy.

8 - ASMD

Just like the Quake 2 rail gun, firing a deadly beam. Secondary shot is a ball of plasma. Combine the two...

9 - BIO RIFLE

Even stranger. Fires blobs of green goo which stick to any surface, exploding after a few seconds or on contact. Secondary fire shoots one large glob!

10 - MINIGUN

Like a chaingun, this fires a lightning fast spray of bullets. The Secondary button speeds the rate of fire to insane levels.

DEATHMATCH

Unreal's deathmatch is unique, and only similar to Quake 2 in one way - it's a more tactical game unlike the full-on fury of the original Quake DM. Because the weapons are all quite balanced, succeeding in Unreal DM really requires you to know your map and apply different tactics depending on the weapon you're holding. There are also cool items like the rocket boots which send you flying high when you jump, and the powershield which turns you chrome and makes you almost invulnerable.

The best thing about Unreal DM are the clever, original and beautiful DM maps included with the game. The design of these maps are second to none and will provide many hours of gibbing delight. Take this for example... on one map, the entire level is engulfed in pitch-black darkness, and though there are torches scattered throughout the level, the flash of gunfire is sometimes the only way to see your foe. On another, a computerised voice announces when someone picks up a weapon from a touchplate... Or the level where you are all suspended over a giant fan which will chop you to bits should you fall into it!

There are also a few varieties of DM, from standard DM to King of the Hill, Kill The Cow, Darkmatch, Teams and Co-op.

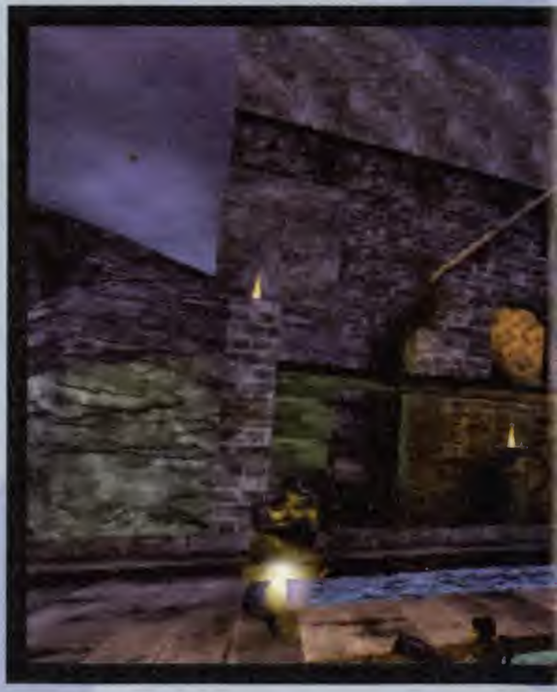
The game also comes with bots (computer-controlled opponents) so you can practice your DM skills on your own time against their varying skill levels. You can also see which type of weapon your opponent is carrying! An excellent inclusion! The bots are damn clever too, and will provide a great deathmatch experience for those without an internet connection or just gamers keen to hone their skills.

Tech Specs

Before I go into detail about the game, you should know that I ran the game on a Pentium 200 MMX, 32MB of SDRAM, with an Orchid Righteous 3D card. At the resolution of 512X384 I was getting frame rates comparable with Quake 2 on the same machine, which is amazing considering how much more complex the Unreal models, textures and environments are. You really wouldn't want to play Unreal on anything less than this set-up, but you can if you want.... the ideal machine for Unreal is a Pentium II with 64MB SDRAM and a Voodoo 2 card. Of course, this raises the question, does the average gamer have what it takes to play this game? Well, if we can assume the average PC gamer has a Pentium 133 and no 3D accelerator then the answer is an unfortunate NO. However, it's pretty much compulsory these days to have a Voodoo card if you're serious about playing games like Quake 2 and Unreal, and Unreal supports MMX, so MMX PCs will perform better. On the other hand, you may have a beefy Pentium II but no 3D card - will this matter? Well, only a little... The game won't look as slick, but Unreal's software mode looks better than some other game's 3D hardware mode! Upgrading is almost worth it just to play this game though! To really know if your PC has what it takes, just check out our "Required and Desired" and make your own decision from there.

Huh? A plot?

So how did Epic MegaGames come up with another flimsy plot idea for the setting of yet another First Person Shooter? Well this time around you're a prisoner on a giant cruiser which has just crashed on an alien planet. After the crash, you are able to escape from your cell only to find the entire crew missing or slaughtered. Hmmmm. Not good. Picking up a nearby translator, you are able to slowly figure out why the ship crashed... But then you venture outside... I'm not going to spoil anything for you, because half the excitement in Unreal is finding out what happens next! The story is very well carried off though, and as you play, you get the feeling that you have a real purpose in the game as opposed to just "finding the exit" which is a symptom of most



THIS POOL HAS SOME SERIOUS ALGAE PROBLEMS.

other first-person shooters. The discoveries you make on the alien planet are engrossing, and whilst you explore some levels you can use your translator to read the alien inscriptions on the walls etc. which becomes vital in some cases to know what you should do next. I can guarantee you, you will just walk around these levels in awe - they really are that amazing.

When you do finally enter into combat, you'll be astounded at how brilliant the AI is. Unlike other shooters where your opponents charge at you in a straight line until you take them down, the monsters in Unreal use a variety of tactics to overcome you. They're damn fast too. Whilst you're trying to nail them, they strafe, jump and even do barrel rolls or cartwheels to avoid your fire. If they get near death, they may even take the option to run away and shoot at you from a distance, forcing you to hunt them down. The AI is the best seen yet, and was designed by the same chap who made the Reaper Bots for Quake.

Your opponents have a variety of attacks too, like the Brute for instance, who fires a volley of rockets but then charges you if you get too close. The Skaarj also have a long range plasma attack, and then reveal their Wolverine style claws if you get in close. Even the Mercenaries have a power shield which makes them invulnerable to your attacks for a short period of time - just enough for them to close in on you, but then they may choose to back off and find a way to attack you from behind! And if you think climbing out of the water will save you from the Slith then you're in for a surprise, as they simply climb out after you and chase you down!

One thing you discover during Unreal, is that not all the aliens are vicious killers... besides the strange rabbit-cows hopping around which you can gib to your hearts content, there are the local natives called the Nali who think you and your alien opponents are gods (you both came down in spaceships) and they will help you out throughout the game. Looking a bit like Abe from Abe's Oddysee with four arms, the Nali can lead you to hidden rooms full of powerups and ammo, as well as alerting you to an aggressive presence. But don't blame yourself if you kill a Nali the first time you see one - I did!

The Verdict

To briefly mention the sound... it too is the best I've heard in a computer game to date. Machinery whirs, water slops and splashes, empty shells clink on the ground and the aliens all grizzle and growl in odd tongues. The sound really helps build on Unreal's incredible atmosphere. If it wasn't enough that the game was already blowing your mind visually with drifting smoke, glarey lights, marble reflective floors and countless colourful textures, the sound just pushes this game into the realm of "My God, is this real?!"

So is Unreal better than Quake 2? Well... YES! Certainly I think the world will agree that Unreal's single-player game is beyond a doubt the best ever, and the main reason you should buy the game. As for the multiplayer side of things, I can see the Quake 2 versus Unreal arguements beginning already, and I really think that in terms of playability they are on par. On a whole, Unreal looks lightyears ahead of any other game on the market and will cause gamers the world over to dribble like children. When you also consider that Unreal's single player game can be played co-operatively with a friend, you really have to accept that Epic MegaGames have produced the leading product in the first-person shooter genre. Unreal encapsulates the best bits of other first-person shooters. It has interesting mission objectives, lush graphics, killer AI and level design to leave you awestruck. Take heed of the tech specs, and then go and buy this game now. Unreal.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS:	1-MULTI
PUBLISHER:	EPIC MEGAGAMES
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIRED:	P166, 16MB, WIN 95 350MB HD SPACE
DESIRED:	PENTIUM II, 64MB RAM, VOODOO 2 CARD
SUPPORTS:	3DFX, POWER VR

PLUS

Simply the most amazing-looking first-person shooter ever.

MINUS

Only ninja PC owners will get the real deal.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
98	96	96

OVERALL

97

The most thrilling first-person experience yet. What will it take to beat this??!!

Prophecy :Of Light And Darkness

In this season of PC adventure games, **March Stepnik** *puts the latest Interplay offering through its paces.*

IT'S THE INTERGALACTIC DISCO BALL OF DOOM

Alright! Another adventure game! That's what this world needs! Take note Mr Game Developer - less games with ridiculous plots and crappy characters. More adult orientated, dark adventure games with well thought out objectives please!

Prophecy: Of Light and Darkness is an adventure game. However, the developers of Prophecy, Tribal Dreams really know their chosen art. While most developers seem to tack a bearable storyline and decent graphics onto some code and a workable interface, Tribal Dreams put a heck of a lot of work into this title, and it shows. First off, the plot is grand in scope, and rather fresh in a genre of more accessible fare. You are the Chosen One, a person prophesised to save the Earth from the impending apocalypse. Yay! It's another save-the-world/universe-on-your-own strain of story! I too at this point lowered my expectations, but here's the twist. The game is not played on Earth. You're in a village, neither here nor there, between heaven and hell. A place where apparitions (or ghosts) of people that committed the most heinous crimes in history, each representing the seven deadly sins, roam aimlessly, trapped without a purpose. Your adversary - Gar Hob, The Dark Lord of the Coming Dark Age. You have to redeem seven apparitions by finding their tools of torture, working out the colour of their light of redemption, and blast them into the Hall Of Mirrors. The final battle is with Gar Hob himself. Using a first person perspective (much like Riven), you guide yourself through the various locations picking up various clues as to the next apparition you must redeem. This is the interesting part. Prophecy is in real-time. There's a clock ticking in the background, getting closer to the apocalypse. If you take too long trying to redeem an apparition, it's game over. To help you out, there are portals you can pick up which instantly take you to another location, and mastering the use of these is a must. The basic objectives for each apparition are these: work out the sin room (the place specific to the apparition you are trying to redeem), use their artefact (which you must first find) there, and blast them with a combination of light orbs (which you also find about the Village). If you got it right, the apparition is redeemed and it's on to the next one. Challenging, and appealing (in a way similar to the need to take a peek at a horrific car accident), Prophecy is a rather unique adventure game.

Tribal Dreams enlisted the services of Gil Bruvel, a renown surrealist artist, to give the game it's dark and organic feel. His artwork suits the game perfectly - bizarre buildings and objects, obviously with some sort of function, looking like a place only someone could dream about. Atmospheric, eerie, and at times disturbing, the visuals really work in portraying the no-mans land that is "The Village". Without these visuals, Prophecy would indeed be a different game.

As far as adventure games go, the Prophecy is clearly not for everyone. It deals with a dark subject matter and succeeds in handling this in an intelligent way. For those wanting a thoughtful, terrifying ride through the depths of the soul - this is a must. A game that restores my faith in the adventure gaming genre.

THE HYPER COFFEE PERCULATOR

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	REAL-TIME ADVENTURE
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	INTERPLAY
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	PENTIUM 90, 16MB RAM, WIN 95
DESIRED:	PENTIUM 133, 32MB RAM

PLUS

Stunning graphics and a challenging, thought-provoking adventure! Finally!
Atmospheric and deep, Prophecy is a welcome break from would-be-witty adventure games.
With a random game generator, replay factor is increased.

MINUS

The engine seems a little dated compared to recent efforts.
At times, interface is slightly unresponsive.
You really need a love for adventure games to get the most out of this one.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	78	82

OVERALL

80

Who would have thought rubbing elbows with a who's who of famous perpetrators of evil could be so interesting, and fun?

Alien Earth

Another Australian developed title hits the streets.* Ross Clarksmith *wanders out into Alien Earth.

You know when you pick up a game in the shops, spin it around look at the screen shots, get excited enough to read the text, then get turned off by the over used cliches like, "aliens invaders", "mind control" and, "save the human race"? Well, it does not always have to be the case, and Alien Earth could be one of those games that just breaks the mould. Well it certainly does have all those tired and much spouted cliches, but they seem to have been brought together in a way that is a wake-up call for other old ideas.

At least not all the old ideas have been trotted out, thankfully there is no sign of card-carrying communists anywhere.

AHH! THE WALLS AND FLOOR ARE COVERED IN SNOT!

No relation to Tim and Neil

The game starts in a primitive village, with a ceremony for Finn, the main character. Finn has been chosen to be hunted down by a Rashka Lord, one of the aliens that invaded earth and enslaved the human race with mind control. You all get the idea, if you can get away, you go free, if you can't, you become the newest topping on a Rashka pizza. So the role-playing begins in the usual way. Find a weapon, make some new friends, escape from both your pursuer and the jungle itself, into the strange, post apocalyptic world beyond, make more friends and carry out a myriad of tasks. That was just the easy part, now all you have to do is single handedly send the pesky, supremely intelligent, technologically advanced aliens back from whence they came, and thus save the human race.

Alien Earth sort of follows on from a game called Shadowrun that Beam created for the Super Nintendo, although its more of a successor than a sequel. The game is basically set in the same story, but with the graphics and sound a bit more up to date than the old 16-bit machine pumped out.

Hope you like exploring...

Alien Earth is played in one of those isometric views that is so popular within this genre, the landscapes are busily detailed, which makes exploring a challenge, as well as providing a rich game environment. All the classic ingredients of RPG's are included allowing players to explore, solve problems and chat with strange dudes, kill creatures in a world that is enormously detailed and visually stimulating. There are a couple of minor downsides to the game. Firstly there is limited amount of interaction with non-player characters, often with no choice but to talk to them, or not talk to them. The second area of disappointment is the combat. No one expects combat to be on the level of quake, but there needs to be a certain amount of challenge, which Alien Earth just can not quite deliver.

For those people who would call themselves aficionados of computer RPG's, Alien Earth provides a return to the glory days when SSI's Dungeons & Dragons titles were all the rage. If you were unlucky enough to miss those classics Alien Earth is set to join titles like Fallout in the new renaissance of top down action adventures. Don't miss this one sportsfans!

IS THIS A PIZZA I SEE BEFORE ME?

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	BEAM SOFTWARE
PRICE:	$79.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRED:	PENTIUM 90, 16MB RAM, WIN 95
DESIRED:	PENTIUM 133

PLUS
RPG in the classic style.
Great playing environment

MINUS
Really only for the RPG fans.
Combat could be better

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	76	87

OVERALL

89

Alien Earth is a top romp for RPG fans!

Might & Magic VI: The Mandate of Heaven

Escaping from reality is what **Eliot Fish** *does best, so off he trudged to tonk some goblins...*

If you've been hankering for a classic RPG, then this is the game for you. We've had Diablo, Lands of Lore 2 etc, but MM6 is a nice return to classic old-school RPGing. MM6 is instantly playable, and once you start poking around the town of New Sorpigal you'll be hooked. Chaos disrupts the land, and rumours have it that the royal family have lost the Mandate of Heaven (which sorta means the divine right to rule) - so it's up to you and your fellow adventurers to restore peace!

Grab a big shiny sharp thing

When you start the game, you're instantly supplied with four characters and a bunch of stats to twiddle with. After choosing between six classes (Knight, Paladin, Archer, Sorcerer, Druid, Cleric), tweaking your stats and choosing a "face" for your character (frustratingly there are only a handful of cheap-looking b-grade actors to choose from), it's time to venture forth. Not the most comprehensive character creation ever seen, but it's during the game that you really get to develop your party with skills, spells and magical items. You can choose a few skills to begin with (for instance, giving your Archer a Bow skill is handy!), and then you can train your characters with new skills such as Identify Item at Guilds.

LOOKS LIKE THE SORCEROR ATE THE CURRY

YOU COME HERE OFTEN?

Moving around the land is done in 3D, with a graphic engine similar to Daggerfall. That's right, gone is the tedious step engine of old and in with the new scrolling real-time engine. The only problem here is that there is no 3D card support! The game really needs it too, as the engine is slow - I was only getting about 10 frames per second whilst moving. Annoying, but this is no action game, so once you start playing it doesn't really matter - it's just frustrating because the enjoyment of the game could have been tripled with the simple addition of Direct 3D support. 3DO studios have stated that the engine has been programmed in such a way as to prevent Direct3D support... typical eh?

Exploring your environment is great though, and you can wander the streets of town and then go for a walk down to the water's edge and check out that huge boat you see docked. Dungeons, castles and towers loom in the distance, and you really get the feeling that there's heaps to discover. If you learn the Walk on Water spell, then you can go wandering Jesus-style off the coast, looking for hidden islands and their inhabitants.

Make friends and kill people

Some of the townsfolk you meet can be convinced to join your party, expanding you up to a maximum of six characters. These NPCs can improve your chances of finding gold, or help you find magical items or even give you quests. Around the towns, there are also the classic magic, weapon and armour shops, taverns and private homes to check out. Guilds also play an important role, training your party with new skills and spells, but you'll have to seek out the right people to join the Guild.

The game's non-linear quest structure, reputation system and combat is so well-balanced that you simply can't stop playing. Combat can be played in either real-time or turn-based (it's nice to have the choice) and is fairly straightforward but perfect in context with the game. You simply click on the monster on screen to attack with your melee weapon, or Cntrl-click to cast a spell at them. In real-time mode, you can walk up and hit the A button to slash at them - sometimes the quickest and easiest way to dispose of lesser enemies. The turn-based system will satisfy those who prefer to be tactical with their spell-casting.

MM6 is addictive, fun and will keep RPG fans happy for weeks. It may not be cutting edge, or provide anything you haven't seen before, but it's extremely addictive RPGing. Stop reading this and go buy this game.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	NEW WORLD COMPUTING
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	TBA
REQUIRED:	P90, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	P133, 32MB RAM, FAST CD ROM

PLUS

Excellent quest structure and fun environments to explore.

MINUS

Character creation is fairly basic and the game badly needs Direct 3D support.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
78	80	89

OVERALL

86

A great adventure which should satisfy any gamer. Traditional RPGing to last you weeks.

X-Files

We handed **Ross Clarksmith** *a flashlight and asked him to solve the mystery of whether this was a good game or not...*

PEOPLE ONLY TUNE IN TO WATCH THE PANEL AFTER US, SCULLY

QUICK, GO BUY US A LIGHTBULB AGENT!

Seen every episode of the X-Files at least a couple of times? Played the X-Files trading card game to death? Had more than your fair share of the X-Files drinking game? Can beat the X-Files Quiz time and time again? Then you might just be an X-Phile, but before you go bragging to your friends, can you cut it where it counts? X-Files the game allows you to pit your investigative skills against the great Scully and Mulder in a 3D point and click adventure. Playing the newest agent working on the X-Files cases, the game puts you in an Episode made by Chris Carter, the show's creator.

The agents are out there Willmore...

Players become FBI Special Agent Craig Willmore, who has just had all his other cases taken off him in order to try and find the whereabouts of agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully. That's right, those two chasers of weird stuff have got themselves in yet another spot of bother, and need to be rescued. Agent Willmore teams up with Deputy Director Skinner to track down the wayward pair. Although lord knows how he got to be Deputy, cus he is about as useful as pyjamas on a honeymoon. Appearing throughout the game, are whole bunches of other people who have become instantly recognizable from the series. The ambience and undercurrent of the X-files series has been well captured, with players expecting to see Cancerman appear on the next screen with some dire warning.

The X-Files was shot on an experimental digital camera which after being tweaked and tuned, and having special effects added was turned into QuickTime movies of 15-30 frames per second. All this technical stuff has lead to a smooth and highly engaging game, provided that is, you have at mega huge PC. If you only have a medium range Pentium (120-133), you will need to turn off a lot of the cool effects and special features, like 3D sound in order to just let the game run. As well as losing the Dolby surround sound for lacking a Ninja PC, players will probably miss out on subliminal messages, translucent images and high quality video. The good news, the game is just as much fun and as challenging to play without these things.

Elementary interface

The interface is very easy and instinctive to use, with the cursor changing when moved over an area where an action is possible. Navigation from one geographic area to another is achieved by using road maps on a Newton Word Pad, which is very clever advertising on the part of Apple. Nokia also take advantage of product placement in the game. Is this just an attempt at making the game feel more realistic, or is it an another inroad for advertising? The truth is out there!

X-Files the game, is bound to do better than most point and click adventures, as it will get the usual fans of the genre as well as those people who wouldn't be anywhere but in front of the TV on a Wednesday night. Plus who could resist coming to the rescue of the ever gorgeous Dana Scully?

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	FOX INTERACTIVE
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRED:	P120, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4X CD-ROM
DESIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM, 8X CD-ROM

PLUS
It's the X-files. Highly realistic playing environment.

MINUS
It's a resources hog.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	92	90

OVERALL

90

One of the few TV show games ever to be done and still be a good game.

Castrol Honda Superbikes

There's nothing like a big powerful object between your legs, eh? **Eliot Fish** *agrees...*

HOW DO I ACTIVATE THE ROCKET LAUNCHER? THAT MICHELIN MAN MUST DIE!

3D accelerator-owning-motorbike-loving PC gamers have been treated to some lovely racing games lately - Moto Racer and Redline Racer to name just two which utilise those 3D cards to the full extent. Now Castrol Honda Superbike World Champions has come along to add a bit of extra meaning to that term "simulation". Though still with an Arcade slant, CHSWC (don't you just love those long acronyms?) is more geared towards the superbike freak or serious gamer.

Geeky Specs

Being an officially licensed product, fans of the sport will be stoked to know that the game was made with the official "nod of approval" from the Castrol/Honda team members. Interactive Entertainment in the UK, have gone to great lengths to make sure all funky details of the sport are included in the game. In particular, the 190 MPH 160 BHP Honda RVF-RC45 is featured for ultra-geeks of the sport to test drive themselves! You can race a championship, go for some practice or try your hand at some training, over a variety of GP tracks and practice circuits. Before you hit the tarmac though, you may want to adjust all those fiddly bits on your bike - tires, suspension, gear ratios etc.

Racing from the "on bike" perspective is great, and with 3Dfx, you really feel as if you are "there". The handling is ultra-realistic, and at first you'll find it hard to get a feel for how these bikes operate, but to ease you into it you can have certain functions "automated" to make the racing a tad easier. Assisted braking for instance will automatically slow you down as you approach a corner, so you can concentrate on keeping a good racing line. All the realism settings can be altered also... enable Wheelies for some coolness! Otherwise you may want to choose between whether or not your bike will suffer Tyre Wear, Steering Damage, Radiator Damage, Penalties, Engine Overheat, Faring Damage and even select whether or not the back tyre slides out if you open up the throttle too far.

Split-Screening

An excellent feature here for the more arcade bent gamers, is the option to race against a friend in a split-screen mode on the same computer (one person can use the joystick, the other the keyboard). Otherwise, there's Network play if you prefer the whole monitor to yourself!

Though there's everything here for the superbike fan's dream game, CHSWC lacks somewhat in personality, and you'll really have to be into the sport or a big fan of realistic racing games to find long-term entertainment out of this title. Whilst the 3Dfx-enhanced graphics are nice and fast, they're certainly nothing spectacular, and this is very much rooted in reality. However, the amount of options on offer here, and the handling of the bikes makes CHSWC a real challenge to master and a satisfying experience.

GET OFF THE GRASS!

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	RACING
PLAYERS:	1-MULTI
PUBLISHER:	INTENSE GAMES
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	p166, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD
SUPPORTS:	3DFX, POWER VR

PLUS
The healthy realism will please the bike geeks.

MINUS
Hard to get the hang of and lacks that certain something.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	83	84

OVERALL

83

Very good simulation which lacks the spit and polish needed to attract gamers.

Hexen II Mission Pack: Portal of Praevus

Having barely had time to gloat over the corpse of Eidolon, **Dan Toose** *is summoned off to deal with some souped up David Copperfield.*

IF ONLY I HAD THE HOLY BAYGON CAN...

It's become almost a certainty that any successful 1st person shooter will result in an expansion pack. Whilst it most certainly was overshadowed by the might of Quake 2, Hexen 2 did quite well for itself. Like both Heretic and Hexen before it, Hexen 2 was noted for its outstanding level design and great single player experience. This time you're after Praevus, a renegade wizard bent on using the souls of the slain serpent riders to become some omnipotent nasty guy.

Done by DaVinci?

On one hand, you can look at the architecture of POP, and smile contentedly, knowing that it is very good. However, since the actual Hexen 2 maps were so well designed, there's no visible improvement. Some may attribute this to the fact that it's running on an engine which Raven basically pushed to the limit last time around, so perhaps it's better to view this as "maintaining a high standard", rather than failing to progress. The use of remote views to see pieces of a puzzle move off in a different room are really well done, and some of the room transformations are just too funky to watch.

Sick of being a human? Well POP allows you to play as a new character class... the Demoness. Like the Necromancer, her default attack is a ranged weapon, and this coupled with her swift movement, make her a very easy character to use. Her second weapon is an acid rune, which predictably, allows you to fire gobs of acids at your enemies. The next weapon is much cooler, with the fire rune literally setting your target on fire, causing damage after the initial blast. The two piece weapon is basically a big lightning rod, which sends funky looking arcs of electricity to kill your opponents, although in GL Hexen2, this looks less impressive than it should, as the lighting doesn't really come off right.

New mutants on the block

There are also only four new monsters, although two of them are very cool. Pentacles are little rock like creatures that are very easy to pass by unnoticed, but they leap about at an alarming speed, and can cause lots of damage fast with their projectile attacks. Pretty much like the spawn in Quake, except quicker. The boss, Praevus is also pretty damn cool too (although I think Eidolon in Hexen 2 was more impressive). The other "two" are really just one monster with different colour schemes. Kind of like a minotaur on steroids, this guy pumps out the damage. With a little room to move though, it's easy to just get out of their way and let them have it.

While there are only fifteen levels to go through, they are set out in a much less frustrating way than in Hexen 2. You almost never have to go back on your tracks (unless you're really sloppy). Major downer here though was no new deathmatch maps.

Basically, if you loved Hexen 2, you'll enjoy this add on pack. If you didn't, then you won't. It'll probably become mandatory for online Hexen 2 enthusiasts to buy it, with people wanting to play as the Demoness.

BUFFALO SOLDIER

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS:	1 TO MULTI
PUBLISHER:	ACTIVISION
PRICE:	$ 29.95
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM, HEXEN 2
DESIRED:	P166, 32 MB RAM, 3DFX CARD

PLUS
Beautiful level design.
Very little back tracking to do

MINUS
No deathmatch maps
Only four new monsters

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	80	82

OVERALL

83

A good expansion pack. Only for the single player fans...

Outwars

Strapping on her power armor, Jacinta Thomler dove into combat with the mutant cockroaches from Hyper's basement.

UTILISING THE NUCLEAR-POWERED BAYGON CANNON

Few action titles reach the level of an epic, however Outwars successfully weaves the player into a rich and intense storyline with barely a pause to draw breathe. From the start, as the player's character escapes a bloodbath on a world invaded by insectoid Hydrans, or "Skulls" and is inducted into the elite "Dreadnought" corps, the pace never slows.

Even before the player is fully trained with the Dreadnought arsenal, Skulls invade and missions become a desperate attempt to escape the planet. Drawing from Starship Troopers, humans are savagely outnumbered, outclassed and on the back foot. The movie sequences are stunning, providing an insight into the progress of the war that is heavily influenced by the player's successes.

There are five richly different worlds to rescue, and the 25 odd missions include rescuing survivors of an attack, racing the Skulls to the heart of the human flagship and infiltrating an alien spacecraft to kidnap their leader.

Bugger the environment...

Elements of the scenery are destructible, with explosive canisters, trees, vehicles and buildings all waiting for the touch of a rocket. It is even possible to take on the huge alien spacecraft that float above many missions if you can spare the ammunition. On untimed missions it is worth exploring the huge levels purely for the visuals.

It was disappointing that there were no plot branches and it was impossible to play single missions out of order. The title does not have difficulty levels and while this shouldn't worry an experienced gamer (much), new players will find Outwars frustratingly difficult even on the first levels.

Characters wear powered battlesuits with jumpjets and (later) gliderwings which make it vital to master all three dimensions of combat. The weapons include mines, guided missiles, gauss guns and the trusty laser rifle, based on the size of the armour and the player's choices. The versatile flamethrower's continuous stream of flame proved ideal to cook hordes of Skulls, and hordes there are, ammunition conservation is a must in many missions.

Aliens range from giant buzzsaws and flying dragons to those similar to creatures in Aliens. Unfortunately their attacks are quite standard, most mindlessly run at the player firing weapons, I even found the flying Skulls quite predictable in their attack choices.

Tell 'em where to go

The player can bring up to three squad mates on a mission and order them about in a standard "attack", "hold", "follow-me" range of orders. This is greatly enhanced by their individual personalities, each of the possible eight has a wide range of audio responses that makes them feel like more than cannon fodder.

Control keys are readily configurable to the player's preferences and the onscreen response is excellent, with flying barrel rolls, leaps and complex manoeuvres relatively easy to perform. There was a sheer thrill in breaking out the gliderwing and diving on land-bound enemies, weapons blazing, at stupid speeds. Although, at times the physics felt slightly askew, and there were some clipping problems and no support for force-feedback joystick (Microsoft what were you thinking?!)

Outwars has drawn together much of what was good about the Mech genre, with the gory thrill of confronting hordes of merciless foes in a battle for survival. Whilst the plot is quite linear and the lack of an easy level will frustrate many new gamers, Outwars is a challenging and immersive title that will challenge any player prepared to go in boots first.

SQUISHIN' THOSE BUGS

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	ACTION
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	MICROSOFT
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G8+

PLUS
Great visuals and feel

MINUS
No Force Feedback support!

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	88	89

OVERALL

90

Not for the beginner, but the game really hits the spot

Adidas Power Soccer '98

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: $59.95
RATING: G

APS '98 is far more than just the original with a '98 slapped on - it's essentially a whole new game. The original APS was liked by those players that didn't want a soccer "sim" experience, but more a bit of arcadey fun, and in this capacity it succeeded. Sure it's graphics were cartoon-like, but that was a reflection of its play style. Unfortunately, with the move to greater graphical sophistication, the arcadey essence of APS is gone. In its place we have an impressive looking contender that occupies a substanceless middle ground.

The sad truth of the matter is that APS '98 has lost any semblance of gameplay. Stringing together a coherent series of moves is annoyingly difficult. Not that there's any need to, just throw on the run button and you can charge up and down the length of the field, literally passing through defenders, without being challenged. Of course, graphical slowdown, only one barely useable camera angle and player markers that jump around incessantly don't help either.

APS '98 also has some of the worst game commentary yet. Bizarre comments spew forth at seemingly random moments, like: "Football players are the best role model a young person can have" just after I've flying kicked another player in the head! The amount of blatant advertising throughout the game is also disturbing - every loading screen is an advertisement. There are even full motion video ads before each game. Surely calling the game ADIDAS Power Soccer is enough.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	82	50	65

Mac Diablo

Mac

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1-4 (LAN, MODEM, IPX, BATTLE.NET)
PUBLISHER: BLIZZARD
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: MA

Diablo first made its appearance on the PC about 18 months ago and quickly became a favourite, with a relatively simple gameplay formula and an addiction level higher than several banned substances. Anyone who frequented arcades toward the end of the 80's would have played Gauntlet, the muliplayer game of dungeon exploration, monster bashing and treasure collection. Diablo is basically the nineties equivalent, with super-detailed graphics, spooky sound, level advancement and a magic system.

Diablo is a cinch to get into. Pick a character class, be it warrior, sorcerer or rogue, head down

your local dungeons, kill Satan's minions, pick up their treasure and get more powerful. Head back above ground to the town (the only real annoying part of the game) to trade booty for bigger and better weapons, then descend again and repeat the process. There's an element of statistics and magic management, but Diablo is primarily RPG-Lite with an emphasis on action and atmosphere. Solo play is superb, but grab three buddies and team up against the endless demon horde and you'll be in heaven (well, Hell, really, but you get the picture...), multi-play Diablo is truely the stuff of legends. Setting up a local network game can be done with one CD, and online play is made easy (and free) with Blizzard's free Battle.net server.

The Macintosh hasn't exactly got a reputation as a games machine, but Mac-users have the patience of Buddhist monks and know that if they wait long enough the games will come. Thankfully games like Diablo make the wait very worthwhile, and all hail Blizzard for catering to the Mac with A grade games like this and the up-coming Starcraft. It's just a pity Diablo II is just around the corner for PC...

MALCOLM CAMPBELL

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
88	80	92	90

Dual Heroes

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: HUDSON
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: M15+

Hudson, who is better known for the legendary Bomberman games, had already astonished us with the surprisingly good 3D fighting romp, Bloody Roar. So when word got out that it had made a new 3D fighter for the N64 by the name of Dual Heroes, it's understandable why people got excited. Presented in an over-the-top futuristic style, Dual Heroes borrows elements from such fine games as Virtua Fighter, Fighting Vipers, and the Tobal series. But when you note the "Lethal Change" feature, which transforms your character and gives them unique special powers, you'll realise that Dual Heroes is just Bloody Roar with a Power Rangers theme.

Unfortunately, that's where the similarities end. The overall visual impression that this game leaves is a bizarre combination of neon colours, brought to life by unbelievably chunky animation. Music and sound effects range from mundane to shockingly sub-par, but it's the control where Dual Heroes falls flat on its face. Slow, slushy, jerky, and unresponsive are but a few words that can be used to describe the frustrating movement controls, which are strangely yet distinctly split between 2D and 3D. By default, the game is in 2D. Press the Z button, and you get 3D movement which you have practically no control over. Be forewarned: if button-mashing doesn't help, you might very well end up smashing your control pad into little pieces. To its credit, there is a novel mode where you can train a robot to fight automatically for you, but programmers should have concentrated on getting the basics right first.

By all accounts, this game is a painful experience. Power Rangers fans would do best to stay glued to the TV. Interestingly, the unique shape of the cartridge makes it ideal for skimming it across a large body of water.

KEVIN CHUENG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
55	50	45	49

Pilgrim

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P75, 8MB, 4XCD ROM, WIN 3.X/95.
DESIRED: P100, 16MB.

One of the first best sellers written was Pilgrim's Progress, a tale about Christian lifestyle. It has some similarities with this game from Infogrammes, the least of which is not its very old appearance. O.K., the game does not have a dusty torn old cover, and yellowing pages, but it does have the look of not quite being up to date. The game is pretty, with highly detailed graphics of beautiful backgrounds, and incredibly meticulously created characters. When the character, Simon, moves about in the 2D environment, the "old" feel comes into play, with a jerky portrayal of the scene from slightly different perspectives.

Movement is also the cause for frustration. Each area in the game is laid out like a grid with different people and objects scattered throughout. Unfortunately it is not always possible to move from one square to another, instead a round about route needs to be taken. The other cause for frustration, is the use of objects. There are three collections of things at the bottom of the screen, these things are the way the character carries out actions, or communicates with people. The difficulty arises in getting objects that do not belong to the character, he has to ask instead of just taking. Good manners and morality is the last thing a character would need with the Pope's own Inquisitor hounding their butt across the country. This combined with the difficulty in moving directly from one place to another, is what makes the solving of puzzles difficult.

The inclusion in the game of an interactive encyclopedia about the middle ages, as well as the accurate portrayal of a real period in time, makes this game one for the history buffs. If you are looking for a hot quest game, look elsewhere.

ROSS CLARKSMITH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	70	60	62

Bust A Move 2

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: TAITO
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

Although the sequel is already available on other systems, the release of Bust A Move 2 on the N64 is a very welcome case of "better late than never". Chronicling the puzzle related exploits of everyone's favourite dinosaurs, Bub and Bob (no, not Barney), BAM 2 is a wonderful little gem that adds a pinch of charm and sophistication to the N64's growing library of games.

BAM 2 is a 2D-based puzzle game where your aim is to clear the screen of all the bubbles. The two main strategy elements are firstly that the balls are all of different colours; and secondly, you can bounce the bubbles that you shoot off various surfaces on the screen. If you connect three or more bubbles of the same colour, they'll explode and take any bubbles to which they are exclusively adjoined into bubble heaven.

The heart of BAM 2 lies in the puzzle layouts, and the strategy that is involved in tackling them. The slightest misfire can lead to total disaster and many subsequent re-attempts. It's frustratingly addictive because a stuff up is more than likely to be the fault of your own unco-ordination, and not of the tight controls.

When you come to the two-player mode, BAM 2 becomes a demon of a party game. The basic aim is to destroy large clusters of bubbles and dump them on your opponent. The operative word here is "fun".

Although the graphics and tunes are cute, BAM2 may seem dated as it is nowhere near as hard-core as Tetrisphere, nor as outrageously funny as Poy Poy on the PlayStation. The trade off is its wider general appeal.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
72	70	85	80

Lucky Luke

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
PRICE: $79.950
RATING: G

Some of you may be aware of Lucky Luke, some of you may not... he's a super-famous comic character over in France in the same league as Tintin and Asterix. Luke is either super-cool or super-stupid I'm not quite sure which, but he walks around like a dude and is handy with a gun - so he can do what he wants! It's obvious why Infogrames would release this in Europe, as anything with Lucky Luke on the cover of the box is going to guarantee sales, but here in Australia, Luke ain't as well-known and frankly the game isn't good enough to sell on it's gameplay merits. There are some moments in Lucky Luke which almost convinced me it was of Disney platformer quality (Aladdin, Hercules) as some of the animation is beautiful, but then the poor controls and awkward "puzzles" bring you back to earth.

It's a quirky platformer with a ton of sub-games - one minute you're doing the standard side-scrolling thing and the next you're shooting bottles ala Point Blank or arm-wrestling a horse - but the variety doesn't make up for the poor gameplay and bad level design throughout. Luke's movements are stiff and the game comes across glitchy and half-finished. It looks like he ain't so lucky after all, because this game should come with a paper bag.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
84	79	58	63

Warbreeds

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1 - NETWORK
PUBLISHER: RED ORB
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32 MB RAM

Groan, not another strategy game. Well, I am afraid so. And unfortunately in this case it is JUST another strategy game. Warbreeds from Red Orb Entertainment doesn't go out and break new ground or scream out over the other RTS releases of late, but it will provide an entertaining relief to the games that have trillions of control options and in depth tactic analysis, but isn't that the whole point of strategy?

The game basics are remeniscent of Bullfrog's Gene Wars, where stealing genes from the enemy will give you the upper hand. The games interface is simple point and click, and doesn't contain thousands of peripheral options.

The graphics provided an interesting change from the strategy games where we squint up close to the screen trying to catch a tiny unit and send it out to battle. With Warbreeds the units are huge, and the animation is also pretty appalling and really falls miles behind games like Starcraft. Worst of all is the AI. Try sending 10 units around an obstacle, and watch half of them get stuck due to their own stupidty.

A good point with Warbreeds however was the ability to fit out combat units with a variety of weapons. This is possible through stealing genes from your enemy, or completing the necessary tasks set for you. Warbreeds also supports Muliplay via the Internet, which is becoming a pre-requisite for PC games. In all, Warbreeds is a fun little game but true to the genre, strategy fans may be a little disappointed with it.

NATHAN

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
84	79	58	63

Plane Crazy

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-8 (NETWORK)
PUBLISHER: EUROPRESS
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G
REQ: P166, 16MB RAM, 2XCD ROM, WIN 95
DESIRED: P200 MMX, 32MB RAM, 4XCD ROM

Plane Crazy contains conceivably the most astonishing scene I think I've witnessed in a racing game on the PC. After swerving violently among the ruins of Mayan city in the heart of a jungle, I piloted my nifty little plane through a waterfall (there's always a secret passage behind the waterfall!) and plunged into an amazing cyclindrical tunnel that rotated spectacularly as I flew along it. My eyes popped so much that I'm scheduled for surgery next week on my detached retinas.

Surpassing Speed Rally and equalling Ultimate Race, this is a genuine contender for the most visually impressive racer ever. And, incredibly, it plays almost as well. Flying these planes is a new and thrilling experience, enhanced mainly by the freedom of movement they allow. Swoop low to get the (somewhat unrealistic) benefit of "faster air", then air brake sharply to avoid the buildings, trains and lava stream hazards. Collect power-ups to send your opponents into tailspins or blow huge holes in the scenery to create a valuable short-cut. Great stuff!

One reservation - it's damn difficult. Even the first track, Border Dash, is pretty hairy, while the last, Sin City Run, is just breath-takingly impossible. There are only five tracks as well - which is probably why they're so tough. An extra two or three slightly easier courses would have been appreciated because, as it is now, you do feel as if you have been thrown into the deep end.

Nonetheless, this is a cool and original racer. Recommended.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
94	75	85	86

BioFREAKS

PlayStation

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

After suffering through titles like War Gods, Mortal Kombat 4, and Mace the Dark Age, can we handle another 3D weapons-based fighter? With the benefit of knowing where they went wrong last time, Midway is trying again with BioFREAKS.

BioFREAKS is a 3D fighting game involving a group of malformed persons, altered through cybernetic enhancements, who must duke it out in a post-Apocalyptic setting reminiscent of the Judge Dredd comics. Control-wise, you get a button for each hand and leg, a button for jump jets (people in the future are too lazy to jump on their own) and another for projectile weapons. Side-stepping is also an available feature, performed in a similar fashion to Soul Blade.

The best feature of this game is probably the graphics. The characters are huge polygon constructs with smooth textures and excellent animations. Some of their designs are pretty cool, and don't look half as contrived as the characters in War Gods. The backgrounds are also of a high standard, coupled with all sorts of spot effects like smoke and real time lighting. The sounds and music aren't bad. The only problems are that the controls are a tad too unresponsive and there isn't much depth or strategy to the combat, despite all the special moves.

This might sound barbaric, but the fun in BioFREAKS is actually in hacking off the limbs of your opponents and watching the blood spray about as they continue to fight. Some will even continue to fight with blades wedged in their face. The action is hence quite entertaining, but the shoddy controls and lack of gameplay depth make this strictly a beginners game.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	76	66	69

Chill

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SNOWBOARDING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $69.95
RATING: G

With the apparent flood of snowboarding games hitting the market, it's interesting to see what programmers are doing in terms of trying to add something innovative or unique to their games. Eidos Interactive, whose recent multi-genre exploits include Fighting Force and Deathtrap Dungeon, seem more than willing to jump right into the snowboarding deal with a game called Chill.

Chill offers a variety of standard snowboarding thrills, including tournament races, slaloms, and half pipes. In terms of gameplay innovation, Chill can be credited for using large, expansive maps that create a general feeling of freedom; and incorporating interesting obstacles like streets, moving cars, windmills, and so on.

Unfortunately, that's where the supposed innovation ends. Chill's environments can at best be described as sparse and uninteresting. The graphics actually look okay, particularly with the use of smooth plain-textured snow with light trails to depict your motion. But when you think about it, it leads to a total lack of any depiction of speed. The sparsity and size of the environments also makes it possible to get lost at times, which not only makes the game a frustrating, but also demonstrates the lack of imagination that went into the track designs.

The controls are also not that much better. The steering is over-exaggerated and the trick controls are very sluggish. The motion looks okay when you go in a straight line and gain speed, but it will begin to defy most laws of physics once you start steering and jumping. It's actually hard to fall over.

The initial Need For Speed-esque features where you can crash into moving cars was promising, but they weren't very well executed at all. There are plenty of better alternatives out there.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	69	45	48

Everybody's Golf

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: JULY
CATEGORY: SPORT
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: $59.95
RATING: G

It's always nice to find a game you thought you would never have liked, but it ends up being so addictive that you spend more time on it than other deserving titles like Klonoa or Tekken 3. Everybody's Golf, a game from SCE, is one such title capable of doing this.

Briefly, golf involves the use of a long metal rod with a paper weight attached to the end. A small ball wrapped in rubber bands and encased in a hard plastic be-dimpled shell is whacked with the said metal rod through the country side until it falls into a hole that conveniently fits the ball. The aim of the game is to get the ball into the hole with as few whacks as possible.

Previous golfing simulations like the PGA Golf Tour series are unrelentingly hard-core, which makes the golfing genre a very niche (or mainstream if you're a 30-something executive) market. Everybody's Golf is the exact opposite. It's a very easy game to play. All you need to do is point and shoot, and watch as the camera chases after the ball from different angles. Now, before anyone runs off screaming that this is a dummy's game, Everybody's Golf is filled with technical detail, right down to the finer contours of the green when you're putting for a birdie. The thing that makes this work though is that you don't have to get anal and pull out your protractor to have a shot, and it retains a light hearted feel to it, rather than the stuffy feel that most PC golf games give those of us that aren't a fan of the sport in the first place.

With humorous, smart graphics and addictive gameplay that grows on you, Everybody's Golf does what Namco's Smash Court Tennis did for its own sport: it puts the fun back into game. The fact that it's been in the Japanese top 30 for the last year can't be a bad thing either. This game is highly recommended.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
82	79	85	82

Egypt 1156BC

PC/MAC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: CRYO
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: (PC): P90, 16MB RAM, WIN95 / (MAC) POWERMAC, 12MB RAM
DESIRED: P120

A strange combination of adventure game and history lesson, Egypt 1156BC is a crime-mystery set in ancient times. Led by quite beautiful in-game graphics, nicely rendered and motion-captured characters, you play Ramose who must prove his father's innocence . . . the crime? Grave-robbery.

Effective music taken directly from a compilation of Egyptian music, the scene is set for a dark descent into the tomb of the pharaoh scouring everything for clues to help you in your quest. Similar to other recent adventures on the PC, the interface is a simple point-and-click with your cursor changing shape when you can interact with an object or other person and your field-of-view being a full 360 degrees. Because of the darkness of the tomb and the similarity of hieroglyphics from wall to wall it is easy to get lost and at times the lack of a map feature, or even a compass, is sorely missed.

As you progress through the game gathering clues you are encouraged to learn about the history of the period through a "pop-up encyclopaedia" function that springs to life whenever the relevance of a particular bit of wall or an object seems a hard to grasp. Although educational games are often hideously dull, this more subtle approach actually proved quite compelling.

On the downside, it would have been nice to have seen the game support higher screen resolutions: the only setting is 640x480, but at high-colour; and the action a little faster paced. Nevertheless a surprisingly solid adventure for budding Egyptologists.

PROFESSOR PERIL

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	75	70	75

Redline Racer

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-8
PRICE: $ 79.99
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, 3DFX OR ATI RAGE PRO, PERMEDIA 2, INTEL 740 CHIPSET, RIVA 128, OR NUMBER NINE.
DESIRED: P166 WITH 3DFX

Those expecting to find an in-depth motorcycle simulation in Redline Racer will surely be disappointed. Redline Racer goes full out to give you a seat-of-the-pants arcade racer that will get the old adrenalin really pumping.

Ten tracks await your challenge, from the basic desert track with its long stretches of highway, perfect for breaking all manner of speed laws, to city tracks that wind through narrow streets and even the odd track along the seaside. The track construction is quite imaginative, and offers real challenge to the player to master all of the tight corners and jumps that are present. New to the arcade 'streetbike racer' is the ability to jump, and boy do the bikes often jump (up to 50 meters off the ground of some tracks)! The driving engine is pure arcade action, with a hint of simulation in the jumping and landing techniques of the bike's handling. The tracks often have very uneven ground, which must be approached at cautious speeds otherwise the player will find themselves on the gravel real fast. It's even possible to 'jackknife' your bike, which results in your player being thrown hundreds of feet in the air (depending on your speed), with nasty landings for the rider that will make you wince in pain. Still, given time, and a little skill, the driving engine offers great rewards for being able to negotiate the track's danger spots a ridiculous speeds. The new addition of jumps and a slightly more realistic driving engine certainly give Redline Racer the edge over games like Moto Racer.

Graphically, the game looks very nice on your 3DFX or Direct 3D card, with some spiffy effect like 'edge anti aliasing' providing a very clear and pretty picture even in the game's lower resolution.

REN HOEK

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
89	70	85	85

Street Fighter Alpha 2

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 2D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
PRICE: TBA
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P100, 16MB RAM,
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM

Adhering to tradition, the Street Fighter games continue to make their way to the PC... long after anyone can remember that version. The Street Fighter Alpha games were where the series took on a much more anime-esque look.

The gameplay is totally faithful to the arcade version, with every move and character being there. There's an ton of characters to play as, each with their own set of special moves, and super attacks, which become available as your "super" meter gets filled up with each special attack you make. There is also a special custom combo move, where the player becomes accelerated, and can thus string together moves which wouldn't normally come off quick enough to work as a combo.

Despite the cool gameplay basics, there are two problems with this PC version that kind of ruin the gameplay in the end. Firstly, if you don't have a gamepad with six buttons in close proximity, then you're going to have hassles playing the game comfortably. The main downer to SFA2 on PC though, is that the graphics are simply dodgy compared to both the arcade, and console versions. Rather than smoothly drawn characters, they've ended up being very pixelated, and unless you have a beast of a PC, the game also doesn't run smoothly either.

Street Fighter Alpha 2 is a good game, but unfortunately the PC version is the weakest of the lot. Just one for those that refuse to buy a console, and must own a Street Fighter game.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
69	83	68	70

Fighting Force

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: BEAT EM UP
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM,
4MB 3D GRAPHICS CARD.
DESIRED: HEX SPEED CD ROM,
32 MEG OF RAM, JOYSTICK

Fighting Force is a 3D beat 'em up/adventure where you can choose to be in control of one of four characters in a third person perspective environment.

Your mission, surprisingly enough, is to go out and basically beat the crap out of not only every living thing, but every inanimate and totally harmless object that you happen to run into.

Each of the four characters have there own fighting style which include some nifty little combos and special moves. For example, Smasher has a cool two handed overhead pound which damages everyone within a certain radius, while Mace's knee to the head does some serious damage. Not only that, but you can pick up items along the way such as baseball bats, pistols and even bazookas to magnify your frenzy of destruction. These small features should keep you interested for a little while, but don't be surprised if you lose interest after only a week or two.

Unfortunately, Fighting Force just does not have enough to offer to keep you interested for any longer than that. For starters, the graphics are not detailed and smooth enough. The objects and scenery are too jagged and do not fit in well with the rest of the background images. It looks as though they have just been thrown into the picture hap-hasardly. This also makes the gameplay that much less appealing as it is more difficult to pinpoint specific areas of an object or enemy that you want to interact with.

The sound effects actually fit in pretty well. They are fairly simple and standard (footsteps, punches connecting, etc) but suit this type of game. Overall, Fighting Force is a bit of fun to begin with, but I won't lose any sleep if I ever lose the CD.

MATT BAUER

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	65	70	68

Triple Play 99

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G

Baseball fans are becoming truly spoiled for choice. Triple Play 99 is EA's latest and greatest stick-and-cowhide sim and a worthy challenger to VR's Baseball Hardware Accelerated.

All 30 MLB teams and stadiums are represented, including the two expansion teams Arizona and Tampa Bay. The player lineup is the full 1998 season roster with the stats replicated as anally as you can possibly get (over 1300 stats per player!) There is also the option to manage the team through an entire season, which adds great depth to the game.

Players are modelled on a medium-build guy, as they are in every other baseball sim, which is a pity because it'd be nice to see some fat guys sweating it out around the diamond now and then. The player's motion is a little jerky due to less animation frames which was a bit of a pity, but this is no different from most other sims out there.

Triple Play 99 does support 3D acceleration, but a 3D card is not essential. The reason for this is that while hardware 3D has brought a lot more realism into most games, there is no absolute need for it in a sports sim. Sports sims don't have volumetric lighting or fog effects etc, so all a 3D card will do for you is produce smoother graphics and a better framerate, rather than stunning visual effects - good news for owners of low-end systems.

The commentary is pretty amazing - the dialogue flows seemlessly and gives you that real sense of being there. Crowd noises are well catered for, with a huge range of sounds making the experience all the more realistic.

EA really have produced a quality game here, and baseball fans will find enough depth to keep them going until the counter is reset to give us Triple Play 00.

GEORGE ARGY

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	85	85	83

Tomb Raider Unfinished Business

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: $49.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: 8MB RAM
DESIRED: P100, 16MB RAM, 3DFX ACCELERATOR.
SUPPORTS: 3DFX, POWER VR, GAMEPADS

Lara Croft, the female hero of arguably one of the greatest 3D action games of all time, must explore and conquer four new levels that Eidos have released with Tomb Raider: Unfinished Business. A new section of the Alien Hive from the original game has been discovered and Lara must get in there and destroy the critters before they can regroup and threaten mankind again.

The extra levels: "Return to Egypt", "Temple of the Cat", "Atlantean Stronghold" and "The Hive" are very nice and a lot of work seems to have been put into their design. The one thing that originally drew me to Tomb Raider over some other 3D games is the huge open areas that you could freely roam around in and explore. There are plenty more of these underground caverns in the new levels and when panning around from the top of a mountain or monolith, the feeling of distance and depth is awesome. Obviously, a 3DFX card greatly enhances this feeling, but the effect is still present in software mode none the less.

The new levels are very challenging. There are a lot more falling boulders, lava pits and hidden holes in the ground that are hundreds of meters deep. One false step will turn Lara's once fine physique into a flamed grilled mess or crumpled figure at the bottom of a cavern.

The only drawback is that you can't buy the four levels as a stand-alone add-on pack. Eidos have packaged it in a two CD set that includes the original game and some other goodies such as Tomb Raider screen savers, a Windows theme and a 3Dfx patch. Because of this, it may be difficult for a lot of gamers (myself included) to justify spending the extra money on only four new levels. Especially since you can download the other stuff for free from the web.

MATT BAUER

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	75	87	85

Extreme Tactics

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: REAL TIME STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: MEDIA STATION
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P100, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P133, 32MB RAM

It is becoming increasingly hard to become enthused about real time strategy games on the PC especially after Dark Reign, Total Annihilation, Starcraft and the more first-person-styled RTS games like Battlezone and Uprising.

Despite a terrible title, Extreme Tactics has a few things going for it. For a start it takes and combines some of the best elements of a well worn genre: multiplay against computer-controlled opponents, a level and vehicle builder, enemy vehicle capture and salvage capabilities, TCP/IP, Internet and network play and a one player skirmish mode: but is let down badly by below standard graphics especially when utilising the 'zoom' modes it offers as another 'feature'. Playing one of two forces whose differences don't extend much beyond their looks, the familiar futuristic 'planet-in-ruin' scenario is trotted out... 'resources are scarce, war is nigh', you know the deal... plots seem to matter less and less outside of adventure games unfortunately. Enemy AI is adequate but most enthusiasts quickly conquer the campaign modes on all RTS games and it is the multiplayer features that add to a games longevity.

Multiplayer options are well supported but unlike other RTS titles which have had greater exposure, finding other players randomly on the Internet as you might with Dark Reign and particularly Starcraft will be near impossible.

Whilst scrambling to build units, mine resources, set up defences and lead sudden attacks on the enemy it quickly dawns that there's really nothing new here especially now that the inevitable progression towards 3D had begun. For diehards only.

PROFESSOR PERIL

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	50	70	60

Three Lions

PC/PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: TAKE TWO INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED:
DESIRED:

Three Lions? What does that mean? Well, this being an English game, it refers to the emblem worn by the England national football team. It was also the name of the terrible Lightning Seeds song adopted as the unofficial anthem for England supporters during Euro 96. So, yes, this is a football game. But, unlike, say, EA's new Fifa

release, Three Lions doesn't just recycle an old game to cash in on this year's World Cup. This is a brand new release - and it ain't bad either.

Without a doubt the best thing to ever happen to football sims was the introduction of the "through ball" button. You know, that ability to thread a perfectly weighted pass between the opposition defence into the path of your rampaging striker. It's brilliant, and every game that includes it is automatically a playable game. Three Lions has it, nuff said.

One of the more noteworthy features here is that each player in all fifty of the international sides on offer (ranging from Brazil's peerless 1970 side to Australia's ill-fated 1997 team) has been individually textured. It's quite spooky to notice that this collection of coloured polygons does, in fact, bear more than a passing resemblance to Mark Bosnich (or whoever).

Three Lions plays a pretty decent game of football. It's not as elegant or as subtle as International Superstar Soccer, nor is it as flashy and playable as Fifa 98, but it's still damn good fun. Slightly sticky controls is the only real drawback, but I love the way you can actually hear your players shouting instructions to each other on the pitch.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	86	81	83

Deathtrap Dungeon

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: ??
RATING: ??

"Have at you rat man, take this demon witch!" I cry as I boldly hack him, then slash her, leaving body parts strewn across the ground and blood dripping from the ceiling. This sounds like fun, doesn't it? Well, it's actually a bit hollow. Despite the potential that a medieval, action-based Tomb Raider style affair holds, Deathtrap Dungeon is a decidedly mediocre game. Combat is lacklustre - there are very few moves (not even a jumping attack), sluggish controls, a hyper sensitive viewpoint that jumps around at innopportune moments, and primitive enemy AI. Fighting basically boils down to the cunning strategy of pressing in a direction and holding down the attack button...and as a result you feel detached from the action.

Fortunately, there is a large array of spells, potions, and weapons to pick up which help make things interesting - indeed the secret to getting far in the game is the sage use of these items. There are also 38 levels to work your way through, with some reasonable level design, and stacks of dungeon dwellers to smite.

The graphics are technically unimpressive and rather bland though, and vision is seriously affected by the surrounding black fog. This isn't a problem in the corridors, but in some of the huge open areas, it's like stumbling around in the dark, and equally exciting. On the positive side, there are some nice lighting effects and the camera positioning can be cinematic. The sound effects are also quite good, and the music sets the atmosphere well. Overall though, a disappointment, considering the original Fighting Fantasy book was such a hoot.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	84	60	72

Snow Racer 98

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORT
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: OCEAN
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G

A distinct sensation of deja vu passed through my veins as I began to play Snow Racer 98, and it continued throughout the entire time I spent in its company. I kept thinking that surely I had seen this somewhere before, that I had in fact already reviewed this game only a few months ago. Suddenly, a word slowly revealed itself to my conciousness - "Cool" - and then another whispery voice uttered - "Boarders".

A-ha! Snow Racer 98 (by the way, there was never a Snow Racer 97, nor indeed another Snow Racer of any description) is almost identical to Cool Boarders. By that I mean it's one of those "racing speedily down slopes of ice doing stunts" type of game. Only this time, as well as snowboarding you can opt for the more traditional sport of skiing. There are the usual event-based competitions against computer opponents, a healthy time attack practice option, and a split-screen two-player mode, but we're still missing multi-player fun for any more than you and your solitary friend.

As far as comparisons go, I think Snow Racer 98

certainly has the edge over Cool Boarders. More polish has been applied to the graphics and animation (something that is especially noticeable in the stunt close-ups shown in the terrific replays), and the courses feel a bit more exciting to discover. Obviously, the addition of skiing is a big plus, if only for the much-needed injection of variety into the gameplay. It offers a fast-paced, no-thinking break from the demands of snowboarding tricks which I found to be very welcome.

Better than Cool Boarders then.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
73	65	76	74

Microsoft Golf 1998 Edition

HYPER BIG RUBBER STAMP OF APPROVAL

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1 TO MANY
PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, WIN 95 OR N.T 4.0, 16MB RAM (24MB RAM FOR WINDOWS N.T 4.0), 4X CD-ROM.
DESIRED: P120, 32MB RAM

Casa del Campo - the house of camp. From the pansy putter's paradise comes the 1998 Edition of Microsoft Golf and the latest version of the world's best selling golf game, introduces some welcome new features in addition to giving the venerable old title a facelift. The 1998 Edition offers you unprecedented control over the physical parameters of your game wrapped up in a package that is even prettier than Arnold Palmer's Link LS, the game that has had me swinging for the last nine months - well step aside Arnie.

Microsoft Golf now offers four swing types. Rather than merely adding a couple of new tricks to the traditional two- and three-click swings though, the 1998 Edition re-invents the traditional swing types in a radical fashion and adds two totally new approaches. The traditional swing mechanisms incorporate the swing guage into the player animation as a ghosted device that sits on the swing plane and becomes active when you place the cursor over the animation - it then operates as a standard swing guage in either mode. Natural swing is a wholly adequate mouse driven mechanism while sim swing allows you to nominate club choice and other variables before the computer executes the shot for you.

Microsoft Golf has always offered a computer golfing experience that is very close to the best available at the time and the latest version takes this duty very seriously - the 1998 Edition could well elevate Microsoft Golf to the top of the heap. Say what you will about the monolithic Microsoft, but one thing that the 1998 Edition of Microsoft Golf proves once and for all - Microsoft know golf games.

CRAIG WHITE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	85	90	90

The Golf Pro

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1 TO MANY
PUBLISHER: EMPIRE SPORT
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, WIN95, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P120, 32 MB

Empire Sport takes a bold step with The Golf Pro featuring Gary Player by designing an interface based solely on the mouse driven swing that other games have so far only offered as an alternative to the traditional swing mechanism. The Golf Pro is a genuine reinvention of the computer golfing interface and at first, elements such as the mouse swing and the unconventional views may be unsettling. But the subtle control available over your swing with the dedicated mouse system is considerable and the lessons included with The Golf Pro let you master the interface under the expert tutelage of Gary Player.

Although elements of The Golf Pro's graphic design are stunning, overall the graphics are not as well realised or as efficiently integrated as the best golf games available and there is still an element of 'cut and paste' in the landscape. Some of the automatic reverse views, which engage as your ball crosses an element of the terrain and out of sight, were particularly simplistic and the menu elements are clunky. However, the 'swing screen' is a welcome feature and removes all superfluous screen elements while you are executing your swing.

Mouseplay has proved to be almost revolutionary in other game genres and, with the seemingly obvious physical similiarities to the motion of the golf swing (albeit in miniature), mouseplay may well revolutionise golf gaming - graphics have motivated golf game upgrades for long enough. But the traditional interface is so elegant and ubiquitous that one has to question the wisdom of Empire's decision to place all their eggs in the mouse driven basket.

CRAIG WHITE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
65	75	85	75

Rampage World Tour

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ABSOLUTE CARNAGE
PLAYERS: 1-3
PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
PRICE:$99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: RUMBLE PAK

Remember this one at the arcades? Yeah, choose a monster and then destroy as many cities as you can, eat as many people as possible, and don't let the army stop you. Good for a bash before seeing a movie or while you're waiting for a hamburger. Considering Godzilla is at movie theatres, this is pretty timely!

Rampage World Tour is big dumb fun, just punch and kick your way through buildings to score points in a time limit. You can play as either a lizard creature (like Godzilla), a big gorilla (like King Kong) or a giant Wolfman (like Dan... ouch! Dan let go!) and then it's off to wreak havoc and pop frenzied humans into your gaping jaws to impress the monsters of the opposite sex...

Get together with two other friends, and all three of you can go at it at once to see who can destroy the most - probably the games best mode of play. If you totally demolish the city you're on, you move onto another and then eventually continue on to another country - simple eh? Well, so is the gameplay. So simple in fact that you'll probably tire of it pretty quickly.

Your monsterly duties include climbing the sides of buildings and punching out the windows, revealing hidden items. Pop these in your mouth to either replemish your life or make yourself puke, but once you've popped enough windows it destroys the building and you have to move on. Fending of the army is pretty funny though, and there's nothing like flipping over a cop car.

Whilst Rampage is good fun and all, it's the sort of game which loses it's novelty pretty quickly. Unless you were a massive fan of the arcade game, this may be one you would rather rent - at least then you could decided whether you wanted to buy it or not.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	72	72	70

Redneck Rampage Rides Again

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON ADD ON
PLAYERS: 1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY
PRICE: TBA
RATING: MA15+
REQUIRED: P90, 16 MB RAM
DESIRED: P133, 24MB RAM

Yee Haw!!! Those freaks of nature, Leonard and Bubba are back and have crash-landed to wreak more havoc in the American South than ever before. New levels, new weapons, new enemies. What else could you ask for?... ahh, new gameplay?

OK, maybe I'm being a bit harsh. RR Rides Again (the sequel to Redneck Rampage) is a 3D, 1st person perspective shooter in a similar vain to Duke Nukem 3D. For those of you who liked the original, R.R. Rides Again has quite a few new features that I'm sure you'll enjoy discovering. I mean, I have to admit that I got a bit of a buzz when I first picked up a crossbow and fired... wait for it... a chicken loaded with dynamite. Other highlights include crawling into a marsh buggy and firing off a few mortar rounds at not only your fellow Rednecks, but Aliens and Cheerleaders as well. It's features like this that keep you vaguely interested in RR Rides Again and also keeps your mind off the graphics which are still pretty average.

The 14 new levels include DisGraceland, Area 69, a riverboat and a brothel, so rest assured, there will be some interesting times in store for you ahead.

One thing that really annoyed me is that it is still a DOS based game and it automatically closes all programs before starting play. The PC must then re-boot when exiting. C'mon Interplay. I think it's about time you get your act together and move into 90's of gaming.

Apart from that, I think Interplay have created what will become a fairly successful sequel. They have not tried to dazzle us with the latest and greatest graphics and sounds, but have mixed in a well used 3D engine with a bit more mindless violence, humorous anecdotes and sexual innuendo to give us; well, just a bit of fun.

MATT BAUER

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
62	72	75	73

Sign of the Sun

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: PROJECT 2 INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $49.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P75, 8MB RAM
DESIRED: P90, 16 MB RAM

Well retro has been flavor of the month for quite a few months now. We have had, retro clothes and retro music, so it stands to reason that we should be getting some retro games. A good thing too say I, and Sign of the Sun fills that niche quite nicely. For those of you who have played the King's Quest series from Sierra, there will be little problem in picturing the style that this game has. For those of you who have been locked in a box and have not played KQ, the concept is simple. There is a hero (whoopee) who has, not surprisingly a quest to fulfill. The quest

involves wandering from screen to screen of 2D background, picking up different objects and using them for a purpose for which they were not originally intended.

Inevitably a game like this is going to see lots of trial and error in the use of items. That is where the problem with SotS comes into play. If you choose an unusable item, the character turns around tells you it can't be used then turns back round, which can get pretty annoying when you are trying 20 items in one place. Now you could be thinking, "Why would I want to go and play some stupid retro style game?" Apart from becoming incredibly cool and gaining worship from your peers, (Hey wow, look there goes that retro gaming guy) the answer is simple. SotS like its predecessors is straight out good value gaming. There are hours of fun to be had wandering from screen to screen looking for that elusive item, fighting off strange creatures and generally saving the planet. Saving the planet from what? The earth from total annihilation of course, only this time its not from nuclear holocaust, or alien invasion, but the Mayan's third prediction that the sun will crash into the earth.

ROSS CLARKSMITH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	75	65	72

Jazz Jack Rabbit 2

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: EPIC MEGAGAMES
PRICE: $69.95
REQUIRED: P75, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P90

Eeww... What a seedy name for a game. Jazz Jack Rabbit 2 is yet another 2D platform game. It sports a different perspective to the average platformer, with the view zoomed back to encompass more of the world. As a consequence, the player sprite is tiny. Fortunately the characters still have a lot of personality, and the perspective allows for some sonic-style speed elements in the game.

There's nothing much here that hasn't been done already, but it still manages to entertain. Both of the characters have a wide variety of moves, and can pick up heaps of different powerups and weapons (like rocket launchers, freeze guns and flame throwers). There are 5 worlds, each with about 6 levels. Each world has a different theme inspired by popular culture, but design also changes from level to level. Thankfully, the levels aren't strictly linear with multiple paths and numerous secrets.

There's also a reasonable amount of variety in getting around the levels, from hoverboards to flowing speedy sections with springs that shoot you through clear tubes and into poles that spin you around, then fling you out.

My favourite levels would have to be the "Alice in wonderland meets 60's acid culture" ones - we're talking lava lamps, cheshire cats, dancing mushrooms, and caterpillars blowing smoke that makes you dizzy (remember those floaty white puffballs from Yoshi's Island?).

Jazz Jack Rabbit 2 also contains a level editor for all you keen beans out there. The bottom line though is that experienced platformers won't find this a challenge, but the younger gaming populace will have a blast.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	60	70	75

Wayne Gretsky 98

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G

"Game On!". For those of us not blessed (or more likely cursed) with cable TV, ice hockey is a fairly remote spectacle. This, quite frankly sucks, because it's a great game. In fact, the closest the average Aussie gamer will get to a puck is... er... by recreating the intensity, the skills and the blood lust on their game console. EA currently holds the crown for best ice hockey sim with NHL 98, so how does Wayne Gretsky 98 stand up? Unfortunately not all that well.

The problem is that WG 98 comes across as a bit too arcadey, even in simulation mode. There's no depth to the moves available to the player, only the bare essentials. Also, there doesn't seem to be any real skill involved in scoring a goal - it all feels very random, the puck just goes in every few attempts, rather than giving you a sense that setting a move up carefully will result in a goal, which is really how the game should work to encourage some tactics and skillful moves. The gameplay isn't helped by the lack of analogue support either.

Another big downer for WG 98 is the appalling sound. Whilst the commentary itself is passable, the quality of the speech samples is sooo 16 bit. There's no clarity. The graininess of the sound is such that it could be coming from a SNES. The same also applies to the amazingly primitive music.

On the plus side of things, Wayne Gretsky 98 runs smoothly and the action can be cranked to a frenetic pace. The camera angles are all functional and it's generally clear who has the puck (mostly thanks to the puck streak). Unfortunately though, WG 98 seems a rather shallow game, and is probably best suited to hire for a quick multiplayer blast.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	40	65	68

Robotron X

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: GTI
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

Anyone old enough to remember when Robotron 2084 was an arcade hit isdefinitely in the "veteran gamer" bracket. The old arcade classic was one ofthose "It gets faster the further you go" games. You started in arectangular arena and had hordes of little robots come at you... You simplyhad to shoot them before they ran into you.

Come 1998 and there's a Nintendo 64 version... Robotron X. It's basicallythe same thing, except now all the monsters are made up of polygons, as isyour little character. The challenge exists just the same as in Tetris,where it becomes more a test of reflexes than anything. Once the speed getsso high you have almost no time to react to the hordes of robots coming atyou. You use the analogue stick to move, and the c buttons to fire in achosen direction (or alternatively you can use two controllers, on to fire,one to move).

The problems here are obvious. Firstly, the graphics are a little too simplefor the late '90s. Retro or not, it would have been really simple to makethis game look a little better. Secondly, unless you're an old fart who hasenjoyed the original, you're going to wonder why on earth anyone would spendany time playing a game that involved so little variation of gameplay.

Thirdly, how about an option to have two players on screen at once? Thatwould have at least introduced something new to the game.Whilst the gradual speed increase helps builds that gripping tension whichwe gamers love, it's just been done with a lot more finesse in recent years,and even though you can have some fun with Robotron X, there's better outthere to be had.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
50	72	70	65

Addiction Pinball

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PINBALL
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: MICROPROSE
PRICE: $59.95
RATED: G
REQUIRED: P75, 16MB, WIN 95
DESIRED: P120, 32MB

Pinball machines are simulated on computers so those flipper freaks can get their fix without risking being mugged on the way down to the pinnie parlor. Addiction pinball has taken all the advancements in pinball machines and brought them along for the ride. There are skill shots, ramps, spinners, bumpers, jets, caves, loops, and tunnels. Provided on two different tables, the first based on the game Worms, and the second on World Rally fever. Different elements from both these games have been incorporated into the table, much like machines in the arcades are based around movies.

The view problem has been solved by giving the player a number of different options, from full table top down view, to an isometric view also of the full table, along with a couple of half views. The game has all the other features that you would find in an arcade machine, nudge and tilt, high scores, video modes and the most insane multiball yet, with up to six balls to control.

Addiction Pinball is fully customisable, which allows the game to run just as well on the slowest Pentium as on kick butt ninja PCs. Team 17 have done a fairly good job of simulating such a classic idea, but it lacks the feel of the real thing. Still if you can't get down to the arcade, Addiction Pinball is well worth the effort.

ROSS CLARKSMITH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	79	82	74

Ehrgeiz- God Bless the Ring

By TIM LEVY

It's clobbering time again. Ehrgeiz (yes, it sounds like a sneeze in Latvian), is the latest in 3D fighting games to grace the well vacuumed floors of the local arcade. At last it seems that we are to take a full excursion into the world of multiplane 3D.

Previously, we have been confronted by pseudo 3D (Street Fighter EX) and the relatively 3D (Tekken 3, Virtua Fighter 3), which allowed dodging into the background or foreground. In either case, things looked 3D but all the action basically took place on the one axis, which meant no serious dodging or running around. Also the combat zones were either totally flat or just slightly graded (VF3). Now it's time to say goodbye to all that ye olde world stuff. Before you know it you'll be running around- yes running, jumping up levels and manically dodging incoming projectiles, all the whilst trying to pound your opponent to a pulp.

Initially there are 8 characters to choose from, though if you arrive at the 9th stage in under six minutes forty seconds, then you get to duke it out with Cloud and Tifa from 'Final Fantasy 7' (some arcade machines already have Cloud and Tifa as selectable characters), which is the clear giveaway as to Namco and Squaresoft joining forces to bring you this one. The characters include Godhand (mucho chesty bottle blonde laser gun shooting army guy), Sasuke (sword wielding shuriken throwing ninja), Naseem (very similar to Prince Naseem the champion boxer, though with the ability to launch fire balls), Yoko (police chick with a deadly YoYo), Inoba (the meaty wrestler whose charge is more taxing than the State Bank), Han (a rocket fireing TaeKwoDo expert), Jo (cute, shape changing chick), and Shuwen (the traditional Kung Fu dude).

Each character has a wide variety of attacks, all being accessed by joystick and 4 buttons (Guard, Lower attack, Upper attack and Special). Combination of buttons (G+L+U=Throw, G+S=Jump, etc) or buttons depressed in sequential order gives the gamester a whole host of attack possibilities, though none are as powerful or fun as the 'Special technique'. The special technique is usually a long range projectile weapon. It's quite joyous to be finally be able to have 'shootouts' in a fight sim. Projectiles can be used to cancel each other out like in Street Fighter. You can also build up the power of your special technique by depressing the 'special' button for 3 seconds. Also the type of special technique used depends on the joysticks location. But- just when you thought the special technique was too good, you suddenly run out (of power) and have to resort to more conventional means of bashing your opponent. A 'Special Technique-O-Meter' resides beneath the ever compulsory 'Health-O-Meter' at the top of the screen.

The fight locations are fully interactive. On several stages, you have to jump up levels or round a corner to get to the opponent. This is where you should try to use the 'lay of the land' to your advantage by either waiting for an opponent to jump up to your level or by kicking with the correct leg to get an opponent who is trying to get around a corner to attack you. Boxes also furnish the locations and may be thrown at an opponent. Once broken, the boxes reveal bonuses (health, power ups) and sometimes weaponry (knives, axes).

Although as per usual, it is hard to hear the sound effects, it doesn't sound as if we are missing too much. Assorted grunts and ughs ruminate round the battlefield. The soundtrack is different for each of the nine locations and range from dark ominous music to camp clown tunes.

It's a relief to see someone (Namco & Squaresoft) is taking the 3D world seriously and trying to use the possibilities provided by that extra dimension. Hopefully it will not be too long a wait till we see more arcade fighting games with the option of playing in the first perspective.

8/10

Published by Namco

hyper@ctive
http://hyperactive.com.au
GAMES ONLINE

Duke Nukem Forever

The Duke lives. In his upcoming full 3D engine shooter, the buffed-up king of carnage will be doing what he does best, with a little help from you the gamer of course. This website is devoted to following the development of DNF, posting new screenshots and info as it crosses their path. If you're into reading the developer's Plan updates and all that sort of stuff, then it's all here for your consumption. The little visuals they do have on the site, show DNF shaping up to be a tasty title.
http://www.dukeforever.com/

Time to open up another can of Trawlin' for the masses. **Eliot Fish** *pops the lid...*

Makron's Screenshots

One of the more enjoyable sides to working on Hyper, is spending time getting screengrabs of mad gibfests for the various Quake 1 & 2 bits and pieces we feature every now and then. Well, this dude has a whole website devoted to sick and crazy Quake 2 grabs, some of them are hilarious and others downright silly. If you can't get enough gibs on your monitor, then drop in at Makron's Screenshots and stay a awhile.
http://www.quakecomet.com/makworld/

Rebel Boat Rocker

Rebel Boat Rocker is an independent games developer in Texas, who have sprung up out of nowhere to bring forth amazing games for us to play. Currently, they're working on a "futuristic war sim" from a first person perspective using a game engine they've built from scratch. The website is a bit cagey about how the game is progressing, in fear of revealing any secrets about their spiffy new game engine to their competitors. However, they promise to produce a game on the cutting edge of technology, and frankly, it's all very intriguing! Drop in and check out their progress...
http://www.rebelboatrocker.com/main.html

The Gamesmen

The Gamesmen is a big computer and videogames store in NSW, and now they've launched themselves onto the web. Besides the fact that they're trying to flog their games to you, their website is actually a good resource for finding out what games are going to be released when and for what system. They update fairly regularly, and have quite a comprehensive list of products for you to browse. Eager shoppers don't have anything to lose by checking out their site, and if you live in another state, I think they even allow you to order stuff online.
http://www.gamesmen.com.au/

Heretic 2

Interesting eh? We all thought Hexen was Heretic 2! Well, those crazy game designers have decided to go ahead and make Heretic 2 anyway... Sheesh! Luckily for us, the game looks cool, and although it's still early in development, a few screen shots have found their way online. The game is looking a bit Tomb Raiderish (it plays from a third-person perspective), but with more classic role-playing elements than Hexen. Spells look like being the big draw-card here, with tons of sick magic effects. Keep an eye on Raven's website for an announcement of when we can expect a demo. Meanwhile, take a look at the pretty picture, and remember to wipe your chin!
http://www.ravensoft.com/

Armitage III- Poly-Matrix

By MAX AUTOHEAD

By the 22nd century, Mars has been colonised by Earth. Somehow humankind has found enough water on the red planet and adapted to it's lower gravitational pull to build a very dense and ultra tall city, complete with Spaceport and a new breed in artificial lifeforms known as the "seconds" and the "thirds". It's here that Robots and humans co-exist, scratching at the red Martian dirt to make ends meet. But like any other "civilised" environment, there is a need for law and order. On Mars it's the Martian PD, and it's leading "can do" cop? ARMITAGE the Third, ie- THIRD TYPE ANDROID. Ultra strong, quick and child-like, it's Armitage's job to track down the scum of the universe and maintain the iron fist of the law on Mars.

When a psychotic political "serial killer" named Rene D'anclaude comes to Mars to thin out the local population of "thirds", all hell breaks loose, as the city erupts in anti Robot riots, and it's all the Martian police force can do to keep the city from tearing apart.

Sound familiar? Well it should, since it's same storyline that the Armitage series followed. In fact, Armitage the movie is the series recut and redubbed with the voices of Elizabeth Berkley (Showgirls) and Kiefer Sutherland (Young Guns). Kinda disappointing, since I was expecting an all out new eyeball extravaganza.

However, for those of you who haven't seen the Armitage series, this is a great opportunity for you to get the whole thing on one tape. Armitage is full of high IT concepts and sci-fi absurdities presented within a slick veneer of well executed animation. Action scene's galore with our fave gal punching holes in cyborg psychotics and robot armies while firing salvo after salvo of bullets and lasers. Lots of hard core violence that we've come to love and expect from this type of anime.

If you loved Venus Wars or Ghost in the Shell then you'll like Armitage.

7.5/10

Rated M15+. Distributed by Kiseki and Pioneer.

Tenchi the Movie
Tenchi Muyo In Love

In an earlier review of the series I made the claim that the Tenchi Series was one of the weirdest things that I'd ever seen. The story of a guy living in a house of beautiful girls all with weird arse powers and technology, Baby milk formula materialised from other dimensions, photon interface computers and a strobing girl made all my synapse's fire off in a strange and disorderly pattern (and we all know what that leads to!)

Tenchi the Movie is a text-book example of what standards anime can achieve in narrative storytelling. From the onset we're besieged with a flawless execution of animation in both movement and delivery. Beautifully rendered backgrounds couple with funny and highly likeable characters, who engage each other and the world around them with fun and mischief.

The one thing I like about Tenchi is that it always gives you the unexpected, ultra intense Jackie Chan style fight scenes in the middle of a school excursion; Volley ball during a planet threatening undercover mission, conspiracy while watching old 8mm home movies. The storyline is kinda reminiscent of the Back to the Future Series, but hey, it didn't sour my enjoyment!

10/10

rated M15+. Distributed by Kiseki and Pioneer.

STARCRAFT PLAYGUIDE

Disciples of Blizzard Software will be rubbing their hands in glee at the arrival of the prodigal son, Starcraft. This game delivers what we have come to expect from Blizzard who have previously given us the Warcraft series and Diablo. Those two games have become classics in their respective genres and Starcraft will no doubt join them. Like most RTS games Starcraft contains an evolving storyline, not just through the mission briefings, but also continues to play out whilst you are down in the trenches, or in this case, up in the stars, slogging away. It is quite common for your objectives to change during play, when a trigger is activated, a nice(?) little surprise to keep you on the edge of your seat. In essence Starcraft can be seen as a sequel of sorts to Warcraft, but similarities tend to stop after basic interface and point and click commands.

A surprising feature with Starcraft is the addition of an extra race. Most RTS games include two teams as such, the goodies and the badies, Starcraft has three, Terran, a group of mutant Humans and reformed criminals, the Zerg, an insectoid race with a collective conscience, not a nice one at that, and the Protoss, an advanced race of aliens, at the summit of the evolutionary tree, the Zen Warriors of the future if you like. It is up to you to decide who is good and evil in this case. The fun doesn't stop at the completion of the three campaigns either, as Blizzard have allowed for multiplayer competition over Battle.Net which allows you to really test your stuff. Battle.Net supports up to 8 players online competing head to head or in teams.

The trick with playing any game of strategy is making well informed decisions, analysing your situation, and deploying your units with finesse and accuracy, allowing no room for the enemy to escape. Of course you can always just produce thousands of units and throw them at the opponent and hope for the best. I think we'll concentrate on the first idea.

GETTING STARTED

The basics of almost all RTS games are resources, required to produce units, so the first thing you will want to do regardless of the race you are playing is establish your base and collect resources. This will start with a central building where resource gatherers will be produced and then sent out to retrieve the necessary resources required for building further units and structures. This central building is essentially the same for the three races though the tasks performed at each varies. For the Terrans, you will need to construct a Command Centre. Early in the game the Command Centre will be supplied, in more advanced and custom scenarios, you will need to build this, which should be the first thing on your agenda. The other races should commence in the same way, the Zerg will require a Hatchery, for the Protoss, a Nexus. With this structure complete, it is time to start collecting resources. The two resources you will be collecting are Minerals, which come in the form of scattered blue crystals and Vespene gas, which will be identified as a gas geyser.

Start producing a collection force for minerals and gas. You will want a fairly steady flow of resources coming in, so I recommend multiple units. At least ten collection units is a good figure to start with, and I recommend anywhere up to twenty five collection units so that the resource flow will be nice and steady.

With Vespene gas, a structure must be placed over the geyser first before any gas can be collected. This structure should be taken care of early in your operation. With gas, the number of collection units should not be too high. As only one vehicle can access the gas mining structure at any time, you will be wasting workers if there is a large queue at the Vespene Gas geyser. Three gas collecting units is usually sufficient for geysers near your central building, up to five or six for a geyser that is at a fair distance. Again the three races have different units for collecting resources, which we can look at in more detail later.

Your whole economy relies on these worker units, without them you cannot build structures or collect the resources necessary to create your military might. If playing as the Terrans these workers will be responsible for repairs as well. The workers therefore become the lifeblood of your mission, and should be considered your most valuable assets. Protect them and keep them happy. With this in mind you should see what you want to take away from your enemy. The economy. Just as it is essential to you, your enemy will not function fully with a massively depleted workforce. So at any point you see a way to stem the resource flow of your enemy, do it! Slowing down your enemy will give you the upper hand. Remain cautious though, there is no point sacrificing hundreds of troops attacking a position that is just impossible to attain.

Another useful task to have your workers do in the initial stages is to scout around the immediate area of your base. Find any areas where you can establish a strong defensive point against ground troops. Another thing you should try and locate are points where you can expand your operations. If early in the game you are able to locate untapped resources, then you should be considering expanding your base into these territories. Emphasis should be placed on waiting until it is safe to do so. You will need military support if your enemy is near these resources, because you don't want to find yourself losing resources defending an impossible position for the sake of gaining more resources. It is important to keep the resources and the workers safe.

ESTABLISHING YOUR BASE

We can now assume we have resources coming in, so you need to look at the build up considerations for the base. Many units and structures will rely on a primary building for construction. For example a Barracks for Terran troops cannot be produced without the Command Centre, nor can the individual troops be produced if there aren't enough supplies. Initially you should not have your workforce up to full capacity, or you will soon find yourself prone to attack with no defense. If you have some resources coming in, look at setting up your defenses. So what do you do first? Firstly check the amount of supplies. If you have no supplies to build the troops, you will be wasting time building your barracks first. If you have sufficient funds, and the workers to take care of it, build a Barracks and a Supply Depot consecutively. The Supply Depot will complete construction first, so when the Barracks come online, troops can be trained immediately. A rule of thumb that I work by, is that if when a Marine (or other basic unit) is complete there aren't enough resources to produce another Marine, then you will want more workers collecting these resources. Another nice change from Warcraft in Starcraft is the ability to queue unit production. You can have up to five combat units in production at any given Barracks. However in the early stages you may want to steer clear of queuing too many units, as this will tie up resources which may be better utilized elsewhere.

With your initial defense, I suggest relying on cheap units. You will want a decent defense force to counteract any early rushes your enemy may throw at you. In Multiplayer a skilled opponent may take advantage of a slower competitor. Speed is everything in this game, so get cracking on supplying yourself with ground troops. We have established that the workers are important, so I suggest placing defensive structures near them to give them support. The workers alone don't possess much in the way of attack abilities. That's not what they are paid for! The other points where defensive structures can be deployed, are areas where any attacks will come from. Early on, this may not be apparent, but as more of the map is revealed, some points should become obvious. Basic defense structures like Bunkers can be produced quickly and provide early defense. Advanced structures such as Missile Turrets can wait until there are sufficient funds to put these in place without draining your economy.

Once the defensive aspects have been resolved, you can start looking for the action. Collecting small groups of troops together and scouting out the enemy is a good idea now. Locating your enemy early can help you prepare your attacks. For example, they may be located on another platform, and you will possibly need to consider aerial transports to get the troops to appropriate locations. Also, you may find that it is possible to flank around the side of your enemy and penetrate the base through a defensive weak spot.

The ghost abilit of Lockdown works great to trap even the largest of enemy units, even the airborne ones.

» Note how tight and secure this early base is. Short travel time for the SCVs, and a bunker close enough to cover most of the transit area.

General Strategy

Initial Defensive Tactics.

Any initial attacks will be fairly weak, so if we have the numbers we should be safe. If your enemy attacks a structure or your workforce, try and get some troops over to them, or flank your troops around behind them. I suggest never dragging workers from their duties, they will surely die. Try and get troops produced quickly and dealing with the troublesome unit. This idea can also apply to enemy units attacking a structure. Early in the game units are fairly weak, and hence will take some time to effectively destroy a building. Unless they are of adequate numbers of course. Concentrate on getting troops over to the enemy and taking them out.

If the enemy is targetting one of your worker units, and you currently need to stall to get a couple of extra combat units to deal with the problem, try making the worker run away... it may take the attack force away with it. This tactic can also work with a standard unit, especially if you set up units ready to fire, and have a "dummy" unit lead them into it.

Also make sure that you take advantage of the "Hold position" command when setting up base defenses. Otherwise, your units will wander after anything that goes out of range, and thus not cover the area they're meant to be defending.

TIP: With the Terrrans, Bunkers can have an added usage. Terrran marines can't be healed, so placing injured men in the Bunkers gives them added armour, with the same amount of firepower.

Placing injured units within Bunkers insures that your force remains at full capacity.

Yeah, OK, this is great, but I want to get into the action NOW!!!

Initial Offensive Tactics.

If you are the sort of player who likes to get into battle early, then you will want to make sure you have figured out where your enemy is. Also, if you intend on deploying an early offensive, you will want to be producing a reasonable amount of units early on. I advise not throwing all your troops at your enemy initially, for if your enemy is set up nice and snug, chances are your enemy will retaliate, and you will need something holding back to prepare to intercept. Another thing is the size of the map, if your enemy is a fair distance away from you, for example, in the opposing diagonal corner, it may be a wise thing to consider constructing your Barracks closer to the enemy than your central base. This will save your men time attacking the enemy. If your enemy is extremely close by, or a relatively short distance away, an early attack might possibly be on the cards.

An important factor to remember when planning any kind of attack, regardless of when you plan to launch it, be it an early thrust and parry, or a latter mission mad rush, you will want to keep an eye on your enemy. Good reconnaissance is important, it will help you prepare the correct attack strategy. Watching what your enemy is up to will provide vital information that can help you decide what your enemies intentions are. If your enemy is building several barracks, you can safely assume that a sizable ground force is being prepared. Quite often in these situations, your enemy will be planning to get the early initiative. Hindering any progress here could be vital in stopping your base being flooded by enemy Zerglings.

Another option to keep an eye out for, is an enemy who is racing up the technology ladder. If advanced structures are being constructed it is possible your enemy is planning high end vehicles or even an air assault. If you have gathered this information early, and have a decent number of troops, let 'em loose. Chances are, your enemy is using funds in construction and troops will be slow in production. If in this case you break through any defenses your enemy has in place, look at getting your troops to the resource line. Remember, buildings take longer to destroy, so attack the units. Once the enemy units are gone, take out their buildings which create more units (barracks, hatchery, gateway, etc), so you can go about your assault without interuption. Then destroy your oppositions workers and the rest of the mission is a simple matter of grab a coffee and mop up.

The importance of an early attack could just be a simple matter of psychological advantage. By keeping pressure on your enemy you will prevent them from gaining any knowledge of your base. Early offensive operations may result in equal losses for both you and your opponent, but this is a not a bad thing. It will keep your enemy at bay for the time being. If your early assaults were effective and your opponents progress has been slowed, you may want to consider getting a worker scouting out new mineral and gas reserves. This can help base expansion and another way of winning the game could be simply a matter of hoarding all the resources.

Another good reason to have your worker out scouting, is to locate any enemies you may not know about, or to see if your existing enemy has expanded to other minerals. If an existing enemy has begun expanding, take care of them now, to stop the wealth being distributed into unfriendly hands.

Whilst Attacking

Something to be careful of is to ensure that you use your troops effectively when attacking. For example, sending some Zerg Guardians to the edge of an enemy base is asking for them to be killed kinda shortly once they start chasing targets. If you put them in "Hold position" mode though, they'll quickly blast any unit that approaches by ground, by all acting at once. The HP command allows you to make sure your troops are doing what you want, and attacking the immediate threats, rather than making up their own mind as they go. Also make sure you assign groups of units to keys before launching an attack, so you can get the different types of units to do things by simply hitting one key, and making one click. This way you can get the melee units up front and have them take the brunt, rather than having your more valuable units cop it.

Don't forget about the possibilities of drawing fire away from your attack by using a dummy unit to lead the enemy somewhere else. If you can sacrifice 5 units to let 30 rush in whilst their main force is chasing, then you can cripple a base to a point where the whole game can turn in your favour.

THE TERRANS

THE ZERG

THE PROTOSS

THE THREE

With basic strategy taken care of, (and these strategies tend to remain fairly standard across most RTS games), we should take a look at what really makes the game tick, the three races. All three have different build techniques, technologies, and little tricks up their sleeves. Just remember that every unit has a weakness, and a use, so never rely on one unit type. Let's take a look...

THE TERRANS

Playing as:

The Terran are a race of mutant and genetically restructured humans, therefore it comes as no surprise that the units available to the Terran forces are of a familiar kind. They are made up of machine gun toting Marines, heavy artillery such as the Goliath and Arclite Siege Tank and airborne vessels.

The Terran combine inexpensive troops with high tech Vehicles nicely, and another nice feature of the Terran force is the ability to relocate buildings after construction is complete. This is handy if you hastily built a structure, and find later it is hindering efforts. Note however, when moving a structure, it cannot perform it's necessary duties, so if you are relocating a Barracks, you will be unable to produce Marines or Firebats at this Barracks.

Soon you may consider some simple defensive measures. If you have a rough idea where an assault on your forces would be launched from, place a couple of Bunkers here. Make sure you place some troops in the bunkers, they may look good, but are useless unarmed. Don't waste too much resources on building a heap of Bunkers though. Also you may want to get your firepower up a little so a Factory should be considered. The Vultures will add that extra punch mixed with their speed, and don't require any other primary buildings other than those mentioned. If it is affordable, consider the Spider Mine upgrade early as well, nothing beats watching invading forces explode on entry to your base. A handy little weapon to place near your enemies resources as well, if you can get close enough. The more Barracks and Factories you have the quicker production, but be careful not to waste funds on structures, you need a force.

If your SCV or Marine scouts have located other resource deposits, explore the areas around them. If you see a chance of safely expanding your base, do so. If not, keep the resources guarded. As we have covered early strategy techniques lets skip to what will aid you an later stages of the game. For ground units, the StimPack upgrade from the Academy is useful. This will turn your Marines into drooling killing machines insanely bloodlusting and attacking everything. Fun to watch! Also with ground troops, there are weapon and armour upgrades available at the Engineering Bay, these will be essential when playing on a large map or extended campaign. If you are playing on a smaller map, these upgrades may use up resources better spent on sheer numbers.

The real weapon which makes the Terran deadly is the ability to cloak. Enemies can't attack what they can't see. This upgrade is available for the Ghost and the Wraith aircraft. Using cloak can allow you to gather intelligence about your enemies base. It will also allow the Ghost to reach a nice vantage point to guide a nuclear strike. If you are fighting against the Terran, you may want a Comsat Station add on to your Command Centre, this will allow you to scan areas and detect invisible enemy units.

Placing groups of marines around siege tanks in siege mode, is a good way to cover areas of the map With a fully functioning force, some final weapons of choice may be EMP for the Science Vessel, this will reduce all enemy energy to zero, which will reveal hidden units and disable units that require energy for special weapons. Lockdown is a useful upgrade for the host which will stop any mechanised units from functioning. Useful when recieving a barrage of shots from a Siege Tank or Reaver. Note however Lockdown has no effect what so ever against Zerg troops as they are all biological creatures.

Playing against:

Terran bunkers are very annoying, unless you're using a long range unit. Siege tanks (Terran), Guardians (Zerg), and Reavers (Protoss), can all take a bunker out without the marines within being able to attack back. Once you know you have Terrans as enemies, build units and buildings that can see cloaked units, as this will help you counter their most effective attack method.

The seige tanks pound the bunkers from a safe distance, while the marines stand by, ready to take on any additional threats..

Whoops... don't forget to set up a few cheap units to prevent an early grunt rush. This game is over already.

THE ZERG

Playing as:

We are familiar with what is needed to establish a base, so let's look at what subtle differences there are with the Zerg. All Zerg units are produced at the Hatchery, which also acts as the return point for the resources. Therefore the Hatchery acts as both central structure (Command Centre equivalent) and unit producer (Barracks). This can be seen as an added little bonus, but you'll still need to get a spawning pool before you can take advantage of this. So building time is similar.

The Zerg main advantages are in bulk numbers. One single larvae can produce two Zerglings. Also, the Hatchery will continuously produce larvae at no cost to you. Transforming these larvae into units will cost money though. However, if there are three larvae attached to a Hatchery, then all three larvae can mutate into units simultaneously. Therefore three units will be produced at the same time. This sure beats the queuing situation with the Terran.

The other great ability of the Zerg is Burrowing. Should you find yourself under an early attack, the worker units (the Drones) should quickly burrow. This upgrade should be taken care of early to enable it. Also, the Zerglings can burrow, so this is useful in gathering intelligence. If you are able to get a Zergling into your enemy base, either during an early offensive, or during a scout, burrow it. It will enable you to keep a watchful eye on what your enemy is doing, and what they are planning.

As the Zergs can produce a large number of Zerglings in a short span of time, a good tactic is the early rush. The Zerglings alone are weak units, unable to sustain much punishment, but if there is a large number of them and there is a way to get them into an enemy base, have them attack the workers. If the workers are protected, consider setting up two waves of Zerglings. The first should be used to lure away enemy troops, the second to attack the workers. The Zerglings are incredibly fast. And with upgrades can be even quicker. Consider using Zerglings on unprotected enemy structures. A lot of them can cause incredible damage quickly. The Zergling speed makes them ideal units for scouting as well. They can cover a lot of terrain quickly and cheaply. If at all possible, consider upgrading these little beasts early. And use them aplenty in early rushing tactics.

Early game, construct a Hydralisk Den, this will allow the mutation of larvae into Hydralisks. These guys coupled with your swarm of Zerglings are effective early low tech assault troops. Two reasons why you should couple these units is that the Zerglings cannot attack the air, whereas the Hydralisks can. Also the Zerglings need to be in the face of your enemy to attack, the Hydralisks however can attack from a distance. So, if you send in a wave or two of Zergling swarms, followed up quickly with the Hydrlisks, the Zerglings will hold enemy units and allow the stronger distance attack of the Hydralisks to be effective.

You will want to advance your technologies quickly. Against some of the more powerful Terran and Protoss units, you will be fighting a losing battle. Quickly get to the Spire stage, and soon after, set up the Queen's Nest. With the more effective units like the Queen and the Mutalisk, you should be able to hold back any attacks, as well as develop more advanced ones for yourself. The Hydralisk, Mutalisk and the Scourge, are you primary anti-air defenses. The Queen should be upgraded to feature Ensnare. This will slow enemy units, which will give you a chance to use the ground forces more effectively, both in defending and attacking. Ensnare is also useful in that the green gunk will reveal any cloaked units. Useful for defeating the Terran.

Late in the Zerg strategy you will want at least three Hatcheries, up to six is good. As well you'll want at least one of these upgraded. In long campaigns, you'll need to take the upgrade all the way to Hive. This will also allow for more advanced structures and units. The advanced unit you will want is the Ultralisk. This creature, can be used in much the same way as the early strategy of Zerglings and Hydralisks. As the ultralisk can sustain some punishment, it should lead attacks, followed by the Hydralisks, which can utilize the range and aerial attacks.

When planning later attack strategies, you will want a lot of units with upgrades. Upgraded capabilities will allow you to perform wave attacks. By using the special abilities such as Ensnare, Plague and Dark Swarm, you will slow or ware down your enemy before ground troops arrive to finish them off. Ensnare as we know will slow the enemy. Dark Swarm can provide a protective umbrella for distance attacks. Allowing Hydralisks to attack with the added bonus of a insect shield. Thus prolonging the life of the unit. Plague will wear down a buildings strength, which can be useful when planning an assault on towers or Bunkers. A significantly damaged building will be destroyed much quicker. If you can sneak up a Defiler and and plague a few buildings, you can actually clear out the whole base shortly afterwards with a much weaker force than normally required.

Playing against:

Make sure you keep flying units that can attack ground units, as this will allow you to take out Zergling hordes without losing units. If you can get a group of units to attack the Zerg Overlords, you can cripple their ability to produce a large force quickly, which is their main strength. Creep colonies can only attack one sort of unit, so use the unit they can't hit to take them out. When attacking a Zerg base, once immediate threats are illiminated, go straight for the hatcheries, as the Zerg can produce many units fast while the hatchery is still there.

THE PROTOSS

Playing as:

While the Zerg are able to produce a lot of units quickly and cheaply, the Protoss power is in high end devastating weaponry. Somehow this makes them more manageable, less confusing, but still expensive. Oh! And they look great!!

Starting out, just like the rest, you'll want to get your workers busy. Have the workers (Probes) start constructing Gateways, which are your barracks. You'll need a few of these, and get cranking on Zealots. The Zealots are the cheapest of the units, and you'll want these doing most of the defending and early scouting or offensive operations. Save your funds for the upgrades and structures needed to get the best stuff.

As the game progresses, the superior Protoss air force should be used. Scouts with the speed upgrade are deadly. Using the shield they can attack aerial units such as Scourges, Queens or Wraiths. Be careful not to use them against ground troops which can fight back, you may just waste them. Flying Sorties with these units is a great idea. Fly in, fire away some shots, return to the Shield Battery to recharge, then repeat.

Carriers and Scouts will be a formidable air force if you fire from a distance with the carrier, and protect it with a huddle of Scouts. Managing this can be a problem if Terran Wraiths are hiding. If they are you'll probably want to send in an

Observer to detect them. If your enemy knows about your planned sky invasion, they will probably set up anti-air defenses. You will want your Zealots and ground units attending to destroying these. Use the Carriers from as far a distance as possible when attacking ground and structures. Carriers can be stacked above one another. This is a useful tactic if you don't want your enemy to know you are sending a few or more of them. If your enemy sees only one dot approaching on the mini-map, they may not be too concerned, at the last minute on approach, spread them apart and start dealing. Make sure they don't stay stacked as they may be wiped out with one devestating blow from your enemy.

If you are expanding your base the Carrier can supply sufficient defense, coupled with Zealots for ground support. These units should buy you the time to get established. After you establish your second base and the resources begin to flow, immediately build a Citadel of Adun and research the Zealot speed upgrade. With the speed upgrade, the Zealot overcomes its disadvantage of having no range attack. Next build the Templar Archives. The Templar is a relatively inexpensive unit that proves to be a worthy investment-its Psionic Storm spell kills enemy units with aplomb. Psionic Storm works best when your opponent fighting other members of your forces. If you have large numbers of Templars but no regular troops or aircraft, your enemy will be able to quickly kill off all your Templars because they have such low hit points. Instead, Templars should lurk around in the rear of your army away from the heavy fighting, ready for use once the enemy approaches. Use the Templar's Psionic Storm ability in the path of incoming enemy attackers, and when they arrive to attack they will all be greatly damaged and easy pickings. Use it when attacking an enemy base, and it will force them to come out to meet you away from the safety of their base defenses.

Late in the game, the full power of the Protoss will become apparent. The Templar's Hallucination ability will begin to play a significant role late in the game. Not only do Hallucinated units cause your opponent to vastly overestimate the strength of your military, but they have immense offensive potential as well. Put the weaponless Hallucinations in the front of your attack force and they will draw most of the fire, allowing your real units to attack freely.

Arbiters also begin to play a role late in the game, and can make the difference between victory and defeat. The Arbiter cloaks all nearby units, and if your opponent isn't expecting it you could easily wipe out his entire force in an ambush by cloaking your air fleet. Arbiters will also allow you to win battles in which you find yourself greatly outnumbered and outmatched. Use the Stasis ability to paralyze clumps of enemy units, so that you deal with the enemy in small groups instead of the entire enemy military in full force.

In defense, you can't beat the Photon Cannon. It can attack both air and ground units. However it is fairly weak, and will quickly be destroyed by an advancing army. For greater defense, consider scattering Shield Batteries, these also recharge depleting units, so placing some Dragoons near them for added firepower is handy. The Dragoons also don't need to go anywhere to get recharged.

Playing Against:

The Protoss rely upon their power Pylons to both power their buildings, and to allow them to have more units. Players using Zerg should make use of the Defiler's plague ability often, as it essentially halves the work your combat units need to do to a Protss unit. Keep hassling the Protoss, keeping their forces low in number really improves your chances of victory, more to the point, allowing them to build in numbers is not advised. Scattering your forces armed with ranaged weapons when attacking the Protoss can make a difference, as the time it takes them to go from unit to unit is often enough to let you wear them down.

The main weakness of the Protoss bases. Take out the pylons, and their buildings are rendered useless. This Gateway can no longer deliver valuable guards for the Protoss.

STILL STUCK?

If you're praying for some heavenly intervention, well I can't guarantee it, but here's the next best thing...the CHEAT CODES !!!
These only work in single player, and are enabled by typing,
Enter + cheat code + Enter.

Power overwhelming:
God Mode

Show me the money:
Gives you 10,000 gas and 10,000 crystal

Operation CWAL:
Speeds construction of buildings and units

The Gathering:
Gives unlimited energy to all casting units

Game over man:
Ends your game as a loss

Staying Alive:
Prevents the mission from ending due to victory or defeat

There is no cow level:
Completes the current mission

Whats mine is mine:
Free minerals

Breathe deep:
Free Vespene Gas

Something for nothing:
Gives all upgrades

Black Sheep Wall:
Shows entire map

Medieval man:
Free upgrades to units

Modify the phase variance:
Ability to build all buildings

War aint what it used to be:
Disables fog of war

Food for thought:
Ability to build units beyond the support limit

Ophelia:
Enter this to enable level skipping cheat. Then enter the mission you want to skip to (i.e., "terran10") to go there.
Gotta laugh at the Diablo reference with the cow level cheat !

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Outwars

PC

For armor, health and ammo pause the game and type keymaster
You should get the message "The next time someone asks you if you're a god, you say YES!" to let you know it worked.

Starcraft

PC

While playing press ENTER and try any of these.
power overwhelming: God mode
operation cwal: Increases building/upgrade speed (NB: CWAL: can't wait any longer)
the gathering: Infinite energy
noglues: Computer can't use energy
game over man: Instant loss
staying alive: Lets you continue playing after you have finished the mission
show me the money: Gives you 10,000 minerals and gas
there is no cow level: Completes the current mission
whats mine is mine: Gives you 500 units of minerals
breathe deep: Gives you 500 units of vespene gas
something for nothing: Everything available is upgraded
black sheep wall: Reveals entire map
medieval man: Gives free upgrades to units
modif y the phase variance: Ability to build anything
war aint what it used to be: Disables fog of war
food for thought: Allows you to build more units than your supply of materials will allow
ophelia: Warp to any mission (type it in, press enter, then type in the mission number)

Redline Racer

PC

For loads of extra gear type in your name as dissent

Die By The Sword

PC

While playing, hold down F1 and type in any of these
Mukor: God Mode
Dedly: Weapon that kicks ass.
Golrg: Big Char
Btiny: Small Char
You can also add -god after the.exe in the shortcut for god mode.

Fallout

PC

Try this to get unlimited turns - that way you get to wipe out any opposition before they get a turn.
1. Get into combat mode.
2. Take ammo and put it in to your hands (there should only be ammo in your hand!)
3. Get up close to a guy and click on target to shoot him. (always a pleasure)
4. He should say something like "Did your mama taught you that move?"
5. Then Bang!!! Now you have unlimited turns.

Interstate 76

PC

Did you know that the [F12] key changes the screen resolution between 640x480 and 320x240. When you are airborne in the Pirahna and you realise you are going to land upside down, just press [F12] twice in rapid succession before you hit the ground and you won't die. In most cases you wind up rolling backwards from the direction you jumped in. This works anytime you are driving the car, whether in single player Melee or Trip mode. This will also work if you are falling from a height (which usually results in instant death!)

Dark Reign

PC

Skip mission:
Follow these seteps carefully to success (albeit slightly jaded.)
1. In the game directory path 'Dark ReignDarkShell', you'll find a file called 'shellcgf.h'. Click on it with the right mouse button select properties from the menu.
2. Un-check the 'read only' box.
3. In the text file you'll find a section named menu mission buttons under which you will see the line #define BTN_MISSION_COEFFICIENT 150.. Change the value '150' to '157' so that the line reads '#define BTN_MISSION_COEFFICIENT 157'. That's it. Now when you run the game, you'll be able to select any mission from the dial in the shell by pressing the new 'cheat' button in the bottom left corner.

Chasm

PC

While playing just press the backspace buton and try any of these . . .
CHOJIN: God mode
ARMOR: Full Armor
KILL: Kill all monsters
AMMO: Full ammo
KEYS: Get all keys
INVISIBLE: Invisible
WEAPON: All weapons
FULLMAP: Reveal entire map
Go # : Warp to any level (obviously substitute # for the number of the level you want to warp to.)

Chaos Overlords

PC

While playing, try typing any of these codes in . .
SMGHUBBLE: See all gangs in every sector
SMGKICKASS: Five fully equipped ground zeroes
SMGMILD: Every hire is full

Croc: Legend of the Gobbos

PC

For access to all levels & the Secret Map enter this code on the password screen:
LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, RIGHT, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, UP, RIGHT.

College Slam

PC

Here's some codes to add fun to your game. Try them on the title page . .
Shoot, Shoot, Shoot, Up, Up, Up: High Shooting Percentage.
Left, Right, Up, Up, Left, Right: Super Dunking.
Down, Down, Down, Shoot, Shoot, Shoot: Big Heads.
Hidden Fraternity Teams: On the title page, press Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Right Look for your new teams in an expanded roster under "Team Selects."

Beast Wars

PSX

Bonus Players: At the options screen, hold R1+R2+L1+L2 and press Circle, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, X, Square.
Level Skip: Pause the game, hold L2 and press Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, X, Triangle, Right, Left, Down, Up. Keep holding L2 and unpause the game.
Missile Lock: To use the Missile Lock, hold the FIRE button after shooting to lock the missile on an enemy.
Super Weapons: While playing quickly press Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square.
Weapon Power-Up: To max out your weapon energy, pause the game, hold L2 and press Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square. Keep holding L2 while you unpauses the game Your Weapons should now be at their maximum level.

Total Drivin'

PSX

Extra Levels:
Moscow 2
On Moscow 2 use the ramp to jump over the barriers. When you're clear, head for the left side of the large building on the right. See the bonfire to the side? Drive into it for an extra Moscow level where the road is covered in ice, it's snowing, and the bridges are down. Who could ask for more?
Egypt, level 1
Drive until you come to a long left curve around a valley with a lake in the middle. Pass the wooden bridge, and watch for a temple on your right hand side. Jus drive straight on in. The level warp is on the other side of the temple.
Eastern Island, level 2
"From the start, turn you car around and drive until you can see a cruiseboat. On your left hand side, you should see a red and white barrier, and behind that a small road. Drive around the right hand side of the barrier and at the end of that road you'll find a level warp
Switzerland, level 1
Follow the track through the village and under the cable-car. Go through the tunnel and continue on until you cross a small bridge. To your left are a number of buildings. Drive off the road and around the back of these buildings. You will see a yellow and red spinning level warp.
Scotland, Level 3
Look out for the wooded area. Back up and drive off the road behind the crash barriers. About half-way down this hill is a spinning level warp.

Puyo Puyo Sun 64

N64

Choose Opponent's Character:
To select your opponent's character, hold down START for about 3 seconds on Draco.
Random Character Select:
Hold down start for about 3 seconds on the blue haired woman in the front row.
Make all characters elephants:
Hold down start for 3 seconds on the elephant.
Play as Carbankle:
Hold START for about 5 seconds on Arle
Play as Satan:
Hold START for about 5 seconds on Schezo (the white haired guy)

X Racing

PSX

To enable the hidden stages, enter the password SFO.

Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown

PSX

All Weapons:
At the menu, hold L1+L2+R1+R2 for 15 seconds. Now press Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Circle, Left, Left, Right. You will then see the cheat menu. You have to do this quickly, otherwise, it won't work - keep trying!

Sid Meier's Gettysburg

PC

While playing press SHIFT+ENTER, enter any of these codes , then press ENTER to activate.
Union Codes:
HOOKER: Fortify all troops
HANCOCK: Eliminate stress
MCCLELLAN: Increase experience
BUFORD: Reset clock
SEDGWICK: Advance clock
REYNOLDS: Call immediate reinforcements
HALLECK: Computer v. Computer mode toggle
SHERIDAN: Rally routed troops
WARREN: Show all troops
CUSTER: Show enemy's battle order
Confederate Codes:
LONGSTREET: Fortify all troops
JACKSON: Eliminate stress
BEAUREGARD: Increase experience
STUART: Reset clock
PICKETT: Advance clock
HILL: Call immediate reinforcements
HALLECK: Computer v. Computer mode toggle
LEE: Rally routed troops
HOTCHKISS: Show all troops
HARRISON: Show enemy's battle order

Incubation

PC

While playing type in any of these codes . . .
ix1: Show all locations
ix2: 10 skill points for each marine
ix3: 500 equipment points for your squad
ix4: Next mission

2 Xtreme

PSX

Bonus track:
The following tricks must be completed on any course track.
(For easier execution, disable the CPU opponents) Perform an easy trick (Square, Triangle) on the first ramp at the beginning of the course. Increase speed, then perform a medium trick (Square, Circle, Triangle) on the second ramp. Finally, perform a hard trick (Square, X, Triangle, Circle) on the third ramp and finish the race.
The Japan bonus track will begin loading.
Extreme Moves:
These extreme move are performed while jumping with any equipment.
Square, Triangle, Easy, 50
Square, O, X , Medium, 100
Square, O, Triangle, Medium, 100
Square, X, Triangle, O Hard, 200
Special Tricks:
Perform these special jumps with the equipment shown.
Skateboard: Triangle, X, Square, Circle
Snowboard: Triangle, Square, X, Circle
Mountain Bike: X, Square, Triangle, Circle + X, Circle, Square, Triangle
Rollarblades: Circle, Square, X, Triangle

Agent Armstrong

PSX

Find this location.
At the start of play, move to the right until reaching a teddy bear. Face the wall and press Circle to jump. You will hear a sound will confirm. Move forward and walk in the next room just to the right, which leads down into a small room. Press Circle to access a platform. Use this platform to reach a room and activate cheat mode. WHile playing, enter any of these using Controller 2
Invincibility: X, X, X, X, Triangle, Circle, X, Square
All weapons: Circle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, X, X, Square
Level select: Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Square, Square, X, X, Circle

Armored Core:

PlayStation

To change the backround pf your emblem go to the edit emblem screen and hold L1+L2+R1+R2 and press SELECT.
To change your custom colors press Triangle when editing your custom colors
During the game die with fewer than 50,000 credit in your account and a movie will begin. When it is over the game will re-start from the first stage, but you get to keep everything in your possession. You now receive a special bonus every time this trick is done. The first time your Radar becomes a Grid. The next two times give no change but the fourth time allows you to fire your back weapon while you move. On the sixth time your energy will double allowing you unlimited flight with the right configuration. To switch to first-person perspective, pause the game and press Triangle+Square+START at the same time then un-pause the game. To return to third-person view, just pause the game then un-pause it.

Bloody Roar

PSX

Big Head:
While on the Character Select screen, hold L2 and select your character with the Circle button
Kid Size:
While on the Character Select screen, hold R2 and select character with the Circle button
Infinite Replays:
Hold SELECT during the final hit to get more replays.

Colony Wars

PSX

Try these passwords . . .
Level Select: Commander*Jeffer
Unlimited Primary Weapon Power: Tranquillex
Unlimited Secondary Weapons: Memo*X33RTY
Unlimited Shields: Hestas*Retort
Disable All Cheats: All*cheats*off

Darklight Conflict

PSX

Cheat Mode:
On the Options menu press Down, Down, Up, Square, Letf, Left, L1, R1, Circle.
Return to main menu and select the -Extras- option.

Gex 2

PSX

Unlimited lives:
Pause your game and highlight the Exit option. Hold L2 and press Up, Up, Down, Right, Triangle, Down

Level Select:
Pause your game and highlight the Exit option. Hold L2 and press Left, Right, Triangle, Down, Right

Invincibility:
Pause your game and highlight the Exit option. Hold L2 and press Left, Right, Triangle, Down, Right, Left

Poy Poy

PSX

This little trick is best used in the four player deathmatch.
If you just so happen to get knocked out of the game early there is still a way to nail your pals. If you very quickly tap on the L1,L2,R1,R2 buttons you can charge your glove and explode. This can be done as many times as you like. You will not get any hit points for this, just a bit of satisfaction.

Steel Reign

PSX

Try any of these at the main menu

Invincibility:
L2, L1, R2, Circle, Square, Circle, Circle, L1, L2, L1

All tanks:
L1, L2, L1, Circle, Square, Circle, Circle, L2, L1, R2
All the tanks, including a super tank with unlimited weapons, will be selectable.

Bonus level:
L1, L2, L1, L2, R2, R1, Square, Circle, Square

WCW NITRO

PSX

Press select to have a hidden wrestler come in the ring. the hidden wrestlers don't get hurt.

Unlock all Wrestlers:
At character select screen press R1, R1, R1, R1, L1, L1 ,L1, L1, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, Select.

Cheat Codes:
Enter the following codes at the option screen.

Big Head Mode: R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2, Select

Big Head, Hands, Feet: R2, R2, R2, R2, R2, R2, R2, R1, Select.

Swellinng Head Mode: L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L2, Select.

Ring Select: R1, R2, R1, R2, Select.

All 24 Rings: L1, L2, R1, R2, L1, L2, R1, R2, Select

Instant win: At the character select screen Highlight a wrestler and Press: L1, R1, L2, R2, L1, R1, L2, R2, Select

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Next issue the 1st person shooters just keep on coming!
The Xatrix Quake 2 mission pack just missed our deadline this issue, but we'll have the low down on it next month. If that wasn't enough, Half Life should also be getting a full review. Quake 2 heads... Rejoice Also, an E3 Summary... The first glimpses of Final Fantasy VIII and more!

HYPER Letters
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Redfern, NSW 2016
Fax: (02) 9310 1315
E-mail:
freakscene@next.com.au

MORE REALISM DAMNIT!

Dear Hyper,

Just wondering what some of the trends are for first person gaming in the future - the "fun" factor in Quake 2 wasn't as high as it could of been. In Quake we were introduced to polygon bullets - isn't it simple programming to show a wound exactly where the monster was hit? I guess the only problem is the number of animations would increase - but how much more does the basic 3D engine need to advance before attention is turned back to the monsters? In Quake 2 the monsters look almost photorealistic but with consistent death animations and with the same number of bullets needed each time - whether every shot is in the foot or in the head. Bushido Blade did away with the life meter and I'm sure people want to see this in first person games as well - I want to shoot a rocket up into a tank commander's arm and see his whole side blow up and continue to shoot at me from the ground! What programmers are aiming towards this and what are the constraints? Trinity? Sin? Tell us Hyper!!!

WILL

Will,

To have wounds, it's more of a model and texture issue than animation itself. As for exact hit locations, this would involve making either adynamic modelling system (which we haven't really seen yet). More models and textures in memory mean the game runs slower. New PCs allow the developers to go further but then the whole saga continues once they get to the next level of detail, where they need even more powerful hardware once again. Basically, it will all happen eventually, but at this stage, making a game like Quake 2 or Unreal, where the weapons have a perfectly realistic effect that is calculated on the spot, is impossible due to the hardware required AND the breakthrough in game engine. Your requests are fair, but it's just a little way off yet.

MORTAL PATIENCE

Hyper great mag please tell your loyal fans if we'll see Mortal Kombat 4 on N64 or PSX. If it is soon to be on N64 do you think it will be used with the rumble pak. I hope it is, please give me a response.

Loyal fan signing off now

KRIS HARRINGER

Inglewood, WA

Kris,

Good news for you, it's coming on both systems. As for the Rumble Pak, unsure at this stage.

WHERE IS IT?

I am writing to you not to praise your magazine (although it is the best multi-platforming gaming magazine ever), but in extreme desperation. I am a devoted RPG fan and have just about all the RPGs available to my Playstation console. All but one that is,WILD ARMS!!!! I have searched games stores to no avail. The local games expert told me that Wild Arms was never released in Australia. There are no import gamers in the area so I could not further investigate.

Then in one of my brother's British magazines; I saw a review of the game. On the contents page the magazine promises to review only fully completed, locally released games. This proves that an English translation, PAL version of the game exists.

The things I would like to know, please are;

1. How come the game was not released locally here in Australia?
2. How would I go about getting a copy of Wild Arms?

Thank you for your time

SAM BANNISTER

Castle Hill, NSW

Sam,

Just because a magazine claims to only review finished product, doesn't mean it really does. Think about it... Their mag comes out around the same time as the game. Do you think they made the mag overnight? Although with Wild Arms, they're probably telling the truth.

Your answers.

1. It is being released in August, in fact we've had it for ages. The release date just kept slipping, that's all.

2. You could wait for it to come out, as we doubt Sony will give you a gold disc copy.

Have fun when it arrives.

HERE KITTY

Hyperinoes,

Tell me, what became of Boris, the crew cat? Is he still around? Pretty please put a pic of him in ya mag, please, please, please? Thanks for the mag, I've been with you since issue #1 and hope to be with you when issue #100 comes around

Boris 4 eva (stupid girlyness!)

ANON

P.S Who named him/her Boris?

Cat lover,

Boris tasted fantastic... only kidding. Boris wasn't here when I got here. A cat would be nice though, as all we get here are ants, who seem to love shacking up in N64 cartridges (Handy tip for y'all... keep em safe).

P.S. It was really just Ben Mansill's cat.

ECLECTIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Hyper,

I am a devoted reader of your magazine. Congratulations and keep up the good work. I have a few questions regarding the video gaming world, and I have a few points to make. What would a letter need to include in order for it to be put into "Letter of the month"? I don't know what it could be as most of the letters of the month are usually pointless. Just look at the May issue, who gives a shit if some older lady in Sydney has managed to kill the main bosses at Northern Cave in Final Fantasy VII?

Do you think it is unfair to compare Sony and Nintendo? In my opinion it is fair in that they are both gaming consoles, but on the other hand, you're comparing a video games specialist to a multi-media organisation that has been operating for much longer. Although Nintendo have the quality to rival Sony, Nintendo have much more of a chance of going broke. Sony have just got too much back-up, money, resources and advertising to be defeated by Nintendo. So in that sense it is unfair.

Do you think the OFLC are over reacting when it comes down to classifying video glasses? Do you think the OFLC will ever create an R classification for video games?

Changing the subject, I understand Sega's new console "Katana" will be available on import Dec '98. Do you think Sega have a chance of being successful with this new console? To be quite honest, I have no interest in purchasing one as Sega haven't been successful with quite a few consoles in the past. Sega, turning up with this new console at the end of the year, will be a gutsy move, as Sony and Nintendo will be releasing some strong software at that time which may divert some people's attention away from the "Katana". The technical specifications sound promising, but as for the games, we will just have to wait and see.

NICK PETROPOULAS

Carlton, NSW

Nick,

Okay, on letter of the month, it's not always an easy decision, basically because there's often no stand out letter. We do get some intelligent letters that unfortunately just cover tired issues, or go on for just far too long (please folks, don't bother with the 10 page letters!). That letter wasn't really any better than any of the others, it was simply that we found the mind numbingly freaky levels of time this woman spent on the game interesting, basically because she's the last sort of person we expect to go to that amount of trouble in FF7. It simply amused us.

Unfair? This is business. Like I said in my reply to last month's letter of the month, money matters. In terms of comparing them though, if you're talking about our coverage, we just compare their products and their interaction with the market.

The OFLC have only banned a couple of games, and the games they've banned haven't been good. Frankly I don't care if they ban 5 games a month, as long as they're not good games. As for R classification, I'm amazed the government doesn't push for it. Simply because the older voters would see this as a crackdown on stopping kids from playing unsuitable games, and at the same time, it allows the OFLC to appear to be more conservative by giving many games an R rating.

Finally, on the Katana, base everything on its own merits. I'm definitely going to buy one. The machine is capable of performing along the lines of a Model 3 board, and with Virtua Fighter 3 (supposedly arcade perfect) being a game available at launch, which will interest me far more than any other game on a console at all. If it turns out you don't like the games available on it, then don't buy it, but with eight games at launch, that's a stronger start than either the PlayStation or the Nintendo 64 had We'll all see in time anyway.

RESIDENT EVIL2

letter of the month

26 red

THE INJUSTICE OF IT ALL!

Dear Hyper

I'm writing to express both my astonishment and sadness over the treatment of Resident Evil 2 by some stores. I tried 2 major department stores, both of whom say they're refusing to stock the game due to so called complaints about the horror content. To make matters worse, a couple of games shops won't sell the game to me because I'm 13 and Resident Evil 2 is rated MA 15+. This has never happened to me before and when I asked why, they said a Sunday newspaper did a story where they sent an 11yr old to purchase games rated 15+. So there's some crackdown on, and proof of age is required. I bet sales are down!

The original Resident Evil is my favourite game of all, I began to save for the sequel before I got halfway through the first (by the way, I was 11 when I bought it) so my anticipation of RE 2 was - I can't wait! I don't know if you've had this feeling, but when I finished Resident Evil, despite having intense satisfaction of completion, there was more than a twinge of sadness too, an emptiness somehow.

I would like to stress to you that it's not the rating that makes me want RE 2. And I'm well aware of differences between fantasy and reality. Nor is gaming my entire world, it's an occasional past time. A fun hobby. Another worrying aspect of this is the possible ramifications for Hyper and other mags that run competitions featuring M15+ rated games as prizes. After all, you don't ask for age, just name , address, and answer. Would that mean you are supplying these games to under-aged gamers. I mean, it's not the adults who send in the artwork! The vast majority of Hyper contest entries must be by young people. Where there's a will there's a way - mail orders don't ask for age either. I guess I'm just letting off steam because there exists a perception that

young people want "Adult" games in the exception of sex and violence, and that is utter nonsense. Game play is everything !

From a disappointed **RE FAN.**

REfan,

Well said. Although I'd question the sanity of a retailer who refused to stock a sure fire money maker like Resident Evil 2. Seriously, no one could possibly be stupid enough to believe that a retailer cares more about the effects of a gory game may have on kids, than whether or not they've bought profitable stock or not. Maybe this is good news for the independent stores.

Bloody Sunday newspapers! Another case of mainstream media using video games as a scapegoat, when there are real problems at foot like individuals having too much control over mainstream media for example. "Oh no!", screams Mum, "Timmy, you're too young to play a game like that!". The real horror story here is Mum putting the idea into Timmy's head that he was doing something wrong, and if he ends up getting the game against his mother's wishes, and having fun playing the game, then he'll associate disobeying his mother with having fun. People instinctively seek to acquire or do, things that they can't have... so education on the realisms of violence would do far more good for a child than taking away their copy of Resident Evil 2.

On this note, you're obviously mature enough to explain to us that you enjoy the game for, so maybe you should ask your parents to do the buying for you.

As for our comps, even if we had to start asking for ages, we can only be held responsible for what we read, not what you write, that bit is up to you. Think about it.

DIABLO ON A MAC? I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT!

QUAKE 64

GOT ANY GAMES MAC?

To those useful people at Hyper

Hello, first let me congratulate you on the great magazine you have, it kicks ass. Now that I've said that, I'll get on with the letter. I'm 13 and own a Nintendo 64 and a Macintosh Power PC. I think the Nintendo rocks, but a lot of the games out for the system at the moment are really crap, why I ask? As for my computer, I can not find any good games for the Mac, and where I live there are only a few stores that sell them (trust me, it's not much of a selection either), why does nobody stock the games?

I've got some questions, which I hope you will answer.

1. Are there any decent games for the Mac, or any coming out? If so, could you name a few.
2. I heard that Final Fantasy 7 may be coming out on Mac?
3. Is Grand Theft Auto out for the Mac? If not, will it be coming out?
4. Will Hexen 2 or Quake 2 be coming out for the Nintendo 64?
5. Are there any RPG type games coming out for the N64 (besides Zelda64)
6. My friend told me that Nintendo can't make a version of Tomb Raider until after the year 2000 because that's when some contract that Sony have is going to expire or something , does my friend know what he's on about or not?

Well, that's all from me, keep up the good work guys

MR DODGY

Mr D,

We're just a little curious as to why you think the system rocks if you don't like the games much? Answer time.

1. Yes. Diablo is out, and that rocks. Myth is also a real winner. Also keep your eyes peeled for Starcraft and Unreal.
2. Heheh.. That's a good one.
3. No, and no.
4. Quake 2 will, Activision announced it to us this month.
5. Quest 64 is another. Not a RPG gamers machine really is it?
6. There was talk about deals being signed, however Eidos have had no formal comment on the subject yet. Our speculation is that they're cautious about the idea of going into the cartridge format. It's cheaper and easier on CD format systems.

DESPERATELY DATED

Dear Hyper

lately I have become pretty damn angry at the current state of PC games. I am a 13yr old (one of many I would suspect) who is heavily into games but simply cannot afford to upgrade my aging computer. I can remember that only a year (or maybe less) ago my dad brought home a brilliant new P133, 16 megabytes of RAM and an eight speed cd- and I was over the moon- it was one of the best things ever. But now, as I borrow some CD's off my friend I see that THERE IS NOT ONE GAME that will run on anything less than what I have (i.e they will work but chug like nothing else) It sucks! My point though, is look at the consoles! The Playstation's older games look weak in comparison to new ones such as Resident Evil 2 (compared to the original), FFVII, etc. This is because the programmers OPTIMIZE their code so they can get the most from what they are working with. What I want to know is why the heck can't computer companies do this also? I am 100% certain that if a little more time was spent on making a PC game run as well as possible (in low res, whatever) then there would me many young people like me who could enjoy all the great games out there (and make companies more rich) without having to spend everything they have on upgrading. Oh well.

P.S - To anyone out there who is in the same position as me - my advice is to simply buy a console- at least you'll know that you will get a decent amount of time with it.

CONNOR FITZGERALD

Connor,

Like Tim Willits said, it's an expensive hobby. When purchasing a computer, if you have high end gaming in mind, then you really need to buy an expensive machine if you want it to last you a couple of years. To be honest, even 12 months ago, a P133 with 16MB of RAM was a long way from the top end of the scale. I'm about to get a P2-400 with 64MB of RAM, 2 Voodoo 2 cards, and a 20 inch monitor. No, I'm not loaded, I'm simply taking out a loan to do so, just like I did two years ago to get my P166, which I'm about to finish paying off. I also have been asking around lots, and the deal I'm getting is probably a hell of a lot cheaper than you'd imagine. One thing to consider, a big monitor may be expensive, but it doesn't go out of date like processors do. As for developers optimising, they limit the game if they keep catering for people with low end machines. This is exactly why Quake 3 will require a 3D accelerator as a minimum requirement, because Id feel this means they can create a better engine, so they can make a game they truly want to. If it's any consolation, the companies that make games that have huge requirements lose sales to folks like you because you can't run the game.

JAPANESE GRAPEVINE

Dear Hyper,

A Japanese pen friend of mine, who I have been corresponding with since 1980, so he's trustworthy, insists that Sharp corporation is developing a next generation console! He says it is to head off PSX 2 by being released mid-late '99.

There's no title or exact specs as yet but he claims the sharp console will actually be upgradeable using chip inserts, and that some inserts go into the TV instead. Also, multi gaming link ups will go through a PAY TV channel! I know this all sounds like a pie in the sky, but I got this info from a fanatical and honest gamer, and he's always been right in the past. He told me of the plans for the Saturn and PSX when the SNES and Megadrive consoles had barely been released in the west, and I didn't believe him when he said the N64 was cartridge based.

You heard it here first

WAYNE

Wayne,

Well, There's the "Project X" console coming up, which very little is known about, and maybe Sharp have an interest in it. Other than that we really haven't heard anything. So let's see how your story pans out.

MORE GORE?

Dear Hyper,

I love your mag as it has great cheats and unbiased reviews on all the latest games. Anyway, I'm dying to find out about the R rated version of Resident Evil 2 I read about on the internet. Apparently it is a limited edition version of the game with heaps more gore than the standard MA 15+ CD. Is this true? If so is it possible to obtain it in Australia and on PAL format or is it exclusive to Japan like the uncut version of the original?

Also, are Playstation Gamesharks available in W.A as I keep finding codes for them in magazines but none of the game shops I visit have any. Thanks a lot for reading my letter.

Your Sincerely

ROTTING CORPSE

RC,

More Gore? How? You can already blow limbs off your enemies with blood pouring everywhere. Let's face it, bodily dismemberment is about as full on as it gets. Other than actually pulling out internal organs and

smearing them around the place just to give the janitor something to do, how could you get more gore in there? Any gorier than the current Resident Evil 2, and we can only assume the OFLC would ban it.

TELL ME ABOUT MY FUTURE...

To the crew at Hyper,

I recently purchased the May edition of HYPER, and was reading the review on Quake 64. My question is why put the original Quake on the 64 when you have already made a way better sequel, in Quake 2.

I also read the review on Resident Evil 2, it looks great and I can't wait 'till I get enough pennies in the piggie to go out and by it. Finally I was wondering if you would be doing a full review (or preview) on C&C 2 Tiberium Sun.

Thanks,

LUKE

Luke,

Put simply, Quake 64 was in development a while before Quake 2 was done. However, if Activision's claims are true, we should be seeing Quake 2 on N64 around Christmas. Res Evil 2 is good... Finally got some time to play it myself and enjoyed it more than I expected to (don't normally like my action that slow).

As for Tiberium Sun, basically that little blurb we did in news is ALL of the facts out there thus far (at time of publication anyway... E3 may change this). Some mags went and did huge previews, of what to us (since we had the facts list), were derived from the same brief list of features that Virgin/Westwood released. We're majorly keen on the title's release, so as soon as there's some more conclusive information (and more than one or two gameplay screen shots available), we'll cover it. The game is not expected to be released for at least a few more months yet.

WHY CAN'T IT BE LIKE THIS?

Dear Hyper....

Congrats on such a great mag (like u haven't heard that before!), for it is great to see a mature minded magazine, providing sensible insights and views for a multitude of gaming platforms,and the mag arrives in newsagents ON TIME, unlike so many other overseas magazines, however they cannot be held accountable. With all that behind us, I have a few things I would like to say, and I am sure I speak for many others too...(At least I hope I do!)

1. I think that it would be good for magazines and particularly television ads which advertise computer games to print or tell you the specifications of the system that the advertised game is running on, because I have seen countless ads which show games running at silky smooth frame rates, however when tried on my PC, they run jerky or the graphics look no where near as good as they did on the ad. This is probably because I sadly lack a 3D accelerated card, but at least in the case of Total Annihilation, on the T.V it was running in 1024X768 resolution beautifully, but when I tried it on my Pentium 200MMX with 64meg SD RAM and a diamond stealth 3d pro video card with 4 meg video ram, it sadly was jerky to say the least.

2. I wish that a game would be released on the arcade and/or playstation which would be a fighting game, probably 3d, and would be TOTALLY REALISTIC. In combat, the object of the game would not be to hammer the bejesus out of your opponent as fast as possible (Street Fighter series), but to avoid being hurt with usage of realistic and HUMANLY POSSIBLE fighting techniques, whilst attacking and counter attacking with sensible attacks, and in this game, it would be good if the martial arts were real, and real moves were performed in the game, martial arts which could be used are endless..eg. Capoeira, Various styles of Kung-Fu and Karate, Muay Thai, Pentjak Silat, Savate etc. I know that there are games like this (Tobal No. 1 and Tekken 3) but they either have aspects which ruin the feel of the combat eg. usage of aliens, robots (ala Tobal no.1), or Usage of attacks which are very powerful, and probably enough to kill a person, like Yoshimitsu from Tekken 3. This does not mean I don't like these games, Tekken 3 is my current fave game, because it in my opinion provides a semi realistic combat feel.

Now if it isn't too much, I would present you with a few questions.

1. Is Final Fantasy 8 coming out, because I have heard many rumours on the net of it's future existence, and if so, will it follow in the adventures of cloud and the rest, because I would love to hear more about Vincent Valentine.

2. Is there a definite release date for a PAL version of Tekken 3?

Eagerly awaiting your reply

JOHN.

John,

Okay, on comment 1. Basically, an ad is basically an attempt to get your interest. No company is ever going to risk putting you off by reminding you that they have the game running on some Ninja PC. Yes, it's a bit misleading, but companies are naturally going to make their product look as good as they can.

2. I'm surprised you didn't mention Virtua Fighter 3, since the game basically meets most of the conditions you talked about (there's a few over the top moves in there). Although I'd actually say Tobal No.2 has the most realistic fighting, although the addition of fireball moves sort of ruined this (I preferred no silly magic moves). None of these games are truly realistic, but you'll tend to find that most people don't really want total realism in a game such as a fighting game... They want action. The proof lies in games like Mortal Kombat. Super bodgey attacks and amazingly non realistic... but since you can rip out your opponent's spine at the end, it gets an instant cult following.

And answer time

1. Yes.. It's on it's way, and all we've seen at this stage are a logo (big whoop), and three character sketches, which looked like stock standard anime characters, as opposed to the cute style adopted in FF7. Don't expect to see Vincent, as the Final Fantasy stories are basically unconnected.

2. Definite release schedule... now that's an oxymoron if I've ever heard one. Basically the Sony release schedule we have goes to August...and no further. Our guess is Sony will give us a longer schedule after E3. Current speculation on Tekken 3's release date out here is October.

hypermart

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FOR SALE

PC games: dark reign, KKND x-treme and sim city 2000 special edition $60 each, or the lot for $150. Will aslo swap for the following games- Diablo, Carmageddon and splat pak., Lucasarts Archives III. Call 02 4948 9540 (Newcastle)

N64 games: Wave race $50, and San Fransisco rush $65, Mad catz steering wheel $110. Ph Julian on 02 6680 1055, NSW only

Need for Speed 2 $50 (PAL), Wipeout $35 (PAL) both in perfect condition. I'm also selling my SNES with 2 controllers and 3 games for $150 and my special Ed gameboy for $50 with three games. Call Kilian Walter after 5pm on 07 4780 4782

Diddy Kong racing $75, Wave Race 64 $75, Mario Kart 64 $70 or all for $200. Or swap individually for any of these games- Fighters Destiny, Lylat wars, Yoshi's Story, NFL quarterbac club '98, NHL Breakaway '98, Goldeneye 007, etc. Call Ben 07 5539 3361. Must live in Brisbane/Gold Coast area unless willing to send money/games first.

Great Saturn games: Tomb Raider $25, Virtua Cop + virtua Gun $40, Daytona U.s.a.c.c.e $25, Virtual On $20, Manx T.T $25, Die hard Trilogy $20, Sega Arcade steering wheel $40. All boxed with instructions, immaculate condition $180 for the lot. WA only unless you want to pay postage. Call Todd after 5pm Mon, Wed, Fri on 08 9443 9568

RPG's- Chrono Trigger $75, Act raiser's $45, Secret of Evermore $50, Final fantasy 3 $70, Equinox $40, Illusion of time $35. All SNES same import. Also fantasy star 4 $50 on Mega. All Top Top condition. Call Patrick (w)on 08 9330 8313 or fax 08 9330 8343.

Sega Saturn with 1 controller and 5 games- Doom (1 & 2), Need 4 speed, Loaded, Fifa soccer and theme park for $250 o.n.o. All games boxed with instructions and cheats. Call Mark on 07 3348 6565.

I will sell my N64 with blast corps and a memory card and Aircombat or will sell for $240. Call Brad after 3.30pm weekdays on 08 8326 1107 (adelaide only)

Sega Saturn games- Road Rash $30, Command & Conquer $30, MK Ultimate $30, Nights into Dreams $30, Die Hard Trilogy $30, Die hard Arcade $30, demo disk 5 and 2 $20, daytona U.S.A Circuit edition $30, 1 x normal control, 1 x 3D control $25 each, all in good condition. The lot for $450 or will separate. Call Martin on 07 3880 1030

Sega saturn with 2 controllers. 1 is turbo and 2 games: destruction Derby 1 and Fighting Vipers all in good condition. Worth $260, selling for $100 or will trade for sony playstation. Price neg. Call thomas on 07 5525 0125.

I will sell my N64 with 1 controller for $120, price neg. Or swap for a Sony Playstation with or without games. Call 08 8242 1530.

Nintendo 64, excellent condition, 2 controllers, 4 games- Mario 64, Mario Kart, Goldeneye and Wave Race $450. Call Angus on 03 6428 7388.

N64 games; Mario Kart, Star Wars, Lylat wars (with rumble pack) and Top Gear rally (all PAL) all in boxes with instructions. Call Tim 03 5956 7407.

N64 games- Goldeneye 007 $55, Diddy Kong racing $55, Lylat wars and Rumble pak $50 (no box), Grey N64 controller with box $30, PC Games- Blade Runner $50, Quake $15, Duke Nukem 3D $15, Doom 2 $10, (Also NTSC USA Goldeneye + Doom 64 for $35 each). Call Chris on 9409 7733.

Sega Saturn- white Japanese NTSC model, 240 volt, works on NTSC compatible TV, 1mg-4mg switchable ram cartridge. 5 latest games including X men vs Streetfighter Samuri Showdown 4 and House of the dead. 2 white control pads. All like new condition, 2 months old. Sell the lot for $350 o.n.o. Call Jason on 02 6297 8698.

Gameboy- battle toads, gargoyles quest, Street fighter 2 champions edition, Duck Tails 2, Mortal Kombat 3, tetris, All Star Challenge 2 and Othello. Will sell for $15-$20. Call patrick on 08 9574 6590 (Perth only)

SWAP

I want to swap my N64 (PAL) with mario, Wave Race and one controller for Playstation (PAL or NTSC) with at least one controller. Call thomas anytime on 02 4821 1306.

I will swap Cricket 96 for Carmageddon or Grand Theft Auto. Call after 3.30pm on weekdays and after 9am on weekends on 03 5182 5378.

I will swap any playstation game for Sega mega drive games including- Cheesy catastrophe, Chiki-Chiki boys, Haunting and Jurassic park. Ask for Shayne on 07 3206 3499.

I will swap Command & conquer for Settlers 2, Beasts and Bumpkins, Age of Empires or theme hospital and Sim Safari. Call kerry on 07 5485 1895.

Sony Playstation (PAL) 1/2 yr old, comes with 3 games and 3 demo's all in good condition. Will swap for N64 with any 2 games. Call Glen after 4pm on 02 4573 1558.

Blast corps or Mario. To swap for Diddy Kong racing. Other games considered. Call carl on 07 4168 9843.

I want to swap my Playstation with 2 controllers for a N64 with 2 controllers (no games) I also have plenty of PSX gear you may want to buy. Phone Duncan on 02 9498 7392. (Sydney please)

WANTED

Diehard trilogy and christmas nights for sega Saturn. PH cameron on 07 4773 4121

Total drivin' for the playstation. Willing to pay $25-$30 for it. Must be in good condition with case and manual. Call peter on 02 6231 9392. Canberra only.

Grand theft auto for PC .Name your price. Call Rick after school on 08 8284 8232

Raiden project on PSX and Namco Museum No. 1. Call patrick (w) 08 9330 8313 or fax 08 9330 8343

Mega drive games, especially Sonic 2 & 3, Sonic and Knuckles, mega-lo-mania, Landstalker, Buck Rogers or any other decent titles. Pay up to $10 each- boxes and instructions not required in most cases. Ph Matthew on 08 8381 8730

Has anybody got Warcraft I or II. I will pay $40 for either of them. (Mackay only, must be able to drive to Glenella cash store) Call michael after 4pm on 07 4942 5230.

Landstalker, the treasures of King Nole for the Sega megadrive. Will pay for reasonable price. Call Scott after 6pm weekdays and after 11am weekends on 02 6231 0130.

The TV tuner for the Sega Saturn game gear. Willing to pay up to $50. Must be in good condition. Call Ed or Joe on 06 2412 697.

A copy of Saturn Bomberman. Willing to pay $40. Must be in good condition with box and instructions. Call mark on 02 4945 8869 (Newcastle area)

US version of Goldeneye $35, Aus version of Goldeneye $55, US version of Lylat Wars with Rumble Pak (no box) $45, Cruis'n USA $25. PC Quake $15, Blade Runner never used for only $60, Doom 2 $15, Duke Nukem 3D $15. Snes killer instincy $15. 2 PC demo cd's $3 each. Call Chris on 9409 7733.

PENPALS

I am looking for a penpal. My name is Ryan Delzoppo and I like most fighting games and I like sport. I own a PC CD Rom. I want a male penpal 12-15 yrs old. My address is PO BOX 38, Loveday, SA 5345

Hey, I'm looking for a penpal who likes Doom and is aged 11-15. So write to Roy at 24A margaret Rd, Bellvue, Tauranga, NZ. I will only reply if you like Doom.

Hi, my name is Luke and I am looking for a penpal any age, male or female. I have a PC CD rom and a saturn. I promise to write back. So write to Luke Thompson, 19 Coshams Close, Eden, NSW 2551.

Hi my name is Shayne Freebody, I'm a 15yr old girl who worships Playstation. I also totally adore horses, and anything associated with them. So if this sounds like you write to me. 150 Pioneer St, Sheldon, QLD 4157.

I'm a male species after a female penpal species 16-18. I already have a male one. I enjoy outdoors, nature, drawing, sci-fi and fantasy. I own a Saturn and proud of it. Interested? Write to Boyd Esset, 166 bent st, Sth Grafton, NSW, 2460.

My name is Clair and I'm 15. I'm looking for anyone to write to who will reply. I love to play hockey, the outdoors and a lot of other things. I don't care who or what you are as long as you write often. Pls also send a photo:Clair Price, 3 Dowsett Cres, Mt Isa, QLD 4825.

Hi, I'm a 16yr old male looking for a penpal, M/F ages 15-17yrs. I have a N64 and a playstation and a PC. I like playing video games, watching movies and listening to music (Aqua, Savage Garden) write to marcus sanburg. Charles Towers , QLD

Do you have hair? If so, write to me. I am a 15yr old male looking for a penpal of any age, sex, system, town and arm length. I have a PC, Playstation, Saturn and a gameboy. Write anything, I can keep secrets! My addres is :Peter, 14 Eagle Circuit, Kambah, ACT, 2902.

Hi, my name is Danielle. I'm looking for a male penpal aged 13-15. I promise to reply to all that write to me! I own a PSX and will talk about anything. I like the games Tomb Raider 1/2 and Nightmare Creatures. Please write to Danielle at 5 Caliso Court, Warnbro, WA 6169.

Hi, I'm a female oldie and into RPG and platform games like FFVII, TR, Zelda, Terranigma, Illusion of time, Equinox, Secret of evermore, Secret of mana, DKC, mario 64, mario world, Excalibur, COS, etc, etc. If you like any of these games and your looking for a penpal or to chat on the phone if local, drop me a line. Sorry, I have no interest in beat em ups, shoot em ups or sports. I presently own a PSX and N64. I am also interested in the unknown. Write to Frances, Box 1195, Penrith, 2751.

Hey! Dan here...
Congratulations.
You have completed Hyper Issue No.57
Thank you for reading...
GAME OVER

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