HYPER »

The complete guide to Buying a gaming PC
How to get the machine you want and not get ripped off.

SEGA DREAMCAST

The Future of Console Gaming Unveiled!

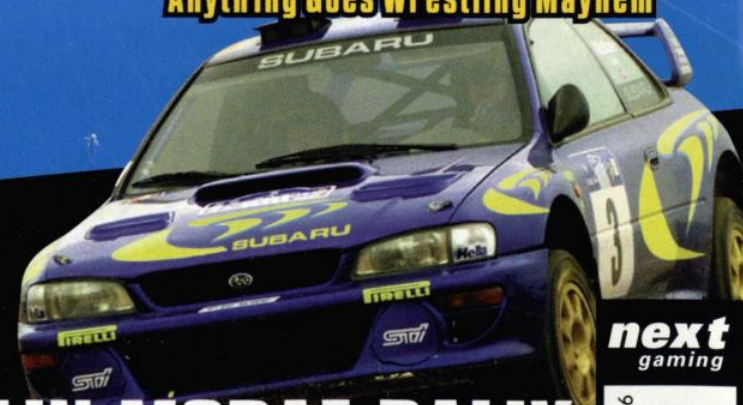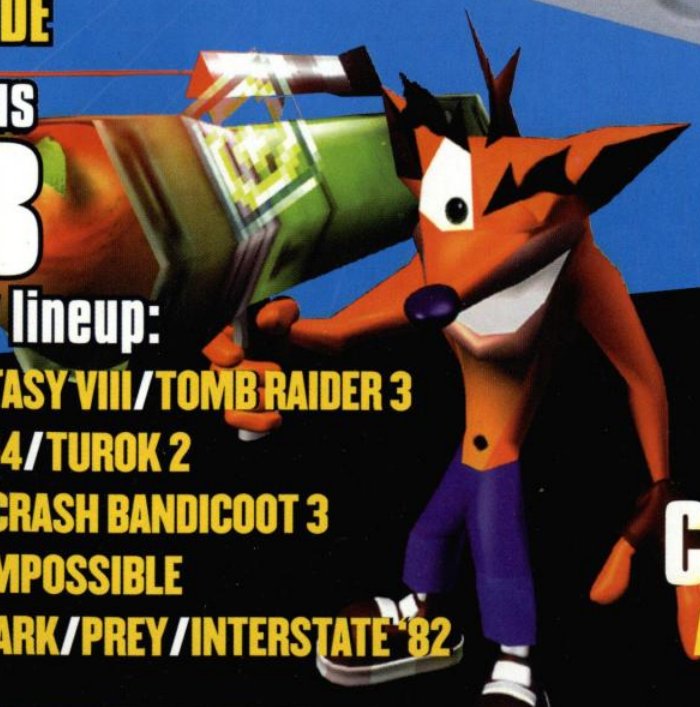Dreamcast

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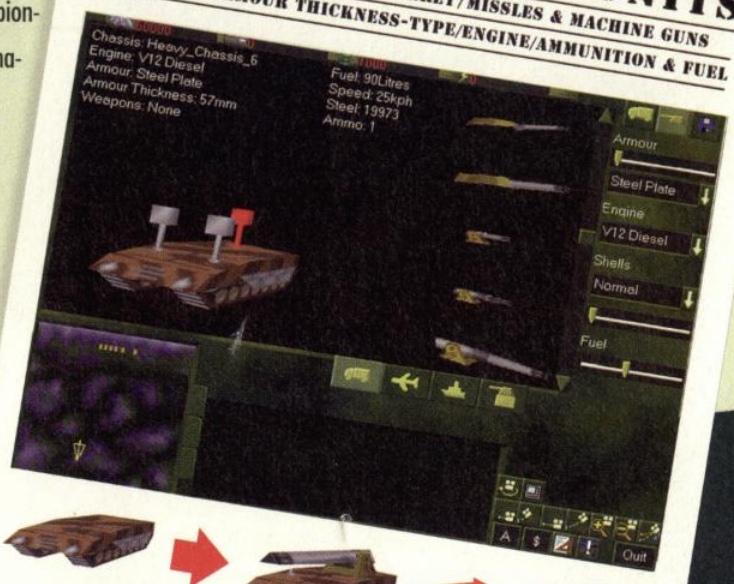Variable Multiplayer modes allow for both single player cooperative and on-line world championship Tournaments.

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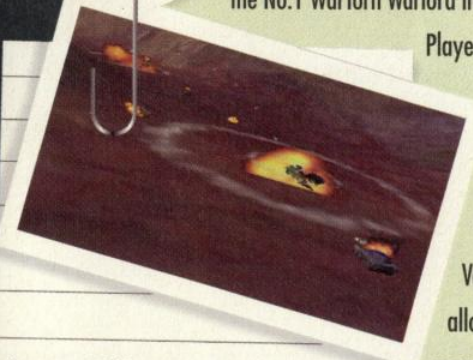
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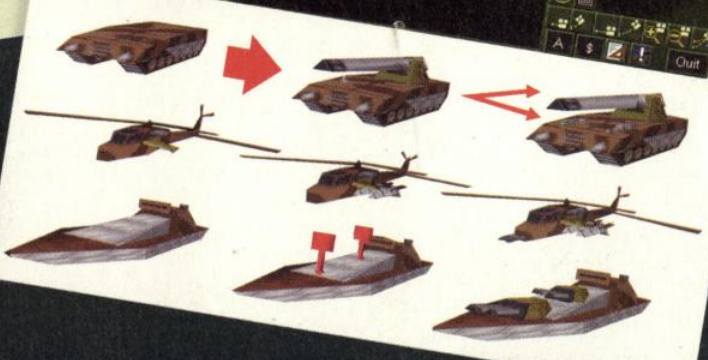
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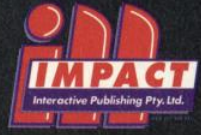
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EDITORIAL

I'd like to think of this as a bit of Spring cleaning issue, even though we've got a few months till Spring. Basically, Hyper's been tidied up quite a bit, in the hope you'll be more informed, and less confused.

My personal experience of having had to learn all sorts of stuff before I could go out and buy my new PC recently led me to think, "God I wish someone had just given me a list of all the stuff I needed to know", so that made it a great opportunity to save you all the hassle I've just been through. So this month's feature on buying a gaming PC will prove invaluable for those looking for either a new machine, or even just a specific component.

E3 has been and gone, and we've done an extra large preview section on the hottest games from the world's biggest video game trade show. If you're a 1st person shooter fanatic like me, there's several killer titles to look forward to, like Half-Life, Prey, Duke Nukem Forever, and Daikatana.

Of course the big news is the Sega Dreamcast. Go on and check out the tech specs of that console... truly devastating. Quite frankly I don't want or need games to get any better looking than Virtua Fighter 3, but it sounds like the Dreamcast can do just that... Just imagine it. Game on!

REGULARS

REVIEWS

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ISSUE

58

JULY 1998

Sega's New Console REVEALED

At last, Sega present their console of the future - The Dreamcast.

After going through so many working names, such as the Dural, Dragon, and Katana, Sega have finally decided to call their next console the Dreamcast. At Hyper, this name is quite unanimously the worst name we've ever heard for a console, but this isn't going to sway our interest in what looks to be the most awesome home video games system to date.

The Dreamcast is the result of careful planning by Sega. It would seem that Sega are making the right moves to ensure their next console does not suffer the same fate as the poor old Saturn did. The Saturn fell down in three main areas. One, the marketing was simply second rate compared to that of Sony and this put the console on the back foot to begin with. This was not the case in Japan, but was a major factor everywhere else in the world.

Two, the software support was not as strong as the console really required to succeed in the long term. Developers had troubles working with the Saturn's hardware configurations, and as a result, never got what they wanted out of the machine. As the PlayStation got ahead, developers were much more interested in developing for the more successful console.

Thirdly, the hardware was simply not up to par with the PlayStation, and later, the Nintendo 64. The only area the Saturn was number one was in 2D background intensive games, like X-Men vs Street fighter. Once people saw that the

PlayStation and N64 were delivering more impressive visuals, people immediately lost interest in the Saturn.

Sega look to have addressed these problems with the Dreamcast, although we'll only know about the strength of Sega's marketing once the Dreamcast has been out for a little while. The main hurdle with new consoles has traditionally been a whopping price (remember when the PlayStation launched at $700). The Dreamcast is yet to have a confirmed, or fixed price, but speculation is that the console will cost US$250 for the American launch, so expect a price between $350 to $400 out here.

The Dreamcast looks like the lovechild of the Nintendo 64 and PlayStation, with a stronger resemblance to the latter. We should note at this stage that the Saturn has come in several colours (grey, white and black), which were territory dependant, so don't assume it will be light grey when it comes out here. The four controller inputs at the front mean the end of Nintendo's dominance as the "Ready to go" multiplayer machine. The memory packs (Visual Memory System) actually allow for another type of multiplayer game all of their own, but more of that later.

SEGA

ARE YOU READY 2 RALLY?
Only at leading arcades.

SEGA RALLY 2 CHAMPIONSHIP

Dreamcast - Online console gaming a reality!

The real multiplayer breakthrough here is that the Dreamcast comes with a built in 33.6Kbps modem. Sega Saturn's Netlink will have provided them with the experience to ensure they can deliver a useful service to the gamers. This also means the Dreamcast will be usable as a web browser. The only issue that remains as far as Australia is concerned is that this will require Sega to set up the services. HEAT.NET has been established in America, so the US will certainly have an online service on debut, but we'll have to wait and see out here. Imagine playing on an online racing league for Sega Rally 2, or entering Virtua Fighter 3 knockout tournaments (although neither of these have been confirmed).

Sega Dreamcast - The Hardware

Considering so many people were critical of the Saturn's hardware, here's a breakdown of the guts of the Sega Dreamcast, and the partnerships with the respective hardware developers, which should be enough to get any gamer excited.

CPU

People got all obsessive over the fact the Nintendo 64 was a 64 bit machine. Well if that impressed you, the Dreamcast will too. The DC uses a 128 bit SuperH RISC processor, which provides the raw grunt of the Dreamcast. The CPU is a result of the combined efforts of Sega and Hitachi... a customised 200 MHz SH-4 Hitachi CPU that has been geared to perform especially strongly in the area of floating point unit calculations, which are the basis of all 3D visuals. The CPU supposedly handles FPU (Floating Point Unit) calculations four times faster than a Pentium II chip, which means the graphics chips can be run much closer to their optimum levels compared to a PC (where the current top end cards aren't being used to their full potential by today's CPUs).

VIDEO

The graphics chip was designed by NEC, using second generation PowerVR technology from Video Logic. Here's the staggering bit... the chip can draw 3 million polygons a second when running at peak performance. It remains to be seen how often the machine will run at this peak performance, but to give you an idea, the Model 3 board (the guts of a Virtua Fighter 3 arcade machine) can only push out 1 million polygons a second. Sega are supposedly working on a new arcade board based on the Dreamcast! There's a turn up for the books. This arcade board is supposedly going to be able to move 10 million polys a second, which will basically allow for photorealistic visuals (all you need now is a photorealistc artist).

SOUND

Recognised for their top notch sound cards for PC, and general history of excellence in all things audio and music, Yamaha make an excellent partner for Sega in their new console. The chip allows 64 channels for music, voices, and sound effects. Just to keep up with the latest PC trends, the Dreamcast's sound chip also supports 3D sound, so basically it provides far better audio than any other console to date, and is on par with the latest PC sound cards. The 3D sound options prompt questions of speaker arrangement, as these features will be wasted on a mono TV setup.

CD-ROM

The PlayStation has been the dominant console for more than two years, and this has been plenty of time for everyone to realise the importance of a reliable CD-ROM drive, as many folks curse at their PSX as a result. Yamaha have developed a special 1GB CD and drive, which will perform at higher speeds (specs not yet announced) than any other console. These special CDs will cause cost increases in the production, which may result in a noticeable cost to the end buyer, but this all remains to be finalised.
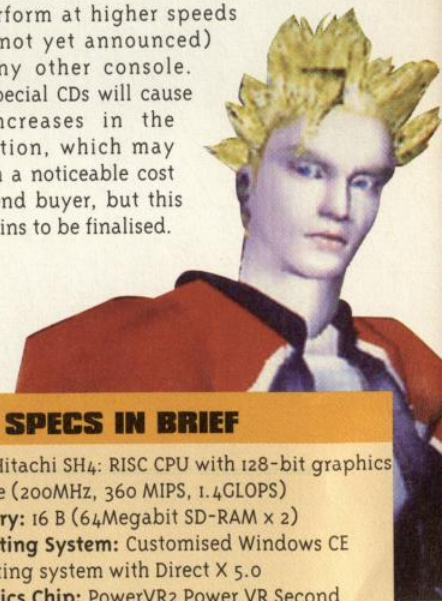
THE SPECS IN BRIEF

CPU: Hitachi SH4: RISC CPU with 128-bit graphics engine (200MHz, 360 MIPS, 1.4GLOPS)
Memory: 16 B (64Megabit SD-RAM x 2)
Operating System: Customised Windows CE operating system with Direct X 5.0
Graphics Chip: PowerVR2 Power VR Second Generation (3,000,000 polygons/second)
Video/Texture Memory: 8MB RAM
Colours: 16.77 Million colours
Sound Chip: Super-intelligent sound processor with 32-bit RISC CPU (64 channel ADPCM)
Audio Memory: 2 MB RAM
CD ROM: 12 speed CD drive with special 1 Gig architecture
Modem: Built in V34 (33.6Kbps), V42 and MNPS full support
Dimensions: 190mm (width) x 195mm (height) x 78mm (depth)
Weight: 2kg

(continued from page 10)

OPERATING SYSTEM

This is where Sega have really got off on the right foot. You can have awesome hardware, but in the console software developer's mind, an easy to use operating system is the key to getting the desired results out of the machine for their games. Microsoft have provided Sega with a customised version of Windows CE with Direct X that is written specifically to be optimised for all the Dreamcast hardware. This means developers familiar with coding for Windows and Direct X, will have little to learn to be able to get top results out of the Dreamcast. Also expect this to result in arcade conversions happening very quickly, and also PC PowerVR versions of Sega arcade titles, a lot sooner than they have been.

The controller & VMS

Sega have gone for a much more full on controller than we've seen yet. The analogue and digital pads are near one another, just like on the Saturn analogue pads. There are two analogue trigger/shoulder buttons underneath, also like the Saturn analogue pad. One surprising feature (or lack thereof), is having only four buttons on top. The Saturn had a fantastic configuration of buttons for fighting games (especially the Street Fighter ones), and this just seems like a strange step backwards. Considering the time to launch, there is plenty of time for Sega to change this without any major design alterations. What makes the controller "full on" though is the VMS (Visual Memory System), which is essentially a Gameboy style device, which is slotted into the top of the controller, has a 48 dot x 32 dot LCD screen. This is sold separately, but everyone will want one, as the device not only works as a data storage device, but also a linkable game unit! Users will be able to swap data from one to the other without using the console

The Dreamcast Dream Team

At E3, the following publishers and developers announced that they'd be developing for the Dreamcast:

Acclaim	Argonaut
Bizarre Creations	Capcom
GT Interactive	Interplay
Konami	Micropose
Midway	No Cliché (Adeline)
Red Lemon	Ubisoft

The Dreamcast has a Japanese release date of November 20th this year. There will be 5 games at launch in Japan, but we can expect a lot more out here at the Australian launch... As many as 12. The bad news is, that the system is not expected to be released in America and Europe till late 1999.
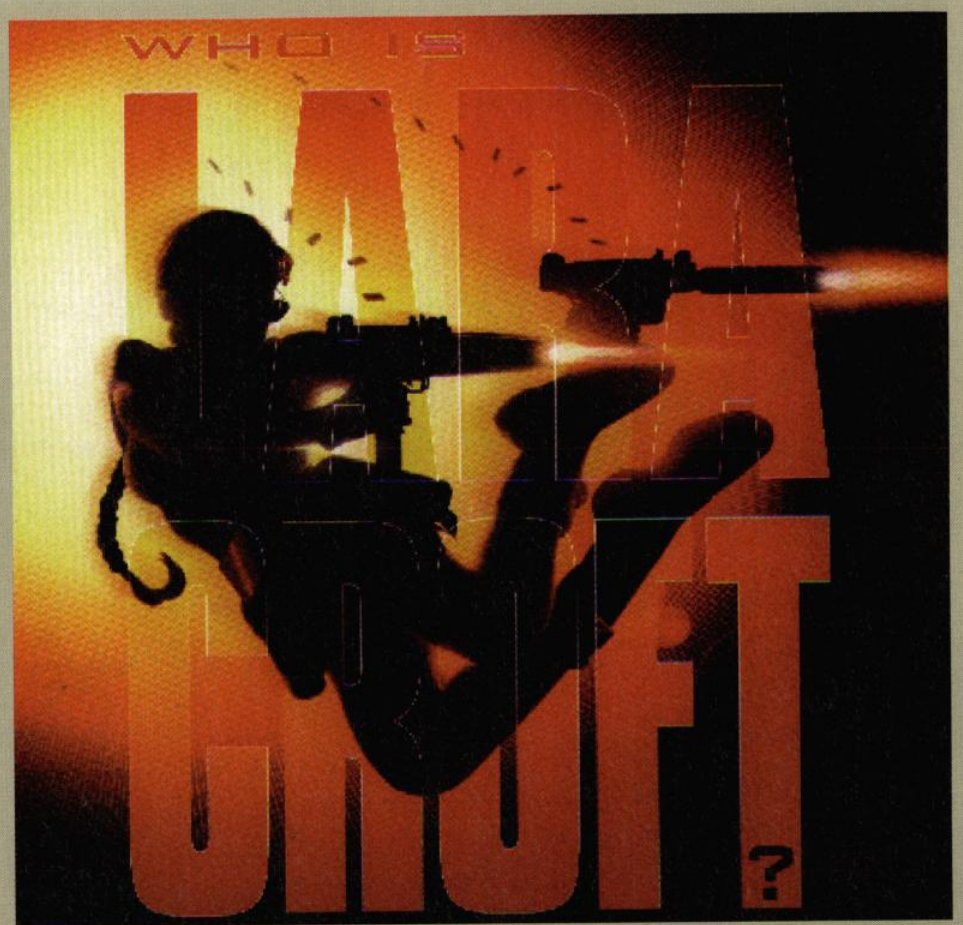
Lara Croft Comes Alive!

A big topic of discussion amongst gamers - which has been hot for a while now - is who will play Lara Croft on the big screen? Paramount Pictures have put Tomb Raider the film into production, and already a "teaser poster" has popped up on the internet to let the public know that they can expect to see the live action Tomb Raider in 1999. The poster slyly keeps up guessing who they have in mind to play the coolest heroine ever created. Let the speculation continue!

Resident Evil Shocks Gamers

Capcom Japan have released new dual-shock compatible versions of Resident Evil Director's Cut and Resident Evil 2. Not only do these new versions provide the gamer with rumble support, but they also come with new funky features to satisify the most hardcore Resident Evil fans. The new Resident Evil Director's Cut edition also comes packed a disc of cheats, a walkthrough and other goodies for gamers to copy onto their memory cards. The actual game will also feature a brand-spanking new soundtrack written by Kawachi Yoshimura.

The new Resident Evil 2 edition will feature three new modes of play - Rookie mode (you begin with more powerful weapons and an easy difficulty level), USA Version (which reportedly has a higher level of difficulty all round) and Extreme Battle Mode which is set in an arena - the player must see how long they can survive endless hordes of zombies with only a certain amount of ammo. There is no word yet on a local release for these new editions.

Competition Winners
Is your name on this list? Then you just won cool, free stuff!

WARHAMMER
Arron Hayden, NSW
Casey Wrigley, Tas
Daniel Diaz, Vic
D. Troughton, SA
Kaz Przybylski, WA

MAKOPAD 64
Wai Houng Tan, Qld
Barry Meade, NSW
T. Hyde, SA
Blake Street, Qld
Ben Tortora, NSW

Peter Briton, SA

Quake Botblast announced on page 38

N64 Expansion Cartridge

Rumours are going around of a Nintendo 64 4MB expansion cart being released. It's true that there was one being used extensively at this year's E3. Games like Perfect Dark were using one when running, though Nintendo say the cart will not be needed when the games are finished. We've heard that whilst this is true to some extent, Nintendo will still eventually release this memory expansion cart as a pack-in with a game, and that Extreme-G 2, for instance, will use the cart to display the game in 640X480 resolution. We'll know by next year...

Xena Warrior Princess - The Game!

Universal Interactive aren't going to let this opportunity slip by! Here comes the Xena 3D action adventure!! Lucy Lawless (the real-life counterpart of Xena) is supplying her voice for the game and getting her face texture-mapped onto her character, as is her sidekick Gabrielle (Rene O'Conner) in this upcoming PlayStation game which borrows elements of both Tomb Raider and Tenchu. All Xena's moves from the show will be included, and you can expect the game to be non-stop action. There should eventually be over 20 levels, bosses, hidden levels and tonnes ofs Warrior Princess action. When we get it later in the year, we'll take a closer look.

Soul Calibur Soul Blade 2

The arcade sequel to the fantabulous 3D fighter Soul Blade (or Soul Edge as it's known in some quarters) is in development by Namco Japan - it's called Soul Calibur - and should hit Japanese arcades this month. Four characters from the first game will return (Mitsurugi, Sophitia, Taki and Voldo), along with new characters such as - Kilik, Nightmare, Maxi, Xiang Hua and Astraroth. It also sounds as if a PlayStation port is already under way, even before the arcade version hits the streets! Soul Calibur will feature a much faster-paced game and some reportedly amazing special effects. Namco have announced that Soul Calibur is based on their System 12 board.

Charts

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

PLAYSTATION	NINTENDO 64	PC
1. Gran Turismo	1. 1080 Snowboarding	1. Unreal
2. Alundra	2. Forsaken	2. TA - Core Contingency
3. Resident Evil 2	3. Goldeneye 007	3. Forsaken
4. World Cup 98	4. Lylat Wars	4. Jedi Knight
5. Tomb Raider Platinum	5. Yoshi's Story	5. Moto Racer
6. Diablo	6. World Cup 98	6. Dark Omen
7. Final Fantasy VII	7. Bomberman 64	7. Die By The Sword
8. Tekken 2	8. Mario Kart 64	8. Grand Theft Auto
9. TOCA Touring Car	9. Diddy Kong Racing	9. Oddworld
10. Poy Poy	10. Rampage World Tour	10. Ultima Online

SUBSCRIBE
PLAYSTATION & COL

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ies. To be in with a chance to win this amazing prize, you simply have to subscribe to **HYPER** this month (or re-subscribe), which not only puts you in the comp, but guarantees you a copy of **HYPER** every month before the shops get it. You also **SAVE 37%** off the cover price if you subscribe for 12 issues, and it's **44% CHEAPER** if you subscribe for 24 issues. Awesome or what?!

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VIGILANTE 8
Get Funky on the PSX!

Lookin' mighty fine, Vigilante 8 has been released by Activision, and is currently the driving-combat game you have to have. Because we're aware that most of you have spent your cash on fine threads and disco balls (yo lookin' fiine bruthas and sistuhs!), Activision and Hyper have pooled their resources to bring you five free copies of Vigilante 8 to win. Just grab a pen and think hard on this one...

Does having a roof-mounted missile turret cost more at Toll gates?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and fling it our way. **Funk Me, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.** Dig it!

FREE FREESPACE
Descent: Freespace for free!

Hyper's Game of the Month, Descent: Freespace, is one of those PC games you just gotta play. Currently it ranks amongst the best space combat games out on the market, so we really want you to win a copy if you can't afford to buy this treat. Hell, it's worth it just to watch the funky intro FMV! Drooling yet? Well, to lay your hands on one of five sweet freebies thanks to Interplay, you'll have to correctly respond to this probing question...

How much was the universe before it became freespace?

Ho ho. Answers will only be accepted written on the back of envelopes. Send it to... **FREEspace, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.** Go to it!
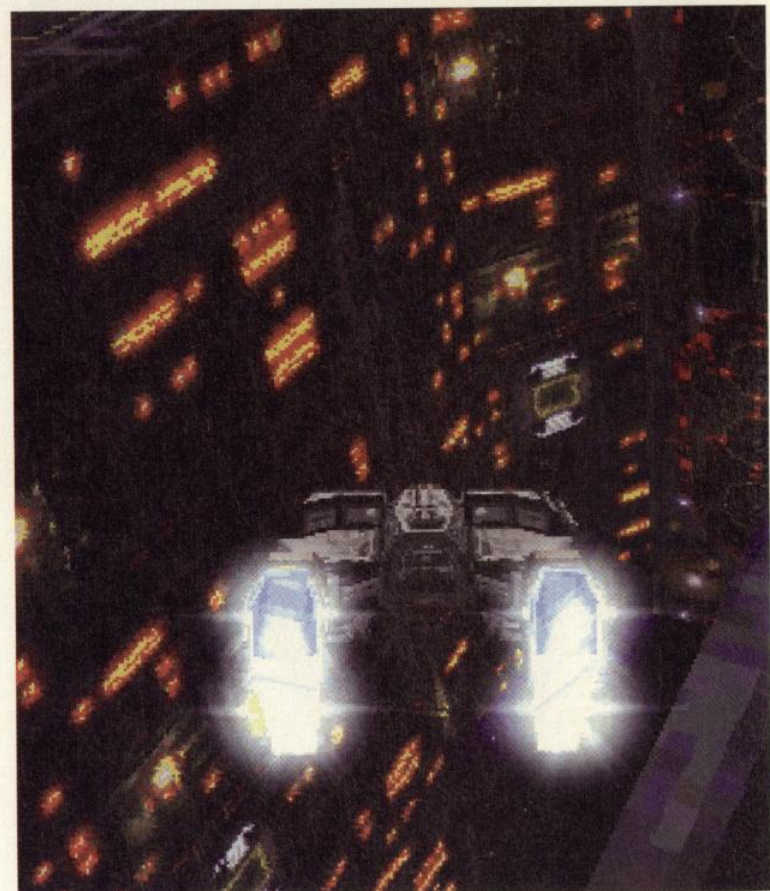
GHOST IN THE SHELL
Get the Ghost in your machine!

When a cool Anime becomes a videogame, you just gotta be happy. Thankfully, it's not some tired old money-making conversion - it's actually a damn good game! So good, in fact, that it's worthy of being a Hyper prize! Sony Computer Entertainment have offered us five copies of the game to give away for PlayStation owners to love, enjoy, kiss and cuddle... er yeah. Well, you do get to blow things into tiny bits, so you want this game. To enter, answer this mighty difficult question...

Of which gender is the main character in the game?

Scribble your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to... **Spooky, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

It's a WARZONE
Beefy blokes in underwear!

WWF Warzone on the Nintendo 64 is one of those wrestling games that'll have you busting your gut with laughter. Customising your own wrestler is one of the funniest things we've seen at this office in a long, long time. Maybe we need to get out more, I don't know... anyway, the good news is that Roadshow have donated four copies of WWF Warzone to the Hyper prize pool this month. That's right! Enter now and win a cart full of big, hairy wrestlers hugging each other on canvas. Here's what you'll need to do to enter...

Simply come up with an original name for a wrestler - something snazzy - and the best entry wins a copy of WWF Warzone. Cool, eh?

Send your entries to: **And the winner is..., Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

PREVIEWS

E3

The biggest computer and video game industry trade show on earth

Electronic Entertainment Expo '98

Well, the biggest and baddest games expo on the planet Earth, the Atlanta E3, has come and gone for another year. As usual, gamers got together and had their minds blown clear of their craniums by some truly awesome stuff. There was lots to see, lots to do and lots to drool over. Sony, Nintendo and Sega had the biggest booths as per usual, and probably the hottest topic at the show was Sega's upcoming console now called Dreamcast (though we still think they should have stuck with Katana, as does the rest of the world). Rather than give you some huge "E3 special", it made sense just to say the whole news and preview section is really our E3 report. All games previewed here were shown at E3, and all the news this issue has come from E3 as well. Some of the games previewed are really a fair way off, but we thought it best to show you what was hot at the big show.

E3's Hot Software at a Glance
Nintendo 64

Rare unveiled their Goldeneye follow-up called Perfect Dark, which has nothing to do with James Bond, but uses a souped-up Goldeneye game engine and simply looks amaaaaazing. Zelda 64 was shown once again, and is still looking mighty fine, though a little late! Psygnosis hit everyone between the eyes with Wipeout 64, looking every bit as good as the PlayStation's Wipeout 2097 - if not better. LucasArts took the first level from Shadows of the Empire and made a whole game out of it - Rogue Squadron - which looked damn spiffy. Turok 2 is looking incredible. Superman 64 surfaced again from Titus, and will also appear on PlayStation. Extreme-G 2 was sampled. Castlevania 64 was playable. Gex 3D will get ported to the N64, no new features were evident in this conversion at this stage.
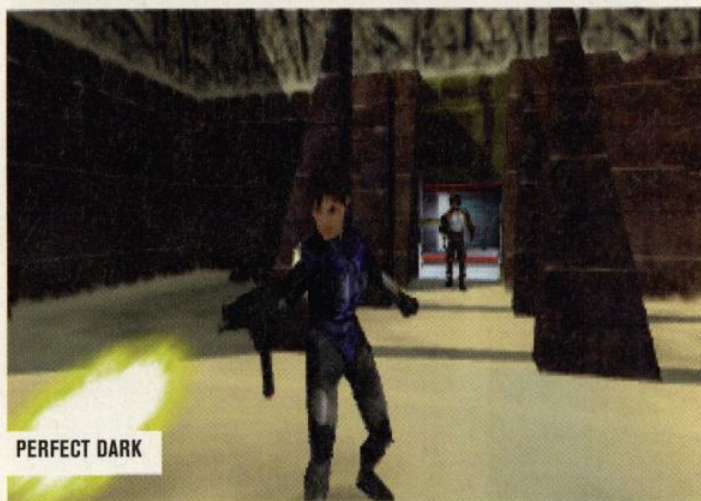
PlayStation

Tomb Raider III was announced (as if we didn't see that one coming), and a real-life Lara Croft stood around the place looking mean and attracting more than a few wandering eyes. Final Fantasy VIII was unveiled (what little of it there was) and looks like being another blockbuster - but not until late 1999. Colony Wars 2:Vengeance was showcased and Psygnosis have another winner here, they also gave peeks at The Contract, Global Domination and Eliminator. Tomorrow Never Dies looks like the PSX's answer to Goldeneye. Capcom pleased zombie-fans with Resident Evil 3 being confirmed. Virgin showed off a new, nasty fighting game called Thrill Kill. Sony let the world know about Crash Bandicoot 3, but their real 3D platforming hope now lies in Spyro, their latest character who should feature in a game far more "Mario 64" we've seen on the PSX before. Duke Nukem - Time to Kill looks set to be the boofheads answer to Tomb Raider. Metal Gear Solid from Konami, still looks like an absolute killer, which is hardly surprising since it was one of the shining stars at last year's E3.

PC

Wheel of Time based on the Unreal engine, looks like being the greatest RPG ever made. Daikatana looked even more finished and shouldn't be far off, with other shooters like Sin, Half-Life and Prey all showing great promise. Myth 2 was announced - woohoo! Diablo 2 appeared, as did Tomb Raider III, Interstate '82, Descent III and a great looking

SPYRO

FINAL FANTASY VIII

PERFECT DARK

INTERSTATE '82

Duke Nukem Forever using the Quake 2 engine. LucasArts announced a new Indiana Jones adventure game, requiring a 3D accelerator, to please adventure fans - with Grim Fandango also looking tasty. Dark Reign 2 got a mention. X-COM: Alliance was added to the Microprose stable, another title using the Unreal engine (there it is again!). Falcon 4.0 was there again, so we guess it holds the record for most E3 appearances without actually shipping. Populous 3 surfaced again. Psygnosis showed off Drakan, and it's like Lara Croft meets Conan. Ultima IX: Ascension frightened lots of RPG-lovers with it's suspiciously action-orientated gameplay, could the best RPG series on PC be turned into a Lara Croft game?

Dreamcast

D2 the sequel to the loved and hated D (Japan loved it, everyone else hated it), was revealed to be launching with Dreamcast. There was also an unamed shooter, that bore a resemblence to Lylat Wars, only better. Resident Evil 4 (yes, four!) was promised by Capcom. Konami, GTI, Midway, Microprose, Interplay, and Acclaim all announced development on Dreamcast games, and then shortly after the show, some others followed suit (see the list in the news).

Since the show confirmation of conversions of Virtua Fighter 3 and Sega Rally 2 have made this a must have console in the eyes of the Hyper crew. If you haven't seen Virtua Fighter 3, go down to a major arcade that has it, take a look, then imagine this game running the same on your home console... Dreamy.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

DUKE NUKEM' FOREVER

DRAKAN

TOMB RAIDER III

E3's Hot Hardware at a glance

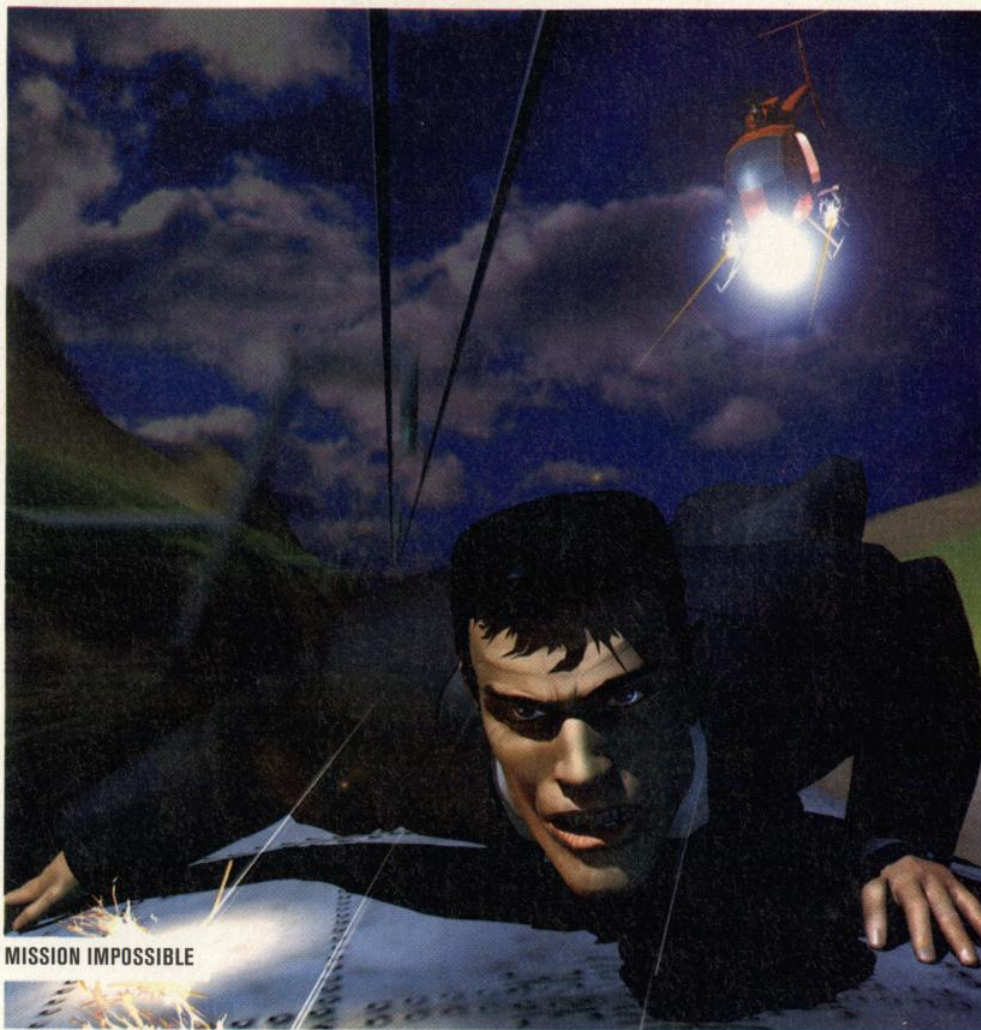Besides the Sega Dreamcast, which is our lead news story this month, here's what was hot . . .

Nintendo 64

Most notable was the lack of the one hardware item which everyone has been waiting on for so long now, the 64DD. Nintendo of America Chief Howard Lincoln confirmed our fears about the 64DD, which will not make it to western shores. Actually, the comment was "maybe never", but that's just the non-commital, positive way of saying, "It's canned". Could still be a goer in Japan, but not here it would seem.

The only other noteworthy mention for Nintendo 64 hardware was a US$20 price drop, although there is no sign that the price will drop here as well.

PlayStation

The PSX doesn't really have anything new, with the Dual Shock controller still being their latest peripheral release. On this note however, look out for the new Sony PlayStation package, which comes with a Dual Shock as opposed to a plain old digital pad... for the same price. So if you were about to buy one, and you haven't seen the new pack yet, hold out a little and get the better controller.

Sony also dropped the price of the US PlayStation by US$20, and just like with the N64, don't expect to see that to happen here.

PC

There are some major things afoot that affect PC gamers, and E3 showcased some of the goods. There are three new video cards coming up that gamers should take note of. Power VR 2, Riva TNT, and Savage 3D. The Riva TNT was running Quake 2 and Motorhead at 1600x1200 resolution!

The stand out controller of E3 was Microsoft's force feedback steering wheel, which should create a real jump in the overall feel and realism of upcoming racing games.

Also shown at E3, relevent to those in the market for a new PC, the AMB K6-2 CPUs, which basically do everything the Pentium 2 chips do, and once Direct X 6 is out, will do even more for those that own 3D accelerators. The K6-2s also cost 75% of the chips, so hopefully by next E3, we'll be seeing a fiercely fought price war between the Intel and AMD. We felt this was important enough to do as our main hardware coverage this issue in our hardware guide.

Project X

What was looking like a potential killer console has now taken the path of "Home entertainment multimedia device", so in other words, it's not going to be geared to be a killer games machine. We expect it to end up being a bit like the 3Do, where people buy it for watching films rather than games. We'll keep watching this space, but considering it will be up against Sega, Sony, and Nintendo... the Project X console will struggle to get a market share of the gamers.

Now for the games... Over the page are a stack of 1st look previews of some of the better games to show up at E3...
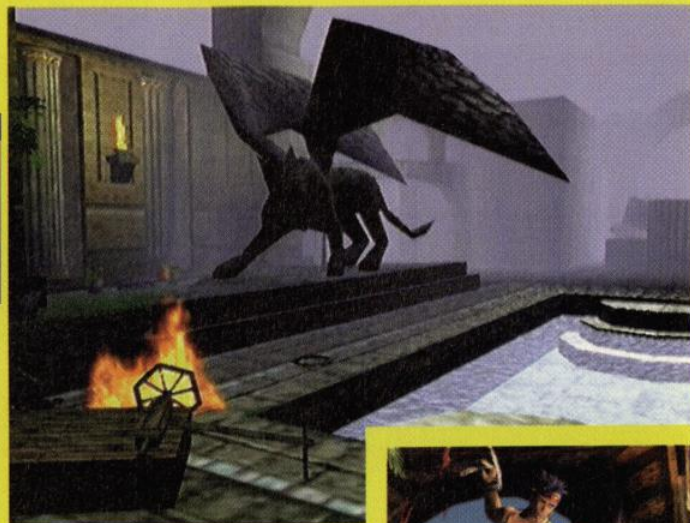
PREVIEWS

Turok 2: Seeds of Evil

N64/PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER
CATEGORY: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-4 [N64] 1-16 [PC]
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

How did Turok get himself wrapped up in another mess? Here's the plot direct from the developer's mouth... "Having defeated the Campaigner in the original Turok: Dinosaur Hunter, Turok attempts to destroy the Chronoceptor by throwing it into a volcano. In doing so, Turok unwittingly awakens an even more deadly foe—The Primagen—who lies imprisoned in a spacecraft buried at the core of the lost land. Turok must stop the Primagen from escaping his prison and breaking through the wall dividing the nether world from Earth!" That's how.

As we saw in Goldeneye, Turok 2 will utilise a more body-part specific damage system, allowing the player to actually target specific limbs on their opponents for a more realistic firefight. Higher detailed textures and "soft-skin" will be used, so that creatures will appear to be more organic and even wrinkle when their limbs are moving. Expect around seven quests, which take you across a number of levels within strikingly different environments - from the wilderness to village settings. You will have 24 different weapons at your disposal, and you'll have to learn to use them all too, because some weapons will be useless against certain enemies. Five bosses will also stand in your way, and the AI has been much improved since Turok: Dinosaur Hunter. And if you thought the animation in the original was good, wait till you wrap your eyes around some of the stuff in Seeds of Evil!

The multiplayer modes will include teamplay, deathmatch and tag frag which sounds like fun. Whilst the N64 can only cope with 4 players, PC gamers can look forward to a 16 player deathmatch. Thank the Lord we can actually look forward to this one before the end of the year. **EF**
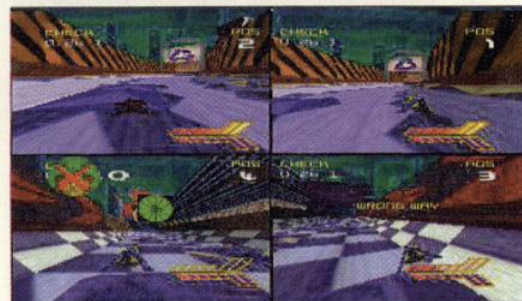
Wipeout 64

NINTENDO 64

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS

Finally Wipeout 64 was revealed to the public in playable form, and it didn't disappoint. The Nintendo 64 version of Wipeout offers new weapons, new tracks and a new twist on the classic Wipeout formula. It also offers up to four-players on screen at once in a split-screen, which is awesome for a Wipeout game - a feature we all wished had been included in Wipeout 2097 for PlayStation. The cart can have up to 15 ships on the track at once, and you can race your friends in tournament mode. Six new tracks are featured, though there seemed to be elements of the original PlayStation tracks included within them - but then, if it ain't broke...

Look forward to five new weapons to tool your friends with, with all the spectacular lighting effects of the original, and then some. The only thing we did notice in the two-player split screen was some unfortunately squished-looking ships, due to the horizontal nature of the split-screen - but that shouldn't affect gameplay.

A nice addition, thanks to the N64 controller, will be Rumble Pak support so you can feel all those rockets your mates keep hammering you with and of course analogue control (which hopefully won't make the racing easier as it did on the PC). Yeehaw for Psygnosis developing for the N64, and we can expect to be playing (and reviewing) this one before the year is out. **EF**
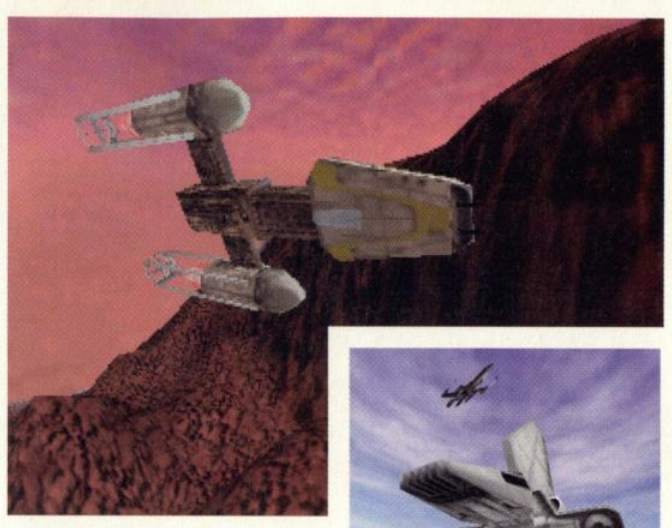
Rogue Squadron

N64/PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER
CATEGORY: AIR COMBAT
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS

Sounds as if LucasArts actually listen to their fans! Almost everyone agreed that the best level in the Shadow of the Empire N64 game, was the very first Hoth level in which you got to fly a snow speeder against oncoming AT-ATs. Well, they've gone away and come up with an entire game based on that concept. Named after the comic book series of the same name, Rogue Squadron puts you back in the shoes of Luke Skywalker, the Rebel hero fresh from his Death Star victory. You'll get a chance to fly not only X-Wings, A-Wings and Y-Wings (bombers) but even the experimental V-Wing airspeeders as well as the trusty snowspeeder! Gameplay consists of flying across the surface of a number of Star Wars environments, like Tatooine or Yavin, and taking out Imperial bases, dogfighting, escorting, protecting troop transports and keeping track of your fellow wingmen. At this stage, it doesn't look as if there is any actual combat out in space, but there are enough games which offer us that, so this is a nice change. Besides, swooping in and out of canyons and avoiding turret fire should mean a more action-packed game. There seem to be enough strategy elements in here to give N64 gamers a taste of what X-Wing and TIE Fighter were like on the PC, except with graphics which will get you dribbling. **EF**
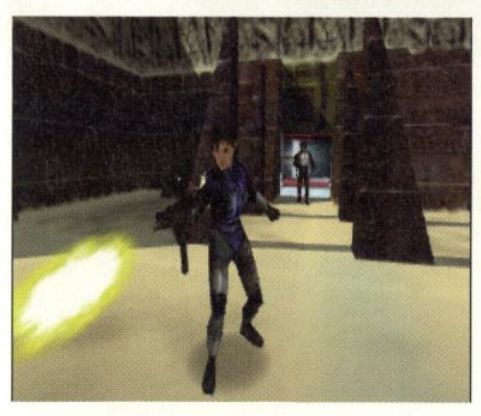
Perfect Dark

NINTENDO 64

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 1999
CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: RARE

It's long been rumoured what Rare were working on to follow in the footsteps of ther awesome shooter Goldeneye... and Perfect Dark is it. Thanks to E3, the world got a first glance at this oh-so-tasty shooter. Utilising the Goldeneye game engine, Perfect Dark looks damn impressive, and certainly pushes the Nintendo 64's hardware limits. The engine has been tweak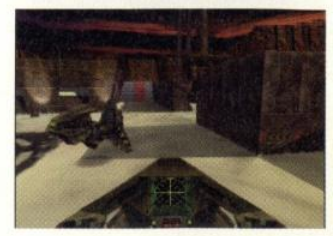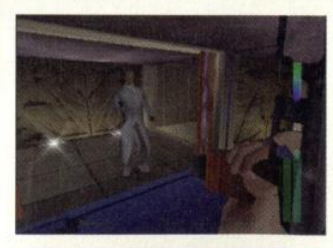ed almost beyond recognition, with the characters in Perfect Dark holding more polygons and more detailed textures than their Goldeneye counterparts. At the show, the game was running with a 4MB expansion pack, but Rare insists it won't be needed to play Perfect Dark when it gets released, they simply needed one to show features of the game they haven't yet optimised. The game will feature more weapons, more enemies and more death animations too! Heh. All up, the game is smoother and yet more detailed than Goldeneye - no mean feat for a cartridge game! The environments will be more interactive, with objects you can pick up and push around, and there will be things like hoverbikes which Joanna will be able to ride around the place. Different sorts of mines will be used to explode holes in walls and give you access to hidden rooms and new areas. Special effects include realistic lighting and water effects.

So what's the story? The year is 2023, and Joanna Dark (codenamed Perfect Dark) is drawn into a dark conspiracy surrounding the mysterious DataDyne corporation. Her mission will take her through the dark streets of Chicago and even to a submerged alien spacecraft. Cooler than. **EF**

PREVIEWS

International Superstar Soccer '98

NINTENDO 64/PLAYSTATION

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: KONAMI

No Nintendo 64 owner would be complaining about a lack of good soccer games on the N64 - but they keep on coming. The next in the International Superstar Soccer series, features a tweaked game engine and a bunch of subtle new features which improve on the original and simply make ISS64 '98 a much more solid game. The game will feature new camera angles, animations, a player create and edit function (so you can put the real player names in there!), better controls, five difficulties, six modes of play (Open Game, International Cup, World League, Penalty Kicks, Scenario and Training), better AI in the goalies, nine world stadiums and new music. There are also a whole bunch of weather effects and the option to play during the day, evening and night. You can also switch between 16 different strategies, during the game with the flick of the Z button. Rockin'.

Mission Impossible

NINTENDO 64

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: OCEAN

Mission Impossible was one of the first games announced for the Nintendo 64 - and it's still not finished! This year's E3 gave us another chance to see how the game has developed since we last saw it, and it seems Infogrames haven't dropped the ball. You still take the role of Ethan Hunt (played by Tom Cruise in the film), and are presented with five dangerous missions to accomplish - though when the going gets tough, you can call upon various team members to help you out. You have a whole array of cool spy equipment to use throughout your adventure, from the most basic wire-cutters and night goggles to deadly advanced weaponry and gadgets. The game is played from a third-person perspective, but the camera angle dynamically shifts to provide you with cinematic angles of play. For instance, your character will go transparent when your gun is drawn, to give you maximum visual clarity when attempting to shoot at your enemies. However, the focus in Mission: Impossible is on stealth and tactics, rather than all-out carnage. You're guaranteed a game chock-full of suspense here. The five missions span about 20 different levels, with a gripping storyline that should have you addicted to the game until you've beaten it thoroughly. Should be huge.

Carmageddon 2: Carpocalypse Now

NINTENDO 64/PLAYSTATION/PC/MAC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: RACING/SPLAT-FEST
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: SCI

Carpocalypse Now was announced for all platforms at E3, but most surprisingly officially making it to the friendly N64 - because this time around, the splat-fest is even more outrageous than before! All the pedestrians in Carmageddon 2 will be 3D polygons, which will make for more detailed blood bombs. Body parts will fly into pieces, bodies will be knocked into the air, set on fire and wrapped around lampposts. Traffic will also be included, as well as Emergency vehicles who appear to clean up after your carnage - and believe me there will be carnage. Everything will be breakable now - you'll even be able to drive through the glass walls of buildings. Hopefully we'll be playing this one around November.

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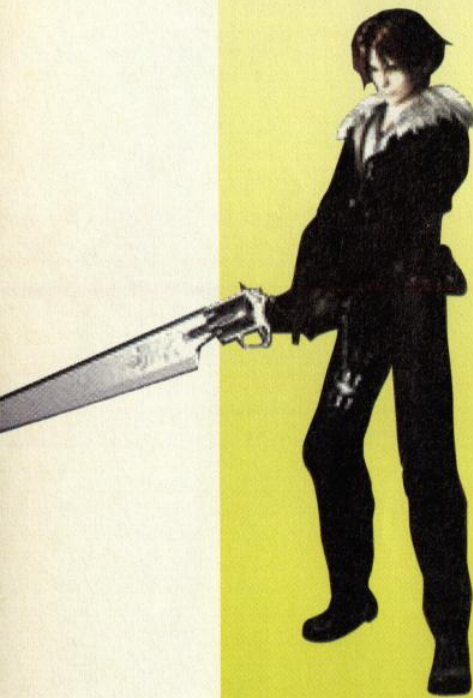- Packed with a FREE full version of Jazz Jackrabbit

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BLACK FRIAR

Final Fantasy VIII

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: 1999
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SQUARE

wow-o-meter

スコール
「敵はどこの連中なんだ？」

The anticipation over Final Fantasy VIII is just silly considering the game won't get a Western release for over a year, but it IS the sequel to one of the greatest videogames of all time, so... not much has been unveiled on the game, but we do have a certain amount of information for your consumption. For those of you expecting the continuing adventures of Cloud, Tifa and Barrett etc you may be a little disappointed to know that Final Fantasy VIII has all new characters. But the Final Fantasy games have always been unrelated with each other, so for die hard fans this will come as no surprise. The new heroes on the block are Squall Leonheart (a 17-year-old youth who doesn't care much for anyone, little alone himself) and Laguna Loire (a 27-year-old journalist who fights for justice), though you can expect to meet quite a few more on your adventures. The characters on screen will appear more realistically than they did in FFVII, and appear to look more humanoid and textured than the squat polygonal cast we know and love. The programmers are confident that there is still more untapped power within the PlayStation for pushing out more polygons and displaying them with greater detail. Considering the game is still so far off, we can expect a pretty amazing product.

As for weapons, the only one which has been leaked is the cool looking Gunblade - a pistol handle and trigger with a Cloud-like sword blade attached to it. We don't know how it works - but damn it looks good! There's seems to be little doubt that FFVIII will also be packed-full of new spells and summonings - guaranteed to knock your socks off. No word yet on plot, except that one of the Japanese programmers

commented that the central theme was Love. We can assume the game will be bigger than FFVII, but we don't yet know what time period it is set in. From the screenshots, the environments look very pretty and the playing area should be huge. If PC gamers are lucky, there's a good chance Final Fantasy VIII will get ported over much like FFVII has. Now everyone be good and stop thinking about this game for another 12 months! Argh!
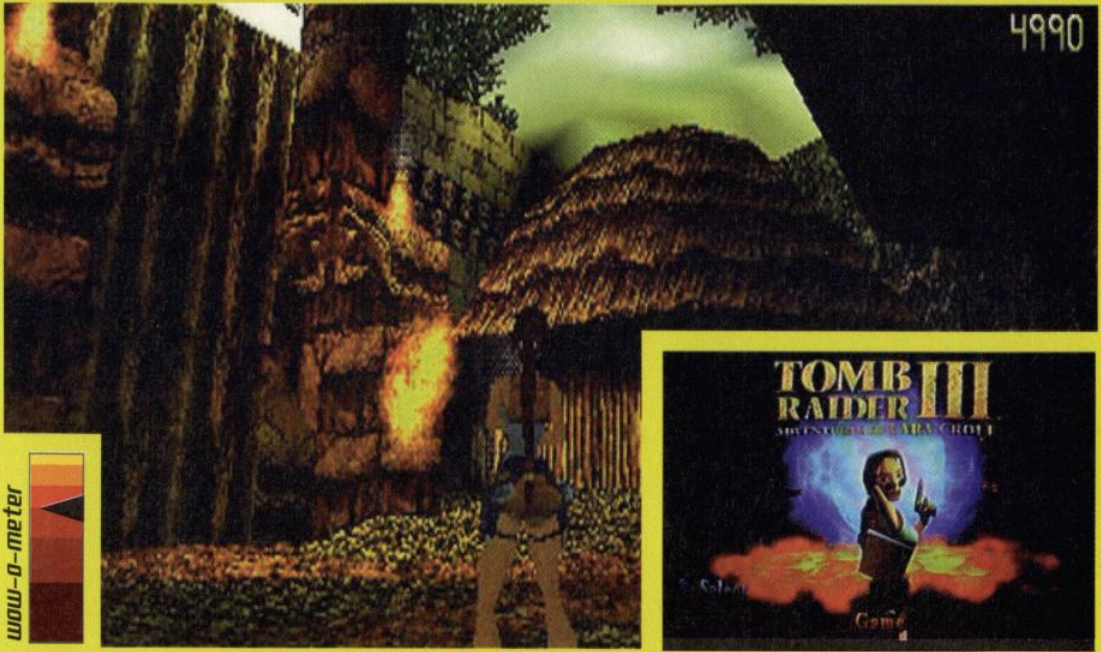
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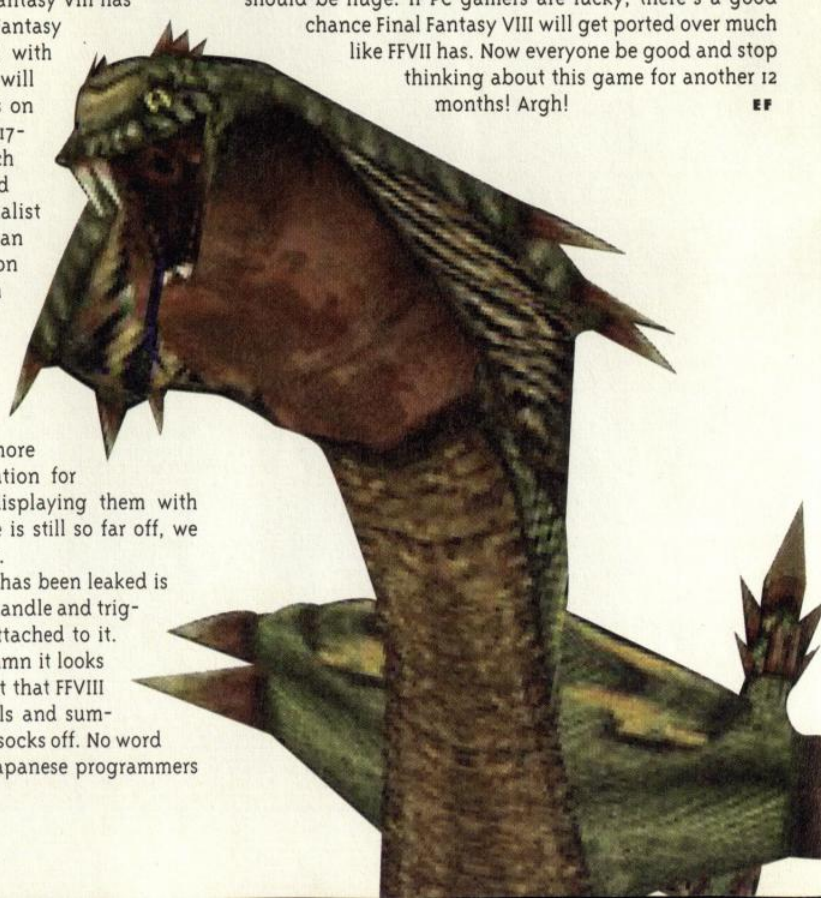
Tomb Raider 3

PLAYSTATION/PC

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: 3D ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: EIDOS

Lara lives on. Tomb Raider 3: The Adventures of Lara Croft will be arriving on shiny discs sometime in the next 12 months for both PlayStation and PC. Though not revolutionising the series (it essentially looks set to be more of the same), Tomb Raider 3 will have some nice new features for Lara fans to acquaint themselves with. Graphically, the visuals are sharper, cleaner (TR3 will be high res, as it was developed specifically for the PlayStation this time around) with smoother geometry and better environmental effects - less blocky than it's predecessors. The game is broken up into three chapters, which you can play in any order you like - each consists of five levels - so there will be 15 missions in total. The environments will make a nice change too, from the rooftops of london (Lara in a catsuit - grrrr) to a hidden Military Base, we should be given a good break from the Mayan Temple concept. New moves for Lara include the Crouch and Somersault manuevre which will no doubt be used to great effect in the game, and some minor differences with some of the weapons - but on the whole, those of you who have played Tomb Raider 1 and 2 will not be seeing anything terribly new with the next game in the series. You can expect new enemies of course, new puzzles and new funky FMV bits... just enough to get you salivating for that Tomb Raider Motion Picture. Mmmmm...   **EF**

wow-o-meter

4990

Colony Wars 2: Vengeance

PLAYSTATION

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER
CATEGORY: SPACE COMBAT
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS

If you thought Psygnosis delivered a big, multi-layered Space Combat sim in Colony Wars - you ain't seen nothing yet! Colony Wars: Vengeance is going to have even more multiple paths to victory, with a reported six different endings to the game. During missions, you may have multiple objectives - the more you complete may determine which mission you play next. Fans of the original will be excited to know that Vengeance will include all-new planet-based missions, thanks to the optimised game engine. This time around you're actually fighting against the League of Free Worlds, in a bizarre twist of fate. You may have to start out the game in one of four different fighters, but as you play you'll have the opportunity to upgrade your craft into one killer machine - weapons, shields and maneuverability will all be upgradeable. There will also be over 22 weapons to choose between over the course of the story - so you should be taken down those fleets of battle cruisers with nary a scratch on your shiny hull.

The engine has been poked and prodded to perfection, displaying more detail and sharper visuals than seen in Colony Wars. Vengeance looks truly spoogey. Adding on the three solar systems that appeared in the orginal, will be two brand new systems to explore. Throw in 26 new Full-Motion Video sequences and you have one spankingly good space combat sim coming in November.   **EF**

PREVIEWS
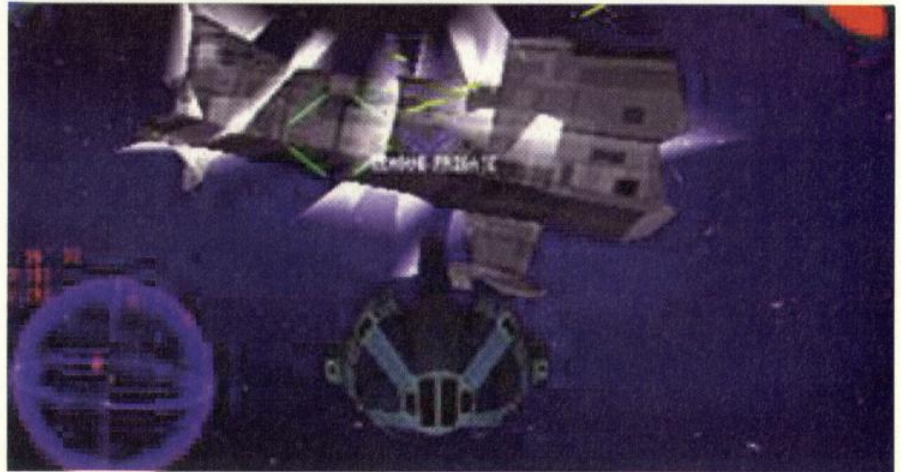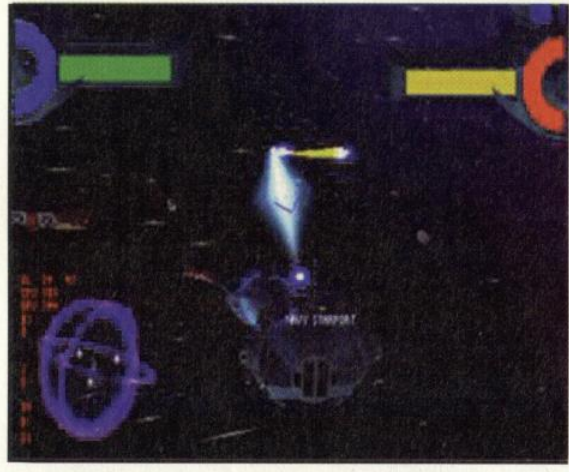
Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped

PLAYSTATION

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: 3D PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SONY

Did you ever doubt there would be another Crash Bandicoot sequel? Of course not! Children everywhere are wearing their Crash slippers, eating their Crash breakfast cereal after emerging from their Crash bedsheets only to stop and play a bit of Crash 2 before going to school... Gamers just want more Crash! It's that simple!

Well, Crash is returning to PlayStations towards the end of the year, in yet another scrumptious platforming adventure romp, this time subtitled Warped. Can we expect anything new? Yes! This time around, Crash has to travel back in time to stop a determined Dr Neo Cortex from his achieving his evil plans. Crash has to go back through Ancient Egypt, Rome, Medieval England and even prehistoric times, with twice the frames of animation we saw in Crash 2! Because of this time travelling business, the environments you'll get to explore will be bigger, more interesting and complex than the previous Crash games. Crash Bandicoot 3 will also give you greater variety of paths to choose from as you progress through the 3D landscape, with a more interactive

environment than before too. As usual though, Crash will be riding on the backs of animals and spinning his enemies out of the game, though new moves include the super-powered body slam and slides, a new double jump, a death tornado spin, laser guided apple bazooka and speed shoes. There will also be funky mission-orientated items to collect and use throughout the game. Crash 3 should hopefully turn out to be the most polished Crash game yet.
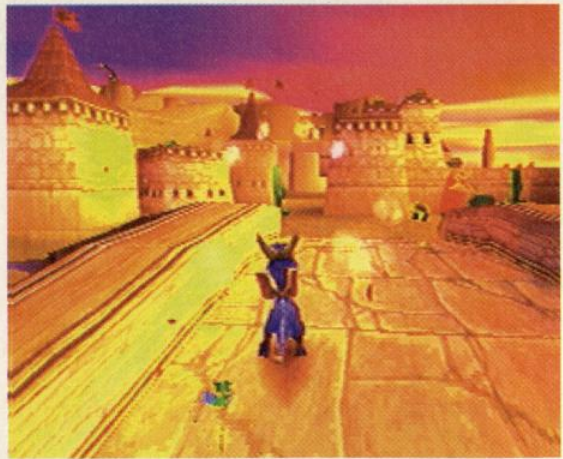
Spyro the Dragon

PLAYSTATION

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: DECEMBER
CATEGORY: 3D ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SONY

Here's a surprise title from Sony which had the attention of many at E3, Spyro the Dragon - a very Super-Mario-inspired 3D adventure platformer from developer Insomniac. Spyro is a young dragon who's family has been turned into a collection of crystal statues by Gnorc the Gnasty. All Spyro has to do to release them back into the land of living flesh, is touch the statue. But it's not that easy - there are 120 statues scattered throughout the land, and Spyro has to find them all, whilst dealing with Gnorc's evil underlings. Then he'll be faced with a final showdown with the evil Gnorc himself. There are 36 levels all up, spread over seven different worlds - each one uniquely 3D. Spyro can look and explore everywhere in total 360 degree freedom. Sounds a bit familiar now doesn't it. Each crystal statue which Spyro touches, turns back into one of his friends and rewards him with a special power. Eventually, Spyro will have enough skills to face his final challenge. Visually, the game looks really, really gorgeous and we're hoping it has the gameplay to match. Spyro himself can glide around on his little wings, and breathe fire amongst his other attacking moves. The music in the game should be great too, as Stewart Copeland, formerly the drummer in 80s band the Police has written the soundtrack.
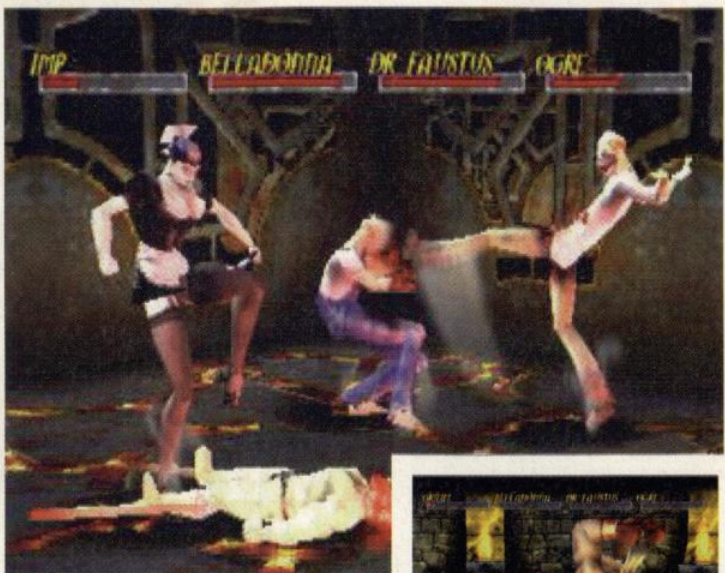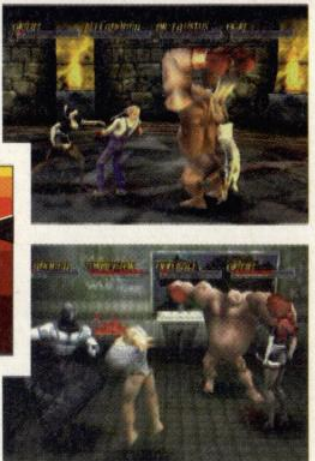
Thrill Kill

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: OCTOBER
CATEGORY: FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: VIRGIN INTERACTIVE

wow-o-meter

Since the fatalities of Mortal Kombat, gamers have been waiting for someone to come out with something even more violent and grotesque. Now Virgin Interactive have done it with their upcoming gore-fest fighting game, Thrill Kill. Taking the idea of fatalities one step further, Thrill Kill's gameplay centres around performing outlandish finishing moves on your opponents. Four people can play the game at the same time, and it works like so... as you punch and kick your opponents, as opposed to causing damage, you actually build up your own "kill" gauge. Once it hits it's limit, your character has the ability to "kill" another player - this is where everyone else desperately tries to keep out of your way, whilst trying to push others into your bloodthirsty path. The last person on screen to get killed, dies in the most graphically violent way, as it's the final victorious "thrill kill" of the winning fighter. Be prepared for decapitations, disemboweling, and lots of unfair play. There should be more blood in Thrill Kill than you've seen in all your years of playing Mortal Kombat. Characters include a sexy but deadly French Maid, a beefy guy in leather who looks suspiciously gimp-ish and other oddities like siamese twins joined at the waist. There will also be a number of big, gruesome bosses. This should really be "sick".
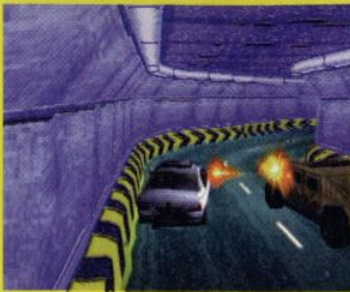
Tomorrow Never Dies

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: MGM INTERACTIVE

wow-o-meter

MGM Interactive have finally gotten around to making the Bond game they should have made a long time ago - maybe the success of Goldeneye gave them a kick in the butt? Well, this PlayStation action game is based on the last Bond movie, Tomorrow Never Dies and puts you directly into the shoes of James Bond himself, the suave 007. The game plays from a third-person perspective, though there are more stages than simply foot missions. This Bond game will put you behind the wheel of snazzy cars, stick you in a pair of skis, squeeze you into a tank, strap a parachute on your back and throw you into some scuba gear and take you underwater. If you want variety in your action games, then Tomorrow Never Dies looks like it could deliver. The missions will all be fairly espionage-based, so be prepared for lots of sneaking about and lots of funky Q inventions.

The Contract

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: DECEMBER
CATEGORY: 3D SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS

wow-o-meter

Natasha Moland and Simon McKlaren are both seeking revenge over the deaths of their families, innocent victims of a local crime gang. Natasha's playing style is way more aggressive than Simon's, so choose your character carefully, and enter into this third-person action adventure with your wits about you. Depending on how you play, there are different paths and endings to the game as you explore through the 16 different environments. Investigate city back streets, sewer systems and industrial parks in over 30 missions. Looking very similar to Goldeneye (hey, it's a winning formula!), the animation in the Contract has been motion captured for ultra-realism. You can even switch to a first-person perspective with a gun-sight, for the shootouts which is cool. Should be finished around Christmas.

PREVIEWS

Diablo 2

PC

AVAILABLE: 1999QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: ACTION/RPG
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: BLIZZARD

wow-o-meter

The world of Diablo 2 will be wilder and more wonderful than ever before... the land now consists of four different towns, connected by wilderness area, including the endless levels of dungeons under the ground. Not only does this mean a larger playing area, but it means battles taking place above ground which didn't happen in Diablo. The environment will also switch between day and night, giving the world a more atmospheric and absorbing feel - some magical items may also be specific to night for instance, losing their power when the sun rises. You may also find yourself getting lost late at night whilst wandering through the forests, as it can get very dark out there... Five all-new character classes will be available, with class-specific spells and fighting techniques - the Amazon, Necromancer, Paladin, Sorceress and Barbarian. Your character will now also be able to jump, but so will monsters! Blizzard have apparently included some ultra-rare magical items which may only appear in 1 in 8000 games! As far as the multiplayer side of things go, Battle.net will host a new trading post for players wanting to sell or trade items, and also have worldwide rankings. Blizzard are also doing their best to ensure that Diablo 2 is unhackable, to prevent more cheating by lame gamers who can't rely on their own skills.

Wheel Of Time

PC

AVAILABLE: 1999
CATEGORY: 3D ACTION/STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: LEGEND ENTERTAINMENT

wow-o-meter

If there was one game which left people gasping for air at E3, it was the Wheel Of Time based on the Robert Jordan fantasy novels. Only shown behind closed doors, WOT is an action game with strategy and RPG elements, based on the Unreal engine, which really takes that game engine to the next level. The only way to describe the environments in WOT, is with words which are not fit to print in Hyper mag!

The detail is quite incredible, and it bodes well for the future of first-person games. Development has been cruising along for quite a while now, yet the plan is to keep fine tuning everything for possibly another whole year, proving Legend Entertainment's dedication to producing a cutting-edge product.

Combat doesn't play out like any other 3D shooter, primarily because the game keeps true to the Robert Jordan novels, and everything is magic based. Searching the world for artifacts and seals will give your character greater power, but whilst you're out there adventuring, your enemies may be back at your castle attempting to steal your own artifacts - thus the strategy element comes into play. To protect your own domain, you can deploy troops or lay traps for any unsuspecting thief. This is also why Legend Entertainment are confident that Wheel of Time will turn out to be a fantastic multiplayer game (maybe even more so than the single player), because the combination of game elements allow players to approach the gameplay from different angles. Whilst the defense of your own domain for you is strategic, your opponent gets to tackle the challenge from a first-person perspective and vice versa. Unique and original.

The architecture within the game, was actually sketched by an architect before being created with the level editor, which gives the design of the game added depth. Everything has a purpose, and exploring the mysterious environment will be more exciting than ever. The game looks ridiculously good in software (that's without 3D acceleration), and the spells really take advantage of the 3D hardware if you have it. Transparent crackling lightning bolt spells, and gorgeous beams of fire - the 50 or so spells you'll get to play with in Wheel of Time are the best visual effects yet seen in a PC game. The release of the game may still be a long way off, but it should be worth the wait. **EF**
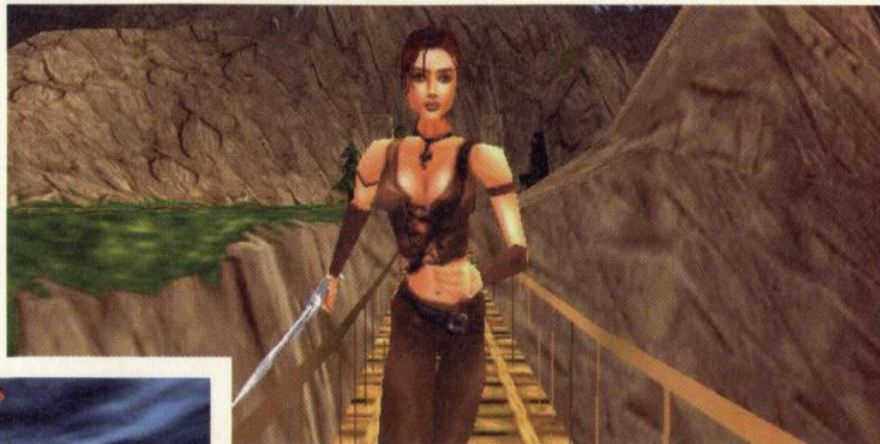
Drakan

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 1999
CATEGORY: ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS

Drakan is an exciting genre-busting PC game from the brainy-types at Psygnosis, which should kick off 1999 in good form. Played from a very Tomb Raiderish third person perspective, Drakan centers around Rynn, a very Lara Croftish looking warrior gal. Before we all throw our hands in the air and say "Tomb Raider clone!", a closer look at the game reveals that it's really nothing of the sort. Gameplay consists of two different "modes" - ground-based hand-to-hand combat, and airborne combat on the back of a dragon called Arokh. As Rynn, you get to roam the land doing your adventurey thing, meeting NPCs and finding weapons, but once you hop on the back of Arokh you can fly over the land with complete freedom. There are something like 50 weapons to be used throughout the adventure, from Arokh's dragon attacks to Rynn's melee weapons.

The game consists of five different fantasy worlds, which hold around 15 multi-mission levels in all. The big feature in Drakan is the ability to seamless go from flying around on the dragon, to landing and exploring an area - even venturing into an interior environment - all without any stop in gameplay. Nice.

Once you've finished the single-player game, you can then take on up to eight friends in a multi-player combat mode. Whether this will allow you to actually make the transition from sword-to-sword combat to airborne dragon fights remains to be seen, but it sounds logical to us. The game supports 3D hardware of course, which makes the whole game engine run smooth and look awesome. The animation will also give the characters an ultra-realistic edge, with Rynn herself being able to accomplish a whole number of moves on land. Looking forward to this one. **EF**

Prey

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 1999
CATEGORY: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
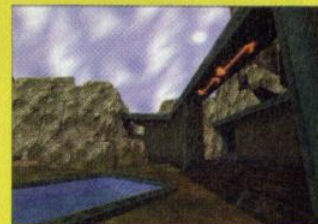**PLAYERS:** 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: 3DREALMS

As far as first-person shooters go, Prey was turning more than a few heads at E3. Using it's very own engine, Prey looked just as good as Unreal, which is impressive in itself, but when you consider the Prey team are going to be able to tweak the game for possibly another whole year , this could turn out to be something seriously special. You begin the game as a full-blood American Indian named Talon Brave, and end up battling it out against three different alien species! Must be a distant relative of Turok, eh?

The "Portal Technology" which 3D Realms have developed for Prey, allows you to fire your Portal Gun which spits out a rotating blobby portal showing you another level in the game. The tricky thing is, if you see a monster wander past through the portal, you can shoot your weapon through to the other level and try and kill it. Fancy stuff. Didn't someone tell them you can do this with teleporters in Unreal DM? Anyhow, Prey promises a fully interactive six-degrees-of-freedom game, with exceptionally dark and violent gameplay. Get that 3D card you've been thinking about too, because Prey will rely heavily on 3D accelerators for most of it's special effects. Realistic lighting, shadows and animation will hopefully deliver us a game-world which is real and fight-

PREVIEWS

the gripes people had with Interstate '76 can be thrown out the window - it looks like Activision have not only got this right, but they've made Interstate '82 way cooler than anyone expected. Not only will you get to drive some sexy 80s supercars, but Interstate '82 allows you to get out of your car and run around like the pistol-packin' bad-ass dude you really are. You will even be able to enter bulidings, and play some levels out along the lines of Quake 2 - then hop back in your car and take out your pursuers - hell, you can hop on a sleek motorbike! Nice. Gone will be the funk, and in will be the early-eighties cop show themes, like Miami Vice - so that'll amuse any gamers who grew up in the early eighties. In the multiplayer maps, more strategy will come into play, simply with the ability for your opponents to jump out of their cars and hide in the environment. Targeting a small moving human will be tougher than sending a rocket up the tailpipe of a bus, so balancing your weapon choice going into a match will be crucial. The game looks crisp and colourful, and we should see it pop up in a few months. **EF**

Interstate '82

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: 3D ACTION
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Get out your hot pink t-shirt, stone-washed jeans and winklepickers because Interstate '82 is on it's funking way. Using a brand new 3D engine (the Dark Side engine which we reported on last issue - fully 3D hardware native), all

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character is the direct descendent of the person you played in Fallout, but the village elders are determined for you to prove your heritage. So your adventure begins...

Fallout 2 will use the same engine as the original Fallout, though the programmers have given it a good tweak and added tons of new stuff. For instance, they've dropped the "time limit" concept, which will please gamers who love to take their time exploring. The game world should turn out to be at least 50% bigger than the original Fallout, with new cities, characters, monsters, items, weapons and maps. This time around, you'll even get to cruise the wastelands in a car! NPC's AI will be greatly improved, and you also be able to fit your party member's out with armour, weapons and new skills.

The world of Fallout 2 will also be a lot darker, with your character changing depending on your karma, giving you the option to turn good or evil. The game objectives won't nescessarily change, but being evil will mean certain characters won't talk to you and certain characters will. Sounds like a good non-linear, flexible world to us! Should rock.

Fallout 2

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: OCTOBER
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY

RPG traditionalists loved the big, bad world of Interplay's Fallout... but Fallout 2 is looking even bigger, badder and better! Currently aiming for an October release, Fallout 2 is set 80 years on from Fallout, and concerns you and your village's plight for a better environment. Your reserves are running out, and your ancestors' vault technology has to be re-discovered to help replemish the earth. Your actual

Myth II: Soulblighter

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: REAL TIME STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: BUNGIE

Exploding chickens! Yep, Myth II promises all that and more! Like for instance... exploding squirrels! It was inevitable really, that a classic like Myth would be given a good once-over by the programmers, packed full of new features and trussled up like a prize turkey for a beefy sequel. Myth II: Soulblighter looks set to continue the wondrous 3D real-time-strategy gore-fest which was Myth. Now boasting interior locations, as well as a terrain engine which holds four-times the level of detail the original did, Myth II is looking like great fun. Twice as many frames of animation, better AI, coloured lighting, dynamic shadows, 3D fire (which can divide troops on the battle field), working 3D environments like spinning windmills and 3D sound (so you can hear arrows flying overhead) pushes Myth II into the stupidly-good category. Expect a host of new units, new spells and funky secret stuff they won't tell us about yet! Be prepared to laugh too, because Myth II doesn't take itself too seriously. Nice to see.

wow-o-meter

Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine

PC

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER
CATEGORY: 3D ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS

wow-o-meter

It's been a long cold winter in the world of PC adventure games since Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis by LucasArts. It was one of their best - up there with the Monkey Island games (though with a tad less humour and more fiendish puzzles), and fans have been praying at the foot of their beds for years in the hope LucasArts would pump out another Indy game. Ta-da! This year's E3 blessed the gaming populace with the promise of Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine - an adventure which looks like proving that Indiana Jones was the original Tomb Raider. In full 3D-accelerated glory, Indy has gone third-person action (at least it looks that way at this stage), though there is little doubt that there will be plenty of puzzles along the way in this new installment. Indy can crawl, run, jump, use his whip, fire his pistol, swim, climb and use a variety of items on his quest to foil yet more Nazis. Sophia from the first game will make a brief appearance here too, which is kinda cool for fans of the original. Hopefully the Infernal Machine will not only beat Tomb Raider at it's own game, but set the pace for all future 3D action adventures. Let's hope. **EF**

PREVIEWS
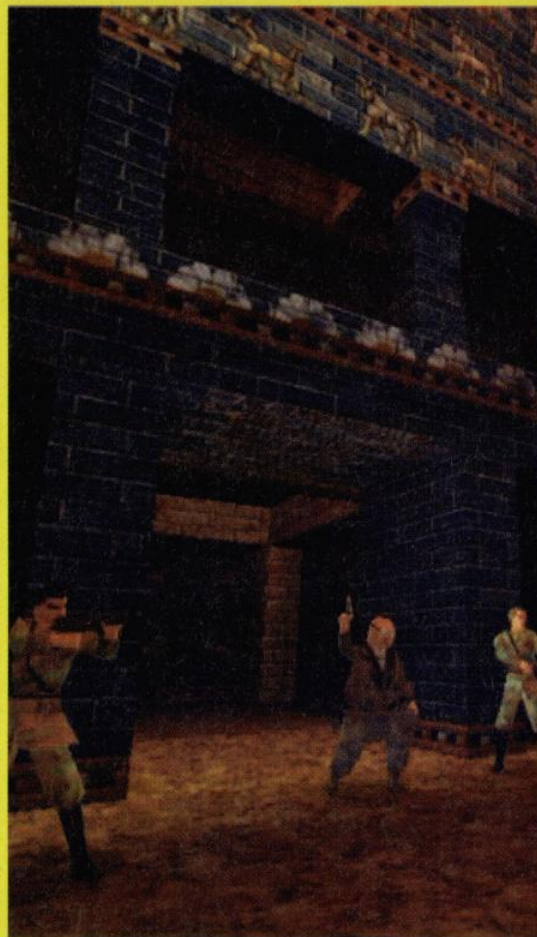
Powerslide

PC/PLAYSTATION

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE

Pumping out 300,000 polygons a frame at 60 frames per second, Powerslide from GT Interactive was probably one of the stand out racing games at this year's E3. The game is set 20 years in the future, post-environmental holocaust, and the new sport above ground (because everyone has had to go underground to avoid the now deadly environment) is a hardcore rally racing event. The races take place over swamps, toxic sand dunes and other tricky terrain in varying weather conditions - allowing for huge jumps and barrell rolls in your car. The gameplay hovers comfortably between simulation and arcade car handling, resulting in a awesomely fun game with the depth to keep you playing for ages. The AI will also be some of the best seen in a driving game, with the computer-controlled cars actually changing tactics during the race depending on the situation. Powerslide was looking so good a while back, that 3Dfx interactive were using the game to showcase their Voodoo graphics hardware. The game has been devloped by Emergent software, using their own graphics engine, and the game has evolved from promising into damn-well impressive. Featuring 10 off-road tracks, 6 vehicles, 4 classes and features like independent wheel suspension, Powerslide is making tracks.
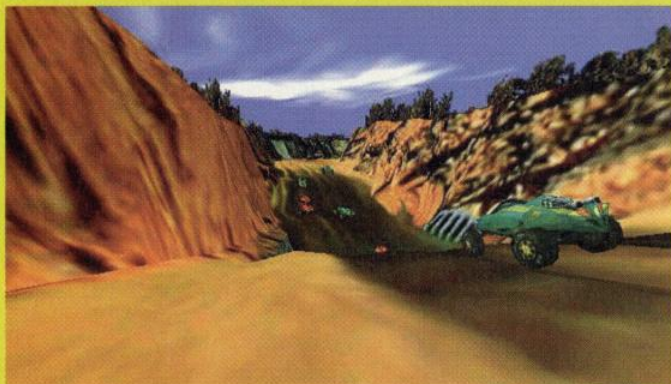
Duke Nukem Forever

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: 3D REALMS

The Duke is coming back. With a brand new game engine (it was built on the Quake 2 engine, and has now switched to the Unreal engine), Duke is going to be bustin' out all over with his new polygon biceps and gun barrels. Though the game is visually different, Duke's wise-cracks will remain, and there's even the possibility of a stripper or two! The environments look quite splendid, with loads of interactive objects - like vehicles you can ride in and planes to shoot down!

3D Realms have worked long and hard on this one, and they've kept everything a tight secret too, so chances are we won't know much about the game until it's unleashed in a marketing frenzy. What we've seen of the game though, makes it look like an absolute must buy!

Daikatana

PC

wow-o-meter

AVAILABLE: 4TH QUARTER '98
CATEGORY: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: ION STORM

The much talked-about first 3D shooter from John Romero and his team at Ion Storm, was shown again at E3, and is still looking mighty fine. Romero has a lot of critics to impress with this one after leaving id Software, and promising the world his finest work. The game takes you through four different centuries, through Grecian temples and futuristic factories, in search of the Daikatana. Expect a few role-playing elements with your characters increasing in experience with the more monsters they kill. You have specific attributes which will grow, depending on how you play — Attack Power, Attack Speed, Constitution, Acrobatic Skill and Movement Speed. You will be able to allocate your experience to the area of your character you wish to be improved. There will also be actual voices in the game, and Non-Player characters too...

UPCOMING RELEASES

The complete guide as to what's coming out over the next couple of months here in Australia


Daikatana

Heart of Darkness

Banjo Kazooie

Star Trek: Secret of Vulcan Fury

PC

August
Baseball Pro 99
Crime Killer
Cueball
Daikatana
Dawn of War
Dead Reckoning
Fantasy Football 99
Head Rush
Heart of Darkness
Lockheed Martin's 16
MIG 29
Recoil
Revenant
Sierra Golf 2.0
Star Trek: Secret of Vulcan Fury
Tiger Woods 99
World of Combat 2000

September
3D Ultra Pinball 4
Aironauts
Alien Intelligence
Alpha Centauri
Backyard Soccer
Baldur's Gate
Boxing 99
Caesar 3
Fighter Pilot
Grand Prix Legends
Kaos
Killsuit
Lands of Lore 3
Madden NFL 99
Magic & Mayhem
Morpheus
Moto Racer 2
Need For Speed 3
Newman Haas
NHL Hockey 99
Predator Racing
Quest For Glory V
Radar Rebels
Return Fire 2
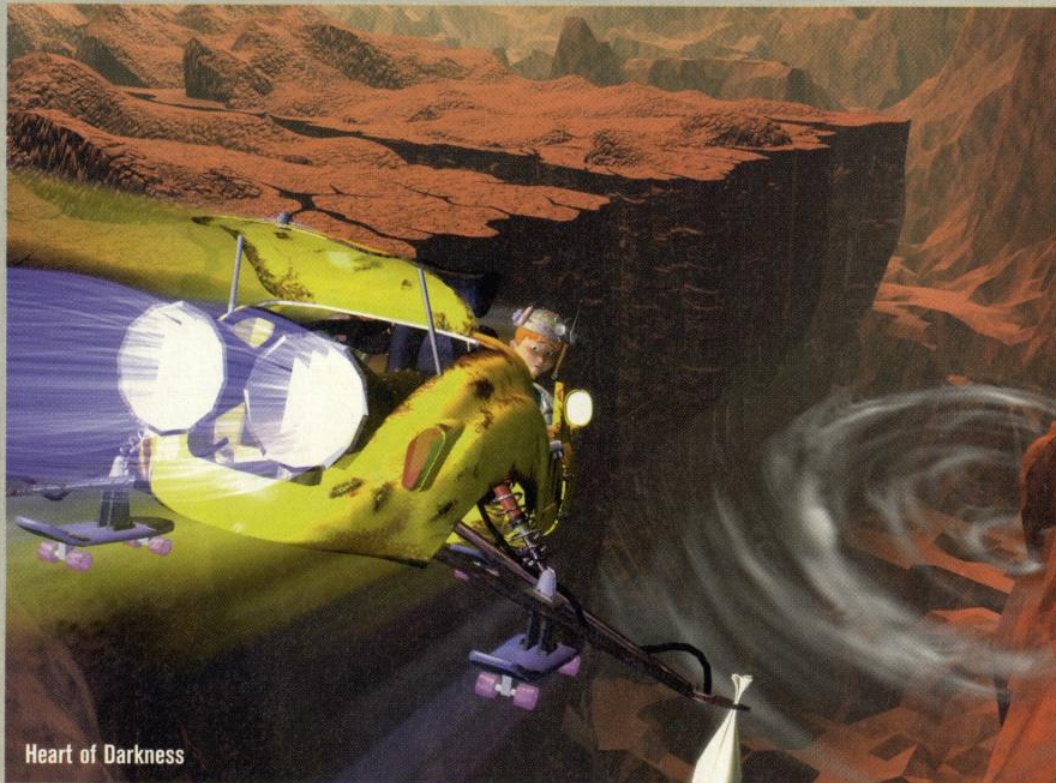
Sim City 3000
Star Siege
Tellurian Defence
Ultima: Ascension
Vigilance
Voxel Commandos
World Superbikes

PlayStation

August
Alien Ressurection
Fluid
Heart of Darkness
Legend
VIVA Football
Wild Arms
Zero Divide 2

September
Aironauts
BioFreaks
Castrol Honda Superbike
Duke Nukem: A Time to Kill
Earthworm Jim 3
International Superstar Soccer '98
LAPD 2100
Madden NFL 99
Mortal Kombat 4

Moto Racer 2
Nascar 99
NHL Hockey 99
Predator Racing
Red Alert: Retaliation
San Francisco Rush
Small Soldiers
Tennis Tour
Tiger Woods 99

N64

August
Airboarders
Cruis'n World
Earthworm Jim 3
Iggy's Reckin Balls
Mission: Impossible
WWF Warzone

September
Banjo Kazooie
BioFreaks
Buck Bumble
Chopper Attack
Gex 3D
Ken Griffey Jnr
Madden NFL 99
Mortal Kombat 4
Nascar 99
NHL Blitz
NHL Quarterback Club 99
Off Road Challenge
Paperboy
Predator Racing
Sim Copter
Tennis Tour

Release dates subject to change without notice... of course.

AMD K6-2 Processors

Type: PC CPU
R.R.P: Varies (see below)

Even though we don't have a category for recommended CPU, this a rather major event in terms of choosing a processor for a new PC, or even going about an upgrade. People tend to talk about computers as a "Pentium", whether this is due to the fact that Intel hold a majority of the market share, or simply because people don't even know that Intel actually have some competition.

AMD have actually been around for a while, and more so in the American market than the Australian one, they have had a lot of success with a strong install base over there. The main reason the AMD K-6 processors never became a hit as the CPU to buy is that their FPU (Floating Point Unit) capabilities were inferior to the Intel Pentium chips, and as a result, weren't so great for 3D applications, making them a very poor choice for gaming PCs.

AMD Go 3D

AMD have done the right thing, admitted the K6's FPU performance needed work, and got it working much more efficiently. This clears up the immediate shortcoming compared to Intel's CPUs... but it doesn't stop there. AMD have come up with "3DNow!" Technology, which like MMX, is an extra set of instructions that assist greatly in the way the CPU dishes out the triangle setup that is a fundamental step of creating 3D polygon graphics. Today's 3D cards have actually been far more efficient than the CPUs, and as a result "wait" on them. The 3D Now technology helps make the transition of information from the CPU to the video cards much more efficient, without actually running at a higher frequency. What this means is that rather than being an alternative to using your 3D cards, the AMD K6-2 will compliment them, and basically get better results out of them than the equivalent Pentium II chip would.

This boost is only used by those using Direct X6, which is pretty much going to come along with almost every new game you buy in the very near future anyway. Note however that some old games won't be able to get anything out of Direct X 6, and thus 3Dnow! as well. AMD have also been establishing relationships with game developers and hardware manufacturers, so that the maximum performance can be drawn from the K6-2 CPUs. A game that has 3DNow! code, runs in Direct X6, on a machine with a 3D accelerator that has drivers that cater for 3DNow!, will run better on a K6-2 than on a Intel Pentium 2 of the same speed. Take away these factors, and the technical advantage disappears. Quake 2 runs better with K6-2, but Turok runs worse (relative to the Intel Pentium II CPUs).
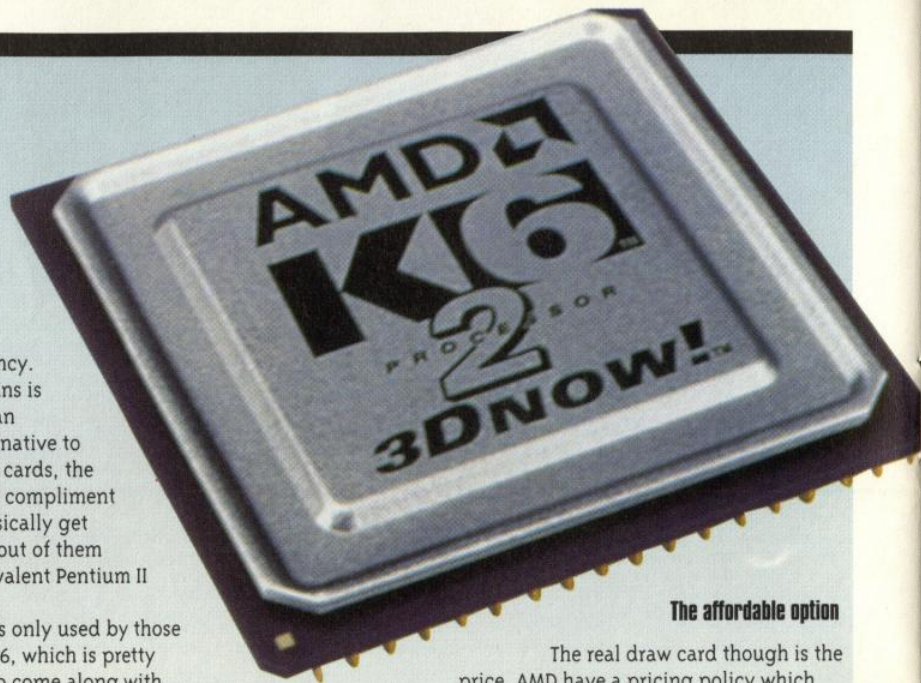
The affordable option

The real draw card though is the price. AMD have a pricing policy which basically means they should always be a consideration. The policy is that they price their AMD K6-2 CPUs 25% cheaper than the Pentium II CPUs of the same frequency. So basically, if you were to buy today, you'd get a CPU that is 25% cheaper, and will run almost every game that gets released from now on, faster than on a Pentium II. Intel have things in store though, so prepare to see a real battle develop. If you hate monopolies, consider that Intel have been in the same position as Microsoft, and that the next six months could see Intel lose its stranglehold if the PC buyers of the world choose to give AMD a go, which could have a really serious affect on the price of buying a new computer.

Dan Toose

ACCESS LINE RACE LEADER 32/64

PlayStation & N64
Type: Racing Wheel
R.R.P: $139.95

Over the last year or so we've witnessed a huge flood of third party peripherals for all game platforms, especially Nintendo 64 and Sony PlayStation. One of the most prolific products for these systems as well as the PC has to be the analog steering wheel & pedals. There are now quite a few multi-platform steering wheels available for you to pick and choose. Well, this month we're going to add to your woes by giving you yet another option in the form of the "Access Line Race Leader 32/64", a N64 and PSX cross platform steering wheel.

The first thing you'll notice about the Race Leader is that it is quite attractive. It has colourful (red, yellow and green) buttons and a high gloss finish. Access line have done away with the gearstick on the side approach and put two Formula One style paddles on either side directly behind the wheel itself, which I think is preferable. Performance wise this wheel is certainly nothing special. Unfortunately, it pales quite a bit in comparison to the Top Gear, Mad Catz and V3 steering wheels due to it's flimsy design and limp wheel tension. It can however be adjusted for height and angle, which will no doubt suit some gamers, and it does support the N64 Rumble Pak and memory card. All up, I couldn't recommend this wheel to anyone over the others currently available, but it does get the job done! A good deal if you own both a PSX and N64, as it supports both.

Simon Bailey

Buyers Guide The guide to purchasing the best value gaming hardware

	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.
Gamepad	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.

The Hyper BOTBLAST Champions

The last time we ran a Quake comp in Hyper the response was huge, and once again the Australian Quake community came out to show their stuff and prove that they're better than some AI! We picked a small tight map with features that would enable the most efficient players to control the map and rack up the frags against two Omicron deathmatch bots over 5 minutes. Most entries were in the 20's and low 30's, but the stand out performance was from a young Quake expert from sunny Strathfield, N.S.W rose to the top of the pack with a whopping 53 frags.

The winner is:
1st place (on 53 frags)
Tim Wong
Quake handle: FlinT
Quake Clan: Bad Mojo
From: NSW

FlinT's demo is a textbook example of how to rack up frags fast. Some players controlled the whole level, hogging all the weapons, but FlinT spent more time concentrating on getting the kills, which is the way to win. Those that go to Hyper ctive and download the demos will see that FlinT generally hangs in the same area through the demo, and has learned that the bots enter the teleporters if they see him, so he covers the spawn points with grenades, lets himself be seen, and racks up the kills.

He was also the only player to submit a demo that didn't die during the demo, so hats off for a perfect performance.

FlinT received a copy of Unreal, a copy of Sin will also wing it's way to his mailbox once available, and of course he gets a free subscription.

The other winners were:
**2nd place** (on 42 frags)
Adam Solomon
Quake handle: Adder
Quake Clan: Bad Mojo
From: NSW

Besides having a great demo, Adder helped Bad Mojo get a total stranglehold on the title. Maybe if we do another one of these we'll see it become more of a competitive thing between clans. Come on, can't some clan out there match it with the Mojo?

3rd place (on 41 frags)
Jason Storm
Quake handle: Jaxx
Quake Clan: Realm of Fear
From: SA
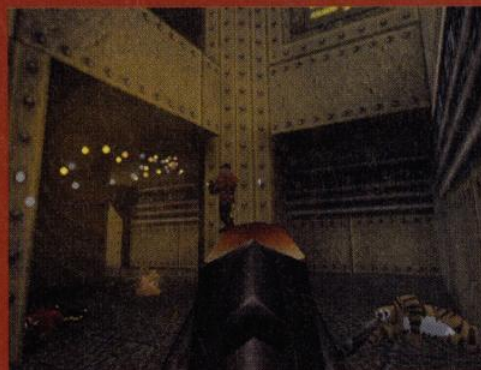
Jason's demo looked the most manic and relentless. He just kept on chargin' everyone down! Most amusing was the "Blue Oyster" style lightning kill on Mountie! Now that's gibbin' someone's ass!

4th place (on 39 frags - 2 deaths)
Richard Scroce
Quake handle: Groo
Quake Clan: -
From: VIC

Mr last minute himself, Richard's demo came in hours before the deadline, and scraped home to earn a copy of Unreal. Prior to Groo's entry there was a 5 way tie for 5th place on 37 frags! Proving just how tight the competition was.

5th place (on 39 frags - 3 deaths)
Corbett Battaile
Quake handle: Red
Quake Clan: -
From: NSW

A Mac Quaker who shows remarkable talent with the Thunderbolt. One less death and he may have come 4th! His falling "Death from above" Thunderbolt kill on Mountie ranked amongst the coolest looking kills of the competition.

To see the demos for yourself, go to http://www.hyperactive.com/ and download them!

Do you want more!?
Thanks to all who entered and made this an excellent competition. Once Quake 2 version 3.16 comes out and the bots for that version are confirmed to work, we'll run a Q2 botblast (probably Eraserbots). Seeing as team games are possible with bots, we may look to run not only an individual comp, but also a clan comp as well. We will also look into the possibilities of doing Unreal botblasts.

If any Quake, Quake 2 or Unreal fanatics out there have any thoughts or feedback on botblasts, we'd love to hear 'em. Send email to omicron@next.com.au

THE PARTS OF THE PC.

Do not think of a computer as a single piece of electronic hardware, because they're really made up of lots of different components. Just like cars vary in performance depending on what engine, tyres, and brakes they have... So too do computers vary in performance according to what CPU, motherboard, video card, RAM, etc they have inside. We look at each component of the PC, and help you better understand what they do, and what you want. Note that the different components relate to each other, so reading back over a component, may mean even more to you if you now understand stuff about some other component. We also have gone through this practical exercise ourselves, as Dan has just bought a new top end gaming PC, so we'll explain each component, and then look at Dan's choice, and why he made it. Of course, the nature of PC technology means you'll probably be able to get a better machine than Dan did, for about the same price, so always look out for new stuff.

CPU (CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT)

The CPU is the "brain" of your PC. The higher the frequency the faster it "thinks", or more precisely, calculates various functions. In terms of the CPU you choose, the options are relatively straightforward. For gamers with money, the high level Pentium II CPUs are the fastest and best performing. For those with limited cash, Pentium MMX CPUs are available at incredibly cheap prices.

Another option is the cut down Pentium II Celeron which offers good gaming performance but relatively poor business performance to a similarly rated Pentium II.

Outside of Intel there are chips from Cyrix and AMD. Whilst the Intel chips offer the best 'brute force' processing, the alternatives from AMD and Cyrix are good to examine. For gaming the Cyrix chips offer reasonable performance but have suffered some incompatibilities with some games. The

BUYING A GAMING PC

By Professor Peril

It is every PC gamer's worst nightmare and every year or two it happens... The 'necessary' upgrade. With advancements in gaming outstripping nearly every other field of computing, the base level PCs required to run the latest and greatest games keeps climbing. While the last two necessary upgrades have been forced by iD products, notably Doom and then Quake, the latest game to push the limits of your PC is Epic's Unreal. Similarly if you want to be able to play Forsaken, Incoming and a whole host of the latest 3D games without having to turn off certain graphics options then an upgrade is what you need. Even in the 2D world of real-time strategy, recommended gaming requirements have risen to the level of a Pentium 166. Also, over the last two years, 3D accelerator cards have become so common in gaming machines that the majority of 3D titles look horribly blocky without one. With Windows98 here, expect gaming requirements to rise even higher. One of our tech gurus, Professor Peril will advise you on how to build up your ultimate gaming rig and warn you of some pitfalls.

AMD K6 are excellent value (25% cheaper) and offer very fast Windows 95 performance sometimes outstripping a Pentium II but they have been criticised for their performance in games which use the FPU (floating point unit) such as Quake2 and hybrids. However, paired with a good 3D accelerator card the K6 is well worth looking into. The newer K6-2 with 3Dnow is also worth considering (still 25% cheaper), as AMD have worked on the FPU performance, and more specifically, new instructions that allow a higher rate of transfer to the 3D accelerators, resulting in better frame rates on screen. These instructions will only be taken advantage of automatically by Direct X 6 or later in Windows 95/98.
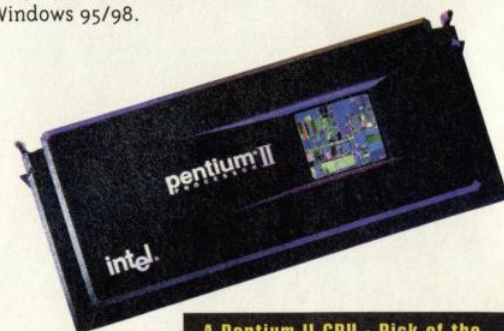
A Pentium II CPU - Pick of the bunch, for now

Motherboard

Labels on motherboard image: RAM modules, ISA Ports, AGP port, CPU, PCSI ports

EDITOR'S CHOICE: PENTIUM II-333MHZ.

Basically, this was the fastest CPU I could afford at the time. A bonus is that this particular CPU (333) seems VERY stable for overclocking, so I feel like I've got a faster CPU than what I paid for. At the time the AMD K6-2 CPUs hadn't come out yet, so they weren't an option, but if I was buying again today, I'd be very tempted to choose AMD due to the improvements in 3D performance, which is essential to my gaming needs.

MOTHERBOARD

The basis of every computer is the motherboard (also referred to as mainboard). It is the motherboard that all other devices are mounted onto, and it is the motherboard that controls the paths that data travels between various components. If you have a poor quality motherboard then you are likely to experience unexplained system crashes and your high-end components will fail to work to their limits. Motherboards are made by a number of manufacturers from well-known names like Intel to tiny Taiwanese companies. Being the least advertised part of a system, often computer retailers fail to tell you what brand of motherboard they are putting into your computer. Motherboards can be classed by their CHIPSET (see table to match CPUs to Motherboards).

For the Pentiums and Pentium-MMX series, motherboards based on the TX chipset are the ones to choose. The TX chipset supports a number of useful features such as the fast 168-pin SDRAM, Universal Serial Bus (USB) and ULTRA-DMA for faster hard drive accessing. On the downside, the TX chipset only supports 64MB total RAM before it begins to suffer performance-wise. Because of this some of the TX features have been implemented on the newer models of the VX and HX boards, both of which properly support higher RAM configurations.

For the Pentium II series the choice is easier. When the Pentium II was first released the only chipset that supported it was the outdated 440FX chipset originally designed for the Pentium Pro. This had the effect of constraining the performance of the Pentium II considerably and more recently the LX and BX chipsets have been released. Both of these chipset support SDRAM, USB and ULTRA-DMA as well as implementing the Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) which will be
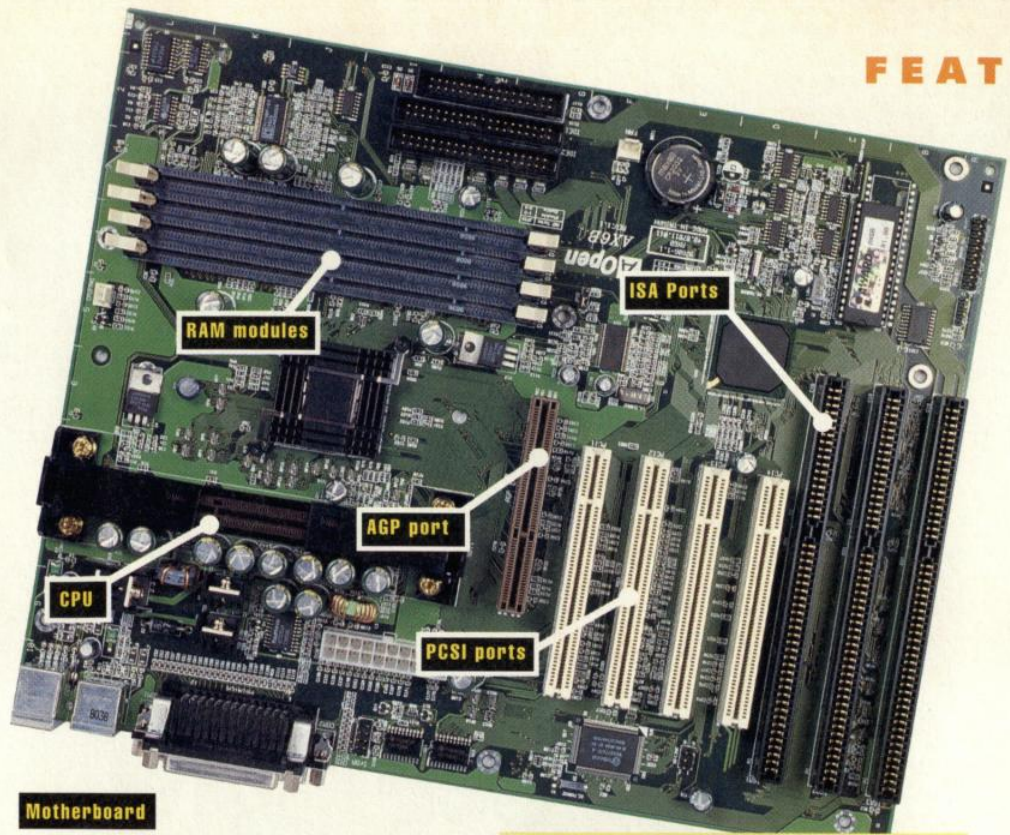
discussed shortly. For Pentium II 233-333 models the LX chipset is the most common, while the BX is specifically geared towards the Pentium II 350 and above, although most motherboards also support the 233-333.

The crucial difference between the LX and BX chipsets is the potential BUS SPEED (see insert). The LX chipset supports the standard 66mhz bus speed whilst the BX supports the newer and faster 100mhz bus speed. In my own tests I have also found that some BX boards do actually perform slightly faster than their LX counterparts when clocked at similar bus speeds although the difference is hardly noticeable.

Because there are so many motherboard manufacturers the choice is often overwhelming. In independent surveys available on the Internet (see web sites insert), boards from ABIT and AOPEN consistently score well for performance, stability and features. Of the cheaper motherboards GIGABYTE and the Chinese-made QDI offer good performance and stability. The choice of motherboard should come down to three factors stability, performance, and special features (like overclocking).

EDITOR'S CHOICE: AOPEN AX6B BX BOARD / ABIT BX6 BOARD

Considering the top of the range motherboard only costs $270, it's a wise move to get the best, since it affects your whole system performance. This board is fast, jumperless (meaning you do all your overclocking on screen, not by physically adjusting jumpers), overclocks very well, and catered for every other bit of hardware I intended to use. It will also allow me to pop in a faster CPU in the future.

MEMORY

Back in the days of a 386 and DOS, 4MB of RAM was considered enormous. The venerable Commodore 64 had only 64KB of RAM, but now it is foolish to settle for less than 64MB of RAM. Games are getting bigger and bigger, and the more memory your machine has, the less it will
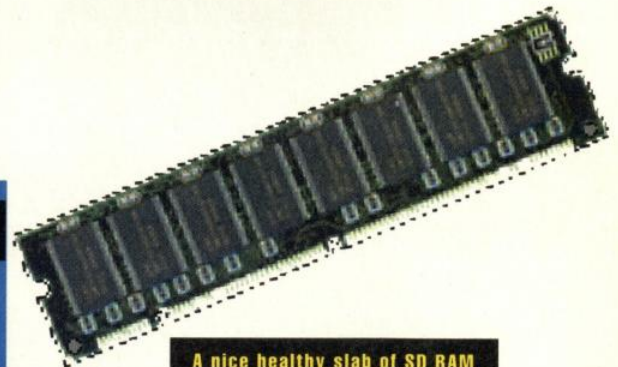
A nice healthy slab of SD RAM

need to use you hard disk for 'virtual memory' through a process known as 'caching'. You can think of RAM as the raw amount your system can "think" about at once, without having to resort to "writing it down" by accessing the hard drive. Unreal is notorious for 'caching' and on low memory system the in-game action slows to a crawl as the available memory is eaten up. Whilst Unreal runs at its best on 128MB RAM systems, other games and Windows 95 rarely benefit from

CPU AND REQUIRED MOTHERBOARD TABLE

PROCESSOR/CPULATEST	MOTHERBOARD CHIPSET
INTEL PENTIUM 60-233	MMX SOCKET 7 - 430TX
INTEL PENTIUM PRO 150-200	SOCKET 8 - 440FX
INTEL PENTIUM II 233-333	SLOT 1 440LX and some 440BX boards
INTEL PENTIUM II CELERON 266	SLOT 1 - 440EX
INTEL PENTIUM II 350-450 -- SLOT 1	440BX
AMD K6 200-233	SOCKET 7 - 430TX
AMD K6 266+	SUPER 7 (phase 1) - VIA-MVP3
AMD K6-2 300+	SUPER 7 (phase 2)- VIA-MVP3
CYRIX 686	SOCKET 7 - 430TX

BUS SPEED & OVERCLOCKING

Bus speed is the speed at which data travels around the motherboard between components, the CPU and memory (RAM). CPU speed is always a multiplication of the bus speed. The higher the multiplier the less the performance increase, which explains why a Pentium 200 (66x3.5) is only slightly slower than a Pentium 233 (66x4.0). In 66MHz bus speed machines, data moves between RAM and the CPU at 66MHz. The PCI bus has a standard of 33MHz (half the overall 66MHz bus speed), however with the advent of SDRAM overall bus speeds could be increased.

The faster nature of SDRAM allows bus speeds of 100MHz and sometimes higher, whilst AGP (Accelerated Graphics Port) allows transfers at 66mhz. The latest Pentiums IIs now operate at 100mhz on BX chipsets which explains why despite the difference between a Pentium II 300 (4.5x66) and a 333 (5.0x66) is negligible, the jump to a Pentium 350 (3.5x100) is quite noticeable. For the knowledgeable there have always been ways around the shortcomings of the 66MHz bus and even now the same practices called overclocking are being implemented on the 100MHz bus. Some motherboards allow 'nonstandard' bus speeds such as 75 and 83, or on the 100MHz BX boards 102, 112 and 133. This allows a risk-taking user to run their Pentium II 300 at 4.0x75 or 3.5x83 both of which make quite considerable performance differences because the PCI bus is now running at 38MHz and 42MHz instead if the standard 66MHz. Whilst most PCI devices run safely at 38MHz, some cards, especially video cards, begin to show signs of stress at 42MHz so be careful. However, if a Pentium II 300 is clocked at 3.0x100 there is virtually no performance increase. Why? This is because at 100MHz the motherboard still runs the PCI bus at 33MHz to maintain backward compatibility.

Overclocking also allows users to run their CPUs at higher speeds than usual by simply increasing the multiplier although this is very risky and can easily burn out your CPU if you are not careful. Remember, too, the law of diminishing returns and that it is much better performance-wise to raise the speed of the bus rather than the clock multiplier.

Note: Making adjustments to your bus and CPU speeds can cause damage, and any actions you take here are entirely at your own risk. If you don't feel confident you know what you're doing, don't take the risk.

such a luxurious setup, and, if you have a TX motherboards, greater than 64MB will result in system slowdowns in any case. RAM still comes in a number of varieties. There is Standard 72pin RAM, 72 pin EDO RAM, and 168 pin SDRAM. Standard RAM dates back from the days of the 486, EDO is faster but the new standard and often the only size that new motherboards support is SDRAM. SDRAM is unique because it is built to run at the speed of the bus (66-100MHz) which allows it operate considerably faster than both EDO and Standard 72 pin RAM. SDRAM is also fast becoming the new standard and is the best option if you want to be able to take your RAM with you when you next upgrade. EDO and SDRAM also come in a number of speeds with EDO available from 40 to 60ns (nano seconds) and SDRAM from 6 to 15ns. RAM speed is important in fast machines and with BX motherboards only faster than 10ns SDRAM is recommended (but it costs considerably more). Fast RAM is also of great benefit if you're overclocking as it provides a more stable environment (slower RAM can result in lock ups).

I forked out the extra money so I could: 1) overclock with that extra bit of stability, and 2) Upgrade to a P2-400 without having to buy more RAM later... although I will once the price comes down on this speed of RAM. If you have limited spare RAM slots on your motherboard, buy larger SIMMs (64mb) to keep your options open.

HARD DRIVE

Games are not only getting more memory hungry, but they are also wanting to take up more and more space on your hard drive. Despite the rapidly increasing speeds of CD-ROM drives the average game still wants to take up 150MB of hard drive space. For example, Unreal operates best when installed at 450MB, Blade Runner wants over 1GB as its maximum install, and then you still need space for your operating system, you game add-ons and Internet stuff. As a general rule, the minimum hard drive size should now be around 4.3GB which will allow a fair number of games to remain installed on your machine whilst still keeping aside enough room for the rest of your work. Hard drives come in two varieties, each named by their connector, IDE and SCSI. IDE drives plug into the IDE interface usually built onto your motherboard and can run under the latest Ultra DMA technology at 33mb/s burst transfer rate although the real world rate is closer to 6-10MB/s. SCSI drives are considerably faster
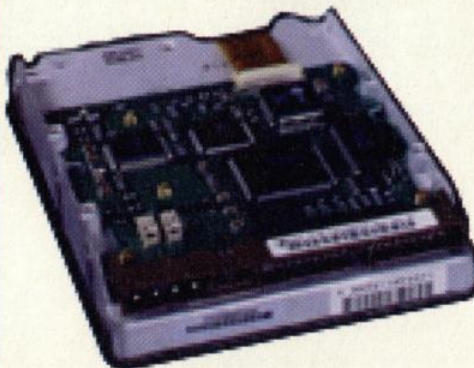
and more reliable than IDE drives but require a separate SCSI controller and are far more expensive than IDE drives. Arguments over which is best, IDE or SCSI, have raged for aeons in the computer world but for most gamers, a large IDE drive running with UltraDMA (see motherboards), will be more than adequate. With any large hard drive there is a catch... wasted space.

To be honest, I'd bought this HD for my old computer, just a few months back, so I just moved old hardware across. If I was buying new, I'd get a 8GB drive.

CD-ROM

At this stage a straight up 24 speed CD-ROM is all you need nowadays. DVD is expensive, and unless you're heavily into FMV based games or the idea of watching DVD movies, you're probably better off waiting for DVD to come down in price, and get a new drive later. There is a catch with some CD Rom drives over 12 speed, in that they often have considerable 'spin up' times and generate quite a lot of vibrations when spinning which isn't too good for your system overall. If you can, test the CD Rom drive in the shop - does it make a lot of noise? does it take a while to 'find' data? Also, if you are thinking of delving into the world of sound recording and wish to 'rip' music from music CDs, then it is well worth checking out which drives support direct digital transfer.
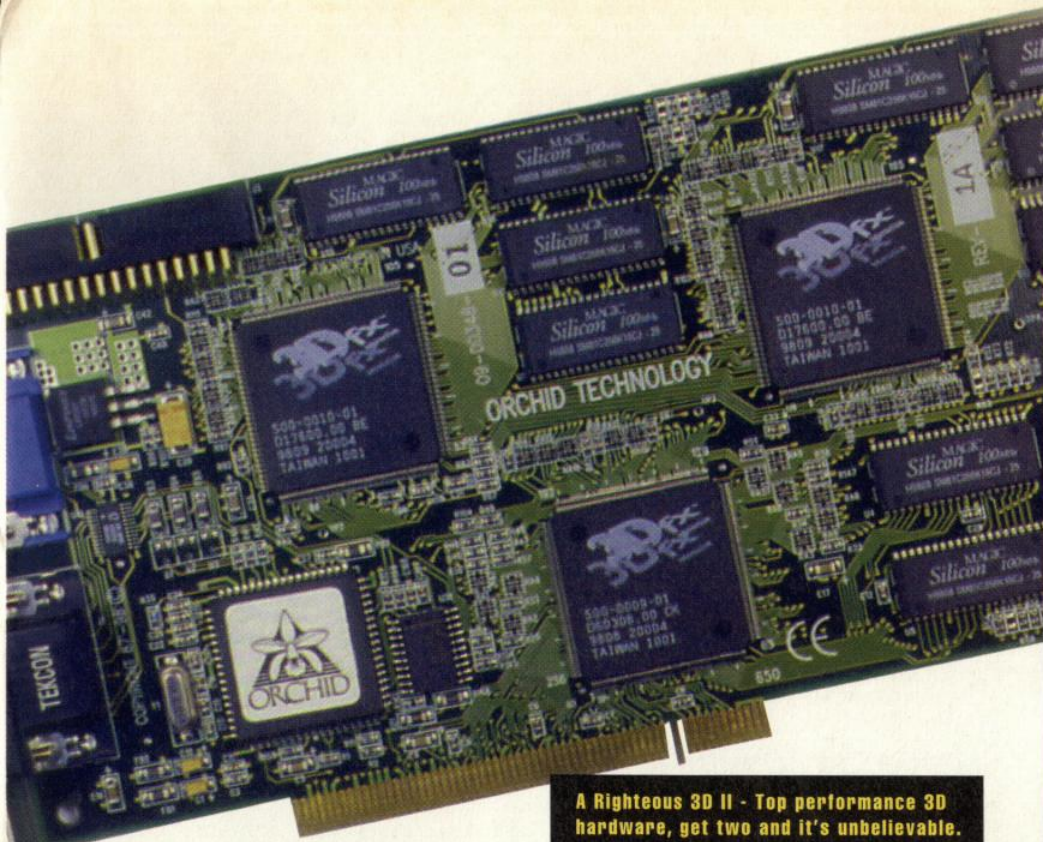
I've had a Mitsumi CD ROM once in the past, and it was amazingly unreliable. This CD ROM Drive I now have seems totally reliable... and that's all that matters really.

OPERATING SYSTEM

WINDOWS 95, WINDOWS 98 OR WINDOWS NT?

Although this is not hardware, if you're buying a system from scratch, it's a big issue. Already in this article we have seen five technologies that have developed after the initial release of Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0 MMX, the Pentium II, UltraDMA, AGP, and FAT32. To this list can be added USB (Universal Serial Bus) which allows the chaining together of devices like keyboards, scanners, mice, modems but for which there are virtually no peripherals currently available. In the cases UltraDMA, AGP and USB device manufacturers provide special drivers for

A Righteous 3D II - Top performance 3D hardware, get two and it's unbelievable.

HOW HARD DRIVES WORK

FAT16 VS FAT32

In the days of DOS and Windows3.1 data was arranged on the hard drive under a system called FAT16 (File Allocation Table). As a maximum size, FAT16 supports 2GB drives. With the advent of Windows 95, FAT16 remained to allow for backward compatibility. On later releases of Windows 95 (OSR2 and above) packaged only with new systems, FAT32 emerged boasting support up to 8GB but at the expense of backward compatibility. This lack of compatibility meant that a whole host of older disk management software, especially DOS based utility software could cause irreparable damage when run on FAT32 drives. With Windows98, FAT32 will become much more widespread. So what is the benefit of FAT32 other than supporting larger hard drives?

FAT32 not only allows users to use larger hard drives in enormous single partitions but it also saves space on these large partitions. Data is stored on a hard drive in clusters of data. This cluster size means that even if a file reports itself as being only 1KB in size it will actually take up the minimum cluster size in space on your hard drive. Thus if you have a 1KB file stored on a 2GB FAT16 partition it will actually take up 64KB of space, because above 1GB the minimum FAT16 cluster size is 32KB. A 33KB file on the same drive would take up 64KB of usable hard drive space and so on. Under FAT32, the same 1KB file would take up 4KB, a 33KB file, 36KB, because the minimum cluster size is set at 4KB rather than 32KB. On an average system running Windows95 on a 2GB FAT16 partition, converting to FAT32 reclaims about 400MB of spare hard drive space.

FAT16/FAT32 TABLE

Drive Size	FAT 16 Cluster	FAT 32 Cluster
128MB	2KB	512bytes
256MB	4KB	512bytes
260MB	4KB	512bytes
512MB	8KB	4KB
1GB	16KB	4KB
2GB	32KB	4KB
8GB	unsupported	8KB
16GB	unsupported	16KB
32GB+	unsupported	32KB

Ideally you should choose FAT32 and get a whopping great 8GB hard drive and partition it into 3 sections, one 3GB section for Windows95 and your work stuff, one 4GB drive for you game installations and single GB partition for downloaded files and testing. Unfortunately, unless you buy a third-party hard disk management program such as Quarterdeck's Partition It or PowerQuest's excellent Partition Magic, you will have to choose your drive partitions BEFORE you install Windows95. This can be really annoying because often when you buy a pre-installed system, the hard drive has already been partitioned and more often than not, set up as FAT16 partitions of 2GB each.

Windows95 taken either from the OSR2 release of Windows95 or beta versions of Windows98. Only with the final release of Windows98 and NT5.0 will all these technologies become properly integrated into the operating system and officially supported. When this happens, the popularity and availability of devices using AGP and USB in particular will surge ahead. The vast majority of games are now written for Windows95 and either run wholly under the operating system or work in a DOS shell. Only a few very old DOS-based games fail to work under Windows95. With Windows98, it can be expected that virtually all existing Windows95 games will work properly, if not faster and smoother, under Windows98. Windows98, features Internet Explorer 4.01, and this alone makes it an unwise choice for people with machines under a Pentium 133 with 32MB RAM although Microsoft claims it will work on a 486DX4-100.

Windows NT is another matter. Windows NT 4.0 looks and feels like Windows95 but it is far more stable. Built for critical business environments, a properly configured Windows NT system crashes roughly once for every fifty times a properly configured Windows 95 system when using the same hardware. This is especially true when multiple operations are running. This stability is the result of Windows NT completely ditching backward compatibility with old 16-bit Windows 3.1 and DOS software. Another consequence of this shift from 16-bit to true 32-bit is that Windows NT is faster and really makes the most of systems that are Pentium Pro or Pentium II-based. For gamers, there is one nasty implication of this shift from 16-bit to 32-bit most games still use 16-bit routines in their programming and thus fail to work under Windows NT without some serious tweaking if they work at all. Also, at this stage Windows NT4 only supports Microsoft's DirectX3 while most post-1996 Windows 95 games make use of DirectX5. DirectX6 is due out in July and this might remedy some of the problems with DirectX games under Windows NT but it'd be better to wait and see. Windows 98 is the last of Microsoft's non-NT

operating systems so at some point in the future, probably well after the release of NT 5.0 (due in early 1999), NT will become the virtually crashless gaming platform that Windows 95/98 should have been.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: WINDOWS 98

It's simply the up to date OS for PC gamers. NT will be the choice in the future, although it seems NT and Win 9x seem to be getting more similar over time, so maybe Microsoft will offer just one stable OS in the future. OS2, Linux, etc all have their merits, but if you want gaming variety, you must own Windows.

VIDEO CARDS

UNDERSTANDING THE BIG PICTURE.

For gamers on a budget the best option when it comes to video cards may be a 2D/3D combination card. Most large retailers package systems with 2D/3D cards rather than simple 2D-only cards especially now that the majority of the latest games support and look much better on even the most basic 2D/3D card. For people buying a video card to complement a new system or upgrading an old one, you will probably do best weighing up your needs.

The most common question about video cards relates to the value of video memory. Is a 2MB video card necessarily worse than a 4MB or 8MB card? In terms of 2D, video memory correlates directly to the maximum number of colours able to be displayed simultaneously on the screen at any given screen resolution.

The amount of video memory you need depends greatly on the size of the monitor you are going to hook your video card up to. (see table)

But that's not all. The higher the resolution you want to display your 2D desktop at, the more work you are placing on your video card and the faster you will want your card to be. If you intend to be in front of your new computer for

Software vs 3DFX comparison
Quake 2 in 800x600 resolution in a P2-333.
Top: Software version, running at around 15-20 frames per second
Bottom: 3DFX Voodoo2, running at over 60 frames per second

OEM - ASK FOR IT AND SAVE MONEY.

Video cards, when bought separately to complement an existing system often come in two varieties a retail version and an OEM version. OEM stands for Original Equipment Manufacturer and is supposed to mean than they are only sold pre-installed into a system. Because OEM cards are often considerably cheaper than their 'retail' counterparts it is well worth shopping around to find an OEM version. The main difference, other than price, with an OEM version is the lack of a 'software bundle'. Included as sweeteners with Retail packs, software bundles range from a useless bundle of 'limited demo versions' of games you could download freely from the Net, to excellent specially optimised full versions of some the newest games. If a Retail pack offers you optimised versions of games you don't already have and have been hanging out for, then its up to you to look at whether the price difference between the OEM and Retail pack is worth the value of the games. More cunningly, some versions of cards such as the Diamond Viper 330 only come in AGP form as an OEM card so be careful and make sure you are clear on what you want.

more than an hour at a time you will also want your screen image to conform to the VESA health and safety standard of a 85hz refresh rate. The refresh rate of a screen refers to how flicker-free the image is. In the old days a 60hz refresh rate was standard despite the hideous flicker it produced, and a sharp pair of eyes can pick up flicker even at 75hz. For a video card to be able to display a large image at a high refresh rate it needs a fast RAMDAC (digital-analogue converter) and a 4mb card should boast a 250mhz RAMDAC to be able to display a 1024x768 image at 85hz. Cheap video cards often won't go higher than 75hz and a lot of cheap monitors begin to show signs of image distortion at higher resolutions and 85hz refresh rates.

For 3D, the issue of video memory becomes more complicated. 3D video memory is split two ways texture memory and frame buffer. Texture memory refers to the texture data that the video card can store with which to map complex textures.

AGP cards use system memory (RAM) for storing textures and thus can theoretically support massively complex and detailed textures although in reality with even the fastest Pentium II the benefits of RAM-based texture memory cannot be realised. The frame/z buffer completes the 3D image. Thus a Voodoo1 chipset with 4MB memory is split to 2MB frame buffer and 2MB texture memory allowing a maximum resolution of 640x480 while a 8MB Voodoo2 with 4MB frame, 4MB texture offers up to 800x600. Similarly, a 4MB RIVA128-based AGP card is also limited to a maximum z-buffered resolution of 800x600 because of its 4MB frame buffer despite using system memory through AGP for complex textures.

2D/3D OPTIONS

There are currently several choices. Here are the main chipsets available.

NVIDIA RIVA128/128ZX

The most common card in package systems is the Diamond Viper 330 AGP or the STB Velocity 128 both of which are based on the Nvidia RIVA 128 chipset. The RIVA128 supports Direct3D and OpenGL giving fast acceleration at up to 920x760 resolutions (800x600 with z-buffering) in 16bit colour although the image quality is a bit flaky compared to 3D only cards. Under OpenGL for Quake2 the RIVA128 produces a very dark image that lacks some of the special FX of other cards. The RIVA128 works at its optimum on Pentium II systems because it is quite dependent upon the

speed of your processor. The AGP model is slightly faster than the PCI version although the PCI version allows the same system memory accessing as the AGP.

Canopus make the most feature-rich RIVA128 card, the Total3D which has both TV-on and TV-out capabilities as well. NVidia also offers a slightly expanded Riva128ZX with more on-board RAM, and will soon release what promises to be a spectacular RivaTNT which may give even the 3D-only Voodoo2 a run for its money.

INTEL I740

The Intel i740 chipset offers higher level support for AGP than the RIVA128 and better image quality. Less processor dependent than the RIVA128, the I740 is an excellent choice for mid-range machines. Using the x2 AGP mode the I740 harnesses more of the potential power of AGP by doubling the bandwidth through which it can access data, it has OpenGL support and a full set of Direct3D capabilities which is the reason for the higher image quality. The i740 is available from several manufacturers with host cards offering a 8MB minimum of on-board RAM allowing higher resolutions than the RIVA128.

MATROX G200

A brand new Matrox chip that has been built to give Matrox a new lease of life in the world of 2D/3D cards. Performing higher than both the i740 and the RIVA128 as well as being a solid choice for slower machines the G200 is one of the very best 2D/3D combination cards around although it is not cheap. With OpenGL support, full Direct3D capabilities, X2 AGP, and available in combinations of 8MB and 16MB the G200 is the best combination card currently available.

3DFX VOODOO RUSH

Released after the initial success of the 3D only Voodoo, the Voodoo Rush has been plagued by problems from the beginning. With comparatively poorer 2D than its competitors and the slight incompatibilities with some games that work perfectly on a fully-fledged Voodoo, the Rush was and remains a poor second-choice to a 'proper' Voodoo and especially now the RIVA128, i740 and G200. Whilst it supports 'windowed'-3DFX gaming that the Voodoo and Voodoo2 do not, you have to ask yourself whether you would actually play that many games in a window! Our advice is to steer clear of Voodoo Rush.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: DIAMOND VIPER V330 - AGP

I would have preferred a Matrox G200, but con-

VIDEO RAM AND MONITOR SIZE NEEDED PER RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION	256 COLOUR	16 BIT COLOUR	24/32BIT COLOUR	MONITOR SIZE
640x480	512K	1 MB	1 MB	14"
800x600	512K	1 MB	2 MB	15"
1,024x768	1 MB	2 MB	4 MB	17"
1,152x864	2 MB	2 MB	4 MB	19"
1,280x1,024	2 MB	4 MB	4 MB	19"
1,600x1,200	2 MB	4 MB	6 MB	20+"

sidering that I spend most of my time just playing 3D games, and thus using my dedicated 3D cards, it wasn't worth the money. The Viper runs fine, and lets me get the Windows desktop 3D acceleration that my Voodoo2 cards don't, which helps for Quake map editing, etc.

3D ONLY OPTIONS

The market for 3D accelerator cards has been pretty much controlled exclusively by 3DFX since the release of their Voodoo chipset back in 1995. With the recent release of the Voodoo2, 3DFX still control the market for gamers but increasing competition from the 2D/3D manufacturers will see the stranglehold of 3DFX loosening. Interestingly, whilst the rest of the market has been embracing AGP, 3DFX has stuck with PCI and consistently the Voodoo2 produces higher benchmarks than any other current cards especially on high-end machines. Both the Voodoo and Voodoo2 are passthrough cards meaning that data is passed first to your 2D card and then onto the Voodoo cards. In some early models of the Voodoo high resolution 2D displays became degraded because of low quality passthrough cables but this was quickly rectified. In short, you MUST have an existing 2D card to make use of a Voodoo card.

The Voodoo and Voodoo2 chipsets support Direct3D, a cut-down OpenGL driver mainly developed for Quake and Quake2, and 3DFX's own graphics library, Glide.

Because of the excellent performance and market penetration of the Voodoo chipset, Glide has become a defacto third standard which no other competitor can copy. Game manufacturers who release games with versions for Direct3D and Glide offer two options to Voodoo owners where the Glide versions are invariably faster, smoother and more feature-rich. This means that owners of RIVA128, G200, i740 and other chipsets consistently run behind, even though their Direct3D acceleration is faster than a Voodoo1 on high Pentium II systems. With standardisation looking to be the way of the future, 3DFX's Glide may eventually be subsumed by Direct3D or OpenGL. Already DirectX6 is promising far more 3D feature support than DirectX5. 3DFX's Voodoo chipsets are now available pretty cheaply from a whole host of manufacturers with little difference between them other than the software bundle that you get with the retail versions. However Canopus offers the Pure3D which has 6MB of memory allowing gamers to play up to 800x600 resolutions instead of regular Voodoo's 640x480.

3DFX's Voodoo2 chips are the top of the range at present supporting nearly all Voodoo games as well as offering a multitude of new features and speed to newer games. In 8MB and 12MB combinations the Voodoo2 offers higher resolution support up to 800x600 from 4mb frame buffer with texture memory of 4mb and 8mb respectively. Best of all, add two Voodoo2 cards from the same manufacturer together and the Voodoo2 utilises a mode called SLI (scan-line interleaving) with effectively doubles the frame buffer and texture memory of the combination allowing resolutions up to 1024x768 and an enormous speed increase. On the downside, to get the most out a Voodoo2, especially a combination utilising SLI , you will want a fast Pentium II. Even a P2-400 does not

push a single Voodoo2 anywhere near its limit which is good in terms of longevity, but on a Pentium 200, the upgrade from a Voodoo to Voodoo2 is hardly worth the money, unless you have a big monitor, since you get the advantage of being able to get a decent frame rate at higher resolutions.

Also, for the future, the Voodoo2 only supports 16-bit rendering which will become an issue when the third-generation of 3D cards appears and games begin to support 24-bit and 32-bit true colour in 3D.

Of all the Voodoo and Voodoo2 manufacturers, Canopus offers the most features for both chipsets with TV-out and 6MB on their Pure3D Voodoo card, and TV-out with simultaneous TV and monitor display and 12MB for their Pure3D-II Voodoo2 card (although this card has poor refresh rates at high resolutions, which is an issue for folks with decent monitors). Diamond, Creative Labs and Orchid offer 8MB and 12MB cards with varying game packs.

There is also Power VR, which we wouldn't encourage you buy. However, Power VR2 is coming very soon, and if it lives up to the promises, may pip Voodoo2 as the best 3D accelerator. The PowerVR didn't live up to promises in the past though, so we'll remain slightly sceptical till we test a PowerVR2 ourselves.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: TWO ORCHID RIGHTEOUS 3D II 12MB CARDS.

I admit this is excessive, but this is the best you can currently get for a 3D gamer. Running two of these cards I get SLI, playing Quake 2 at 1024 x 768, with everything on the highest detail/quality, I get 72 frames a second, which basically means it's always silky smooth, and I can see

Monitors - Bigger is better, but make sure the dot pitch and refresh rates are good too, otherwise it's a lemon.

everything perfectly clearly. The R3DII was the best price of the Voodoo2 cards, which was the deciding factor.
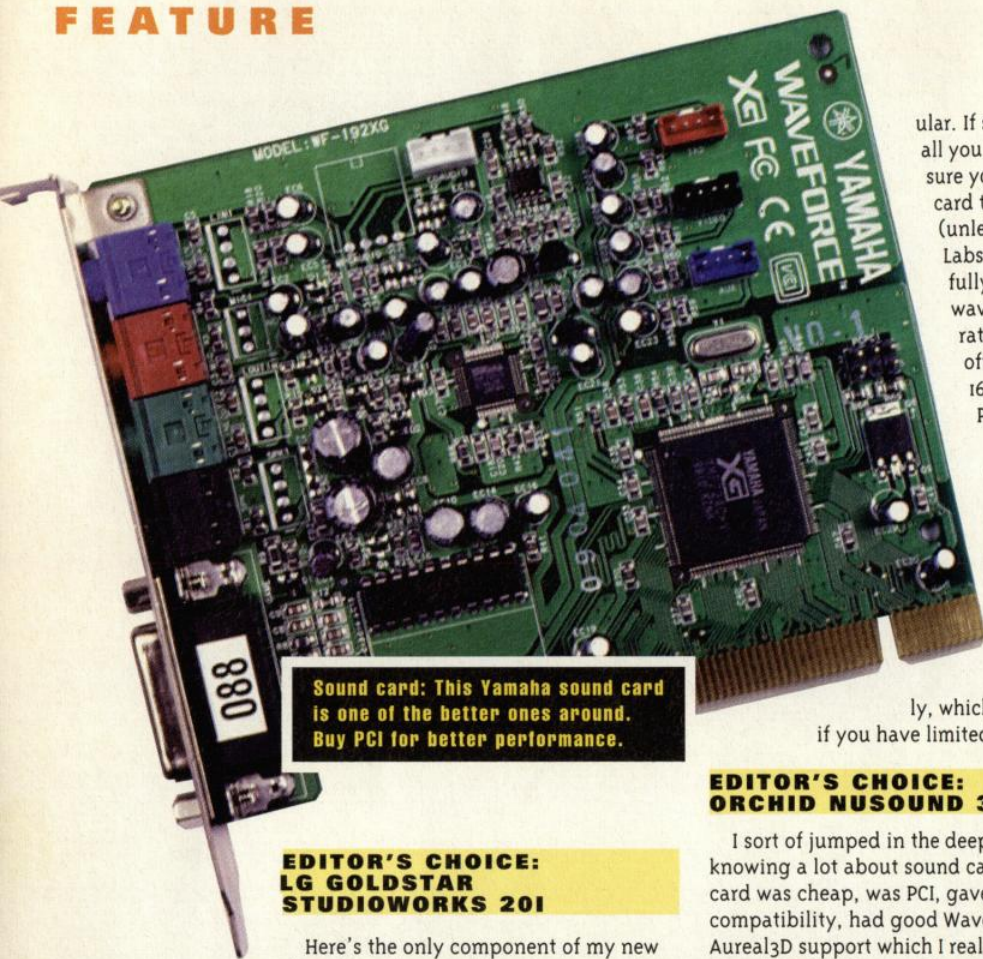
MONITOR

Of all the pieces of hardware, the monitor is the one that really hurts your wallet. A 15" monitor is cheap. A decent 17" monitor costs a lot more, and a 20" or larger monitor costs a fortune. It doesn't matter how good your video cards are if you have a crappy monitor, it will still end up looking bad.

So if you intend to get two Voodoo2 cards, then you've wasted your money if you don't have at least a 17" monitor, and a decent one at that. Monitors are rated by what is known as dot pitch which refers to the smallest dot size that makes up an image on the screen. The lower the dot pitch, the sharper your image is regardless of what resolution the monitor is set at. A standard monitor has a dot pitch of 0.28mm but the best have pitches as low as 0.22mm. Another thing to check is whether the monitor has digital or analogue controls. A digital monitor stores settings such as screen position, screen width and height, and shaping for each resolution that you use, eliminating the need to change your monitor settings every time you switch between Windows and Quake. As a rule of thumb, a digital monitor will use on-screen menus, while analogue monitors tend to be cheaper, older and use dials.

Remember that good monitors don't get outdated like other components do, so think of the monitor as an investment. However, lower quality monitors may only last 3 or 4 years. If you get a good 17" monitor now, you won't need a new monitor when you go to buy another PC.

Sound card: This Yamaha sound card is one of the better ones around. Buy PCI for better performance.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: LG GOLDSTAR STUDIOWORKS 20I

Here's the only component of my new PC that I bought second hand, since getting a 20" monitor for $1200 is a bargain. The image quality is great, even next to the Sony monitor of the same size, which actually had an inferior dot pitch rating (although most Sony monitors rock). If you can get a big monitor cheap by buying second hand, you can cut a huge amount out of your overall PC cost.

SOUND CARDS

To enjoy your games to the fullest, a good sound card and speakers are essential. Most cheap systems come with equally cheap sound cards that emulate an old Soundblaster 16 standard which has been surpassed by the more authentic Wavetable emulation. Sound cards have now even moved into 3D sound and surround sound which threaten to create a similar revolution to the one created by 3D graphics cards. Sound cards are incredibly confusing devices to buy. Some are PCI cards whilst others, especially the well known Creative Labs AWE32/64 cards still use the ageing and very slow ISA bus; some have built-in memory; and the 3D cards all depend upon 3D support from games. Extra features also demand extra processor time and CD-quality (44.1khz) 3D sound needs a very fast processor to keep games playable. Currently there are two main 3D sound standards the Aureal3D and Microsoft's own DirectSound. For example, Unreal supports the Aureal3D 3D sound standard, but without the latest Aureal drivers enabling 3D sound causes all sorts of problems whilst using a ISA-based card rather than a PCI-card sees the CPU effectively 'waiting' for the sound card to process its functions resulting in about a 5% immediate performance hit. Forsaken is the other new game to support Aureal3D and the effect is quite spectac-ular. If standard sound is all you require then make sure you go for a sound card that is PCI-based (unless it is a Creative Labs AWE64) and that it fully supports wavetable emulation rather than simply offering Soundblaster 16 or Soundblaster Pro compliance.

Some cards offer outputs for four speakers for surround sound, but this naturally makes things more expensive. It also requires you to set up speakers properly, which may be a problem if you have limited space.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: ORCHID NUSOUND 3D

I sort of jumped in the deep end here, not knowing a lot about sound cards. However, this card was cheap, was PCI, gave Sound Blaster compatibility, had good Wavetable, and Aureal3D support which I really wanted for Unreal. So it did everything I wanted.

MODEMS

The first modem I had on my Commodore 64 was a 300bps modem and at the time this was superfast. Nowadays a 56Kbps (56,000bits per second) is fast becoming the standard. Up until very recently, the 56K modem world was split by two different standards K56Flex and X2 which were incompatible, however this has been resolved by a new V.90 standard. Still, most Australian Internet providers (ISPs) only offer one of the two old 56K standards, predominantly K56Flex. 56K modems are not all the same, and 56K itself is a bit of a myth. Never will you find yourself communicating with another 56K modem or your ISP at 56K. Modems are terribly dependent upon clear, crackle-free telephone lines and areas which still are serviced by old telephone exchanges suffer lower connection speeds.

Even so, if you own a 56K modem then most likely you connect at a maximum speed of 46K, although owners of the Netcomm Roadster series seem to consistently achieve 50K or 52K connections over good phone lines. But it gets worse, 56K is actually one-directional you can only receive data at 56K and all your transmissions go out at only 33.6K. 56K also needs to connect to a digital modem at the receiving end to enable the 56K standard. This means that for connecting to your ISP and browsing the Internet you will probably achieve speeds of between 40K and 50K if your ISP supports your 56K standard, but when connecting directly to your friends for a game of Quake2 or just to transfer files, you will connect at a maximum of 33.6Kbps. Some newer modems also support SVD (simultaneous voice-data), which means that theoretically if your friend also had a compatible SVD modem you could talk to each other while killing each other viciously in a death-match but even this has a downside to utilise SVD your maximum data rate drops to a measly 14.4Kbps which is enough to make most modern modem-to-modem games unplayable. In short, when buying a modem for gaming first and foremost investigate the quality of your telephone line does it crackle? Does it drop out? and hassle Telstra to fix it if necessary, then check exactly what standards your ISP supports, and what 'extra' features you really need.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: BANKSIA WAVE SP 56.

Heck, it looks good on my desk. I've actually had this modem for quite a while, and it works great so I felt no urge to look into buying another. If buying today though, I'd also have to consider the Roadster, based purely on performance tests.

NETWORK CARD

For a PC gamer, unless you plan on being the head honcho LAN (Local Area network) organiser who has a hub that everyone else connects to, just go get a NE2000 compatible ISA Network card. Don't get PCI simply because games don't need anything more than what the ISA cards deliver, and basically you need all the PCI slots free for the cards that really need it. Make sure you get it working before you go to a LAN gaming party, otherwise you'll spend all day getting it working, and no time gaming.

For online gaming, a good modem is a must - Wave SP56 does the job.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: NO NAME NE2000 CARD.

If you're paying more that $45 for a gaming network card, you're wasting your money. Just go buy one from any old dealer.

MOUSE AND KEYBOARD

The only considerations here are ease of use. When it comes to a mouse, a wheel mouse is really handy, essentially acting as a five button mouse (left, right, wheel press, wheel up, wheel down). This is really handy for all those 3D action games where you use the mouse to aim., and want as many "kill" buttons as possible.

With keyboards, just go for something plain and simple. Weirdo ergonomic keyboards that are split in two or something are just a gimick that

will end up being a hassle, especially if you're playing a game where you leave one hand on the mouse, and the other on the keyboard, which makes getting around the keyboard a pain.

EDITOR'S CHOICE: MICROSOFT WHEEL MOUSE AND A MITSUMI KEYBOARD.

The wheel mouse has served me very in Quake 2, and the scrolling feature is handy. I paid no attention to the brand of my keyboard, it just happened to be a Mitsumi. It works, and the keys feel good, so that's all that matters.

PIECING A SYSTEM TOGETHER

The way to buy a PC is to think about what you want to do, otherwise you'll just get lost in the possibilities. 3D gaming is basically the way of gaming today, but if you know for a fact that you aren't into 3D games (go see a doctor), you can save a lot of money by planning things out.

The order of planning to a gamer who wants good gaming (especially 3D) performance should go as follows:

```
3D CARD
2D/3D CARD
MONITOR
CPU
SOUND CARD
NETWORK CARD
MOTHERBOARD
RAM
MODEM
MOUSE
KEYBOARD
OS
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1) Knowing your 3D and 2D/3D cards lets you know what resolutions and refresh rates you can use, which then makes choosing your monitor easier to understand.

2) Get the fastest CPU you can afford. The 3D cards will work better with a faster CPU.

3) Once you've picked a sound card and decided if you want a network card, you can now see how many AGP, PCI, and ISA slots you need on your motherboard, and thus make a choice. You'll feel like an idiot if you buy 5 PCI cards, and a motherboard with only 4 PCI slots.

4) Once you know what overclocking the motherboard supports, you can now select the RAM you need, based on CPU, motherboard, and whether or not you think you're going to push it. Note: A few motherboards have fewer RAM modules (slots), so you may wish to go back and reconsider step 3.

5) Your motherboard also determines what sort of ports you have for your mouse and keyboard, so decide on the external peripherals last, so you know if you need any extra adaptors (like PS2 connectors for keyboards and mice).

6) Regardless of what hardware you have, we advise you get Windows 98 at this stage, as it offers the best games support.

WHERE AND HOW DO I BUY?

It's very rare that buying a complete system in a major department store will provide you with what you want. Some stores (generally the smaller ones), may be open to negotiating the inclusion or exclusion of specific components. As dodgy as it may sound, the Trading Post is actually a smart way to shop, as often you get the most competitive prices, sometimes from established stores who simply realise this is where many people look. However, if you're buying from some guy who doesn't speak English very well, and is working our of his garage, you should be aware that if you have a problem, this supplier may not be around to give you a refund or warranty claim.

When asking for components, it's much better if you know what brand you are after before hand. It's the first law of salesmanship to try and move dead stock, so never take the store owner's word for it that a particular brand of component is the one you want or need. If you don't already have Internet access, find a friend who does, and check out the web pages at the end of this feature to find out what non-biased experts have benchtested, and discovered to be the best. Our Hardware Guide will help you pick components, but when purchasing a whole system, it's best that you research it yourself so you know what you're buying, and why. This is the best way to avoid regretting your purchase.

Remember to ask for OEM if you don't want a fancy cardboard box, or "free" software, as this can save you heaps of money if you get several components this way.

Lastly, unless you're very confident about your technical abilities with PCs, it is advised you fork out the extra money to get your supplier to put it all together for you. This is where understanding the FAT system is important, so they set it up how you want. If you don't know what you're doing, you can damage your hardware, and lose a lot of money very fast (especially if you fry your CPU).

WEB RESOURCES

TOM'S HARDWARE GUIDE

The most widely respected hardware website with countless reviews and benchmarks for the most number-hungry person around. An excellent independent resource for finding out about new hardware and discovering the 'real world' performance differences between various motherboards, processors, and graphics cards. (http://www.tomshardware.com)

ANAND'S TECH PAGE

Similar to Tom's Hardware Guide, Anand's tech Page provides comprehensive reviews and benchmarks. Updated more frequently than Tom's the page offers a slightly different perspective and set of resuits to Tom's and is excellent for comparison. As a rule of thumb, if both Tom and Anand agree that a certain product is good then you can be pretty sure that is. (http://www.anandtech.com)

PCWEBOPAEDIA

An online dictionary of computer terminology, PCWebopaedia is the best resource for quickly finding out what all the jargon means. This is enhanced by short, clear descriptions of even the most complicated of terms as well as comprehensive links to other pages that go into more detail. (http://www.pcwebopedia.com)

FRANK'S WORLD OF WINDOWS

A page that offers all the latest news on various Windows products, Frank's is actually far more useful for his enormous alphabetised set of links to various hardware manufacturers' web sites which allows users to all the latest drivers for their cards. (http://www.conitech.com/windows)

OPERATION 3D

One of the most useful 3D graphics resources and news guides around. With daily information on new cards, game patches, upcoming stuff and links to other web pages Operation 3D is essential reading for every 3D graphics card owner. (http://www.op3dfx.com)

REVIEWS

Things have certainly quietened down a lot from last month, probably due to both E3, and the end of the financial year. Most remarkable was that there were only five N64 titles out of the 28 we reviewed, which although has been an ongoing trend, the trend itself is now becoming remarkable. However Mission Impossible and Banjo Kazooie are due very shortly, so maybe we're about to see a real turn around in form from Nintendo.

In truth I sat writhing in jealousy (and that stupid feeling you get when you realise it's your fault) as Eliot went on about Descent Freespace... I wish I'd been the one who reviewed it now. With Commandos, and Mech Commander as well, it
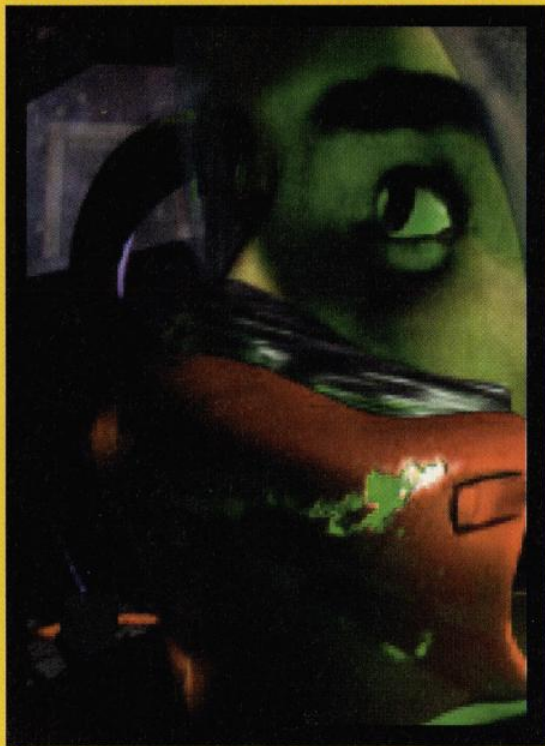
was an issue for the PC military and sci-fi nuts.

We've got a new driving game reviewer, Simon Bailey, who also has some real life racing experience, so he's one of the few guys that can say, "The cars handle like real racing cars" with any sort of credibility.

Another Saturn title finally came in, but it was a bit of a let down. Hopefully Panzer Dragoon Saga will make it here some day and give us one last "Wow", on the Saturn. Although many Sega fans will just be saving their pennies for the Dreamcast, I'm sure.

A batch of titles arrived in the last day or so of this issue, with no time to review them, so next month should pack a heftier range of games, like we saw last month.

David Wildgoose
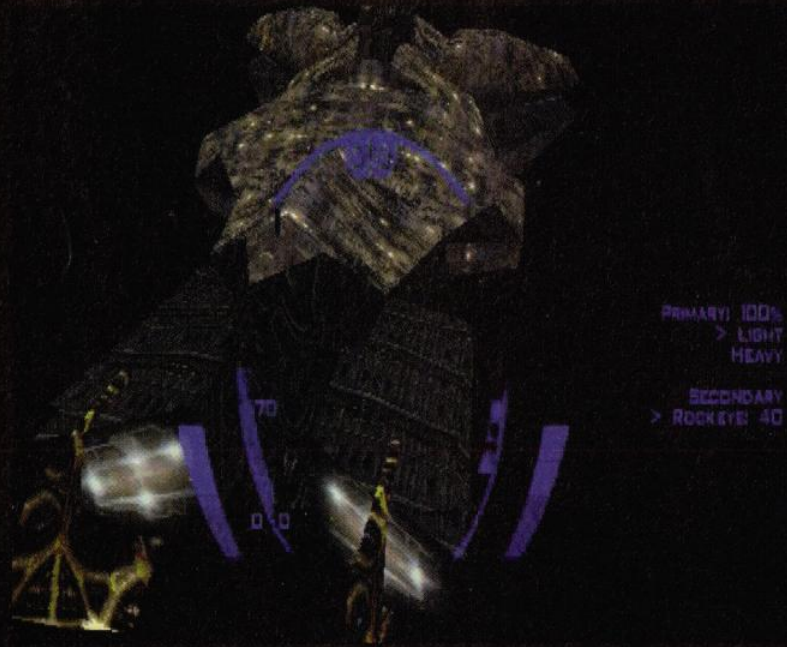
GAME OF THE MONTH DESCENT FREESPACE

Score: 92 reviewed on page 72

PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE MONTH COLIN MCRAE RALLY

Reviewed on page 64

NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE MONTH WWF WARZONE

Reviewed on page 55

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 reasons, 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 recommended 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 performance 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.

GT 64 Championship Edition

Revhead Simon Bailey gets out from behind the wheel of GT 64 and hands us back the keys.

SELECT A TEAM

CAR SETUP

PETRIFIED ROO CAM...

I just can't, for the life of me understand it! Here we are, in the 90's (late 90's even), decade of high technology, and yet it seems that no-one (Midway excepted) can provide us with an enjoyable driving experience on the one games system largely touted as the best of the 'Next Generation' consoles: - The Nintendo 64.

Since the advent of the N64 everyone, myself included, has been patiently waiting for a driving game (using something other than a go-kart, plane or hovercraft) that would fuse all the machines 64-bit gadgetry into one big speeding mass of pure gameplaying heaven!

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Racing
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Ocean
PRICE:	$99.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble paks, steering wheels.

PLUS
Good track design

MINUS
Frame rates ruin the overall feel of the game

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
69	40	60

OVERALL
63

An all round clanger! Poor frame rates bury the game's good features.

GOOD THING THE SIGN CAME UP... DIDN'T SEE THAT WALL OF ARROWS
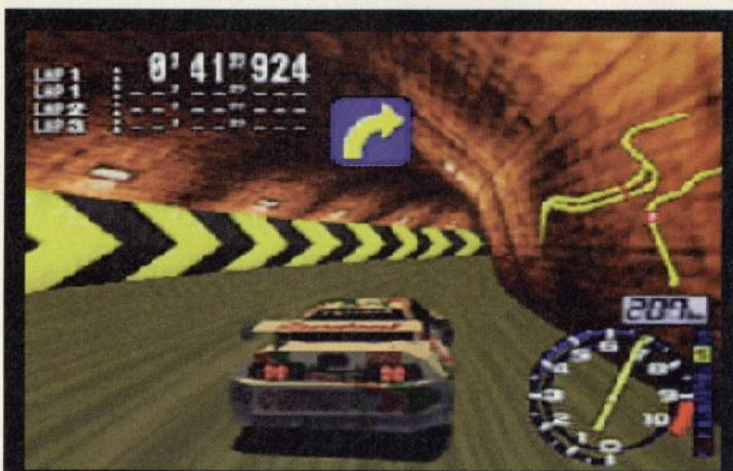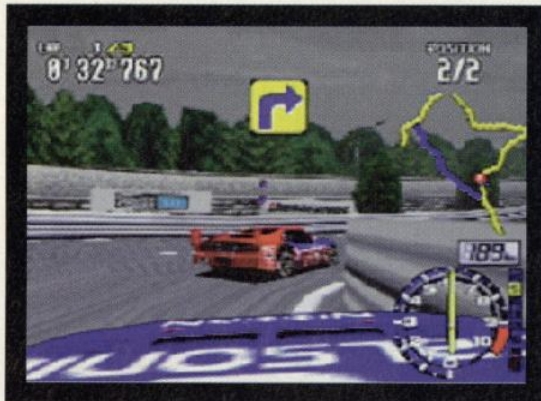
The bad news

The greatly anticipated GT 64 Championship Edition has finally landed on our shores, and boy did it leave a mighty stink in Hyper HQ. From the first opening seconds of play you just know that this is going to be painful. GT 64CE has 3 choices of play: Championship Mode, Time Trial and Battle Mode (2-player). OK, let's start with the bad news. Unfortunately, my fellow racing fanatics, you have 2 choices: 1) Get this game till someone has the 'know-how' to pull off a good N64 racer. Or 2) - you could go out and buy yourself a PlayStation and a copy of Gran Turismo!

For some reason, Ocean - the team who bought us the deplorable MRC (Multi Racing Championship) - seem to have no idea when it comes to making a good racing game, let alone a great one.

The worst thing about GT64 is the sound. What are we using here Ocean, a Sega Master System? The music is awfully retro, and kinda reminds me of old beat-em-up's like Super Double Dragon. The engine whine is also ridiculously bad. Just as dissatisfying though, are the visuals. Although some of the screen grabs do look rather pretty, I can assure you this game runs like a three legged dog! The frame rate is laughable. This is an N64 for God's sake!
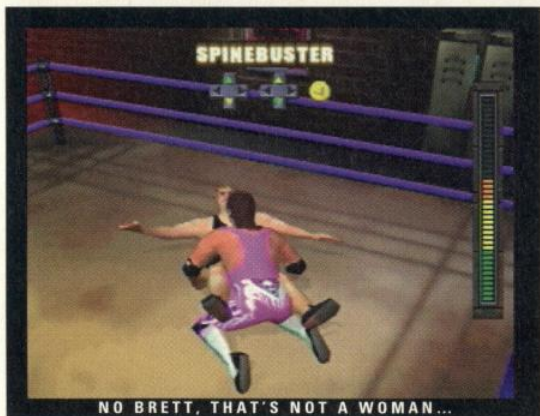
The good news

There are however, a couple of things that GT64 does have going for it. The first being good track design, the second, decent car selection. There are 14 teams to choose from ranging from the Castrol Supra Team, through to the Mugan Team. The handling of the cars is only as bad as the frame rate, and is slightly improved with the use of a steering wheel (it doesn't support the pedals).

Okay, so all up I'd have to say that it may be worth a look if you have cash to burn and must have another Nintendo 64 racing game! Other than that, get a PSX and Gran Turismo. It's quite perplexing that one of the only genres that Nintendo or any of it's 3rd party developers can't seem to get right is serious driving games. If you stop and think about the amount of above average racers out there for the PC, PSX and even Sega Saturn. You'd have to bet on someone getting it right one day. The potential is most definitely there.

WWF Warzone

You'll never see him fighting folks in Speedos, but Dan Toose has been known to like a wrestling game or two through the years.

NO FATSO... HE'S NOT A HAND PUPPET

SPINEBUSTER

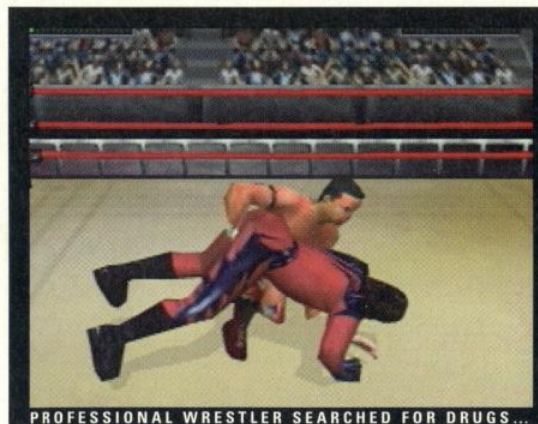NO BRETT, THAT'S NOT A WOMAN...

Wrestling games have been around for many, many years now. My earliest wrestling memories go back to Rock and Wrestle on the Commodore 64. A collection of different pear shaped blobs to play as, and perhaps the most shonkily digitised growls and grunts ever used in a video game... it was great. The really funny thing is, that besides better visuals, authentic characters and some decent sound, today, not a lot has changed.

The visuals are pretty damn cool. Sure they look a bit like plasticine men who move a little too slow for you to believe they have the full compliment of brain cells, but that means Iguana have got it right really. The actual animation by the N64 is nice and smooth, but the character animations look a little clumsy when it comes to landing blows on your opponent (once again, this is just like TV, hmm).

Hey Vinnie!

I really couldn't do without hearing Vince McMann crap on about how Fatso hit Dumbo when it comes to wrestling, and neither could anyone else really, so it's a good thing he's there. There are some decent thuds, whops, and bangs to help add all that impact you want to feel (although a rumble pak does that best of all).

Some things about the game mechanics are really good. For example, if you want to pull off a certain throw

on your opponent, many things are factored into whether you get a throw in or your opponent does. If you've landed a few blows before you grapple, then you will be given an "advantage". The more damaging moves take more time to do, but seriously, if you can't hit left, then right, then one button, then you're really going to have hassles in any game. Having some complex multipart throws like in Tekken 2 or 3 would have been great. In a way you can combo stuff together, like throwing a couple of punches and leading straight into a throw, but it lacks the subtleties and finesse fighting game enthusiasts would really want. This is more for the casual fighter who simple finds it all bloody funny.

Even though you basically do the same thing over and over, there are many different game modes, making the longevity increase somewhat. There's the straight up challenge and versus modes, tag team (this rules with four players), cage matches (whoever can climb out first wins), the Royal Rumble (a new wrestler arrives every two minutes, last man standing wins), and the gauntlet, which is kind of like a survival mode. The last mode is our favourite, weapons mode. Nothing is quite as satisfying as grabbing the nearest TV and smashing it over your opponent's cranium, and you'll even end up laughing when it happens to you.

PROFESSIONAL WRESTLER SEARCHED FOR DRUGS...

If you're trying to choose between WWF Warzone and WCW vs NWO, it really comes down to how fussed you are about the control. WCW vs NWO is a bit tighter and solid, yet WWF Warzone allows for funky wrestler creation and has slightly better graphics. Either way, WWF Warzone is certainly good for a laugh, especially multiplayer.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Wrestling
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Acclaim
PRICE:	$99.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble Pak

PLUS
Hilarious visuals
Excellent multiplayer fun

MINUS
Feels a bit sloppy in the controls

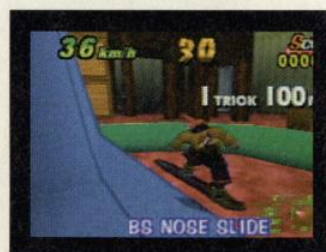| VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	89	87

OVERALL
86

A lot of senseless multiplayer fun to be had with WWF Warzone.

Air Boarders

All of a sudden the Nintendo 64 is getting some "boarding games. **Eliot Fish** *ollies up to the review stand.*

INDY GRAB

THREE

TURBO

YEAH, JUST OLLIE UP ONTO THAT BRIDGE... NO WORRIES

BACKFLIP 360
MELANCHOLY

BS NOSE SLIDE

TURBO

HMM... MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THIS DARE

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Human
PRICE:	$59.95
RATING:	G

PLUS
Big, open, detailed environments.

MINUS
Limited gameplay with little replay value.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
83	72	68

OVERALL
69
Smooth gameplay but not a lot going on . . .

much fun. To have not included a racing option for single-players is just infuriating! There are a number of modes, and there's variety here, but racing against the computer is just obviously going to be the most popular mode. Oh well... Air Boarder offers Street Mode (pull off sick moves to earn points), Time Attack (race against the clock), Coin Mode (find all the hidden coins placed around the level), Free Run (which allows you to check out the tracks on your own time) and the obligatory practice mode which teaches you how to control your board. The versus mode, of course, is a split-screen for you and your friends to dick around with - and that's in there too.

Fear of open spaces
The environments to race in are the best thing about Air Boarder. From a huge skate park with

ramps, railings and a half-pipe to futuristic city streets and a massive golden-gate bridge type level. Zooming around the place, looking for objects to jump off or explore can be quite entertaining and the fact that your board can hover completely vertically up the side of bulidings makes getting a nice high possie easy as pie. Then of course, you just jump off the edge and try to pull of as many rotations and grabs as you can. Once you've checked out every tiny corner of every map though, the novelty wears pretty thin. The fact that there's no full-on racing mode, really spoils the longterm playability of this game - because once you know the maps and complete to Coin mode, it's no longer fun cruising about on your own. To get maximum enjoyment out of Air Boarder, you really want a friend around to race with all the time.

Boarding games... there are now enough of these puppies to fill an entire garbage truck - and most of them belong there too. 1080 Snowboarding has (unfortunately for other games in the genre) set the pace for at least the next six months. Any other Nintendo 64 boarding game which gets released in that period is undoubtedly going to suffer comparisons to that great snowboarding game. Well, Air Boarder is at least different enough to avoid too much of a head-to-head with 1080, and it's very lucky in that respect. The thing that sets Air Boarder apart from the pack, is it's futuristic environments, and huge "go-anywhere" playing fields. But when it comes down to boarding mechanics, Air Boarder only just manages to keep it's head above water.

Gnarly moves, dude
Select your character, choose your board and then hit the street - Air Boarder seems nicely balanced to suit any playing style. Whether you prefer speed and checkpoints, or free-stylin' with no time limit, the options are here. But the first thing that'll get you a bit hot under the collar - is that there is no racing mode which pits you against computer controlled characters! Sure, there's a two-player mode if you have a friend around, but what about the single-player game? Cruising about on your board pulling off tricks or collecting coins is only so

Kobe Bryant's NBA Courtside

Tall, slim, full of energy... But Dan Toose is a lousy basketball player. At least he can play video games.

VOLLEYBALL SERVE?
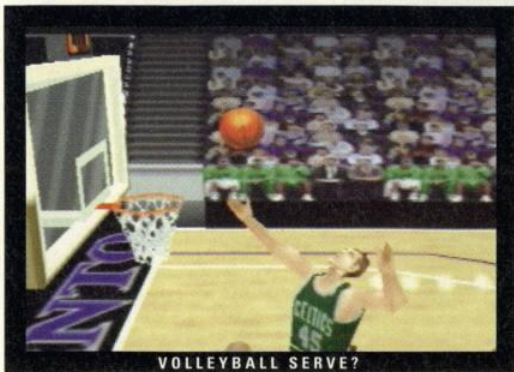
I'd feel awful reviewing a sport title of a sport that I hadn't actually played, and whilst I was never any good at basketball it's good fun to play. It is also one of the sports that translates well into video games, and the fans have proven it by spending up big on Basketball titles through the years. Because of this, there's been a gold mine waiting for any company that can get it together and make a killer basketball title for the Nintendo 64. No one else could manage it so it would seem, so Nintendo have done their own game, and it's really quite good. Enter Kobe Bryant's NBA Courtside.

Beautiful, but wonky

The visuals for KB's NBA Courtside are good, and in no small part due to the fact that the game is running in 512x240 resolution (medium res). Gameplay and frame rate look pretty smooth, but the character animation is a bit wonky, and the players have that low polygon count thing happening, so they look a bit block like (like in Jedi Knight on PC). Whilst this slightly awkward look about the players doesn't help, there are nice touches like reflective floorboards.

The most important element in a sporting title is intuitive controls that make you feel like you're in control of the game, and KB's NBA Courtside delivers here. Performing alley-oops and the like is not the unintentional fluke that it is in most basketball games, and this really helps the player feel they can put together a good play, rather than feel they have a system they have to adhere to.

Of course, no die hard basketball fan would be happy without all the NBA teams being present, and as the title implies, the dotted lines were signed, and all 29 NBA teams are there, with of course the exclusion of the world's most over paid and over-sponsored human being. To use his name would probably cost more than the production of the whole game. If that's not enough for you, there's always the option to create your own players, although it's not quite as detailed (or funny) as the Acclaim sports titles that we've seen on the N64, like NFL Quarterback club, WWF Warzone, etc.

Vic Who?

The music is quite unremarkable, but Vic Orlando's (Seattle announcer) calling of the game is nice and clear, which is impressive considering the sound storage limitations of a cartridge.

KB's NBA Courtside suffers from only one real problem gameplay wise, and that is that it's a little bit too slow, and as a result, loses a bit of pizazz and intensity. Being one of the fastest sports around, this is a rather strange place for the game to fall down considering everything else is done very nicely.

This is the basketball game to have if you own a Nintendo 64, although there is still enough room for improvement that a company like Acclaim may be able to have a crack at bettering it by simply upping the tempo a bit.

GEE... NICE D NUMBER 42
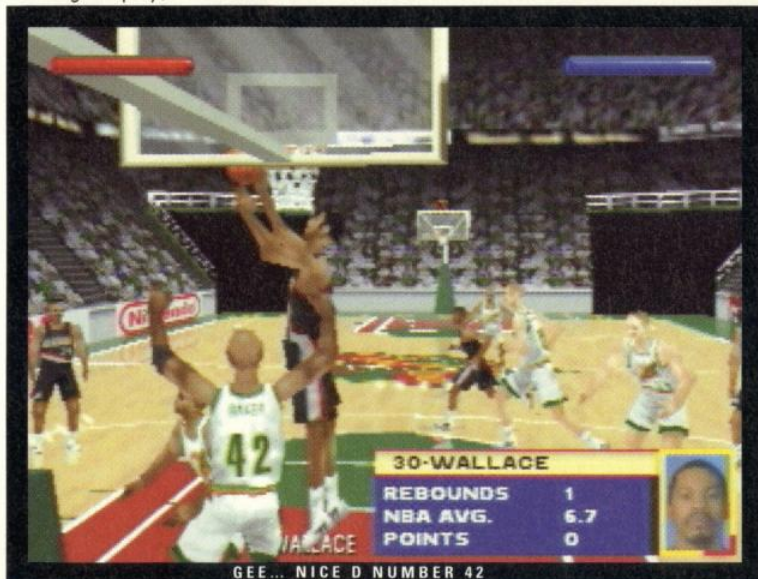
AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Basketball
PLAYERS:	Nintendo
PUBLISHER:	1-4
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble Pak

PLUS
Intuitive controls
Proper NBA teams included

MINUS
Slow gameplay detracts
from the action

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	87	82

OVERALL

83

Clearly the best basketball game available on the Nintendo 64.

House of the Dead

After a long drought we see another Saturn title reach our shores. Dan Toose *holsters his lightgun and checks out House of the Dead.*

The Saturn has had a host of arcade conversions, some good, some poor, but two shining pearls were definitely Virtua Cop 1 & 2. These games looked very close to the original arcade games, and these were the sort of games that drew crowds. There was also a great feeling of accuracy, and player interaction. These proved to be the key to making this style of game a hit.

House of the Dead has a very simple objective and purpose... Make your way through a huge mansion filled with zombies, and the occasional defenceless scientist who would really love it if you came and saved them.

House of the Dead is probably best known to most as that big game in the arcade with a curtain around it. The game was rated MA15+ for excessive gore, and as a result has had the blood replaced with green goo (big deal).

I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE USED A NAME BRAND SURFACE SPRAY...

You look awful

Your zombie opponents look dreadful, unfortunately, not just in the terrifying manner intended. Virtua Cop 1 & 2 treated us with clean, sharp targets. The various monsters that attack you in HOTD are textured really poorly, to the point where there is huge pixelisation on the monsters. The animation is also lacklustre compared to VC 2, and your view as you pan through the mansion also becomes quite stilted. This improves in the boss stages, possibly due to having a small environment to keep track of.

Something that does look cool is the way your targets break up as you take them apart with your firearm. This may explain why things are chugging with a couple of zombies on the screen. This is a bit of a change from the big gun game titles in recent years (Virtua Cop, Time Crisis), where one clean hit usually does the job.

Something that is cool (and probably the reason for the glitchy graphics), is that you can blow parts of the zombies off without actually finishing them off.

Special extras...

Some of the better features of the Saturn version include the ability to play as various characters, who have varying health levels, ammo per reload, hit area (thus accuracy), and shot power. So you may play as a guy who only has two shots per reload, but does huge damage with each bullet. For those that just like playing the boss (or feel they need to practice), there's a boss mode, so you can just have a bash at the big guys.

Now either we're getting clumsy here at Hyper, or this game just has no real sense of accuracy. Even when you're certain you're holding the gun dead steady, the shots seem to spread out. This makes trying to hit a bad guy behind a good guy you're trying to save very risky (and luck based), which ends up being a bit frustrating.

House of the Dead is good, gory (even if the blood is green), action packed and challenging light gun game, but the rather average visuals and annoyingly inaccurate gun fire make this game a rather disappointing conversion of a great arcade game.

FLURO MUCUS FOR BLOOD... YUMMY

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Lightgun shooter
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Sega
PRICE:	$69.95
RATING:	MA15+
SUPPORTS:	Lightguns

PLUS
Selectable characters are a novelty

MINUS
Shonky shot accuracy

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
57	84	64

OVERALL
62
A pretty lousy arcade conversion, but still a bit of fun nonetheless.

Treasures of the Deep

Kevin Cheung *asks for a gun and he gets thrown a wetsuit. Go figure...*

Are you one of those people who watched the underwater sequences in The Abyss or Never Say Never Again and thought, "It'd be so cool to ride one of those mini-subs"? Well it looks as though Namco have got just the thing for you. Treasures of the Deep is a deep sea adventure game putting you through 14 levels' worth of exploration, under sea battle, and treasure hunting. From the outset, TOTD is not the sort of game nor title of the attention-grabbing variety like Quake or Tekken, but its depth, thought, execution, and alternative approach makes it every bit as satisfying.

Trawling for cash.

The premise of the game is simple: you are a treasure hunter, competing with other treasure hunters in the neverending quest for cash, jewels, and other assorted treasures. In this case, the treasures are to be found on the sea bed in such exotic and notorious locations as the Mariana Trench, the Bermuda Triangle, and even the Great Barrier Reef.

Simple as this may all sound, TOTD is executed with a wonderful use of detail, realism, and gameplay variety. Control-wise, the game is a first-person shooting game like Forsaken except with lots of under water exploration. By default, you have a harpoon as a weapon that can fend off sharks and any of the competition who are trying to bring you to an untimely end. Other equipment you can use include torpedoes, mines, and nets. With all this equipment, you not only can pick up treasure, but also catch prized specimens and defuse inhumanely cruel traps (and earn cash for these deeds). You can even be fined for shooting at an endangered species.

The real feel...

The only word one can use describe the gameplay is realistic. The game is jam-packed with lush detail and ambient scenery. If it's not the watery reflections from above that momentarily distract you, it might be the coral on the sea floor or the sharks and schools of fish that haphazardly swim by. The gameplay is also very common sense. For instance, shockwaves from your torpedo blasts can affect you, and undersea currents can make navigation a bit of a chore. The game is

accompanied by a beautiful fully orchestrated musical score, which gives it a wonderful atmosphere. For those in the know, the music is a complete rip-off of the musical score of the action flick, The Rock.

In the end, however, TOTD is a very alternative game. It is a slow paced game that focuses on atmosphere, realism, and exploration. Many might be turned off by the distinct lack of frantic action. This reviewer, however, is sick of all the flashy wham-bam thankyou ma'am games where the only excuse to go on a wild turkey-shoot is because aliens have kidnapped your girlfriend. Sugar-coated concepts like good prevailing over evil have always been an unrealistic contrivance anyway. Sit back, relax, and enjoy a dose of atmosphere, depth, and reality. TOTD is a very welcome and refreshing change that deserves attention.

BLBLPBLPBLP...

TORCH SELECTED

LN MISSILE SELECTED

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS EITHER...
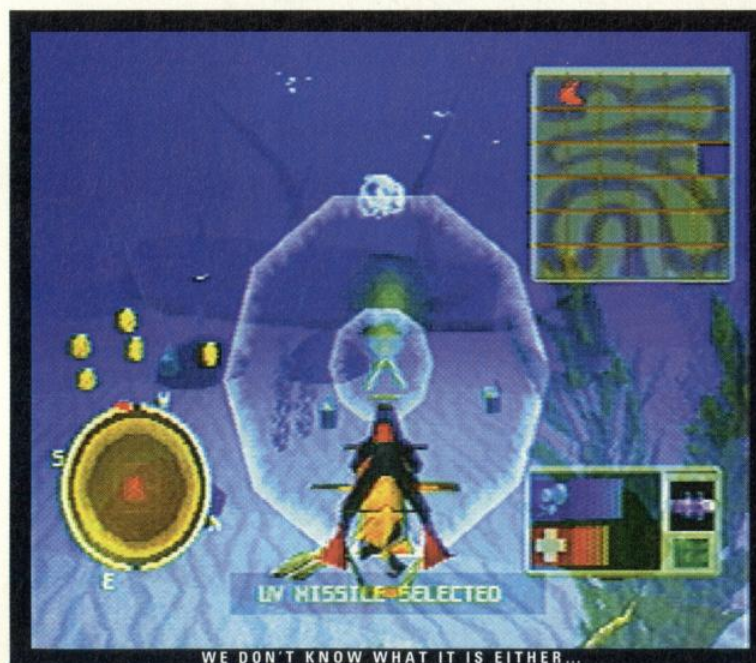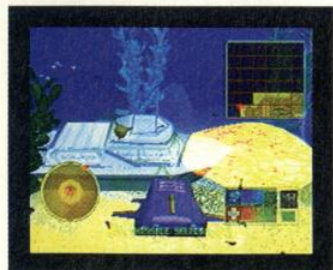
AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	3D Shooting/Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Namco
PRICE:	$69.95
RATING:	G

PLUS
Great atmospherics, which lets you slowly immerse yourself into the game

MINUS
Slower paced than most games, and a tad frustrating and time consuming at some stages.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	82	84

OVERALL

83

Not for everyone, but this could make it a good choice for those after something completely different.

Vigilante 8

Wearer of excessively baggy pants, Cam Shea takes us to Funkytown with Vigilante 8.

VEGAS BABY! VEGAS!

Funk in a game is an abstract notion, like the concept of gameplay - it is not necessarily explainable. It is more likely to be a vibe, or a collection of elements within the game. For instance, I regard Parappa the rapper and Wipeout to be truly funkniferous games. For these games, funk is a natural by-product of game design. However, a game can also be overtly funky. That is, the game can be based on a funky premise. Vigilante 8 is such a game - it makes a concerted effort to be funky. Fortunately, it largely succeeds.

Not a sequel...

Activision had a fair degree of success on the PC with Interstate 76, so it was logical for them to bring a similar game to the Playstation. Vigilante 8 is by no means the sequel to I'76 though. They're very different games - with the only real overlap being the retro theme and setting, and car based combat. In fact, Vigilante 8 was developed from the ground up by Luxoflux - an external development team, and fully optimised for Playstation. Thus, Playstation owners hoping for a bit of Interstate '76 action will be disappointed in some ways, but pleasantly surprised in others. The destruction is now arena-based, and similar in feel to the Twisted Metal series. Thus, Vigilante 8 is an out and out action fragfest. But oh what a fragfest!! It is set in an alternate 1975, and draws heavily from the styles of the time.

The largely irrelevant story involves an evil oil conglomerate by the name of OMAR (Oil Monopoly Alliance Regime) with world domination on their minds.

DUDE... YOU'RE TOAST...

Apparently, the southwest of the good ol' US of A contains the last pockets of resistance (now there's a surprise!), so this consortium of bumpnoxious dictators offers $100 million to anyone who can totally destabilise the southwest. A gang known as the Coyotes are attempting to cause as much mayhem and destruction as possible in order to claim the cash, whilst do-gooder group the Vigilantes attempt to stop them. Luckily, both groups are armed with some seriously yummy firepower.

The cast is a motley assortment of weird-ass characters and satirical references to 70's films, such as Shaft. Thus, characters range from a disco dancing champion, to an arsonist, to a beekeeper. Each has his/her own vehicle, including a bus, a campervan and the obligatory 70s muscle cars. There are 6 standard weapons to pick up, as well as a special weapon for each character.

NEVER PUSH IN AT THE MCDONALDS DRIVE THRU

you want to take out that yuppie ski resort, just go ahead and desecrate it. The cars sport reflections on the windows, and there are 3 levels of damage mapping in several different sections for each vehicle.

Vigilante 8 is also a lot of fun splitscreen with a friend, as you can go head to head, or play in a team.

Luxoflux certainly haven't skimped on the one player side of things though, as opponent AI is devious. The only complaint that I have is that sometimes at slow speeds you tend to be able to drive right through the other cars.

The sound effects are good, but not great. The music is a bit mixed as well - some funky tunes, some great atmospheric pieces, but also some dodgy cock rock.

If you like your violence all funked up - this could be the fix you've been waiting for. Much more of an action affair than Interstate '76 was.

NO LEROY... YOU USE THE SKI LIFT TO GET BACK UP...

Tricky handling

The control takes quite a bit of getting used to, but becomes enjoyable with practice, especially considering Luxoflux have successfully walked the tightrope between realism and gameplay. Graphically, Vigilante 8 looks just as a 3rd generation playstation title should - very nice indeed. The 3D engine is super fast, creating crisp and clear environments that allow you to go anywhere. Each level is large, and well designed with plenty of secrets, but importantly - the terrain itself is amazing. Not only are there little divots and bumps, but full blown steep slopes and huge jumps. Some of the arenas have vast differences in topography that absolutely rock. The other graphical element that kicks ass is the ability to destroy every polygonal model on the battlefield. That's right, if
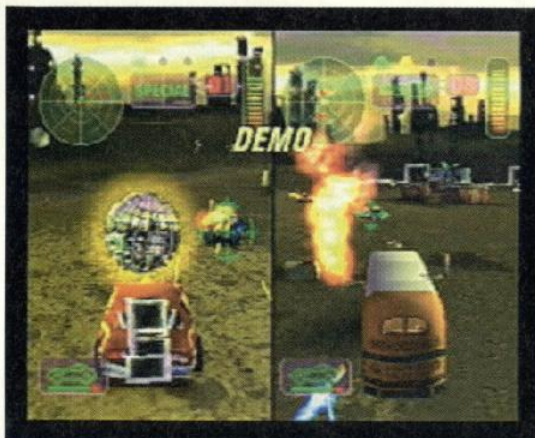
AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Combat
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Activision
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: TBA
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

PLUS
Ultra-slick graphics engine and a funky vibe

MINUS
Very similar to Twisted Metal, and lacks a compelling storyline

VISUALS 88 SOUND 78 GAMEPLAY 88

OVERALL
88

Man, Activision be collaring de jive on dis one. Dis sucker's cleana dan de board o' health.

Road Rash 3D

*Another excuse for **Dan Toose** to wear leather, Road Rash 3D. Try not to mess up your hair Dan.*

Road Rash was one of the titles that made some folks happy that they bought a 3Do. Okay, so this joy was kind of short lived, but some folks found Road Rash amusing for many months, and as a result it made it to the PSX, Saturn, and PC. So how do we make a sequel in 1998 girls and boys? That's right, add polygons. If you know the original Road Rash, then you're already up to speed with Road Rash 3D.

SUPERMAN IN BIKER LEATHERS?

Your mission should you choose...

The objective of Road Rash 3D is very simple. You're a gang biker who enters some rather irresponsible road races, that are pretty much devoid of rules. You are one of 16 riders, belong to four different gangs. If someone is inbetween you and the finish line, then kick their bike out from underneath them and pass 'em by. The game is geared to create a challenge by making skidding and coming off your bike (which makes winning very hard) the common result of driving too fast to be able to react in time, although this is what you really need to do to come first. Winning races earns you money to buy better bikes.

The game is reasonably smooth to watch, but the frame rates do vary with what's on screen, so naturally, when it's busy (and thus when you really need to be able to see), it gets a little choppy. By nature of the standard low res graphics on the PSX, discerning what's coming at you down the road is a little hard at first, which means the PC version (assuming it happens) will probably be a lot easier to play. Seeing a biker fly off his cycle and land 100 metres up the road is always amusing.

The gameplay is frantic and fun, but if anything, they've taken stuff out of the original Road Rash! The riders supposedly remember what you do to them in the races, and have "an attitude" towards you as a result, but it's not like there's a screen where you can go and get their vibe like you could

in RR, which is a shame. The FMV sequences are smooth etc, but really don't add much to the game, and certainly don't make up for the lack of snide comments from your competitors. The FMV actors do say stuff, but it doesn't seem tied with your performance at all.

Love a cup of...

EA signed a deal with a record label to get some professional music in the game. The only band of note amongst the line up was the Tea Party. Each gang supposedly has different music tied to it, but it all fits the game about the same.

There are plenty of tracks to race, but if you go a different way this time, you simply have to go back, where as in RR you could rejoin the race at a later point. This longevity may not make up for the apparent lack of additions to the original RR game. Maybe the introduction of stuff like earning a rank in your gang, or a multiplayer mode that wasn't just a comparitive time trial thing (meaning it's really not proper multiplayer). Good fun for newcomers to the game, but not the sequel that Road Rash fans would have liked.

TRACTION WOULD BE NICE RIGHT ABOUT NOW...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Racing
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: EA
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M

PLUS
Fast paced action
Instantly playable

MINUS
Less feel than the original game

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
69	81	72

OVERALL
70

A fun game, but a let down for the old Road Rash fans.

WarGames: Defcon 1

Blood sweat and tears are no longer a part of war since the inception of the little red button. **Kevin Cheung** *investigates in War Games.*

KEVIN RELAXES ON HIS TRIP TO HAWAII

It feels almost a lifetime ago since Matthew Broderick used an obscure chess program to outsmart a computer that was about to wreak nuclear havoc around the world. That was a movie called War Games, which now comes to the PlayStation in a game set several years in the future. Alas, this is not exactly a real time strategy in the vein of Command and Conquer; but its novel interface definitely makes it food for thought.

TANKS FOR NOTHING

War: When Sport Doesn't Solve Anything

Your role in the game is the tactical commander. Each mission places you in a large three dimensional terrain where you must fulfil incoming mission objectives such as levelling an enemy base. It just so happens as a matter of practicality, you end up shooting everything that turns up red on your radar. At any rate, the missions are accomplished with a designated set of vehicles assigned to you per mission.

Gameplay is best described as Command and Conquer right in your face. You can direct the movements of each vehicle through the 3D terrain one at a time, switching between them any time you want. They can be directed to converge on a certain area, take a strategic position, and

let rip with the firepower on an unsuspecting base. In essence, this is exactly the same as Square's Front Mission Alternative and Myth on the PC, except it's more hands-on. In the end, the control interface works very well, providing a good balance between action and strategy.

A Smart Approach to War

Graphically and aurally, War Games is a very solid piece of work. The 3D terrains are huge and have excellent variation in content, such as hills, bridges, and so on. The game also uses many special effects like lighting, smoke, and little ambient effects like trees catching on fire. This is all supported by loud war-related sound effects and plenty of ridiculous voice samples like a tank yelling "We're under heavy fire!" when it is being attacked by a GI with a pop gun.

That brings us to the point that War Games is not to be taken seriously at all. There are a lot of humorous effects such as the GI's that melt upon being shot; the vehicles and their speed are often disproportionate to the real thing; and the lack of precise shooting controls (you can't even strafe), puts the focus of the game on mindless explosive fun, as opposed to getting down and dirty with hardcore skirmishing tactics. The only real let-down is the AI of the units you aren't controlling.

Finally, it should be recognised that multi-genre games represent, one of the next frontiers in gameplay innovation. They have general appeal, yet with depth. This is a premise on which many a game has failed. Hardcore gamers might be enjoying Unreal, but that's no reason to ignore mainstream gamers, who are frankly getting too smart for blatant commercial exercises like Crash Bandicoot. War Games, in that respect, does the job very nicely. PC version should be cool.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action/Strategy
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G

PLUS
For hardcore gamers, the action isn't deep enough, and the strategy might be a little too shallow.

MINUS
An excellent game for mainstream gamers who want just a bit of everything.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	79	80

OVERALL
80

A quirky little game with funny war action. Worth checking out.

Colin McRae Rally

Hyper's new driving game expert, Simon Bailey, puts Colin McRae to the test, and it's thumbs up.
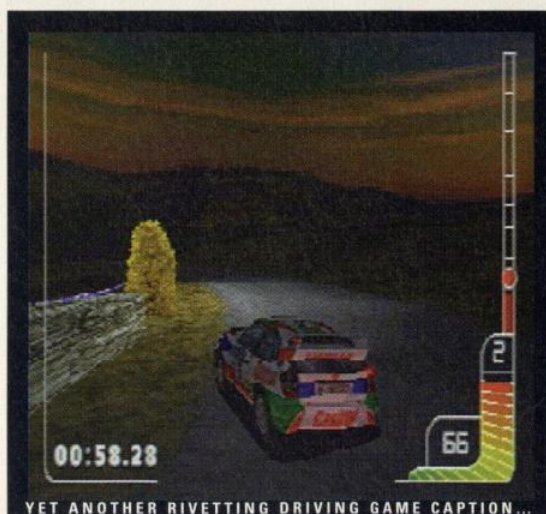
YET ANOTHER RIVETTING DRIVING GAME CAPTION...

For many, many years now, both motor racing fans and experts alike throughout the world has been debating one very touchy subject, 'Who Are The Better Drivers', the glamorous superhero icons of Formula One? Or the "Put your head down and get on with the job" boys of the WRC (World Rally Championship)?

For a long time everyone was screaming for a Formula One game on the PlayStation that would convey the feeling of actually driving an F1 car, and Psygnosis had the bravado to deliver in style with the original Formula One, a real F1 simulator (or at least we thought it was at the time!)

Now comes along the console's first dedicated Rally Simulator, Colin McRae Rally.

"Dedicated rally simulator!" I hear the expletives fly, "what about V-Rally!?". Well my friends, V-Rally, while being an exceptional game, is a bit of an arcade-y romp through rally fantasyland! When was the last time you saw the WRC cars physically race against each other, on circuits no less?! They don't! With the possible exception of the Super Special stages held at the end of each round (where they do actually race in tandem), these guys race against the clock, working their guts out to be the quickest over each individual stage, and hopefully, with all those stages put together, the eventual winner of the Rally.

Loin twitchin' good!

Booting up the machine to the now almost compulsory rendered intro, my loins seemed to twitch in anticipation of a game dripping with the key elements that CodeMasters have relentlessly strived to deliver to us over the years: Simple game screens, tasty graphics and spanking gameplay. After all, the huge success of both TOCA Touring Car Championship and Micro Machines V3 led me to believe that my trust in these guys was well placed! Was I disappointed? Well, no actually!

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD, AND YOUR... YEAH, YOU KNOW THE SONG

Good Ol' Colin offers you four modes to choose from:

Championship: 1 Player - This is where you tackle the WRC head on. There are 8 rounds to compete in, all being in different countries; ranging from the tight twists of Greece, to the dusty outback of Australia, all painstakingly recreated with very delicious visuals. In each round you have 6 stages to complete, all with varying track conditions. And you'll definitely need to set your machine up accordingly. There's rain, snow, ice, mud, tarmac and dust, and most of them are fairly treacherous! But don't stress too much, because sitting right next to you yelling directions and warnings in your ear is Nicky Grist, Colin McRae's real life navigator. To start with, you have only 4 cars (with 5 different camera views) from which to choose, with more being 'unlocked' as you progress through the game, ending up with a total of 8. All the official WRC cars are there and so are most of the drivers.

Rally: 1 or 2 Players - Single Round. Choose any round in any country (as long as you've unlocked it in Championship mode) and belt your way through the 6 stages. Simple!

Rally School: The man himself takes you through the paces in what is reminiscent of Cherries Driving School in MMV3, except a bit more mature! He has a few Gran Turismo-ish tasks for you to complete and then rates your performance and gives you a score on each of your individual driving attributes which include speed, braking and car position. He also gives a final score along with a pass or fail.

Time Trial: now I find this a bit weird seeing as how the very nature of the game is a time trial! I spose you could just think of this mode as Practise Mode.

I must quickly mention the 2-player mode. Basically, It's average. Because of the game's nature both cars in 2-player mode are ghost cars, which means one thing, no pushing and shoving. There is absolutely no collision detection between the two cars whatsoever and the race

soon becomes tiresome, compared to say, V-Rally. Overall, this game definitely serves the purpose it was designed to. It is an extremely enjoyable WRC simulation for die hard driving fans, and whilst being quite tricky, it is very rewarding if you stick to it! Those of you up for a quick blast of arcade action or fun with a friend should maybe stick with V-Rally or TOCA. Otherwise it's a great game that just lacks a bit of raw excitement due to its solitary gameplay.

I DON'T TRUST THAT TURN SIGN...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Driving
PLAYERS: 1 - 2
PUBLISHER: Codemasters
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Analogue Steering Wheels

PLUS
Best handling ever with a wheel and the gameplay really grows on you some nice graphic effects too!

MINUS
Gets a bit lonely out there!

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
89	95	91

OVERALL

90

This game performs extremely well for what it is. The benchmark rally sim. Get a wheel and get it!!!

Ghost in the Shell

Renowned for his appalling Quake skills, Kevin Cheung shows that he can be inspired into showing off some hidden talent.
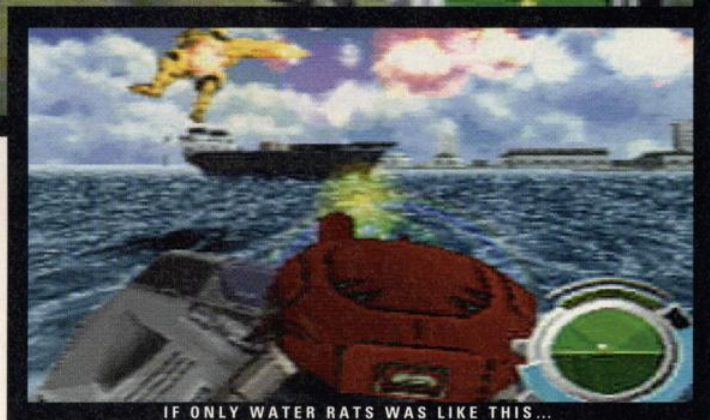
IF ONLY WATER RATS WAS LIKE THIS...

The future will be a vast technological jungle where skyscrapers reach in their hundreds for the heavens, and the mind and machine are one. Best described as a slick combination of Ridley Scott's world of Bladerunner with a globally proliferated Gates-free internet, Ghost in the Shell represents the imaginative genius of Masamune Shirow. Having first appeared in manga form several years earlier, GITS was translated into the more consumer-friendly anime form and wowed both Eastern and Western audiences. Fans of the original manga were unfortunately disappointed by Mamoru Oshii's distinctly hard-line philosophical direction, which is why the PlayStation incarnation of GITS is so important.

Complex Story, Simple Game

Behold: Newport City, a place where bio-mechanical augmentation are a necessity for survival and multiple A/V outputs at the back of your neck are the happening thing. With this kind of technology, it doesn't take much for one to fall to the dark side and tussle with the forces of justice. That's where you come in. You are Motoko Kusanagi, member of an elite security squad whose quantum of bio-implants could bankrupt a small nation. Your principle form of combat weaponry will be the Fuchikoma, a fully armoured spider tank with enough firepower to scare the battery fluid out of any opposing mech. In this game, you are faced with the greatest threat Newport City has ever seen: a megalomaniac mech freak who boasts 200 troops, 80 ground and air mechs, and one little red button. With the help of your companions Togusa and Batou and your trusty Fuchikoma, you're going to shell out a little justice.

The Fuchikoma's controls are simplicity itself. There are basic movements, rotational controls, and a slide move where you can strafe in any direction. The only complicated part is the ability to crawl along any surface, but once you're acquainted with the control, you'll

button and locking on to your targets.

And what of the action? Well, following the meagre lead of a few ones and zeros left behind by a lowly data thief, your search for Ye Bad One takes you through a series of missions through such locations as the city districts, sewers, and freeways. Some of the cooler missions have you infiltrating a Geofront reactor, while the last boss has you spot-jumping from a 300-storey building! Every mission is jam packed with things to shoot at, and the large size of the mission areas guarantees plenty of random skirmishing.

To Hell With Disney: Anime Rocks!

Gorgeous graphics and presentation is something that GITS absolutely exudes. The in-game graphics are lush with detail, with solid polygonal environments and characters that zip by with resolute speed and fluidity. Even in the most cluttered action, GITS has little slowdown and even less break-up. This is truly a testament to the game's 3D engine, which was developed by the same team behind Jumping Flash 2 (the first with a true 3D environment, overshadowed later by Mario 64). The sounds are also impressive, with plenty of explosions, environmental effects, and acoustical variations, all accompanied by a techno soundtrack that actually makes you feel cool when you play the game.

But that's not all. Ghost in the Shell has the Godliest hand-drawn anime cut-scenes to be seen on any system. This is no exaggeration. Each time you pass a certain stage in the game or training mode, you'll unlock a movie that you can watch any time in future. They are entirely relevant to the story, and are chock-full of drama, pathos, and great touches of humour. The beauty of these sequences is that Masamune Shirow personally oversaw the creation of these sequences with Production IG, and the final results are simply gorgeous.

In hindsight, there are but two elemental flaws. Firstly, the enemy AI is just a little on the low side. Secondly, although there's excellent variety to the action, but there are only 14 levels of the stuff! Therefore, the final word on Ghost in the Shell is that it's an excellent shooter, albeit a little short; but if you are a total anime nut like this reviewer is, go right for it. You will not regret it.

be giving new meaning to the phrase 'death from above' as you launch a shower of rockets on the sucker passing underneath you.

In terms of weaponry, the Fuchikomas are armed only with a minigun, rocket launcher, and a limited supply of smart bombs. It's a tad disappointing that there aren't more weapons. On the other hand, if there were indeed more weapons, your concentration would have been wrongfully taken away from the rapid on-screen action. It's unfortunate, then, that even though the action focuses on quick reflexes, the rocket controls require you to go through the cumbersome process of holding down the

CHRIST YOU'RE A BAD SHOT!

YOUR MISSION, KILL A WHOLE BUNCH OF SELF RIGHTEOUS YUPPIES IN THEIR GAWDY LEXURY CRUISER...

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	3D Action
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	From Software
PRICE:	$69.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock

PLUS
Anime rules! How many times do I have to allude to such a basic fact?

MINUS
The action is kick-arse, but there's just not enough of it.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	85	86

OVERALL

88

This game just oozes sex appeal. Come to me Motoko...

Blast Radius

Cam Shea *takes the controls of Psygnosis' latest space shooter... Is this deja vu?*
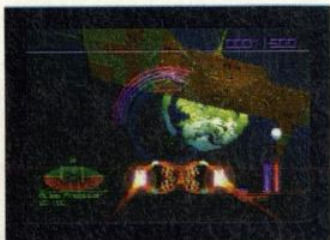
"OK space cadets, prepare to hurtle through the cosmos!!", or at least through your living room as you run to the Playstation to check out Psygnosis's latest 3D space combat game. But shock, horror, it's not the sequel to Colony Wars, it's an entertaining ditty called Blast Radius. I'm at a bit of a loss to explain why Psygnosis decided to invest development time and money in this title with Colony Wars:Vengeance just around the corner, but hey.. I'm not complaining!! Blast Radius was created by Psygnosis' London team, and uses the Colony Wars engine (or something that

looks so similar that it's not funny), so has a familiar smoothness and visual polish. Unfortunately, compared with Colony Wars, Blast Radius doesn't really come out on top in any area.

The main practical distinction between Blast Radius and Colony Wars is in play style. Blast radius is faster paced with more of an emphasis on arcade blast 'em up action. This isn't necessarily a good or bad thing - it really depends on the individual gamer's tastes. The combat itself is engrossing, as the fighters move faster, so dogfights tend to be a little more dynamic than in Colony Wars. There are 40 fairly typical missions and 37 or so enemy craft to engage - each with differing abilities and AI. Players have a choice of several different cockpits to hop in, although the action is actually viewed from outside the ship. Each mission completed nets a booty that can be spent on upgrading your ships shields or buying/upgrading the many weapons. Failure to complete a mission, however, results in a monetary penalty.

To be honest, Blast Radius feels like a stripped-down version of Colony Wars. It's inferior in both gameplay and production values. Blast Radius's mission path is essentially linear. The save game structure serves to compound this - completed missions often have to be replayed repeatedly, as death in the mission after results

in going back to the last save point. Rather than being a challenge, this rapidly becomes frustrating. Unlike most Psygnosis games, the presentation is disappointing. Their hallmark techy options screens and lush cut scenes are noticeably absent, so the sense of a consistent time and place is lessened. The only inkling of the galactic battle that you're supposedly taking part in comes from the utterly boring mission briefs that are simply written on screen in a tiny typeset that's hard to read.

Graphically, Blast Radius simply isn't as eye poppingly gorgeous as Colony Wars. It often feels (and looks) like there's less going on around you, and lacks the same level of visual flair.

Thus, where Colony Wars draws the player in with non-linear gameplay and real personality in story and design, Blast Radius achieves almost the opposite. That said however, Blast Radius is still a competent game that will provide a long and hearty challenge, with entertaining combat, a good soundtrack and the oft neglected option to link with another Playstation for full screen multiplayer tonking action.

ENGAGE THE FLASHY LENS FLARE DRIVE!

AN ALIEN RACE WITH NO COLOUR SENSE

AVAILABLE: **Now**
CATEGORY: **3D Shooter**
PLAYERS: **1**
PUBLISHER: **Psygnosis**
PRICE: **$59.95**
RATING: **G**

PLUS
Fast paced, and fun

MINUS
Colony Wars does it that much better

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	82	84

OVERALL
82

A good shoot em up, but not quite up to Colony Wars.

Quake 2 Mission Pack: The Reckoning

Considering that Quake 2 was a little easy, everyone was assuming that the new mission pack would be a challenge for even the top players... Dan Toose *puts the Reckoning to the test.*

POINT THAT LASER KEYRING THING SOMEPLACE ELSE!

The first person shooter is a genre where everything is relatively good. Compared to Quake 1, Quake 2 had great level design, and a better single player game. However, the enemy AI was soon no match for any competent Quake player, and was really no challenge in the long run.

Now, over six months after Quake 2 was released, there are a horde of Q2 experts, just dying to sink their teeth into a rich, challenging single player Q2 experience. Xatrix, makers of Redneck Rampage, have come up with the first official Quake 2 Mission Pack: The Reckoning.

As far as visuals and sound go, this is Quake 2, nothing more or less. The level design is kind of cool, but really only shines in the outdoor and cavern areas, where Xatrix have gone to a lot of trouble to make the rocky passageways look as authentic as they can.

Unfortunately the game is just way too easy for a Quake 2 enthusiast. The AI has had no improvement, with monsters still just taking it on the chin. The new weapons are fine, but they don't really add a new dimension to the game, nor do the new monsters, only one of which is a completely new monster. There isn't even a new boss, which is hugely dodgy. The deathmatch maps are cool, but chances are very few online servers will run them, so getting to play on them may be a rare event.

This is not the cool addition that Q2 fans have been hoping for like the Hipnotic and Rogue packs were for Quake 1.

FRESH MEAT: THE NEW STROGG ADVERSARIES.

Gekks: Mutated ape like creatures that gib into fluorescent yellow globs of blood once they go down. They spit acid, which is basically like a simple blaster shot. They can swim, although the AI sometimes makes them sitting ducks.

Phalanx Gladiator: Just like the Railgun gladiator we're all familiar with, except he spit out mag shots, from a shoulder mounted phalanx gun. Also comes with a power shield, so they take extra punishment.

Repair Bot: These guys bring other Strogg back from the dead, although playing through the whole game, I never saw this happen once, so they kind of failed their purpose. I guess I killed them without them able to fire a shot, since they look like fliers.

Grunts: Now there are some new grunts, that are far more dangerous than the old ones. One fires a Ionripper, making it difficult to avoid their fire if you have a wall behind you. There are also new Hyperblaster grunts, and a beam weapon grunt, that simply tries to keep a deadly red stream of light cutting into you.

THE WEAPONRY

Ionripper: Each shot takes two energy cells, with the result being a projectile pulse that causes plenty of damage, and also bounces off solid surfaces to result in much ricochet action. Firing this into a large deathmatch battle will result in lots of easy frags.

Phalanx: This twin barrelled gun is essentially a variation on the rocket launcher, firing twin blobs of lava like death. Like a rocket launcher, it is dangerous to use at point blank.

Trap: This one is cool. Once set, anyone who wanders too close gets sucked into its beam... killed... then turned into a tasty bite size +50 health pack (even over 100 health).

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Quake 2 add-on
PLAYERS:	1-network
PUBLISHER:	Activision
PRICE:	$49.95
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIREMENTS:	Registered version of Quake 2

PLUS
New weapons and brilliant deathmatch maps

MINUS
A really tame single player experience for Q2 fans.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	90	60

OVERALL

65

A great set of Deathmatch maps, bundled with a dull single player set.

Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines

*We often catch **Eliot Fish** stalking folks with a Nerf gun, so we gave him Commandos instead.*

YA FRITZ, BUILD ZE SHACK RIGHT WHERE THE PLANES ARE TRYING TO LAND...

is the sort of World War II espionage simulation that gamers will love - easy to pick up and play, yet challenging and satisfying to conquer. The emphasis here is on stealth and planning, as opposed to machine-guns blazing action.

Simple Interface

Each of your commandos has a small satchel displayed in the bottom corner of the screen, showing you what items they are carrying (usually a combat knife, pistol and then character specific items like dynamite for the explosives expert and scuba-gear for the frogman etc.) - this is the quickest way of identifying the soldier you are currently controlling. One click of the pistol for instance, will tell your soldier to get it out and point it at something - you then simply click on what you want to shoot, and as long as it's within range, you can fire away. Usually though, the closer you get to a German soldier, the greater chance it is for you to be seen yourself - thus the handy "sight" function which allows you to click on a

Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines is just the sort of strategy game for those of you who A) hate resource management; B) hate the concept of mass-construction then mass-destruction; C) like to watch the action as much as be part of it; and even D) all of the above. Set in World War II, Commandos puts you in charge of a squad of soldiers, though you're more playing God than anything else. You have a bird's eye like view of the action, though there are camera functions to zoom you in on your units if you so choose, and the angle is more of an isometric one. You actually have the option of playing in 1024x780 resolution if your PC can handle it, with the lowest option being 640x480 - but the map glides smoothly under your touch at this setting. The Commandos environment is lovingly detailed, and everything down to the smoke trailing away from a bored German Soldier's cigarette is animated beautifully. This
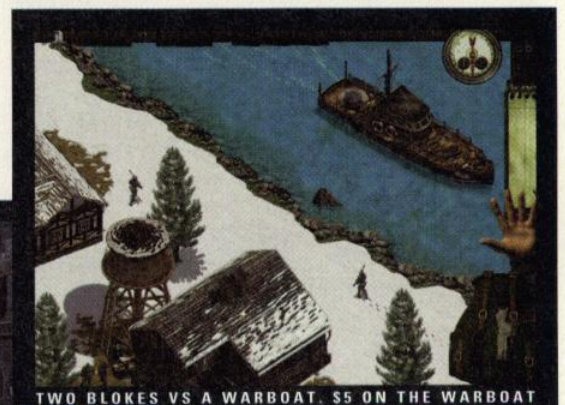
TWO BLOKES VS A WARBOAT. $5 ON THE WARBOAT

German and see his field of view as he looks around the landscape. This is what you'll end up using the most, as it's the only way to sneak past sentries or quietly dispatch of an enemy soldier without him raising the alarm - then you'll have to get your Green Beret to drag the body off into the bushes so as to not alert the other Germans to your presence.
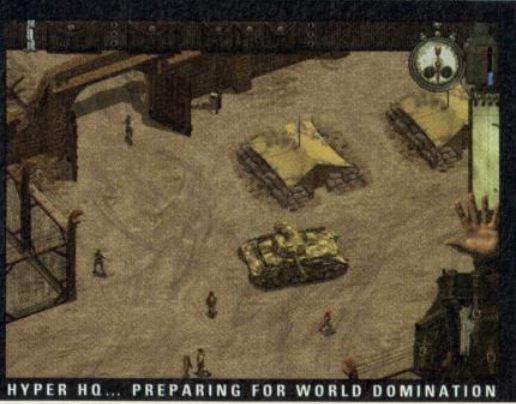
HYPER HQ... PREPARING FOR WORLD DOMINATION

Fun trial and error?

The missions are great fun and challenging too, though they do tend to end up being an endless routine of trial and error - as once you get so far into a mission, you may then have your entire team mowed down by a passing patrol boat before you can react, for instance. However, the gameplay is so simple and fun, that you'll be determined to "get it right" - you can also save your game at any point.

Your options with each troop are a tad limited though (each one can only really perform 3 or 4 actions depending on their "class") and it's frustrating when the green beret can lift fuel barrels - but nobody else can! You end up figuring out how to use each unit and when, to solve the problem you're presented with - and if one dies, it usually means restarting the mission. The spy for example, is the only one who can speak German and thus he's the only one who can put on a stolen uniform and bluff his way into a compound. Controlling the action during missions like these, becomes hugely entertaining - though you may have to split the screen up into different windows so you can keep an eye on your other team members and even a wandering German patrol if you so choose. Your team members can even hijack trucks and boats to achieve your mission goals. You really have to study the environment, observe the enemies movements and weigh up your own team's skills to know how to approach each mission's objectives. There is no set winning way to solve each mission either, you can use your men and exploit the enemies' weaknesses anyway you choose - very cool. Just don't expect too many options, which can get frustrating when there's no real-life explanation for why one unit can't do what another can, and don't expect any real brilliant AI in the game either. Sometimes, a group of four Germans can get stuck in their pursuit of you because there's one dead body in their path - a shame.

On the whole though, Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines is great fun and great to look at, and after playing one mission you'll be hooked to the very end.

PLUS
Excellent real-time tactics gameplay with super-detailed graphics.

MINUS
Not enough variety in your soldier's actions and some questionable AI.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	84	85

OVERALL
85

The no-nonsense/freakyless/World War II/spy/action/adventure some of us have been waiting for! Entertaining.

Descent: Freespace

What this game has to do with Descent, we have no idea. **Eliot Fish** did his best to find out...

OMEGA 1: CEASE FIRING ON FRIENDLY CRAFT
OMEGA 1: CEASE FIRING ON FRIENDLY CRAFT
OMEGA 1: CEASE FIRING ON FRIENDLY CRAFT

HYPER BIG RUBBER STAMP OF APPROVAL

DIRECTIVES
ESCORT OMEGA 1 TO
JUMP NODE [1]
ESCORT OMEGA 2 TO
JUMP NODE [1]
DESTROY THE ANVIL [1]

ORDERS: WAYPOINTS
TIME TO: 99:99

OMEGA 1
GTT ELYSIUM

MONITORING:
OMEGA 1   71
OMEGA 2   100
D ANVIL   36

WEAPONS
ML-16 LASER
DISRUPTOR
39 MX-50

30 CM.

SIR, I CAN'T SEE THE SHIP... THERE ARE THESE STRANGE GREEN SYMBOLS OBSCURING MY VISION...

Take one big blender. Grab a copy of Wing Commander Prophecy and one slightly used copy of X-Wing Vs TIE Fighter and hell, why not a copy of I-War too. Throw them in, pop on the lid, and switch the trusty household appliance to "blend". Whizz it around for a bit, then pour the resulting substance into a long, tall glass (maybe pop in an ice cube or two) and sip it slowly. There... you've just had your first taste of Descent: Freespace! No nasty new flavours here, just the best bits of three awesome games, combined to make one killer space experience. Now before you get confused, Descent: Freespace is not Descent 3 - that's yet to be released, and will feature more of that intense corridor-based action that you've come to love. Descent: Freespace is an out and out Space Combat sim purely set in the Descent universe. I don't want to be cynical, but it seems that the word Descent was just tacked on to attract sales. But hey, that's okay in this case, because this is one fine game!

A tasty blend

The developers, Volition (one half of the Parallax team who brought us Descent) have really been studying their Space Combat genre well... Descent: Freespace is an example of brilliant game design. Everything from easy to follow training missions (spread over the course of the game, slowly introducing new tactics) to the original and unpredictable mission structure - Freespace is the most satisfyingly realistic Space Combat game yet.

The only glaring mistake that has been made, is that all these great features lifted from other great games in the genre, haven't even been remotely disguised. Wing Commander Prophecy elements? The plot is nearly identical! The craft design is eerily similar and the "wing commanding" in the game is lifted directly. Freespace also has enemy Aces that you can take down during the mission as bonus secondary objectives, and a non-linear branching mission structure... So how about X-Wing elements? Well, the actual game mechanics seem to operate identically (though cosmetically it's quite different), plus smaller things like the support craft which can dock with you to reload your armaments, speed matching (which automatically adjusts) and even the menu screen concept. You even have a medal case which displays your promotions, and it goes on... Whilst all this borrowing is a bit of a shame, it's been utilised so well in Freespace that when the game kicks in, you enjoy the familiarity rather than despise it.

Good luck kid... you're gonna need it!

Frankly, the missions in Freespace leave Wing Commander Prophecy for dead, in terms of intelligent and intuitive design. In Freespace, you're no longer treated like a brain dead idiot. A mission ends when you decide to hit that hyperjump key - never before - and if

COUGH! DAMNIT, I HATE UNLEADED ION DRIVE FUMES

you decide to do something within a mission which seems purely practical, regardless of your mission briefing, the game will reward you for your clever thinking. Example... One mission required me to ensure the capture of a traitor who was rendevouzing with the enemy. We jumped in and spotted them on the radar - ordering my wing to disable his ship, I concentrated on the alien fighters. Once they were wiped out, Intelligence reported that they successfully captured the traitor. Mission objectives complete (you may hit hyperjump now). However, the alien shuttle which was rendevouzing with the traitor had not been destroyed in the battle and was leaving the system - so I thought "well, damn you aliens aren't getting away!", but rather than blowing them to smithereens, I decided to disable their engines just to be a torturous bastard! But then, amazingly, Intelligence came in over the radio and told me that they would take the alien ship too! A descision which I made on the fly, and which wasn't even hinted at in the mission objectives, was recognised and rewarded by the game - purely because, in that situation it would make real sense. Other games would either have the aliens jumping out, or force you to kill them to finish the mission. This really gives you the feeling that the game world is alive and the outcome of the missions can really change depending on your own logic.

So real you'll puke!

Visually, Freespace is the most realistic Space Combat sim ever - another game which was simply designed to be

played with a 3D accelerator and no other way! Not only is there no slowdown near large craft, but when you're next to something big you really feel tiny. Take one of the spacestations for instance, it has a hole which you can fly through, and it's peppered with tiny lit up windows, but the best thing is that the mother is huuuge. This is the first space combat game which really lets you fly around objects which absolutely dwarf your fighter. Fantastic.

The detail in the textures and smooth dynamic lighting makes you really feel like you're dogfighting with solid objects too, and the engine is so smooth, you may even feel movement sickness! Though the effects are not as pretty as Wing Commander Prophecy for instance, they somehow feel more realistic and it doesn't detract from the action. On the medium difficulty, the game

swings from feeling a little easy to being brutally hard. Flying your missions can get quite complex, requiring you to target specific sub-systems of any opposing craft - from their engines to their weapons and communications - all whilst trying to co-coordinate a rescue mission, or successfully escort another craft to a jump point. Some of your objectives are nicely orginal too, with one mission purely being the need to clear a path through an asteroid field so the Capitol ship can get through!

Whilst Freespace borrows heavily from other games, it probably ends up being more satisfying to play than any of them!

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Space Combat
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	Interplay
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G8+
REQUIRED	P166, 16MB RAM, Win 95, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	P200, 32MB RAM, 8XCD-ROM
SUPPORTS:	Direct3D, Glide, AGP

PLUS
Fantastic game engine and white-knuckle missions.

MINUS
Some missions are hard to figure out, and your wingmen are hopeless!

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	90	92

OVERALL
92

Big scores across the board for this polished space combat experience. A thrill to play, but not for beginners!

Mech Commander

Matt Bauer *accepts the mission to do some recon on the latest Battletech activity... The results are in.*

HEY... IT'S REDFERN!
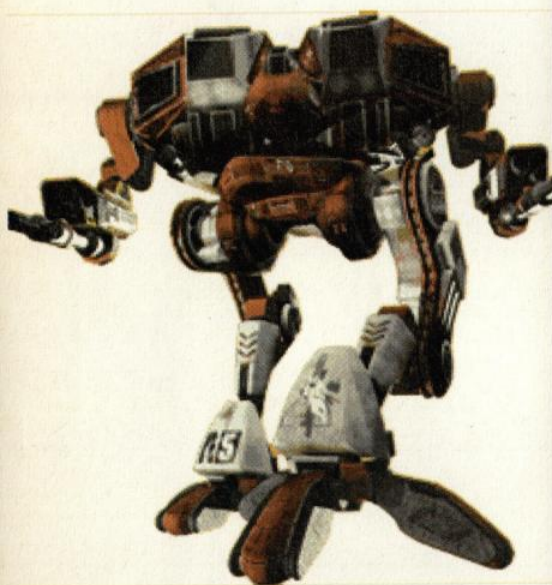
The long awaited Real Time Strategy Game from Micro Prose has arrived. Designed within the universe of Battletech, Mech Commander has a very different feel to the classic Real Time Strategy games of the past such as Warcraft, Command and Conquer and Dark Reign. While the gameplay of these other titles is generally based around a strategy of building up a command centre from where you defend and attack an enemy, Mech Commander comes from a slightly different angle.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it...

You are basically in charge of a unit of Mech Warriors, which you must add to, upgrade and control, in order to complete certain missions. You begin the game with three light weight Mechs, three pilots and some standard weaponry. Initially, there are not many options; basically put your pilots into the mechs and deploy them onto the battlezone. From here, you must skilfully control and manipulate them around the battlefield to complete certain missions. The missions range from escorting Armoured Personnel Carriers to salvage operations to completely obliterating certain designated targets within the enemy territory. This sounds pretty simple, but throw in some enemy tanks, missile turrets and Mechs whos sole purpose in life is to stop you dead in your tracks, and you have a very exciting, not to mention challenging game on your hands.

Adding new Units, pilots and weapons to your arsenal as well as repairing old equipment is done by the exchange of Resource points (RP) during a non time-critical portion of the game in between missions. The RPs are earned by salvaging enemy buildings or Mechs during the scenarios. Other weapons and machinery can also be salvaged along the way and there are some really nice weapons to add to your arsenal. Rocket launchers, lasers,

high-powered rifles and sensor packs are just a few of the goodies that you can find or purchase to get you through.

When you begin playing the first mission, the graphics don't impress too much. They were very small and because of this, you couldn't notice very much detail on the buildings, vehicles (especially the Mechs) and background. Then you discover the zoom button...Whoa!!. Very, very cool indeed. My first impressions were totally wrong, as the graphics detail increased one hundred fold when the zoom feature is in effect. The Mechs themselves look awesome. You can make out each individual

weapon that they are carrying and there are some nice little lighting effects when a weapons if fired. The animation of the Mech is also done very well. They can be knocked over by an enemy missile or have parts of their structure blown away. When moving along, they crash over trees or fences with reckless abandon and don't worry if there is a particularly dense bit of forest that

nerves will create a count down on the target. The larger the air strike, the bigger the count down so unless you have ESP, it is probably a waste of time trying this on anything that moves.

Not to be blind sided by the aesthetic side of the game, the audio also, is superb. I really love the way the soundtrack in each mission begins with a smooth almost mellow melody and then escalates into an intense fanfare when a battle commences. The sound effects, while not spectacular, do fit in very well. From the crackle of a bush fire to the crashing of a tree as you walk over it, the audio effects complete the great multimedia experience.

impedes your movement... just burn it down! Another cool little bit of animation is when a Mech is destroyed and the pilot ejects in a stream of smoke leaving the burning wreck behind. Microprose have not singled out the attention to detail on the Mechs only. Other struc-

Multimech

Mech Warrior will also support Multyplayer gaming. Modem, Serial, Local Area Network

tures and vehicles are beautifully rendered and have their own subtle but noticeable animated sequences. The explosions also look great with nice bright flares of fire and chunks of metal flying from the detonation.

Let those flyboys do the work...

One particular feature that Microprose have not forgotten to include is the air strike. Always a fan favourite, the air strike will make toast of most structures within seconds. Simply selecting the air strike and then clicking on the unfortunate building that is getting on your

(IPX/SPX or TCP/IP) or Internet play are all natively supported. Upon installation, there is an option to setup the Internet gaming interface, Mplayer on your system. Unfortunately at the time of this review, however, Mech Commander was unavailable on the Mplayer network.

To conclude, Mech Commander is a great new addition to the library of the Real Time Strategy genre. The fact that it is not simply a carbon copy of Warcraft or Command and Conquer with just a different plot but actually more of a real war game will really make this stand out from the crowd.

I WISH THESE DAMN CIVILIANS WOULD SIT STILL

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Strategy
PLAYERS:	1-multi
PUBLISHER:	Micropose
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	TBA
REQUIRED:	P133,16MB RAM
DESIRED:	P166MHz, 32MB RAM

PLUS
Cool to play the Battletech Universe from a different perspective.

MINUS
A more diverse landscape would make things a little more interesting.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	80	85

OVERALL
88

A beautifully finished production that will keep you involved for ages, in both single and multiplayer modes.

Final Fantasy VII

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G8+
REQUIRED: P166, 32MB RAM, 4XCDROM, WIN 95
DESIRED: P166, 3DFX CARD
SUPPORTS: 3D ACCELERATORS

I realise right about now that I've just set myself mission impossible... To do Final Fantasy VII justice in around 270 words. FF7, if you've had your head in the sand, and hadn't noticed, is the best RPG available on a console. What's different here, as far as PC gamers will be concerned is that this is a Japanese RPG, which has a particularly different feel to it than a Western RPG like Ultima, Might &Magic, or the like.

You play a collection of heroes, working against a huge corporation whose ambitions to monopolise on the world's power sources are threatening the planet's safety. There's also a legendary warrior who was formerly your hero, who seems to have plans of his own. That may all sound cliche, but the character and plot development are outstanding.

Not only is the plot great, but also the simple game mechanics, which also allow for complex strategies if you want to experiment with different combinations of magic effects. Battle is a combination between real time and turn based that blends for a very even and fair result.

The PC version of this game has catered for those with 3D cards, which is great, since the whole game uses 3D characters the whole way through. Due to the higher resolutions possible, the PC version looks better than the original PSX version.

In the end some hard core PC RPG fans may scoff at the cute characters and heavy use of a character based storyline, but these folks will just be missing out on what is truly a grand epic RPG experience. If you own a PC and haven't played the game on PSX, go get it.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
91	90	94	94

Cyberstorm 2

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER: SIERRA
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 24MB RAM, 4XCD
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM
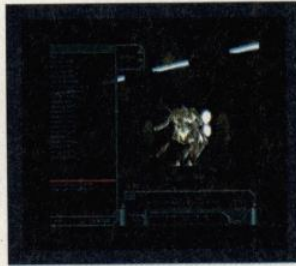
Mission Force: Cyberstorm was a little gem of a game back in 1996. Blending finely-tuned strategy with intelligent turn-based combat, it may not have been a big hit but was loved by all those who played it. Cyberstorm 2 is the sequel, yet it's quite a different game. And, unfortunately, nothing like as good either.

The best thing about the game is the mission structure. Right at the start, from the safety of your command centre, you are able to choose whichever mission you wish. Feel the need to scout around your base? Select one of the reconnaissance missions. Want to build up your resources? Venture forth on one of the mining missions. As you progress, more and more missions open up for you. It's quite a neat idea.

Almost ruining the whole game is the frankly shocking AI. Your troops (mainly mech robots) are just mind-bogglingly stupid. Get this - you need to click every single time you want them to shoot. Sure, you usually only control a handful of troops, which makes things a little easier. But, honestly, the real-time mode is totally unplayable. Thankfully, Sierra have also kept the turn-based option, but it suffers from the same problems (if to a lesser extent). They've complicated the strategy side of the game as well, and again the result isn't good. Too much micro-management gets in the way of your enjoyment.

A very disappointing follow-up to a very good game.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
64	69	60	62
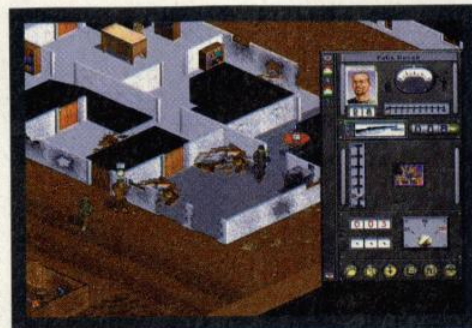
Soldiers At War

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-4
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M
PUBLISHER: SSI
REQUIRED: P120, 16MB RAM, WIN 95, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM, 8XCD-ROM

It's been a while since turn-based strategy has reared it's head around the Hyper office, but it's a welcome change from the piles of generic RTS games that have been kicking around under our desks. Ever since playing X-COM, turn-based strategy has held a small spot in my heart, and Soldiers at War isn't too far removed from the X-COM concept. You begin with a crack team of four soldiers, knee-deep in World War 2, and depending on how you equip them and order them around the environment, the war could be yours to win. Setting up your motley crew with the appropriate weapons and items for battle is a bit like playing with your sister's barbie dolls - or maybe more like playing with the ken dolls to be exact. As opposed to RTS where you get to play God, but with certain limitations (as the action plays out at it's own speed), Soldiers at War allows you to truly play the Maker, as there is nothing stopping you from sitting there and contemplating your next move for hours. It could take almost that long too, just to rifle through the endless menus and sub-menus regarding the specific soldier's actions and options - annoyingly bad design. However, the strategy is deep enough to keep you playing. There's also a great scenario editor which virtually gives you infinite playability. For the freaks.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	76	80	78

Sentinel Returns

PC/Playstation

AVALIABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1 (PC VERSION OFFERS MULTIPLAY)
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95
DESIRED: P166, 32MRAM, 3DFX CARD

Sentinel Returns, eh? Um… I don't really know what to say. I could tell you that it's weird and bizarre and surreal. But that goes nowhere near describing the absolute indescribability of this game. And, if I mentioned it's written by the guy who did Grand Prix 2 (PC), it might pique your interest, but it's also irrelevant since the two games have nothing whatsoever in common.

Right, then. There are 650 worlds. In each, and always stationed at the highest point in the landscape, stands the Sentinel. From the vantage he surveys his domain by forever rotating around really slowly, absorbing the energy of things that meet his gaze and turning them into trees. Got that? Now, you are also in each world, although the only way you can survive is inside a robot host. To move around you need to create a new robot somewhere, then transfer yourself to it. Boulders can also be generated to give your robots extra height. Your ultimate goal is to climb high enough and close enough to topple the Sentinel. Oh, and if the Sentinel sees you then you're dead.

Honestly, forget Resident Evil, forget Unreal, this is one of the most terrifying games I have ever played. Everything is silent, save for the moody ambient music and the slow, deathly creaking as the Sentinel turns. It's a quite amazingly spooky effect. Not to mention the fact that you know you're being watched the whole time. Aargh! Brings a whole new meaning to the phrase "paranoid android". I like it.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	88	85	85
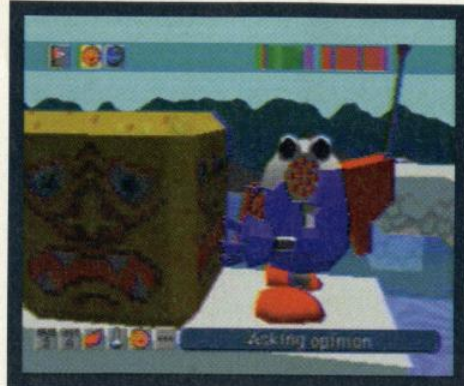
Pet In TV

PlayStation

AVALIABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SIMULATION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: SONY
RATING: G
PRICE: $59.95

Pet In TV is one of those games where you instantly fall in love with it as a child would befriend a puppy; or run away screaming in terror like a little girl who's snapped off the head of her first Barbie. Considering the Tamagotchi's heavily publicised Australian reception, this is not inconceivable.

To keep things in simple terms, Pet In TV is exactly what it says it is: you have a domesticated electronic pet that lives, eats, plays, craps, and sleeps in your TV. Now, before anyone starts asking whether you can have a dog or dinosaur version, the 'pet' in question is a cute little water fountain with eyes, legs, arms, and a back-pack with enough mechanical devices to put Inspector Gadget to shame.

Gameplay takes place in an expansive polygonal world where you teach the pet what to do in various circumstances. In most cases, you are required to indicate your approval, or lack thereof, of its actions. For instance, your pet might walk up to a rock and kick it. If you approve, then that's what it will do every time it sees a rock in future. If you disapprove, then it will try to eat it or jump on it, and other alternative actions until you either approve or tell it to give up. With enough education, your pet will be solving complex puzzles and mazes on its own.

In the end, Pet In TV is a remarkably innovative and unique game. While the Tamagotchi comparison is inevitable, it is really head and shoulders above it. It has a simple interface, great gameplay, infinite replayability, a pleasing appearance, and wonderfully entertaining. It's also welcome proof that games don't need any killing to be good, and services a much-neglected portion of the female market. This game is highly recommended to anyone who was able to stomach Tamagotchi for a little while.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	72	89	83

V-Ball: Beach Volleyball Heroes

PlayStation

AVALIABLE: NOW
CATAGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: SOFTGOLD
PRICE: $59.95
RATING: G

Volleyball. A game pitting your mastery of a ball's projectile motion against the skills of another. Whilst the game is a pleasant mix of badminton and tennis, everyone knows that the only reason anyone ever watches the game is to have a good perve. In many respects, V-Ball is no different, and yet it's not quite what you'd expect in the mainstream sense.

First and foremost, the novelty behind V-Ball is in the presentation of the game. There is a distinct Japanese feel to the character designs as they are all organised into teams like "The Fighters", "The Soccers", and even "The Sexies"; and they are pitted against each other in a very Street Fighterish kind of way. When you get to the actual game, you play on a variety of exotic locations, such as the beach, a school sport arena, or even an ancient temple.

These wacky settings and wackier characters are conveyed mostly in polygonal form, set against a 2D backdrop. The characters are simple gouraud shaded polygonal constructs, some looking like cute little Bruce Lee clones or (formerly) Ginger Spice. The animations are nothing particularly spectacular, and there's a fair bit of clipping as well, but they get the job done quite well. Save for the music, V-Ball is sparse on the audio effects.

In terms of gameplay, there isn't very much to expect aside from running, hitting the ball, jumping, spiking, and blocking. Unfortunately, that's where V-Ball falls short. The responsiveness is slow, and control haphazardly switches between characters, which makes it difficult to co-ordinate any plausible strategy.

In the end, V-Ball does well in imitating the visual charm of Smash Court Tennis or Everybody's Golf, but it's sadly lacking in control and depth.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	62	54	62

Batman & Robin

PlayStation

CATEGORY: ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G8+

Acclaim have made releasing games based on a license (whether film, TV or comic) something of a habit. In fact, it was this over-reliance on such products that almost resulted in disaster for Acclaim during the paradigm shift from 16 to 32 bit consoles.

Since this low point, Acclaim have taken a good, hard, unyielding look at themselves and re-focused, with titles like Turok and Forsaken proving they can deliver the goods. So given that their last stab at the Batman license 'Batman Forever' was less than impressive, can the new and improved Acclaim avoid the pitfalls of the license game with their latest release 'Batman and Robin'?

Despite good intentions, the answer is a resounding no. Although Batman and Robin has potential - aiming for a compelling mix of detective work and action, as well as a game world that runs in real-time and is undeniably huge - this matters little.

Why? Because the gameplay is so stinky that Mr Hankey himself would need to leave the room. Controlling your character is a chore, the animation is poor, the graphics bland, the camera system annoying and the fighting mechanics laughable.

There were cool ideas, like having a different set of events if you arrived at crime scenes before or after the deed was done. Also each of the three Bat characters (man, girl and Robin), each have their own merits and abilities, and in some situations only a specific character can reach certain areas, but the ideas are lost in the dull interface, and in the end Batman and Robin simply isn't much fun to play.

CAM SHEA

Game, Net & Match

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: TENNIS
PLAYERS: 1-4 (PLUS INTERNET PLAY)
PUBLISHER: BLUE BYTE
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P166, 16MB RAM, 4XCD
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM, 3DFX, GAMEPAD
SUPPORTS: GAMEPADS/CONTROLLERS

While I wait with impatience for the first N64 tennis game - c'mon Nintendo, how about an update of Super Tennis? - PC veterans Blue Byte have come to tempt me with the cunningly-titled Game, Net & Match. And very tempted I am, too, by almost everything this game has to offer.

An area sorely neglected by most tennis sims is depth, especially for solo players. You might be able to win a few tournaments or perhaps enjoy some mixed doubles with a few friends, but usually there's little incentive to keep on playing.

Thanks to the dual pleasures of Season play and Internet leagues, Game, Net & Match goes a heck of a long way to rectifying this situation. Season play has you creating a player for yourself, choosing which tournaments to enter throughout the year, and then trying to climb the world rankings. The really excellent feature is that, although you begin as a fairly lousy player, simply by playing more matches and practising your shots (not to mention winning titles) you'll gradually improve your stats and abilities. Equally cool is the Internet play, where you connect to Blue Byte's server and set up matches against fellow tennis freaks in an effort to win those vital championship points.

Despite a couple of problems (volleying doesn't feel quite right and I've never really liked the target-the-crosshair service method), this is easily the best tennis game on the PC. For that achievement alone I was about to award 90%, but then I remembered the competition - and sanity prevailed.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

Supercross '98

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: MOTORBIKE RACING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G

Unless you're either a keen motorcycle fan, or someone who gets a real kick out of watching the "Crusty Demons of Dirt" videos, you've probably never heard of Jeremy McGrath. In fact if you do go watch one of the CDOD videos, you'll probably decide that you're not likely to see or hear about him again anyway, as he'll probably die some painful and instantaneous death doing some sort of stunt that requires a complete lack of regard for personal safety. If you want the definitive "extreme" sports guy, Jeremy is it.

So basing a video game around this reckless young man should result in some utterly breathtaking stunts and action. Well, unfortunately it didn't happen quite like that.

Talk about a game that could use some tweaking, the visuals in Supercross '98 are jerky to a point where the epilepsy warning should state "Warning, this game is epileptic and could cause your PlayStation to shake and dribble". It's fairly smooth until you go to turn a corner (every few seconds), at which point it looks decidedly shocking.

The shonky visuals go on to ruin any real feel that the game may have had due to game mechanics.

Finding merit here is impossible. I won my first race, and every subsequent one, so the difficulty is obviously sub standard. The stunts may look good if the visuals weren't so bodgey that you can hardly see what you're doing... until you come off the bike. There aren't many tracks, and there are no interesting new features to offer the motorcycle game genre.

It's hard to fathom how Probe, a company that delivered the utterly fantastic Forsaken, could also be responsible for a title like this. We'll just forget this one and look forward to Machines or something else instead.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	74	46	58

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	87	85	85

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
51	70	40	48

BioFREAKS

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: SEPTEMBER
CATEGORY: 3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
PRICE: TBA
RATING: M

BioFreaks was originally developed to be an arcade game, but Midway decided somewhere along the line to release it on the consoles instead. Turning out like a mixture of Mortal Kombat and War Gods, BioFreaks is a better fighting game than either of those two 3D fighters, whilst not quite making the grade of greats such as Tekken 3 or Virtua Fighter 3. Certainly, what is does have going for it, are the ultra-gory decapitation moves and limb-removal which will please lovers of fatalities. You can even dis-arm your opponent (and I mean literally) and have them still continue to fight you, with blood gushing from their open wound. Urk.

The character design and animation in BioFreaks is top notch, with realistically animated freaks going the tonk in a variety of interesting and interactive environments - facial expressions even change!

Most of the most effective attacks are projectile based, and the game doesn't have a block button (you have to perform a blocking move) so,

annoyingly, many bouts consist of pelting your opponent from a distance. All the characters have a "jet-pack" style move too, so getting out of arms reach of your opponent is also a bit easy. Defeating the CPU shouldn't take you too long either, because alternating between your "gun" attack and a close-range punch or kick seems to carve through most opponents easily.

This N64 version of BioFreaks is lightyears better than the PlayStation version, in case your mate who owns a PSX tells you this game is lame, the N64 churns everything out smoother and with greater detail than the PlayStation version. This does actually improve the gameplay, simply because it's easier to identify what's happening on-screen. Worth checking out.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	79	70	74

Comanche Gold

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: FLIGHT SIM
PLAYERS: 1-6 (LAN)
PUBLISHER: NOVALOGIC
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G8+
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

Several years ago, the flight simulator went through an interesting change, with the helicopter being entered into the equation. Comanche was one of the earlier exponents of this trend, and through the years the game has had it's fair share of updates and makeovers. Comanche Gold is the latest incarnation of the series created by NovaLogic, and could be seen as an expansion on the Comanche 3. Comanche Gold lives up to the title, flight simulation, you could be forgiven for thinking you will require a degree in aerodynamics and a pilot's license just to get started.

However you can customise the setup to suit your level of expertise. For beginners you can start with the basics using the easy model and learn the skills needed by playing the introduction tutorials. The more advanced pilots out there may skip right into the hot seat and start blasting away with full cockpit control, weapons toggle, realistic flight displays and an itchy trigger finger.

Attention to detail is amazing, from the incredibly realistic terrain, through to the amazing weather and lighting effects. Added features that will help keep the game a lasting experience is the addition of a mission editor and multiplay via the internet through Novaworld.net, NovaLogic's free games server. This way you really can go out and conquer the world. Although the game is stunning in features, it is highly recommended that you have a decent machine to play it on. CG supports 3D accelerators and MMX technology, features which will definitely enhance the gameplay.

This is a game for all levels of flight fans, from the hard nosed pilot, to the uninitiated who is looking for that next challenge. I totally enjoyed Comanche Gold, and I am sure it will keep you blasting away into the wee hours of the morning.

NATHAN GERSBACH.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	82	86	86

Deathtrap Dungeon

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: MA15+
REQUIRED: P90, 16 MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32 MB RAM, 3D CARD

Maybe I was a little young (and dorky), but I used to love the Fighting Fantasy books. Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson created masterful story/adventures to play through. Of particular note was an adventure where you entered a dungeon that no one had managed to come out of alive, in the hope you'd get stupidly rich. This one was called Deathtrap Dungeon, and was regarded as one of the better Fighting Fantasy books ever made.

The video game adaption finally made it... about 15 years later, but hey, it made it. How it has made it seems to have been driven by what is deemed to have worked best in 1998. However, I can't really say it has. The game engine is very similar to Tomb Raider in that you play in a 3D environment with a 3rd person perspective. The aim is to progress through the many levels of Baron Sukumvit's dungeon, solving puzzles, avoiding traps, and killing monsters. To this end the game is good, and the traps are certainly going to catch you off guard more often than not (which is what makes for a good trap really).

Maybe having an easy and intuitive control system may have made this a cool title, but you simply end up struggling with the controls, rather than the puzzles and monsters. Perhaps I should be more specific and explain that the way the camera angle changes around without your input, based on what the computer believes is the best angle. This unfortunately disorientates you at the least convenient moments, making the controls inept.

There's not much else to fault Deathtrap Dungeon with, but the rather unimpressive character models and animation just make this title look a little yesterday, and it's hard to get really excited about. Die by the Sword also makes the network play in DD redundant. Really one for the fans of the book, or fantasy action titles only.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	80	71	77

Time Crisis II NAMCO

BY TIM LEVY

After 2 years of hanging out at the pub, Robert Baxter, the star of the semi-seminal 3D polygon shooter on rails, has been recalled to duty to save the humble human race from the evil clutches of a megalomaniac by the name of Ernesto Diaz. Mr Diaz, a man of vast wealth and CEO of Neodyne Industries, has created a plan to set up a global network of satellites. Enter Christy Ryan. Fortunately for us (the people) Christy is a snoop by nature and has bumbled on Mr Diaz's REAL plan- which is :

1) send killer nuclear powered satellites armed with really dangerous lasers and injury inducing rockets into inner orbit and then

2) hold the people (us) to ransom... and then maybe even killing a few (people) just to show how powerful he really is.

After discovering the information leak, Diaz sends one of his hardcore Lieutenants (a.k.a End Of 1st Stage Boss) to kidnap Christy. After plugging the leak, Diaz decides to keep her as a hostage / shield just in case any VSSE agents complete the first two stages and area 1 of final stage three.

Meanwhile down at the local bar...

Keith Martin - "Sounds like a good excuse for Blast Fest '98, Bobster"

Robert Baxter - "You must mean - it's time to save an innocent world, Keith."

Keith Martin - "Yeah, YOUR world as YOU know it- Bobby."

As Bobby had been slightly injured in late 95 battling against Sho Garo and his henchman Wild Dog, the VSSE (Bob's Employer) has decided it was within their budgetary constraints to hire him a surly, hard drinking, gung ho sidekick by the name of Keith Martin.

Stage 1, Area 1. Foolishly, in their mad rush from the pub, our likely heroes Keith and Bobby discard the idea of driving to VSSE Headquarters to get some beefier

armaments and recklessly show up to the scene of the kidnapping armed with their puny 10 round semi-automatic 9mm pistols.

Meanwhile, back in the arcade... those most excellent recoil action guns encountered in TC 1 are back. Frame rate has picked up a little. The resolution is a little higher. Music is a little catchier. Gun sound remains the same. Time constraints are a little looser. The real step forward is that TC 2 is TWO PLAYER involving 2 separate screens - meaning 2 totally different perspectives. Going back to back, or for that matter front to front, has never been so exciting as it gives real meaning to "I've got your back/front covered homie". At times your paths will divide and each character will find cover in separate locations. Often, you will be able to see your partner shooting it out in the corner of your screen (V. cool). Other times you will be giving your partner cover as he dashes ever forwards and towards cover.

The colour/ rank/ soldier skill system has been employed once again, but for those of you who have been absent for undisclosed reasons, then this is how the Time Crisis army operates. Blue soldiers are in dire need of optical assistance and couldn't hit a barn door if they were standing in a room made of barn doors. Grey Soldiers are little better than blue and are usually squad leaders. Light Orange soldiers are cowardly soldiers who are hiding dormant in a difficult to hit location or are just totally wimping it out by running away in the background. Green Soldiers have the weapon skills happening and are armed with grenades, machine guns or rocket launchers (watch out, they fire 2 rockets in quick succession). Kahki Camo Soldiers have got the knife throwing ninja skills going on. But the soldier to look out for is the Red Soldier. He will target and fire within milliseconds of appearing, so always take them out first. All soldiers are equipped with the patented 'melt away system' which is activated if shot and ensures no mess (very eco-friendly), no piles of bodies to trip over and of course no evidence.

Also making his return from the so-called dead is one of our favourite super heavy duty bad guys of all time- Wild Dog. WD has picked up an ultra major facial scar and has replaced his right arm with a machine gun.

The foot pedal operated cover / reload button is back, so try to get used to quickly tapping the pedal every time you see one of the enemy soldiers with a glowing red circle around his gun (how sporting of them). Another thing to learn is how to count your bullets fired per clip as it is more skilful to be able to pick off a
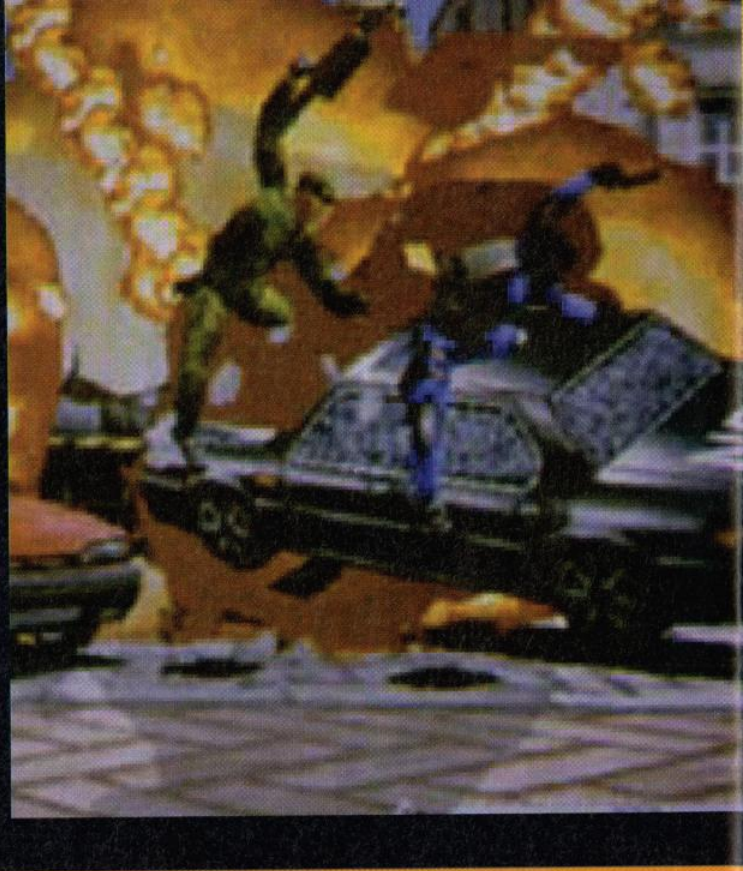
wave of enemy soldiers with one clip. This also lowers the chance of jumping from cover at the same time as someone has targeted you. Otherwise just go for the hold gun in one hand and press the trigger with your opposing finger technique. That way it will ensure your hand doesn't lock up (i.e. get a cramp) due to trigger depressing overkill.

Unfortunately, there are only a couple of instances in which you get the opportunity to upgrade your weapon (machine gun). It would have been nice to have a few other weapons, though maybe Namco is saving that for TC III.

Keith's and Bobby's adventure is divided into three stages, comprising of three areas each. An interesting array of shoot out locations are provided and include action in: the local town; on high speed dinghies; a forest; on a couple of moving trains; at a storage facility and on a rocket launch rig at sea. All the links between areas and stages are both funny and exciting to watch, even though Keith and Bobby's voices will make you wish you could shoot them. On the subject of shooting your sidekick, if you do accidentally hit your partner, the computer deducts points and not life, likewise for hitting Christie in the final stage.

I'm sure we are all eagerly awaiting the day, that the foot pedal becomes a directional joy pad and there is a weapons rack in front of the console with a pump action shotgun, Uzi and a sniper rifle and maybe even a rocket launcher (No- not a machete Keith). But until that day, or at least next week, TC II is definitely arcade's 'Two Player- King of the Shooters.'

9/10

BY ELIOT FISH

Falcon 4.0

Everyone's been asking about Falcon 4.0, and for a while there it didn't look like we were going to get the game at all. But things are looking good now, and if you want to find out exactly what's going on, simply visit **http://www.falcon4.com/** and dig up all the info you want. Download the demo and try it out, read the developers notes and get technical support. Microprose have set this up themselves, so you can trust every word.

Quake 2 Body Shop

Sick of the models and skins available in your Quake 2 set-up? Want to play as Boba Fett, Astro-Boy or a Transformer? Well you can! And it's as simple as throwing a few files in your Quake 2 directory! Go check out the Quake 2 Bodyshop, and browse the bucketloads of great models and skins they have for you to download. Some of them are truly amazing! Remember, models aren't just a fresh coat of paint - they're completely new characters from scratch, with their own animations and sounds. You can literally play as whoever you want!
http://www.q2bodyshop.com

PC Help

Buying a new PC? Buying new bits and pieces for your PC? There's one place on the web where you can read some excellent reviews of new hardware, investigate benchmarks and read-up comparisons of current 3D accelerators and the like - that's Tom's Hardware. This guys knows his stuff, and is extremely thorough in his evaluation of a product. The URL is simple... **http://www.tomshardware.com/** so drop buy and get all geeky. You know you want to.

Godzilla

Currently stomping it's way around the world, Godzilla is making big impressions everywhere (get it?! Heheh), and the web is no exception. Ride some cyberwaves to **http://www.godzilla.com/** and see the official site. Play the online game, buy some Godzilla merchandise, find out about the soundtrack, the cast, the crew - it's Godzilla madness! Hey, they've even got a Godzilla screensaver! So, if you can't get enough of the big green lizard from TriStar pictures - go there now!

Unreal

Looking for the latest happenings with this sensational 3D shooter? There are now a number of excellent websites devoted to providing you with the latest FAQs, patches, strategy guides, mods and news on Unreal from Epic MegaGames. To get the official word, check out **http://www.unreal.com**, and get the gab from the horses mouth. Otherwise, you can find what you're looking for at **http://www.unreal.org** and also **http://www.unrealnation.com**. They're probably the top three, but for those of you into Unreal map editing, you may want to go to **http://www.unrealed.com** for full-on tutorials and troubleshooting on making maps in the Unreal Editor. Very handy, well written, and you'll be making cool DM maps in no time!
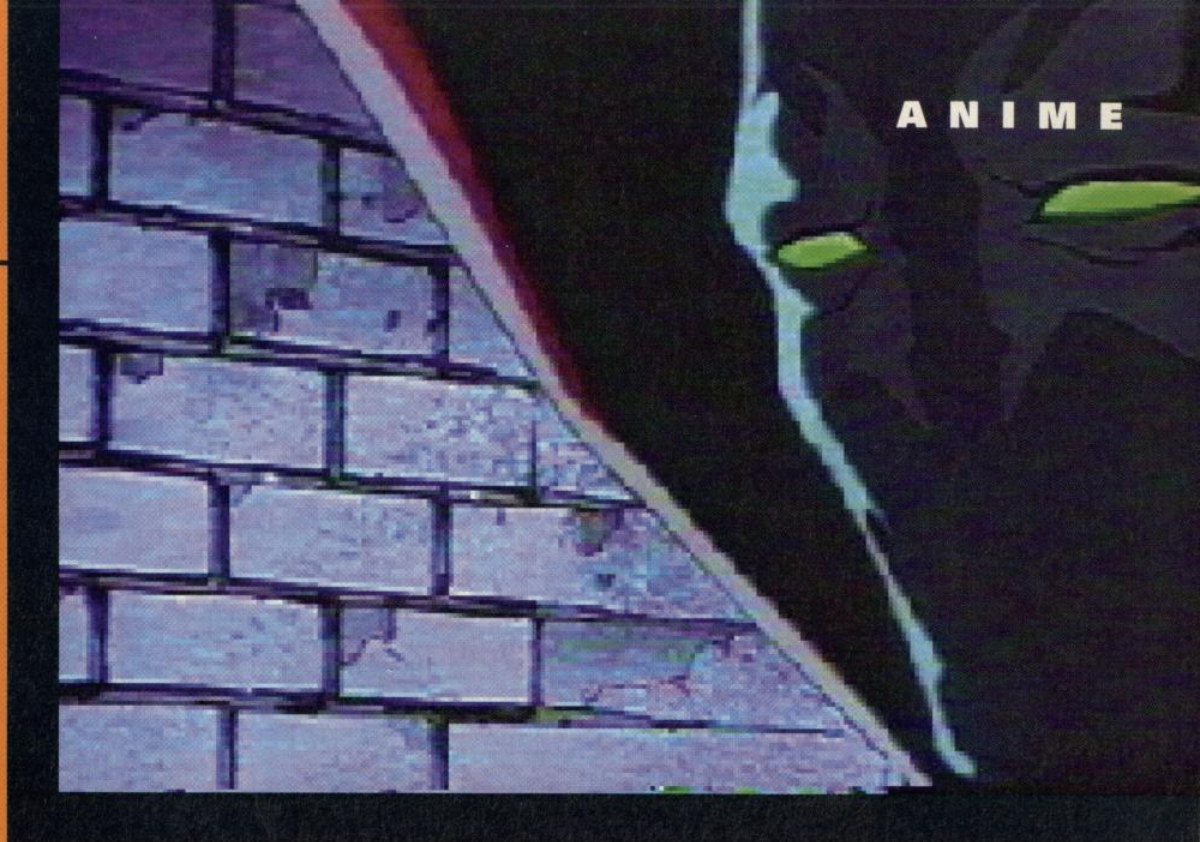
Spawn The animated series

BY MAX AUTOHEAD

Ok. You start your life out as a government assassin. Mr Big says kill, you ask how many. Things are going great with your dream job and your lawyer wife, till one day a bullet in the head kind of ends your life. Kind of, cause you wake up in hell. There you make a deal with the devil; and in return for joining the officer core of hells army in its upcoming confrontation with heaven, you get to go back to earth one last time to see your wife Wanda. You are Al Simmons, the latest Hell Spawn.

In the Late eighties and early nineties, Spawn Creator Todd McFarlane was the best known artist to emerge from mainstream super hero comics. Then working for Marvel entertainment as artist on Spiderman, he quit his employ and started his own company and character; respectively Image comics and Spawn.

On release Spawn became the highest selling independent comic ever released in the United States, and McFarlane has been pursuing the exploitation of Spawn in all the related medias, chasing the dream of making Spawn a household name.

One of these areas has been to create the Spawn animated series. McFarlane's goal was to create an no-holds barred, "adult animation". Naturally, with the growing emergence of anime culture in the west, the idea was to create Spawn in that anime mould (Glen Danzig is currently producing Satanika the anime with the same production house that produced Ninja Scroll). The result is this series, one that captures all the horror and darkness of the original comic series. At times the execution of the animation is less than consistent, with the narrative wandering in a cliche world of mercenaries, assassins, corporate big wigs, Corrupt senators and Rogue Cops. The ice cream dispensing serial killer paedophile makes an unwholesome appearance, as well as the fat bloated clown we've all come to associate with Spawn's main bad guy/pain in the butt.

Spawn is set in a world you thought was going on when you were a twelve year old kid. If you're a comics fan, or just think that Spawn is the coolest thing since sliced bread, then your bound to get you rocks off over this series.

6.5/10

Rated M .

Distributed By Visual Entertainment Group

Soul Music

Every time I re-read Lord of The Rings, I like to imagine the elves as zippy ravers, doing their thing in the valleys of Rivendel and Lothlorien. For those of you who like to wonder what would of happened if rock and roll had been discovered in a fantasy backdrop, you can now find out in Soul Music, the latest animated release based on Terry Pratchet's Discworld series.

Spanning the history of modern music as we know it in one "Bigger than cheeses" rock around the world tour, a medieval band led by a would-be Elvis/John Lennon/Jimmi Hendrix clone, revolutionises Discworld, a self contained planet balanced on the back of a enormous space turtle and four titan elephants. In this world, Death a.k.a the Grim Reaper, goes on a hell bending suicide trip, and leaves the job to his young granddaughter. Bearded vikings ride the steeds of fat valkyries, while an irrepressible orangutan tinkers away on the world's first magic powered motor bike in the basement of the university of wizards.

If you're a fan of Terry Pratchet then needless to say that you should have a squiz.

7/10

Rated PG.
Distributed by
Siren Entertainment.

DEAD
OR ALIVE
PLAYGUIDE

Dead or Alive is an amazing yet unpredictable game. There are dozens of moves for each character, each of which can be strung together to form combos. This move list is designed to show you some of the basic moves and some of the more complex combos that you wouldn't otherwise even think to try. Above all else, this guide teaches you how to perform the chain throw combos, which can take off as much as two thirds of your opponent's energy!

KEVIN CHUENG

BASIC STRATEGIES

All you really need to keep in mind is the fact that every move you make against your opponent is a game of Stone Paper Scissors. That is, attacks are defeated by holds, holds by throws, and throws by attacks. Your basic strategy would therefore run something like this: if someone is out of kicking range, you might expect them to charge in with a 5-hit combo, so you should have your fingers ready at the Hold button. If you're the one charging in, then you'll have to try to approach the attack so as to avoid the Hold, such as by performing a flip kick instead of going for the usual long-string combos.

Conversely, if your opponent is up close, you are probably more susceptible to throw moves which can be countered by a quick combo. Other characters like Gen Fu and Jann Lee have specific surprise moves for such encounters, so you'll also have to be aware of what your opponent can do.

Surprise moves, such as those of Jann Lee, should only be used when you've completely overwhelmed and bewildered your opponent so that they simply wouldn't expect it. Otherwise, if you're playing against an experienced opponent, you'll simply be avoided and have your guts

kicked out.

Chain throws are simply the best things to pull off. Unfortunately, it requires good timing and a great deal of risk.

DEFAULT CONTROLLER SETTINGS:

L1	H+P
L2	P+K
R1	H+P+K
R2	H+K
Square	H
Triangle	P
Circle	K
X	P

COMMON MOVES

R1+R2	Lunge Forward
L1+L2	Lunge Backward
f, f	Dash
f, F	Run
b	Guard
R1 or H+P+K	Danger Zone defence for landing.
H + P	Throw
u	Throw cancel
R1 or H+P+K	Throw escape

While Down:

u+H	roll and get up towards background
u+K	get up, low kick
K	get up and kick
d+H	roll and get up towards foreground
H	get up quicker
d	crouch
b	roll backwards

H		Hold
H	**P**	Punch
P	**K**	Kick
u/U		Up/Hold Up
d/D		Down/Hold Down
f/F		Forward/Hold Forward
b/B		Back/Hold Back
uf, ub, df, db		Press Diagonally in the Directions indicated

AYANE

Ayane is one of the new PlayStation-exclusive characters, and she fights in a similar style to Kasumi. She's lightning fast and has many devastating combos that can be chained together, but her throwing abilities are a little on the weak side.

Jab: P
Elbow: f,P
Upper Slap: df,P
Low Jab: d,P
Backflip: ub,P
Roundhouse Kick: K
Knee: f,K
Gut kick: df,K
Ankle Kick: d,K
Twin Upper Combo: P,P,P
Round Slicer Combo: P,P,K
Heaven's Combo: P,K,K
Earth's Combo: P,K,d,K
Dart Shot: f,f,P,f,K
Dragon Lance: b,P,b,P
Land Mine: df,df,P,D,K
Spiral Axe: d,db,b,P,K
Spiral Cutter: d,db,b,P,d,K
Double Spear: f,K,K
Double Arrow: f,K,d,K
Dragon Tail: uf,K
Cresent Edge: ub,K
Round Slicer: H+K
Rolling Breeze: df,H+K
Ground Arrow: d,H+K
Gale Knife: P+K,P,P
Gale Edge: P+K,P,ub,K
Gale Cutter: P+K,P,d,K
Air Drill: d,df,f,K
Ayane Cyclone: H+P+K
Mirror Image: u,H
Gale Knife Dance
(with back turned): P,P,b,P,P,P
Gale Edge Dance
(with back turned): P,P,b,P,P,ub,K
Gale Cutter Dance
(with back turned): P,P,b,P,P,d,K
Spiral Axe Dance
(with back turned): P,P,f,P,K
Spiral Cutter Dance
(with back turned): P,P,f,P,d,K
Shadow Edge
(with back turned): ub,K
Spinning Knife
(with back turned): b,P
Spinning Cutter
(with back turned): db,P,d,P

Spiral Knife
(with back turned): u,P
Ripple Cutter
(with back turned): d,H+K
Maple Drop: H+P
Butterfly Dream: d,db,b,H+K
Misty Illusiond: f,P+K
Air-Stream: d,df,f,P
Dark Swallow: d,H+P
Snow Knife: f,H
Brocade: f,df,d,H
Frost Knife: df,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Palm Slam
(while opponent is down): df,P
Wind Circle: d,db,b,H
Taunt ı: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:

Slide: d,df,f,H
Dropping Icicle
(while performing slide): u,u,H+P+K

BASS

Supposedly Tina's father, this guy packs a fairly huge wallop with both his offensive moves and throws. His only drawback is that he must constantly be in close to be able to do any serious damage to his opponent. He is especially susceptible to the more nimble characters like Kasumi, in which case, you'll have to exercise precision timing in the use of the Hold button.

Palm Hit: P
Gut Punch: f,P
Elbow: uf,P
Upper Elbow: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
Heel Kick: K
Knee Thrust: f,K
Hop Kick: uf,K
Low Heel Kick: df,K
Ankle Kick: d,K
Combo Rising Elbow: P,P,P
Combo High Kick: P,P,K
Combo Kick Rush: P,K,K
Hell Stab: P+K
Elbow Rush: uf,P,P
Stun Gun Combo: b,P,P,P,P+K
Knee Hammer: f,K,P

Rising Elbow: f,f,P
Kick Rush: df,K,K
One hand Hammer: u,P
Buffalo Crush: df,df,P
Drop Kick: d,df,f,K
Flying Crosschop: f,f,P+K
Kenka Kick: f,f,K
Hell Scissors: ub,P,P
Rolling Axe: b,f,P
Lariat: b,H+P
Front Roll Kick: b,f,K
Low Drop Kick: d,H+K
Backward Drop: b,H+P
Tornado: d,df,f,H+K
Super Freak: b,db,d,df,F,P
T F B B: D,f,b,P+K
Bomb: H+P
Double Arm DDT: df,H+P+K
Backdrop: H+P
Holding Headbutt: f,H
Flying Body Scissors: f,f,H
Dynamite Lariat: f,B,H
Wild Chop: df,H
Reverse Power Bomb: f,f,H
Calf Branding: df,H
Spine Buster: d,db,b,H
Taunt ı: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:

Kitchen Sink: d,db,b,P+K
Stretch Plum
(while performing kitshen sink):
d,d,H+P+K

Manhattan Driver
(while performing kitchen sink):
u,u,H+P+K
Atomic Drop: H+P+K
Face Crusher
(during atomic drop): f,f,P
Power Slam: d,df,f,H
Oklahoma Stampede
(during power slam): b,db,d,df,f,H
Iron Claw: d,df,f,H
Grizzly Launcher
(during iron claw): b,db,d,df,f,H

BAYMAN

This scuba diving soldier is one of the most devastating characters in the game. He is very strong, and his chain throws are among some of the more painful to watch. However, Bayman is not on the agile side and his power can only be exploited properly with a little patience and darned good timing.

Punch: P
Gut Punch: f,P
Crouching Uppercut: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
High Kick: K
Side Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Spinning Back Knuckle: b,P
Leg Spike: db,K

GEN FU

Does this guy remind anyone of a character in Virtua Fighter 2? Gen Fu's fighting strategy is a little more subtle than the rest in that there are more 'surprise' moves than usual. Instead of fast multi-hit combos, he uses short powerful moves chained together, which are quite effective when he's closed in on an opponent.

Punch: P
Elbow: f,P
Lunging Upper-Cut: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
Roundhouse Kick: K
Mid Roundhouse: d,K
Low Roundhouse: d,K
Qi-Gong Palm: f,F,P
Phoenix Punch: f,P,P
Sweeping Chop: DF,P
Qi-Gong Kick: f,K
Short Palm Jab: u,P
Cat Smash: ub,K
Tiger Elbow: uf,P
Blade Kick: uf,K
Tiger Claw: df,DF,P
Flying Reverse Kick: u,K
Falcon Hammer: f,b,P
Gen Fu Special: u,K,d,K
Bull Horn: db,f,P
Snake Attack: df,K,P
Falcon Hammer Kick: b,P,P
Rooster Knee: F,K
Gen Fu Special: b,P,f,P,P+K
Jumping Blade Kick: f,K,K
Slient Kiaing: df,P,P
Iron Toe: db, K
Kiaing Combo: P,P,f,P
Iron Bull Horn: db,K,db,f,P
God's Step: f,F,H,P
Rooster Special: d,P+K,b,f,P
Tiger Head Bat: P+K
Rabbit Kick: H+P
God's Hand Push: f,P+K
God's Sweep: d,H+K
Double Bomber: d,P+K
Wind Blast: H+P+K
Spine Attack: H+P
God's Hand: d,f,H+P+K
Stomach Shock: b,H+P
Tiger Tail

(while behind opponent): H+P
King's Punch: b,d,db,P
Palm Attack: f,H
Peacock Sweep: f,b,H
Monkey Hands
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Shield: f,f,H
Side Turn: ub,P
Shoulder Tackle
(while opponent is kicking):
d,db,b,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Downward Palm
(while opponent is down): df,P
Taunt: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:

Monkey Hold: d,df,f,H
Monkey
(during monkey hold): d,df,f,H

JANN LEE

This Bruce Lee wannabe is just too noisy for his own good. He's fast and he has a great variety of multi-hit combos and one-off super moves that send an opponent flying. The drawback is that if his attack is blocked, countered, or otherwise avoided, he is extremely susceptible to attack. You either love or hate this guy.

Jab: P
Uppercut: df,P
Low Knuckle: d,P
High Kick: K
Side Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Dragon Blow: d,df,f,P
Sonic Uppercut: P,d,P,P
Dragon Knuckle: D,b,f,P
Combo Low Spin Kick: P,d,P,d,K
Sekken-Chop: b,P
Body Uppecut: f,P,P
Upper Knuckle: f,P
Body Low Spin Kick: f,P,d,K
Rear High Kick: u,K
Flash Spin Kick: f,P,K
High Shin-Knee Kick: ub,K

Smash: df,P
Sliding Kick: d,H+K
Palm Arrow: ub,P
Reverse Double Hammer: f,F,P,P
Smash Hook: u,P
Storm Hook: P,P,P
Shoulder Tackle: b,f,P
Storm Back Knuckle: P,P,b,P
Knee Lift: f,K
Storm Sabot: P,P,K
Heel Hammer: b,K
Rush Sabot: P,f,P,K
Javelin Kick: u,K
Crash Leg Spike: ,P,P,d,K
Drop Kick: uf,K
Trap Heel Hammer: K,K
Thrust Kick
(While Rising): K
Trap Reverse Hammer: K,P,P
Rolling Sabot: H+K
Head Bat: P+K
Giant Uppercut: d,db,b,P
Belly To Belly: H+P
Neck Hanging Tree: b,H+P
Ghost Buster
(while opponent crouches): d,H+P
Quebradora Congiro: b,bd,d,df,f,P
Flying Arm Bar
(while behind opponent): H+P
Victor Cross Hold: d,df,f,H+K
Swing Hold: f,H

Choke Slam: f,b,H
Jumping Elbow Crush: f,df,d,H
Catching Hold
(while opponent is kicking): d,db,b,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Foot Stomp
(while opponent is down): df,K
Taunt: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws

Arm Lock
(while opponent crouches): df,H
Arm Bar
(during arm lock): d,db,b,H
Arm Lock 2: f,f,H
Neck Lock
(during arm lock 2): f,df,d,db,b,H
DDT
(during neck lock): d,db,b,P
Sleeper
(while behind opponent): d,df,f,H
Swing Neck Hold
(during sleeper): f,df,d,db,b,H
Trip: d,df,f,H
Hold
(during trip): f,df,d,db,b,H
Half Boston Crab
(during hold): b,db,d,K

H: Hold   **P:** Punch   **K:** Kick   **u/U:** Up/Hold Up   **d/D:** Down/Hold Down
f/F: Forward/Hold Forward   **b/B:** Back/Hold Back   **uf, ub, df, db:** Press Diagonally in the Directions indicated

Flash Low Spin Kick: f,F,P,d,K
Dragon Kick: d,df,f,K
Flash Turn Knuckle: b,b,P
Dragon Rush: P,P,P,K
Blind Elbow
(with back turned to opponent):
P+K
Blind Knuckle
(with back turned to opponent):
db,P
Spin Kick: P,f,P,K
High Spin Kick: K,K
Low Spin Kick: P,f,P,d,K
Double Hook Kick: b,K,K
Double Upper Kick: uf,K,K
Snap Spin Kick: f,K,f,K
Middle Spin Kick: df,K,f,K
Dragon Elbow: P+K
Thrust Middle Spin Kick: db,K,f,K
Shin-Knee Kick: H+K
Thrust Low Spin Kick: db,K,d,K
Low Spin Kick: d,H+K
Hell Drive: H+P
Fireman's Carry: d,db,b,P
Side Buster: b,H+P+K
Hell Crash
(while behind opponent): H+P
Counter Knuckle: f,H
Front Face Lock: f,f,H
Rear Counter Knuckle
(while behind opponent): f,H
Low Face Lock
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Sekkan Punch
(while behind opponent): f,f,H
Low Sekkan Punch
(while behind opponent or while opponent is crouching): df,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Snap Kick
(while opponent is down): df,K
Enter The Dragon
(while opponent is down): u,H+P+K
Taunt: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Head Lock: d,df,f,H
Extra Head Lock
(while performing head lock): b,b,H

KASUMI

Kasumi is the nubile all-rounder of Dead or Alive. She's got plenty of moves and combos, but only a cou-

ple of 'real' throws. Although she is far from being the strongest character, she is the fastest. Combined with her unbelievably cheap Somersault Kick, she's one of the easiest characters to come to grips with.

Jab: P
Uppercut: df,P
Low Knuckle: d,P
High Kick: K
Side Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Shadow Sword: f,f,P
Silver Flamingo: f,b,K
Float Sword: u,P
Kick Combo: P,P,P,K
Round Sword: b,P
Sweep Combo: P,P,P,d,K
Illusion Sword: df,DF,P
Double Kick Combo: P,P,K,K
Deep Mist: df,P,P
Moon Flash Combo: P,P,uf,K
Wind Fang: df,P,K
Lightning Spin Combo: P,P,f,P,d,K
Rising Cutter: u,K
Lightning Dirk Combo: P,P,f,P,K,K
Forward Flip: uf,K
Ground Tornado: d,H+K
Somersault Kick: ub,K
Windmill Kick: df,H+K
Ground Lance: d,df,f,K
Kasumi Cyclone: H+P+K
Heaven's Kick: K,K
Whirlwind: P+K
Air's Kick: K,df,K
Rising Swallow: f,f,P+K
Earth's Kick: K,d,K
Moon Darkness
(with back turned): u,K
Rainbow Throw: H+K
Roundabout: d,df,f,K
Go To Heaven: b,K
Shadow Swallow
(while opponent is crouching):
d,H+P
Hawk's Phantom: d,db,b,H+K
Broken Wings
(while behind opponent): H+P
Misty Moon: df,DF,P+K
Cherry Blossom Exchange: f,H
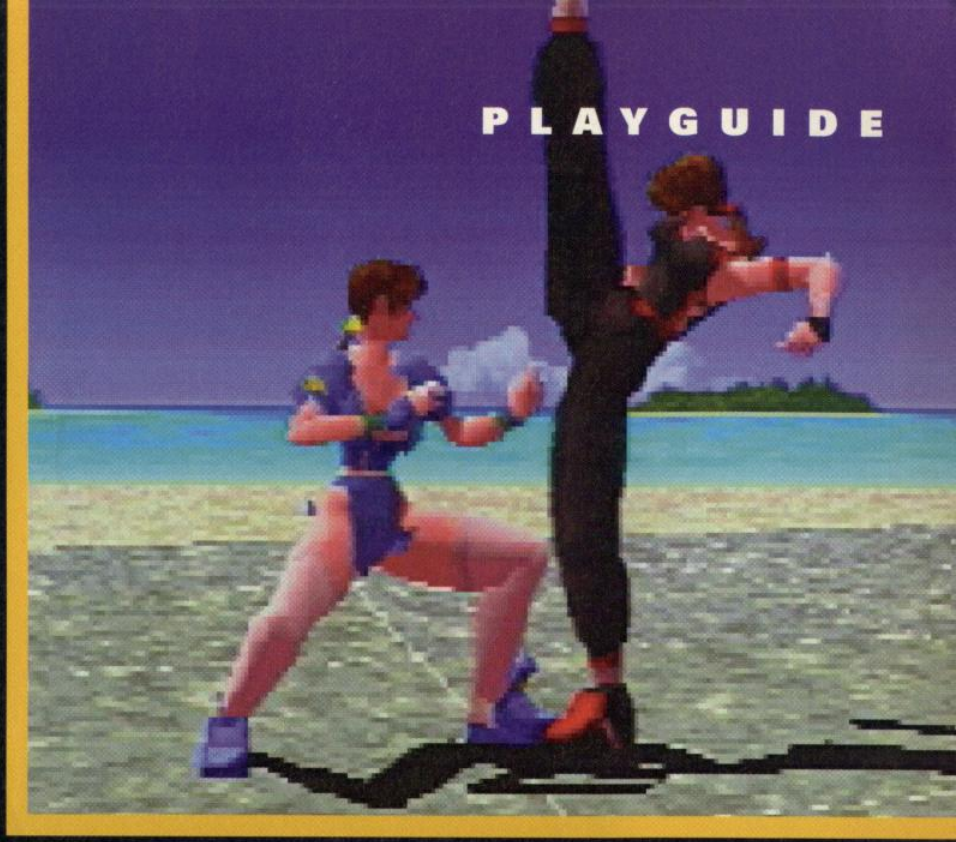**Spinning Fall:** d,df,f,H
Pick-Up-Cherry
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Angel Wheel: ub,P
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K

Press Kick
(while opponent is down): df,K
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Flaming Candle: f,f,H
Thorny Path
(during flaming candle: d,K
Flying Swallow: f,f,H+K
Falling Swallow
(during flying swallow): b,H

LEI FANG

Lei Fang is one of the best characters in Dead or Alive. She's somewhat stronger than Kasumi and more manoeuvrable than Bayman, but the beauty of her fighting style is in the chain throws and grabs, which serve both to displace and attack your opponent. Her throws require a bit of practice, but they're worth it.

Jab: P
Elbow: f,P
Backhand: df,P
Palm Strike: d,P
High Kick: K
Front Kick: df,K

Low Kick: d,K
Shotei: uf,P
Double Fist: f,P
Upper Elbow: u,P
Double Smash Kick: K,K
Palm Attack: ub,P
Front Screw Kick: K,d,K
Lei's Attack: b,P
Rolling Sobat: ub,K
Upper Palm Smash: b,P,P
Low Joint Kick: db,K
Back Fist: db,P
Swirling Face Kick: b,K
Back Fist Punch: db,P,P
Chiki Screw Back Kick: b,K,K
Palm Spring Kick: f,P,K
Triple Screw Kick: b,K,K,d,K
Double Hands: f,f,P
Double Jump Kick: uf,K,K
Knuckle Part: f,b,P
Split Kick: d,D,K
Shoulder Bash: b,f,P
Fair Lady Attack: P,P,f,P
Phoenix Combo: P,P,f,P,K
Defending Palm: P,df,P,P
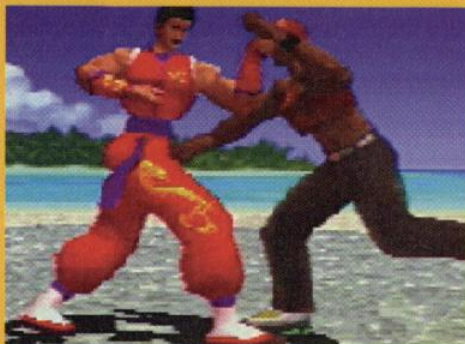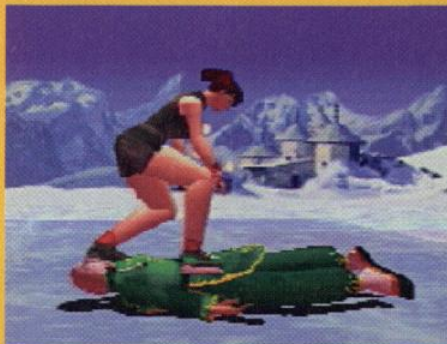**Taiqi Combo:** P,P,b,P,P
Knee Attack: P+K
Palm Split Kick: P,P,d,K
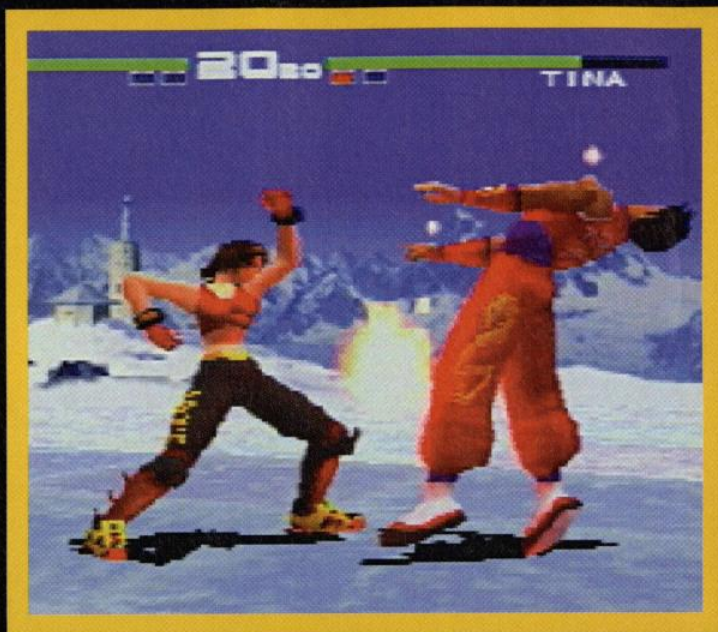**Palm Splash:** H+P+K
Palm and Fist: P,df,P
Arm Bar Throw: d,db,b,P
Chest Hold Bash: H+P

Atomic Punch: f,b,P
Reverse Parallel Chop: b,H+P+K
Lotus Throw
(while behind opponent): H+P
Sannei: f,H
Knee Grab Attack
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Front Kick Bomb: f,f,H
Jaw Crusher
(while behind opponent): f,H
Shoulder Thrust
(while behind opponent): f,f,H
Reverse Karate Chop
(opponent is crouched or you are
behind them): df,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Crouch Stomp
(while opponent is down): df,K
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Stomach Hold Punch: d,df,f,H
Back Elbow
(during stomach hold punch):
df,d,db,d,H+P
Neck Lariat
(during back elbow): f,f,H+P+K

RYU HAYABUSA

Is this guy Kasumi in a man's out-
fit or what? He's very quick and he's
got a lot of combos and strange
moves that can easily dupe an oppo-
nent into doing the wrong thing. The
only problem is that he's not that
strong, and he'll get pasted if he's
ever caught up close with his oppo-
nent. Since his effectiveness is deter-
mined by surprise, you'll have to
learn every variation in his combos.

Punch: P
Elbow: f,P
Backhand: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
High Kick: K
Middle Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Shadow Blade: ub,P
Short Slide Kick: d,H+K
Rising Palm: u,P
Wind Blade: P+K
Low Spin Blade: db,P
Rapid Blade: P,P,b,P
Slash Kick: b,P,K
Shower Bows: P,P,b,P,f,P

Double Spin Blade: db,P,D,K
Triple Impact: P,P,K
Palm Straight: f,F,P
Sonic Bomb: b,P,f,P
Upper Knee: f,K
Bullet Kick: f,f,K
Somersault Kick: ub,K
Ground Cutter: db,DB,K
High Kick: u,K
Ground Stake: db,DB,K,D,K
Flip Kick: uf,K
Trick Heel: f,b,K
Upper Spin Kick: H+K
Rising Dragon Kick: D,b,K
Cross Arm Suplex: H+P
Demon Buster: f,f,b,P+K
Northern Light Suplex: b,H+P+K
Falcon Wing: d,df,f,P
Swing DDT: d,db,b,P+K
Neck Breaker
(while opponent is crouching):
d,K+P
Reverse DDT
(while behind opponent): H+P+K
Ura-Nage
(while behind opponent): H+P
Shadow Hunting: f,H
Mirage: f,F,H
Thunder Bolt
(while behind opponent): f,F,H
Shooting Star: d,df,f,H
Demon Strike
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Vision
(opponent is crouched or you are
behind them): df,H
Capture
(while opponent performs kick):
d,db,b,H
Evil Hunting
(while behind opponent): f,H
Hand Stand: df,P+K
Fake Rainbow: uf,P
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Press Kick
(while opponent is down): df,K
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Skyward Shot: b,db,d,df,f,H+P+K
Dive Bomb

(during skyward shot):
d,df,f,uf,u,H+P
Izuna Drop
(during dive bomb):
b,ub,u,uf,f,df,d,H+P

TINA

This wrestling babe is excellent to
use once mastered. Her moves are
all easily chained together to make
all sorts of combos, which are effec-
tive both up close or when charging
in. Her throws, displacement moves,
and chain throws make her all that
much sweeter. Despite her speed
and power, like Jann Lee, she is
quite vulnerable to attack if she has
been avoided or blocked.

Punch: P
Elbow: f,P
Lunging Uppercut: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
High Kick: K
Middle Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Double Hammer: b,P
Double Uppercut: f,f,P
Low Spin Knuckle: db,P
Vertical Chop Hammer: DF,P,b,P
Knuckle Arrow: ub,P
Jumping Hip Attack: H+P+K
Elbow Smash: u,P
Machine Gun Kick: P,P,K
Shoulder Tackle: b,f,P
Machine Gun Rush: P,P,P
Lariat: f,H+P
Ultimate Combo: f,P,P,K
Neck Cut kick: u,K
Spin Knuckle Combo: f,P,P,db,P
Kenka Kick: f,f,K
Knee Hammer: f,K,b,P
Rolling Sobat: H+K
Combo Rolling Sobat: d,K,K
Low Spin Kick: d,H+K
Double Low Kick: d,K,D,K
Death Valley Bomb: H+P
Body Slam: f,H+P+K
Fisherman's Buster: b,db,d,df,f,P
Frankensteiner: d,df,f,H+K
J O Cyclone: d,f,P+K
Bass Bomb

H: Hold **P:** Punch **K:** Kick **u/U:** Up/Hold Up **d/D:** Down/Hold Down
f/F: Forward/Hold Forward **b/B:** Back/Hold Back **uf, ub, df, db:** Press Diagonally in the Directions indicated
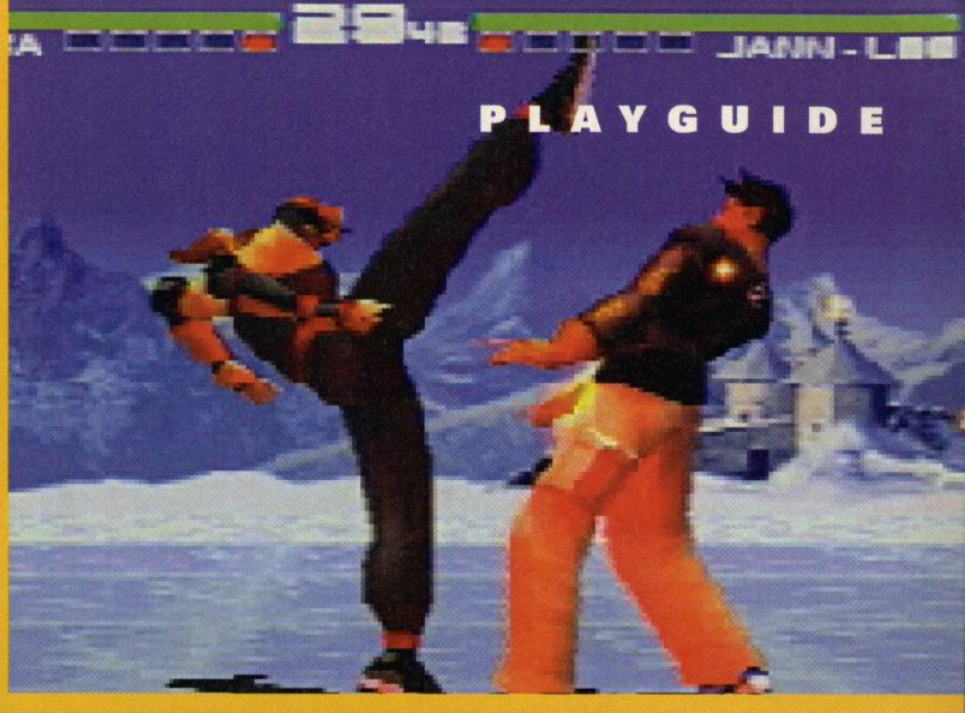
(while opponent is crouching):
d,H+P
J O B
(while opponent is crouching):
df,H+P+K
German Suplex
(while behind opponent): H+P
German Suplex Whip
(while behind opponent): H+P+K
Hammer Throw: f,H
Knee Bomber
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Dragon Screw
(while opponent performs kick):
d,db,b,H
Roll: d,P+K
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K
Elbow Drop
(while opponent is down): df,P
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Flying Major: d,db,b,P+K
Stretch
(during flying major): b,f,H+P
J O S
(during stretch): d,u,H+P
Tackle: f,df,d,H
Giant Swing
(during tackle): b,db,d,df,f,H
Reverse Lock: d,df,f,H
Flying Wing Lock
(during Reverse Lock):
f,df,d,db,b,db,d,df,f,H
Full Nelson
(while behind opponent): f,H
Dragon Suplex
(during Full Nelson):
f,uf,u,ub,b,H+P

ZACK

Zack is a good all-round character who has a perfect balance between attack combos and throws. The problem is, aside from looking cool, he's not all that spectacular in any category. He does have a large number of throw manoeuvres, but none of them can be chained together. Use him if you just want a safe bet.

Punch: P
Elbow: f,P
Lunging Uppercut: df,P

Low Punch: d,P
Roundhouse Kick: K
Mid Turn Kick: df,K
Sweep Kick: d,K
Down Elbow: b,P
Spinning Kick: H+K
Hell Needle: u,P
Half Spin High Kick: b,K
Upper Elbow: f,F,P
Half Spin Rolling Elbow: b,K,P
Sway Blow: ub,P
Half Spin Heel Kick: b,K,K
Devil's Uppercut: df,DF,P
Double Kick: K,K
Rolling Elbow: d,df,f,P
Gattling Knee: f,K,K
Double Impact: d,df,f,P,P
Double Low Spin Kick: db,K,D,K
Double Elbow: f,P,P
Volcanic Elbow: P,P,P
Rising Heel Kick: u,K
Volcanic Mid-Kick: P,P,K
Rising Knee: f,F,K
Dancing Rush: P,P,K,K
Heel Kick: d,df,f,K
Volcanic Knee: P,P,f,K
Devil's Rush: P,P,f,P,P
Twister Uppercut: d,df,f,H+P+K
Genocide Rush: P,P,f,P,K
Flying Knee Kick: f,F,P+K
Low Spin Rush: P,P,d,K,D,K
Turning Elbow
(with back turned): b,P
Inferno Rush: f,P,K,K,K
Turn Heel Kick
(with back turned): b,K
Heaven Smash: df,P,DF,P,DF,P
Throw: H+P
Knee Storm: f,b,P+K
Neck Hunting
(while behind opponent): H+P
Beast Fang: df,DF,P+K
Knee Strike: f,H
Forward Trap: f,f,H
Hook Elbow
(while behind opponent): f,H
Backward trap: f,b,H
Head Crash
(while behind opponent): f,f,H
Lift Nape
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Burst Elbow
(opponent is crouched or you are behind them): df,H
Fake Roll: d,df,f,H
Stomp
(while opponent is down): u,K

Foot Stomp
(while opponent is down): df,K
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

RAIDOU - BOSS

This big bad end-of-game dude isn't quite as bad as he initially seems. He mostly combines the moves of the other characters, but unfortunately, the moves are a mismatch between fast and weak attacks with slower and stronger ones. He's not very effective when charging in, since his combos are nearly identical to other characters; but if you can get him in close, his counters and throws are quite powerful.

Punch: P
Elbow: f,P
Lunging Uppercut: df,P
Low Punch: d,P
High Kick: K
Middle Kick: df,K
Low Kick: d,K
Stomach Crash: f,P,P
Spinning Knuckle: b,P
Gen Fu Form: b,P,f,P
Low Spinning Knuckle: db,P
Heel Hammer: b,K
Leg Spike: db,K
Lunging Palm: ub,P
Shoulder Bash: b,f,P
Swing Reverse Hammer: f,b,P,P
God's Hand Push: f,P+K

Big Kick: u,K
Flip Kick: ub,K
Snap Kick: df,K
Palm Strike: f,f,P
High Palm Strike: uf,P
Land Slide: f,f,K
Palm Kick: d,H+K
Shadow Strike: P,P,K
Solar Cyclone: uf,K
Jumping Knee: f,K
Cross Bar Throw: H+P
Neck Break: d,df,f,K
Spinning Back Breaker:
b,db,b,df,f,P
Turning Throw
(while behind opponent): H+P
Shoulder Thrust
(while behind opponent): f,f,H
Splash Bomb
(while opponent is crouching):
df,H+P+K
Crouching Knee Strike
(while opponent is crouching): df,H
Standing Knee Strike: f,H
Shadow Flip: f,f,H
Grab and Punch: f,H
Jumping Punch
(while opponent is down): u,P
Stomp
(while opponent is down): df,P
Taunt 1: f,b,f,H+P+K
Taunt 2: b,f,b,H+P+K

Chain Throws:
Head Lock: d,df,f,H
Bulldog Lock
(during headlock): b,b,H

Incoming
PC

Cheat Menu:
At the main menu type:
numberonedacrestreet
The cheats menu will appear giving you options for unlimited firepower, super guns, unlimited lives and more.

F-22 Raptor
PC

While playing press T to bring up the message prompt and type any of these . . .
it's not my fault:
Completes the current mission
never tell me the odds:
Can't be hit
we can rebuild him:
Repairs damage
there can be only one:
Invulnerability
i'll be back:
Reload stores

Interstate '76 Nitro Pack
PC

Play as an Air Balloon:
Choose Melee then select Instant Melee. Pick the Phaedra Rattler as your machine and rename it as HOTAIR. Go back to the make/model screen and choose another car. Now select the Rattler again and choose the varient you

named HOTAIR. The make/model should say Hot Air Balloon.

Armored Fist 2
PC

While you are playing the game hold down the backspace and type kyle. This gives you full weapons, fuel and repairs damage.

Duke Nukem 3D Atomic Edition
PC

DNGODLY: God mode on
DNUNGODLY: God mode off
DNWARP"episode""level": level skip
DNAMMO: full ammo
DNVIEW: Tomb Raider style view (press F7 to toggle)
DNWEAPONS: all weapons
DNUNLOCK: unlocks door
DNITEMS: keys, items, stuff
DNSTUFF: keys, weapons, ammo
DNSKILL"skill level 1-5": Re-start level with skill #
DNCLIP: walk through walls
DNHYPER: steroids
DNENDING: ends the episode

Frogger 3D
PC

1. Pause Frogger in single player mode.
2. Type each of the cheats in slowly and deliberately

including spaces
3. A message will flash on the bottom of the screen after you have typed in the code acknowledging which cheat you turned on.
4. Note: To quit a level when the cheat is activated, press 'ESC'.
Infinite Lives: NO MORE ROAD SPLATS
All Zones Open: SHOW ME MORE ZONES PLEASE
All Levels Open: WAY TOO HARD FOR THE LIKES OF ME

Ignition
PC

Type any of the following words on the title screen to toggle on/off the following effects.
STRINGS: Flattens all of the opponents cars.
SVINPOLE: Drops the camera viewpoint.
SKUNK: Displays just the wheels of your car.
FILMJOLK: Constantly flips the screen. (spew mode)
SLASKTRATT: Gives you all of the cars.
SURMULE: Gives you all of the tracks.
BANARNE: Stretches the cars upward.

Mortal Kombat Trilogy
PC

To get to the green question mark in the option section just hold

block, run, and down.
To get level select: at the character select screen put the cursor on Sonya and press up and start.

Star Fleet Academy
PC
Various cheats:
To reload photon torpedos in mission7 type ****TIBERIUS after the first battle (you may have to type it in twice). Get within transporter range of the starbase and hit "i".
In Omega 12-300 type $PUNISH to get extra photon power.
To kill Romulan near Raven in END GAME type MERCURY.
To kill Sherak in Smugglers Den type $-"ME!

Need For Speed III: Hot Pursuit
PSX
Change Cop Voices:
On the screen before your race actually starts (the one with the rev counter) press START and any of the following combinations at the same time. Hold them all until the Loading screen appears.
Cops speak German:
Up+R2+L1
Cops speak in Spanish:
Down+R2+L1
Cops speak in Italian:
Left+R2+L1
Cops speak in French:
Right+R2+L1
Enter any of these as the User Name in the options menu
Extra tracks:
Mcityz: Empire City
Gldfsh: Scorpio-7 (hidden)
Mnbeam: SpaceRace (hidden)
Xcntry: AutoCross (hidden)
Xcav8: Caverns (hidden)
Playtm: The Room (hidden)
Other cheats:
ijagx: Jaguar XJR-15
amgmrc: Mercedes Benz CLK GTR
rocket: El Nino car.
Seeall: More camera views (look in Options/Views)
spoilt: All cars including El Nino, and all tracks except the hidden ones.
Even more Codes:
Enter these codes after you've chosen a race, but before the LOADING screen appears (as with the cop cheats)
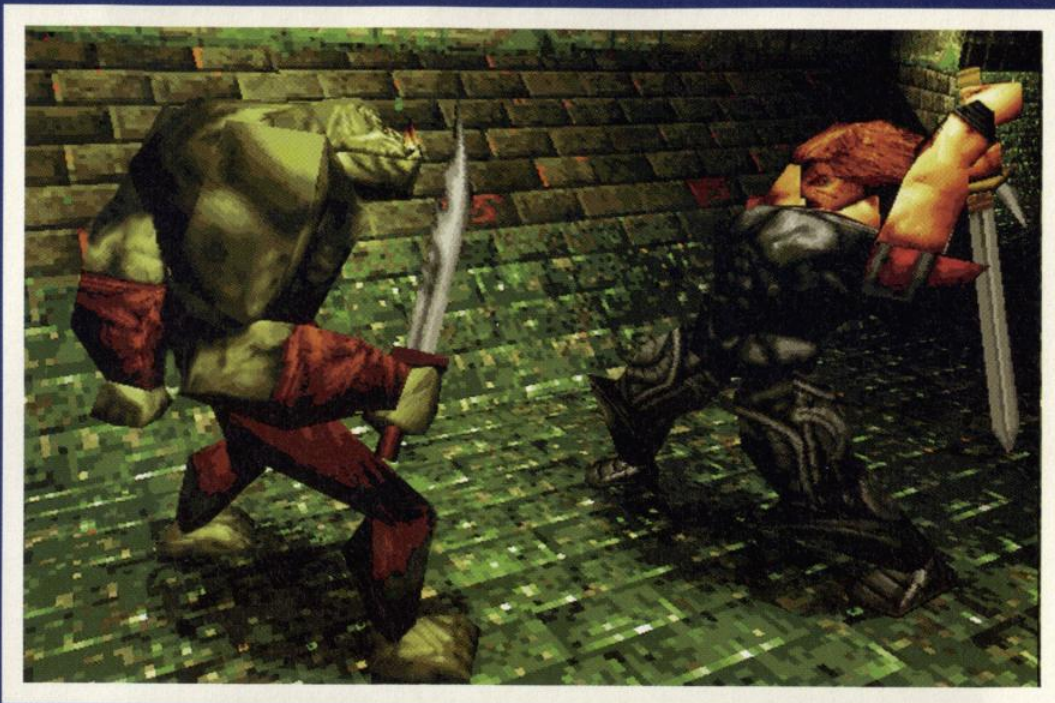**Ultra Horn: (ooer!)**
Start+Select+R1+L2
Slow Motion by 20%
Up+X+Triangle
Increase Car Weight (allows your car run down the traffic without slowing down, and that can't be bad!)
Select+Square+X

Actua Soccer 2
PSX
Cheat Codes:
Punch in these codes in the start menu:
GREMLIN 11:
Left, Right, Square, O, Up, Down, Square, O
SUPER FURY ANIMALS:
Left, Left, Square, Right, Right, O, Up, Down
GHOST BALL:
Square, Square, Left, Left, Right, Right, O, O
BEACH BALL:
Left, Right, Left, Up, Left, Right, Square, Square
SMALL PLAYERS:
O, Down, Down, Square, Up, Up, Left, Right
INVISIBLE PLAYERS:
Square, O, Down, O, Up, Right, Square, Left
GIGANTIC PLAYERS:
Up, Down, Down, Right, Sqaure, Sqaure, O, O
BREAK REFLECTORS:
Left, Left, Left, O, Right, Right, Right, Square
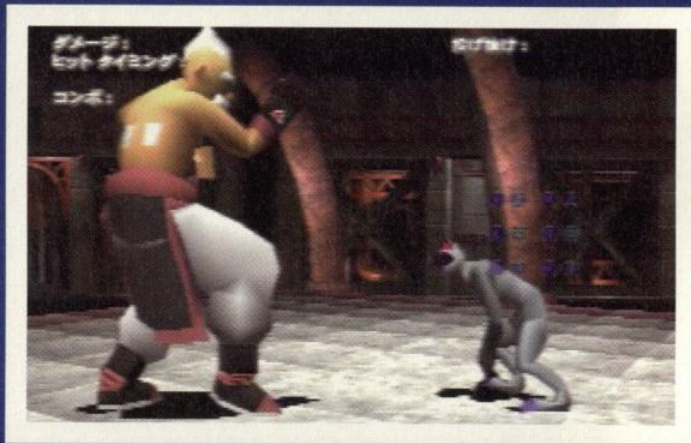**BLACK-WHITE COLOR TV MODE:**
Up, Down, Up, Square, O, Up, Down, Up

Tennis Arena
PSX
Extra Characters and Canyon Court:
At the "Smart Dog" logo screen press Up, Down, Left, Right, Start. If you do this correctly you should hear a guy cheer. This should give you access to the extra players and the Canyon court which is normally not available in Smash Tennis mode.

Tobal #2
PSX
Cheap Trick in Quest Mode:
Here is a simple trick to get most of the monsters. First have lots of Capture Stones (or combine all of them) Save before going into a dungeon. Enter a dungeon. Use up all of the capture stone (or use most of it.)Reset by pressing L1+L2+R1+R2+Select+Start. Save. Go back into Quest Mode and load up the same game you just played. Now you have just captured several monsters without using up your capture stones.
Giant and Shrunken Mode:
(works in Vs. Cpu or Vs. Player mode only)
At the character select screen press and hold R2 + L2 + Triangle then select your character. Continue to hold these buttons until Round 1 appears. While playing, you can use the R2 and L2 buttons to grow or shrink your character!

(Shrink your character so you cannot be hit then toast your opponent with fireballs)
To access the Bosses:
To play as Mufu, beat the game on Easy.
To play as Nork, finish the game on Normal.
To play as Emperor Udan, win the game on Hard.

Deathtrap Dungeon
PSX
Level Select:
At the main menu press L1, R1, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle, R1, L1 then choose LOAD GAME.

Ghost in the Shell
PSX
Level Select:
At the main menu press R2, R1, Square, Square, Up, Down, Square, Square, R2. A tone will confirm the code.

Rampage: World Tour

N64

Change Characters Colors:
To change the colors of George, Lizzie or Ralph go to the characters select and press UP or DOWN on the controller stick or the d-pad.

Double Points:
You can double the points you get in certain cities if you press the character button on the screen that introduces the next city. The buttons are:

George: Jump
Lizzie: Punch
Ralph: Kick

The cities affected by this are Casablanca, Kiev, Kodiac, London, Moab, Nashville, Rio de Janerio & Washington DC. You also get these Effects if you pick up a calculator in any city.

Hidden Cities:
Using the same technique as the double points cheat, try these cities to end up at a secret city:

San Diego: Caleb's City
Fairbanks: Underworld
Atlanta: Suburbia
Louisville: Warehouse
Phoenix: Area 69

Monster Allergies:
All monsters have their own allergies. When your monster eats the thing he or she's allergic to he or she will sneeze and it will blow down the building you are on. George is allergic to dogs. Lizzy is allergic to birds. Ralph is allergic to cats.

Play as V.E.R.N:
To play as V.E.R.N. search for a Scum Lab facility. Eat the toxic waste barrels and you will be transformed into V.E.R.N. for the rest of the stage. V.E.R.N can fly and has super strength. planes early.

Tank and Plane Ride:
Jump on tanks to get a free ride. You can control the way the tank is moving. The tank will then shoot elsewhere. In a short while, the tank will explode and you will be shot into the air. You can also jump onto the low flying planes and use them to attack the buildings and other players.

NHL Breakaway '98

N64

Bonus Points:
At the season mode's main screen enter this code for extra bonus points each time you enter it . . . C-Left, C-Left, C-Right, C-Right, C-Left, C-Left, C-Right, C-Right, R.

Cheat Menu:
At the main menu, press C-Left, C-Right, C-Left, C-Right, R, R.

Hulking Player:
For a powerful player, enter your name as "grEEn jeLLo". Make sure you enter it exactly as shown.

Perfect Player:
Enter the name as Jim Jung (exactly as shown) After you enter Jim Jung you can change the name to what you want it to be.

360 Player Inspection:
Press C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, or C-Right at the player creation screen to rotate the displayed player in any direction.

Pull Computer's Goalie:
After you start playing, pause the game and go to Game Settings. Now go to Controller Select, and change to the other team. Under Team Options, select PULL GOALIE. Go to Controller select again, change back to your team, and the computers goalie will be on the bench and out of your way. Go for it!

Adidas Power Soccer 98

PSX

To enter the cheats you must first access the cheat entry screen. When on the `Main Start Up Screen`, press and hold L1+L2+R1+R2. The cheat entry screen should appear. From here you can enter the following cheats:

Make All players Head Big :
Square, Circle, Circle, X, Triangle, X, Square, Circle.

Hidden Teams Available :
X, Triangle, X, Square, Circle, Square, X, Triangle.
Go to flag to the right of `Netherlands` to access extra teams.

Display credits:
Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Triangle, Triangle, Square.

Extra Stadium Cheat:
Square, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, X, X.
You can now access the extra stadium called `The Difference` from the Stadium Select options.

Win Match Cheat:
X, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, Circle, Triangle.
When you press `pause` in-game you can now choose to win one match of your choice

Dead Ball Zone

PSX

Cheat menu:
To activate the in game cheat menu do the following:
Press the SELECT button in a game, this will bring up the `select menu`.
"From here press and hold L1+L2+Square+Circle. If the cheat was successful a `Fat Cat Cheat Menu` will appear, if not then keep trying.
The new cheat menu will give you lots of different options and variations. Check out the `duck cam`.
NB: This only works in Tussle Mode.
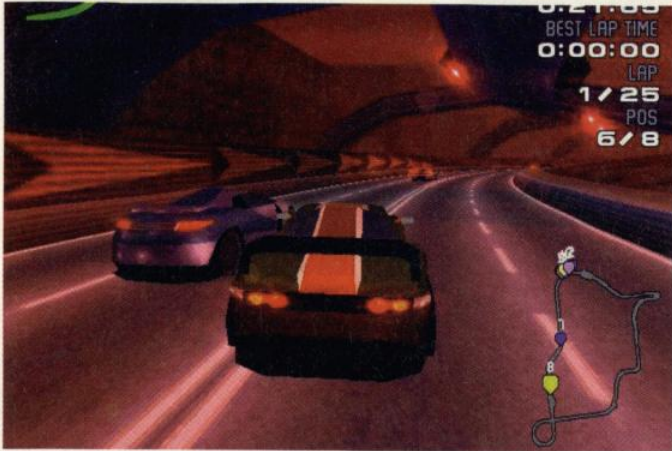
Forsaken

PSX

Cheat Menu:
To open the in-game cheat menu:
Highlight `Options` on the Main Menu and press left, right, left, right on the controller.
Now when you enter the Options menu, `cheat options` should be available.
These include Level select (Choose

entereing this one!

In game cheats:
These must be entered when playing the game on the appropriate track. Follow the instructions given for each individual cheat closely as precise movements are needed for the cheat to work. When the cheat is activated a scrolling message will appear on screen.

GOLDBRIDGE TRACK:
At the gas station, drive backwards around the gas pumps 3 times within 20 seconds. You will need to pass the entry door to the gas station with a speed of at least 40km/hour

Soup up your car:
REDROCK TRACK:
Turn around from the start and head the wrong way around the track until you reach the dead end path on the right hand side. Hit the dead end and slam the car into reverse straight away. You need to do this within 30 seconds of starting the race so this may take a few goes to get it right. You will get a message to announce the cheat has worked.

Check out the Development team – now you know why they work behind closed doors!

NEOCITY TRACK :
After you go down the big hill (before you reach the cinema and nightclub) turn left into the first wall with windows on it. Change suspension:

ATLANTIKA:
Go to the alley opposite the Atlantika Central Station Building on your left then drive to the right side of the central building and wait in the left corner.
Jeep mode:

RUHRSTADT:
Stand close to the door outside the Black Lotus club for around 15 seconds

External camera view:
OLYMPOS:
Wait on the Heli-bridge for around 10 seconds.

Moon Gravity:
NOLBY HILLS:
Drive into the leftmost garage door with the 'Digital Illusions' sign. You need to be going at at least 75 km/hour. Get a run up and use the signs on the floor as a ramp.

any level, including Deathmatch levels.), All Weapons, Invulnerability & Stop Enemies Firing (Turns off enemies AI)

Motorhead

PSX
COWRULES:
Unlocks 3 extra cars and 2 extra tracks
FRAGTIME:

Unlocks 6 extra cars and 4 extra tracks
TURBOMOS:
Extra track
LASTCODE:
Another car and another track
SOFTHEAD:
Activates in-game motion blur
SUPERCAR:
Overhead view
INSANITY:
Check out the demo after

NEXT ISSUE . . .

HYPER »

Any gamers out there remember a title called Heart Of Darkness? It's one of those games that's been about to come out for... oh, three years?! Finally finished, it just missed out on getting the Hyper treatment this issue. Well, next issue we'll review this curious platformer for PlayStation/PC and let the world know whether it was worth the wait...

LETTERS

YOU DON'T LIKE LARA?

Dear Hyper,

I was wondering why not one of your guys voted for Tomb Raider 1 or 2. Is it because you just simply forgot it or because you do not think it's worthy of being in your Top 20. Why are Sony developing ridiculous contraptions like "The Glove"?

And another thing, R-type is storming our way. Wohoo! I love all things R type.

Now for a coupla questions

1. Any chance of Resident Evil 64? If so imagine how many nights you'll be drooling in front of your N64 with a growing wet stain soaking through your pants.

2. Will there be a Mario 2 64?

3. Any news of an Australian Touring car game?

4. Any more news on Quake 3?

5. Will Midway grace us with a all new fighting game series?

Well, that's all from the Flame, Cheerio!

I.P.FLAME

P.S great mag, superb website, great posters too

Flamester,

Well, a few things. Firstly, that list was just the combination of everyone's votes, rather than our "Official" top 20 or whatever. The adding up was just for fun. The real aim was to show that we all liked different stuff. As good a game as Tomb Raider 2 is, we've all finished Tomb Raider 1, and doing it all over again didn't really do it for us (Doing that playguide for TR2 really made me sick of the whole Tomb Raider thing altogether). It would seem people buy ridiculous contraptions, so there's the simple answer. Your answers:

1. Umm... Perhaps your gaming experiences are a little bit more physically intense than ours. According to E3 news, there is no confirmation on RE64, and Capcom Japan have just said, "It's a possibility", which as about as concrete as "Your guess is as good as mine Bucko".

2. No official word on that (although everyone assumes it will happen). Super Mario RPG 2 is coming out in Japan

though. No word as to US or European (and Australian) releases.

3. Nope. We won't answer this question again until the answer is yes. The PC gaming market is very quiet right now, so developing a title that would only sell big in one country, and even then to a quiet, small market, is simply not a wise move for a software publisher.

4. There'll be lots of snippets of info as time goes on, but the game isn't going to be out till next year some time (and even that hasn't been officially guaranteed). We'll look at Quake 3 once there's some concrete news, or screen shots, or something that actually means something, rather than some speculative rumours about what it might do, since everything is bound to change heaps over time.

5. No news of one at E3, so we can only guess that there's nothing in the immediate future. Biofreaks is their latest effort.

WE WANT IT IN STORE... NOW!

Dear Hyper

In my opinion you are the only mag who deserves the title of "Australia's No 1 video games mag". I am sure that somewhere in your vast intellect you have the answers to my simple questions.

1. Do you have absolutely any new info on Wipeout 64? (Anything)

2. Any word on Dark Reign 2?

3. Any word on Goldeneye 2 or Tomorrow Never Dies? I heard that the company that made Goldeneye is making Goldeneye 2 instead of Tomorrow Never Dies as another company bought the rights to it

Both the letter of the month and the reply in issue 56 brought up some very good points. I know of at least 2 stores in my area that have closed down due to competition from the major stores (K-Mart, etc) I definitely like the idea of having in store competitions-even without prizes.

Lastly, the postal service in my area must be pretty slack as I don't get your mag until 2 or 3 days after it was at the newsagent at best!

Thanks for a great mag

RUSSMAN (lowly reader)

Russman,

Thanks for that.

1. Check out our preview.

2. There was an announcement at E3 to say that Dark Reign 2 was in the works, and it's 3D like the upcoming Wartorn, but there weren't any concrete release dates or promises at this stage, so it's in the "Watch this space" bracket right now.

3. Goldeneye 2 is really Perfect Dark (same folks, same type of game), and Tomorrow Never Dies, like Perfect Dark, was previewed this issue.

There you go indie games stores, the gamers want in store comps, even just for fun. As for the postage, that's really bizarre. Ask your post office about it, as the stuff does get distributed to the mail outs before it hits the newsagents. I've met subscribers who get their mag early, so it really is a postal thing. Even if your local postie is a bit slow, your subscription is saving you dosh, so don't give up on it.

FAST BUCK POLICY

Dear Hyper people,

How are you holding up? It must be tough playing games all day long and getting payed for it and you have my deepest sympathies you lucky bastards. My letter to you addresses a simple topic and that is are gaming companies just looking for a quick buck?

I look at Final Fantasy VII and Quake 2 and I say hell no, but I glance elsewhere and I see games like Gran Turismo which could have been brilliant with a two player game tournament mode and Resident Evil 2 if only it was a bit more challenging. Surely game companies make games to be the best and help fellow gamers sample what the industry can offer, with coinage as a welcome secondary objective. So many times I read in your interviews with gaming companies that they didn't put something in because they didn't have the time... MAKE TIME!.

The rumour that Tekken 3 is being launched in September so it can compete with Dead or Alive is another thing that makes me believe the industry sucks. I saw Tekken 3 on import on May 10th, it takes less than 2 months to convert a game to PAL as was illustrated with the fact the Saturn brought out it's system here before it was released in the US, with games converted and on the production line weeks after being released in Japan. A friend went to Japan, they have brilliant games well ahead of us. (He found a copy of Time Crisis almost 15 months before it hit our shores). The industry is clearly not there for the benefit of the gamers, which makes me sad, especially to know that I and gamers like yourselves must take a back seat to bulging wallets and company feuds. It should not be this way.

BEN HEAVEN, Cremorne, TAS

Ben,

The thing about making time comes down to a developer being under contract to complete a game in time for a publisher to release it. Quake 2 was actually a perfect example. Sure the game was great, but there were a ton of fixes that needed to be done at the end, and getting it out on sale pre-Christmas was deemed to be priority number one. The timing of the release can really make or break a title around the key spending times.

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

26 red
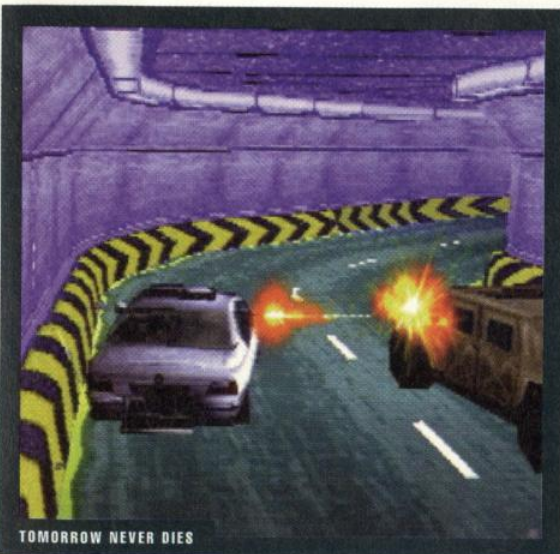
HARDCORE VS MAINSTREAM

Dear Hyper blokes,

After reading letter of the month in #56, I had a feeling of elation. Finally, someone else knows "The Theory" which is the story of "Mainstreamers" (those who buy games at-a-glance such as "Bob the newbie") and "hardcore" gamers (ourselves). Mainstreamers suck big time. We rule.

This is the law of gamesland. Anyway, this is "The Theory" which I have been distributing like mad but also to no avail. Us hardcore gamers used to rule 'Gamesland'. We were the ones who started playing games at the age of 5, who progressed from Atari 2600 to Commodore, Amiga and Master System etc until the dawn of the SNES. The 'Hardcores' were in paradise. But about 2 years after the release of the SNES, something else, eg mainstreamers, was lurking in the bushes. Then the mainstreamers attacked. They bought a SNES because to them it was a status symbol, and bought games because of the pictures on the front. Us Hardcores were suitably annoyed, for these fools gave gaming a bad name.

It was not just for hardcores anymore, no, these mainstreamers quickly took over Games land so naturally the Market shifted to suit the needs wants and desires of the Mainstream, who's motto is graphics make the game and us hardcores were abandoned by all but a few games developers. It has been this way ever since. OK, I know "The Theory" sounds pretty crap on paper, but we know what's going on. Anyhow I just thought I'd tell you the Hyper crew my theory and I hope you can make sense my description. I've been rockin' with Hyper since Issue #1 and hope to see more

Later

THE XENOMORPH

P.S I can't help but feel Hyper has gone a little mainstream itself, eg 26 RED letters page, UGH cheats (no doubt set up for mainstreamers). The reviews are fine, it's just that Australia's no 1 video games mag doesn't have independent in the title anymore

This saddens me

Xenomorph,

A different issue in a way to the issue #56 letter. In many ways I can relate to what you're saying... I was gaming from age 5 on. I certainly feel very different about how I see myself as a gamer as opposed to someone who only came across gaming in the past few years. However, the mainstream is actually responsible not only for the waves of crap games that get made, but also all the high production quality classics, because the mainstream made the video games industry a much more lucrative one. Thus, companies have been spending more on producing their titles. It's a catch 22 really. Mainstreamers also have actually improved the name of gaming rather than tarnished it, simply because society is generally more prepared to accept something if many people are already doing it, as opposed to a minority. I've been interviewed several times for TV now, and in the past (pre-mainstream) the interviewer would have been attacking gaming as an evil thing. My interviewers did no such thing... because video games have already been accepted by the mainstream, so it's much harder to use a scapegoat now.

Another thing to think about... Back in the "Hardcore days", game developers didn't make anywhere near as much money, and really were ripped off severely by the hardcore gamers who pirated software. Think back to the Commodore 64 and Amiga days... People used to have game collections that ran into the hundreds, but they'd only ever have bought 2 or 3 games. The hardcore gamers appreciate the old game developers now, much more so than when the old stuff was actually made.

Maybe if piracy wasn't so common back then, gaming would have become mainstream WITH the hardcore mindset still in place now. For the developers and publishers, the hardcore gamer's devotion to playing unfortunately is no where near as valuable as the mainstreamer's willingness to part with their cash.

As for us not being independent, I think you may possibly be confusing advertising with a lack of independence. Just because someone advertises with us, does not mean we are not independent. An example of a non-independent magazine is the Official Australian PlayStation Magazine (even though I can vouch for the integrity and lack of bias of the staff), as they are an official brand magazine. Sony, Nintendo, Sega, nor any other company have any say in what we do. That's independence. UGH is a company that does cheats, and they have staff by the phones ready to help people. So we print the cheats they get, and we give the numbers in case you have any problems. They don't dictate to us how we do anything, or vice versa. We took that little independence comment out of the title simply because we felt like writing something else, not because we'd changed stance or attitude. The fact that you believe our reviews are fine is reassuring to us, because if a magazine isn't independent, and biased as a result, the reviews are the first telltale sign.

With Tekken 3 and Dead or Alive, the basic deal is that Sony haven't been pushing Tekken 3, to help draw the focus to Dead or Alive. Sony are distributing BOTH titles, and it's fair enough from Sony's point of view that they don't want to compete with themselves directly. This doesn't help the end user much, but Sony also pay for it too, with some gamers getting sick of waiting to the point where they get mod chips so they can get the Japanese versions earlier. As for conversion times, that all depends on decisions made by the company in the first place. Those Saturn titles that came out a few weeks later were probably being developed for PAL at the same time as the NTSC version, rather than afterwards.

The video game industry really isn't any different to any other industry, as companies exist to try and make money. Developers are usually gamers themselves, who really want you to love their product, and the Publishers are the companies that turn the developers efforts into a product you can buy. The Publishers may not have any emotional attachment to a title, but without them, it doesn't become a reality. That's life.

THIS AIN'T NO ARCADE

Dear Hyper,
Sega have no one to blame for the Saturn's death other than themselves. The reason I think that the Saturn died was because a lot of the Saturn's games were arcade conversions of their racing games and because they are arcade conversions they only came out with around three tracks. I think that racing games are all consoles strong points, take the Playstation for example. It's alright to release a racing game with only three tracks in the arcade because no one spends weeks on it. No one wants to spend ninety dollars on a racing game if their going to get sick of it in a couple of weeks. If Sega had released the saturn versions of Daytona, Sega Rally, Sega Touring Cars and Manx TT (just to name a couple) with around ten tracks each the Saturn might still be around today. If Sega don't want to kill their new console they should start making more than three tracks on their console.

NICK LAZAREVSKI

Nick,
Interesting point. The amount of depth and longterm value that people expect out of a game they buy is certainly different to what they expect in the arcade. Titles like Fighters Megamix were a step in the right direction, but too little too late maybe.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

To the crew,
OK, I'll get right to the point. Do games in America come out at about the same time games in Japan do? I ask because I picked up an electronic games mag) which came out before your June edition. It said that Mission Impossible was out, also inside was an article on Zelda 64, with some very cool screen shots, at the end of this article it gave me a release date of late October. Is this true? If so when will it hit Australia? I also noticed that this mag already has cheats for Resident Evil 2. This is probably due to the fact that they offer prizes for good cheats. Why don't you guys have something like this? My last questions.

1. Do you guys read other games mags for extra info?
2. Where do you get your cheats from?
3. Have you put out a N64 mag? Because I saw a mag equal in size and with similar cover art as yours.
4. Have you guys ever considered doing a separate PSX or N64 mag, because you guys could pull in heaps, or do you have to buy the rights or something?
Thanks for listening

SPARKY

P.S Great mag... I just had to say it.
Sparky,
Overseas games have varying release dates, sometimes there's little difference in time between Japan and the US, and other times there's a big difference.
Sounds like someone at that mag got caught in the trap of being told a game was going to be out, only to have it slip a bit after they went to press. We know for a fact that game wasn't finished yet at the time you sent us this letter, so someone got something horribly wrong.
Cheats all come from developers and distributors, and UGH, who do our cheats get them all direct. We're not seeking cheats from the readers... we're seeking to give the readers cheats.
1. Nope. We do like to have a look to see how other mags score some stuff, as varying opinions are often interesting. If we want extra info, we contact the source... not the press. We may chat to some of the staff of our sister magazines here, but we don't read them to make our own mag.
2. I guess I've already answered that.
3. Next Publishing has a group of mags called "Next Gaming". N64 Gamer is one of these. The similar cover is probably because Matt Hatton has been doing their covers too.
4. Next Gaming also does the Official Australian PlayStation magazine, which being an official magazine, does have a series of agreements etc, set up with Sony.

QUALITY TV

Dear Hyper
Your glossy, cool, unbiased mag really deserves the title of "Australia's Best Games Mag"
My brothers have a N64 but despite it's awesome graphics the television it's played through reduces quality somewhat from what the machine produces. Now what I would like to know is on the verge of the digital/high definition revolution (phew) will the picture quality of the Nintendo (and Playstation) be displayed as it should or will they be incompatible with his new technology. If they are

TEKKEN 3

incompatible, will the respective companies release adaptors to use the new TV's. Also, it probably won't happen, but I think Goldeneye would make an awesome PC game.

Yours Sincerely
MR. B

P.S Whatever you do, don't go all one brand and screw up your format. The once great Megazone did, and it no longer exists.

Mr. B,
Things will look better on a digital/high def TV. Adaptors should be the same. As for Rare converting their game to PC, you're right, don't hold your breath. The engine would need a major upgrade, since the Quake 2, Unreal and Prey (from what we've seen) engines are all superior 3D engines.
P.S. Well, we've been all-formats for 58 issues now... I think we're happy this way.

LACK OF 64 STUFF

Dear Hyper

I've been reading your mags for about 1 1/2 years and I've noticed that you don't have much N64 info and stuff in them. What the hell is with all this PC and PSX stuff? The only decent games are on Nintendo 64. So please put heaps more N64 stuff in your excellent mag.
ANON.

Anon,
We can understand how you might be a bit peeved, but not much really happens news wise for the N64 out here. The simple truth is, there's just TONS of PC and PSX games coming out each month, and only a couple of N64 titles. As for the only decent games being on N64... who are you trying to convince? I guess you could say Hyper is a direct reflection of what is going on in the marketplace, so if you see 20 PSX games, and only 5 N64 games in a given issue, that's something Nintendo needs to address, not us. I wish there were more N64 releases going on, I'd prefer a more even spread of stuff to be looking at. While there's little going on for the N64 games wise, we'll try look at their peripherals more often in the Hardware Guide. Note that we are getting mail from readers that blame Nintendo rather than ourselves as to the problem, and before some of you say, "But this Nintendo mag comes up with X amount of

pages every month", remember that they HAVE to come up with that many pages of N64 stuff. Last issue we covered 48 games, of which only 7 were N64 titles, and we didn't miss a thing.

GAMING = SEX APPEAL?

Dear Hyper,

I have found it is the general opinion that males that are interested in computers and computer games are quite often stereo typed as being unpopular and considered boring. I have discovered different. After I changed my degree at Uni from Accounting and Taxation (boring subjects I know) to Information Systems I have become infinitely more popular with the opposite sex and gaining more respect with some of my own creed. It may be that computers are being more widely excepted as the norm, and every household now seems to contain a computer or home entertainment system of some sort. I have to admit that I do not overly publicise the fact that I am interested in computers, but I do not hide the fact either.

On a different subject I part own a Nintendo 64 when it was first released and have observed that the analogue controller has started to produce white powder and is becoming stiff to use. I had considered dabbing a bit of oil with a cotton bud but I thought this unwise without consulting someone with authority. Is there a way of cleaning the controller without damaging the electrics and therefore restoring the unit to near perfect condition?

Thank you for your time,
ADRIAN GREEVE.

Adrian,
Funny stuff. I think you'll just find Accounting and Taxation were stifling your shining sex appeal. I think it really comes down to the individual. A computer related job or interest won't make an otherwise attractive person, unattractive. In my teen years, my interest in computers (and my thick glasses, messed up hair, and teen acne) was a bit of a downer in the eyes of the femmes that I wished thought I was more interesting, but now they don't seem to care. You can bore or put off anyone if you have a one track mind and it's on a very technical subject.

ZELDA 64

Approach the nubile amazonian dance queen in your local night club, and start throwing her jive about your experiences with running your front side bus at 100MHz... surprise, surprise, we're still single. As for your controller. Out with the KY! In seriousness, I'd be putting a drop of vegetable oil or something there. If you're getting white powder (hmmm), then it's obviously because something is under too much friction, so a drop of oil can't hurt. Just don't douse the thing.

SO WE'RE WEIRD EH?

Hey Hyper dudes,

After reading the staff awards I have come to the conclusion that you lot have very diverse tastes and that you're a very weird bunch indeed. Also, after reading some of the games you choose I started to think about what games I would put in my top ten. It is quite a hard choice to make.

Especially after what some of my 'friends' (who shall remain nameless) think of some games. Only two or three of them have any good taste at all. For example, one 'friend' doesn't even like Quake 2 (which must come as quite a shock to you Dan.) If a game isn't for their system they think it's crap. A few of them have the poxiest computers (486's) and what makes it worse is they try to run games like Tomb Raider 2 on them. The only games they buy are demo disks from Silly Solly's and I don't think they own a registered version. I own a N64 yet I don't hate other machines. My 'friends' are the opposite.

Those that own N64's hate PSX's and those that own computers hate everything. Taking all these into account I think maybe your choices for best games aren't so weird (all of them were fun in their own way)

See ya round

An **ANONYMOUS** person who doesn't want his friends to know he wrote this.

Anon the 2nd,
We do have diverse tastes. Nothing shocks me anymore about what people do and don't like. Ross Clarksmith doesn't like Quake style games, and I don't bother to try and convince him to do so. What's the point? He's happy, I'm happy, yadda, yadda, yadda. The fact that some games that I personally consider mindless trash, manage to sell so well, leaves me with a kind of open mind as to what some people will like.
Seriously, people who are too heavily into one machine, and dis the others, aren't true gamers. Gamers are into games more than systems.

QUESTIONS... STRAIGHT UP.

Dear hyper,

I only have a few questions so could you please answer them for me

1. Could you please explain what Final Fantasy tactics really is? Some people have told me it's an RPG others have said it's an RTS and some simply say I don't know.

2. Could you please explain what a Game Shark controller is and what it can do.

3. Is a Warcraft 3 coming soon?

I really liked your poster edition

keep up the good mag

B. COX

BC,
1. It's a strategy game, with RPGesque qualities to the way it's all set out. Like all FF stuff, it's set in its own world (So don't expect to be hangin' with Cloud and Tifa).
2. The Game Shark is a device that essentially allows you to interfere with settings within games. Sort of like a hardware cheat device. Basically you enter codes (long, boring, makes-no-sense codes), to alter variables in the game. For example, using a Game Shark on FF7, you can get Aeris back into your party after she dies. She doesn't appear in the conversations and stuff, but you can use her in combat etc.
3. Not that Blizzard have announced... no. Warcraft Adventures was canned by Blizzard, as they felt it wasn't up to their high standards. I must take this opportunity to declare them the perhaps the most credible game developer (despite the auto-download of CPU info debacle), as a company that can admit that it's game doesn't rock, rather than just getting it out and making easy money for a while on a lower quality product, simply due to their big name, is a company that really has the gamer's best interests as a top priority. Shame they're the only company to really show this much care in these modern times.

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FOR SALE

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Sega Saturn; memory card, virtual cop gun, 1 control pad, 7 games, $300. Mega Drive: 19 games, action replay, 2 control pads $200 Ring Sharron or Jamie Haigh on 0354 414148 anytime.

Playstation Games - Final Fantasy 7 $40, G- Police $40, Wipeout 2097 $20, Tobal No. I $20 and Resident Evil $15. All have original cases and instructions. Very good condition. Phone Luke on (07)55971428, weekdays after 4.20pm. Gold Coast area preferred.

N64 with 5 top selling games, 2 controllers, 1 rumble pak and I memory pack. The lot for $350 o.n.o. Call Luke on 02 4572 8555.

Gameboy with 2 games for $95. Pls call Jeremy on 08 8278 5065 or 08 8357 5161.

Hey! Over here! Now that I've got your attention I'll give you my copy of FIFA '97 for Saturn for $25, or FIFA '97 AND a Demo Disc for Duke Nukem 3D on Saturn. Gold Coast only. (07) 55241599 after 4.30pm weekdays.

PC Games: dark reign boxed with instructions $55 and Time Commando boxed mint condition $30. Desperate sale pls call Arron on 02 6785 1871.

Playstation games - I would like to sell Soul Blade for $89. Call Simon on 03 5881 3611 between 4.30-5.45pm.

Nintendo 64 with RF Adaptor, 2 controllers, Yoshi,s Storey, Diddy Kong Racing, Goldeneye and Blast Corps. All in perfect condition. $400 o.n.o. Or swap for Playstation with games. Ask for Andrew on Tel (02) 62544677. Canberra area only.

PC CD Rom games- MDK, mega Monx, exhumed, baryon, Captain Quazar, Hunter Hunted and Pee & City special 2 ,for $55. Playstation games : Nuclear Strike, Loaded and Zero divide for $40. Please call HIP on 02 9727 5947 (Fairfield, NSW)

Tekken 2, V-Rally - $30ea. TOCA touring car - $50 PSX controllers (x2) - $20ea, ($35 for both) Call Duncan on (02) 9498 - 7392 after 5pm on week days

Hyper mags from issue #45 onward for only $2.50 each. (In excellent condition). Sorry, no posters. Call 08 9248 1871.

Super Mario 64 $50, Bomberman 64 $40. Or both for only $80. Contact David Willett on (02) 42964583. Warilla and surrounding areas only.

Gameboy with 2 games for $95. Pls call Jeremy on 08 8278 5065 or 08 8357 5161.

PC Games: dark reign boxed with instructions $55 and Time Commando boxed mint condition $30. Desperate sale pls call Arron on 02 6785 1871.

Playstation games- I would like to sell Soul Blade for $89. Call Simon on 03 5881 3611 between 4.30-5.45pm.

Nintendo 64 with RF Adaptor, 2 controllers, Yoshi,s Storey, Diddy Kong Racing, Goldeneye and Blast Corps. All in perfect condition. $400 o.n.o. Or swap for Playstation with games. Ask for Andrew on Tel (02) 62544677. Canberra area only.

N64 games- Diddy Kong racing $70, Goldeneye 007 $70, all with instruction booklets. Ask for Tom on 03 9337 5033.

NES console (not SNES) with 2 controls, a joystick, gun and 18 games all for just $30 bucks. For this Hyper deal call Benno on 08 8682 2658 (SA only). Pls leave a message if not home.

SNES, 2 control pads, US adaptor, 18 games. Excellent condition $400. Call Adam after 6pm on 08 8395 4663.

Lylat Wars $30 boxed with instructions. Call Chris weekdays from 6.30-8.30 on 08 9385 2639

A PlayStation with arcade pad controller and original controller with Fifa 96 and 1 demo disc. Will sell separatelyoo at reasonable price. The lot for $200. Contact Javier on 03 9364 9093.

WANTED

Time Crisis plus Namco G Con 45, for between $70-$80. Call James on 02 9597 2716 weekdays after 4pm (Sydney-Wollongong area only)

Theme Hospital: Will pay $20 for it. Please call Raymond after 5pm on (07) 38008216. Brisbane area only please.

X-Com : Terror from the Deep for Playstation. Will pay good money if in original box, instructions and good condition. Call Steve on 02 9477 6761.

Any Streetfighter games for Playstation (Pal). Will pay up to $80 for street fighter Alpha 2 or Street fighter us x-men. $60-$70 for others. Phone Chris on 0295841488. Leave your name and number and I will get back to you A.S.A.P. (Sydney only).

Various demo discs in excellent condition. Will pay a good price, also want Suikoden or Breath of Fire III. Will pay $40-$50. Call 08 9248 1871.

Bomberman for SNES (whichever one). Must be in fair to good condition. With box and instructions if poss. Pay fair price. Call Matt on 0414348118 anytime and leave a message.

All States.

Super Mario RPG for SNES. Must be boxed with instructions and in good condition. Will pay $35. Call Ben on 02 6993 8194 on weekends between 12-6pm.

I want Time Crisis hcon 45 desperately, pretty please! Will pay $70-$80. Ring James on (02)95972716

I will pay $60 -$80 for a Sega Saturn with control pad light gun and memory card. I am also willing to swap my PC games Dark Reign, Frankenstein, Pitfall and $15. Phone 0247842569. Blue Mountains NSW area need only apply.

Past issues of U.K Sega magazine. Will pay top dollar. A.C.T only. Call Jason on 02 6291 5293.

X-Com : Terror from the Deep for Playstation. Will pay good money if in original box, instructions and good condition. Call Steve on 02 9477 6761.

Bomberman for SNES (whichever one). Must be in fair to good condition. With box and instructions if poss. Pay fair price. Call Matt on 0414348118 anytime and leave a message. All States.

Super Mario RPG for SNES. Must be boxed with instructions and in good condition. Will pay $35. Call Ben on 02 6993 8194 on weekends between 12-6pm.

Hong Kong movie posters, Jet Lee, Jackie Chan etc, Call Vu on 08 8276 1230 after school hours.

Super Nintendo: wanting to buy Dr Mario (puzzle game) will pay extra for postage from anywhere in AUS. Call Cynthia on 041 979 6343.

SWAP

I would like to swap my N64 with 4 games and 1 controller for a Playstation with 2 controllers and 2 or more games (one must be Time Crisis with a gun). If you are interested call Andrew on 02 6281 0353.

Gameboy and 2 games for Mechwarrior 2 PC CD Rom version please phone Jeremy 08 8278 5065 OR 08 8357 5161

I will swap my SNES with 5 games: Mario Allstars, Sand M

C'man Ninja, B.O.B, Mario W, for a 64 and no game (with control) call Chris on 07 3846 2539 after 5pm.

PENPALS

G'Day all you people that sit around on there arses all day. If this means anything to you your a lot like me. Well maybe not. Anyway, if your female between the ages of 13/14 write to me. I already have a girlfriend so don't worry about that, and a PC CD Rom. Write to Tommo, 8 Malcliffe Rd, Newhaven , VIC 3925.

Attention all keen writers!!! I'm a 20 year old male seeking pen-pals (more female), age is irrelevent. I own a Playstation, and other interests are sports, music (dance, rap) and anything that doesn't involve dying of boredom. So, if you've got something to say, drop me a line to Anthony at: Flat 9/1, Northborne Flats , Forbes St, Turner, A.C.T, 2612

Hi! 13 1/2 year old guy, wanting a girlfriend! If you're interested in Metallica, Prodigy, hate Hanson, but love video games (Playstation) then write to Travis Deer at M/S 189 Kingaroy QLD 4610

May I have the attention of all young girls. I am Denham at the bright young age of 13 and I'm looking for a female penpal my age, who hates the crap out of Segas, likes Starwars and strategy games. If you're one of those lucky girls write to Denham Haynes, 25 Victoria St, Henley Beach SA 5022. If possible send a photo.

Hey there everyone! Are you bored? Then write to me but only if you're : any age, sex, race or colour. Come on, start to write, I'm hungry for letters. *Spice Boy* 77/1 Ancona Street, Acacia Grove, Cararra,QLD Australia 4211.